

**THREE YEARS NARRATIVE REPORT OF JAGORI RURAL CHARITABLE
TRUST (JRCT) April 2012- March 2015**



Jagori Rural Charitable Trust
Rakkar Road Sidhbari, Kangra District,
Himachal Pradesh - India

An Organizational Overview

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust (JRCT) is registered under the Indian Trust Act in October 2002 and is committed to the cause of building a just and equitable society.

The major involvement of JRCT is with communities that fall under marginalized category and within that there is a special focus on adolescent girls and women. Presently there is an active involvement in nearly 110 villages from 3 blocks of the Kangra district and 30 villages in the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh.

Our engagement with the community addresses all forms of discrimination based on gender, class, caste, religion, disability and all other forms of social exclusion and seeks to protect the individual and collective dignity of the most marginalized. JRCT employs a Rights-based approach to strengthen Dalit and Scheduled Tribe communities, with emphasis on developing the leadership of young women and men who are aware and committed to building gender just and socially equitable communities and society.

Presently there are 70 women's collectives, 35 youth collectives, 32 Kishori samoohs and 42 farmers' collectives working for the advancement of rural men and women from more vulnerable communities.

JRCT outreach activities are built around five key programmatic areas: **Fellowship to Young girls** , Aware Women's Action for Justice (AWAJ); Sustainable Agriculture, Forest and Land (SAFAL); Social Architects of Tomorrow in Himachal (SATH); and Aware Girls Action for Justice (AGAJ). The programmes are implemented its programs in partnership with local community groups.

All these components are intrinsically interlinked and provide the foundation for the *team members* to translate their learning into practice. Activities and campaigns organized by JRCT have been received well by the community and the local administration.

JRCT is increasingly being recognized as a group that women feel confident to approach to address issues of their concern. Jagori Rural Charitable Trust is working as Service Provider under the Domestic Violence Act 2005.

At a glance- Programatic Activities undertaken in the last three years:

1. Fellowship Program for Young Women

Since its inception Jagori Rural has put in place a fellowship award programme for young rural girls. So far nearly 30 girls have been awarded. Fellowship is meant for girls from poor and marginalized communities. Due to family pressure and limited financial resources, most girls stop their education after they finish their school or intermediate. However, they have a strong desire to study further.

In the last three years, 10 young girls have been awarded fellowship. All are from socially and economically marginalized families of the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. All young girls are working with Jagori Rural Charitable Trust and are engaged effectively in community mobilization process and awareness campaign. In addition they have started their formal education through distance learning and are able to appear for their exams through an open university. As feminist activists, all of them have become more aware of gender discrimination issues and have incorporated gender justice perspective into their lives and in their daily work including in their homes.

In the year 2014 JRCT has started a new initiative **“Himalayan Daughters Rise for Education”**. Under **this Programme**, financial support is provided to young girls to enable them to continue their education. So far in the Chamba and Sirmour districts, 20 young girls from single parent or socio-economic difficult families are getting fellowship.

Both for capacity building and monitoring purposes, the girls are being mentored by experienced team members of JRCT – Sahelis. They serve not only as mentors but also role models for the girls. Every six-month, meetings held, bringing some of the girls together and developing a sense of coherence among the scholarship holders. Due to the holistic approach of the programme girls are not only provided financial means to continue their education but they will be involved in JRCT's activities such as gender campaigns, evolving life-skills and providing an opportunity to become self confident, self assertive and aware of gender equality issues.

2. AWAJ Programme – (Aware Women's Action for Justice)

AWAJ , works through the formation of women's collectives on a range of issues such as violence against women, sex selective abortion and neglect of girl child, women's right to bodily safety and women's participation in governance. Legal support is provided through Nari Adalats (Women's Courts) managed by bare foot women lawyers as well as formal judicial processes.

Major activities undertaken in the last 3 years :

2.1 Community Based Women's Action to Address Violence Against Women,

2.2 Training of Police Personnel on Gender and Legal frameworks to be implemented.

2.3 Training of Protection Officers under the DV Act,

2.4 Yearly Campaign For The Elimination of Violence Against Women,

2.5 Women's Health Education, Awareness and Claiming of Health Entitlements

2.6 Leadership Building of women as community representative

2.7 Orientation Sessions of Panchayt Representatives And Village Level Monitoring Committee Members

Description of Activities

2.1 Community Based Women's Action To Address Violence Against Women (VAW)

JRCT is working with women's collectives to address the issues of Violence against women and girls. In the last three years, selected 20 active women of women's collectives have been oriented on the domestic violence act, latest amendments in the laws related to the safety and protection of women and children. They have been trained on the basic principles of feminist counselling, gender Justice and further equipped to address cases of violence against women with gender sensitive perspective.

Presently a cadre of 15 barefoot activists (Nyay Sakhis) in the Kangra district is conducting weekly women's courts (community based institutions). In addition, a trained cadre of 5 barefoot lawyers is actively conducting women's court in the Chamba district.



The team work very closely with the police and protection officers. So far, total 355 cases related to violence against women have been registered and about 40-50 % were settled by the intervention of Nyay Sakhies.

