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Jagori Rural Charitable Trust

Newsletter January 2025 - June 2025

2025

JRCT Newsletter
January 2025 - June 2025

 www.jagorirural.org





AWARE GIRLS ACTION FOR JUSTICE – AGAJ

From Foundations to Futures: AGAJ's Journey of Empowerment

The first half of 2025 under the AGAJ (Aware Girls Action for Justice) program has been a dynamic and transformative period of learning, reflection, and growth. Through a series of targeted workshops and events, adolescent girls and boys across Kangra and Chamba districts engaged deeply with critical themes shaping their lives and futures.

The first half of the year was marked by a series of foundational and thematic workshops that nurtured awareness, skills, and confidence among adolescents. Beginning with gender and mental health sessions, the program gradually expanded into livelihood training, art therapy, and career guidance. Workshops on sustainable livelihoods and disaster preparedness further deepened youth engagement. The period culminated in vibrant community events like the Maa Beti Mela and a peer-led networking meeting, alongside an exposure visit to local governance and environmental institutions. Together, these initiatives reflect the AGAJ program's holistic approach—nurturing awareness, skills, and solidarity for a just and equal tomorrow.

Gender & Leadership Empowering Adolescents Through Dialogue

In January, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust organized two Basic Gender Workshops, engaging 59 adolescent girls—43 from Kangra (at the JRCT campus) and 16 from Chamba. These workshops introduced the concept of gender as a social construct, helping participants unpack stereotypes, understand discrimination, and explore the distinctions between sex, gender, and intersex identities. Through interactive tools like games, short films, creative charts, and group discussions, the sessions encouraged critical reflection on relationships, violence, and patriarchy.

Building on this foundation, an Advanced Gender Workshop was held from 18–20 January in Chamba with 30 girls from Mehla and Salooni blocks. Facilitated by Anupama, the workshop used expressive tools such as the ‘river of life’, card-making, theatre, music, and film to foster emotional resilience, self-awareness, and understanding of healthy relationships. Participant feedback reflected meaningful personal shifts:

“This gave me time to think about myself.” – Manju

“My perspective on movies changed.” – Kajal

In June, a parallel Advanced Gender Workshop for Boys was conducted at the JRCT campus, involving 34 participants from Kangra and Chamba. Led by facilitator Jagdish Lal, the sessions aimed to challenge patriarchal norms and rigid notions of masculinity. Using storytelling, roleplay, and engaging activities like the “Kamla-Kamal” story and the “invisible rope” game, boys explored the emotional costs of gender expectations, division of labor, and the importance of empathy and shared responsibility. Pre- and post-workshop surveys revealed significant mindset shifts, reinforcing the belief that gender equality must be a collective journey.



Education & Career Guidance Nurturing Informed Futures

To support adolescents in making thoughtful life choices, a Career Guidance Workshop was held on 27th April for 22 youth from Kangra, facilitated by Manu Dhiman (CII-MCM Trust). Through vision-mapping and discussions on aspirations, identity, and societal pressures, participants explored success as a balance of passion, purpose, and values.

A second residential workshop on 24–25 May in Dharamshala, led by Dolphi Raman, focused on climate change and disaster preparedness in the Himalayan context. 32 adolescents learned about environmental challenges and career paths in green livelihoods like conservation, environmental law, and circular economies.

We also ran remedial classes for children lacking private tuition support and held school sessions across six blocks:



These efforts aim to build awareness, resilience, and future-ready youth.



Livelihood Skills Training Electrical & Motor Repair



In March 2025, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust, in collaboration with the Tools for Life Foundation, conducted hands-on workshops in electrical and motor repair for 68 adolescents (53 girls and 15 boys) from Kangra and Chamba.

Led by expert facilitators Michael and Ingried, the sessions provided a unique opportunity for participants—especially girls—to step into a technical field often seen as male-dominated. Through a blend of theory and practical training, the workshops introduced essential repair and maintenance skills, inspiring young people to view technical vocations as viable and gender-neutral career paths.

More than just skill-building, the training nurtured values of teamwork, discipline, and self-confidence, laying a strong foundation for future vocational certifications and livelihood opportunities.



Health & Well-being Creating Spaces for Healing & Resilience

Mental Health Workshop | 8–9 February 2025

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust hosted a transformative mental health workshop for 43 adolescent peer leaders from eight development blocks, facilitated by Sehar Hashmi. The sessions offered a safe, supportive space where girls openly shared experiences of stress, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, and emotional burdens.

Using storytelling, art, music, and group discussions, participants explored mental health symptoms, self-care strategies, peer support, and the value of trusting relationships. Many shared that they felt emotionally lighter and more confident, with a renewed commitment to supporting peers. Key action points emerged, including the need for regular counseling, family engagement, and peer mentoring.

Art Therapy Workshop | 5–6 April 2025

At JRCT's Darbari Training Centre, an Art Therapy Workshop led by Gurgaon-based therapist Shikha Aggarwal offered a creative and reflective healing experience. Through drawing, fabric art, movement, and metaphor-based prompts like "If you were a season or a tree...", participants expressed their identities, strengths, and aspirations.

Group activities-including a visual web of connection, bonding games, and a closing gratitude circle with meditative dance-fostered empathy, expression, and emotional release, reinforcing the power of collective healing and creativity.



Networking for Change: Adolescent Voices, Collective Visions

“Like threads in a loom, each networking meeting wove together diverse adolescent journeys into a shared fabric of learning, leadership, and local action.”

As part of the AGAJ program, 4 vibrant networking meetings were held across Kangra and Chamba on 22nd June 2025, bringing together over 140 adolescents from different social backgrounds and geographies. These gatherings created vital reflective spaces where adolescents shared lived experiences, cross-learned from peers, deepened their understanding of Jagori’s thematic pillars—Gender, Health, Environment, Education & Livelihood and co-developed action plans rooted in local realities.

District-Level Meeting – Kangra

At the district-level meet in Kangra, 54 adolescents from five blocks came together to reflect on their leadership journeys. Through shared stories and thematic group work, they explored issues like gender norms, harassment, and menstrual taboos, while aligning their personal growth with Jagori’s program goals—ranging from legal literacy to environmental action.

Block-Level Meeting – Tissa

In Tissa, 25 adolescents, including many from SC/ST communities, participated in a dialogue-centered session on self-worth, rights, and leadership. Mapping everyday concerns such as unsafe spaces and substance use, the group proposed community-based actions like awareness drives and digital literacy workshops.



