

SHIVI DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



Table of Contents

Introduction

Projects

1. Women Empowerment

- State-Level Women Leadership Trainings
- Sensitization of women at Village and Cluster level Community Meetings for the Capacity Building.
- Exposure Visits
- Addressing Violence Against Women.
- Developing a network of Women Human Rights Defenders
- Reclamation of Community Resources and Promotion of women Livelihood.

2. Youth Development.

- Orientation of Youth.
- National Youth Day.

3. Public Health.

- Menstrual Hygiene Campaign.

4. Child Development.

5. Miscellaneous Activities

- One-Day Consultation on Role of Civil Society Organizations in the Development of Bastar Region.
- International Human Rights Day Celebration
- Tree Plantation Initiative in Bundi, Rajasthan.
- Staff Team Orientation.

Introduction

Established in 1995, we are a civil society organization that takes initiatives to positively impact the lives and quality of living of poor and marginalized sections of our society. The organization works on the issues of child development, human rights, good governance, and the people's participation promotion with gender as a cross-cutting theme. SDS generates awareness and capacity building through training and experience-sharing workshops. Additionally, SDS undertakes direct community outreach programs, including participatory research, analysis, and grassroots action. Working at various levels of social development, the organization conducts research studies that enable us to undertake advocacy initiatives.

In particular, SDS facilitates and strengthens community action in social development, dealing with livelihood and children's issues. We believe that while voluntary and independent social action, is important for dealing with a large mass of problems, the very functioning of democracy in a civil society is based on minimizing the gap between the aspirations of the people and public policies. Thus, SDS initiated research in policy work with the public sector. It strives to support policy framework and capacity building through lobby and advocacy strategies.

SDS envisions a pluralistic society based on the values of human dignity, justice, and gender equity, where all individuals have access to their fundamental human rights. Using the rights-based approach to development, SDS works towards capacity building of its partner communities, with a focus on marginalized women, children, and youth, so that they can achieve their lasting well-being.

Our organization strives to protect and uphold the inherent dignity of every individual by ensuring that we treat every individual with respect, fairness, and equality, regardless of race, gender, religion, nationality, or other characteristics. Our work is subject to the directives of the Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNHR). We promote equality by challenging discrimination and working towards the systemic injustices elimination. We advocate for equal opportunities, rights, and resources for all individuals, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups. We empower individuals and communities to participate actively in decision-making that affects their lives. We encourage people to be aware of their rights, engage in social and political processes, and demand accountability from those in power. We provide information and also engage in public outreach to promote a deeper understanding of human rights principles. Our organization serves as peace-building and solidarity between different sectors of society, bringing together individuals and communities to work towards a common goal of achieving human rights. We encourage diverse groups to unite for the cause of human rights.

As a Civil Society Organization effort towards the development of society, we work on Women Empowerment, Youth Development, Child Development, and Public Health through various Core Strategies: Community Engagement and Outreach Intervention, Capacity Building, Policy Research and Advocacy, and Coalition Building and Networking. We believe that in shaping the well-being and progress of societies, it is essential to recognize their interconnectedness and work towards comprehensive, holistic approaches that address the needs of women, children, youth, and public health in tandem, and achieving sustainable development of our society requires attention to all these aspects to create a balanced, equitable, and thriving community.

Presently, the organization runs two projects in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan based on women leaderships with inclusive and deeply interconnected youth development, child development, and Public Health, as each of them plays a crucial role in women's Empowerment.

Projects

Promoting Peace and Gender Justice in Bundi District of Rajasthan through Women Led Community Institutions.

The project has been running in the Bundi District of Rajasthan. Promoting Peace and Gender Justice in Bundi District of Rajasthan through the Women Led Community Institutions project” recognizes the power and potential of women to promote, protect, and uphold their human rights. Shivi Development Society launched the initiative towards fulfilling its vision which is grounded on the premise that gender equality is one of the most effective ways to eradicate poverty and build peace. Shivi Development Society is proud to partner with Vista Hermosa Foundation for this project. The project aims to deliver an initiative that will promote a vibrant and sustainable women’s rights movement in 50 villages of Bundi district in Rajasthan, consolidating the power and voice of women from these villages to lead their development, demonstrate their agency, promote gender justice and build peace. The 50 villages are designated as 5 Clusters that consist of 10 villages in each cluster.

Shivi Development Society, with generous support Vista Hermosa Foundation, launched this women's leadership program in October 2021.

Women Human Rights Defenders Programme in Chhattisgarh

This project was first launched in the five districts of Bastar in Chhattisgarh on April 1, 2012. Shivi Development Society has addressed the issues of WHRDs in northeast India for years and realized the need to expand its work to the state of Chhattisgarh as the socio-political situation developing there is following a similar pattern of violence, undermining of rule of law and its huge adverse impact on women. In such a situation, women human rights defenders are at high risk of being victims by Naxals, State security agencies, and feudal elements in the society due to growing militarization. Against this background, SDS has started addressing such issues with the support of Misereor with the main aims of strengthening good governance, deepening democracy, strengthening capacity, and providing a better working environment to WHRDs where they can work for the protection of human rights freely. Initially, the project was running in 5 Districts of the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh which are Kanker, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, Bastar, and Dantewada, and currently, the Project is running in 3 Districts which are kanker, Kondagaon and Narayanpur.

Both the project revolves around three objectives: To build and strengthen the capacities and capabilities of women as leaders within their own social and political spaces, to enable them to be effective and robust community leaders combating various forms of violence and discrimination against women and issues of marginalization emanating from their limited resource base and livelihood options, to bring the dialogue and discourse around the rights and safety of women and violence against women to the men and boys start the process of sensitization at the formative level with the help of women leaders backed by their first-hand experiences of working on these issues, and to support women leaders and other members of communities and accompany them in the process of building alternative narrative and opportunities of livelihood, to engage with district and state level authorities, and simultaneously spread awareness, sensitize communities, and ensure that adequate public facilities are made available for the citizens.