In addition, awareness sessions on latest amendments in the domestic violence act 2005 and POCSO have been conducted in colleges and schools. These sessions were facilitated by a legal expert along with the Team leader of the Nari ADALT programme. In these sessions students were informed about the latest amendments and legal provisions such as DV Act and POCSO. All the students were encouraged to break the silence around the issues of eve teasing, violence within and outside schools and college premises as well as in the home.

2.2 Training of Police Personnel on Gender and Legal Process

In the last three years, JRCT has organised three trainings of police personnel and total 101 police personnel (both men and women) participated in the workshops that were conducted by Khadijah Faruqi, a well known feminist rights based lawyer and the person in charge of the 181 crisis helpline in Delhi. Khadijah broadly divided the workshop into two sections i) Understanding gender and issues of patriarchy and violence in the context of gender and ii) recent amendments to laws related to women specifically POCSO, section 354 and 376.

These trainings have built conceptual clarity of police officias on the topics of Gender Justice and Gender Equality.They were oriented on the latest laws i.e. Anti Rape and Sexual Violence Act, Domestic Violence Act 2005 and POCSO- Prevention Of Child Sexual Offence.

Outputs

- The issues related to gender discrimination, increasing violence against girls and women were introduced and disseminated to a group of 26 police officers.
- Extensive and thorough discussions on the ground realities of the challenges faced by the police force were also unravelled in a sympathetic environment.
- Recent amendments in the section 376 & 354 and the new POCSO Act was shared along with the provisions, procedure to be followed while employing these sections, the revised punishments under each section as well as how to strengthen the cases by combining these sections with other existing laws.
- A concrete action plan has been devise with the Superintendent of Police for the continued training of the same group and collaborative action plan with Jagori for the redressal of criminal cases related to women.



2.3 Training of Protection Officers

In the month of September 2013, Three days training of protection officer was organised. Main objectives were:

- Inform and make aware protection officer about the latest amendments in the laws related to the protection of women, girls and children.
- Orientation of newly appointed protection officers on issues of Gender justice and Violence against women.

23 protection officers from 7 blocks of the Kangra district participated. In three days main topics covered included gender discrimination, Gender based violence, Domestic Violence Act, filing of the First Information Report(FIR)- and DIR- Domestic incidence Report, amendment in 376, 354 and POCSO.

Outputs

- Built awareness and conceptual clarity of 23 protection officers on the issues related to Gender and Violence against women.
- Protection Officers become aware of latest amendments in the section 376,354 and POCSO.
- 10 newly appointed protection officer acquired detailed information on the procedure of filing DIR and FIR.

2.4 Yearly Campaign for The Elimination of Violence Against Women

The Sixteen days of Activism for the Elimination of Violence against Women is a global campaign which mobilises women and men across the world annually. The campaign spans from the 25th of November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (IDEVAW) to the 10th of December, International Human Rights Day (IHRD), thus illustrating the link between violence against women and human rights emphasizing that violation of women's rights is gross violation of Human rights.

Since last two years, the campaign is being linked to the on-going International ONE BILLION RISING Campaign- a call to one billion people to rise against increasing violence against women and the focal point of the campaign around violence against women and girls. In collaboration with local NGOs, One Billion Rising Campaign was successfully organised by JRCT in three districts of the Himachal Pradesh, reaching nearly 30000 people (60 % women and 40 % men/young boys) from Rural and Urban Communities including women, young girls and boys and students of schools and colleges etc. With the help of NGOs, women' and youth collectives numerous sensitization activities were conducted by using popular mass media such as short films, street theatre feminist songs and bands. Day and Night Meetings were held with women's collectives and community members in 73 villages of the Kangra district on gender based violence in the society. Students of 30 schools and 5 colleges held morning assemblies with slogans and songs making commitment to stop violence against girls and women. Human Chain and candle light vigils were organised at Mcleodganj in collaboration with Tibetan Women's Association, with Buddhist nuns of 3 Nunneries, 2 monasteries, NGO's and community members.

Village level Rallies (Road Marches) were organised by women at 10 locations. Street plays were performed by young girls (fellowship awardees) in 8 different locations of the Kangra district including bus stands, schools. Approximately 2000 people have watched it. The Male participation of the audiences was truly remarkable.

In the last two years, On 16 December 2013 and 2014, the anniversary day of Delhi Gang Rape case, the JRCT organized Events and performances centered on the theme of Restoration of Justice and Ending Violence against Women as part of One Billion Rising (OBR) campaign in Kangra. In 2013, the event was graced by the presence and performance of Eve Ensler, the renowned playwright and activist, the founder of V-Day and OBR campaign. Among other artists and activists. On a cold December evening, more than 500 people from the area made the evening lively. On 16 December 2014, the commemorative event was organised at an important block head quarter, Rait. It was graced by DIG Police. More than 2500 including women, youth, Adolescents girls and students participated. The use of the cultural forms of protest was particularly appreciated by the audience.

One of the main results of OBR Campaign is that people from all communities directly participated in the OBR Campaign and rose to demand for justice, especially to end violence against women and girls. The indirect participation was more than a hundred thousand. Further, it has increased the level of awareness among common people as well as created a public presence. In addition, due to the campaign, there has been a larger awareness about the need to eliminate VAWG due to patriarchal socialization resulting in male domination mind set. The audience found the programmes relevant and felt connected. The response from the media was very encouraging.

