



# SAKHI

Strengthening Adolescent Girls Knowledge,  
Women's Right, Health & Income

321-900-1626 ZG

## Third Year Completion Report

# SAKHI

Strengthening Adolescent Girls Knowledge,  
Women's Right, Health & Income

Project Number : 321-900-1626 ZG

Reporting Period : October 2019 to November 2020



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# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Ags</b>	Adolescent Girls
<b>ANM</b>	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife
<b>ASHA</b>	Accredited Social Health Activists
<b>ASK</b>	Association for Stimulating Know How
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organization
<b>CHC</b>	Community Health Centre
<b>COVID</b>	Coronavirus Disease
<b>DLSA</b>	District Legal Service Authority
<b>DSSS</b>	Diocesan Social Service Society
<b>FIR</b>	First Information Report
<b>GOVT</b>	Government
<b>GST</b>	Goods and Services Tax
<b>Hb</b>	Haemoglobin
<b>IEC</b>	Information Education Communication
<b>IFA</b>	Iron Folic Acid
<b>IU</b>	International Unit
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament
<b>MLA</b>	Member of Legislative Assembly

<b>NGO</b>	Non Government Organization
<b>PHC</b>	Primary Health Centre
<b>POSCO</b>	Prevention of Child Sexual Offences
<b>POU</b>	Point of Use
<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protective Equipment
<b>RTE</b>	Right to Education
<b>RTI</b>	Right to Information
<b>SAKHI</b>	Strengthening Adolescent Girl's Knowledge, Women's Right, Health and Income.
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>TT</b>	Tetanus Toxide
<b>UKSVK</b>	Uttar Kshetriya Samaj Vikas Kendra

# 1. FORMAL DETAILS

1.1	Name of the partner organization	Uttar Kshetriya Samaj Vikas Kendra (UKSVK)
1.2	Project Number	321-900-1626 ZG
1.3	Project Title	SAKHI - Strengthening Adolescent Girl's Knowledge, Women's Right, Health and Income.
1.4	Reporting Period	October 01, 2019 – November 30, 2020

## 1.5 Brief description of project activities

Adolescent age is full of complexity and especially for girls of rural India. They face a range of risks and vulnerabilities that challenge their healthy development from girls into young women, and they often lack the social, physical health, and economic assets that are necessary to mitigate these risks. The issues that confront vulnerable girls of northern region are — child marriage, gender discrimination, school dropout, lack of economic resources and less income-generating options. Across a wide range of issues—child marriage, education, social support, safety, gender discrimination and low reproductive health—girls are at a greater disadvantage compared to their male peers. The vulnerabilities confronting the adolescent girls formed the basis for designing the SAKHI Programme, which a) focused on adolescent girls aged **10–24**, b) delivered community-based interventions and c) selected participants for the programme with the direct intention of capturing those girls who were the most vulnerable. SAKHI was rolled out in **120** villages of three northern states, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, and aimed to reach **12,000** girls in the programme. The theory of change behind SAKHI posited that adolescent girls are empowered by building their social status, physical health, and economic assets that they can then draw on to reduce vulnerabilities and expand opportunities.

### Intervention Components

Group formation and group meetings: Group meetings were organised weekly and monthly, in which **15 - 20** girls met with a mentor like project staff, trainer for short

training sessions on a variety of topics as well as an opportunity to discuss together their experiences in the past week. Different curricula for adolescent girls were used in the group meetings like: 1) training on health and reproductive health, 2) vocational training on tailoring & embroidery, basic and advanced computer course, beautician/mala making/ home decor course, 3) Youth leadership, 4) IEC activities, 5) Goat management and backyard poultry.

**Health Sakhi:** In partnership with the frontline health workers, **126** Health Sakhis were trained on communicable and non-communicable disease, tracking of children and pregnant women for immunization and data compilation. They also assisted in pooling govt. schemes for the needy and pooled around **60,000** in INR for the needy. During Covid pandemic they collaborated with the frontline workers for covid relief activities.

**Training sessions:** Series of training sessions on health, nutrition, leadership, legal aids, vocational skills, livestock management (goat & backyard poultry), exposure visit assisted the AG's in enhancing their skills and knowledge.

**Implementation design:** A randomised cluster design was implemented to rigorously assess the impact of SAKHI, as well as the impact of each of its core components.

The program was implemented under the guidance and supervision of Executive Director, Diocesan Director, Project Coordinator, Animators, Vocational Instructors, Accountants, Anganwadi Workers, teachers and other influential people. Concrete plan and collective measures enabled in achieving the four central goals: engagement with learning, emotional and physical safety, positive sense of self/self-efficacy and decision-making skills.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which originated in the city of Wuhan, China, has quickly spread to various countries, with many cases having been reported worldwide. In India too the Covid cases were growing, several measures were formulated to fight against Covid. The Govt. of India imposed complete lockdown on March 24, 2020 and gatherings in any form was made punishable. Owing to the Govt. guidelines, many planned activities had to be postponed till further guidelines. From early June a major relaxation from lockdown was given and slowly our office and field team started visiting fields following the new norms. Reformation in the initiatives according to the prevalent scenario were taken up as follows:



S.No	Particulars (Project Activities)	New Initiatives
1	Any Training as per the requirement (Beautician course)	Procurement and distribution of PPE kits, clothes for mask, sanitizers, hand gloves and sanitary pads.
2	Knowing our body: Menstrual system and hygiene	
3	Celebration of AG's Day including certificate distribution annually.	

This Annual Report is prepared by UKSVK secretariat staff consisting of the Executive Director, General Coordinator, Associate Coordinator and Accountant. The inputs covered in the entire report is assembled from the monitoring/field visit, coordinators meet, quarterly reports, data compilation format with diverse case /success studies and other achievement articles shared by the diocesan partners have designed this annual report. The major outcomes of the project are as follows:

Major outcomes - October 2019 to November 2020	Major outcomes - October 2017 to November 2020
<b>15</b> new Ag group formed with <b>300</b> girls.	<b>586</b> Ag group formed with <b>10740</b> girls.
<b>126</b> Health SAKHI's are actively involved in community led activities and are liasoning with line departments.	<b>126</b> Health SAKHI's are actively involved in community led activities and are liasoning with line departments.
<b>1450</b> Ags received sanitary pads from Govt. institutions.	<b>9245</b> Ags received sanitary pads from Govt. institutions.
<b>90</b> child marriages were postponed.	<b>1774</b> child marriages were postponed.
<b>110</b> Ags started earning ₹. <b>2500-3000</b> additional income for their families.	<b>400</b> Ags started earning ₹. <b>2500-3000</b> additional income for their families.
<b>420</b> kitchen gardens were developed.	<b>2345</b> kitchen gardens were developed.
<b>120</b> women volunteers have been trained on Livelihood base skill development training.	<b>240</b> women volunteers have been trained on Social Security Schemes and Services, Livelihood Base Skill Development training and Service of Bank and Financial Institutions.

An external evaluation of SAKHI programme facilitated by ASK organization was organized, the findings of evaluation is being attached in Annexure – 12.

### 1.5.1. Objectives and target groups

#### Objectives

The overall objective of the program are to:

- Objective 1: The number of girls who marry or give birth before the age of **18** has decreased significantly.
- Objective 2: A significant number of boys have become sensitized towards gender injustice and violence against girls.

#### Target groups

The target group includes **adolescent girls** and various different stakeholders. It also includes trainers who will be trained to deliver relevant capacity building activities.

## 2. CHANGES IN THE PROJECT CONTEXT

### 2.1 Important changes in the external framework conditions and project setting:

Various political, economic and social situations concerning the country are somehow directly or indirectly affecting the on-going implementation of SAKHI. Some important changes for this reporting period are:

#### Political

Politics of the country since **2019** took curious undeterminable and unpredictable turns. The ruling class is tearing up labour protections and stoking sectarian violence, while rewarding its big business cronies. Hundreds of millions face destitution, violence and oppression.

The year **2019** ended with nation-wide agitations with youth, students and civil society joining hands to oppose the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), **2019** and the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC).

- The central government enacted Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019 ending the Islamic practice of 'triple talaq'.
- The unplanned, nationwide lockdown, affecting a population of **130** million, has led to huge chaos. Migrant workers were left to fend for themselves. Since there was no transport, they had to walk all the way back to their homes. Many people died on the way and due to accidents, violence and starvation.
- India's agricultural sector has been liberalized and sort of privatised by the new Farmers bill 2020. The farmers are not in favor of the proposed bill and are demonstrating their opposition by holding rallies, movements, and meeting to oppose the Government. They are accusing the Government for their poor condition. Farmers are even committing suicide.
- During COVID-19 pandemic, the National Education Policy 2020 was introduced, which seeks to further privatize and communalize education. Education will become inaccessible for the poor and the new policy attempts to centralize education, and impose Hindi and Sanskrit languages in non-Hindi speaking states. Students will have to clear entrance tests for admission to arts and science colleges, which hitherto was only a requirement for medical and engineering studies. This would lead to increased drop outs and exclusion of Dalit and other oppressed classes of students from education.
- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act 2020 (Amendment Act) has been notified by the Central Government (Government) on 29 September 2020, to amend certain provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act 2010 (Act / FCRA). The amendment is an attempt to choke the free functioning of NGOs. In our region NGOs for years have been functioning as networks, with smaller ones being supported by the larger, better-funded organizations. Without this networking option, many of the smaller ones will find it difficult to survive. More perturbing is a new provision where all foreign-funded NGOs have to bank with a single State Bank of India (SBI) branch in New Delhi.