SECTION

1

Women Empowerment



Women Leadership Training: State-Level

Women's leadership training is of paramount importance in fostering gender equality, driving social progress, and enhancing the overall development of societies. This specialized form of training equips women with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to take on leadership roles in various sectors, from social to political. First and foremost, women's leadership training addresses the longstanding gender disparities in leadership positions. Historically, women have been underrepresented in decision-making roles, often due to systemic barriers and societal biases. Our leadership training programs empower women to challenge these norms, break glass ceilings, and contribute their perspectives to diverse leadership teams. Furthermore, women's leadership training promotes diversity and inclusion, which is not only a matter of fairness but also a driver of innovation and success. When women are represented in leadership positions, a wider range of voices, and experiences come into play, leading to more creative solutions and better outcomes. In addition to fostering gender equality, women's leadership training has a ripple effect on communities. Empowered women are more likely to champion social causes, advocate for policies that benefit marginalized groups, and address issues such as gender-based violence, healthcare disparities, and educational access. They serve as role models, inspiring the next generation of female leaders.

In both projects, it is strategized to conduct one state-level women leadership training yearly.

Chhattisgarh:



For many years, we benefitted the women leaders in Chhattisgarh with the 3- Days State-level capacity building workshop for Women Human Rights Defenders. The residential training was conducted at Xavier Institute of Social Action, Raipur, from 24th March 2023 to 26th March 2023. Through this training this year, we successfully trained 35 women human rights defenders from Kanker, Narayanpur, and Kondagaon. The training sessions include:

Entertainment where our defenders perform their cultural folk songs and folk songs,

- Introduction to women human rights defenders and their struggles,
- The status of women in Chhattisgarh in the context of Bastar Territory,
- Women's Economic Empowerment: Livelihood,
- Domestic Violence against women: Understanding the Violence and its consequences, factors underlying and Preventive Approaches,
- Policies and Schemes for the Welfare of Women,
- Gender and Human Rights,
- Women's Health, Hygiene and Nutrition: The valuable aspects of Women Empowerment,
- The Association of Women Empowerment and Alliance Building and the approach of Policy Advocacy,
- Empowering Women with Digital and social media: Giving a Voice.

The 3-Days workshop was inaugurated by Dr. Pritam Ram(Member of Legislative Assembly, Chhattisgarh), Vidya Vati(Board Member of Shivi Development Society), Mr. Binod(Director of XISA, Raipu), and other staff lead of SDS. The sessions were conducted by some of the best resource persons from different Government departments and NGOs. The very first Resource person Mr. Anand Shukhla presented a detail of Women Human Rights Defenders in Chhattisgarh and around the world, their struggles, their rights, and their opportunities. He also described a quiet history of evolvement of Human Rights. The status of Women in

Chhattisgarh in the context of Bastar Territory was conducted by Dr. Ambika, Women's Economic Empowerment: Livelihood by Miss Nageena Netam from VRUTTI-Livelihood, Domestic Violence against Women: Understanding the Violence and its consequences, factors underlying and Preventive Approaches by Mrs. Pushpa Bhatt from One Stop Centre and Additional Superintendent of Police Chanchal Tiwari, Policies and Schemes for the Welfare of Women by Pushpalata and Santoshi Rathore, Gender and Human Rights by Dola Gobinda and Neelam Xoxo from CASA India, Women's Health, Hygiene, and Nutrition: The valuable aspects of Women Empowerment by Vidya Vati, The Association of Women Empowerment and Alliance Building and the approach of Policy Advocacy by Rajesh Sisodia from Nange Paon Satyagraha, and the last session was on Empowering Women with Digital and Social Media: Giving a Voice by Mr. Manoj Kumar and Shyam Kumar from Lalluram.com.

The three days residential capacity-building workshop concluded with the honor of a certificate of appreciation to all women participants. The trained women leaders mutually decided to spread awareness about whatever they learn from the training and extend help to women and girls in their community who face difficulties.

Rajasthan:



We organized a three-day residential workshop program for Women Leadership in Kota, Rajasthan, and trained 38 women leaders from Bundi District on various issues that support them in leadership and decision-making.

We recognized the importance of fostering state-level women's leadership through dedicated training initiatives. This training aimed to equip women with the skills, knowledge, and confidence necessary to assume leadership roles in various sectors. One of the key objectives of this state-level women's leadership training is to bridge the gender gap in social, political, and administrative leadership. Our

women leaders' participants in these programs received comprehensive training in areas such as leadership strategies, public policy analysis, communication skills, and networking. This training program featured expert guest speakers and mentors from state women and child welfare departments, One-Stop Centre, Police Department, and Legal Authority, who shared their experiences and insights, inspiring aspiring women leaders to overcome challenges and make a meaningful impact in their communities.

Furthermore, the training emphasized the importance of promoting diversity and inclusion in leadership positions. Through this training, we encouraged women from diverse backgrounds in Bundi District to participate actively in community development. We aim to create a pipeline of capable women leaders who can contribute to the development and progress of the Bundi District.

Our commitment to state-level women's leadership training is a significant step toward achieving gender parity and empowering women to take on influential roles in politics, governance, and beyond. By providing women with the tools and knowledge needed to excel in leadership positions, we visualized women can contribute to a more inclusive and equitable future for the region and the nation as a whole.





Community Meetings for Capacity Building for Women

The community meetings with women are a fundamental component of inclusive and participatory development strategies of our organization. These gatherings provide a platform for women to come together, discuss issues that matter to them, and actively engage in decision-making processes that can impact their lives and the well-being of the entire community.

In these meetings, women are often given the chance to voice their concerns, share their experiences, and articulate their needs. We observed that this open dialogue is crucial for identifying local challenges, such as healthcare access, education, economic opportunities, and gender-based violence. By actively listening to women's perspectives, we efforts to give insights and tailor interventions to address these specific issues effectively. Moreover, community meetings with women foster a sense of solidarity and empowerment among participants. We create a supportive environment where women can build networks, exchange knowledge, and learn from one another's experiences. These connections can lead to self-help group formation and collaborative initiatives that enhance economic opportunities and social cohesion.

