

Advancing the Rights of **Women and Girls** Panchayats Leading the Way

A Compendium of Success Stories

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The book will serve as a motivational learning material for panchayats and help to create a multiplier effect of women-friendly development initiatives.

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MESSAGE

सुनील कुमार, आई.ए.एस.
SUNIL KUMAR, IAS



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Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

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भारत सरकार
पंचायती राज मंत्रालय
SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

MESSAGE

India as a signatory of Sustainable Development Goals-SDGs : Agenda 2030 of the UN, is striving to achieve them through planned action and monitoring at the National, State and Local Levels. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India is committed to achieve the SDGs by localizing action on them through PRIs. The Flagship Scheme of the Ministry-Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) has been revamped from April, 22 to build capacities of PRIs for good governance through participatory local planning at the Gram Panchayat level, with focus on the attainment of SDGs.

The Expert Group constituted by the Ministry for Localizing SDGs, has clubbed the actionable agenda for 2030 under 9 themes for PRIs. Theme 9 of these focuses on 'Engendering Development for promoting Gender Equality in Villages'; laying emphasis on empowering women and girls as a pre-condition to achieve all SDGs.

It is a welcome initiative of UNFPA to bring forth the present compendium of Success Stories of Engendered Beacon Panchayats of India, to showcase and inspire all Panchayats to imbibe the good practices and follow the examples of engendering development-set by these pioneering gender responsive panchayats. My best compliments to the UNFPA Team and Dr. Anita for creating this inspiring volume of Stories of Engendered Beacon Panchayats, for all PRIs to learn from and help attain the goal of Gender Equality in Rural India.

(Sunil Kumar)

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MESSAGE

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MESSAGE

It is noteworthy that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, under its Flagship Scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan has embarked upon its campaign for Localizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Panchayati Raj Institutions focusing on themes of Poverty Free and Enhanced Livelihoods, Healthy, Child Friendly, Water Sufficient, Clean and Green, Self Sufficient Infrastructure, Socially Secured, Village with Good Governance and Engendering Development in Villages.

The theme on Engendering Development in Villages for making all Development efforts gender-inclusive and gender equality oriented is most exceptional and has to be universally integrated for achievement of SDGs.

I am happy to note UNFPA has brought out a success stories of Engendered Beacon Panchayats of India, which is a judicious mix of development vision, strategies and outcomes, covering efforts of Panchayats for attaining all the aspects of these 9 themes in a gender sensitive governance work-culture. Hope that these Stories of Panchayats will show the way to many more Panchayats to become similarly engendered and help attain gender equality in rural areas as a ripple effect and prove as catalyst to the campaign of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on localization of SDGs.


(Dr. Chandra Shekhar Kumar)

Additional Secretary
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संयुक्त सचिव
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Joint Secretary



75
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MESSAGE

It gives me immense pleasure to present for the PRIs – “Success Stories of Gender Empowerment in Beacon Panchayats of India”, with the hope that this compilation will inspire many more Panchayats to take up the cause of promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls.

This agenda of gender responsive governance is well exemplified by the impressive strides made by the Panchayats showcased in this Book-as forerunners espousing engendering women's role in the development work ethos at the grassroots. Their examples also establish that all the 9 Themes being championed by the Ministry for Localizing SDGs through PRIs, are an achievable agenda for action under RGSA – our Flagship Scheme and that Women Friendly Village is an integral part of the thematic approach for localization of SDGs by PRIs.

Our heartfelt appreciation to our partner UN Agency-UNFPA, to help us share this inspiring collection of Success Stories of Gender Empowered Panchayats – to multiply the good work across PRIs of India. May this endeavor of engendering development gather speed and strength of empowering all women and girls in rural India!


(Rekha Yadav)

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MESSAGE

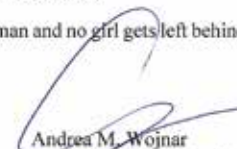
Enlightened local level leadership – the Elected Representatives and Officials of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are key to bringing about positive social change at the grassroots and upwards. Mainstreaming gender in local governance can help address the needs and concerns of women and girls in vulnerable situations, eliminate the root causes of discrimination, address harmful practices such as child marriage, gender-biased sex selection and prevent, and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) both in public and private spaces.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) recognizes this, and the crucial role PRIs can play in localizing action for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly, SDG-5 for achieving gender equality.

As an ongoing part of our commitment to empower PRIs for gender responsive governance, and ensuring inclusive development through Gram Panchayat Development Plans, UNFPA is honoured to present this book of success stories, showcasing Panchayats as the drivers of change towards women-led progress and development. We hope this compendium will motivate many more Panchayats and Gram Sabhas to scale-up the path breaking grass-roots work for enhancing the value of women and girls.

Finally, I extend my appreciation to the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India for partnering with UNFPA to create inspiring knowledge products for PRIs to use.

We look forward to expanding this partnership to ensure that no woman and no girl gets left behind.


Andrea M. Wojnar
Representative India and
Country Director Bhutan

MESSAGE

ACRONYMS

ANM	-	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife	NGO	-	Non-Government Organization
ASHA	-	Accredited Social Health Activist	NIRD & PR	-	National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj
ATM	-	Automatic Teller Machine	NRLM	-	National Rural Livelihoods Mission
AWC	-	Anganwadi Centre	NRM	-	Natural Resource Management
AWW	-	Anganwadi Worker	ODF	-	Open Defecation Free
BPL	-	Below Poverty Line	PESA	-	Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas Act
CCTV	-	Closed Circuit Television	PHC	-	Primary Health Centre
CSO	-	Civil Society Organization	PMAY(G)	-	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin)
CSR	-	Corporate Social Responsibility	PMGSY	-	Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
FFC	-	Fifteenth Finance Commission	PMJY	-	Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
FIR	-	First Information Report	PRIs	-	Panchayati Raj Institutions
FPO	-	Farmers Producers Organization	RD & PR	-	Rural Development and Panchayati Raj
GBV	-	Gender Based Violence	SAGY	-	Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana
GFGP	-	Girl-friendly Gram Panchayat	SBM (G)	-	Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin)
GP	-	Gram Panchayat	SC	-	Scheduled Caste
GPDP	-	Gram Panchayat Development Plan	SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
GRC	-	Gender Resource Centre	SFC	-	State Finance Commission
ICDS	-	Integrated Child Development Services	SHGs	-	Self Help Groups
IEC	-	Information, Education and Communication	SIRD & PR	-	State Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj
JJM	-	Jal Jeevan Mission	SIRD	-	State Institute of Rural Development
JKRLM	-	Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission	SRLM	-	State Rural Livelihoods Mission
KILA	-	Kerala Institute of Local Administration	ST	-	Scheduled Tribe
MCHN-Day	-	Mother Child Health Nutrition Day	UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
MGNREGA	-	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act	UNFPA	-	United Nations Population Fund
MMAY	-	Mukhya Mantri Awas Yojana	UT	-	Union Territory
MoPR	-	Ministry of Panchayati Raj	VPRP	-	Village Poverty Reduction Plan
NCERT	-	National Council of Educational Research and Training	WCD	-	Women and Child Development



PREFACE

The rationale for bringing out this compendium of success stories of women-friendly panchayats of India, is to inspire all panchayats to learn and adopt similar initiatives for advancing the rights of women and girls. Stories in the compendium have been carefully selected from 17 States and two Union Territories of India and showcase how panchayats have been leading the way for empowering women and girls.

The range of inspiring examples showcased in this book include:

- Overcoming malnutrition amongst women and girls – as demonstrated by Gram Panchayats (GPs) in Andhra Pradesh
- Eliminating harmful social practices – as in the story from Assam
- Mainstreaming needs of women and girls in Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPD) – as shown in the story from Bihar
- Empowering women Self Help Groups (SHGs) to lead the way for a clean and green village – as in Chhattisgarh
- Curbing gender-based violence and discrimination – as in Daman & Diu
- Making women equal partners in development – as undertaken in GPs of Goa
- Ensuring basic services of urban standards – as in the GP of Gujarat
- Promoting women's livelihoods with environmental protection, – the example of Himachal Pradesh
- Ensuring women's economic empowerment through improved access to rural development schemes – as in Jammu & Kashmir
- Promoting gender equality at grassroots – the example from Kerala
- Integrating women's needs in development – as in Madhya Pradesh
- Building a modern village through people's participation – as in Maharashtra
- Ensuring economic empowerment of women – as in Mizoram
- Eliminating the harmful practice of child marriage – as in Odisha

- Women leading the way for a liquor-free panchayat – the example from Rajasthan
- Promoting an Eco-Feminist Model of village development – as demonstrated by Rajasthan
- Creating girl-friendly GPs – as demonstrated by GPs in Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan
- Ensuring sustainable and inclusive development through women's participation – the example from Tamil Nadu
- Empowering women farmers through collective farming – as in Telangana
- Creating safe spaces for girls and women through safety audits – as in Uttar Pradesh
- Creating women and child-friendly panchayat – as in West Bengal

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), Government of India (GoI) is working towards localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve the 2030 development agenda. As per its Expert Committee Report on Localizing SDGs through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), nine themes have been adopted for local action on the SDGs. Theme-9 focuses on creating women-friendly panchayats and aims to localize SDG-5 for achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

It is hoped that the book comprising 21 success stories of women-friendly panchayats of India will inspire other panchayats to work towards attaining the goals under SDG-5 and Theme-9. Since achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is a cross-cutting theme, it will help PRIs attain the other SDGs by mainstreaming participation of women and girls. Reaching out to women, girls and those in vulnerable situations will also ensure that no one is left behind in the development process.



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Healthy Mother, Healthy Child for a Healthy Society



Andhra Pradesh

Story of Gram Panchayats
Kasipadu and Vinjanampadu

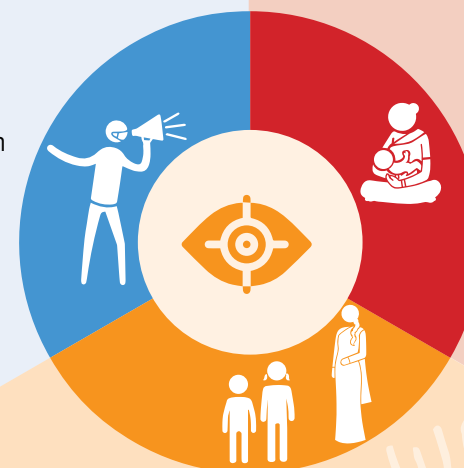


Profile of Panchayats

- a) Gram Panchayat – Kasipadu,
Block – Pedakurapadu, District – Guntur,
Andhra Pradesh
Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Gorre Sambaiah
Population and Size
Medium-sized panchayat with population of **3773**
(males - **1876**, females - **1897**) and **971** houses (2011 Census).
- b) Gram Panchayat – Vinjanampadu,
Block – Yeddana Pudi, District – Prakasam
Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Narne Rajyalakshmi
Population and Size
Small panchayat with population - **1053** (males - **502** and females - **551**) with **333** houses in the GP (2011 Census).

Vision of Development

To make the community aware and responsible for eliminating malnutrition amongst mothers and children to create an enabling environment for better health and productivity in the GP.



Focus on reducing anaemia and malnutrition among pregnant and lactating mothers and children below six years of age by close monitoring of Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) by the GP.

Effective implementation of Sampoorna Poshan Abhiyaan under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and inter-sectoral convergence of Women and Child Development (WCD) and Health Department functionaries at GP level for improved health outcomes.





“Poshan Pe Charcha”

Community awareness meetings were organized with gram sabha members to discuss the nutrition status and profile of the villages, with focus on mothers, children under six years, and adolescent girls.



Strategy for Development

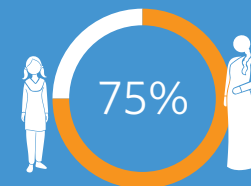
- For effective implementation of the Poshan Abhiyaan, a nutrition programme of ICDS, special registration and counselling of all eligible undernourished beneficiaries was organized by the GPs at the AWCs. Coverage of 100% beneficiaries was ensured with support from line department functionaries of WCD, Health and Education in the GPs.
- «Poshan Pe Charcha» – Community awareness meetings were organized with Gram Sabha members to discuss the nutrition status and profile of the villages, with focus on mothers, children under six years, and adolescent girls.
- Regular home visits were undertaken by Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs) and Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) to counsel family members to take responsible care of mothers, adolescent girls and children under six years, to ensure they are not anaemic or malnourished.
- Based on regular growth monitoring and health check-ups organized monthly at AWCs on Mother-Child Health Nutrition Days (MCHN-Days), the malnourished are referred to higher level health facilities for treatment of severe malnutrition.
- Motivational activities like healthy child and healthy mother contests, cookery competitions for nutritive diet menus, awareness talks on nutrition deficiency related illnesses were organized, with support of Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and health and nutrition experts of ICDS.
- Community consciousness was built for healthy food, nutritious diet and wellness for healthy villages.