## **Economic**

- The economic impact of the 2020 coronavirus pandemic in India has been largely disruptive. India faced a huge decline in government revenues and growth, decline in the GDP for at least two quarters as the coronavirus hits economic activity of the country.

— The coronavirus pandemic has triggered a massive reverse migration. Hundreds of thousands of labourers marched back to their villages. The migrant workers have faced multiple hardships. With factories and workplaces shut down due to the lockdown imposed in the country, millions of migrant workers had to deal with the loss of income, food shortages and uncertainty about their future.

— Prior to the Covid-lockdown, unemployment had grown tremendously. Demonetisation and the implementation of the GST had affected petty producers and small enterprises leading to a steep rise in unemployment. Covid has further supported for a sharp decline in the number of jobs, especially in the formal sector. Widespread unemployment is leading to increasing distress for tens of thousands of families of rural areas. Without a steady income, they cannot avail medical care; cannot send their children to school or, even meet the food expenses of the family.

— The adolescent girls after the age of **18** are mostly married off and they are burdened with household chores. Majority adolescents are dependent on their husbands for their economic growth and welfare. The project SAKHI is providing a supporting hand wherein the adolescents are given livelihood and livestock training which will enable them to be economically sustained and lead an independent life.

## — **Social**

The outbreak of Covid and marching unemployment has created a fear among the common people, women being the most affected. Rural women are the backbone of agriculture and guardians of household food security in their communities. The restricted movement and closure of work place has handcuffed the women.

— The adolescent girls of our project were not able to gather for meetings, in some instances violence against women reported by husband. Though being in lockdown, men somehow managed to have access for alcohol though being charged extra.

— Deprived from education many children were forced into child labour, perforced children had to work for extra hours without any incentives and were even deprived of there basic rights.



## 2.2. Relevant social issues affecting directly and indirectly are:

**Caste related violence:** it's a regular phenomenon in India wherein minority and dalits are the most vulnerable. They are often mistreated and are neglected, face exclusion and other such biases are prone to communal violence as well. It is mostly patriarchal society where women and girls are often oppressed by men and socially restrained from accessing the same rights, services and privileges.

The caste system does exist in the intervention areas of SAKHI, in villages girls from upper caste avoid their presence in group meetings or gatherings participated by lower caste. Efforts were made in bridging the gap, but more efforts are needed. The project staffs were cautioned against such situations, during any instance collective and integrated approaches were practised and ensured peace and harmony

**Safety of Women:** safety of women especially in India is a major concern. The major threats surrounding them are domestic violence, eve teasing, rape, female foeticide, child marriage etc. Sessions on gender and girls safety have enhanced a sense of responsibility among the boys. In many places boys were involved in mobilising the guardians of adolescent girls and ensured they actively participated in project interventions.



## 2.3 Important changes within the partner organization:

We lost two lives during this period, Fr Cyril Sequeira – Director of Meerut Seva Samaj (MSS) Meerut and Ms. Kamlesh – Animator from DISHA – RCDSSS, Ajmer due to Covid.

### 3. IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT AND ACHIEVING ITS OBJECTIVE

#### Objective 1

**Promote adolescent girl leaders and strengthen girls' forum.**

The project SAKHI has been dedicatedly addressing the specific needs of **10740** adolescent girls (**10-24** years of age) of **12** dioceses of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand & Rajasthan. The adolescents of the project area suffer backwardness in every sphere with regard to development and social connectedness. These **10740** adolescent girls have further been mobilized through **586** adolescent groups.



*Group Meeting*

The monthly group meeting was considered the core component of the program as there was a growing literature on sexual and reproductive health, vocational skills, livestock management, life skills and economic-strengthening components.

**586** adolescent groups are functional; each group is a small voluntary association of adolescent girls and comes together for the purpose of learning, sharing and self-sustainability. Group created opportunities and platform to express and demonstrate the hidden skills and abilities of the girls. The girls are taking the initiative of organizing sessions for other girls of their school/college with the help of a specially designed curriculum.

The active participation of adolescent girls in gram sabha and other community events have been highly appreciated. In areas where groups are empowered, the adolescent girls have been found to be articulate, vigilant and practical. Adolescent girls have, for example, used the opportunity to improve primary schools, sanitation and have also dealt with issues of violence, including domestic violence, alcoholism and other gender concerns.

- The group got several opportunities and platforms to explore and demonstrate their hidden cultural talents & abilities. These platforms contributed in increasing their self-confidence and self-esteem and changed their perceptions & attitudes, thus transforming the personalities of the adolescent girls.
- During Covid – 19 pandemic the girls group came to the forefront as foot soldiers in India's fight against COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Over the past couple of months, the adolescent group of women have produced more than **12000** cotton masks, helping equip police personnels, health workers and community members. Assisted the organisation to feed stranded workers, the poor, and the vulnerable.
- Through networking with school teachers and community-based workers a friendly atmosphere has been developed. **950** teachers are ensuring equal participation of students in all curriculum, ample opportunities are being given to boys and girls for upgrading their skills.
- The frontline health workers/service providers like anganwadi worker, ASHA, ANM gave strength to the project and contributed in mainstreaming the project objectives. At the district level the contacts with officials had become amiable so as to avail any new govt. schemes related to adolescent girls.
- More than **1100** persons (adolescent group members and staff) are capacitated on developed tools and are creating awareness through organizing home visit, sessions and 95 % of the girls are having access to IEC materials.



*Group Meeting*



## Objective 2

Decrease in the number of girls who marry or giving birth before the age of 18.

Child marriage ends childhood and violates children's rights and places them at high risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse. Child marriage affects both girls and boys, but it affects girls disproportionately. Estimates suggest that each year, at least **1.5** million girls under 18 get married in India, which makes it home to the largest number of child brides in the world - accounting for a third of the global total.

The interventions and approach of SAKHI project to curb child marriage in the project area recognizes the complex nature of the problem, and the socio-cultural and structural factors underpinning the practice. The project managed integrating the existing strategies in areas such as health, education, child protection, nutrition and water and sanitation have been brought together to address child marriage in a holistic manner.

The programme worked in partnership with governments, civil society organizations and young people themselves and adopt methods that have proven to work at scale.

During the implementation period, there were instances of prevention of early marriages. **10740** girls have been mobilized through **586** adolescent groups. There is an increase of 60% in girls who are getting married after 18 years and 90% of these girls are aware of the consequences of early child bearing. **90** child marriages were stopped during the reporting period and **1774** child marriages were stopped in **9** districts during the project period.



*"I realized the harm I would be causing myself if I agreed to get married," says Jyoti Rawat, 15, from Hunvantiya, Ajmer. "When I first joined the group, I didn't know that children had rights, or that child marriage was a violation of those rights... I told [my mother] I didn't want to ruin my future by getting married so young. I told her that I wanted to complete my studies, become a nurse."*

**Jyoti Rawat**  
**Hunvantiya, Ajmer**



## Networking and lobbying with government authorities

Interface meetings with village Pradhan, line departments & Institutions like District Legal Service Authority (DLSA), Child Welfare Committee, Teachers, CBO members, Health Department and Childline Nodal. The officials visited community and sensitised them on the impacts of child marriage and early child bearing.



Networking meeting

## Sessions on Family Planning

In family planning sessions, the project staff strictly emphasized on natural family planning methods over contraceptives for healthy future prospects. The sessions also include information on: health schemes, promotion of institutional deliveries and complete timely immunization of children.



Session on family planning

*"I talk to the girls in my village, informing them about their rights. Two girls reached out to me, asking me to talk to their parents and stop their marriages. I went to their houses and explained to their families that child marriage is a crime. I managed to convince them. This is one of my greatest successes, that I managed to save those two girls."*

Arti Kumari

Adarsh Group, Village- Mallahanpurwa, Lucknow



### Objective 3

Upgrading the health status of AGs by enhancing their knowledge and developing training modules.

Menstrual hygiene management is a problem for adolescent girls of rural areas, particularly when attending school. Poor water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools, inadequate puberty education and lack of hygiene cause girls to experience menstruation as shameful and uncomfortable. Cultural taboos add to girls' difficulties, preventing them from seeking help and impose restrictions on them.

In SAKHI implementation areas, adolescent girls earlier knew very little about the types and method of using them or are unable to afford such products due to high cost. So, they mostly rely on reusable cloth pads which they wash and use again. The needs and requirements of the adolescent girls and women are ignored despite the fact that there are major developments in the area of water and sanitation.

The promotion of Menstrual Hygiene sessions combines health education for adolescent girls, ensuring a regular supply of sanitary napkins from schools, anganwadi centres etc. and enabling other sanitation measures such as access to water and toilets in schools and in the community through convergence with other programmes. The Anganwadi workers and staff organizes monthly meetings at the Aanganwadi Centres or other such platforms for adolescent girls to focus on issue of menstrual hygiene and also serve as a platform to discuss other relevant issues. A range of IEC material were developed on menstrual management, using a **360-degree** approach to create awareness among adolescent girls about safe & hygienic menstrual health practices which includes audio, video and reading materials for adolescent girls.