Ultimately, community meetings with women are a means to ensure that the voices and perspectives of women, who make up a significant portion of any community, are heard and considered in the development process. These gatherings not only empower women but also lead to more comprehensive and sustainable development outcomes that benefit everyone in the community.

The community meetings with the women are conducted at the village level in Chhattisgarh, and in Rajasthan, we conducted community meetings with women at the village level and cluster level; a cluster constitutes 10 villages.

Village-Level Community Meetings

Regularly, the volunteers and fellows of our organization conducted extensive community meetings with women in both the project areas. A total of 504 community meetings with women were conducted, across the three project districts in Chhattisgarh and reached out to 4992 women. Out of these, 153 women turned out to be active women human rights defenders.

Several 720 community meetings with women in 5 five clusters in Bundi District under the project, and reach out to 1288 women.



Cluster-level Community Meeting:



In this tenure, we conducted 20 Cluster-level Meetings and reached out to 427 women leaders. Through the cluster meeting, we usually give one woman from a village a chance to represent her village and discuss the issues faced by the women and provide solutions to them.

Exposure Visit

Under the projects, we strategized to conduct exposure of women leaders to different government departments. It serves as a bridge between marginalized communities and essential government services. It is one of the best ways to empower women with knowledge, encourage active participation in decision-making processes, and catalyze positive change at the grassroots level.



Women Human Rights Defenders:



Women in rural India face the prime issue of not knowing the availability of facilities, laws, departments, and schemes. Likewise, the dominant women population in the Bastar region is also not acquainted with the One-Stop Centres, Family Counselling Centres, Women's Helpline, Police Cells, Laws, and Rights, and their lack of knowledge results in the consequences of the endless victims of inequality.

During the year, we organized an exposure visit of 50 Women Human Rights Defenders from 3 districts of the Bastar region at diverse departments: One-Stop Centres, Nagar Palika (Municipality Committee), District Court, Family Counselling Centres, and District

Police. During the visit, women advanced to interact with the department in charge and discussed the process and facilities available for women in each department. They gained adequate knowledge and empowered themselves through the visit. Another exposure visit of a group of 36 women, 12 women from each district at Nagar Palika (Municipality Committee), was also conducted to make them understand the process of SHG registration as they were also taken to the bank to understand the process of account opening of the SHG group.

Staff Members at Vaagdhara:

An Exposure visit for staff members at an NGO is a valuable initiative that aligns with the organization's goals of creating a more informed, motivated, and effective team.

An exposure visit of our staff members at Vaagdhara, an NGO working on sustainable livelihood, was organized to understand the family-centric livelihood activities. The visit was 3 days long visit at various villages in the Banswara District of Rajasthan. Our staff members have met different SHG groups and individual women to understand the concept

of Self-Help Groups, and household livelihood activities where Vaagdhara has been working. The visits were typically designed to provide our staff with a firsthand understanding of the Self-Help Group, women's livelihood activities, and the broader context in which Vaagdhara promotes the sustainable livelihood of marginalized communities.



During the visit, our staff members have the chance to directly engage with the beneficiaries and witness the impact of Vaagdhara's interventions. This exposure helped our staff members connect theory with practice and deepens their appreciation of the challenges and opportunities faced by the communities they serve.

The staff members observed how the practices increase crop yields, improve food security, and enhance the income of local farmers through adopting traditional seedlings, household nurseries, traditional cropping systems and seed storage. Also, this firsthand experience benefitted our staff to better understand the technical aspects of sustainable agriculture and the socio-economic dynamics of the community.

Furthermore, this exposure visit facilitated cross-learning and knowledge sharing among staff members. We also exchange ideas, best practices, and innovative approaches with Vaagdhara colleagues as we work on partially similar projects.

Eventually, our staff shared the knowledge earned from the Vaagdhara's field with the women of Bundi District to contribute effectively to creating positive and sustainable improvements in the financial status of the women of Bundi District.

Social Media Training of Women at Chhattisgarh:

Initially, social media platforms used to be a medium of entertainment, chatting, and interaction within a closed group of friends. However, now social media provides immense opportunities and benefits in social, political, and economic domains. It has also become a golden opportunity for women in traditional families as they are strict inside their homes and have lesser exposure. We also realized that social media would help our defenders to build interpersonal relationships amongst themselves, and different stakeholders, social media could be a platform for their awareness and information sharing platform for women, and social media could help in



showcasing their work as defenders to the world and also could act as a forum for many women to garner support in solidarity, against their sufferings.

With this belief, we trained 23 active women human defenders from Kanker, 26 from Kondagaon, 19 from Narayanpur, 20 from Dantewada, and 22 from Bastar in Chhattisgarh on the utilization of Facebook, Twitter, and email.

Addressing the Domestic Violence against Women

Chhattisgarh

Bastar, as a conflict and Naxal-prone area, faces significant challenges in addressing the issue of violence against women. Despite our efforts to improve the status of women and promote gender equality, we also focussed on incidents of violence against women in the region. This multifaceted problem requires a comprehensive approach that involves social, legal, and educational initiatives. One of the key challenges in tackling violence against women in Chhattisgarh is the prevalence of deeply rooted patriarchal norms, and attitudes. Traditional beliefs that perpetuate gender-based discrimination and violence continue to persist in many parts of the state. Breaking these societal norms is a long and arduous process that requires not only legal reforms but also extensive awareness campaigns and community engagement. To address the domestic violence against women, we regularly have community meetings with women, children, youth, men, local leaders, and government authorities, awareness drives on women's rights, facilities, schemes and facilities, networking and coalition with the different concerned authorities. Whenever a domestic violence case comes across, we efforts to solve it at our level through counseling initially, then bring the issue to the local leaders. When the case is extreme, then we help the women victim reach out to One-Stop Centre and legal aid.