With focused efforts of the GPs, malnutrition among children has been reduced by 100% and anaemia among mothers and adolescent girls reduced by 75%.

Malnutrition among children reduced by



Anaemia among mothers and adolescent girls reduced by





Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Panchayats can effectively roll back malnutrition from mothers, adolescent girls and children by making focused efforts.
- Poshan Abhiyaan of ICDS and services available at AWCs on a regular basis can be closely supervised and improved, if panchayats bring it under their regular monitoring.
- Close coordination of line department functionaries of WCD, Health and Education Departments can be channelized for optimizing positive results by eliminating malnutrition and anaemia.
- Creative motivational learning events can be organized by the panchayats to promote health and wellness, by organizing healthy diet menu cookery contests, healthy mother and child contests and extension lectures on healthy food for better health and productivity of people.
- SHGs can be associated with AWCs to ensure nutritive food supplies and also create kitchen gardens for fresh vegetables and fruits for children and mothers.
- Health for All and Zero Malnutrition can be a guiding vision to create healthy lives in the villages of India; as done by these panchayats in Andhra Pradesh.



SHGs can be associated with AWCs to ensure nutritive food supplies and also create kitchen gardens for fresh vegetables and fruits for children and mothers.

Women Stand up against Harmful Social Practices



Assam

Story of Gram Panchayat
Badahapur

Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Badahapur,
Block – Balijana, District – Goalpara,
Assam

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch
Bhanujoy Rabha

Population and Size

Badahapur is a large panchayat with **14000**
population,
(2011 Census) and 15 villages.



Vision of Development

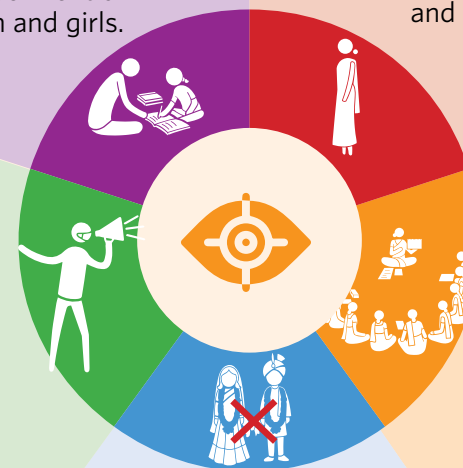
Focus on education
of girl-child
and economic
empowerment of
women and girls.

To empower
rural women by
mobilizing their active
participation through
formation of Sanghas
and Maha Sanghas.

Active
collaboration
with a local
Civil Society
Organization
(CSO) – Assam
Mahila Samata
Society, for
mentorship of
Women Sanghas.

Building confidence
among women to speak
up against harmful
practices such as
witch-hunting and child
marriage; gender-based
violence (GBV) and other
forms of discrimination
against women and girls
prevailing in the area.

Create awareness
rights and
entitlements of
women, to enable
them oppose and
eliminate all forms
of violence against
women.





Strategy for Development

- Over 20 Mahila Sanghas formed to collectivize and empower women to prevent all harmful practices in the panchayat like child marriage, witch-hunting, etc. and to deal with violence against women and girls.
- The local mentorship to Women Sanghas was provided by the panchayat and the Assam Mahila Samata Society, which helped the Sanghas federate into a larger body called the Bishu Jyoti Panchayat Maha Sangha.
- The key objective of these Sanghas was to spread awareness among women regarding their rights, entitlements and laws for the protection of women and girls.
- The Maha Sangha with active participation of women has been successful in preventing instances of child marriage,

witch-hunting and violence against women and girls.

- The Badahapur Gram Panchayat with support of Assam Mahila Samata Society has initiated 'Nari Adalats' (Women's Courts) which are innovative informal dispute resolution platforms, set up by women to respond to cases of violence against women and harmful practices faced by them. In addition to addressing issues related to harmful practices and violence, the Nari Adalats also looks into issues of substance abuse and school dropouts.

Over 20 Mahila Sanghas formed to collectivize and empower women to prevent all harmful practices in the panchayat like child marriage, witch-hunting, etc. and to deal with violence against women and girls.





Impact of Integrated and Inclusive Development

- More than 200 awareness camps organized for mobilizing the community against social evils and creating awareness on rights and entitlements of women and girls.
- The panchayat has been organizing street plays and exhibitions to create awareness and empower the community to eliminate harmful practices.
- Reduction in School Dropout rates – The Maha Sangha and Nari Adalat impose a penalty of Rs. 5000 to 15,000 on families whose children drop out from school. This has reduced school dropouts substantially in the GP.
- For economic empowerment of women, the panchayat has set up herbal medicinal gardens, mushroom cultivation, fruit processing training cum production centres.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Badahapur experience is a classic example of how empowerment of women, including those in vulnerable situations like the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) women can be achieved through formation of strong collectives and mentorship.
- Mobilizing women and girls and creating awareness on their rights, entitlements and laws is a great enabler in preventing harmful practices against women and girls.
- Ensuring women's right to dignity should be a key prerequisite to empower them to participate in development on an equal footing.
- Setting up of Nari Adalats for checking all forms of violence against women and ensuring their access to equal rights (right to health, education, economic empowerment and participation in the development process) is a unique innovation that can help ensure timely justice to women and girls.

Mobilizing women and girls and creating awareness on their rights, entitlements and laws is a great enabler in preventing harmful practices against women and girls



Empowered Women and Girls Lead the Change



Bihar

Story of Gram Panchayat Dawan



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Dawan,
Block – Jagdishpur, District – Bhojpur, Bihar
Gram Panchayat President – Mukhiya Shushumlata

Population and Size

Large-sized village panchayat with population of **14,523** and only one revenue village with **2481** households (2011 Census).

Vision of Development

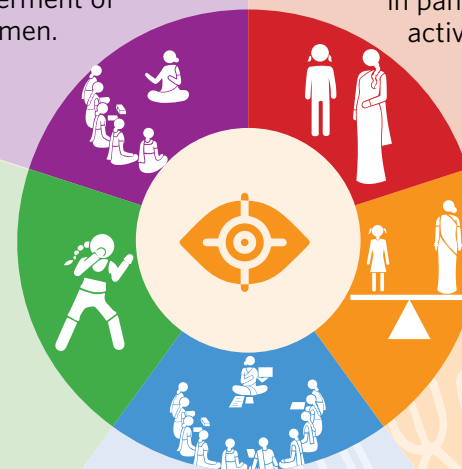
Ensure linkages with banks and markets for promoting economic empowerment of women.

To mainstream participation of women and girls in panchayat activities.

Ensure women and girls have equal opportunities for development.

Focus on ensuring women's active role in Gram Sabhas in order to prioritize their needs.

Ensure dignity and safety of girls by coaching them in self-defense.





Strategy for Development

- Regular and active participation of women and girls in Gram Sabha.
 - Organizing regular interaction of women with banks for economic empowerment of women and guidance for marketing tie-ups.
 - Promoting self-defense training for girls in karate in the GP Bhavan.
 - Promoting menstrual health and hygiene by creating awareness and addressing taboos on the issue and installing sanitary pad vending machine in the GP Bhavan
- Involvement of women in the Gram Sabhas has helped to raise their aspirations and ensure that their needs form an integral part of GPDPs.
 - Setting up of a sanitary pad vending machine in the GP Bhavan and organization of community awareness on the issue has helped promote awareness among girls and women on menstrual hygiene.
 - Training in self-defense for girls has helped build their personality, enabling them to overcome their hesitations and build fearlessness for self-protection.
 - Interaction with bankers builds women's awareness to avail credit for self-initiated start-ups; also makes them aware of various saving schemes and handling banking transactions independently.
 - Sanitation drives have been led by women to keep the village panchayat clean and make individuals observe all aspects of Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), including construction of household toilets and proper solid liquid waste management.



Impact of Integrated and Inclusive Development

Involvement of women in the Gram Sabhas has helped to raise their aspirations and ensure that their needs form an integral part of GPDPs.





Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Making Gram Sabhas truly vibrant and inclusive by ensuring participation of women and girls can help prioritize their felt needs for inclusion in GPDPs.
- Panchayats can focus on localizing SDG-5 for gender equality and empowering women and girls to ensure women have access to benefits of development schemes.
- Creating women and girl-friendly infrastructure like household toilets, installation of sanitary pad vending machines in public buildings like GP Bhavan, AWC, Sub-Centre can help ensure dignity for women.
- Panchayats can ensure safety of girls by promoting self-defense training for them.
- Fostering bank linkages for rural women to avail credit for income generating activities and becoming self-reliant in banking transactions can help promote their economic empowerment.
- Changing the social mindset of treating girls and women as a burden, to one of believing that they are assets and can provide solutions to problems within families and communities, can lead to sustainable development.
- Become a role model beacon panchayat for promoting women's empowerment and inspire other panchayats to follow your example.

Panchayats can focus on localizing SDG-5 for gender equality and empowering women and girls to ensure women have access to benefits of development schemes.



Upholding the Dignity of Women: Making Villages Open Defecation Free (ODF)



Chhattisgarh

Story of Gram Panchayat
Phulkarra

Profile of Panchayats



Gram Panchayat – Phulkarra, Block –
Gariyaband, District – Gariyaband, Chhattisgarh

Gram Panchayat President – Asawan Bai Kanwar

Population and Size

Small panchayat with total population of **350**
(**174** males, **176** females) (2011 Census).

Vision of Development

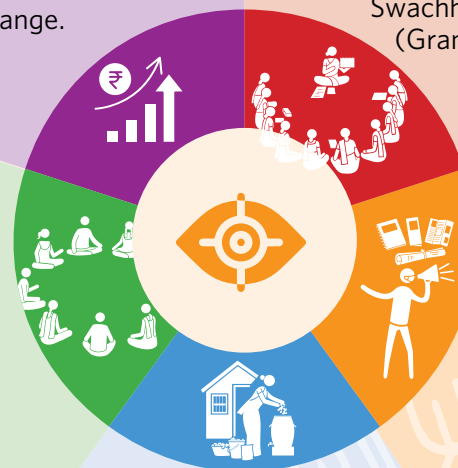
Promoting
economic growth
for all, with women
as agents of social
change.

Mobilize women SHGs for
promoting self-employment,
as well as for spreading
awareness for the panchayat
to attain ODF status under
Swachh Bharat Mission
(Gramin) SBM (G).

Organizing
awareness rallies
and undertaking
wall-writing of
sanitation slogans
to mobilize the
community for
behaviour change
so as to make ODF
a way of life in
the GP.

Educate the
community about
health consequences
of unclean and
polluted environment
and invoke them to
be proud citizens of a
clean and prosperous
panchayat.

Cleanliness drives
organized by SHGs for
proper management of
solid and liquid waste
from houses.





Strategy for Development

- The Phulkarra Panchayat has focused on tapping the leadership potential of tribal women to lead both economic self-reliance and cleanliness as a way of life in the panchayat.
 - Under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) - State Chapter (Vihan), 26 women SHGs have been mobilized in this GP, with 325 women members from poor families, pursuing diverse livelihood options and promoting cleanliness/ODF as a way of life in the village.
 - The income generating activities being pursued by the women SHGs in the GP include horticulture, organic farming, goatery and poultry, vermicompost manure making, fencing poles and wire supply, barbed-wire fencing, garbage disposal bins etc.
 - Skill training is ensured to all SHGs, along with bank linkages by the panchayat.
 - Women SHGs have also been motivated to work as Swacchtagrahis and spread awareness in the community for a clean, ODF GP and for safe garbage disposal.
 - Village infrastructure is upgraded by using funds under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for constructing anganwadis, school infrastructure, village roads and rain-water harvesting structures. Goatery and poultry sheds for SHGs have also been built under MGNREGA.
- Panchayat Phulkarra is spreading its unique model of a clean and prosperous panchayat with the GP undertaking activities for behaviour change in collaboration with SHG-Swachhtagrahis or sanitation pioneers.

Skill training is ensured to all SHGs, along with bank linkages by the panchayat.



Rewards and Recognition

The Panchayat won the following awards



State Award for reaching ODF status with **100%** toilet usage by all houses in **2016**.