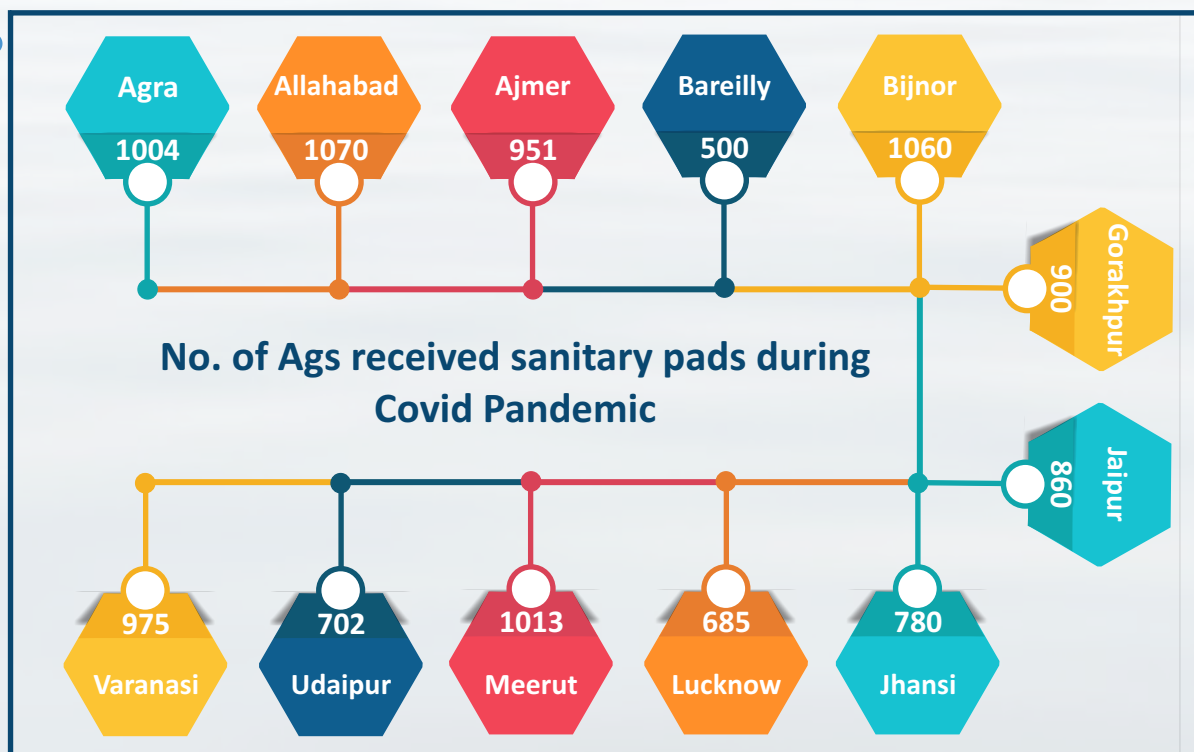


*Training on Health*

90% girls have been trained on sex education and more than 75% girls are using sanitary pads and there is a decline in the practice of reusing cloth. Girls are demanding for sanitary pads from school or anganwadi centres. Due to Covid and lockdown girls had to go without it, only 3460 Ag's could only get sanitary pads from institutions.

There were issues on knowledge about disposal of sanitary napkins as majority treated it as general waste. In Gorakhpur, Health Instructor gave information on low-cost incinerator (Pot Incinerator) wherein wood is used as a fuel to burn used sanitary napkins and is very suitable for rural atmosphere. 250 Pot incinerators have been placed in the target villages and approximately 1020 Ags are using the incinerator to dispose of the used sanitary napkins. This practice has helped in keeping the surroundings clean and eco-friendly.

Covid- 19 and the prolonged nation-wide lockdown has compromised the menstrual hygiene of economically disadvantaged and rural women/girls. There had been a jump in shortages of affordable sanitary napkins in rural areas, forcing many women to adopt unhygienic methods of managing their monthly period. During this period UKSVK in support from Misereor distributed 10500 sanitary packets to the girls associated with SAKHI program as follows:



In some places, the partners mobilized 5000 more sanitary pads and were distributed to women and girls.





*Mask stitching by Ags to combat with Covid-19*

During the coronavirus pandemic adolescent groups contributed in the fight against coronavirus and emerged with the idea of making face masks and distributing it to the group members and community members. The adolescent group volunteered to work for free for this noble cause, even few girls collected spare bits of cloth which were being used by them to make cloth masks. The group made more than **12000** cloth face masks and distributed it for free.

**World Health Day (WHD)** and **health camps** were organized in **24** villages reaching out to **1347** adolescents. Focus issues covered under the activity were:

- Importance of health
- How we can safeguard our health
- Healthy food habit and importance of balanced diet.
- Menstrual Hygiene
- General health check-up

Doctors, nurses and para medics delivered the lecture on balance diet, health counsellor did counselling of adolescent girls on Menstrual Hygiene, hormonal changes and nutritious diet.

During the health camp **566** Children (of **6-12** months) received Vitamin **100000** IU and **475** children (of **13th** month to **5** years), Vitamin **200000** IU along with Albendazole in collaboration with Vitamin Angels.



*World Health Day*

**10500** adolescent girls have been sensitised on nutritional diet plan through sessions on food and flag, kitchen garden and healthy cooking. **139** sessions on Healthy Cooking has been organized for **3008** adolescent girls. Besides healthy



cooking sessions, **357** session on food & flag were organized for **8963** adolescent girls. The interventions were a nutrition education session conducted by frontline health workers specially designed flipcharts covering important aspects of nutrition relevant for adolescent girls. A demonstration of food items, charts and flex material were also given.



## Health SAKHI

An initiative to bridge the gap between the communities and line departments.

Promotion of Health SAKHI health/volunteers as peer educator was an added advantage and innovation of SAKHI Project. **126** adolescent girls were selected from adolescent group and were trained to support their peer girls in community services. The Health SAKHI/health volunteers played an important role in bridging the gap between community and govt. health departments, schemes and services especially for adolescent girls. Govt. health department and health personnel were kept in the centre of intervention for availing their stipulated services and knowledges. Effective linkage with Anganwadi Centers, PHC, CHC and their staff are ensured to mobilize their services and support in project interventions. The Health SAKHI/health volunteers are the catalyst of SAKHI project, their effortless contribution was more cohesive, safe, and has indeed increased the social network between the communities and line departments.

The Health SAKHIs/health volunteers assisted the frontline health workers in organizing immunization and health camps, organize counselling service for adolescent girls and in some cases referral to PHC or CHC, listing of pregnant women and lactating mothers with Anganwadi centers for maternity benefits. The work done by Health SAKHIs/health volunteers are as follows:



*Health Sakhi assisting in health camp*

● No. of pregnant women registered with Anganwadi worker	<b>1220</b>
● No. of lactating mothers who received supplements from Anganwadi centers.	<b>1240</b>
● No. of adolescent girls who received Iron Folic Acid (IFA) tablets from anganwadi centre.	<b>2570</b>
● No. of adolescent girls referred to PHC & CHC for counseling and treatment	<b>890</b>
● No. of adolescent girls received sanitary pads through Health Sakhi's	<b>1290</b>
● No. of adolescent girls vaccinated with TT	<b>850</b>
● No. of girls who did Hb test	<b>1100</b>



*Health Sakhi referring a pregnant lady to the ANM*



*Ags with sanitary pads provided by health sakhi*





*Ags with sanitary pads*

## Kitchen Garden

“A healthy mind needs a nutritious diet”.

Malnutrition and poor health status especially in rural areas of North India is a common problem. It retards children’s growth, increases the risk and duration of illness, reduces work output and slows social and mental development. To overcome this problem, Kitchen Garden is considered to be the best possible solution. The objective of promoting a kitchen garden was to enrich the Ag's diet and make it more nutritious in a cost-effective manner.

Adolescent girls and their families were mobilised to initiate kitchen or terrace garden. Kitchen Gardens were established in all **120** villages making the involvement of **937** families. Average production of vegetables in kitchen garden were found to be **220** kg in the year **2018- 19** & **2019- 20**, average saving procured was Rs **3500**. Through kitchen garden families got fresh and organic vegetables year round and their nutritional needs are fulfilled. Use of high yielding varieties of different vegetables and few plants of nutritious fruits like Guava, Lemon, Papaya etc. were also planted in Kitchen Garden



*Flourishing kitchen garden*

## Objective 4

### Exposure visits for Ags to explore their knowledge.

A very important aspect of the SAKHI program included workshops on self-defence as well as exposure visit trips covering police stations, post offices, hospitals, banks etc. in order to expose them to the formalities of these various institutions so as to empower them with the knowledge to approach any of these independently and with confidence in case of emergencies.

At the police station **175** Ags learnt about the filing of an FIR, hierarchy of the police, police recruitment process, criminal & civil cases, functioning of Police Helpline numbers and most importantly, the role of common citizens in shouldering their responsibilities to help the police do their duty efficiently.