Our fellows regularly identified domestic violence cases through community meeting drives. In this tenure, 15 domestic violence cases from Kanker, and 16 from Kondagaon were filed at the One-Stop Centre. At the organization level, we solved 34 domestic violence cases from Kanker, 28 from Kondagaon, and 16 from Narayanpur.

Rajasthan

It is unfortunately common for many women not to realize or acknowledge domestic violence in their lives. Like other women, women of Bundi district also unaware of the domestic violence happened against them, so it is essential to understand them every woman's experience with domestic violence is unique, and there is no one-size-fits-all explanation for why some do not realize or acknowledge it. Recognizing domestic violence can be a complex and personal process. Supportive friends, family, or professionals, as well as increased awareness and education about the signs of abuse, can help women in abusive situations realize the need for intervention and support.

Our organization has been putting efforts creating a safe and non-judgmental environment where women can recognize various form of domestic violence and openly discuss their experiences is crucial in this regard. Efforts to combat domestic violence in Bundi District require a comprehensive approach. This includes raising awareness about women's rights, providing education and economic opportunities for women, strengthening legal mechanisms. Additionally, community engagement and changing traditional attitudes towards gender roles are crucial for shifting the cultural norms that perpetuate domestic violence. Ultimately, a collaborative effort involving government agencies, community leaders, youth, men and community is essential to address this deeply entrenched issue and create a safer environment for women in Bundi District.

Work on violence against women and girls continued this tenure. A total of 678 women and girls were counselled and advised on matrimonial regimes, entitlement issues for VAWG prevention and reduction. The women received advised and counselling, now have improved knowledge and better preparedness on gender-

based violence prevention and how to access justice. In order to combat VAWG, women were given knowledge of police reporting system. *Parvati Bai*, one of the defenders has successfully intervened in a case of domestic violence.

Developing a network of Women Human Rights Defenders

A network of Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) amplifies their collective voices and advocacy efforts. By collaborating and coordinating their activities, WHRDs can effectively raise more awareness of human rights violations, advocate for policy changes, and mobilize resources for their causes. This collective strength will allow for considerable impact and resilience in the open out of adversity.

Our mission is to create a robust and supportive network of Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) that empowers, amplifies, and protects the voices and actions of women who champion human rights. Once the women are well-informed and identified as active women defenders, we aim to institute a group in each village of women human rights defenders of our project areas. The groups will undergo continuous awareness meetings with their fellow women. In Chhattisgarh, the group of women is identified with the name “Shivi Saheli” and in Rajasthan, as “Shivi Nari Shakti.”

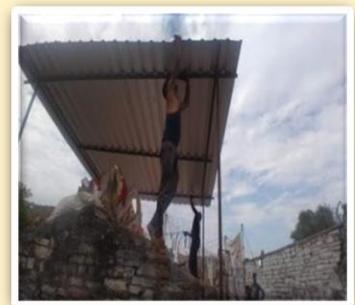
In this tenure, we have 4 Shivi Saheli of 12 active women human rights defenders in each district, which means we have 12 Shivi Saheli. And, in Rajasthan, we have formed 83 Shivi Nari Shakti.

Reclamation of Community Resources



The reclamation of community resources is a vital and transformative process that involves the communities improving, recycling, and taking back control of community essential assets such as land, water, forests, and infrastructure. This endeavour drives many a time by realizing that these resources are essential for the well-being, sustainability, and self-determination of a community. Under the projects, we motivated our women leaders who are actively involved in community development to reclaim community resources. When women are involved in decision-making and resource

management, it not only benefits the environment but also contributes to women's empowerment. Community resource reclamation efforts led by women often go hand in hand with sustainable practices. These leaders emphasize the need to protect and restore ecosystems while ensuring that community members have equitable access to the benefits generated by these resources. They often incorporate traditional knowledge and innovative approaches to balance resource use with conservation.



Under the leadership of our active women leaders and with the support of our organization, the two mandirs(a sacred place of Hindus) and a Hand pump were repaired in the Bundi District of Rajasthan.

Promotion of Livelihood

As a dedicated civil society organization, one of our undertakings is to promote women's livelihood to advance women's empowerment. We firmly believe that economic independence and the ability to generate sustainable income are fundamental pillars in the journey towards gender equality and women's rights. Our organization recognizes the multifaceted challenges that women often face, including limited access to economic

opportunities, discrimination in the workplace, and societal expectations that hinder their participation in the workforce.

Our commitment to women's empowerment is unwavering, and one of the ways we manifest this commitment is by extending financial assistance to individual women to support their promotion and expansion of their livelihoods. Another way is helping women through Self Help Groups. During the year, in the Bundi District of Rajasthan, we have formed 17 livelihood activities for women, where soon the group will be taking up the Achaar (Pickle) production activities. And we extended financial assistance to 5 individual women.

Supported Women

Sl. No.	Name of Supported Women	Husband Name	Place	Occupation	Type of Help	Amount (in Rs.)
1.	Foola Bai	Rajulal Yadav	Budhpura, Bundi	Cobal Yard	Loan	Rs.10000
2.	Sunita Verma	Kamlesh Verma	Budhpura, Bundi	Cobal Yard	Loan	Rs.10000
3.	Sushila Bheel	Narayan Bheel	Budhpura, Bundi	Cobal Yard	Loan	Rs.10000
4.	Goma Yadav	Jagdish Yadav	Budhpura, Bundi	Cobal Yard	Loan	Rs.10000
5.	Chandrakala Yadav	Ramswaroop Yadav	Budhpura, Bundi	Cobal Yard	Loan	Rs.10000

Celebration of National Women's Day:



National Women's Day is celebrated in India on 13th February each year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu, a prominent Indian freedom fighter, poet, and advocate for women's rights. It is a day to celebrate the achievements of women, acknowledge the ongoing struggle for gender equality, and reaffirm the commitment to creating a more just and inclusive society where women can

thrive and fulfil their potential. It is a day of reflection, inspiration, and a call to action for women's rights and empowerment.