ODF plus State Award for maintaining Sustained ODF Culture, as well as, proper garbage disposal in **2020**.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Collaboration of panchayats with the leadership potential of SHGs can drive community-wide behaviour change for sanitation and ODF culture in villages.
- Value addition through new knowledge and skills in traditional livelihoods of farming, animal rearing, food processing can also boost sustainable economic progress, as evidenced by the Phulkarra example.
- Economic growth and sanitation in villages can augur well for a healthy life, with focus on upgrading infrastructure for safe water, clean toilets, child-friendly anganwadis and schools, clean roads with

street lights and wall paintings with awareness slogans for promoting health, sanitation, nutrition and prosperity for all in the villages.

- Women's empowerment can drive true community empowerment and sustained development and progress of villages.

Women's empowerment can drive true community empowerment and sustained development and progress of villages.

Eliminating Gender-Based Violence



Daman & Diu



Story of
Gram Panchayat Dunetha



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Dunetha,
Block – Daman, District – Daman,
UT – Daman & Diu

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Savita Bharatbhai
Patel

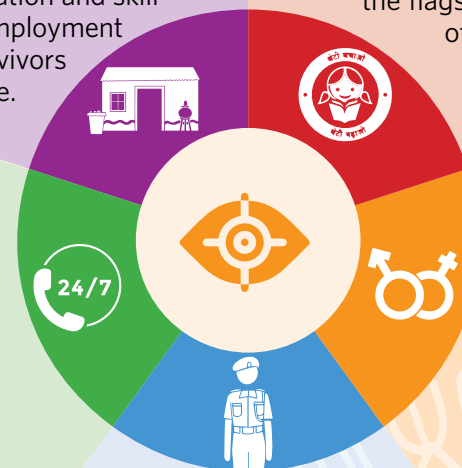
Population and Size

Large panchayat with population of 14735 (males – 9440, females – 5295) (2011 Census).

Vision of Development

Establish One Stop Centre, – *SAKHI Kendra* – as a one stop solution for providing shelter, counselling, first aid and medical care, mental health and psychosocial support, access to law enforcement agencies, legal aid and rehabilitation and skill training for self-employment to women survivors of violence.

Work to promote the vision of '*Beti Bachao Beti Padhao*', the flagship Scheme of GoI.



Ensure 24X7 operation of Helpline-181 for women in distress.

Appoint and publicize availability of Protection Officers for curbing violence against women and girls.

Promote awareness and ensure effective implementation of laws upholding the rights of women and girls like Pre Conception and Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994; Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961; Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, etc.





Strategy for Development

The Dunetha Panchayat has been focusing on creating awareness and setting up mechanisms to end all forms of discrimination and violence faced by women and girls. Some of the innovations include:

- Enforce implementation of all laws related to women and girls and create awareness on rights and entitlements of women and girls through door-to-door IEC campaigns and popularize women-centric development schemes, through the Mahila Shakti Kendras.
- Set up and ensure a functional One Stop Centre *SAKHI Kendra* for women survivors of violence, providing services like legal aid, counselling, medical aid, police complaint, skill training for self-employment and shelter as a one stop solution for women in distress.
- Develop linkages with Protection Officer designated under the Protection of Women

from Domestic Violence Act to support survivors of violence and create awareness by displaying their contact details.

- Ensure a 24X7 helpline service is functional in the GP – 181 for women and 1098 for children, as per national mandate.
- Birth of a girl-child is celebrated by way of a felicitation – ‘*Kum-Kum Tilak*’ programme, for ensuring well-being of mothers and daughters.
- Support has been mobilized from corporates in the area and from private hospitals for health check-up camps for women and girls.
- ‘*Saas-Bahu* Sensitization Meetings’ are organized to end gender discrimination.
- Confidence building events like ‘*Ladkiyon Ki Ballebazi*’ – cricket match for girls and beach-side night marathon for women and girls are organized.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- For empowering women and girls, panchayats have to focus on awareness-building and effective enforcement of laws related to women and girls.
- Ensuring the designation and functioning of Protection Officers, functioning of One Stop Centres *SAKHI Kendras* for women survivors of violence, and creating awareness and access to helplines for women and children in distress is an effective means to address violence against women and girls
- Celebrating and felicitating the birth of daughters can help dispel the notion of girls being a burden.
- Organizing confidence-building events that break gender stereotypes, like sports meets for girls and women; inter-generational dialogues to overcome gender discrimination like ‘*Saas-Bahu* Sensitization Meetings’ is an effective means to ensure gender equality.
- CSR support can be mobilized to periodically organize health check-up camps for women and girls and also extend health and nutrition education.

Celebrating and felicitating the birth of daughters can help dispel the notion of girls being a burden.

Mainstreaming Gender in Gram Panchayat Development Plans



Goa

Story of Morjim and Camorlim Gram Panchayats



Profile of Panchayats

- a) Gram Panchayat – Morjim, Block – Pernem Taluka, District – North Goa, Goa
Morjim GP is notified as a Model Green GP by Goa, to National Green Tribunal (NGT).

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Vaishali M. Shetgaonkar

Population and Size

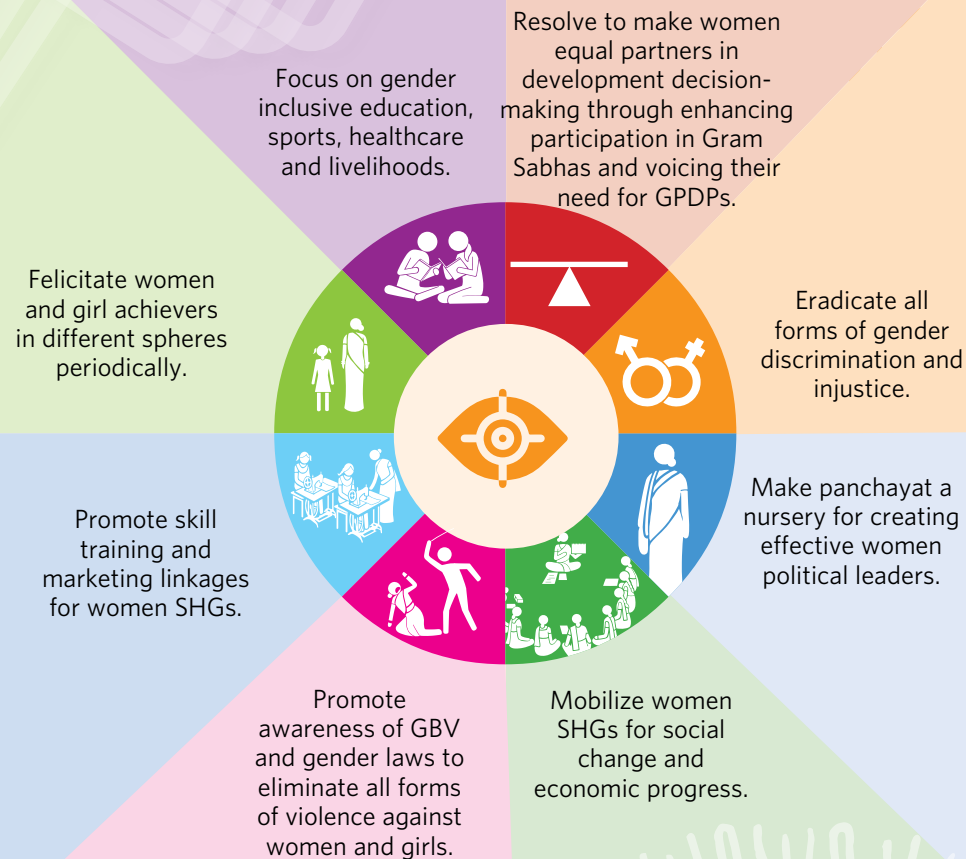
Medium-sized panchayat with population of **6760 (3356 males, 3404 females)** and **2045** households (2011 Census).

- b) Gram Panchayat – Camorlim, Block – Salcete, District – South Goa, Goa
Camorlim GP is the first solar-powered GP in Goa.
Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Basilio Fernandes

Population and Size

Small panchayat with population of **2247** (female population is 52%) and 595 houses. (2011 Census).

Vision of Development





Strategy for Development

- Strive for greater and active participation of women in Gram Sabhas for gender-inclusive GPDs.
- Awareness drives through AWCs for removing all harmful discriminatory practices against women and girls.
- Promote active leadership of elected women representatives, by training and mentoring support and through vibrant leadership in various standing committees of the panchayat.
- Involve women as behaviour change agents for cleanliness, sanitation and healthcare campaigns, with support of AWWs, ANMs and ASHAs.
- Activate women SHGs with skill training for economic self-reliance and through bank and market linkages.
- Ensure quality services in schools and anganwadis for education, sports and healthcare.

Impact of panchayat's efforts is evidenced by aware, assertive and active women leaders in panchayats and SHGs of Goa.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Women-friendly panchayats will strive to have truly gender-inclusive and vibrant Gram Sabhas, with enhanced participation of women and inclusion of their development needs in GPDs.
- Panchayats can eliminate all forms of gender discriminatory practices, with support of SHGs and women functionaries of line departments.
- Ensuring active role of women elected representatives in the panchayat and its standing committees will help to bring needs of women and girls to the forefront.
- Women SHGs can be nurtured with skill-sets, bank and market tie-ups.
- Panchayats can focus on improved healthcare, education, livelihoods with equal opportunities to women and girls for inclusive development.

Panchayats can focus on improved healthcare, education, livelihoods with equal opportunities to women and girls for inclusive development.



Creating Urban Amenities in Rural Areas



Gujarat

Story of
Gram Panchayat Punsari



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Punsari, Block –
Talod, District – Sabarkantha, Gujarat

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Himanshu
Patel (2006 to 2016).

Present Sarpanch of Punsari - Sunandaben Patel is
the first woman Sarpanch of Punsari.

Population and Size

Medium-sized panchayat with population of **5500**
and **1109** houses (2011 Census).

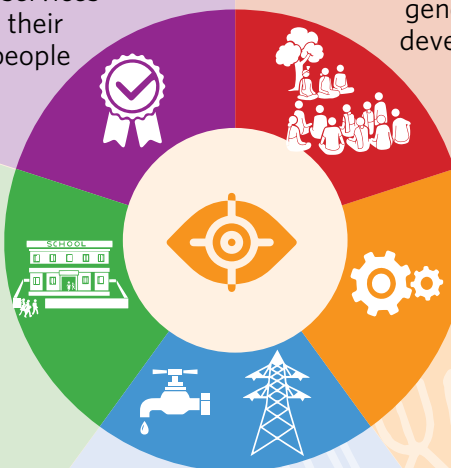
Vision of Development

To mobilize inter-sectoral
convergence of all line
department functionaries
to provide quality services
with respect to their
sectors, for all people
of the GP.

To have quarterly Gram
Sabhas with equal
participation of women
and make need-based,
gender-responsive
development plans.

To focus on providing
quality basic services
to all citizens in
Punsari, with urban
standards to check
out-migration.

To upgrade
infrastructure of
schools, anganwadis
and health centres,
to provide good
schooling with zero
dropout rate and
quality healthcare for
all, especially children,
mothers and the
elderly.



To ensure a decent
standard of life for all
with 24X7 water and
electricity supply, good
roads and drainage
system, clean litter-
free villages with good
street lights and ease
of transport services.
Ensure ease of living,
safety and reduced
toil for women in
day-to-day life.





Strategy for Development

- Ensure quarterly Gram Sabhas with active women's participation, to draw up gender-inclusive development plans.
- Activate effective functioning of Standing Committees of the GP with women representation in all committees.
- Mobilize women SHGs for boosting household income – 109 SHGs with more than 1300 women members are active in Punsari.
- Enhanced community infrastructure and basic civic amenities like all houses being pucca and attached with toilets; ODF panchayat; 24 hours water and electricity supply with GP's own RO plant supplying mineral water to all houses @ Rs.4/-per 20 litre jar. GP has its own 66 KV power sub-station. Good quality cement concrete roads with proper cleaning and garbage collection, underground drainage and sewage systems, making it a clean litter-free panchayat.

GP has also installed LED street lights on all roads with no dark areas and 25 CCTV cameras have been installed at prime spots to keep a surveillance for making the GP crime-free. Around 140 spots have been linked with a public address system of the GP, for regular awareness building and providing information to citizens about development schemes and their benefits, panchayat meetings and Gram Sabha meetings. A mini-bus service called Atal Seva is plying in the GP for mobility of citizens, as well as, for supply and transport of milk to dairies and back to houses. A mobile library with books for all segments of the population and with outreach in all areas is functional. Banking and ATM services are available in the village. Upgraded infrastructure in schools with smart TVs, computer labs, playgrounds and sports facilities and upgraded play-way learning oriented anganwadis, good quality healthcare infrastructure are some of the basic improvements in the GP.