Networking for Change: Adolescent Voices, Collective Visions

Block-Level Meeting – Mehla (Chamba)

At the Chamba office, 26 adolescents reviewed their six-month journey, discussing shifts in confidence and identifying local issues like poor infrastructure and safety concerns. Using participatory tools, they developed a practical action plan focused on education, environment, and community engagement.

Block-Level Meeting – Salooni (Sanghani)

In Sanghani village, 35 adolescents engaged in conversations connecting gender, environment, and livelihood. Through personal stories and skill-sharing, they identified local challenges and co-created an action plan, reflecting a strong alignment with Jagori's vision for grassroots leadership and collective change

Across these four networking meetings, what emerged clearly was the **power of adolescent-led reflection, solidarity, and action**. By linking lived realities with Jagori's core program components, adolescents demonstrated both readiness and resolve to shape inclusive futures—not only for themselves, but for their communities.



Ma-Beti Mela Celebrating the Journey from Aangan to Aasmaan

On 25th May and 8th June 2025, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust hosted two heartfelt **Ma-Beti Melas** in **Chamba and Kangra**, creating intergenerational spaces for connection, reflection, and celebration.

The first mela in **Dharwala, Chamba**, brought together **120 girls and 35 mothers** around the theme “*Apne Mann Ki Baat Rakhna*”- encouraging open conversations and emotional bonding. The second, at **Patola Ground, Khaniyara**, saw **over 250 participants** from across five blocks, exploring the theme “*Aangan Se Aasmaan Tak - Maa Beti Rishton Ka Safar.*”

Through **folk performances, poems, letters, symbolic activities, and joyful games**, both events offered safe, creative spaces to share love, gratitude, memories, and aspirations. Thought-provoking sessions on **societal pressures, care work, and shifting roles** led to powerful exchanges between generations. Activities like “*Neemboo Pyaar Express*” and “*Mere Sapne aur Samaj ki Deewar*” revealed the silent inheritances and shared resilience passed from mothers to daughters.

Moved by the experience, adolescent peer leaders are now planning to replicate similar spaces in their villages - nurturing **empathy, trust, and change** from their *aangan to the aasmaan*.



Fostering Awareness & Wellbeing Empowering Adolescents Through School Outreach



School Outreach at GSSS Kachiyari *Engaging Adolescents on Health, Gender, and Well-being*

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust reached 188 students through a school outreach at GSSS Kachiyari. Boys (9–12) discussed substance abuse and healthy choices, while girls explored hormonal changes and body awareness. Younger students (6–8) engaged with basic concepts of gender and health. The sessions fostered dialogue, curiosity, and self-reflection.



Encouraging Dialogue, Building Understanding *Awareness Sessions at GSSS Paddar*

On April 28th, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust engaged 82 students at GSSS Paddar in sessions on gender equality, health, nutrition, and menstrual wellbeing. Students openly discussed gender discrimination, hygiene, and nutrition. Girls actively participated in breaking menstrual taboos, and many shared personal experiences-highlighting the importance of continued dialogue on these vital issues.



Health Awareness Sessions at GSSS Samloti

On April 30, 2025, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust held two sessions at GSSS Samloti, engaging 210 students. Boys attended a discussion on substance abuse under the theme **“Say No to Drugs”**, while girls participated in a session on Menstrual Health and Hygiene. The initiative encouraged informed choices and open dialogue among adolescents.



Seeds of Change: Youth Explore Governance & Conservation

Youth Engagement with Governance & Conservation



As part of the AGAJ initiative, 24 adolescents (21 girls, 3 boys) from Nagrota Surian visited the Kotla Forest Range Office and Police Station to deepen their understanding of **governance, environment, and legal rights**.

Forest Department

Interactive sessions covered ecological conservation, wildfire prevention, rainwater harvesting, and native species like Khair and Shisham. Youth reflected on **climate change, landslides**, and their **role in protecting nature**.

Police Station

Participants learned about FIRs (including Zero FIR), child rights, cyber safety, the **POCSO** and **NDPS Acts**. Officers shared real-life examples, and the presence of women officers encouraged open dialogue. The visit inspired confidence and awareness among the youth, promoting active citizenship and stronger engagement with public institutions.



Navigating Disasters, Shaping Futures

Adolescents from nearby communities joined a two-day workshop on **disaster preparedness and green livelihoods**, led by expert **Dolphi Raman**.

Day 1 focused on local hazards—earthquakes, flash floods, forest fires, and more. Participants learned emergency response skills, first aid, and how to stay safe and prepared.

On Day 2, they mapped risks in their own areas and discussed ways to build community resilience. The sessions also introduced **career pathways** in disaster management and **environmental fields** such as:

- DRR professionals, rescue workers, and emergency coordinators
- Forest conservationists, ecologists, and waste management experts
- Legal and research roles in environment and disaster law

The workshop sparked awareness and inspired youth to become future **guardians of people and the planet**.



Building Equality: A 3-Day Journey with Adolescent Boys

From June 1 to 3, 2025, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust conducted a three-day residential workshop on gender equality and power, bringing together 34 adolescent boys from Kangra and Chamba districts. The participants represented seven blocks - Dharamshala, Kangra, Rait, Nagrota Bagwan, Nagrota Suriyan, Tissa, and Mehla - each bringing their own perspectives and experiences to the shared learning space.

The workshop used interactive methods such as games, group discussions, and role plays to explore critical topics including gender and power relations, discrimination, ideas of masculinity, and the unequal workload often carried by women and girls. These activities created a safe environment for boys to reflect on social norms and challenge internalized beliefs.

A key focus of the workshop was on encouraging boys to recognize their role in creating a more equal and respectful society. By nurturing critical thinking and empathy, the workshop aimed to support these young participants in becoming advocates for gender justice within their families, schools, and communities.



Youth-Led Cleanliness Drives: Reclaiming Spaces, Restoring Pride

Over the past six months, adolescent groups across Kangra, Nagrota Bagwan, Nagrota Suriyan, Rait, and Dharamshala have taken inspiring steps toward transforming their communities through village-level cleanliness drives.

What began as routine cleaning became something much more—acts of care, dignity, and environmental solidarity. From forest edges to village lanes, these youth-led efforts turned public spaces into sites of collective action and reflection.

Through campaigns like “Trash into Thought” and the revival of neglected green corners, young changemakers brought crucial conversations around waste, consumption, and community responsibility to the forefront. With each broomstroke, they reminded their villages that cleanliness isn’t just about hygiene—it’s about belonging, pride, and ecological justice.

These drives exemplify how meaningful change begins at the grassroots—one sweeping act at a time.





EMPOWERING GIRLS: A STEP TOWARDS EQUALITY AND WELL- BEING

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust recently conducted an awareness session with 43 adolescent girls, focusing on gender equality, health, and well-being.