We noticed that every effort counts, no matter how small it may seem. Every small step can save a woman and educate a woman. Just do something, and do something well. We celebrated the day with the women of the Kanker district in Chhattisgarh. To mark the day, we carried out an awareness rally against the issue of sexual violence against adolescent girls and women in Mahud village of Kanker, our small step to educate this village about gender-based violence issues. More than 30 women came to the street to join the rally.

Celebration of International Women's Day:

The International Women's Day celebration is a global acknowledgment of women's achievement in the social, economic, cultural, and political discipline. It's a day to honour and recognize women's contributions to society while at the same time highlighting the ongoing struggle for gender equality. International Women's Day is not just about celebrating the past; it's also about looking to the future and envisioning a world where gender equality is a reality. It's a day that inspires individuals and communities to take action, support women's rights, and work towards a more inclusive and equitable world for all. It's a day of solidarity, reflection, and a call to continue striving for progress in the ongoing fight for gender equality.

Chhattisgarh:



The 2023 International Women's Day was more exceptional than the previous year for Indian Women as the day falls on the day of the Holi Festival, and such is a color festival across India, so we celebrated the day of women with the colours of Holi. The International Women's Day theme for this year, according to the United Nations, is "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality," and it aims to emphasize the importance of technology in bringing gender issues to light. And the theme of our organization is "Educate, engage, and empower women with Digital

Innovation". Through the celebration, we aim to spread awareness the women that they can get more information, gain knowledge, and get connected through digital technology, women can inspire women of the entire community, an online safe for women and girls, and like men, and women also have the right to digital access. The celebration was conducted in all three Districts with the women from different departments like health, housewife, police department, education department, etc. We celebrated women from all spheres.



In Kanker District, there were 49 participants including men, youth, and students, a total of 52 women and youth in Kondagaon District, and a total of 56 women in Narayanpur District, celebrated the day. The celebrations were complimented with fun games to motivate the women and to make them feel special.

Rajasthan:

It is put in writing in the ancient scriptures of India, "Yatra Nari Aste Pujyate Tatra Ramante Devta" which means that where women worship, the gods reside there.

We celebrated International Women's Day with 33 women from Dhaneshwar village of Bundi District. The celebration initiated with applying 'Tilak' (a religious mark or symbol, typically applied on the forehead made with a paste, powder, or a small dot of vermilion, sandalwood, or sacred ash) followed by prayer. Later, we discussed the history and theme of



international women. The celebration celebrated the achievements of some women from the Bundi District specifically, Anjana Devi Chaudhary, the first female social worker and activist of Rajasthan, who led 500 women and took part in the Bijolia movement and the Bundi Kishan movement, Kamla Bhasin, that voiced against atrocities against women, Ruma Devi, a social worker and traditional, an awardee of "Nari Shakti Award 2018".



We celebrated the spirit and courage of such women. Taking advantage of the day, we also spread awareness on the women's helpline number, one-stop center, schemes, and facilities for women at the District and state levels. We also encourage the women participants to voice against inequality and gender-based violence.

Consultation on Spirituality and Women Empowerment: Indian Perspective

Women are a storehouse of power when women secure themselves with the spiritual and divinity Armor.



Empowering women means we are taking a step toward the development of our society. Spirituality and Divinity account for one of the reasons for the manner of empowering women.

Spirituality is a much discussed and debated theme. It conveys different things to different individuals. Many opined that it does not relate to our immediate, visible, and practical life. Spirituality abides life according to its intrinsic rules and that which is gifted with rewards of practice and perfection and the ability to reinforce and reward. And women empowerment is all about promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence

social change for themselves and others. Spirituality shapes women's lives, and giving them the bounty of their own unseen and subtle energies makes them productive and significant. Women of primary and civilized spirituality maintain goodwill and alliance with spirituality, respectively. Every living being functions only because of the spirit in it, and in this way, we all are spiritual. Spirituality in women's empowerment means the presence of the spirit in the process of evolving as an actively seated in the highest grades of nobility that is accelerated and supervised towards great goals of empowering themselves. Spirituality and religion play significant roles in promoting women's leadership at the community level for sustainable development.

Shivi Development Society believes that spirituality and religion have played significant roles in promoting women's leadership at the community level for sustainable development. Spirituality accounts for the journey of women's empowerment in a way that helps women to create a community and support network around themselves; it allows women to the community with other like-minded women on their quest to feel stronger and more grounded, to bloom; and it makes women come out from selfishness and loneliness and enter into common wellness and collective action.

With this belief, in collaboration with Manjari Sanstha Jaipur, VAAGDHARA Banswara, Shivi Development Society organized a day consultation on the role of spirituality in Women's Empowerment on December 20, 2022, at the Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur. The seminar focused on how religious and spiritual traditions contribute to women's leadership roles that can build sustainable women empowerment effectively.

Academicians, religious experts, social activists, and civil society organizations representatives attended the seminar, and the participants counted 41 in total.

Manish Singh (Secretary, Manjari Sansthan) inaugurated the seminar by greeting all the participants, and he translated the seminar's aim, motives, and expectations.

Immediately, Narendra Kumar (Executive Director, Shivi Development Society) took over the session and briefly discussed the journey of the Shivi Development Society, the ongoing programs of SDS, and its core strategies. He also expressed SDS's belief in spiritual and religious, with a special mention of this being one of the efforts towards the elimination of social injustice against women.



Followed by him, there was a quick round of introductory sessions by all participants.

