ROSHNI,
A RAY OF HOPE

Apna Shauchalay

Roshni Ahirvar (15), daughter of Mr. Pritam Singh hails from Alampura village, in Jhansi. Roshni, daughter of a daily wage laborer has two siblings. Their fragile economic condition resulted in discontinuation of her and her sister's education after the primary level. After a year, they encountered the SAKHI team in their village. In one session, Roshni and her sister expressed their desire to continue their studies. The SAKHI team accompanied Roshni and her sister who shared their concerns with the village Gram Pradhan, who was elated to see the enthusiasm and interest for education among the girls. His intervention got Roshni and her sister enrolled in Kasturba School.

In the meantime, it was learned that Roshni was suffering from increased menstrual frequency, which was affecting her health and wellbeing. Her family turned to superstitious practices and magic to find the cure. This only worsened her condition. The SAKHI team contributed for her medical treatment and the issue was resolved. This motivated Roshni to spread awareness of menstrual hygiene and health and discourage superstitious beliefs and practices.

Lack of functional toilets in public schools is one of the main reasons for girls dropping out, especially during menstrual days. This also leads to open defecation which exposes the young girls to the risk of eve teasing. Triangular sessions with parents, teachers and adolescent girls addressed the issue of lack of sanitation facilities in the junior school, of Khalilabad block, SantKabir Nagar district in Gorakhpur. During a triangular session in Junior High School of Chilona village, the school principal, teachers, adolescent girls and their parents, discussed in the School Management Committee meeting about the need for proper sanitation facility to enable the girls to attend school regularly. The School Principal took heed of the concern and in April 2019, a separate female toilet was made functional which has made the girls' attendance consistent.