*Exposure visit to police station*

### At the bank and post office 180 girls learnt on:

- Importance of Savings
- Types of accounts – Savings, Current
- Concept of Deposit – Fixed, Recurring
- Interest Rates – concept and benefits
- Process of opening a Bank Account and Post Office Account
- Loan System
- Government schemes such as Jan Dhan Yojana
- Different Departments and Hierarchy in a Bank and post office

These exposure visits aimed in enhancing the capacity, communication skills and exploring opportunities to learn about sustainable growth. The girls did mention that exposure visits helped in reviving their capacities and was an enriching experience. SAKHI project is glad to hear that from the girls!!!



*Exposure visit to post office*



## Objective 5

### Increasing “stay in school” concept.

The proposed objective has a strong coherence with and positive contribution to SDG: Goal 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

**154** girl friendly sessions with parents and teachers were organized. The sessions enabled in developing a platform for adolescent girls, wherein they got the opportunity to interact with teachers and share their issues. The teachers played a vital role in realizing the needs of adolescent girls and collectively approached by establishing a friendly atmosphere in the school like organizing separate toilets for boys and girls, strengthening school committee, forming grievance redressal system, promoting girls leadership etc.



*Teacher sensitization meeting*

Teacher sensitization program assisted in sowing a sense of responsibility among the teachers and ensured all children's attending school. Intensive efforts were made to increase the school enrolment of the girls. There has been a progressive increase in the attendance & regularity of adolescent girls in schools.

**379** drop out girls have been re-enrolled to school during the project period. In some places the adolescent groups organized tuition/coaching classes for adolescent girls of weaker section. Around **550** adolescent girls benefited from this coaching.



*Networking with officials*

- Through networking and linkages, the project have been able to increase the access of the adolescent to school uniforms, books and bags, and social security schemes as follows:

Social Security Scheme	No. of adolescent girls families benefitted
Ujwala Scheme	69
Samuhik Vivah Yojana	17
Prime Minister Housing Scheme	151
Labour Card	377
Marriage Grant Scheme	18
Balika Samriddhi Yojana	44

## Objective 6

- Legal literacy and advocacy campaign, 'ME and My Friend' for Ags.**
- The sessions on legal literacy and advocacy campaign helped the adolescent girls in enhancing their knowledge of local laws and their rights, and ways to seek justice. Through session on legal rights the girls were sensitised on child marriage, child rights, property rights, FIR, RTE, RTI, domestic violence, POSCO act etc.
- At few instances the girls had claimed in the paternal property rights and in some places legal support service were organized for the girls. Networking meetings were organised with DLSA department for creating opportunities for adolescent girls as Para Legal Workers. Paralegals are grassroot advocates who use their knowledge of the law to seek concrete solutions to instances of



*Training on legal rights*

- justice. **12** trainings on Para Legal Work were organized and were participated by more **300** girls. Some diocesan partners have started linking the Ags with DLSA to spread legal awareness at the community level.
- In Jhansi two girls are appointed as Power Angels by the police officials. These girls have direct access to the police station and raise complaints when required. During the project period the Power Angels reported cases like: eve teasing, domestic violence, child marriage and dowry.



*Identification cards of power angels*

- During the project period **190** workshops were organized for **5700** Ags on FIR, **150** workshops were organized for **3400** Ags on domestic violence, **125** workshops on property rights for **3700** Ags on property rights & legal advocacy. In some places the groups have identified leaders to assist and guide the adolescent girls in crisis.

## Objective 7

- Sensitization of boys towards gender injustice and violence against girls.**
- A number of initiatives were organized to address gender norms, dating violence and sexual abuse among teenagers and young adults. These targets either male peer groups, or male and female youth together, and aim to increase knowledge of intimate partner



*Sensitization program for boys*



violence, challenge gender stereotypes and norms and reduce levels of violence.

- Despite major hurdles that still deny them equal rights, girls refuse to limit their ambitions. Positive results have been reported, more and more girls are attending and completing school, and fewer are getting married or becoming mothers. But discrimination and limiting stereotypes remain rife.
- 63** sessions were organized and **1664** participants participated in these sessions. Through workshops, skilling sessions and lectures, the adolescent boys and girls were educated on various subjects related to gender, sexual health, reproductive health, human rights and issues about gender. **75%** of school going children (boys) are aware and do realize the importance of gender equality. But the existing patriarchal society and the existing customs and traditions somehow hinders their thought and perception towards the opposite sex.
- The sessions on biological and psychological changes enabled the adolescent girls in changing their perspective and approach puberty in a healthy manner. Visit to health centre, district hospital were organized wherein the health workers address them on puberty and psychological issues. Under Rastriya Kishori Swasthya Karyakaram (RKSK) counselling sessions were organized for boys and girls. At some instances the participants were given IEC materials, Vitamin, Calcium and Iron tablets.



*Session on behaviour counselling*



## Objective 8

### Capacity building of adolescents and raising livelihood options.

SAKHI program was instrumental in analyzing the demand and skill gaps in the adolescent girls of Northern India to get a clear picture of the skills that are in demand in the local areas and the quantum of unemployment that can be addressed through skill building; imparting training in tailoring and beautician to enable the adolescent girls to choose for self-employment. These vocational course intended to create economic development of adolescent girls and their families & break poverty.

Tailoring & embroidery training, beautician training created opportunity for self-employment at their homes. More than **400** adolescent girls are earning around **Rs. 2500 – 3500** per month by tailoring and 350 adolescent girls are earning around **Rs. 2000 – 3000** per month through beauty parlour work. More than **50** adolescent girls have been appointed as tailoring tutor at various institutions. **60** adolescent girls have enrolled for fashion designing course, **50** girls have enrolled for advance beautician course and **90** girls have enrolled for advance computer course.



*Reviewing the tailoring records of Ags*

The process adopted in organizing the vocational course were as follows:

- Adolescent girl should be a group member, age **14** and above, preference was given to dropouts and economically poor girls.
- The course was free and were trained by qualified professional teacher. Certificates were given to those who successfully completed the course.

COVID-19 pandemic and the introduced quarantine have brought unplanned rapid changes in the project implementation. The restrictions confined the adolescent girls and could not gather for any vocational course. The SAKHI team remained active throughout the lockdown period and had organized telephonic conversations remotely from home with the vocational instructors and girls. At the ease of lockdown, vocational courses were resumed following the new norms.

The number of Ags who participated and completed the vocation courses are as follows:

Vocational Course	No. of Ags completed the course (October 2019 - November 2020)	No. of Ags completed the course (October 2017 - November 2020)
Tailoring and embroidery	956	2902
Basic computer	469	1659
Beautician	496	1952
Mala making & Home decor	30	198



Sessions on: Tailoring, Computer & Beautician



## Objective 9

### Continuous community mobilization through IEC & BCC activities.

Unsafe drinking water, poor sanitation and poor hygiene are the main causes of diarrhoea among children. In rural areas and especially in North India people are very negligent towards ensuring the safety of water. To mobilise community on the impacts of unsafe drinking water, POU tests were conducted to detect bacteriological



*BCC activities*



infection in the drinking water. Water samples from both, Point of Source and Point of Use were collected, stored in room temperature for **48** hours and then tested. It was found that **55** Point of Source were contaminated, SAKHI team had a dialogue with Village Monitoring Committee and succeeded in fixing 45 Point of Source.

**125** Point of Use were found to be infected due to unhealthy handling practices. The families were intervened and were sensitised on Household Water Treatment System (HWTS) methods, such as boiling or chlorination, washing hands before serving water, covering utensils and using long handled ladle for drawing and serving water.

## 4. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED DURING THE EXTENSION PHASE

COVID-19 has struck an unprecedented blow in the lives of adolescents all across the country, from disruptions in formal education to the lack of availability of essential resources to barriers in accessing health services. The complete shutdown of all economic activities had created an economic crisis and misery for the poor and families of adolescent girls. The families of adolescent girls of SAKHI intervention area were also affected because of lockdown. The shutdown has only compounded the existing problems of rural unemployment, low incomes, poverty & distress.

The project extension was designed with a new set of activities as per new normal. The activities were designed and planned as per the need analysis of Adolescent girls' aftermath of Covid-19 pandemic. Goatery based and backyard poultry livelihood development program aimed at promoting livelihood opportunities through adequate knowledge dissemination and developing market linkages for socio economic empowerment. Training and capacity building of adolescent girls and their families on livestock management helped them to minimise their risk and to maximize profit through introduction of scientific livestock rearing practices.