Meditation itself is a spiritual tradition, and with it, Shanno Behan from BrahmakumariRajyogini began the very first session of the seminar. She requested the participants to question themselves about who the self is because if we can identify the self, then only Spirituality and Divinity will evolve within the self. In her lecture, Shanno Behan mentioned that Spirituality is an inborn quality and our soul bears seven qualities: Knowledge, Happiness, Peace, Love, Power, Purity, and Pleasure, also all humans must realize these. Later, she also beautifully framed a few matters: We have all the worldly things, but without Spirituality and Divinity, all these do not complete us delighted; We sense empowerment and peace when we conduct spiritual practice; When we are not religious and spiritual, we won't be able to do the betterment for society; We remain unconscious when we are not religious. According to her, only the spiritual woman, or Sanskari Mahila, can make the worldheaven as she owns the power to change the world because Spirituality & religion accompany women since birth. She concluded the session with what she initiated. She contended that we should challenge ourselves to identify ourselves because all the peace and power within ourselves ought to awake to stimulate us to work with a spirit, and spirit is something that makes us unite and work for the betterment of society. She also pleaded that our deeds only remain alive in this world after us.

After an energetic and insightful session, Dr. Vinisha Baliyan from Yogda Satsang Society orated the second lectureship session. She initiated her session with a clear definition and explanation of spirituality, women empowerment, and their inter-relationships. According to her, the person possibly attains externally empowered only when empowered internally, and in spirituality, there is no gender bias. Dr. Vinisha voiced that the men in our society are advantaged already, and it is the moment to empower women; their conditions need to improve for societal development as it depends on women because they are bearers and creators of society. In continuation, she conveyed that, Spirituality and Divinity within us bring harmony, and if we can realize then it indicates a state of empowerment. Meanwhile, she also stated the spiritual idea by Swami Vivekananda that Faith in ourselves, Faith in our God- this is the secret of greatness and overcoming all obstacles. Dr. Vinisha, continuing the lectureship, articulated that we empower when we are morally strong and achieve inner harmony, blissfulness, and joy. Also, she asked us to self-pledge to stop seeing or depending on others for our happiness, and we should not run after perfection as we all are not perfect other than God. She concluded her session with the message, "*Happiness is my Birth Right.*"

Dr. Meeta Singh conducted another short session. She explained the importance of Meditation in our life. According to her, Meditation sets the tone for our entire day and helps us to be focused content, and optimistic; one should take it as a task. Meditation should be part of daily routine, likewise, spirituality should be part of our life. She also cited that the idea of spirituality is different for each person, and it's the key to unlocking the solution to every problem, calming us down, connecting mind and body, and making us strong. She also called for us to start loving ourselves, must do good things because this is the only asset we will carry after our life.

After the three insightful lecture sessions, there was an open discussion where the participants had offered a chance to put their ideas and perspective on the seminar theme, and a few of them gave a few statements.

The first statement was- Whenever a woman faces rape or violence, we must make her realize the Spirituality within her to empower her. As well as, Every religion must be taught in schools and should be a policy.

The second statement was- One must begin to empower the self-first, as Spirituality is within us, and later should reach out to the critical mass.

The third statement was- Spirituality is the way to every problem. Every woman needs to chase the Spirituality within her to empower because if women develop, then the world grows.

The last statement was- Women do not need to find spirituality, they have a spirituality, and they need to feel empowered to use it, and society needs to encourage them to acknowledge it.

In continuance of the seminar and followed by the open discussion session, Dr. S.N. Bharadwaj conducted a short lectureship session. He discussed self-importance and self-realization. In his brief speech, he explained that one could not empower someone and the self is only responsible for whatever. One must accept the responsibility for self for where to go and no one else. Women possess empowerment from birth, their strength comes from God, and they require self-realization to employ it.



Further, he continued that if a person is religious and spiritual, they will never encounter any wrong deeds. Also, Dr. S.N. added that each woman in our society should be physically, mentally, and socially spiritual to achieve empowerment.

Lastly, Imam Moulvi Zuber Sahab essayed a session about spirituality in Islam and Empowerment. He initiated his speech with the catchwords that according to the teachings of Islam, men and women enjoy equal rights in all walks of life, implying women have rights over men comparable to the rights of men over women. Islam regards women as completely legal personalities, and there is no gender differentiation in Islam. He reasoned that numerous Verses of the Qur'an and Prophetic Traditions enjoin gender equality which categorically proves that gender inequality is not faith-based. He claimed that Islam brings men & women together, and it is human, social, political, and civilizational significance who gauge it.

He further explained that women do not need to be buttoned by someone else to work or walk, and men and women should learn their spirituality and religion to empower themselves, and women should educate. He supported his statement with a quote, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate a nation."

Moulvi Zuber Sahab concluded his speech with the devotion that All humans are equal, and we must love and teach each other to grow together, as well as respect each other spiritually and religion.

Mr. Surrender Kumar concluded the session. He outlined the discoveries of the discussion:

Gender bias is not in any religion,

Women need to realize self-realization & self-empowerment to empower themselves, Meditation is a way to find out the hidden spirituality within us,

Happiness and empowerment are the birthrights of every human,

Civil Society and activists must encourage women to acknowledge their unseen spirit and strength. Religion and Spiritual are inborn qualities for human beings to walk life with spirit.

Spiritual and religion equipped women to be good leaders and to conduct good deeds for others.

On behalf of the organizing team of this insightful seminar, Hanuman Sahay Sharma of Shivi Development Society extended his heartfelt gratitude to the esteemed guests and participants. He also called for future collaborations and discussions with the participants.

SECTION

2

Youth Development



Youth Orientation

Orientation programs for young boys focused on women's development are pivotal tread as a contribution to fostering gender equality and promoting a more inclusive society. Through this program, we aim to educate and sensitize young boys about the unique challenges and opportunities of women and also to empower them to become advocates for gender equity. Through these orientations, we provided young boys with valuable insights into gender stereotypes, biases, and the importance of



respecting and promoting women's rights. They learned about the historical struggles women have faced, and continue to face in various aspects of life, including education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and political participation. One of the primary goals of these orientations is to break down traditional gender norms and expectations. We encouraged young boys to question harmful stereotypes and to challenge attitudes that conserve discrimination and violence against women. They gained an understanding of the significance of treating women as equal partners in all spheres of life. These programs also emphasize the

importance of empathy and solidarity. Young boys are taught to listen to women's perspectives, to be supportive allies, and to actively participate in efforts to advance women's development and rights. This includes understanding issues such as gender-based violence, reproductive health, and economic empowerment.