Through open dialogue, participants reflected on gender discrimination and shared personal experiences. The session introduced breathing techniques for stress management and addressed menstrual health, busting common myths and encouraging open discussion.

Girls also learned about the value of iron-rich foods, green vegetables, and ginger water, while understanding the impact of junk food on hormonal health. The importance of digital discipline and mindful mobile use was also emphasized.

Creating a safe, supportive space, the session helped girls ask questions, build confidence, and grow with knowledge. Jagori remains committed to empowering young girls to thrive.



Wheels of Change: Steering Her Own Path

From Tradition to Transformation in Malan Village

In the quiet village of Malan, Kangra, Kajal once believed her life would follow a familiar script of silence and domestic duties. That changed when she joined Jagori Rural Charitable Trust's Aware Girls Action for Justice (AGAJ) program. Through gender workshops, Kajal began to question societal norms and envision a different future. Her bold first step? Enrolling in a plumbing course—an unusual choice that challenged stereotypes and built her confidence. But she didn't stop there.

Determined to break more barriers, Kajal trained as a JCB operator, mastering heavy machinery once seen as out of bounds for women. Each moment behind the controls became a declaration of strength and self-belief. Her transformation inspired her community—not as defiance, but as courage.

Now, Kajal dreams of opening a driving school for girls, where others can gain both technical skills and the confidence to chart their own paths.

“I was scared the first time I touched the JCB controls,” Kajal recalls, “but with every movement, I felt stronger—in my body and in my belief that I can lead my own life.”

Her journey is a powerful testament to what's possible when girls are supported to dream, act, and lead.

If she can, we can.



Aware Woman Action for Justice – AWAJ

Community Intervention for Rights and Entitlements

Strengthening Grassroots Governance: 3-Day Workshop with Panchayat Representatives



Jagori Rural Charitable Trust recently concluded a powerful three-day residential workshop in Rakkar, bringing together 60 Panchayat representatives from the Kangra and Chamba districts. The workshop aimed to strengthen grassroots governance and build the capacity of local leaders to drive inclusive development in their communities.

The sessions were led by governance experts Ruchi Yadav and Ganga Gupta from The Hunger Project, Delhi. They facilitated engaging discussions on effective governance practices, ways to leverage government schemes, and strategies to promote transparency, participation, and equity at the Panchayat level.

Participants also shared inspiring stories of change from their own areas—such as the construction of ambulance roads, development of children’s parks, establishment of health centers, and organization of village cleanliness drives. These success stories sparked new ideas and reinforced the power of collective action.

The workshop ended on a high note, with participants feeling energized and motivated. Many left with a renewed commitment to initiate impactful projects and work towards building model Panchayats that embody progress, inclusivity, and people-centered governance.





RISING TOGETHER: MGNREGA AND THE PATH TO JUSTICE

As part of the One Billion Rising campaign, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust organized a powerful gathering under the Jan Jagrukta Manch to celebrate the transformative impact of MGNREGA in rural communities.

The event brought together 174 participants—including MGNREGA workers, Panchayat representatives, and government officials—who engaged in meaningful conversations about rights, livelihoods, and the future of rural development.

The highlight of the day was the moving testimonies from women MGNREGA workers, who spoke about how the program has not only provided them with job security but also strengthened their voice and dignity within the community.

Together, we celebrated the spirit of solidarity and resilience, reinforcing the message:

Let's rise for change. Let's rise for a better tomorrow.



Legal Camps Bring Schemes Closer to Women

In the months of May and June, Jagori facilitated legal awareness camps in Mandal and Pasu Panchayats under Dharamshala Block in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority, health officials, and the Social Welfare Department. These camps provided a crucial opportunity for 92 community members, mostly women, to engage with complex welfare systems in a simplified, approachable way. Participants were guided through entitlements such as widow and old age pensions, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), disability benefits, and health rights including free HIV/AIDS care at government hospitals. With direct facilitation by doctors and legal officers, villagers were able to understand application processes, documentation requirements, and eligibility criteria. Importantly, the sessions created space for women to discuss individual challenges, reflect on past exclusions, and leave with a clearer path to accessing what is rightfully theirs.



Two Days of Dialogue, Awareness & Empowerment

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust (JRCT) organized a two-day interactive workshop with 33 women participants, centering on critical themes of health, gender equality, and overall well-being. These discussions aimed to strengthen awareness around the foundational pillars of social justice and create a safe space for learning and sharing.

Over the course of the workshop, participants engaged in conversations on women's rights and entitlements, the importance of gender-sensitive healthcare, and the need to challenge deep-rooted patriarchal norms. The sessions also highlighted the significance of social support systems—particularly for older women—and encouraged open dialogue around health and sexuality, topics often silenced by stigma.

For many women, the workshop was an eye-opening experience. It offered a rare chance to express themselves freely, share personal struggles, and ask difficult questions. These conversations were met with compassion, solidarity, and practical guidance, helping to replace shame with self-awareness and silence with strength.

By the end of the two days, the atmosphere had shifted—from hesitation to hope, from individual pain to collective resilience. JRCT continues to stand alongside women, nurturing a future built on knowledge, dignity, and empowerment.



Empowering Change Through Knowledge

At Jagori, our commitment to justice and workplace safety continues to deepen through sustained learning and collaboration. In a recent two-day workshop, we focused on building legal awareness and community capacity.

Day 1 centered on understanding the POSH Act (Prevention of Sexual Harassment at the Workplace) and the Moot Court process. Participants were guided through court procedures and the legal frameworks that protect workplace dignity and safety—ensuring that every individual, regardless of their role or identity, feels secure and respected at work.

Day 2 brought together community leaders, PRIs, Anganwadi Workers, and other local stakeholders to explore the Domestic Violence Act (DB Act) and the Forest Rights Act. Interactive sessions and a participatory Moot Court exercise created space for meaningful dialogue, enhancing understanding of legal entitlements and justice pathways.

By equipping grassroots actors with critical legal knowledge, we are strengthening local capacities to uphold rights, challenge injustice, and build safer communities.

Together, we move forward—toward a more informed, equitable, and just world.



International Yoga Day 2025

Yoga for One Earth, One Health

On June 21st, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust, in collaboration with Surya Uday Charitable Trust, celebrated International Yoga Day at the Indoor Stadium, Dharamshala. The event brought together over 100 participants—including children from the Surya Uday School for Special Needs, students from the Army Public School, B.Ed trainees, and Jagori team members—for a vibrant session focused on inclusion, wellness, and unity through yoga.