192 Vermi compost pits were also developed as demonstration model.

### Training on Goat Management & Backyard Poultry

**1800** adolescent girls (**150** from each DSSS) were selected from **12** DSSS for the training on Goat Management and another **1800** adolescent girls (**150** from each



*Training on Goat Management*



DSSS) were selected for training on Backyard Poultry. Opportunity were given to AGs who could not participate in any vocational course, migrant families, widows and drop outs. The guardians of Ags were also invited to participate in the training session. Trainings were conducted in 5 villages for two days in each DSSS. The resource person/experts for the training were pooled from different institutions like Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Agriculture Institute and likeminded NGOs. The adolescent girls got both, theoretical and practical knowledge of goat management and its rearing. The points covered in the training session were:

Training contents for Goat Management	Training contents for Backyard Poultry
Basic information about Goat	Basic information about Backyard Poultry
Different Breed of Goats, identification & speciality	Different Breed of Hen/Cock, identification and specialty
Habitation	Habitation
Feeding Practices	Feeding Practices
Measuring body weight	Vaccination
Vaccination	Increasing body weight and egg producing capacity
Disease management	Disease management
Market strategies	Market strategies
Cost benefits analysis	Cost benefits analysis
Different by-products from Goat milk	—



Training on Backyard Poultry

After the completion of training **517** adolescent girls were given goat (breed: local) and **589** adolescent girls were given hen (breed: local). An agreement between the community and organization has been done as per this each beneficiary who received goat; will rear goat properly, after giving birth beneficiary will rear kids for at least **4** months and that kid will be given to a new beneficiary. In this way within one year beneficiaries will be increased from **35** to **70**.



*Goat & Hen distribution*

## Para Legal Training

In **2009** National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) brought out a scheme called the Para-Legal Volunteers Scheme which aimed at imparting legal training to volunteers selected from different walks of life so as to ensure legal aid reaching all sections of people through the process of Para-Legal Volunteers Scheme; ultimately removing the barriers into access to justice.

The concept of HEALTH SAKHI / HEALTH VOLUNTEERS was successfully adopted by the community and they contributed immensely in bridging and streamlining the health services in their community. Accordingly, the concept of Para Legal Volunteers was introduced wherein **414** girls participated in the para legal training and ways to associate with DLSA. A two days training was organized for the identified girls, resource person from DLSA were invited for facilitating the sessions. After completing the training **100** adolescent girls have further enrolled for



advanced training course being organised by DLSA. After completing all the procedures as per DLSA the adolescent girls will be appointed as Para Legal Workers.

Once appointed as para legal workers they will impart awareness on laws and the legal system.



*Training on Para Legal*

## Vermi Compost Unit

The focus on Organic farming is being promoted rapidly for better health of human life, minimize chemical fertilizer consumption and is being considered as the best option for organic farming. Trainings were organized for adolescent girls and small farmers in the production of organic compost through vermiculture, a composting process using agro waste and earthworms to make nutrient-rich fertilizer.

**192** (minimum **14** pits/units in each DSSS) vermicompost pit has been developed as demo units. The manure developed from these units will be used in the farms and some will be sold to fellow farmers.



*Vermicompost pits in the making*



*Session on Vermicompost pit*

## 5. ADDITIONAL EFFECTS AND RISKS

The project has affected the lives of the people in many other ways as well. To count a few:

### Health

Networking and liasoning with health department and likeminded NGOs assisted in mobilizing more resources and IEC materials on menstrual hygiene and nutrition. Doctors, nurses, ANM, anganwadi workers were invited for organizing health camps and counselling sessions for Ags and their guardians.

Though so many programmes for adolescent are available, the services have not reached the target group adequately because resources like materials, money and man power are limited. No separate man power has been allotted for adolescent health services. This unprofessional



attitude of govt. departments often misleads the target group and hinders the project progress. Access to menstrual hygiene products for women and adolescent girls, especially those in rural areas, has been severely impacted due to the coronavirus pandemic and closure of educational institutions and community organisations has further compounded the problem.

## Gender

There has been a paradigm shift in the attitude of boys towards girls. **45%** boys are helping families to do equal treatment with the girls at homes and schools. But still in rural areas gender discrimination remains a point of concern and often girls and women are subjected to violence. The ratio of school drop-out among girls is more than compared to boys.

## Enhanced Livelihood

The SAKHI project has enhanced the vocational skills of **6480** adolescent girls. Many girls have impacted from vocational course and have been started their micro enterprise and are stitching different type of blouses, petticoat, salwar, kurtas etc. With this they are earning **2500 - 3500** Rupees per month as additional income for their family needs.

We had also introduced the concept of livestock management, in near future the adolescent girls will be exploring the opportunities on livestock for their livelihood enhancement.

## Ecology

Important days like environment day, Independence Day, earth day, water day etc. were celebrated with zeal and enthusiasm. These events were planned and executed by AG's which enhanced their awareness and unity on the importance of ecology conservation. Many AGs have developed and are promoting kitchen garden and terrace gardening. **192** vermi compost pits were constructed as demo for the community. Each community has owned the pit and have ensured its sustainability.

The manure developed from these pits will be used in kitchen garden and farms.

### Civil society

For elections awareness campaigns were held to ensure fair voting, people were mobilised and sensitised for casting their vote.

Village level monitoring committee and school monitoring committees actively participated in various activities at the village level and assisted the people in availing the govt. schemes.

The invisible social boundaries still persist and this hinders project activities. Girls from higher caste will hesitate to accompany girls of lower caste and vice-versa. This invisible boundary is hard to overcome.

## 6. EVALUATION

Internal evaluation and external monitoring was a regular phenomenon in the project implementation period. Findings and challenges are discussed at the staff and partner meeting and platforms have been created for sharing/learning.

The following method was practised during the project implemenation:

Diocesan Level	Secretariat level
Every month internal evaluation is done by the diocesan director. At times, Program Manager of the diocesan society too monitors and evaluates the project interventions.	Every month the project progress and way forward is planned and reflected by the secretariat team. project interventions.
Diocesan director visits to learn the progress and difficulties faced by the project staff. In some instances the village leaders and other influential people too accompanied the director.	A field visit is conducted, twice a year, wherein the secretariat team reviews the progress record, books of account and field activities. The findings and learnings are further shared with the concerned team and it is ensured that the suggestions are being incorporated.

The challenges encountered during field work activities were presented at a bigger platform called the Coordinators Meet. In this meet all lights and shades were shared and discussed and accordingly a consensus was developed for implementation.

## 7. CONCLUSION

### 7.1 Lessons learned within the project

- Adolescent girls are making a vast impact and are heading the groups. During the first year of implementation, adolescent girls were reluctant to participate in group meetings and sessions. The girls were never considered capable and mature to take decisions on their own. Home visits and counselling sessions assisted in collecting girls and paved way for group formation.
- SAKHI project always emphasised on upholding and promoting the transition of adolescent girls from school to productive growth through innovative interventions. The support of stakeholders: panchayat members, health and education department, local guardians to the project interventions have enhanced their hope to strive hard for their needs.
- Involvement of local stakeholders like teachers, school management community, parents, community members and groups, block level officials and media were helpful in fruitfully implementing the activities. Timely availability of resource materials, monitoring feedback to the staff and follow up sessions with Ag's group, anganwadi centres etc, was central to the girl's observance to the program and its success.
- In most of our intervention areas we found that Ags suffer from a variety of poverty-ridden village life conditions: caste oppression, lack of facilities, malnutrition, educational backwardness, early marriage and gender neglect. These difficulties did sometimes hurdle and disturbed the work atmosphere. Relatively little attention within an already constrained set of policy initiatives has focused on appreciating the distinctive needs of girls
- Adolescents generally enter the labor force out of economic need to help reduce the vulnerability of their households. Families deploy adolescents for work as part of a larger household survival strategy. Vocational training on tailoring,



beautician and home decor courses have enhanced the skills of adolescent girls and are contributing in their family's income. Training on goat management and backyard poultry provided an opportunity to the adolescent girls to get acquainted with livestock management and can adopt it in near future.

- The lessons learnt indicate that SAKHI project served as a platform for the empowerment of Ags, reduce gender and social inequalities and break the inter-generational cycle of under nutrition and deprivation in India.
- The COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge for the SAKHI team and our partners. Consultation meetings were organised with the partners to find the new ways how to reach our target group, how to help school communities, how to ensure continuation of health activities. The team has managed to find creative ways of working from “home” as well as to stay safe and productive. Digital online means were used in all the activities implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **7.2 What lessons were learnt from project implementation to date with respect to your organization?**

- The project SAKHI paved way for adolescent girls wherein the girls got a chance to explore, analyse and address their specific development through various need-based interventions. The project has been instrumental in shaping the confidence and enhancing their soft and hard skills at various platforms.
- SAKHI project has opened the window, or prepared the soil for very good interventions. After SAKHI many other projects can go and use this openness or preparedness of adolescent girls and communities for interventions in this field. A lot of people were mobilized thanks to the intervention. People came, started working, thinking, talking, about progress of adolescent girls and way forward.
- In the community SAKHI initiated a dialogue between parents and children on sexual and reproductive health issues. Many parents said that previously it was difficult to address these issues because of shame and taboos about sexuality, but with various SAKHI activities they became more sensitized.
- Caste-based discrimination still remains a big factor that hinders the growth of Ags. At field level our intervention gets a setback due to the poor economic condition of our beneficiaries (families of adolescent girls), as they are

compelled to participate in bread earning activities. To ensure their participation achievable strategies were formulated to ensure AG's participation in all events.