- Punsari GP has ensured availability of good quality primary rural infrastructure. The quality of basic civic services has led citizens to rank the GP high, at 4-4.5 on a scale of 5 and expressing satisfaction with GP's governance and development performance.
- The present Sarpanch expresses satisfaction in the fame attained by Punsari for assuring decent standard of public services, for the operation and maintenance of which the GP has a fixed deposit corpus of Rs. 45 lakhs. The interest from this corpus is used to bear all maintenance costs. The GP has invested around Rs. 15 crores from Central and State Government grants and schemes for becoming a SMART Model Panchayat in the last 15 years. The bus service is maintained by SHGs and the mobile library is managed by youth volunteers. The Sarpanch wants to now focus on making the women SHGs grow as entrepreneurs and become *Atmanirbhar* (self-reliant) and economically empowered.

Mobilize women SHGs for boosting household income – 109 SHGs with more than 1300 women members are active in Punsari.



Rewards and Recognition

Punsari GP has won many awards at the National and State levels including

Rashtriya Gaurav
Gram Sabha Award

Best GP
National Award

Adarsh Gram
Award



It was one of the four Model Panchayats cited by Hon'ble Prime Minister while launching Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) in October 2014 and its documentary was screened for MPs to motivate them to create more model panchayats under SAGY.

Several foreign and domestic researchers and development practitioners visit Punsari to learn from its example. Many documentaries have been made on Punsari and are available on YouTube – illustrating urban quality of civic amenities in a *Smart Model Indian Village*.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Making Gram Sabhas vibrant with increased participation and influence of women is a first step to work on people-centred development.
- Activating Standing Committees for subject-specific monitoring helps panchayat governance for all round development.
- Mobilizing inter-sectoral convergence and team spirit among line department functionaries, makes them motivated for a culture of providing quality services in their domains, as done by Punsari.
- Using technology to upgrade infrastructure for people, helps the panchayat become a Smart Village – with 24X7 water, electricity, wifi and public address system.
- Having CCTV cameras and public address system keeps the panchayat connected with citizens and ensures crime-free vigilance by the panchayat.
- Mobilizing women (109 SHGs in Punsari) and youth volunteers for community-based monitoring helps keep a check on the quality of all services.
- Punsari has also been a leader in providing insurance cover for all its citizens under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) Scheme by bearing the insurance premium for all, from panchayat's own income.

Mobilizing women (109 SHGs in Punsari) and youth volunteers for community-based monitoring helps keep a check on the quality of all services.

Waste to Wealth: Pine Needles Earn Money for Women



Himachal Pradesh

Story of Gram Panchayat Kot



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Kot, Block – Mashobra,
District – Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

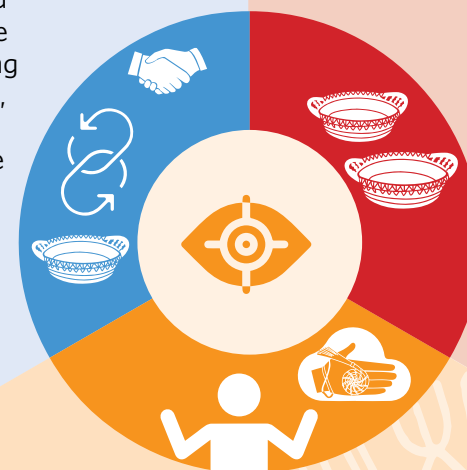
Gram Panchayat President – Pradhan (Sarpanch)
Hira Nand Shandilya

Population and Size

Small panchayat with **52** households and **288** population
(44.1% female population, males - **161**, females - **127**)
(2011 Census).

Vision of Development

Facilitate backward and forward linkages for the GP's SHGs by conducting market demand survey, provide skill training in processing pine-needle handicrafts and ensuring market linkages.



To utilize pine needles lying waste in the forests which are a source of forest fires, as a resource for making handicraft products by women SHGs leading to their economic empowerment.

Provide skill training in making handicrafts from pine tree-needles, shed every year in local forests and working on recycling of waste to wealth.





Strategy for Development

- The Himachal Pradesh State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Shimla under the Village Adoption Programme of National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD & PR), Hyderabad adopted Gram Panchayat Kot for piloting economic empowerment and development activities since 2017-18. Since the topography of the hilly terrain does not enable good productivity through farming, natural resource management-based livelihood of pine-needle handicrafts was ventured into. A demonstration meeting of preparing pine-needle products was organized for the Gram Sabha on 25 January 2020, the golden jubilee of Statehood Day of Himachal Pradesh. Women SHGs evinced keen interest in taking up handicrafts production from pine needles.
- The SIRD-HP arranged for the skill training of about 23 women members of local SHGs in pine-needle crafts, with the two-fold objective of mitigating forest fire-based threats and creating a livelihood option for local women through making pine-needle containers, trays, vases, baskets, perfume boxes, flower pots, *rakhis*, etc.
- The pine-needle handicraft products are linked with local markets and tie-ups for festival season demand, exhibitions at state and national fairs, tie-ups with tourist sector like hotels and homestays, catering to events like marriages and conferences and also internet marketing. The handicrafts are also supplied to consumer outlets.
- A local NGO – Karvan Society extends handholding support and promoting women SHG-products on social media.
- This pine-needle handicrafts venture has helped to boost Natural Resource Management (NRM) based livelihoods for local women SHGs, helped develop them as market savvy entrepreneurs, customizing their products as per emerging demand, yielded better incomes, status and living standards and has become a role model for other GPs in Himachal Pradesh.

The pine-needle handicraft products are linked with local markets and tie-ups for festival season demand, exhibitions at state and national fairs, tie-ups with tourist sector like hotels and homestays, catering to events like marriages and conferences and also internet marketing. The handicrafts are also supplied to consumer outlets.





Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Tap locally available natural resources for promoting NRM-based livelihood options such as handicrafts-based or food-processing, beauty products-based enterprises to be taken up by local women SHGs.
- Provide skill training for designing innovations in response to market demand surveys.
- Provide market linkages through local consumer markets and fairs, tourist outlets, hotels and homestays, internet marketing, etc.
- Provide mentoring support with collaboration of local NGOs who can help develop SHGs as entrepreneurs.
- Combine economic empowerment with environmental conservation and waste to wealth resource recycling as done by GP Kot in preventing local threat of forest fires and using pine-needles as a resource material for handicrafts.
- Provide publicity and sale outlets for women SHG products – in GP Bhavan, bus stops, tourist shops, local haats, e-service centres, anganwadis etc.
- Unleash the social capital of women power through economic empowerment initiatives. This can in turn lead to women taking up leadership roles in the family, community, panchayats and socio-political structures.

Provide publicity and sale outlets for women SHG products – in GP Bhavan, bus stops, tourist shops, local haats, e-service centres, anganwadis etc.



Proving the Adage: Self Help is the Best Help



Jammu and Kashmir

Story of Gram Panchayats
Flora Nagbani and Dhamal



Profile of Panchayats

Flora Nagbani

Gram Panchayat – Flora Nagbani, Block – Marh,
District – Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Vandana Kumari

Population and Size

Small panchayat having **1596** population (**816** males & **780** females) (2011 Census).

Dhamal

Gram Panchayat – Dhamal, Block – Barnoti, District – Kathua,
Jammu & Kashmir

Population and Size

Small panchayat having population of **859** (461 males and **398** females) (2011 Census).

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Ritu Chaudhary

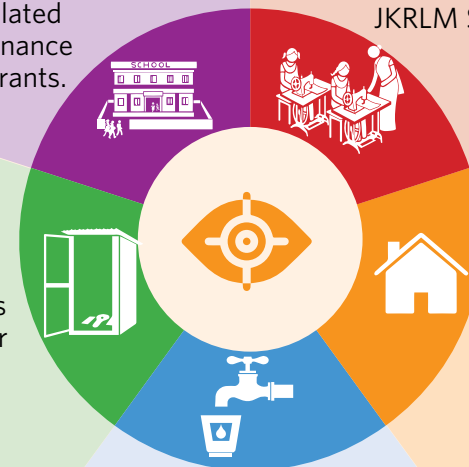
Sarpanches of both the panchayats have worked towards empowering women from their villages through SHGs mobilized under Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) and MGNREGA with an aim to enhance women's work force participation and to ensure that women are benefitted under various flagship schemes of Union and State Government.

Vision of Development

To create better village infrastructure of schools, anganwadis, health centres, roads and street lights under available fund flow of related schemes and Finance Commission Grants.

To mobilize women's participation in SHGs, promote skill training and self-entrepreneurship with the support of JKRLM State/UT Wing.

To link all houses with toilets under SBM (G).



To channelize work force participation of all eligible women under MGNREGA. To ensure housing for all eligible women under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) PMAY (G).

To ensure safe drinking water to households under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).



Strategy for Development

- The panchayats headed by women sarpanches have focused on economic empowerment of women with the support of SHGs mobilized under JKRLM. In J&K this programme is locally called 'Ummeed' meaning 'Hope' and promotes self-employment of rural women by providing them the support to plan together, choose income generating activities that they can be involved in, undergo related skill training and start their collective or individual enterprise with credit support from the SHG.
- Ummeed scheme works through a network of 60,000 SHGs, transforming the lives of five lakh households for better social and economic empowerment, mobilizing active SHGs with the support of panchayats.
- Women in the SHGs acquire skills in food processing, dairy activity, floriculture, horticulture and IT skills as per their choice, for enhancing their livelihood options and incomes.

- The MGNREGA Programme is also gainfully utilized to provide wage employment to those eligible, linking women on priority, for enhancing their work force participation, giving them dignity and financial independence.
- SBM (G) and JJM schemes are used for meeting the basic sanitation and drinking water needs for all houses, to become clean and water-sufficient villages.
- Finance Commission Grants and sectoral schemes are pooled for improving basic infrastructure of AWCs, schools, health centres, roads and drainage, street lights etc.

Ummeed scheme works through a network of 60,000 SHGs, transforming the lives of five lakh households for better social and economic empowerment, mobilizing active SHGs with the support of panchayats.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- By tapping available central flagship schemes and linking women's priorities for livelihoods, water and sanitation, skill training and entrepreneurship building - economic empowerment and a decent quality of life with assured basic infrastructure in the villages is an attainable vision.
- Mobilizing SHGs for active role of women as entrepreneurs in their own right with skill development and credit support through NRLM, is an achievable goal for all panchayats.



Women taking Centre Stage



Kerala

Story of Gram Panchayat Amballoor



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Amballoor, Block – Mulanthuruthi, District – Ernakulam, Kerala

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Biju Thomas

Population and Size

Large sized gram panchayat with total population of **25628** (2011 Census). It has one revenue village with 16 wards.

Vision of Development

This GP focused on women's empowerment initiatives under the Women's Component Plan. Their vision was to promote empowerment of women and girls through:

Imparting training in self-defense - Taekwondo for school girls.

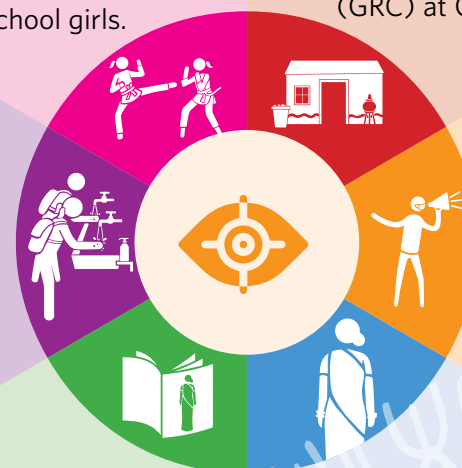
Establishing a Gender Resource Centre (GRC) at GP level.

Awareness building among women through the Jagratha Samiti on their rights and entitlements.

Promoting personal hygiene habits among school girls.

Launching a women's magazine called 'Samatha' to promote gender equality.

Conducting a Women Status Study for evidence-based planning for women's development.





Strategy for Development

The panchayat launched a GRC in 2017-18 to bring about social change for promoting gender equality. A woman Community Facilitator was appointed for coordinating the activities of the GRC and Jagratha Samiti with a Working Committee of 15 members. Many activities are conducted under the aegis of the GRC for empowering women like:

- **Awareness building -** Community mobilization activities were undertaken and awareness created to promote gender equality in all walks of life.
- **Formulation of a Gender Policy**
 - The policy was formulated through consultations and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted with a wide range of stakeholders including persons with disabilities, elderly women, widows, divorcees, domestic workers, adolescent girls, SHG members, traditional workers, etc. Secondary data was collected for the Gender Policy from various institutions in the panchayat like the Kudumbshree (SHGs), Library Clubs and political parties.

