

ANNUAL REPORT
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ARPAN

Association for Rural Planning & Action

Field Office : Village Helpiya

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About this report

We are in a stage in human history where “ development “ has to be challenged . 2020-2021 had impacted the lives of people world over . COVID 19 pandemic with its strains and waves has seen no boundaries and no strata of the society . The impact of the pandemic has hit the economically and socially marginalised community the hardest , and among them the women in the families have again silently borne all the burnt .

The 2021-2022 annual report analyses the work carried out at the grass root level , engagement with different stakeholders , impact , challenges and future direction .

During the period the focus of work revolved around the basic Human rights issues of the most marginalised sections of the society . *Roti kapda aur Maakan* ie food , clothing and shelter also translated as a decent life and livelihood provided with dignity. The main source of livelihood is land based (80% agriculture , forest based and animal husbandry) . The target community were the socio – economically marginalised community , with focus on WOMEN from SC / ST community , Single women , survivors of violence and disabled . Our engagement with children in difficult circumstances has been highlighted .

The area of work was District Pithoragrh as a whole , but with concentrated efforts in the three Blocks of the district (Kannalichhina , Didihat and Dharchula)

About us

Our Vision *A SOCIETY BASED ON SOCIAL & ECONOMICAL JUSTICE , EQUALITY , EQUITY*

Our Mission *COMMUNITY INSTITUTION BUILDING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE & JUSTICE*

ARPAN – Association for Rural Planning & Action is a Right Based NGO , registered under the Society Registration Act 1860 on October 24 , 1996 .

Main Issues and Engagements during the year

Social , Economic and Political Empowerment of Women

The on-going processes of integrated approach to address and establish gender equality , equity and justice , with women in the center of all its program were carried with the following objectives in view –

- To improve the access and control over land and natural resources and promote climate resilient sustainable agriculture and provide sustainable sources of livelihoods.
- Facilitate local community in accessing various government schemes and entitlements.

- Work with children to create community demands for quality education by strengthening the capacity of SMC, PRI and local community
- Address issues of gender and caste based discrimination of the Dalit and tribal community in particular , and violence against women and girls in general, by challenging the patriarchal mind set in the society through alliance building among the marginalized community.

To achieve the set objectives, the focus was on both strengthening the collectives of women and adolescent girls , through their capacity building workshops , And supporting their struggles related to the land and forest issues , livelihood , ensuring entitlements , quality education and challenging patriarchal norms .

Women in the political sphere : Elected women representatives from Gram sabha were identified and their capacities raised through different programs . The reach during the year was 84 Gram panchayats from 03 Blocks , where in 430 EWRs were covered through the following programs –

Sl.No	Programs	Total programs	Total Participants
1	Welcome seminar for Newly elected ERWs	01	155
2	Women leadership workshops	12	325
3	Need based workshops	21	344
4	Advocacy at the district level for on-line classes (survey report)	01	55

Impact :

Elected women representatives raised issues of concern like availability of water , Public distribution system , school education , child marriages and domestic violence . The presence of EWR's and their support to women collectives resulted in positive results ,which are discussed in details .

Land , Forest and water : Main sources of life and livelihood for communities living in rural areas . A base line survey had been carried out in the 35 villages falling under 03 Blocks and thereafter a more focused survey on the status of water (quantity , quality and access) in the villages . The women collectives and panchayat members were involved during the survey and the findings were shared with them . A campaign was organized on We and Our natural resources *Hum aur Hamare prakritik sansadhan* , covering 33 villages . The campaign reached out to more than 2000 people (939 women , 533 man and 292 children) . The main objective of the campaign were – to raise awareness and sensitize people towards the depleting natural resources and appeal to protect and increase the quantity of water in the traditional water

sources in the villages (*Naula , dhara*) , protection and regeneration of our forests , mitigation of the impact of climate change on agriculture

Impact

Small group meetings were organized in the villages and memorandums were submitted at the Panchayat and District level . As a result 04 water tanks of 2000 liters were constructed under NREGS in village Chami and Hudki .

Water pipeline repair was started in six vulnerable villages and In two villages Baram and Birkham water cannal /*Gul* for irrigation work was started .Lack of broad leaved tress is one of the main reason for decreasing quantity in the traditional water sources . Villagers have started plantation in their community forests and dug small trenches called *chal / khal* .

Land and Forest Issues : Forest is the source of livelihood for the PVTG Raji Tribe of District Pithoragrh . There are 09 villages with a total population of 650 . Their habitations are inside the forest and livelihood is based on forest products . The issue of ownership of land and collection of products has been one of the main concern , being undertaken under the Forest Right Act 2006 .