### 7.3 How do you rate the current status of the achievements of project objectives?

- The adolescent girl project, SAKHI has contributed in enhancing the capacity, awareness, vocational skills, stay in school concept and improved sexual and reproductive health. The project has promoted adolescent girls leader and strengthened girls forum. There is an increase of **55%** in girls who are getting married after **18** years and **85%** of these girls are aware of the consequences of early pregnancy, **1774** child marriages were stopped in **9** districts during the project period.
- More than **8000** Ags have been trained in legal literacy and **24%** girls have used helpline services. Gender sensitization and behaviour modification sessions have enabled in increasing general sensitivity, understanding and knowledge about gender (in)equality. **30%** boys are helping families to do equal treatment with the girls at homes and schools.
- Linkages were established consciously & strategically with other ongoing projects to pull and leverage resources for benefitting and strengthening both SAKHI and other projects. The community played a vital role in the transition of project objective. Timely help from the community assisted in pooling community resources like space, man power and other logistics. The constant support from the line department and govt. officials has synergized a positive outcome wherein the target beneficiaries are able to voice their needs and demands.

### 7.4 Are you planning to change your approach in any way? If so, how?

- The approaches that were planned and shared were incorporated across the project intervention.

## 8. TESTIMONIES OF STAKEHOLDERS

*“Adolescence age is just the beginning and soon these girls will step into being more matured and responsible persons. SAKHI project is providing right opportunity at very appropriate time to them. So let them to be bloomed and achieve heights of success.”*

**Mr. Shakti Singh Shekhawat,**  
**Secretary, District Legal Service Authority Ajmer**

*“**14827** community members have been benefitted with different government schemes and services provided by Health Department through remarkable efforts of **10** Health Sakhi under Sakhi project. Access of maximum people to their entitlements has only been possible due to Health Sakhi.”*

**Ms. Taruna Rajput**  
**ANM – Loharwada Panchayat**

*“Trained Health Sakhis are now reaching to **500** to **600** community members every month and providing support in getting sanitary pads, vaccination, counselling in health issues, family planning aids and referral to govt. hospitals and health centres. They also assist health personnel during vaccination day, campaigns of Swatchh Bharat Mission, Polio drop etc. The community acknowledges their support and respects them like other health personnel in the village. They now are moving towards making their career in community health”.*

**Dr. Ravindra Sharma**  
**Head In-charge, Ramsar PHC - Ajmer**



*My girls were shy and never expressed themselves, after joining the group there has been a huge transformation in them. They assist in family decision, does household marketing, approached govt. authorities and also participates in gram sabha meetings.*

**Mr Barampura Rajeev**  
**F/O Sadhana**

*“Project Sakhi gave me confidence to step out from the home and raise my voice. It was really life time achievement for me that I fought panchayat election. I did not win but the self respect and popularity I earned are beyond than any victory.”*

**Ms. Pooja**  
**Project Beneficiary – Village Hanuwantia**

*Sakhi project has deeply impacted the life of the adolescent girls and gave them a platform for grabbing opportunities to become independent and sustainable. Girls who earlier feared or hesitated to go out from their homes are now freely commuting and communicating with other people. He assured that any social evil such as dowry, child marriage, exploitation, female feticide will be strictly addressed as people are aware of these problems.*

**Shri Inshad**  
**Gram Pradhan, Idrishpur, Meerut**

# *ANNEXURES*





**M**s. Saira Guddu Khan, is from Lohavan Village in Mathura. Her father is a laborer and mother housewife. She has a younger brother and a sister both are dropouts. Training on Goat Management

Saira is a member of Mahek Kishori Group since October **2017** and has participated in all activities organized for the group. Her active participation in group activities and leadership quality yielded and got the opportunity to participate in Goat Management Training organized at the Dairy Farm, Mathura. Saira attended the three 3 days training from **12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> November 2020** and learnt on different breed of goats, habitation, vaccination, feeding practices, fodder management, disease management etc. After attending the training she was provided with a goat and a contract was done, wherein Saira will return the first baby of the goat to the organization.

After **18** days of training she saw a goat in her neighborhood struggling to deliver. The goat struggled for one and half hour. The lady of the house knew that Saira had attended the training and she called her for help. Saira was nervous and was reluctant to get involved. Since no veterinary doctor was present in and around, Saira immediately contacted the resource person and with the help of video call she managed in doing the proceedings. Saira saw the Billy was pulling its face out, at once she sanitized her hands. Then as directed with the help of her fingers she hold the neck and pulled the billy out.

She was happy to see the billy and saved both, goat and billy. Sara was proud and realized that her learnings from the training did not go in vain but had the opportunity to save the life.

The lady thanked Saira saying that “You have saved my goat. I didn't have money even to call the doctor. I thank you and SAKHI project who has empowered you with such knowledge”.



## PRECISION OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN THE COMMUNITY'S INTEREST...



The Sakhi project has not only resulted in communication of skill development among adolescent girls, but also decision-making capacity. Their decision-making ability has developed at their own level as well as for the community interest. They proved this at the time of the Corona Pandemic, at the time when the fear of Corona was spreading in the village due to which people did not get out of the house, then the adolescent girls of Sakhi Project decided that they would make domestic masks for the people of the village to protect them from Corona. Healthy Sakhi motivated the adolescent girls for stitching mask. Adolescent girls distributed **1270** masks to people in the Sakhi project area.

UKSVK Agra provided cloths and Mask material for **860** adolescent girls of Sakhi project. After which the work was carried out on a war footing. The senior adolescent girls of the village made masks in groups and distributed masks to all the girls in the village. During this time, the adolescent girls have also helped in writing on the wall in the village to make people aware of the corona pandemic.

Healthy sakhies from the Sakhi project area also helped distribute food supplies sent by UKSVK in the Corona pandemic.





**K**umari Sana D/o Mr. Anees lives in village Jani Khurd, her family's financial condition is weak and is also very conservative. She has two brothers and one sister, her father and mother work as daily wage labourers in the agriculture field and earn their livelihood.

Sana was good at academics and wanted to pursue her education, due to financial constrain and orthodox mentality of her relatives she had to drop out.

When SAKHI project was implemented in her village she was approached by the project staff to be the member of the project. Sana accepted the proposal and got associated with the project. Sana took the lead of mobilising other girls of her village to join the SAKHI project. Because of her motivation and leadership quality soon a group, named, **786** Adolescent Group was formed and Sana was elected as leader of the group.

Sana and her group members actively participated in group meetings and all other events organized under SAKHI project.

One day Sana expressed her desire of continuing her academics with the SAKHI team. Soon the SAKHI team met her parents and counseled them, her parents reluctantly agreed at that moment. After two weeks when the SAKHI team met Sana, she shared that her parents did not agree for her education. Thereafter the SAKHI team and the village Pradhan intervened and had meetings with Sana's parents. The Pradhan assured all possible help will be rendered to Sana to pursue her studies. The SAKHI team also pooled in Rs. **5000/-**.

When she got admission in class **8th**, her grandparents and relatives pressurized her for marriage even though she was not **18**. During the lockdown period the expenses of the marriage and dowry



were low. Sana courageously denied the marriage proposal and also threatened that she will contact the police if they forcefully indulged her in marriage. Her firm and proactive decision was a setback for the elderly and at last, they allowed her to enroll for further studies.

During COVID-19, Sana stitched more than **200** face masks and distributed in the community. Sana and her group had also organized cleanliness drive in her area and always mobilized the community on waste management and sanitation.

The SAKHI project has helped Sana in redefining her life. She also appeals to other girls to give priority to education and take the opportunity to seek higher education which is the base and true meaning of development. She along with her family thanks SAKHI project for giving them a platform to break the chains of suppression and low mentality of the community.





**A** separate toilet for girls is the very necessity of a girl student specially, for an adolescent girl student. Without proper sanitation facilities in schools often adolescent girls drop out from the school.

**“Triangular Session with Parents, teachers and Ags to get maximum enrolment of dropout girls and to regularise/enhance attendance of focus Ags”** was aptly planned. During a triangular session in Junior High School of Chilona village, Gorakhpur, Principal, Teachers, Ags and parents of Ags shared the challenges they are facing. Teachers were worried about regular attendance of Ags and Ags were worried about the toilet facilities in the school. Ags demanded for a separate toilet with gender specific facilities in the school to come to school regularly, as they have to face problem in using common toilet during menstrual period and in regular days too. They proposed that if the school provides a separate toilet for girls with dustbin, soap, sanitary napkin and water facilities, no girl enrolled in the institution will ever skip the attendance. Mr. Amarnath Verma, Principal of Junior High School gave an affirmative response to the problem shared by the AGs and assured that a separate toilet for girls with all the gender specific facilities will be constructed.

In the month of October, **2019** a separate toilet for girls was constructed according to the needs of Ags. All the female students of the school are now regularly going to the school and the attendance registers of the school reflect enhanced attendance too. Number of enrolment of Ags and the quality of education among the Ags improved in the target school as the result of regularisation in attendance in school.

The smile reflects the reaction of Ags, parents and teachers of the school. They all thank SAKHI project for the happiness in their life.

## SO WHAT WE ARE GIRLS; WE CAN ALSO SUPPORT OUR FAMILY...



**P**riyanka and Kamlesh are living in village Dholabhata with their father and paternal uncle's family. Their family survives on agricultural production of **15** bighas land. Their father, paternal uncle and paternal aunty all had equal right on this **15** bighas land but paternal aunty denied to take her portion of land. As land was undivided, their family cultivated different crops and got enough income from the same. But soon after paternal aunty demanded for her portion due to which their father and uncle were very upset.