Simultaneously, at Jagori's Block Office in Pathiyar (Nagrota Bagwan), our team led a yoga session with ASHA and Anganwadi workers, highlighting yoga's role in mental well-being, stress relief, and balanced living.

These celebrations reminded us that yoga is not just an ancient tradition, but a global call to reconnect—with ourselves, our communities, and the planet.

Yoga for One Earth, One Health is more than a theme; it's a step toward holistic health and harmony.



Strengthening Communities for Gender Equality and Justice

Violence Resource, Training and Intervention Center



From February 1st to 3rd, Jagori organized a powerful Capacity Building Workshop with Friends of Health and Friends of Justice, centering on themes of gender, patriarchy, and the Domestic Violence (DV) Act.

Over three days, participants engaged in thought-provoking discussions and interactive exercises, deepening their understanding of systemic gender inequalities and the legal tools available to support survivors of violence. The space encouraged reflection, mutual learning, and strategic dialogue on how to advance justice and gender equity at the grassroots level.

This workshop marked a significant step in building informed, empowered communities that are committed to challenging patriarchy and creating a violence-free society.

Together, we continue to stand for dignity, equality, and justice for all.



Walking With Survivors: Legal Aid and Case Support

Supporting Courage, One Step at a Time...

Over the past six months, Jagori has supported women and girls facing violence—at home, in the workplace, and in early marriages. Each story reflected immense courage in speaking out, often despite fear and pressure. Our holistic approach includes legal aid, rights awareness, emotional support, and practical help. In collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority, we provided free legal counselling and representation.

From police stations to courtrooms, our team stood by survivors, helping them navigate legal processes. Some cases were resolved through law or local mediation; others are ongoing. Justice takes time—and we remain committed to walking this journey with care, consistency, and strength.



Small Shifts, Strong Voices

Every case we take up begins with a shift—sometimes quiet, sometimes bold. A woman saying no to years of abuse. A girl refusing early marriage. A worker reporting harassment. These moments may not make headlines, but they are where justice begins.

In recent months, more women have stepped forward—often after attending awareness sessions, hearing others speak, or simply having one conversation with a trusted field worker. When women feel supported and informed, they begin to challenge silence and seek justice.

We've also seen neighbours, volunteers, and Panchayat leaders play a vital role. Whether helping write an application, sharing legal contacts, or accompanying women to hearings, their support shows that justice is not a solitary journey—it's a shared one.

Not every case is resolved quickly, but each one brings strength and movement. When survivors are believed, systems respond, and communities care—justice becomes a lived reality.

Awareness Is the First Step to Justice

Before a woman takes legal action—or even speaks out—there’s often one crucial step: recognising that what she experienced is violence. In many of our intervention areas, women endure years of emotional, financial, or physical abuse without knowing it’s wrong or that legal support exists.

That’s why Jagori’s legal awareness sessions are so essential. Held across villages and blocks, these sessions focused on key laws like the Domestic Violence Act, the Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, and the Child Marriage Prohibition Act. Using simple language, real-life stories, and open discussions, we helped participants connect the law to their everyday lives.

These sessions were attended by women, adolescent girls, Anganwadi workers, Panchayat leaders—and men. Many women later said, “I didn’t know this was violence. I didn’t know I had options.” As a result, several new cases were reported, showing that awareness often leads to action and change.

Community Support: The Quiet Strength Behind Every Case

Every time a survivor speaks out, she carries more than her story—she often carries the weight of isolation, fear, and shame. But she is not alone. Around her stand people who may never be in the spotlight—quiet, compassionate, and unwavering in their support.

At Jagori, we believe that community support is not just helpful—it’s essential. Our community-based model relies on trained field workers and dedicated volunteers who walk beside women every step of the way. Whether it’s explaining a legal document, accompanying them to a hearing, or simply checking in—this steady presence becomes a lifeline.

Support doesn’t always look dramatic. Sometimes it’s a neighbour reminding her that she has rights. A volunteer helping her fill a form. A friend waiting outside the police station so she doesn’t have to go in alone.

These small, steady acts are the true backbone of justice—and the quiet force that keeps change alive.

Legal Awareness and Outreach Programme

In collaboration with NALSA, Legal Aid Advocate & Welfare Officer

A legal awareness and outreach programme was conducted on 28th May 2025 in collaboration with the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), a legal aid advocate, and a welfare officer. The session saw the participation of around 40 women from the community.

The legal aid advocate addressed key issues related to the rights of children with disabilities, elaborating on the laws and acts designed for their protection. He also spoke about mental illness—its signs and symptoms—and the importance of early medical consultation. Importantly, participants were informed about the provision of free legal aid for eligible individuals, including how to access these services.

The welfare officer discussed various government schemes available for persons with disabilities and those affected by mental illness. He provided a step-by-step explanation of how to apply for these schemes and encouraged participants to seek help without hesitation.

During the session, a few individual cases were taken up. These included the delayed registration of a minor girl's birth and a pension-related issue. The advocate and welfare officer offered guidance and practical steps to address these concerns.

The programme also covered the issue of violence against women, introducing participants to the support provided by our organisation. The concept and functioning of Nari Adalat were shared, along with an appeal to women to assert their rights and speak out against abuse and injustice.

The session concluded with a sense of empowerment among the participants, who left feeling more informed and confident in navigating the legal and welfare systems.



Building Connections, Strengthening Communities

Over three enriching days, Nyaay Sakhis and Anganwadi workers came together for a transformative workshop on Conversation Understanding and Mental Health — a space for learning, sharing, and deepening connections.

Day 1 set the tone by focusing on trust-building and understanding each other's roles through open conversations, interactive games, and reflective poetry.

Day 2 delved into the dimensions of mental health — what it means, how it impacts our lives, and how to recognize signs of emotional distress in ourselves and those around us.

Day 3 offered a grounding in the basics of counselling — its purpose, process, and potential to support individuals in times of need.

By the end of the workshop, it was clear that conversation, mental well-being, and counselling are not isolated tools but interconnected threads essential for building resilient and compassionate communities.

A heartfelt and impactful workshop that left everyone feeling stronger, supported, and more connected.



Walking in Her Light: Honouring the Legacy of Savitribai Phule

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust observed Savitribai Phule Week with a meaningful candlelight march, paying tribute to the life and legacy of India's first woman teacher and social reformer. The event, held in dedication to girls' education, brought together community members in a collective call for equity and learning for all.

Savitribai Phule's pioneering work in promoting education for women and girls continues to inspire our efforts. Through powerful songs and heartfelt reflections, participants celebrated the transformative power of education and reaffirmed their commitment to carry her vision forward.

