

3-year Report – Women’s Leadership Programme

Jagori Rural Charitable Trust (JRCT)

Reporting Period: April 2018 to March 2020

The Leadership Programme is a part of the AWAJ (Aware Women’s Action for Justice) programme. The programme initiates holistic efforts in leadership building among women and enables them to take proactive role in policy and decision-making processes.

The objectives of the programme are –

- To empower women in the communities especially the marginalized to form strong women leaders’ cadre and become aware of their own rights.
- Take up leadership roles in the community and in the civil society.
- Ensure women’s participation in governance and act as change makers in the communities.
- Empower marginalized women to become leaders so that they can act as agents of social change.
- Increase women’s participation in local governance.
- Develop leadership skill in women through training and advocacy.

Presently Jagori Grameen is working with 4500 women of 121 Nari Shakti Sanghtans in 62 Panchayats of four blocks of Kangra District – Kangra, Rait, Nagrota Surian and Dharamsala and 465 women of 37 Nari Shakti Sanghtans in 13 Panchayats of three blocks of Chamba District—Tissa, Mehla and Salooni. The program helps the women from the socio-economic and marginalized sections to develop their understanding and increase their knowledge about democratic rights and ways and procedures to access government schemes and entitlements.

The women leadership programme focused on the following activities :

- (i) Regular meetings with NSS,
- (ii) Cluster meetings
- (iii) Federation Meetings
- (iv) Workshops and Trainings
- (v) Exposure visits
- (vi) International/ National/ State Level Campaigns
- (vii) Surveys and Public hearing
- (viii) Covid Relief

Table 1: Consolidated list of activities (Kangra & Chamba) conducted in the reporting period

No	Activity	No of meetings	No of Participants
1	Regular meeting with NSS	1571+937	4500+1315
2	Cluster meetings	25+38	757+258
3	Federation meetings (KMNP)	12	40

4	Workshops and Trainings	22+3	641+65
5	Exposure visits	8	232
6	Campaigns	15+2	7838+80
7	Public Hearing	4	2323
8	Employment Fair	2	141
9	Outreach during COVID19 lockdown	-	127

ACTIVITY 1:

REGULAR MEETINGS WITH NARI SHAKTI SANGHTAN (NSS):

1571 regular meetings were held in 62 panchayats of Kangra district with 121 Nari Shakti Sangatans (NSS) which has a total membership of 4500 women and 937 meetings were held in 13 Panchayats of Chamba District which has a membership of 465 women. Meetings with NSS has been a regular activity in the programme.

The objectives of the regular meetings were , to discuss and make participants aware about the government schemes, discuss in detail about effectively engaging in advocacy with the administration, especially with the Panchayati raj institutions, access to the rights and entitlements of the people by increasing the participation of women in *gram sabhas*, building women leadership and motivating them to actively participate in decision making inside and outside their families. Participants were encouraged to ask questions, clear their concerns and ensure an active role in the discussions as far as the meetings are concerned. Some of the topics discussed in the meetings include - government schemes, gender equality, identification of local issues, advocacy and collaboration with administration, awareness campaigns on the importance of cleanliness, participation in *gram sabhas*, workers diaries, organizational importance, MNREGA, *awas yojna* (housing schemes), Right to Information Act, social security pension, village level issues, leadership role of women and the need for women to participate in the meetings, etc. There has been an increased understanding among community members about their rights and entitlements in 121 villages of Kangra. Along with this, leadership programme has active intervention in 37 villages of Chamba districts.

- A cadre of 25 women. emerged as ambassadors of women's rights and entitlements and took lead in addressing important and pressing community issues. With their intervention 57 cases of violence against women were reported to the Nari Adalat, Jagori Rakkar.
- In 20 Gram Panchayats of the 04 blocks, there is a significant rise in the participation of women in the Gram Sabhas and they have taken collective initiatives to address important community issues related to rural employment, social security pension, domestic violence, irregular drinking water supply, monitoring of mid-day meal and illegal supply of alcohol.
- 108 people have started getting the benefits of social security pension through the initiative of 272 women from 19 NSS in Kangra and 41 women in Chamba ,the names of deserving people were enrolled by the women for the scheme.

- 49 families have been included in the Below Poverty Line list.
- 15 women collectives protested against opening liquor shops in their localities.
- 15 Nari Shakti Sangathans took the demand of constructing the roads in the villages with the government departments. Several NSS units were successful in getting the roads constructed/repared in their distant interior villages.
- 45 families got LPG connections with collective efforts of the women leaders.
- Rozgar Melas were organized in the 2 Panchayats where 141 people participated. As a result, 82 people applied for job cards in MGNERGA and 44 families applied and got new job cards.
- In Chamba 40 women got the benefit from the scheme *Janani Surksha Yojana*.
- In Chamba 18 girls got the benefit from *Beti Hai Anmol Yojana*.
- 11 women completed 100 days in MGNERGA in Chamba.