- Following the approval of the Gender Policy by the Panchayat Committee, a large-scale programme was organized to launch the Policy. Awareness programmes were also organized in all wards of the GP by the name 'Gender Equality Gatherings'.
- In the GPDP of 2019-20, a provision for setting up counselling services for those in vulnerable situations was added to the Gender Policy.
- During the COVID pandemic, many preventive and promotive IEC and healthcare activities were organized for building resilience in the community.
- **Constitution of Jagratha Samiti** - Although, Jagratha Samitis were set up by the Amballoor GP in 2007, as per guidelines from the Government of Kerala, they were not very active. Steps were taken to strengthen and energize the Jagratha Samitis with the support of GRC through a series of training workshops. Now the Jagratha Samitis are functioning as an effective and

permanent mechanism for grievance redressal of women and children.

- **Women's Status Study** - A Women's Status Study was conducted to understand and analyze the current status of women, to undertake desired development interventions in successive GPDPs in the GP. The Study Report was published by the GP, after sharing of the study findings with the community, for being a baseline reference to bridge the identified gender gaps and women's felt development needs through the GPDPs.
- **Other Women and Girl-friendly Efforts**
 - To encourage values of gender equality, a library has been started by the GRC.
 - A Gender Help Desk has been initiated in the GP and a complaints box has been placed in all GP schools.
 - A magazine 'Samatha' was launched for sustained IEC on gender equality issues.
 - Personal menstrual hygiene is

ensured for girls by creating separate toilets in schools and installation of sanitary pads vending machines and incinerators.

- Self-defense - Taekwondo training started for school girls.

During the COVID pandemic, many preventive and promotive IEC and healthcare activities were organized for building resilience in the community.





Key Learnings for Panchayats

The GRC initiative of Government of Kerala has been successfully demonstrated by Amballoor and is a replicable initiative, to ensure that GRCs become the drivers for making panchayats gender-friendly.

- Gender Status Study initiative is also a replicable intervention for engendering GPDPs.
- The experiment of local vigilant committees called 'Jagratha Samitis' established in all panchayats of Kerala State, under the supervision of Kerala Women's Commission since 1997, is also a replicable venture to prevent crimes against women. The Jagratha Samitis create awareness on rights and entitlements of women and girls, laws for gender equality and provide information on protection mechanisms for women and girls. The Jagratha Samiti members are trained by Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) for their effective role, another practice that can be taken up by SIRDs in other States.

- Starting a magazine for promoting gender equality is a pioneering initiative of Amballoor GP. Other panchayats can replicate this effort in the form of newsletters/wallpapers for regular information on laws, policies, development schemes for women and girls; especially, at block and district levels.

Gender Status Study initiative is also a replicable intervention for engendering GPDPs.



Women Centred Development



Madhya Pradesh

Story of Gram Panchayat
Barkhedhi Abdullah



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Barkhedhi Abdullah,
Block – Huzur, District – Bhopal,

Madhya Pradesh

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Bhakti Sharma

Population and Size

A medium-sized gram panchayat comprising of four revenue villages and **526** families. Total population – **2383** (**1219** males & **1164** females) (2011 Census).

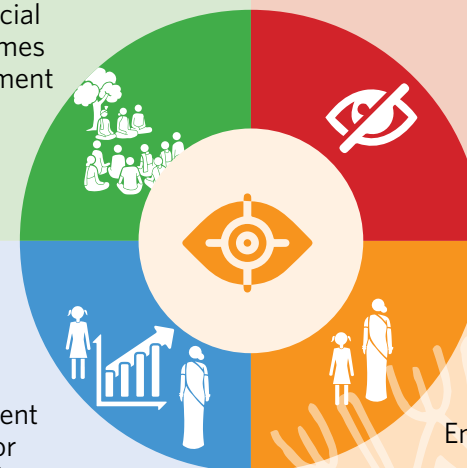
Vision of Development

Implement major development and social justice flagship schemes for all round development of the panchayat

Focus on the deprived, unheard and invisible

Create development opportunities for women and girls

Emancipate women and girls from age-old patriarchal systems





Strategy for Development

After winning the Sarpanch election on a General Seat, Sarpanch Bhakti took stock of the existing development status of her GP through undertaking a situational analysis based on a Village Contact Drive. Despite the regular grants and funds received, the GP had many deficiencies. She identified the following major gaps:

- Lack of basic infrastructure in villages
- Poor road connectivity and street lights
- More than 80% houses were *kuccha* make-shift huts
- Heavy monsoons flooded the roads to the school - cutting off ease of access during rainy season for the students
- Most houses lacked basic access to electricity and water
- The incidence of malnutrition and school dropouts was very high, especially among girls
- Women lacked livelihood opportunities beyond farm or labour work



Impact of Integrated and Inclusive Development

Focusing on the identified gap areas emerging from the Situational Analysis, holistic annual GDPs were rolled out to bridge the gaps. The following major achievements are an outcome of effective, integrated and inclusive GDPs undertaken with the participation of women:

- Now there are 16 pucca roads ensuring inter-village and inter-hamlet connectivity in the panchayat, with solar street lights.
- Over 50% houses in the GP are now *pucca* houses; constructed under PMAY(G) & Mukhya Mantri Awas Yojana (MMAY) - flagship schemes for rural housing.
- A lift irrigation project worth Rs. 12 crores is operational to meet irrigation needs of farmlands.
- Active Women SHGs have been set up and given skill training under NRLM. Women's tailoring units have been set up at the GP level and linkages established for regular manufacture and

supply of school bags to government schools. Cloth and paper bags are also being manufactured for supply to markets in Bhopal, with a resolve to ban plastic bags.

- Women's participation in Mahila Sabhas and Gram Sabhas has been enhanced with resolve of all women SHG members, ward members and line department functionaries to mobilize effective participation of women, to voice their development needs for inclusion in GDP every year.
- All houses in the GP have been linked with Ujjwala LPG connections for access to clean energy and health safety of women.
- The birth of a girl child is celebrated by planting ten trees and gifting two months of the Sarpanch honorarium to the family.
- Women's Fairs, Child Fairs are organized for awareness-building.

- With sustained focus on ensuring quality services at AWCs and Sub-centres, there are no malnourished children in the GP today.
- Free health check-up camps are held for the community every week supported by a Trust.

A lift irrigation project worth Rs. 12 crores is operational to meet irrigation needs of farmlands.



Rewards and Recognition

Sarpanch Bhakti Sharma has won the following accolades for her performance as a Panchayat President

Invited to share her inclusive development initiatives, using the flagship development schemes of National and State Government, at several international platforms viz.

Indo-Ireland Youth Summit, Indo-Australia Youth Dialogue, St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, Russia and the 74th UN General Assembly.

Won several awards at National and State level for her good work as Sarpanch.

Included among the top 100 influential women in India in 2016 by India Today Magazine.



She has been a speaker in the 4th TED Leadership Lecture Series.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Situational Analysis after stock-taking the status of development of villages, is an effective strategy for identifying the major gaps, to be addressed in yearly GDPDs.
- Inclusive and engendered development approach by involving women, children and youth in planning for development is most important, through mobilizing their participation in Bal Sabha, Mahila Sabhas and Gram Sabhas.

Existing flagship schemes and no cost/low cost development initiatives like focus on inclusion of voices through participation of women, children and youth for inclusive development are the way forward for all round integrated economic development of villages (For rural livelihoods - MGNREGA & NRLM; for rural housing - PMAY(G) & MMAY, watershed and irrigation development schemes; for rural roads - PMGSY; Solar Electrification; Fifteenth Finance Commission (FFC), State Finance Commission (SFC) funds for basic infrastructure, etc.)



From Poverty to Prosperity through People's Participation



Maharashtra

Story of Gram Panchayat
Hiware Bazar



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Hiware Bazar,
Block – Nagar, District – Ahmed Nagar, Maharashtra

Gram Panchayat President – Padma Shree Popat Rao Pawar

Population and Size

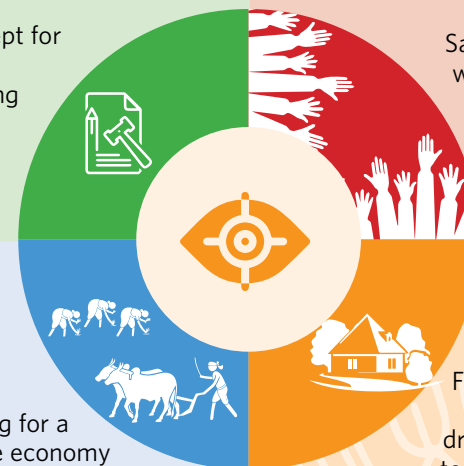
Hiware Bazar is a small panchayat with **1700** population and **315** houses (as per 2011 Census).

Vision of Development

The following key principles for sustainable development are enforced through Gram Sabha decisions:

- Save Water- "Save water... each drop, every drop... more crop"
- Ban on open grazing
- Ban on tree felling
- Ban on liquor
- Ban on tube wells except for drinking water
- Promote family planning methods using a rights-based approach
- Shram Daan (Voluntary Labour)

With an aim of prosperity for all, development decisions are taken with 100% people's participation in Gram Sabha with special focus on women, youth, elderly and the poor.



Planning and working for a turnaround of the village economy from poverty, unemployment and large out-migration to a village with thriving agriculture – undertaken through change to less water-intensive farming, robust dairy sector, active SHGs and reverse migration of people to the village.

Focus on transforming the village ecosystem from droughts and water scarcity to a green village with water self-sufficiency, through water planning, budgeting and annual water audits.





Strategy for Development

A stock taking of major problems of the village panchayat is undertaken by Gram Sabha listing

- Water scarcity and fallow land
- Unemployment and out-migration due to poverty from unviable farming
- Depression, alcoholism, crime, domestic violence
- Poor health and education facilities

Development priorities are enlisted and five-year plans prepared with focus on:

- Availability of drinking water
- Availability of water for irrigation
- Water planning, budgeting and audit
- Watershed development and rainwater harvesting
- Conserving water and checking soil erosion
- Reforestation for greening and ground water recharge
- Education, health and livelihoods based on sustainable farming and dairy development

- Roads, street lights, *pucca* houses, drainage, proper garbage disposal, ODF (since 1992)
- Access to public transportation
- Strengthening women SHGs, Youth Groups, Farmers Groups, Dairy & Agriculture Cooperatives

All of the above have helped to ensure a decent quality of life for people in the panchayat and reverse migration.

- The impact of people-empowered development has given the panchayat the highest per capita income than most villages of India, increasing from Rs.832/- per capita per annum to Rs. 30,000/- per capita per annum. This achievement was made possible through following Gram Sabha decisions of banning open grazing, tree felling, liquor and alcoholism, *Shram Daan* (Voluntary Labour), ground water management, crop management, watershed development and reforestation. The number of Below Poverty

Line (BPL) families has gone down from 170 in 1989 to none at present. Now Hiware Bazar takes pride in having 80 farmers who are millionaires. From 90 wells in 1990, the GP today has 300 wells with water table rising to 20 to 30 feet deep from 120 to 140 feet deep levels, with round the year water availability. A forest cover of about 10 lakh trees has been ensured by Gram Sabha protocols.

- The panchayat and Gram Sabha are unique in having their regular system of water-focused planning and budgeting, with annual water audit linked to availability and storage of rainwater. With strict water-discipline, the GP also ensures water-equity of making available 50 litres water per capita per day for drinking and domestic use and 30 litres per day per cattle. Water consumption for farming



- has been reduced by 50% by switching over to drip irrigation and planting cash crops like vegetables, fruits, flowers, pulses and oilseeds from the earlier pattern of planting wheat, sugarcane, banana etc. which were water-intensive.
- Water self-sufficiency leading to prosperous farmers has been achieved through active water-use surveillance by women-led *Pani Samitis*, watershed management through building hundreds of earthen and stone bunds, nine check dams and a few percolation tanks for rainwater harvesting.
- Domestic violence and crimes against women and public offences have drastically reduced due to strict protocol of *Sharab/Nasha Bandi* (Ban on Liquor).
- Eighteen village farmers have donated land for upgrading the GP school from primary to secondary with good facilities.

- A PHC has been established with good facilities for quality health services.
- Reverse migration is taking place from Bombay, Pune and other big cities of Maharashtra with migrants returning to Hiware Bazar because of rise in farming and dairy incomes. The number of households have risen from 236 in 2011 to 315 currently.
- The GP has a *pucca* building called 'Gram Sansad' or Village Parliament for hosting its Gram Sabha meetings.