During training on property rights of women, they came to know that if land right is surrendered once it cannot be used again. Inspired Priyanka and Kamlesh to share this information with their family members and got assistance in filing petition in concerned office.

*"We are very grateful to project Sakhi as we now understand our land rights are fundamental human rights. With the help of training provided by project, we could help our family members and bring out of that disappointing problem. They are proud of us now".*

**Priyanka and Kamlesh**



## ENSURING NUTRITION FROM PLOT TO PLATE...



**A**t a distance of **46** km from district head quarters there is a village Balapura where a total of **260** families reside. Out of them, **57** families belong to schedule caste, schedule tribes and below poverty line. Anu, daughter of Kailash Singh lives in the village with two siblings. Life was very difficult as her parents are labourers. Her family use very little vegetables in their food as they do not have money to buy them which leads to poor health.

In the first year of project Sakhi, Anu joined Adolescent Group and attended monthly meetings regularly where she learnt about Kitchen Garden. She expressed her desire to establish kitchen garden and got a kit of advance vegetable seeds. The kit contained seeds of lady's finger, bitter guard, bottle guard, round guard, tomato, brinjal, chili, spinach, cucumber etc. Besides fruit bearing plants like papaya were also given. Through the training conducted by project Sakhi in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, she was informed about kitchen garden management practices and she followed the same regularly. Soon the production of green vegetables started from her garden just after **30-40** days. Now Anu's family does not have to spend money to purchase vegetables from market as they get enough vegetables for daily use. She gives some vegetables to others members of group as the yield is more than their requirement and inform them about importance of green vegetables in food. There are many long term benefits of the Kitchen garden, solution to the problem of malnutrition, anemia, deficiency of vitamins and nutrients, diseases, among women and children would be tackled and maternal mortality rates will come down. Girls will be physically and mentally strong and energetic.

*"My family's health suffered due to unavailability of enough nutrients in the diet as we were not capable of purchasing vegetables from the market. Kitchen garden are not only saving money which is being spent in buying vegetables but with the help of these gardens the health of all family members is improved."*

Anu





**G**eeta Kumari, age **16**, hails from a poor family. Her mother is a house wife and father works as an agricultural labourer. He is the only earning member in her family. She has two sisters and two brothers. Geeta goes to school regularly, she is studying in class eleventh, her favourite subject is Hindi.

Geeta Kumari became a part of the SAKHI program in **2018**. After joining the program she became a member of adolescent girl group and has taken part in various activities such as 'Knowing our Body' (menstrual hygiene), Healthy Cooking, Triangular food, Personality Development, Domestic Violence, Property rights, Advocacy (how to file FIR and RTI) etc.

Regarding health, Aags were given training on kitchen garden, where girls were taught to maintain their health by taking proper and nutritious diet. Girls were advised to go for kitchen garden at the back yard of their house so that they may have green leafy vegetables and Aags may avail better health. Geeta liked this concept and decided to develop a kitchen garden. Her father and Geeta together developed the kitchen garden. Geeta cultivated green and leafy vegetables, tomato, pumpkin, bitter gourd, bottle gourd and cucumber.

Geeta and her family members are consuming vegetables cultivated in their kitchen garden thus by consuming she has gained body weight, they also share vegetable to AG's who are landless so that they may also acquire better health and nutrition status in the body. Through this they are saving money as well as maintaining their health.

Geeta and her parents are thankful to SAKHI Project for providing moral and social support and enhancing the capacity of adolescent girls.



With a population of **1375** people spread out across hills of Aravali, village Hanuvantia is **40** Km away from district headquarters, Ajmer. Remoteness creates a major challenge for access to emergency care; accessing better health facilities is distant dream for these villagers. Situations are worse for Adolescent Girls as they have poor knowledge and lack of awareness about physical and psychological changes that occur during adolescence and the ill health affecting them. There are very limited programs addressing actual needs of this group. Lack of accurate information, absence of proper guidance, parent's ignorance, lack of skills and insufficient services from health care delivery system are the major barriers.

Project Sakhi concentrated on diverse need of adolescent girls and focused on multidimensional approach with special emphasis on behaviour change communication towards leading a healthy lifestyle, awareness creation about reproductive and sexual health, educating parents to prevent early marriage, teenage pregnancy and to counsel their children on nutrition and reproductive health.

In lining with the project Sakhi, **951** adolescent girls have been capacitated on Reproductive Child Health, Hygiene & Sanitation and Nutritional food through specific trainings and regular health sessions. Initiatives are enforcing strengthened relations between government health workers and community especially adolescent girls. Remarkable progress of Health Sakhi is best example of improved relationship with government departments. Till now, **4520** community members have mainstreamed with existing government's schemes and services related to health especially immunization, availing nutritional supplements, availing sanitary pads, iron tablets, assisting in reaching health centers and mobilization on health issues.

SAKHI project has created live examples of improvement in critical health of adolescent girls. They are now very much aware about physical and mental changes occurring in their age and dealing



process with these changes; openly share their problems with project staff and health officials, taking benefits of health department's services and many more. Adolescents have increased nutritional requirements demanding diet rich in protein, vitamins, calcium, iodine, phosphorus, and iron due to rapid growth spurt and increased physical activity. Additionally, girls are much more confident in raising awareness and in providing handholding support to other community members which is the best indicator of their empowerment.

*"I always thank project Sakhi and its staff who provided me with the opportunity to learn and motivated me to speak up at least about my problems. Now, I can ask questions to ANM without feeling embarrassed. Discussions during Adolescent group's monthly meetings and regular health sessions have helped ease my fears and shown me the light in the midst of darkness. My mother used to avoid discussion on menstrual cycle but project Sakhi says that sharing resolves any problem and there is nothing to be ashamed of."*

**Pooja**



## Ags HEALTH INSURED BY HEALTH SAKHIs...



**H**ealth SAKHI are an important concept of SAKHI program who played an important role in mainstreaming the project objectives. The efforts of Health Sakhi has been appreciated by the community and in some instances they have been promoted to assist the frontline health workers.

Trainings on communicable and non-communicable disease, menstrual hygiene etc were organised for the them. Further, Health Sakhi's organised sessions for adolescent girls group on seasonal diseases, Menstrual Health Management, Nutrition, kitchen gardening and its benefit, government health entitlements for AGs, Sanitation and hygiene, home remedies for some minor health problems, first aid and to assist AGG members of their focus villages to access local health services provided by the frontline health workers at village block and district level.

In Gorakhpur diocese, **05** out of **10** trained Health Sakhi came forward to work as volunteers. During Covid -19 pandemic they coordinated with the health workers and assisted them in reaching the community. During lockdown they managed in visiting the adolescent girls and made available Iron Folic Tablets, TT vaccination, supplements and sanitary pads.



The Health Sakhi of Mishrauliya Village, during a monthly group meeting discussed on TT vaccination and its importance. After the meet, **10** girls of the group contacted her and said their ignorance on TT immunization and have never taken TT vaccination in their life time. On **25th**

January **2020** the Health Sakhi accompanied the **10** Ajs and took them to the ANM for TT vaccination and told that this vaccination will last for next six months. After six months these girls revisited the ANM for the second dose. Once they got immunized they motivated their school friends and successfully mobilized **30** more adolescent girls for the TT vaccination.

In Mishrauliya and Daleelganj village the Health SAKHI's are often called for counselling sessions or medical aid and they accompany the people to district hospital for further treatment. The SAKHI project has played a vital role in realizing and mainstreaming the potential of adolescent girls who are now not treated as property, chattel, or spoils of war, but rather as individuals with their own voice, talents, and freedom to realize their potential and contribute to our collective humanity.

## Emerging Leader...



**M**iss Veena Garaciya, **19** year, resident of Chattrakutta Panchayat, Sajjangarh Tehsil, Banswara District, Rajasthan is a Bhil Aadiwasi girl from a poor family. Her parents are farmers. She is the eldest among the four children.

Four years before Veena joined Jyoti Kishori Samuh and since then she regularly participated in the group meetings, trainings, awareness programs and many other activities implemented by the project which enabled her to come up like an active and zealous girl.

Veena always had a dream to become a leader and serve the society, especially for women and girls. Because she knew that women were more important than producers or gatherers of meal and rearing children. She realized that each woman/kishori has to struggle in one way or another against the discrimination.

After participating in the training sessions on property rights, domestic violence, gender equality, child marriage and so on she found that it is necessary to understand the system which keeps women dominated and subordinated. Soon she realized and decided to contest the Panchayat Election **2020**. She consulted her family, and they were happy with her decision. Though the community opposed her decision but her family always showered love and support that kept her dream alive.

She stood as a candidate for ward punch. There were three candidates against her. She prepared well and stood for the election. Her hardwork and firm decision yielded, she got **123** votes and was declared Ward Punch. Veena is very much appreciated by the villagers and Panchayat authorities and is a role model for other adolescent girls.

She states that if women leaders are no more likely than male leaders to pass domestic legislation that benefits women and increases gender equality, then who will? If female leaders do not use their power to bridge the gender gap then, who will? But if women do, in fact, facilitate the adoption of gender-specific measures and policies that benefit women, then it can be argued that women's political empowerment, particularly in the developing world can be a tool to bridge the gap and improve the social conditions of women and society as a whole. Now she wants to bring about changes in the villages and in the life of women. She is determined to make available all the government schemes for the needy.