Feedback:

“Women and children are always the victim of violence. We women tolerate this violence thinking of respect in the society and for children’s future. On the other hand, I think we are teaching the same to our children but now I will not tolerate any kind of violence against women nor I will teach my children to do so.” (Shakuntala village Salute Godam).

“I am happy that women are coming out and raising their voice against violence. Alcoholism and domestic violence are major issues in our area. We should continue this campaign to make people sensitise on this issue. (Neelam village Pradhan, Sokni-da-Kot).”

“This is a kind of a revolution and we should carry this protest on. Now girls have started coming out and this social movement should never stop. (Asha Village Khaprotu).”

“We are also very concerned about sexual harassment of girls. I will continue this campaign by educating girls to break their silence”. Ajay , Village Khaprotu.

2.5 Campaign to save the girl child

In the Kangra district the sex ratio of girls below 6 years is second lowest in the State. In order to sensitise community at large on the issue of declining numbers of girl children, a campaign was organised in Dharmshala and the Rait block. During the campaign, meetings were held with women’s collectives and panchayat representatives. With the initiative of women’s collectives, resolutions against the sex selective abortion have been presented and passed in nearly 20 Gram Panchayats. The resolution stated that the panchayat would not allow sex-selective abortions to be carried out in their village, and the responsibility was given to anganwadi workers to monitor all pregnant women who register at their centers ensuring that families did not seek a sex-selective abortion.



In 20 villages, 300 saplings have been planted by the people in the name of their daughters. Just as cutting of trees harms our environment, sex selective abortions harms the social climate. Therefore the trees are symbolic of the girl child who help nourish our homes and social space. Young girls and boys in

the schools and colleges were sensitised on the issue of sex selective abortion through film screening and discussion. On 15 September 2014, a marathon was organized in Dharamsala where 450 young women and adolescents girls expressed their support to the “save the girl child” campaign.

The Superintendent of Police and Chief Medical officer also participated and encouraged the participants.

With the support of schools, rallies were also organised in three different locations of the Kangra district. Total 1390 students gave the message through slogans, posters and songs to save and value the girl children. Students took vows to reject dowry and fight against gender discrimination.



MARATHON TO SAVE THE GIRL CHILDREN

2.6 Two week training course in Hindi/Urdu on “Gender, Human Rights, Just Governance, Sustainable Development and Women’s Empowerment

In the last three years, JRCT, in collaboration with SANGAT has organized 3 two week long residential training Course on “Gender, Human Rights, Just Governance, Sustainable Development and Women’s Empowerment”. These trainings have been organised at the Training and Research Academy (TARA), Sidhbari, Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh, India.

These courses have been coordinated by Ms *Kamla Bhasin* and Ms *Abha Bhaiya*, two well known feminist trainers and also the founder members of the JRCT.. *In addition other experienced and well known resource persons* are also invited to facilitate the sessions. These courses were attended by 105 members of NGOs from the States of Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Assam, Chandigarh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Uttarakhand and Nepal. Various creative and participatory methods such as songs, storytelling, group exercises, and film screening and open discussion were used to engage participants effectively in the course.

One of main output is that participants have built in depth conceptual clarity on the following topics and themes:

- Conceptual understanding of the construction of gender, patriarchy and other systems of domination, masculinity, Violence against women, legal framework for protecting women's human rights, right to health, bodily safety and sexuality, communalism and fundamentalism, just governance grassroots mobilization, Right to Information , feminism and women's movement and One Billion Rising campaign.
- The workshops made participants learn how to plan, coordinate and conduct campaigns and events around the issues of Violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- The training was conducted in a participatory manner and it was process oriented. Participants' experiences were the main resource to build on our common perspectives and action. Yoga, music, dance, laughter, crying and sharing were all part of the principle of joyous collective learning.

During feedback session, it was shared by most of participants that they will apply training learning in their lives and work.

2.7 Women's Health Education and Awareness Programme

In 2012, Jagori Rural conducted a base line health survey of 300 women and adolscent girls in 25 villages of the Kangra district. The survey was a qualitative assessment of various aspects of physical, mental and reproductive health of girls and women. The main purpose of this survey was to assess the nutritional status and overall health of women and how this contributes to the epidemic of anaemia that is pervasive in rural Himachal Pradesh.

JRCT also undertook HB tests on 250 Women and 100 Young Girls. The haemoglobin levels found in 80% women range between 7.5 grams to 9 grams; as opposed to a minimum 14 gms. The vast majority of young girls have a haemoglobin level of approximately 8 grams. Additionally, the majority of women are underweight, even taking into account their short stature. The low body weight significantly contributes to the problem of anaemia and mal nutrition. There is evidence that women marry and have children at a very young age. 83% women have given birth to children by their early or mid-twenties. This too poses a strain on their bodies, which contributes to the deterioration of their health at an early stage in life.

In the last three years, JRCT has organised Health fairs and camps in 31 villages attended by 1246 women and adolscent girls. 638 women have gone through proper medical checkups and 238 women have been found with improved health. In addition, Hemoglobin test of 157 women and 69 Adolscent Girls were also undertaken.