Moreover, young boys' orientations often involve discussions on consent, healthy relationships, and respectful behaviour. These topics are crucial in preventing gender-based violence and promoting positive interactions among individuals of all genders.

We conducted Youth Orientation through a series of community meetings with Youth.

During this tenure, we conducted a total of 120 Youth orientation meetings in Chhattisgarh. Through these meetings, we reached out to 580 youths, out of which 48 youths were motivated as active youth defenders. Of the active youth defenders, we also form a group of 16 youths in each district. These groups usually conduct community meetings and discuss women's issues and challenges.

In Rajasthan, during this tenure, we conducted 108 orientation meetings with 320 youths, out of which 25 youths were identified as active youth defenders. The formation of youth allies is under the process.

Adolescent Girls Groups



In the villages of Rajasthan, health education and guidance for the children of formative ages are not considered very important. Especially in case of girls, social taboos are biggest obstacle for their development and learning. Adolescent girls have to learn things by their own and many times get misguided. They are not aware of physical and mental challenges. To make

them understand about these changes in their bodies and about their future lives, the adolescent girls of the intervention villages have been organised as 20 Adolescent Girls Groups. About 200 girls are members of these groups. The girls meet once in a month and discuss issues related to their physical changes and upbringings, health, hygiene, nutrition and food. Information sharing on psychological changes and other aspects of adolescence is also done with the help of subject experts.

Celebration of National Youth Day:

National Youth Day is celebrated to promote awareness of people's rights and to provide information about them. Keeping the ideals of Swami Vivekananda alive and motivating young people is the main objective of the celebration.



On 12th January, we celebrated the national youth day at Kanker with the collaboration of Nehru Yuva Kendra and a few other local organizations. Taking the chance of celebration, we spread awareness amongst the youth about the historical significance of national youth day, the role of youth in community development, and the inclusion of the young as a volunteer in our project. Nearly 42 youth boys and girls from across the Kanker District attended the celebration. Also, to comprehend a sense of community responsibility, a cleanliness drive was conducted by the 42 youths presented at the event.

At Rajasthan, we celebrated the day with the youth of Budhpura Sankul. The celebration of this day holds profound significance as it serves as a tribute to Swami Vivekananda's vision and ideals and as an inspiration to the youth of India. We started the celebration with prayer, followed by a discussion of life stories about Vivekananda. Along with this, an open discussion session was conducted in which the youth participants were allowed to express themselves about their problems. The celebration



encouraged young people to engage in constructive dialogue, build their leadership skills, and channel their energy and passion toward positive change, fostering a brighter and more prosperous society.

SECTION



Public Health

Public health is not a privilege; it's a right

As a civil society organization, one of our primary focus is on public health, a crucial pillar of societal well-being. Our mission is to address and improve the health and well-being of communities, promoting equitable access to healthcare, preventing diseases, and enhancing the overall quality of life.

In our pursuit of better public health, we employ a multifaceted approach. We collaborate with local communities, healthcare professionals, and policymakers to identify and address pressing health issues, including those related to sanitation, nutrition, disease prevention, and healthcare access.

Our initiatives encompass a range of activities, from conducting health awareness campaigns and vaccination drives to advocating for policy changes that prioritize public health. We work to empower individuals and communities with knowledge and resources to make informed health-related decisions and lead healthier lives.

Furthermore, we strive to bridge gaps in healthcare access, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations. We believe that everyone should have access to essential healthcare services, regardless of their socio-economic status or geographic location. To achieve this, we engage in capacity building, awareness drives, and free health check-ups in collaboration with community and primary healthcare institutions to ensure the availability of quality healthcare services.

Additionally, research and data-driven approaches are integral to our work. We gather and analyze health data to identify emerging health trends, assess the impact of our programs, and make evidence-based recommendations for public health policies and interventions.

Menstrual Hygiene Campaign:



Menstruation has always been encircled by taboos and myths that exclude women and girls from numerous aspects of socio-cultural life. In India, the topic has been tabooing to date. Such taboos about menstruation exist in many societies and impact our girl's and women's emotional state, mentality and lifestyle, and, most importantly, health. The challenge of discouraging menstruation in families, public places, and schools is further heightened by the low women's and girl's knowledge levels and understanding of puberty, menstruation, and reproductive health. We realized it is high time to talk about the period and spread awareness because menstrual health issues are human rights issues and, therefore, of importance to society collectively.

On 25th March 2023, we conducted a mob campaign at Marine Drive, Raipur, and the theme was "Break the silence on Menstruation: Menstruation Matters Everyone". The objective of the campaign was to help break the

silence and build awareness about the fundamentals of menstrual hygiene. The 35 women leaders, whom we identified as “Shivi Saheli”, wore the customized T-shirt of the Organization; they were holding placards on myths and facts on menstruation. Then, they interacted with the public about each of the placards. It was a give-and-take knowledge-sharing awareness campaign; to break so many stereotypes by the public. People of all groups: Students, men, youth, and girls were attracted to and interacted with the women leaders. The feedback of the women leaders and the public clearly indicated that the campaign ease corrects the public about the stereotypes of menstruation, awareness of the people, and impacted the larger public.

SECTION

4

Child Development



Sensitization of Children at Schools & Community



We have undertaken the vital task of conducting sensitization programs for children within schools and communities. Our mission is to create awareness, foster understanding, and promote positive behaviors among children on various critical issues, including human rights, gender equality, health, and social responsibility. Other than these issues, we aim to create awareness of Child Rights, Education Rights, Child Schemes and facilities, etc. These sensitization programs are designed to empower children with knowledge and skills that can shape their perspectives and actions in a way

that contributes to a more just and inclusive society.