The glowing candles lit up the evening — symbols of hope, resistance, and the shared dream of a just and inclusive society.

Jagori remains steadfast in its mission: **Education for all, empowerment for all.**



Beyond Survival: A Woman's Stand Against Violence and Addiction

Preeti, a 49-year-old woman, had endured 18 years of marriage overshadowed by her husband's alcohol addiction. Her husband's drinking problem had started after their marriage and progressively worsened over the years, turning their home into a battlefield. In his desperate need to fund his drinking habit, he would sell household items, leaving the family without basic necessities. Their house had fallen into such disrepair that it was literally on the verge of collapse. The violence followed a predictable pattern - her husband would go on drinking binges lasting for days, becoming increasingly aggressive and abusive, often throwing her out of the house at night while their three children watched in horror.

After years of enduring this cycle of abuse, Preeti reached her breaking point and made the heart-wrenching decision to leave her children and seek refuge at her mother's house. For three months, she remained there, torn between the safety she had found and the guilt of having left her children in that destructive environment.

In August 2023, Preeti's mother-in-law approached Nari Adalat, expressing her desire to bring her daughter-in-law back home. The team traveled to Punjab to meet with Preeti, who stated clearly that she would only return if her husband committed to genuine change. Through careful mediation in the women's court, a compromise was reached where Preeti's husband was given a clear ultimatum regarding his drinking, with explicit warning that continued alcohol abuse would result in legal action.

To reinforce the seriousness of the situation, the team accompanied Preeti to Palampur police station where a formal complaint was filed. This legal accountability, combined with family pressure and community intervention, motivated her husband to address his addiction. Faced with real consequences and the potential loss of his family, he stopped drinking and began working toward rebuilding trust.

As the home environment became safer, Preeti found employment as a janitor in a school, providing financial independence and dignity. The family worked together to rebuild their lives, starting with repairing their house that had once been on the verge of collapse. Today, Preeti's husband has maintained his sobriety and is actively participating in family life positively. The children now have a safe, stable home environment, and Preeti has emerged as both a provider and protector for her family.



BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND ENHANCEMENT OF SOCIAL COHERENCE

Where Conversations Begin the Change...

Snapshots from Jagori's Health Program

There's noise everywhere — but silence lives in the spaces where pain, fatigue, and worry go unheard.

This past quarter, we tried to soften that silence-through conversations, touch, traditional knowledge, and most importantly, by walking together

The Power of Sitting Together

We hosted two powerful dialogues. The first brought community members, health service providers, and local authorities together — no stage, no microphones-just real conversations, heart to heart..

In the second, our friends with disabilities spoke openly about what government “schemes” really mean to them. For some, it was hope; for others, just paperwork and disappointment. And as the officers listened, many eyes welled up. Something shifted that day — beyond words.

मैंने पहली बार अपने दिल की बात समझी...

कविता, एक आशा कार्यकर्ता की जुबानी

जब मैंने सुना कि जगोरी मानसिक स्वास्थ्य पर एक वर्कशॉप करवा रहा है, तो मुझे लगा कि शायद यह सिर्फ किताबों की बातें होंगी। लेकिन जब हम उस कमरे में बैठे, तो पहली बार किसी ने हमसे पूछा — ‘आप कैसा महसूस करती हैं?’

मैं चौंकी। मैंने कभी सोचा ही नहीं कि मेरा भी मन है, और उसकी भी देखभाल जरूरी है। हम दिन-रात गाँव के लोगों की सेवा में लगे रहते हैं — कभी किसी की डिलीवरी, तो कभी किसी की जांच, कभी कोई परेशानी सुनना, लेकिन खुद के लिए वक़्त कहाँ?

उस वर्कशॉप में हमने सीखा कि थकान सिर्फ शरीर की नहीं होती, मन की भी होती है। हमने सीखा कि गुस्सा, उदासी, घबराहट — ये सब इंसानी चीज़ें हैं, और इन्हें समझना और बाँटना बहुत जरूरी है।

मैंने वहाँ एक छोटी सी तकनीक सीखी — गहरी साँस लेना और दो मिनट खुद के साथ बैठना। अब जब भी बहुत भारी लगने लगता है, मैं वही करती हूँ। और हाँ, अब जब किसी महिला की आँखों में चिंता देखती हूँ, तो मैं सिर्फ उसका बीपी नहीं पूछती — मैं पूछती हूँ, 'तुम ठीक हो?'

मेरे लिए ये सिर्फ एक वर्कशॉप नहीं थी — ये मेरे अपने अंदर झाँकने का एक मौका था। अब मैं न केवल दूसरों का ख्याल बेहतर ढंग से रखती हूँ, बल्कि अपना भी।

When the Body Whispered, “Listen to Me Too”

Promoting Wellness and Economic Independence

In a powerful reminder that healing includes the body—not just the mind—Jagori Rural Charitable Trust recently organized two physical well-being workshops focused on massage therapy and guided exercises for women. What began with laughter and curiosity—“What’s this going to do anyway?”—soon turned into deep moments of relief. As aches eased and joints relaxed, one woman beautifully said, “Turns out, this was medicine for the heart too.” These workshops became spaces of rest, trust, and quiet healing. Alongside physical relief, women learned simple, hands-on techniques to manage common issues like back pain, cervical strain, and headaches—without depending on painkillers. The sessions also introduced basic massage skills that could serve as income-generating opportunities.

Traditional Ayurvedic remedies like Tulsi and Giloy were shared, reinforcing the value of local, natural healing. Most importantly, the message was clear: women deserve time for themselves. Just 30–45 minutes of daily care can restore strength, energy, and emotional balance.

Participants left feeling relaxed, reconnected to their bodies, and inspired to explore self-care and self-reliance. More than just workshops, these were steps toward healing, awareness, and empowerment.



Awakening Understanding Within

One of the most meaningful and transformative moments this quarter came through a team capacity-building session on mental health. It wasn't a formal training with PowerPoints or technical jargon. Instead, it was a space for honesty—a circle of trust where we spoke freely about stress, burnout, emotional fatigue, and the weight we often carry in silence.

For many of us, it was the first time we paused to check in with ourselves, to reflect not just on how we work, but how we feel while doing it. These conversations reminded us that healing doesn't begin in the field or in policy—it begins within each of us, when we feel safe to be vulnerable.

Since then, something subtle but powerful has shifted. When we go out into the field now, we carry more than our responsibilities—we carry a deeper sense of empathy. We're no longer just "health workers" delivering services. We are people, connecting with people. And that, we believe, is where real change begins.