The new Forest Right Committees were formed and Arpan organized a **workshop on Forest Right Act** for the committee members , and other community members, wherein a total of 44 people from 11 villages participated in small groups . Main objective was to aware and motivate them to get their documents made . Women leader Hansa motivated her community to file their forest claims and along with others submitted an application to Sub Divisional Magistrate to conduct meeting of Sub Divisional Level Committee (SDLC)

Impact :

- 33 Individual Forest Claims were submitted at the SDLC Dharchula Tehsil .
- 15 Individual Forest Claims were passed and sent to District Level Committee for approval .
- 10 families got land in their names (joint ownership of wife and husband) in village Kuta Chaurani in Didihat Tehsil .
- The process of converting the villages into revenue villages has begun .

The major challenge being faced was the slow process and progress due to COVID 19 protocols. During the first wave , strict log down rules and restriction in gatherings , effected the program activities and long pending demands of the community from the government . The focus had entirely shifted to migrants and quarantine centers .

Livelihood

Workshops cum training's were organised for **Women Farmer collectives** formed in 15 villages , where 750 Schedule caste women farmers are members of the group , with an objective to increase their understating and adoption of climate resilient sustainable agricultural practices . Efforts are on- going to develop Community models , such as collective vegetable farming and marketing , seed banks, and tool banks which will help women farmers to obtain a more secure and sustained form of livelihood, enhance food security and income levels. Women Farmer's day was observed at village level where Women farmers voiced their concerns on the need for ownership on agriculture land .



Key Outcomes :

- Women farmers strengthened their traditional / local seed banks to sustain their agriculture practices
- Low cost organic farming is being carried out through production , use and marketing of bio compost and bio pesticides .
- A women farmer cooperative has been established with 50 women farmers engaged in collection , production and marketing of agri based products . The cooperative has been registered and membership is gradually increasing . A rise of 20% in the income of women has been observed during the year by selling their products at the local level itself.
- CB workshop with single women collective members were organized to strengthen their leadership . During the year 94 women participated in different programs and raised their concerns and challenges in leading a safe , dignified and healthy life .

Violence against women and girls (VAW&G) :

Campaigns like 16 day activism to end violence against women , International women's day , One billion rising and capacity building programs on Social security are organised with women groups . The main objective is to sensitize the community on issues of Gender Justice and challenge issues of child marriage , trafficking of girls and other discriminatory practices .



Success of interventions made by collectives and EWRs : 47 cases of VAW&G from 39 villages were reported either before the women collectives or at the organization . 18 cases were solved at the village level itself . 08 cases were reported at the police station and reached the court for legal action . Arpan supported the survivors in their legal battle by linking them to District Legal Service Authority (DLSA)

Interface Meetings and their impact :

Interaction of community and women groups with government department officials is a major program of the organization . This enables a direct dialogue on the problems being faced by people in remote villages , besides it gives an open platform to women leaders to voice their concerns . During the year the impact of the interactions and applications submitted were as follows –

- 50 people from different villages got work under NREGS
- 35 families had applied for houses under the PM housing scheme , they have been selected but due to COVID 19 no further action has been taken .
- During the year 90 people benefited from different schemes of the government , by asserting their rights .

Engagement with Children :

ARPAN works For and With minor children for their integrated development . Child Help Line 1098 is being run by the organization for the district (7 blocks) as a collaborative partner. Several activities like open house for children , workshops with community and police department and outreach to schools were organized (total 60 programs) covering approx. 3000 people

Impact : During the year a total of 605 cases (Child marriage , sexual harassment and abuse of children , school drop out) were registered at the center , where children and families were reached out for immediate support .



Campaign on increasing school enrollment was carried out to link children to school on – line studies . Small rallies and meetings at village level , slogans on importance of education , on COVID 19 pandemic gender equality and child marriage were important part of the campaign . Coverage of 35 villages with proactive participation of 365 women , 56 men and 834 children . Wall writing was also carried out in 25 villages , motivating people towards the safety and well being of children .

Impact of the programs :

- 15 drop out children (10 girls and 5 boys) were enrolled in their nearby schools .
- 05 child marriages were prevented. During log down , villages with no network connectivity or children with no Android phones were affected the most . 41 youth volunteers in 35 villages engaged children in studies and in 03 villages retired teachers and army personal gave their time for children

Main Challenges faced were Remoteness of the villages , extreme climate variations , natural disasters like land slide , cloud burst , forest fires , patriarchal mind set of people and delay in getting benefit from government schemes , are the major constraints for people of the region . Grim situation of education , health and livelihood opportunities impact the most marginalised communities the most . The most hard hit are the women , who bear the burden as care takers and care givers of the family .

Our Partners and supporters in the change for a better Society :

The accomplishments would not have been possible without the support of our donors , esteemed community leaders , government officials , civil society organisations and individuals . We would like to acknowledge them for their support and solidarity . We may not be able to name each and every stakeholder , but everyone with a positive and progressive thinking and action is important . Action Aid , The Hunger Project , Child India Foundation and Ministry of Women and Child , for their financial and programmatic support .

EWR's , women and adolescent girls collective leaders , volunteers and dedicated staff of ARPAN who are constantly in the field striving to make collective efforts .