Strengthening
women SHGs,
Youth Groups,
Farmers Groups,
Dairy & Agriculture
Cooperatives

Rewards and Recognition

Mr Popat Rao Pawar and Hiware Bazar have won the following rewards and recognition

Delegations from over a hundred countries have visited Hiware Bazar for development inspiration of attaining prosperity for all, from a baseline of majority afflicted by poverty.

Hiware Bazar was selected as Adarsh Gram by the Government of Maharashtra in 1994 and Mr Popat Rao Pawar has been made Chairperson of a project to create 1000 similar model villages.



Hiware Bazar was one of the few GPs showcased to the Members of Parliament of India, at the time of launch of SAGY by Hon'ble Prime Minister in 2014.

Mr Popat Rao Pawar earned the highest civilian award of Padma Shree in 2020 and has featured in many video documentaries in foreign and Indian media for the Hiware Bazar success story.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Gram Sabha driven development decision-making can turn around the status of villages from poverty to prosperity, as evidenced by Hiware Bazar in the true spirit of Gandhi ji's Gram Swaraj.
- Ecological sustainability through watershed development, water conservation, forest and soil conservation and less-water consumptive farming can transform villages to water self-sufficiency, greening, bio-diversity and prosperity.
- Livelihoods such as farming, dairying and poultry can lead to better per capita incomes and gender equality.
- Participation and mobilization of women, youth, children, elderly and the poor in development initiatives can pave the way for inclusive development and prosperity for all people.
- Awareness building and community decisions of the Gram Sabha can banish social malpractices like alcoholism, crimes, GBV and local disputes. This can also help build peaceful, proactive, progressive societies through collective striving for a better quality of life and strong village cooperative institutions.
- Availability of quality health and education, access to livelihoods, availability of water for sustainable farming with clean and green environment and healthy lifestyle can reverse out-migration from rural to urban areas.



Women lead Economic Transformation Efforts



Mizoram

Experiences from Village Councils

Introduction and Profile of the Village Councils Showcased from Mizoram

In Mizoram, Village Councils are formed to formulate and implement village development schemes like the GPs in most States of India. The Village Councils also assist in carrying out village development works of various government agencies. The tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram are covered under the VI Schedule of the Indian Constitution – which provides for governance structures of these tribal areas as autonomous entities.



Profile of Panchayats

Village Council – Kawnpui-III, Block – Thingdawl, District – Kolasib

This Village Council was established in 2015 out of the Village Council of Kawnpui. Population 2080 (1038 males and 1042 females) with 496 houses (2011 Census). This Kawnpui-III Village Council has five members, of which one is a female member, who is appointed as Advisor to Women's Federation and also as Chief Volunteer of Women Farmers.

Village Council – N. Vanlaiphai, Block – East Lungdar, District – Serchhip

This Village Council was established in July, 1954. It has seven members, of whom two are women; one of the woman members being treasurer of the Village Council. Population 4671 (2167 males and 2504 females) (2011 Census). There are two village organizations of SHGs in the Village Council area.

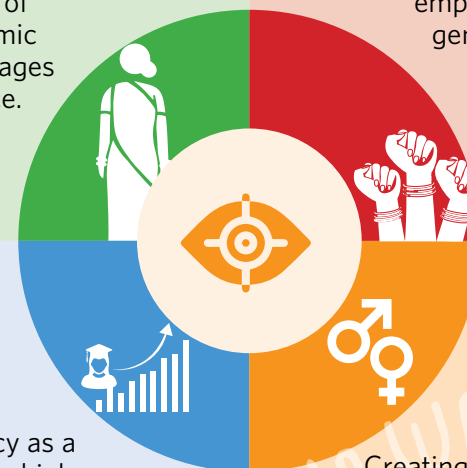
Village Council – Leng, Block – East Lungdar, District – Serchhip

This Village Council was established in 1953. It has three members of which one is a woman. The woman member is appointed as treasurer of Village Council Funds. Population of this Council is 942 (457 males and 485 females) with 196 houses (2011 Census).

Vision of Development

Focus on economic empowerment of women as a way of promoting economic development of villages with social justice.

High priority to women's empowerment and gender equality.



High female literacy as a means to achieving high literacy levels overall.

Creating a Council with no harmful practices like gender-biased sex selection; early child and forced marriage and GBV.





Strategy for Development

- Awareness campaigns on women's empowerment and gender equality, organized through Gram Sabhas.
 - Women's development priorities included in GPDPs.
 - Close collaboration of Village Councils with Women's SHGs extending all possible support to them through inter-sectoral convergence for improved health, education, skill training, inputs and subsidies, as well as, bank linkages through credit camps.
 - Diversification of SHG products by tapping local bio-diversity and NRM-based livelihoods like amla, ginger and turmeric processing, orange juice and jelly processing, piggery and poultry farming, nutri gardens linked with anganwadis for better nutrition, preparation of herbal soaps – from aloe vera, milk and honey. In addition, SHG women are undertaking construction works, organizing food festivals, etc.
 - SHGs assist the Village Councils in prioritizing the Village Poverty Reduction Plan (VPRP) under GPDP and as influencer groups, help focus on desired village infrastructure like – all season roads, solar street lights, safe water and sanitation facilities for every house, basic infrastructure for offices of SHG - village organizations, schools, anganwadis, health centres etc.
- Close collaboration of Village Councils with Women's SHGs extending all possible support to them through inter-sectoral convergence for improved health, education, skill training, inputs and subsidies, as well as, bank linkages through credit camps.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- SHG movement in villages has to be strengthened for true women empowerment, with support of NRLM and SRLM.
- Women's participation in Gram Sabhas has to be mainstreamed with focus on integrating their development needs under GPDP.
- VPRP, as part of GPDP can be effectively drawn up with active support of women SHGs, who can help identify the actual poor and suggest options for their economic empowerment by linking women of poor families to SHGs and NRLM and also under schemes like MGNREGA, PMAY(G) and other social security schemes.
- Diversification of income generating activities under the skill training of SHGs, linking them to natural resource base available in the villages coupled with credit support mobilized through banks can be a game changer for their economic empowerment.
- Awareness building and economic empowerment of women will lead to better health, nutrition, education and decent infrastructure for a better quality of life in villages of India, ensuring economic development and social justice for all.



Eliminating Child Marriage and other Social Malpractices



Odisha

Story of
Gram Panchayat Muthagadia



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Muthagadia,
Block – Nayagarh, District – Nayagarh, Odisha

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Manjulata Behera

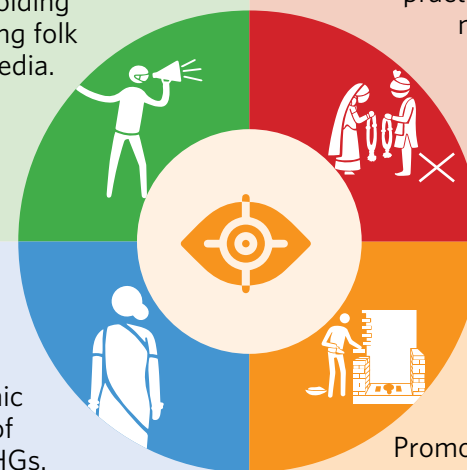
Population and Size

Small panchayat with approximately **1000** population
(2011 Census), in 13 wards.

Vision of Development

Create awareness on rights, entitlements of women and girls and laws upholding women's rights using folk and traditional media.

Eliminate harmful practices like child marriage.



Promote economic empowerment of women through SHGs.

Promote sanitation facilities to make the village clean, ensure construction of toilets in all households so that the GP is ODF.



Strategy for Development

- To stop the rampant social evil of child marriage, Sarpanch Manjulata started awareness campaigns using Pala, a form of street theater and community meetings. When, despite the awareness drive, the malpractice did not stop, the Sarpanch mobilized the Gram Sabha to impose a fine of Rs 10,000/- on families who are involved in performing child marriages and an award of Rs. 5000/- to persons informing the panchayat about child marriages being planned. She also took help of the police and the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer to stop child marriages in her panchayat, creating a deterrent effect.
- Efforts were initiated to make the panchayat ODF by constructing 370 individual household toilets under SBM (G).
- The Sarpanch helped mobilize 72 SHGs in her GP and got women SHG members trained in mushroom cultivation, incense stick making, *papad* making, phenyl manufacturing etc. enabling them to generate extra income for their families, with support of NRLM and bank linkages.
- For effective COVID management, frequent and proper hand washing was promoted in all households, apart from sanitization of public spaces and buildings.

Efforts were initiated to make the panchayat ODF by constructing 370 individual household toilets under SBM (G).



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Elimination of social malpractices like child marriage can be made a priority agenda, to uphold the rights of women and girls.
- Apart from awareness building campaigns for changing mindsets, panchayats can also impose penalties for those violating the law and engaging in child marriage, dowry, GBV or other harmful practices.
- Panchayats can play a key role in promoting health and hygiene by ensuring basic household sanitation through construction of toilets and through hand washing for personal hygiene.
- Promoting skill training and bank linkages for women in SHGs is an effective means to enhance household income, besides agriculture and animal rearing.
- Promoting traditional and folk media-based infotainment on laws, policies, schemes for removal of harmful practices and for addressing GBV is an effective means for creating awareness.



Women Show the Way for a Liquor-free Panchayat



Rajasthan

Story of Gram Panchayat
Kachhballi



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Kachhballi, Block – Bhim,
District – Rajsamand, Rajasthan

Gram Panchayat President – Present Sarpanch – Lalita Devi
(From 2021)

Former Sarpanch – Geeta Kanwar who led the GP to become
liquor-free (2015-20)

Population and Size

Small panchayat with a population of **1103** (**508** males and **595** females), with about 254 families. Population figures are as per Census, 2011.

Vision of Development





Strategy for Development

Seeking to check the spread of alcoholism in her panchayat, leading to rising incidents of violence against women, the former Sarpanch Geeta Kanwar took it as a challenge to mobilize women through Mahila Sabhas and through them mobilize the Gram Sabha, to resolve to become liquor-free. This mass resolve against liquor shops led to the shutting down of these shops. In March 2016, under the leadership of the Sarpanch, Kachhbali GP became the first panchayat in the State to mobilize a special Gram Sabha to invoke the provisions of the Rajasthan Excise Act, 1975 – providing for the closure of liquor shops, if 51% of all registered voters, vote for closing down the shop. Before the poll is held, at least 20% voters of the GP have to write a letter to the District Collector for seeking a referendum on the issue.

On the strength of the '*Nasha Mukti*' campaign led by the Sarpanch in her GP, 95% of the Gram Sabha voters voted to shut down the liquor shop from the GP. Polling was conducted by the Excise Department as per legal provisions.

The success story of Kachhbali has become a model in Rajasthan, and has shown the way to many more GPs in Rajsamand District and the State to follow the example and become "*liquor-free and GBV-free panchayats*".

- The impact of becoming a liquor-free panchayat by democratic consensus building has paved the way to make the Gram Sabha an active mechanism for local dispute settlement through Gram Sabha nominated Peace Committees as per PESA Act of the State; leading the GP to attain a Zero-FIR lodged status, crime-free, peaceful GP.
- Ownership rights of land and trees are being decided by the Gram Sabha, based on the Forest Rights Act.
- Women have become empowered sentinels of peace-keeping, in this violence-free, harmful practices-free GP.
- Village roads, street lights, safe water and sanitation are being well cared for by the GP.

Sarpanch Geeta Kanwar's leadership to make Kachhbali, the first liquor-free GP in the State through Gram Sabha consensus has been featured on Zee TV and the 'Change Makers' – documentary films of empowered Women Sarpanches of India produced for MoPR, Gol by UN Women.

Women have become empowered sentinels of peace-keeping, in this violence-free, harmful practices-free GP.





Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Vibrant Gram Sabhas with active participation of women, can roll back liquor, drugs, substance abuse, social evils and violence against women.
- Gram Sabhas can build institutions like Peace Committees and strive to make the GPs crime-free and FIR-free.
- By promoting women's empowerment and constitution of Peace Committees for dispute

resolution, GPs can focus on people-centred development, to build desired infrastructure and ensure availability of basic services.

Gram Sabhas can build institutions like Peace Committees and strive to make the GPs crime-free and FIR-free.