Healthcare to the Fields: Bringing Care, Building Trust

Taking Health Conversations Where They Matter Most

At Jagori, we believe health is a right—not a privilege. To make this a reality, we organized health camps in remote villages where access to care is limited but urgently needed.

Our team provided free check-ups, consultations, and medicines. Many women—some receiving hemoglobin tests for the first time—shared how no one had ever asked about their health before. Those needing further care were referred to nearby facilities.

More than treatment, these camps created spaces for learning and trust. Sessions on nutrition, menstrual health, anemia, and routine check-ups encouraged open conversations. When care reaches people where they are, it becomes an act of dignity.

Camps in Sukkad, Jaangal, and Kohala reached 137 people—84% women. High BP and sugar levels were noted in Sukkad and Kohala. Common complaints included knee and back pain, often linked to unpaid physical labour. Medicines were distributed and 9 people were referred for follow-up care.

Beyond the camps, our team conducted home visits, counseling, and provided physiotherapy support to 190+ people, mostly elderly women. Two women received financial help for hospital-based treatment.

At the center of it all was a simple question:

“आप कैसी हैं?” (How are you?)

In every answer, we found healing begin.



Learning That Grows from the Roots

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust facilitated three deeply enriching workshops, each rooted in community knowledge, care, and collective empowerment.

The first workshop unpacked the complex relationship between gender and health. Women participants shared personal stories that revealed how their health is often compromised—not due to lack of resources alone, but because of systemic neglect tied to gender. The sessions became a space of reflection, solidarity, and growing awareness.

In the second workshop, Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) were trained to identify signs of emotional distress within their communities and respond with sensitivity and care. This training has expanded their role beyond physical health—they now carry with them not only medical supplies but also the ability to listen, support, and offer emotional first aid.

The third workshop focused on traditional herbal medicine. From forest walks to kitchen stories passed down by grandmothers, participants explored how healing practices are deeply embedded in local knowledge systems. The use of herbs, roots, and leaves—often overlooked in modern healthcare—was revisited as a powerful, accessible source of well-being.

Each of these workshops reflected a shared truth: when learning grows from the roots, it strengthens the whole community.



Strengthening Resilience, One Workshop at a Time

Jagori recently conducted a powerful three-day workshop on **Basic Disaster Management and Community Resilience** with Anganwadi workers from Nagrota and Suriyan blocks. These dedicated frontline workers—already the backbone of early childhood care and health systems—came together with deep commitment, questions, and a strong desire to learn how to support their communities during crises.

Through hands-on sessions and interactive group activities, the workshop covered a wide range of topics. Participants explored the types of natural and human-made disasters, first response techniques, community risk and resource mapping, and strategies to build resilience at both the family and village level. The sessions also focused on the importance of collective care and local leadership during emergencies.

By the end of the training, the women not only gained practical skills but also renewed their confidence to act as community leaders in times of need. Their courage and compassion are a powerful reminder of what true resilience looks like. Together, they are paving the way for stronger, safer villages—led by those who know their communities best.



Turning Point: When Gender Becomes Everyone's Issue

In the past few months, we facilitated a series of interactive sessions with adolescent girls and boys, encouraging open dialogue around gender and equality. During one session, a boy shared a powerful reflection:

“पहले लगता था कि ये लड़कियों की बातें हैं, पर अब लगता है — बराबरी सबके लिए जरूरी है।”

(“I used to think these were girls' issues, but now I realize — equality matters for everyone.”)

These small shifts — from hesitation to understanding — are the true markers of impact.

For the girls, discussions around gender and healthcare created space for honest conversations on menstrual health, personal boundaries, and the often-unseen burden of unpaid care work.

We ended with more questions than answers — and that, to us, is the beginning of real learning.





SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, FOREST AND LAND – SAFAL

Community Intervention for Sustainable Agriculture and Environment

Herbal Farming Offers Pathways to Livelihood

Brahmi, and Shatavari. This exposure visit, followed by a two-day residential workshop in the same region, helped 43 participants learn about cultivation, post-harvest handling, value addition, and marketing strategies. Farmers shared challenges in accessing licenses and certifications, while facilitators explained policy updates and new market possibilities. The exchange seeded new ideas about how traditional knowledge can be transformed into income-generation without compromising ecological values.

Women from Kangra had the opportunity to visit the Joginder Nagar Herbal Museum and engage with experts from the AYUSH Department to deepen their understanding of medicinal plants like Ashwagandha,



From Fields to Plates: Celebrating Mountain Food Traditions

The **“Kheton Se Thali Tak: Mountain Traditional Food Festival”** and the **Millet’s Fiesta** in Tissa Block, Chamba, came together as powerful celebrations of the Himalayan region’s rich culinary and cultural heritage. These vibrant events not only showcased traditional mountain foods but also promoted sustainable agriculture and empowered local communities.

At the heart of both festivals was the commitment to preserving traditional knowledge and practices. From millet-based dishes to locally grown produce, the events highlighted the nutritional value and cultural significance of indigenous foods. Over 100 participants took part in the **Millet’s Fiesta** alone, presenting diverse and creative millet recipes — reviving interest in this climate-resilient and eco-friendly grain.

The festivals served as platforms for farmers, women, and rural artisans to share their skills and connect with wider audiences. By encouraging farm-to-table practices, they strengthened local food systems and created new opportunities for economic growth in rural areas.

Together, these initiatives celebrated the deep ties between food, culture, and community — reminding us that sustainable, healthy living is deeply rooted in our traditions.



Reviving Seed Sovereignty in Muhalkhad

In late May, a farmer's dialogue in Muhalkhad brought together 33 participants to reflect on the erosion of indigenous seed varieties and the increasing reliance on costly hybrid seeds. The conversation highlighted the urgent need to restore seed sovereignty through local seed banks, community-led preservation efforts, and a return to intergenerational farming wisdom.

Farmers shared experiences, challenges, and traditional practices that once ensured food security and resilience. By the end of the dialogue, there was a strong collective commitment to initiate seed exchanges and actively preserve native varieties — a hopeful step toward sustainable agriculture and local self-reliance in the region.



Asha's Story Sparks Livelihood Dreams Among SHG Women

In June, 36 women from Baijnath Block visited Dhanag Panchayat to meet Asha Ji — a local herbal farmer who has transformed her livelihood through the cultivation of Brahmi, earning ₹40,000 to ₹50,000 each season. With support from Mission Dhanwantari, Asha shared her inspiring journey of overcoming uncertainty, learning through experimentation, and steadily building a successful herbal farming practice.