Our goal is to nurture a generation of informed, compassionate, and socially responsible individuals who not only understand their rights but also actively contribute to the betterment of their communities and the world. Through these sensitization efforts, we aim to create a brighter and more equitable future, one child at a time.

During this tenure, we reached out to 32 Government Schools in the Bastar region in Chhattisgarh and 21 schools in Bundi District in Rajasthan.



Celebration of National Girl Child Day:



On January 24, 2023, we observed National Girl Child Day in a few areas of Bastar region, Chhattisgarh. Marking an important day for girls, our Narayanpur's District fellow, Geetanjali Thakur, and Women Human Rights Defenders distributed Sanitary napkins to spread awareness on menstrual hygiene at schools: Kasturba Gandhi Balika Ashram Narayanpur, Binjee High School, and Garhbengal High School. The sanitary napkins were distributed free of cost with the purpose to grow confidence and empower girls/women by promoting safe menstrual hygiene. And interestingly, the distributed sanitary napkins are made by Geetanjali, she has been running a small sanitary napkin production center and making sanitary napkins by herself with the help of WHRDs. She is a fierce lady, and many recognized her as the Pad-Woman of the Narayanpur district and, luckily, the District fellow of our organization.

We also celebrated the day at a few schools in Kondagaon and Kanker.

SECTION



5 Miscellaneous Activities

One- Day Consultation on the Role of Civil Society Organization in Development of Bastarregion:

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are crucial for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), democratization, the defence of human rights, and environmental protection. Civil Society Organizations are the voices to influence all of these policy areas; first and foremost also need to endure for policy coherence within development cooperation.

With the help of our local supporters, we conducted a day-long consultation on the role of civil

society organizations in the development of the Bastar region, and this consultation benefitted a total of 70 women participants, members of civil societies, and social activists from different areas of Bastar.

The consultation comprised different sessions by different resource persons:

1. Women's development is the first step towards the development of Bastar by FatherAlexander (Xavier Institute of Social Action)
2. The hardships and challenges faced by the women in Bastar region by Vidya Rajput(SocialActivist)
3. Significance of women in Islam and spirituality empowers women by Moulana Farooqi (Social Activist)
4. The various conflict issues of Bastar, the failure of political parties in the area, and the civil society organization as the backbone of the conflict area by Ex. MLA Amit Jogi.
5. Consumer Rights and Awareness by Dr. Naveen Shrivastava(Consumer RightsOrganization)
6. The Transformation of Peace Bastar to Conflict Bastar by Jitendra Sharma(Journalist)
7. The Role of Civil Society Organization in the Self-realization of Individuals by AmbikaMishra(Journalist)
8. The Measures and Indicators of Development in Bastar by Prakash Gardia(OXFAM India)
9. Advent and need of human rights by DSP Avinash Mishra.

All the resources persons and participants praised Shivi for conducting the consultation and giving a platform to come together with civil societies and social activists dedicated to the development of the Bastar, also the activities under the project.

Human Rights Day Celebration:

As a civil society organization, we marked the International Human Rights Day occasion with great enthusiasm and purpose. This globally recognized day, celebrated on December 10 each year, holds immense significance for us as we champion the cause of human rights, equality, and justice. We celebrated the day with women and men who are MNREGA workers with the theme "Equality - Reducing inequalities, advancing



human rights.” A total of 31 individuals participated in the day.

Our celebration of International Human Rights Day was a reflection of our commitment to the fundamental principles that underpin human rights around the world. The event brought together individuals from diverse groups to commemorate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948.

During our celebration, we raised awareness about their fundamental rights and the importance of upholding human rights for all individuals, regardless of their background or circumstances. And we encouraged the participants to dialogue and collaboration to address pressing human rights issues at the grassroots level. Also, our celebration emphasized the importance of advocacy and voice in solidarity with those whose rights are threatened or violated. We pledged to continue advocating for more positive change in our society.

Ultimately, our celebration of International Human Rights Day was a reminder that the promotion, and protection of human rights are not only moral imperatives but also essential for the well-being and progress of societies. We will remain steadfast in our dedication to advancing the cause of human rights and will continue our efforts to create a more just, equitable, and inclusive world for all.

Community Tree Plantation in Bundi, Rajasthan

We have initiated a transformative tree plantation initiative in the Bundi District of Rajasthan, India, with the invaluable support and active involvement of the local community. Our mission is rooted in environmental conservation, sustainable development, and community engagement, and this endeavor represents a powerful fusion of these principles.



The tree plantation initiative in Rajasthan is a testament to our commitment to addressing critical environmental challenges, such as deforestation, desertification, and climate change, while simultaneously empowering and involving the community in these efforts.

In collaboration with community leaders, Government School Teachers, and 60 MNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) women workers, we have planted 150 trees across the district. We firmly



believe that lasting change is best achieved when the community takes ownership of the initiative. Through extensive engagement and collaboration with residents, we have fostered a sense



of collective responsibility for the environment. Alongside tree planting, we also raised awareness about the importance of trees, sustainable land use, and the role of communities in environmental stewardship.

We also pledged to continue our tree plantation efforts in the beautiful district, in collaboration with the dedicated members of our community, while we realized tree plantation initiative in Bundi District is not just a symbolic act but a concrete step toward a greener, healthier, and more sustainable future for all.

Staff Meeting



We believe that regular staff orientation reflects the organization's commitment to continuous improvement, employee development, and the overall success of the project's mission. By investing in the ongoing education and empowerment of the staff, we strengthen our foundation and enhance its ability to create positive change in the communities we serve.

On 20th February, we conducted a staff team orientation on social media utilization by the civil society organization and its ability to facilitate rapid communication and information dissemination.