S. No.	Time Period	No. of Meetings
1	April 2018 to March 2019 (Kangra)	483
2	April 2018 to March 2019 (Chamba)	320
3	April 2019 to March 2020 (Kangra)	748
4	April 2019 to March 2020 (Chamba)	282
5	April 2020 to March 2021 (Kangra)	340
6	April 2020 to March 2021 (Chamba)	335
	Total=	2508

ACTIVITY 2:

CLUSTER MEETINGS:

Twenty-five cluster level meetings were conducted in the last 3 years. 757 participants attended the meetings held in Kangra, Dharamshala and Rait block. In Chamba 38 meetings were held with the PRIs in which 258 women participated. The purpose of the meetings was to understand the importance of NSS through the collective meetings of different women's organizations and to work on the planning and solutions to various village level problems.

S. No.	Time Period	No. of Meetings	No. of Participants
1	April 2018 to March 2019	15	615
2	April 2019 to March 2020	6	134
3	April 2020 to March 2021	4	142
	Total=	25	757

The meeting discussed the need to create women’s organization at the village level, how women can effectively solve the social problems, how the process can bring in social change, along with the work of monitoring the government’s plans and their work by forming women organizations at district level. Significant issues discussed in cluster meetings include local issues related to repairing works of Panchayats roads, domestic violence cases, etc. among others.

Activity 3:

FEDERATION MEETINGS:

Thirteen Federation meetings were held at Kangra from April 2018 to March 2021. The topics discussed in the meetings include Right to Information, Fundamental rights and duties , being law abiding citizens and Constitution of India , formulating strategies about the follow up actions, active participation of women in gram sabhas, talks to strengthen the organization, etc.

S. No.	Time Period	No. of Meetings	No. of Participants
1	April 2018 to March 2019	5	22
2	April 2019 to March 2020	1	22
3	April 2020 to March 2021	7	142
	Total=	13	186

Follow up actions of the meetings:

- As a follow up of the ongoing protest campaign against the dumping site, women from Sudher village, blocked the road traffic in Dharmashala. This move was initiated as a mark of protest to bring the issue to the immediate attention of the district authorities. Community members formed a 10-member committee and met the District Commissioner, Dharamshala and shared their concern. The follow up actions have been delayed due to the unexpected coronavirus situation.
- The active NSS women from Tiyara village protested for 10 days to get the Primary Health Centre upgraded to Community Health Centre and for the removal of dumped medical waste in their village. The women were successful in getting the PHC upgraded to CHC in their village.
- Community women filed RTIs to confirm the facts related to several government processes and schemes.

Activity 4 :

WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS

The programme team conducts capacity building residential workshops and trainings for PRIs and women from the various NSS in the different blocks of Kangra and Chamba District. Total 707 people participated in 25 workshops on gender, social dynamics related to gender and patriarchy, domestic abuse and violence, and the legal recourse in situations related to violence, civic education and leadership, human rights, and constitutional rights.

These workshops provided an opportunity for the participants to gain a different outlook and perspective about these issues, which could allow them to communicate the issues at a more theoretical level and practical level while dealing with challenges that arise in rural communities.

S. No.	Time Period	No. of workshops	No. of Participants
1	April 2018 to March 2019 (Kangra)	8	314
2	April 2019 to March 2020 (Kangra)	2	52
3	April 2019 to March 2020 (Chamba)	2	50
4	April 2020 to March 2021 (Kangra)	12	276
5	April 2020 to March 2021 (Kangra)	1	15
	Total=	25	707

Activity 5:

EXPOSURE VISITS:

The purpose of the exposure visits has been to learn from the experience of others through direct interaction. A total of 232 participants undertook exposure visits to government offices/departments and other social service organizations from April 2018 to March 2021. Women from the three development blocks in Kangra, Dharmashala and Rait visited DRDA, Social Welfare, local NGOs and Labour Departments as part of the exposure visits.

The visits to welfare and government departments helped the women to familiarize themselves with the work and functioning of the district administration. The officials shared information on different government schemes and gave an opportunity to the participants to discuss their concerns related to MNREGA, housing schemes, etc. The officials also briefed the participants about the functioning of their respective departments and elaborated more on the schemes being run for the people. The visits also helped them to build a rapport with the officials in various departments.

Two visits were made to Waste Warriors, an NGO in Dharamshala committed to cleanliness in and around Dharamshala. The objectives of these visits were to enable community women to take up initiatives for sustainable waste management, to educate and empower women for a social audit of the dumping sites, recycling waste material etc. Women were guided on the with different ways of processing waste materials.