Some of the significant highlights of women's health education programme:

- Addressed Health problems of 125 women related to white discharge, irregular menstruation, joint pain and anemia.
- Counselling provided to 8 patients with mental and emotional health problems and referred to Government hospital for treatment and counselling.
- Economic assistance provided to 14 women for their health checkups and treatment.
- 16 women were referred to the Government medical college for further treatment.

- Body literacy sessions in 7 Government schools conducted with adolescent girls and boys. These sessions have been attended by 1461 students i.e. 740 girls and 721 boys. Awareness increased on issues of bodily processes, menstruation cycles and myths around it and reproductive and sexual health and on gender equality.
- A cadre of 14 traditional rural midwives and 10 swasthaya sakhis (bare foot health activists) are working as alternative healers (community health workers) within their villages. They have acquired skills in basic first aid, pre and post natal care, identification of common gynecological complaints and other common ailments as well as gender sensitisation training.
- The midwives assisted in collecting local herbs from forests, producing herbal medicines such as cough syrups, oil for joint pain, calendula etc. distributed to a total of 1298 people.
- Built understanding of 46 women on holistic health (physical, mental & emotional and social) and further they also learnt the ways how to disseminate knowledge and information on the issues of anemia, bodily processes, gynecological and general health. As an outcome, a cadre of 10 women have started working as Health sakhis (**friends of women's health**) i.e. community health workers within their villages. They are engaged in the organization of health meetings, Health fairs, and referral and in the preparation and distribution of herbal medicines.
- Increased awareness among 84 Anganwari workers on the issues of gender, menstruation and bodily processes.

2.8 Leadership Building Of Rural Women

One of the focus of JRCT is to strengthen the leadership of rural women especially from socio-economic marginalized sections and prepare a cadre of active women as ambassador of women's rights and entitlements. Jagori Rural is working with nearly 70 women's collectives in 30 Gram Panchayats and has conducted a series of capacity building trainings of selected active members of women's collectives on the issues of local governance such as functioning of Gram Panchayats, Gram Sabha and MNREGA. In the last three years, awareness meetings and trainings have been held with the active members of women's collective. In these meetings and trainings, women become aware of the role and functions of PRIs and role of women's collectives in local development and governance processes. These programmatic activities have motivated Women to play an active role in the process of development and local governance.

One of the main outputs to be measured is that all women who attended the trainings, committed to participate in each gram Sabha and ward Sabhas.

Another output related to claiming entitlements. A total of 83 members of women's collectives in 5 Gram Panchayats have taken initiative to solve the problems of drinking water supply, old age pensions and issues related to MNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural employment guarantee Act). They also visited Panchayat offices and SUB-Divisional offices and shared these issues with the officials. As a result, in 5 villages, problem of irregular water supply was resolved due to the pressure of members of the women's collectives.

2.9 Orientation Sessions of Panchayat Representatives and Village Level Monitoring Committee members:

In the last three years, JRCT has built active contacts with District Rural Development Authority-DRDA, District Panchayat officer and Panchayat representatives. In collaboration with DRDA, JRCT has organised orientation sessions on the MNREGA and procedural issues in 15 Gram Panchayats. These orientation sessions were facilitated by two experienced members of JRCT who have been intensively trained on above mentioned issues. They have been working with women's collective on these issues for the last 3-4 years. Making the sessions participatory, participants were made aware about the processes of social audit, community participation and roles and responsibilities of village Monitoring committee (VMC) members, relevant documents and how to verify the utilization of resources and quality of work done. They learnt to verify the entries of musterll with payment. Participants especially VMC members were also made aware how to make report and presentation of social audit findings. As an outcome, awareness campaign was organised in 11 Gram Panchayats and people were made aware about their rights under the MNREGA scheme.

3. SAFAL - Sustainable Agriculture, Forest and Land

The SAFAL programme aims to revitalize all natural and life giving aspects including organic agricultural production and creativity. The programme also focuses on building women's identities as farmers in order to recognize and value their contribution to agriculture - life giving and life saving activities. Another important aspect of the programme is to increase green cover, raise awareness on climate change, global warming and reduction in the use of plastic.

Presently the SAFAL Team engages with 42 farmers groups, primarily consisting of women in rural villages throughout the Kangra Valley. After organizing the farmers, the team provides on a regular basis information on government agricultural subsidies, distributes seeds, encourages traditional seed preservation, and demonstrates organic practices such as making vermi-compost pits. The team also focuses on increasing green cover, building the identity and status of women farmers, who carry most of the burden but are not recognized for it.