Veena is thankful to SAKHI project for developing her leadership quality and establishing her identity in the community.



## SARAS MELA...



**W**hen the river springs out from its original, it does not have any map or path towards the ocean, without the map, it moves ahead making its own path continuously to reach the ocean its goal. In the same way, when a person is born, he too does not have his goals, but as a result of continuous learning effort, he chooses and reaches the goal.

From **1st October 2017**, in collaboration with the USVK, DSWS – Lucknow started implementing Sakhi project for adolescent girls with two objectives – **1. Prevention of child marriage 2. Gender equality**. The project was implemented in **12** selected villages of Banki Block, Barabanki District. Under this project 762 adolescents were selected in **12** villages.

Various activities were conducted for adolescent girls like: health and hygiene, nutrition, Adolescent Rights, Education etc. On September 8th, Kishori Diwas (Adolescent girls Day) was celebrated, wherein various cultural programs, dramas etc were performed by them.

Ms. Pooja Jaiswal, District Officer - Women's Welfare Department was taken aback by the enthusiasm and talents of Ags and assured them to provide an opportunity to perform at a higher platform.

As per her commitment, she gave opportunities to Ags to exhibit their hidden talents at village and district level. National Girl Child Day was celebrated on January **24, 2020** in Matanpurwa village by District Women Welfare Department. The play on Beti Bachao



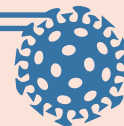
*Adolescent girls performing a skit*

Beti Padhao by AGs gave a strong message on the empowerment of women. To grace the occasion, Mrs. Ruchi Sharma and Mrs. Neha Gupta, Welfare Department's Coordinators, Fr. Praveen, Director DSWS - Lucknow, Anganwadi Worker Sarla Singh were also present, **175** people attended the event.

The next day, District Women Welfare Officer Ms. Pooja Jaiswal invited the AGs to perform at the district level wherein Saras Mela/Fair was organized by the govt. department on **27th** January **2020** at G.I.C. ground Barabanki. The fare was led by the District Officer, MP, MLA and other district level officers.

The adolescent girls of SAKHI project presented a play on Beti Bachao Beti Padhao in Saras Mela. Adolescent girls got the opportunity to present for the first time in front of thousands of people. This was the first time that the Ags left their village and performed at a bigger event. Barabanki MP-Mr. Upendra Rawat and other respected guests appreciated the girls. This opportunity has enhanced their self-confidence and inspiration to be sharper in future.







## ‘हिन्दी दैनिक समाचार पत्र’

## डे दू डे इंडिया

### डी एस डब्लू एस संस्था द्वारा चलाई गई सखी परियोजना के तहत कई परिवारों को निशुल्क मिली दो दो बकरियां।

डे दू डे इंडिया से-संवाददाता जय किशन सतरिखडे जनपद बाबाबंकी के अलगत ग्राम पंचायत सराय बुधेडी में डी एस डब्लू एस

पावर प्रवीण, ग्राम प्रधान बुजेश चंद, मायाराम जाटा प्रधान, सुर्य प्रकाश पाल कृषि विभाग, सूरजपाल राजवंशी, सत्येंद्र यादव ने दीप प्रज्वलित कर

देने के लिए प्रेरित करते हुए बताया कि बकरी पालन एक ऐसा व्यवसाय है। जिसको कम समय में कम स्थान पर कम लागत में किया जा सकता है और यही नहीं इस व्यवसाय से अच्छी आमदनी प्राप्त होती है। और धीरे धीरे व्यवसाय को बढ़ाया जा सकता है। उन्होंने जानकारी देने के बाद लाभार्थियों को शुभकामनाएं तथा सराहनीय कार्य के लिए संस्था को धन्यवाद दिया। कार्यक्रम का समापन रजनी नसीहा ने उपस्थित लोगों के प्रति आभार व्यक्त किया। इस मौके पर परियोजना सुपरवाइजर शिवप्रसाद, नुसरत जहां, सुभा यादव, सूरजपाल राजवंशी, बालदियर रामकुमार कश्यप लखानी गुप्ता, मी० नसीर, अजमत अली, पवन कुमार



संस्था द्वारा चलाई जा रही सखी परियोजना के तहत 35 जरूरतमंद परिवारों को दो दो

कार्यक्रम का शुभारंभ किया गया। इसके पश्चात संस्था निदेशक प्रवीण ने लाभार्थियों

### 150 किशोरी महिलाओं को मुर्गी पालन एवं 150 किशोरियों को बकरी पालन का परियोजना सखी के तहत दिया गया प्रशिक्षण



### परियोजना सखी के तहत 35 परिवारों को निःशुल्क मिली दो दो बकरी

बाबाबंकी। जनपद में डी एस डब्लू एस संस्था द्वारा चलाई जा रही परियोजना सखी के तहत ग्राम सराय बुधेडी चौराहे पर डी एस डब्लू एस संस्था के तहत 35 परिवारों को दो दो बकरी निशुल्क मिली गई। कार्यक्रम को सूरजपाल राजवंशी, मायाराम जाटा प्रधान, सुर्य प्रकाश पाल कृषि विभाग, सूरजपाल राजवंशी, सत्येंद्र यादव ने दीप प्रज्वलित कर कार्यक्रम का शुभारंभ किया। इसके पश्चात संस्था निदेशक प्रवीण ने लाभार्थियों को संबोधित करते हुए

गौर-श्री यादव को बकरी जो सखी ने उन्होंने जानकारी जानकारी देने के बाद लाभार्थियों को सुझाव देकर, नुसरत जहां, सुभा यादव, सूरजपाल राजवंशी को संबोधित करते हुए



### सब्जी विक्रेताओं को बांटे सैनिटाइजर और मास्क

इमर उजाला फाउंडेशन की कोविड फाउंडेशन की टीम ने सखी परियोजना के तहत ग्राम सराय बुधेडी चौराहे पर डी एस डब्लू एस संस्था के तहत 35 परिवारों को दो दो बकरी निशुल्क मिली गई। कार्यक्रम को सूरजपाल राजवंशी, मायाराम जाटा प्रधान, सुर्य प्रकाश पाल कृषि विभाग, सूरजपाल राजवंशी, सत्येंद्र यादव ने दीप प्रज्वलित कर कार्यक्रम का शुभारंभ किया। इसके पश्चात संस्था निदेशक प्रवीण ने लाभार्थियों को संबोधित करते हुए



किसी भी तरह के सहयोग या मदद के लिए 9475896300 और 6397463009 पर वाट्सएप करें अथवा सुझाव देने के लिए टीम को सखी परियोजना के तहत ग्राम सराय बुधेडी चौराहे पर डी एस डब्लू एस संस्था के तहत 35 परिवारों को दो दो बकरी निशुल्क मिली गई। कार्यक्रम को सूरजपाल राजवंशी, मायाराम जाटा प्रधान, सुर्य प्रकाश पाल कृषि विभाग, सूरजपाल राजवंशी, सत्येंद्र यादव ने दीप प्रज्वलित कर कार्यक्रम का शुभारंभ किया। इसके पश्चात संस्था निदेशक प्रवीण ने लाभार्थियों को संबोधित करते हुए

### देवदूत बने मेडिकल स्टाफ को बांटे गए सैनिटाइजर और मास्क

माई सिटी रिपोर्टर

हनुमान। कोरोना के खिलाफ लड़ाई में देवदूत बने मेडिकल स्टाफ को सैनिटाइजर और मास्क बांटे गए। मेडिकल कॉलेज के प्रिंसिपल डॉ. सोनी शर्मा ने अमर उजाला फाउंडेशन और गो क्वीन-गो क्वीन की संयुक्त पहल को मेडिकल कॉलेज के प्रिंसिपल ने सराहा।



अमर उजाला फाउंडेशन और गो क्वीन और गो क्वीन के सहयोग से देवदूत बने मेडिकल स्टाफ को सैनिटाइजर और मास्क बांटे गए हैं। इस कार्य में कुछ छात्रों ने भी सहयोग कर रहे हैं। सोमवार को टीम के सदस्य गो क्वीन-गो क्वीन के अध्यक्ष सोनी शर्मा ने अमर उजाला फाउंडेशन और गो क्वीन-गो क्वीन की संयुक्त पहल को मेडिकल कॉलेज के प्रिंसिपल ने सराहा।

सखी, डॉक्टर की के कुच्छल, डॉक्टर अशोक कुमार, डॉक्टर परमजीत सिंह और माइको बायोटेक्नोलॉजी के डॉक्टर उमेश मीनू से। टीम ने मेडिकल कॉलेज के प्रिंसिपल डॉ. सोनी शर्मा और मास्क बांटे। मास्क और सैनिटाइजर

### ब्रांकी-मेरट

### वेलकम

### 23 किशोरियों को जिला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकरण में पैरा लीगल पर प्रशिक्षण का आयोजन





**Implemented by:**



**Uttar Kshetriya Samaj Vikas Kendra (UKSVK)  
The Northern Regional Forum**

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