The visit also included an exposure to a nearby Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO), where the women observed the collective marketing of organic grains, vegetables, and dairy products. This hands-on learning experience opened up new ideas and pathways for the women, sparking interest in herbal farming and collective enterprise as viable means to strengthen their livelihoods.



World Environment Day 2025: Cleanliness, Conservation & Community Action

On June 5th, Jagori marked World Environment Day with a powerful blend of cleanliness, conservation, and community consciousness across multiple blocks in Himachal Pradesh. The day witnessed a series of clean-up drives and environmental awareness activities that brought communities together in action and spirit.

Collaborating with Waste Warriors in Dharamshala and Nagrota Bagwan — and conducting independent efforts in Rait and Kangra — Jagori mobilized adolescent girls, women, panchayat representatives, and local residents in the villages of Sunhar, Tharu, Sokni Da Kot, Jharer, and Ghana.

From removing single-use plastics, glass bottles, and household waste to clearing old clothes and debris, the clean-up drives reflected strong community ownership. In Jharer village, a special effort was made by adolescent girls and their mothers to restore a centuries-old stepwell — a meaningful act of water conservation and revival of traditional water sources. Community members also voiced concerns about external waste dumping in their areas. The Jagori team listened attentively and assured follow-up action to address these challenges.

More than just a one-day event, this initiative stood as a testament to environmental responsibility, grassroots leadership, and the growing role of women and youth in protecting our shared future.





ONE BILLION RISING CAMPAIGN INDIA 2025

Rise for Freedom

One Billion Rising (OBR) is a global campaign to **end violence against women, girls, and marginalized communities**. Launched in 2012 by activist **V (formerly Eve Ensler)**, it is named after the staggering statistic that 1 in 3 women—around one billion—face violence in their lifetime.

In India, the **Jagori Rural Charitable Trust (JRCT)** has led the campaign since 2013, with **Abha Bhaiya** as National Coordinator. As the OBR Secretariat, JRCT has built one of the country's largest gender justice mobilizations.

Over the years, more than 150 grassroots groups have joined, covering 90% of Indian states. In 2025 alone, 66 organizations across 21 states held 224 'Risings'—powerful events using art and activism to address gender, environmental, labor, LGBTQ+, and disability rights.

Together, we rise for dignity, equality, and justice—for all.

Health Awareness Forum Highlights Access and Transparency in Government Schemes

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust, in collaboration with the One Billion Rising campaign, organised the Swasthay Jan Jagrukta Manch – a Health Awareness Public Forum at Chambi Ground, Kangra. The event saw participation from around 150 community members across 10 panchayats, including local leaders and health professionals.

The forum aimed to raise awareness about government health schemes and address challenges in accessing healthcare. Women actively shared their experiences with health cards, while information on applying for disability cards was also provided. One woman shared her journey of receiving an 82% disability certificate and support from Jagori in accessing Sahara Yojana and pension benefits.

Health department officials highlighted the need for transparency, noting that many—especially women—often hide illnesses due to stigma, missing out on vital support schemes.



Rising for the Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

On January 21, 2025, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust, in partnership with the One Billion Rising campaign, organised the Jan Jagrukta Manch for Persons with Disabilities at the Civil Hospital, Nagrota Bagwan. Themed Rising for the Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, the event highlighted the continued neglect of rights and lack of accessible infrastructure for PwDs.

The forum aimed to bridge the information gap by offering clarity on available government schemes and ensuring direct interaction with officials. Many participants shared their struggles with accessing essential services in

healthcare, education, employment, and financial aid—often due to lack of awareness or complex procedures.

Through the Manch, PwDs gained critical information, voiced their concerns, and received on-the-spot support. The event fostered a collaborative space for the government and PwD community to work together toward inclusion and dignity. Feedback gathered will inform future policy and strengthen service delivery for a more inclusive society.



**1 BILLION
RISING 2025
RISE FOR FREEDOM**

Skill Building for Sustainability and Self-Reliance

As part of the One Billion Rising campaign, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust organised a two-day hands-on training programme on soap making and bio-enzyme production on January 8th and 9th, 2025, in Gudra and Kanthali villages of Chamba Block. The initiative was designed to empower rural women by equipping them with practical, sustainable livelihood skills that can lead to greater financial independence and improved quality of life.

The training sessions introduced participants to the process of creating high-quality, natural soaps and bio-enzymes using locally available, eco-friendly ingredients. These products not only offer a healthier alternative to chemical-based goods but also open up opportunities for women to start small-scale businesses from their homes. By promoting the use of natural and biodegradable materials, the training also helped raise awareness about environmental protection and the importance of reducing household chemical waste.

Participants responded enthusiastically, actively engaging in the learning process and expressing interest in continuing these practices beyond the training. For many, it was their first exposure to such sustainable practices, and it sparked conversations around the potential for collective production and sales within their communities.

This grassroots initiative serves multiple purposes—it addresses rural unemployment, encourages environmentally responsible living and challenges the economic marginalisation of women. By fostering entrepreneurship and building confidence, the programme supports women in taking steps toward a more independent and sustainable future, both for themselves and their communities.



Sadbhavna Yatra: Walking Together for Peace, Non-Violence, and Harmony

On 14th February 2025, the Sadbhavna Yatra marched across the three blocks of Kangra, Nagrota, and Rait in Kangra District, uniting voices for peace, harmony, and justice. The event was organized by Jagori Rural Charitable Trust under the One Billion Rising campaign, carrying the theme: “Let’s Walk For Peace, Non-Violence and Harmony – Aman, Ahinsa, Sadbhavna Ki Raah.”

The rally served as a collective call to rebuild the lost bonds of community life. In a world often divided by fear and distrust, the Yatra stood as a powerful reminder of unity, compassion, and shared purpose.

A total of 298 participants—including school students and community members—walked side by side, embodying the spirit of togetherness and mutual respect. One school teacher expressed his solidarity and offered to support similar initiatives in the future. “We are happy to provide our school campus for such activities and important causes. It would be a privilege to host programs that spread awareness among students,” he shared.

The Yatra left a deep impression on everyone present. It encouraged both young and old to rise above social divisions and actively build communities rooted in love, understanding, and dignity. True harmony, the event reminded us, is not merely the absence of conflict—but the presence of connection, empathy, and collective strength.