List of Activities accomplished under this programme is given below:

3.1 Demonstration Session on Vermi Compost and Bio Pesticide (40 Demonstrations)

3.2 Yearly Environment Awareness Campaigns (Three)

3.3 Trainings of Farmers In Organic Farming (Four Trainings)

3.4 Exposure Visits Of Farmers

3.1 Demonstration Session on Vermi Compost and Bio Pesticide

JRCT has built good contacts with block agriculture officials. In collaboration with Government Agriculture department, 40 demonstration sessions on the SRI, vermi compost and bio-pesticides have been conducted in 17 villages. These demonstrations were attended by 62 farmers (8 male and 54 female). All participants gained knowledge about the formation of bio-pesticides and how to us

SRI technique to grow rice by using organic manure and bio-pesticides. In these demonstrations, four kinds of bio-pesticides were made by the farmers. As an output, total 630 vermi compost pits have been built by the. In addition, 60 farmers have adopted the methods on 520 kanals land in 16 villages. They have been able to end their reliance on urea.

3.2 Environment Awareness Campaign-Van Mahotsav (Forest festivals)

In the last three years, Environment awareness Campaign have been organised in 50 villages of 3 blocks of Kangra district. Main objective was to increase green cover with the involvement of community by increasing their access to fresh fruit.

Awareness meetings on the issues of Environment were held with women's and youth collectives, Farmers groups and school children. How many? Awareness sessions on environmental issues were held in 11 Government Schools. Their main focus was to sensitize students on the issues of topics of junk food, difference between organic farming and market oriented farming, nutritional value of organic vegetables, fruits and cereals, the impact of forest degradation, the need for water conservation, enriching soil health; harmful impact of plastic and the climate change.

Every year, the campaign has reached directly and indirectly a population of 5000 women, men, young boys and girls including educational institutions.

In total 17627 saplings of different fruit trees (mango, Citrus fruits (Nimbu, malta, orange, lemon) apricot, Guava, Amla, Papaya, Bill and plum) and green trees have been planted in nearly 50 villages of three blocks. Nearly 1000 saplings have been planted in collaboration with Forest department.

3.3 Trainings of Farmers in Organic Farming

In the last three years, JRCT has conducted a series of capacity building programme such as trainings and workshop, exposure visits and demonstration sessions with women and men farmers in organic farming . Main objectives of these programme were:

- Enhance the understanding and skills of farmers on different methods of organic and traditional farming practices.
- Provide a platform for farmers to share their knowledge and experience with each other.

So far, four trainings of farmers have been accomplished attended by 170 farmers (31 men and 139 women) from three blocks of the Kangra district. These trainings were facilitated by an experienced team of trainers from the Government Agriculture University and Agriculture Department and from organic farming NGO representative . In these trainings farmers were educated about the use and benefits of different types of organic manures and compost, bio-pesticides and seed preservation methods. Through participatory demonstration sessions, all farmers learnt methods such as making organic manure, liquid compost and various organic biopesticides. They also acquired knowledge about saving and protecting traditional seeds and crops from diseases and fungus by using organic sprays.

Main Outputs

- **Increased awareness among a larger groups of farmers about the harmful impact of chemical based agriculture.**
- **Farmers gained knowledge about improving the health of the soil and its fertility by using the multicropping techniques and growing multi crops, such as spices, pulses, oil seeds etc together. They also learnt how to make the irrigation method more systematic and effective including proper management of cultivated land.**
- **Farmers acquired new skills of making bio pesticides using locally available sources such cow milk, buttermilk, cow dunk and urine, lime and ash of cow dunk cake and bitter leaves of different plants. This helps in reducing farmer's dependency on the market for seeds, manure, and pesticides and herbicides.**
- **Most farmers committed themselves to apply these learnings and skills in their fields and motivate other farmers to grow organic produce for the green leaf project.**

3.4 Exposure Visits of Farmers

In the month of July 2013, organised an exposure visit of 20 farmers (7 men and 13 women) and 8 SAFAL team members to the Kheti Virasat Mission organisation based in Punjab and Rajasthan. The farmers group attended a festival on natural farming and the environment in the Punjab, organized by Kheti Virasat Mission. In this festival, they acquired knowledge about how to make live soil, live seeds and how to use desi cow urine and dung to make pesticides and fertilizers. The group also visited a 130-acre organic agriculture farm located in Abohar, Rajasthan where the farmers were only using organic methods. The group learned how to do mix agriculture by using organic farming methods.

After the Exposure Visit, in the month of August 2013, one day Kisan Mela was organised at Shahpur, inspired by the example of Kheti Virasat Mission organisation. One of the main Objectives was to give farmers a platform share their experiences and organic seeds. This festival was attended by nearly 250 men and women farmers.

In the month of April 2014, Farmers exposure visit was organized to the Agriculture University Palampur. 40 farmers (9 Male and 31 Female) participated. The Prof. and the Head of Organic Farming Department took a session on organic agriculture practices and shared different methods and models of making organic bio-pesticide. Farmers learnt several organic fertilization methods including how to make vermi-compost pits, vermi-wash, cow- pit- pat, bio-dynamic, compost tea, Mathka khan, bio-formulation of different bio-pesticides and Him-compost.

4. Social Architects of Tomorrow in Himachal (SATH)

SATH works towards kindling the fire inside every young heart to build a new society. SATH aims to increase community mobilization through youth collectives. The aim is to expand their horizon and increase their interaction and initiative for the well being of people and the community. The major focus of SATH program is to form strong and vibrant youth collectives, build their leadership and

increase their involvement in democratic processes. In the last few years, their engagement on community development issues as well as their increased participation in local governance has led to an enhanced consciousness around issues affecting community wellbeing. Presently JRCT is working with 35 youth collectives in 3 blocks of Kangra district.