Exposure Visits

S. No.	Time Period	No. of workshops	No. of Participants
1	April 2018 to March 2019	5	164
2	April 2019 to March 2020	3	68
3	April 2020 to March 2021	-	-
	Total=	8	232

Outcome of exposure visits:

- The exposure visits helped the women to organize a camp for the labourers. Officials from the Labour Department also attended the camp and labour diaries of people who had worked for 80 to 90 days in a year were also made under MNREGA.
- 49 women from 12 NSS applied to the Department of Labour for various government schemes and benefits available for women from rural communities. Almost all of them availed benefits of government schemes and accessed facilities like induction stoves, bicycles or solar lanterns.
- A visually challenged person applied to the Deputy Commissioner, Kangra for financial assistance from the Relief Fund for his treatment which was sanctioned thereafter.
- NSS women with their collective effort applied for financial relief for two families on account of the accidental death of their earning family members. The families received Rs. 7,75,000 .

Activity 6:

Jagori Rural organizes and participates in national and international campaigns from time to time. From 2018-2021, 15 campaigns on different social issues were organized for public awareness this was made possible through discussions, informative sessions and advocacy with the government .

Campaigns-

- AWAS Yojna Campaign
- MNREGA Campaign
- RTI, 2005
- Nation Food Security Act, 2013
- Voters Awareness Campaign
- 16-days of Activism against Violence on Women
- One Billion Rising

Overall Outcome/ Highlights –

- People from 21 Panchayats filed 82 RTIs to get information on relevant issues.
- There was no Ration shop in Nareti village but as a result of constant pressure of NSS women on the local governance, a ration shop was opened in the village.
- 22 people from marginalized community were found to have no voter cards. This issue was pursued actively and voter ID were made.
- An open space was created by community members in 6 panchayats to have a dialogue with candidates during elections with a goal of community involvement, enhancing knowledge and transparency of agendas.
- 179 women from NSS emerged as leaders and were nominated as candidates in Panchayat elections. Out of these, 81 women won the elections and among these 19 women won on open seats which is a huge accomplishment.

Activity 7 –

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Surveys were conducted in Kangra District related to different government schemes and whether the schemes were actually benefitting the marginalized people at the grassroot level. After analyzing the surveys, it was realized that about 30% of the people who were eligible for the schemes had no information or access to the benefits. To resolve these problems 4 public hearings (*Jan Sunwayi*) were organized in different blocks. The prime issues were related to AWAS Yojna and Voters ID cards. Apart from these, community members were devoid of basic facilities that they were entitled to. In the Public Hearings, people were able to voice their needs and queries in front of the administrative officers from various departments and as a result of this direct communication, several people were benefitted.

S. No.	Date	Place	No. of Participants
1	5 September, 2018	Dharamshala	180
2	27 November, 2018	Shahpur	637
3	6 July, 2019	Drini	256
4	20 December, 2019	Shahpur	1250
Total =			2323

Activity 8 –

ROJGAR MELA

Rojgaar Melas, employment fairs, were conducted in Gram Panchayat Bandi and Daulatpur. 141 people including Panchayat representative, Panchayat Secretary, Employment Assistant and job card holders

participated. During the fair, MNREGA law and schemes were explained in detail, apart from the formal process of applying for work and the provisions of unemployment allowance in case of non-work.

Rojgar Mela

Name of the Panchayat	No of participants
Bandi	85
Daulatpur	56
Total	141

The *mela* helped in building awareness on MNREGA among the community members. The *mela* also helped 82 workers from the villages to submit their Performas for job cards under MGNREGA and also received acknowledgement receipts on the spot. 5 new job cards were also issued to the workers.

Activity 9

Work done during COVID19 lockdown:

As COVID19 pandemic rapidly spread all over the world in early 2020, the attention of the government was focused on dealing with the pandemic. Issues like rise in unemployment rate, increased burden on women in families and decreasing number of government scheme beneficiaries was alarming. During this period, the people who suffered the most were labor class, single women, senior citizens, people living below poverty line, migrant laborers, physically and mentally disabled people, homeless people and people suffering from chronic diseases. It was in this period, when leadership team identified the people who were unable to afford two meals a day. The JR initiative 'Kaarvan- e -Insaniyat' helped 126 families by providing them ration.

Outcome:

- In Kangra 7 NSS associated with JR collected donations from people and arranged 520 kg ration and in Chamba 130 kg Ration was distributed to the needy people. The NSS members collected a sum of Rs. 8000 to buy ration and donated it to 12 families.
- Kangra Mahila Nigrani Parishad and NSS came together, stitched 11788 masks and distributed them for free in the community. In Chamba 10 NSS units and the team members stitched 4500 masks and distributed them in the villages.
- The team helped 44 families to get job cards which helped them to start their earning.
- Surveys were conducted in 14 panchayats with 517 families out of which 176 families were found to be in dire need of financial help. Out of these 63 families were helped to avail the benefit through government schemes.