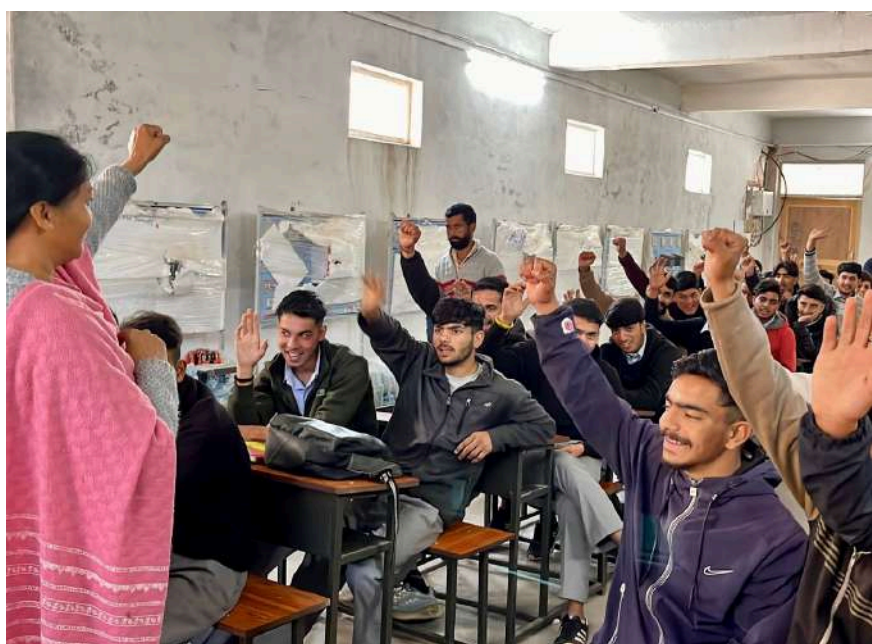


Strength In Solidarity: Obr Empowers Women In Rural Himachal

In February and March 2025, Jagori Rural Charitable Trust organized 16 impactful Risings across Chamba and Kangra districts as part of the One Billion Rising campaign. On February 7, a key session at the Trust's Tissa office focused on raising awareness about government schemes for women's empowerment and ending gender-based violence. Participants learned how to access these schemes, making the session a catalyst for social change and gender equality in the community.



On February 18, 2025, a session was conducted at the ITI Campus in Chamba, engaging young men in conversations around violence against women and the importance of gender equality. Through interactive discussions and real-life stories, participants explored the values of respect, empathy, and the need to actively stand against all forms of violence. The session concluded with the boys taking a pledge to support women's rights and work towards building a society rooted in dignity and equality.



Awareness Session with Adolescent Girls at KGBV, Chamba

On 26th February 2025, a powerful awareness session was conducted with adolescent girls at Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), Chamba. Organized as part of the One Billion Rising (OBR) campaign, the session focused on understanding and addressing violence, and nurturing values of peace, respect, and empathy.

The facilitators introduced the global mission of OBR, which works to end violence against women, girls, and marginalized communities. Through interactive discussions, storytelling, and activities, the girls reflected on the meaning of non-violence, the importance of equality, and how everyday actions can help create a safer, more harmonious world.

The session created a safe space for the participants to share their thoughts and experiences. It encouraged them to think critically about social issues and their own role in promoting positive change. The values of kindness, mutual respect, and peaceful conflict resolution were at the heart of the discussions.

At the end of the session, the girls took a collective pledge to become messengers of peace—vowing to speak out against violence and to promote understanding and unity in their schools, families, and communities. The experience empowered them with the confidence and awareness to take small but meaningful steps toward building a violence-free and compassionate society.



International Women's Day Celebrations Across Chamba District

International Women's Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm across Chamba district, with events focused on empowerment, equality, and local leadership. From honoring the labor of everyday women to addressing community issues, the celebrations reflected the rising voices and unity of women in rural areas.

On March 7, Jagori Rural and the Chamba Administration jointly hosted a district-level event attended by over 210 women. The Assistant Superintendent of Police addressed the gathering, stressing the importance of recognizing all women's contributions. A special tribute was paid to waste collectors, whose essential but often invisible work was acknowledged with gratitude and respect.

On March 8, village-level celebrations took place under the One Billion Rising (OBR) campaign. In Behnota Village, women raised concerns about illegal alcohol sales near a school. With collective action, they approached the shopkeeper, who agreed to stop the sales—demonstrating community-led change.

In Gulodi Village, Pushpa Devi led the rising by sharing her journey from limited education to empowering her daughters. Her story inspired others to claim their rights and reject violence.

In Choli Village (Tissa Block), the focus was on young girls (Kishoris). Through motivational stories, they were encouraged to raise their voices and become future leaders.

In Lech Village, under Panchayat Pradhan Sunita Bhushan, women gathered to demand equal rights, political participation, and fair job opportunities. The event reminded all that when women unite, lasting change is possible.

Together, these events showcased the strength, awareness, and determination of women across Chamba to lead their communities toward equality and justice.



International Women's Day Celebration 2025

International Women's Day is more than a date on the calendar—it is a call to action for equality, respect, and empowerment, every single day.

This year, the spirit of the day was beautifully embraced as 96 women and adolescent girls from Rait, Kangra, Dharamshala, and Nagrota Bagwan came together to celebrate. The event was filled with vibrant songs, energetic dance performances, and powerful messages highlighting the strength and resilience of women.

Laughter and joy were at the heart of the celebration. A spirited tug-of-war brought out not only physical strength but also unity and determination. Musical chairs brought smiles and laughter, reminding everyone to cherish life's lighter moments.

As the day came to a close, it was clear that the celebration was more than a gathering—it was a reminder that the journey toward equality continues. It lives on in our voices, in our actions, and in our collective dreams for a just and fearless world.



Swara Mountain Arts Festival 2025

Rise for the Dancing Mother Earth and the Harmony of Five Elements

From April 8–12, the Jagori Rural campus in Dharamshala hosted the 4th Swara Mountain Arts Festival, organized by Jagori Rural Charitable Trust and One Billion Rising India. With the theme “Rise for the Dancing Mother Earth and the Harmony of Five Elements,” the festival brought together artists, activists, and communities to celebrate ecological harmony through art.

Workshops inspired by Earth, Water, Fire, and Air included Thangka painting with Tsering Norbu, clown theatre with Sukhmani Kohli, Yangshak movement by Surjit Nongmeikapam, and Raaga music by Palash and Neeraj Dholakia.

Each evening featured Open Gate performances with over 40 artists, alongside stalls by local artisans and ethical brands. The finale included powerful acts by Padmashri Shovana Narayan, Dashugs (Ladakhi band), Manipuri artists Mangka Laihui and Mangangsana, Sonam Kalra, and Aaditya Vardhan.

Sayedra Hameed’s reflections and support from Chief Guest Sikyong Penpa Tsering emphasized the call to rise for Mother Earth. The festival was a vibrant blend of creativity and activism in honor of the planet and its elements.