The major Activities undertaken include:

4.1 Trainings And Workshops With the Youth

4.2 Knowledge Centres Programme and its various activities

4.3 Girls Cricket Tournament

4.4 Livelihood Training Programme (31 Youth)

Description of Activities

4.1 Trainings and Workshops with the Youth

A series of trainings and workshops have been held with the youth on the issues of Gender inequality, VAGAW, Patriarchy and its impact on men and women, Democracy and Citizenship. In the last three years, JRCT has accomplished four trainings of active youth on Gender, Patriarchy, masculinity, Democracy and citizenship. These trainings have been attended by 133 youth including boys and girls.

During the workshop, participants were asked to share their happiest and sad moments of their lives. Most of participants shared their happy moments but they were hesitant to share the sad moments. Different kinds of methods such as storytelling, group exercises, songs and film screening were used to enhance their understandings on the issues of Gender, Patriarchal structure, masculinity, governance and citizenship.

In one of the workshop, Miss Kamla Bhasin a renowned activist and writer addressed youth on cast, class and gender issues. Disadvantages of social construction of gender were discussed. How girls keep losing the race in this patriarchal system was described through an exercise. Blessings and abuses for man and woman were discussed in the session. Participants accepted that all abuses are about woman body and blessings are made which shows male dominance. Participants were educated on rights and responsibilities as a responsible and gender sensitive citizen, which they presented through skit, songs and slogans. Image of masculine was discussed with youth to break the notions of masculinity. Youth committed that they will not keep silent and will break the socially constructed taboos in collective manner. They promised that they will never use abusive language for girls and other people. By the end of the workshop, each participant made a resolution to lead a constructive and a responsible citizen life in the home as well as in the society.

4.2 Knowledge Centres Programme

In the last three years, JRCT has set up and strengthened two knowledge centres in two different blocks. These KC s centres have become a drop in and learning and recreational space for the youth. the following programmes are conducted at the knowledge centres:

- Basic computer literacy programme for the youth from deprived socio-economic background.
- Film screenings and discussions on relevant social issues
- Children’s library and creative activities
- Information dissemination on Government welfare schemes.

In the last three years, nearly 100 young boys and girls a have learned basic computer programme.

4.3 Girls Cricket Tournament

In the last three years, JRCT has organised Girls Cricket tournament. The main objective of the tournament was to break gender stereotypes, bring girls out on the playgrounds and enhance their confidence. Most girls got a chance to play on the ground for the first time in their life.

The male members of youth collectives played a significant role. Prior to the tournament, 10 young boys provided regular coaching to the girls. As a result, in total 50 young Girls actively participated in the cricket tournament thus successfully breaking gender stereotypes. The tournament has developed and bonded relationship between boys and girls.

4.4 Livelihood Training Programme

As a part of livelihood programme 31 youth members from 7 youth collectives were enrolled for 21 days Food & Beverages training with Govt. Institute called Food Craft Institute (FCI). This special training was organized for BPL and IRDP candidates Out of 31 candidates 4 dropped in between and others have been placed in the hotels and restaurants.

5. AGAJ –Aware Girls Action for Justice

AGAJ programme aims to build adolescent girls into confident human citizens and developing them as activists with knowledge of their rights and entitlement. In July, 2011 Jagori Rural started intensive intervention in Kishori Samoohs (Adolescent Girls collectives) in 32 villages of the Dharamsala and the Rait blocks of the Kangra district. The focus is laid on their overall physical, mental, emotional development as well as increasing their participation in building their own lives by conducting regular workshops with sessions on health, hygiene, nutrition, sexual and reproductive health and building a positive self. List of Major Activities undertaken under this programme is given below:

Description of Activities

5.1 Capacity Building Of Adolscent Girls –AGs

5.2 Trainings Of Anganwari Workers (AWWs)

5.1 CAPACITY Building of Adolscent Girls –AGs

JRCT has organised a number of activities within the fold of the programme such as SABLA Samoohs meetings, leadership trainings, exposure visits, Maa Beti Mela (mother daughter fairs) and sessions on Health awareness in the Government schools. Adolscent girls have participated in these activities with full enthusiasm. They have brought about changes, small and big, in their daily lives; build understanding about the importance of their role in the society. Through this program, AGs have found a platform where they have been able to better understand themselves and express their voices. As a consequence, 32

Kishori Samoohs have become very strong and a leadership cadre of 60 peer leaders of the AGs is evolved. AGs in these villages have become more sensitive on the issues of gender discrimination within and outside homes, violence against women and girls. They have started challenging patriarchal practices which exists within their homes and openly talking about the taboo issues



such as menstruation.. Another visible impact of the programme is that in 30 villages, AGs have become more aware, open and informed about their own health, body and *nutrition*.