An Atmanirbhar Gaon for Sustainable Development



Rajasthan

Story of Gram Panchayat Piplantri



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Piplantri, Block – Rajsamand, District – Rajsamand, Rajasthan

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Anita Devi (From 2021)

Former GP President – Padma Shree Shyam Sundar Paliwal

Population and Size

A small sized panchayat with about **95-100** families and six revenue villages. Total Population – **497** (260 males and **237** females) (2011 Census).

Vision of Development

By sustained work on five themes, vision is to establish Piplantri as a sustained, self-reliant village community - 'Atmanirbhar Gaon' by promoting dignity of the girl-child, by planting and conserving trees, increasing ground water, saving pasture lands and preserving biodiversity. By promoting nature-sustained livelihoods, the aim is to develop Piplantri as an eco-feminist and eco-tourism village, channelizing resources of development schemes. The five Focus Areas for creating sustained and self-reliant villages adopted by Piplantri are:





Strategy for Development

When Shyam Sundar Paliwal became Sarpanch in 2005, the situational analysis and stock-taking of development status of the panchayat Piplantri revealed a dismal scenario with a low sex ratio at birth due to son-preference, increasing barren wastelands in the area ravaged by intense marble mining, depleting ground water, encroached upon pasture lands and endangered bio-diversity. His resolve to create a women and girl-friendly village panchayat, with green and clean villages was deepened with the untimely demise of his daughter Kiran due to dehydration because of high temperatures. To commemorate his daughter, he planted a Kadamb tree and resolved to mobilize the community through a Gram Sabha decision of planting and preserving 111 trees to celebrate the birth of every girl-child in villages of Piplantri. A decision to invest in the well-being of every girl-child was taken, with the community agreeing to pool in Rs. 31,000/- by way of a Fixed Deposit at her birth, for 18 years, till she attains the legal age of marriage for girls in India. This resource pooling by parents of the

girl and the community, helped ensure a decent corpus for her well-being and also helped to change mindsets of girls being a liability. With this sustained practice of planting 111 trees on birth of girls, the forest cover in Piplantri has grown to over four lakh trees. To prevent termites from spreading, protective aloe vera plants were planted, surrounding the trees. The produce of fruits and flowers from trees and aloe vera plants is tapped for food and beauty products processing-based livelihoods for women SHGs in the villages.

A decision to invest in the well-being of every girl-child was taken, with the community agreeing to pool in Rs. 31,000/- by way of a Fixed Deposit at her birth, for 18 years, till she attains the legal age of marriage for girls in India.



Impact of Integrated and Inclusive Development

With focus on tree plantation and increasing forest cover, linked to celebrating the birth of a girl child and ensuring her well-being, Piplantri has emerged as an eco-friendly and girl-friendly panchayat. It has emerged as a role model in India and the world. Now there is thick green foliage of about four lakh thriving trees, increased ground water table, reclaimed pasture lands ridding them from

encroachments. This has helped to sustain cattle-wealth as a source of livelihood for the people and provide sustained livelihoods based on forest produce-processing by women of the area. The bio-diversity of the area has also got enriched making for a sustained habitation of an eco-friendly village, promoting nature-based livelihoods for people, checking their out-migration from villages.



Rewards and Recognition

The panchayat and the Sarpanch have won the following recognition and awards for their good performance

Shri Shyam Sundar Paliwal known world over for the Piplantri Model of Development has been conferred the highest civilian award of Padma Shree in 2021.

The Piplantri Case Story is taught as an example of good local governance in schools of progressive countries like Denmark.

Piplantri was one of the four GPs that were showcased by screening of their documentaries to motivate the Members of Parliament, at the launch of SAGY in October 2014 by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

GP Piplantri attained ODF status and won Nirmal Gram Puraskar in 2007.



Piplantri has been showcased in about 20 documentaries by UNDP, BBC, NCERT, Prasar Bharti, Rajasthan Doordarshan, IIT-Jodhpur, Green-Business Certification Inc., US Green Building Council, etc. to name a few.

The Watershed Development Department, Government of Rajasthan has set up a Training-cum-Demonstration Centre in Piplantri.

PRIs, Development Officers, IAS Officers, MLAs and MPs, students and scholars visit Piplantri for learning and inspiration for sustainable, eco-friendly, girl-friendly model of village development.



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Situational analysis of status of development of the panchayat's villages at the start of the term has to be a baseline for meaningful planning for sustained development.
- Focus on celebrating girls and ensuring their development, through equal opportunities at par with boys – at the time of birth, in healthcare, education, skill training for livelihoods and providing community support for empowering girls.
- Focus on regenerating natural resources - water, forests, pasture lands and bio-diversity for promoting nature-based livelihoods.
- Focus on resource-pooling and channelizing existing development schemes like MGNREGA, NRLM, Watershed Development, Forestry, Horticulture, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Women and Child Development, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Health, Education and Social Justice, for promoting all-round sustained development of people in villages.
- Focus on people-centred development with vibrant decision-making in Gram Sabhas -building good village infrastructure of roads, street lights, e-service centre linked to the Panchayat Bhavan, good schools and health centres, as well as sustained investment in natural resource base of the panchayat to make its villages self-reliant and sustained habitations '*Atmanirbhar Gaon*'.
- Create engendered development role models that inspire to promote the value of women and girls and save planet Earth.

Focus on regenerating natural resources - water, forests, pasture lands and bio-diversity for promoting nature-based livelihoods.



Empowering Girls for Lasting Change



Rajasthan

Story of Girl-friendly Gram Panchayats, Sawai Madhopur



Profile of Panchayats

The roll out of the Central Government's flagship programme 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' in Sawai Madhopur is supported by UNFPA and implemented by its partner organization - CECOEDCON since 2015, with technical support of the Directorate of Women Empowerment of the State. During the first phase of this initiative, seven GPs were selected and modelled as girl-friendly GPs. These selected panchayats are:

Selected Girl-friendly Gram Panchayats of Sawai Madhopur

S.No	Name of GP	Population (Census 2011)	Name of Present Sarpanch	No. of Wards	Block
1.	Kundera	5076	Sampat Devi	9	Sawai Madhopur
2.	Chakeri	3441	Ramjeet Meena	9	Sawai Madhopur
3.	Rajvana	5441	Gomati Devi	11	Sawai Madhopur
4.	Dekva	4539	Kailash Chand Meena	9	Sawai Madhopur
5.	Jhanun	6152	Seema Devi Meena	11	Bonli
6.	Mitrapura	7120	Lalaram Meena	13	Bonli
7.	Kohli Premapura	1248	Kailash Meena	05	Bamanvas

The criteria for selection of the above panchayats developed as girl-friendly panchayats included:

- Availability of an aware woman Sarpanch as President (In 2015, at the start of the Initiative).
- Availability of a senior secondary school in the panchayat.
- Availability of all frontline functionaries like the AWW, ASHA, ANM, Sathin in GP's villages.

In 2021, with fresh elections of PRIs, now four GPs have a male Sarpanch and three have a female Sarpanch. Two of the GPs are small sized, while five are of medium size.

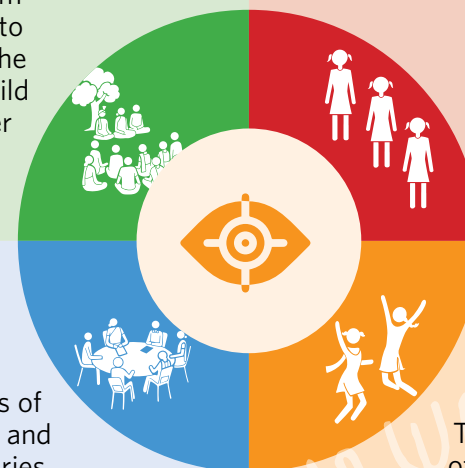
Vision of Development

To resolve problems being faced in rolling out the Girl-friendly Gram Panchayat Initiative to protect and uphold the interest of the girl child and promote gender equality.

To develop a panchayat where all the implementing agencies/development partners work in close coordination for empowerment of girls.

To build capacities of panchayat officials and frontline functionaries to monitor progress on a range of girl-friendly indicators, as part of the fortnightly General Body meetings of the panchayats.

To mobilize the support of different development departments and organizations for creating a girl-friendly environment in the villages.





Strategy for Development

- Capacity building of all stakeholders on gender and empowerment of women and girls.
- Sustained mentoring support to the selected panchayats after training; for developing a women and girl-friendly work culture.
- Constituting a supportive core group comprising of Sarpanch, Ward Panches, AWWs, ASHA, school teacher, religious leaders, other influential community leaders and their orientation on gender and addressing harmful practices like child marriage and gender-biased sex-selection.
- Organization of monthly meetings for concurrent monitoring of the Annual Work Plans of these panchayats to ensure issues related to women and girls are included and addressed.
- Undertaking a range of innovative activities in each of the selected panchayats, like:
 - Addressing the issue of early child and forced marriages through awareness campaigns
 - Addressing reasons for school dropout of girls like availability of safe transport, toilets for girls in schools, women teachers, etc. This helped to ensure retention of girls in schools
 - Setting up 'Meena Manch' or adolescent girls clubs in schools for the empowerment of girls by transacting life skills
 - Sending congratulatory messages from the panchayat to families where a girl child is born
 - Creating awareness on schemes and entitlements for girls through various media like slogan painting on village walls and public buildings, nukkad nataks, etc. and organizing regular interactions with the community for supporting girls' education, health, nutrition, etc.

Sustained mentoring support to the selected panchayats after training; for developing a women and girl-friendly work culture.



Impact of Integrated and Inclusive Development

- Drastic reduction in instances of child marriage.
- Improved retention of girls in schools.
- Birth of girls is celebrated in the villages by planting trees and sending congratulatory messages to the family by the panchayat.
- Improved access of women and girls to quality health and nutrition services in AWCs and health centres. Immunization coverage of girl-child has increased substantially.
- Proactive decision-making culture engrained to protect the interest of women and girls in the panchayat and other development institutions at the village level.

Recognition and Scaling Up

The Government of Rajasthan has recognized and appreciated the Girl-friendly Panchayat Initiative, rolled out by CECOEDCON with support from the Directorate of Women Empowerment and UNFPA. Looking at the positive impact of the initiative, the Chief Secretary has issued directions to all Zila Parishads for scaling it up across all districts of the State, by creating at least two girl-friendly panchayats in every district to begin with, from 2022-23.





Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Panchayats across the country can resolve to work towards the vision of localizing SDG-5 for Gender Equality and empowering all women and girls. They can prepare their action plans to ensure their GPs are women and girl-friendly.
- Panchayats can take initiatives for celebrating birth of girls by tree plantation and sending congratulatory messages or through other innovative means.
- Panchayats can resolve to eliminate harmful practices like gender-biased sex selection, early child and forced marriage and address gender discrimination and GBV in all forms.
- Panchayats can create an enabling environment to ensure access of all girls to school education and undertake initiatives to build their skills - life skills as well as vocational skills

without dropouts. They can play an important role in ensuring quality health and nutrition services for women and girls.

- Mobilize inter-sectoral convergence among all development functionaries for regular proactive work and monitoring progress for promoting gender equality, by creating girl- friendly environment in villages.

- Panchayats can mobilize the community to espouse values and practices of gender equality in all walks of life ensuring a human rights-based approach to development.

Panchayats can take initiatives for celebrating birth of girls by tree plantation and sending congratulatory messages or through other innovative means.



Prioritizing People's Development Needs



Tamil Nadu

Story of Gram Panchayat
Kuduvampoondi



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Kuduvampoondi,
Block – Melmalaiyanur, District – Villupuram, Tamil Nadu

Gram Panchayat President – P. Jyothi Lakshmi, ME who after
being elected as Sarpanch took charge in September, 2021.

Population and Size

Small panchayat with **1192** population and **309** households.
There are **587** males and **605** females in the GP
(2011 Census).

Vision of Development

To undertake disaster
risk assessment of
the GP and plan for
timely action to avert
disasters.

To prioritize felt needs
of the people for all-
round development of
the panchayat.

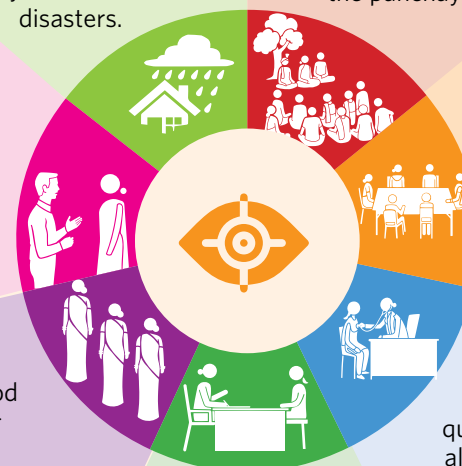
To focus on meeting
basic needs like
availability of drinking
water, street lights,
proper road maintenance,
sanitization of public
places during COVID and
other basic community
services for all people.