In all these trainings, the use of creative methods such as songs, storytelling, body mapping, group exercises and film screening helped adolscent girls talk more openly on the issues of gender based discrimination and about matters concerning the body and its various organs and menustartion. **They learned a ‘mantra’ to repeat every morning while facing a mirror: “I love myself, I like myself, I respect myself, I care myself.”**

5.2 Training of Anganwari Workers (AWW) on gender and adolescent reproductive health

JRCT team has built good contacts with local Sabla Functionaries such as District Programme Officer, CDPOs and Anganwari Workers (AWWs). As a result, In the last three years, JRCT has accomplished two trainings of Anganwari Workers attended by 73 Anganwari Workers from two blocks of the Kangra district.

The main objective of these trainings were to inform the Anganwari Workers on the issues of social construction of gender and its negative impact on girls as they are growing up, adolescent girls reproductive and sexual health.The workshops have been facilitated by Ms Abha Bhaiya along with

two senior team members of Jagori Rural. They used participatory methods to involve them in the learning exercise and to build their conceptual clarity on the issues of gender construction and its impact on health of women and adolescent girls, their bodily processes, the scientific understanding of the menstruation cycle and the importance of personal hygiene. This training has equipped AWWs to take sessions with adoscent girls (AGs) in Kishori Samoohs meetings in a more confident way on the Gender, VAWG and bodily process.

Subsequently follow up meetings were held with 22 Anganwari workers (AWWs) and it was found that most of AWWs workers have taken session with Adolscent girls on reproductive health and bodily processes and feel more confident of addressing these issues with girls and women. At the personal level, total 13 AWWs have challenged traditional myths and stereotypes related to menustartion cycle.



Training of Anganwari Workers

6. The Chandigarh unit – Sanjh Jagori

In Chandigarh, a new Jagori Rural Charitable Trust unit has been started since January 2014 and it is working actively with college students, both girls and boys, women and young girls from low income colonies as well as with school children. The major objective is to spread gender awareness, particularly among young educated girls and boys and encourage and strengthen voices of women and girls to ensure their voice, right to life, safety, dignity and equal opportunity. Another focus is to address all forms of discrimination, particularly those based on gender, cast, and class and to seek to protect public spaces of every woman and girl. So far the programme has been active in four colleges and two low income colonies selected to work on above mentioned issues.

Activities undertaken:-

6.1 Gender Sensitisation Workshops with College Students (Three workshops)

6.2 Community Intervention Programme

6.3 Workshop with Police on Gender Justice and Domestic Violence Act(One workshop)

6.4 Orientation workshop (30th May, 2014- 31st May), on PCPNDT Act

Description of Activities

6.1 Gender Sensitisation Workshops with College Students

In the last one year, Gender sensitization workshops (3 day each) were organized in three Government colleges of Chandigarh. One of the main objectives of these workshops was to enhance the understanding and conceptual clarity of young girls and boys on the issues of Gender, Patriarchy, Violence against women and girls and the knowledge about reproduction and sexuality. These workshops were attended by 231 Girls and 29 boys. Each workshop was led by an experienced team of Resource persons Abha Bhaiya- Founder and Senior Programme Advisor of JRCT, Dr. Pritam Pal- A gynecologist and trainer, Ms. Alka, gender trainer along with the Jagori core team members Navneet, Manju and Asha.

Main topics covered included Gender construction, patriarchy, Violence against women, bodily processes and well being including the reproductive rights, myths and misconceptions concerning women's bodies and their natural processes. A number of participatory methods were used such as sociogram, gender based games and film screening to built in-depth understanding of students on the issues of gender construction and patriarchy. Through sociogram exercise participants become aware of how patriarchy controls each and every aspect of women's as well as men's lives and deprives girls in particular of their right to speech, life and liberty. This has a serious implication on girl's physical, emotional and intellectual growth and development as well as on gender relationships. Many girls talked about the issue of not to being able to take up the subject of their choice, not be able to negotiate to postpone their marriages, not marry the person of their choice etc.

The final day also saw a lot of sharing of individual concerns. Participants spoke about their personal experiences of violation and also some traumatic, some powerful, and some inspiring incidences. A number of students shared experiences of sexual harassment and how they had dealt with them.

The smiling, relaxed faces of the participants spoke volumes about the overall success of the three workshops. One visible outcome is that a group of college students (231 girls and 29 boys) have become sensitive on the issues of gender justice and gender equality.

6.2 Community Intervention Programme

With the help of young fellows, intervention programme has been started in one low income group colony. So far five groups of adolescent girls have been formed and awareness sessions on the issues of Gender and body literacy have been held with 25 Adolescent Girls. In order to make these girls aware about the issues of gender discrimination they face within and outside their families as well as in the school, regular meetings and films screenings on gender issues have been organized. In addition, in one of the Government High schools in the same colony, a gender awareness and body literacy sessions is also conducted on a quarterly basis. One of the visible outputs is that students, especially the girls have started asking questions related to the gender based discrimination and

about their own bodies and are learning to take action against discrimination at home. One day training was also organized with the Anganwari (government preschool nursery) Workers on Gender equality and Gender awareness in a low income group settlement colony. In order to assess the impact of the workshop, a follow up meeting was held with 10 AWWs.