To make available
quality health services to
all individuals, especially
women and girls.

To ensure reduced
dropouts of girls
from schools and
make available career
counselling services for
students.

To create livelihood
opportunities for
women SHGs.

To organize regular
interaction with women
and children and people
in vulnerable situations
to understand and
meet their needs of
social security and
development.





Strategy for Development

- Within a few months of taking over as the Panchayat President, an analysis of the existing situation was undertaken by the Sarpanch and efforts were made to ensure uninterrupted availability of basic services like healthcare, quality education, livelihood options for SHGs and social security coverage for the needy.
- Efforts were made to ensure maintenance of roads, street lights and drinking water supply in all houses of the GP.
- A library and book banks have been set up for students along with career counselling dialogues with experts.
- Coordination has been established with SHGs of women to mentor them for self-employment and credit support.
- The poor and marginalized, including poor single women and widows, are identified and efforts made to provide for their shelter and social security needs under available schemes and with support from NGOs and local charity organizations.
- Regular visits to schools and anganwadis are undertaken to ensure quality of Mid-Day Meals and supplementary nutrition.
- People with various communicable and non-communicable diseases are identified for counselling and healthcare support provided through the health centre.
- Damaged school building was demolished and reconstructed, to ensure safety from foreseeable disaster threats.
- An overhead water tank with a capacity of 60,000 litres has been installed to ensure tap water to all houses and reduce women's drudgery in water collection.
- During COVID, regular cleaning and sanitization of roads and public buildings was undertaken. Efforts were made to ensure 100% vaccination coverage for both doses of COVID vaccine to eligible persons and awareness drives for observing COVID hygiene were undertaken.
- Provision of food and shelter to the needy during COVID was organized and temporary quarantine centres were established for COVID patients.

Efforts were made to ensure maintenance of roads, street lights and drinking water supply in all houses of the GP.





Key Learnings for Panchayats

- On taking over charge of the panchayat after elections, first call of duty should be to prioritize people's development needs including needs of women, children, the poor and destitute in the panchayat.
- Ensuring quality of basic services like drinking water, roads and street lights can help improve quality of life.
- Focusing on quality services at anganwadis, schools and health centres in the panchayat can lead to better health outcomes.
- Ensuring coverage of the poor and marginalized under the various social security schemes for elderly, widows and single women, persons with disabilities, minorities, households below the poverty line, orphans etc. can help improve their quality of life.
- Livelihood opportunities of women SHGs can be enhanced through mentoring, skill training and evolving

backward and forward linkages for sourcing raw material and credit inputs, with marketing tie-ups.

- Panchayats need to be vigilant about and take timely action to prevent threats of seasonal epidemics, pandemics like COVID and lurking disasters from old dilapidated structures, as well as, foreseeable natural disasters by preparing disaster risk assessment and mitigation plans for the panchayat.

- Panchayats should focus on improving health, education and livelihood opportunities for all in the village to enhance human development as a human right.

Focusing on quality services at anganwadis, schools and health centres in the panchayat can lead to better health outcomes.



Power of Women's Collective Farming



Telangana

Story of Gram Panchayat
Chinna Mandadi



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Chinna Mandadi,
Block – Pedda Mandadi, District –
Wanaparthy, Telangana

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch
V. Surya Chandra Reddy

Population and Size

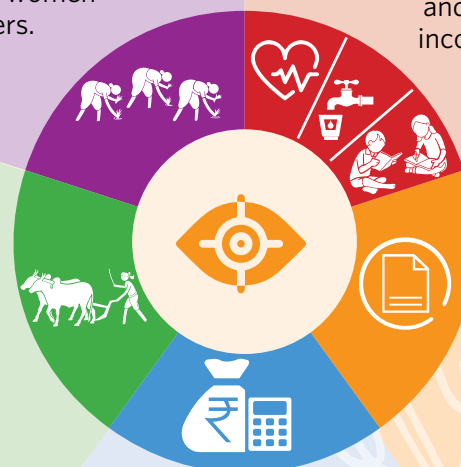
Small gram panchayat with population of
2000 and **377** households, (2011 Census).

Vision of Development

Focus on extension
training of women
farmers.

Focus on human
development issues
related to health, water,
sanitation, education
and livelihoods for
income generation.

Focus on improving
household income
of farming
community in the
villages.



Utilization of resources
available under flagship
government schemes
of Rural Development
and Panchayati Raj,
as well as, other line
departments for
optimizing the resource
envelope of the GP.

Focus on women and
children by earmarking
budgetary allocations for
them within the GP budget.



Strategy for Development

- Since 2020, the GP Chinna Mandadi has focused on improving household income from farming, by promoting transition to horticulture and other food crops in place of paddy.
- To bring this change, the GP focused on extension training of women farmers in new technologies of vegetable farming and improving market-linkages through collectives of women farmers. Women who were either owners or co-owners of agricultural land, less than two acres, were chosen for the intervention.
- The elected representatives of the GP continually engaged in motivating women farmers to adopt the collective farming model to augment their incomes. This continuous effort has led to women farmers growing horticulture crops in 50 acres of land in a collective farming mode.
- All the women farmers who underwent training are now leading horticulturists – marketing their vegetable produce as Collectives/Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).
- The GP has helped the women farmers to become a viable FPO by modernizing their farming practices, linking them with credit and subsidies from government schemes and arranging logistics for easy marketing of their produce, without middlemen.
- This initiative has led to empowerment of women farmers as it has given them financial freedom and autonomy. It has also resulted in their decision-making within the family and community. It has further empowered them to access development benefits of all schemes, beyond agriculture.
- The initiative has led to enhanced income levels of women from previous levels of Rs. 250/- to Rs.300/- per day as seasonal labour to Rs. 750/- to Rs. 1000/- per day.

Since 2020, the GP Chinna Mandadi has focused on improving household income from farming, by promoting transition to horticulture and other food crops in place of paddy.





Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Motivating farmers, especially, women farmers to become innovators in farming practices is an effective means for enhancing agri-incomes.
- Promote recognition of women farmers as equal stakeholders who deserve fair wages..
- Ensuring access to extension training, new technologies and government subsidies for women farmers can improve financial independence and autonomy of women.
- Form women's collectives/ FPOs to engage in collective farming of vegetables and fruits and promote adoption of mechanized farming and drip irrigation for increased produce.
- Link women FPOs with training and credit from NABARD/other national banks/rural banks and enable them to acquire agri-inputs, vehicles/pick-up vans for transport of their produce to mandis for sale; as well as learn collective price negotiation skills for better bargains in the market, without any middlemen to enhance their income levels.
- Participation of women as progressive farmers and agri-entrepreneurs can equip them to champion for improved healthcare and education for their children.
- Economic empowerment and freedom for women in decision-making can lead to improved participation in all social and political platforms, paving the way for an engendered village panchayat.

Economic empowerment and freedom for women in decision-making can lead to improved participation in all social and political platforms, paving the way for an engendered village panchayat.



Creating Safe Spaces for Women and Girls



Uttar Pradesh

Story of Gram Panchayat Chandwara



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Chandwara,
Block – Masauli, District – Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh

Gram Panchayat President – Pradhan (Sarpanch) –
Parkasene Jaiswal

Population and Size

Medium-sized panchayat with population of **4465**
(**2322** males and **2143** females) as per Census 2011.
Total **731** families residing in **15** Wards of the GP.

Vision of Development

Conduct safety audits for identifying public spaces where girls and women feel unsafe in the panchayat, for taking action.

To focus on empowering women and girls.

Ensure girls complete school education.

Ensure safety and dignity of girls and women; address issues of violence in public spaces.

Improve quality of infrastructure in schools and AWCs.





Strategy for Development

- Conduct periodic safety audits in Gram Sabha to identify public spaces where girls and women feel unsafe.
- Install CCTV cameras for regular surveillance and to keep vigilance on unsafe spaces identified as part of safety audits and check instances of violence.
- Create WhatsApp groups of women and girls for regular grievance redressal by the panchayat.
- Set up cycle banks for ensuring mobility of school and college girls.
- Establish women and girl-friendly infrastructure by way of separate toilets for girls in schools and colleges and in all public buildings.
- Create safe drinking water facilities and toilets in schools and anganwadis.
- Create play grounds for girls and boys with sports equipment in GP schools.
- Create an enabling girl-friendly environment to ensure girls do

not drop out of school by organizing regular dialogues with Parent-Teacher Associations and School Management Committees.

- Install adequate street lights in the GP with no dark patches to ensure safety of women and girls.
- Mobilize Mohalla Vigilance Groups for safety of women and girls.

The impact of women and girl-friendly proactive measures initiated by GP Chandwara

have led to reduced dropout rate of girls from schools; active participation of women and girls in WhatsApp groups enabling better understanding of their needs and concerns; and a sense of safety in public spaces.

Mobilize Mohalla Vigilance Groups for safety of women and girls.





Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Panchayats can uphold the dignity of women and girls by resolving to create safe spaces and mobility for them.
- Mechanism of safety audits through consultative community engagement can be institutionalized to identify unsafe spaces and desired safety compliances can be ensured like installation of CCTV cameras, adequate street lights, etc.
- Creating WhatsApp groups of women and girls for prompt action on their grievances by the GP, demonstrates gender-responsive governance.
- Focus on ensuring gender-friendly infrastructure and environment in schools, and anganwadis can help reduce school dropouts.
- Mobilizing Community Vigilance Squads for ensuring safety of women and girls in the GP is an effective means of community participation to uphold women's right to safety and security.
- Having regular dialogues with Parent-Teacher Associations and School Management Committees to curb dropouts among girls is an effective means to ensure girls continue to be in schools.

Focus on ensuring gender-friendly infrastructure and environment in schools, and anganwadis can help reduce school dropouts.



Empowered Women and Girls Lead the Change



West Bengal

Story of Gram Panchayat
Manikpara



Profile of Panchayats

Gram Panchayat – Manikpara, Block – Jhargram, District – Jhargram, West Bengal

Gram Panchayat President – Sarpanch Kalyani Mudi

Population and Size

Large sized gram panchayat with total population of **20568** (2011 Census), with **4603** households. Number of revenue villages - 51.

Vision of Development

Strive to eliminate all harmful practices like child marriage and GBV from the GP.

Special focus on development of women and girls and people in special need.

Focus on gender-responsive budget.

Ensuring participation of women in preparing GPDs.

Promote livelihoods of poor women through active SHGs.

Special priority to mainstream women-headed households in development schemes.





Strategy for Development

- Enrolment of 99% of socio-economic backward women in SHGs.
- Awareness-building among girls and women on health and sanitation, continuing education and skill development, eliminating child marriage and GBV.
- Ensuring women's participation in development planning and budgeting for GPDP.
- Promoting sports, self-defense training, extra-curricular activities and IT-skills among girls and women.
- Regular meetings of women, children and the Social Welfare Standing Committee of the GP.



Impact of Integrated and Inclusive Development

The panchayat has mobilized 349 SHGs with almost universal coverage of poor women. Skill training for livelihoods and bank linkages for women entrepreneurs, craftspersons and women farmers is ensured. With active involvement of women in GPDP process and awareness building on health, hygiene, sanitation, continuing education issues, the impact is visible in prevention of child and early marriage, improved basic health awareness, 100% immunization of children and 100% institutional deliveries. Women and girls are breaking gender stereotypes by acquiring computer skills, self-defense skills and

entrepreneurship skills.

Gender-friendly infrastructure is created by way of training and production centres for SHGs, sanitary napkins vending machine in the GP office, separate toilets for girls in schools and anganwadis. Health & hygiene awareness activities are organized on a fortnightly basis at AWCs. Children's parks and sports facilities are created for healthy growth and development of children including girls. Regular awareness building activities are organized on eliminating child marriage, GBV, healthy life and life-skills education for women and adolescent girls.

Women and girls are breaking gender stereotypes by acquiring computer skills, self-defense skills and entrepreneurship skills



Key Learnings for Panchayats

- Focus on mainstreaming women's participation in GPDP process.
- Ensure gender-responsive budgets.
- Create gender-friendly infrastructure.
- Leave no poor, needy women behind by including them in active SHGs with skill training, bank and market linkages.
- Strive to eliminate harmful social practices like child marriage and GBV.
- Focus on health, education and livelihoods for all - ensuring gender equality in GPDPs, for prosperity and well-being of all people.

Strive to eliminate harmful social practices like child marriage and GBV.