6.3 Workshop with the Police on Gender Justice and Domestic Violence Act

A two day workshop on “Gender Justice and Domestic Violence Act” was jointly organized by Jagori Rural Charitable Trust and Chandigarh Police for Chandigarh Police personnel at the Recruitment Training Centre, on 24th and 25th March, 2015. Around 55 Police personnel (Inspectors, SIs, ASIs, HCs & Constables) from various units of Chandigarh Police participated in this workshop.

With a visible increase in reporting of offences/crimes committed against women as well as the recent changes in the laws, this is an endeavour towards an interface with the Police personnel. Ms. Khadijha Farouqi, a lawyer, Consultant and trainer interacted with the participants and sensitized them regarding the legal aspects related to the women and children.

The workshop focused on gender justice and laws related to women which have undergone significant changes in recent years. Beginning with the social construction of gender, detailed discussion on different sections of the Domestic Violence Act, laws criminalizing sexual abuse of children, POCSO and Sexual Harassment of women were undertaken. Along with this, the changes in the Indian penal code as well as the criminal procedures were taken up. Using the group activity method, special attention on the altered investigation procedures and allied processes were deliberated at length. Some cases were also discussed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the process. In the context of child abuse and gender violence many of the sections which contain special duties and responsibilities and liabilities for the police personnel were also dwelled on.

Most participants liked the exercise of “**Wheel of Violence**”. They reported that they could easily understand the ambit of violence against women and various laws to deal with such violence. The RP also emphasized on the amendments in Criminal law procedure and POCSO made the participants get engaged in one or more group activity. With assignment on a case of a rape victim who comes to seek help the police participants were asked to identify all necessary steps to be taken according to the priority of the case. This practical exercise helped them to think through their own responsibility and the action plan.

Throughout the workshop, participants were engaged in songs, discussions and exclusive interactions, uncommon and unique learning experiences. In their feedbacks, a participant, **Pragati** expressed that **“the duration of the workshop should be increased. This must be a five days workshop.”**

Surinder Singh said that **“I would like to share all this with my colleagues”**

Another participant was of the view, **“I found training very useful and I learnt a lot. I came to know about the help lines of women and children. In the next workshop I would like to get more knowledge about the POSCO Act.**

Neelam said, **“I liked the discussion on POCSO act and laws related to sexual harassment”**.

The workshop seemed to have left a deep impact on their minds. They were quite sure that whatever they have learnt in the workshop would strengthen their innate abilities and this would further help them in achieving the goal of helping women in distress by using fair means.

6.4 Orientation workshop (30th May, 2014- 31st May), on PCPNDT Act

In addition, a two day Orientation workshop (30th May, 2014- 31st May), on PCPNDT Act was organised at the 'Institute of Correctional Administration' Sec- 26, Chandigarh. This workshop was facilitated by two experienced Resource Persons, i.e. Jaya Srivastava and Mrs. Varsha Deshpande. This workshop was attended by 30 NGOs activists from Himachal, Chandigarh, Punjab and Haryana. In two days participants were made aware on the relevant section and provisions of PNDT Act and they learnt how to develop strategies to work towards stopping sex selective abortion.

7 Jagori Himat – Chamba district Unit

In January 2014, JRCT started another unit in the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh. Chamba is one of the remotest districts of Himachal Pradesh. **There is total absence of civil society organisations in the district.** Due to the patriarchal societal set up, most girls do not get the opportunity to pursue their formal education beyond the elementary education level. Most of them, due to their economic conditions, are forced to help the family with agriculture and related work and are married off at an early age. At the same time, there is a lack of awareness about women's rights and entitlement.

There is total silence on issues of violence against women, their gynecological and general health including their reproductive rights. In addition, the community at large is deprived of information and knowledge about various welfare and other beneficial schemes of the Government.

The Main objectives are:

- **To spread consciousness among the village communities at large on the issues of violence against girls and women and address issues/cases of VAWG.**
- **To strengthen women's leadership by forming women's collectives in 15 Gram Panchayats and make women aware about their rights and entitlements as well as increase their involvement in community issues.**
- **To educate adolescents girls on the issues of VAWG, health rights and awareness on the bodily processes and the importance of nutrition in 10 villages.**

As an outcome, 10 women's collectives have been formed in the remote villages and one women's court initiated. A community based alternative justice system has been set to address the cases of Violence against women and girls. So far 18 cases of VAW have been registered with the Women's Court and 14 cases have been settled successfully by the intervention of barefoot activists.

The outreach by the Jagori Rural Charitable Trust has ensured a much larger involvement with the community and additional constituencies such as mothers of Adolescent girls, a large number of boys and an increasingly more amicable relationship with the district administration. In the last one year, JRCT has started expansion programe in Chamba district and Chandigarh.

JRCT has built good contacts with District Administration such as Police, District programme officers, DRDA, District Panchayat officers, Anganwari Workers and CDPOs etc. In addition JRCT has built very good contacts with schools and colleges.

The mindset and attitude of the Government Offiecrs have changed overtime to some extent as they got the opportunity to participate in a lot of our programmatic activities and started seeing the value of a process oriented learning methods as well as a sympathetic/sensitive environment as essential and non negotiable principle for achieving the expected outcome.

This has created a more conducive environment for Jagori Rural Charitable Trust to take the programme to its vitality and firmer outcome as well as outputs.