

Information about SUTRA's Work

Water and Sanitation:

Sanitation: The Govt. of India launched 'Rural sanitation' programme in 7th five-year plan. On an experiment basis sutra installed 14 toilets in village Khajret in 1987 as a part of action research with financial support from Australian High Commission, New Delhi. In the second phase, 100 toilets were installed and financial support for this phase received from SIDA, New Delhi. With successful implementation and acceptance of the programme sutra entered in the third phase for which financial support came from MISEREOR, Germany. In this phase women masons were trained in fabrication and installation of low cost toilets. By the end of January 1992, all the 150 toilets were installed.

In late 1991, the state govt. of Himachal Pradesh decided to launch rural sanitation programme. Considering sutra's experience in this field it was approached by two districts administrations i.e. Solan and Sirmour. By the end of March 31, 1992 all the 237 toilets were installed.

Water:

In the year 2002-2003 International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Kathmandu (Nepal) provided financial aid for research on caste and gender roles in water management. The research was carried in two districts i.e. Solan and Sirmour of Himachal Pradesh. The study focuses on irrigation, drinking water distribution, use and management.

PRA was conducted of village amenities in drinking and irrigation facility.

Three watersheds were assigned to SUTRA by DRDA, Sirmour i.e. Talon Bankala (1200 hectares), Dana Ghaton and Ganog (1426 hectares). Talon Bankala sutra was officially ended where Sutra was responsible for community organization, capacity building, training and infrastructure works but in the other watersheds it is responsible only for Capacity building of community and training.

Sutra prepared a book on water management that is under process.

In the year 1994-98, with financial aid from Indo-German Bilateral Project Sutra initiated watershed management in Arki District Solan.

While addressing the issue of safe drinking water sutra published a booklet in Hindi 'Pani Manav ka Jivan'

Empowerment:

When sutra initiated the process of organizing the Mahila Mandals in late 1970s and early 80s, it implemented 'developmental activities' as a tool to bring out women on public flora.

It was the first time in the history of Himachal Pradesh when women came on roads against liquor.

SUTRA initiated a project on cattle care in the Year 1987-88. Under this project 20 women were trained as Para-Vets. SUTRA published a series of booklet on cattle care and animal husbandry for rural women. The programme was closed in the year 1995.

Mahila Samakhya program was implemented in 6 districts of Himachal Pradesh through network of sister organizations.

From women's collective empowerment sutra initiated socio-political empowerment of these groups. During this period residential awareness camps were organized. Info was imparted on women's body, Reproductive health & hygiene, laws related to women, Panchayati Raj etc. Efforts were made to ameliorate positive self-esteem through sensitizing women against gender based discrimination and violence.

Integrated community Development is possible through effective, sensitive and strong governance at grassroots, i.e. Panchayat. Hence to reactivate and strengthen the decentralized governance, SUTRA facilitated Panchayat Mandali Programme in the year 1998-99. Panchayat Mandali has become a forum where men and women of village come together and discuss about the developmental issues of their village and make collective efforts to resolve them. Community /village people grouped as Panchayat Mandalis are regularly imparted information on issues influencing their lives e.g. update government policy on minimum needs programme, basic health facilities that each community should have, participatory micro planning etc. Joint actions on issues (problems due to lack of availability of infrastructure or developmental resources) were taken by submitting written resolutions, to concerned authorities and ministry.

The women's movement in Himachal Pradesh was initiated and established which led us to have number of 'domestic violence free' villages in all the 3 developmental blocks where sutra works.

Sutra brought out a series of 8 booklets on women body and health i.e. Stree Sharir ki Pehchan (to know a woman's body)

Sutra initiated the micro-credit programs in mid 90s, with some belief to bring younger generation to join these groups or have their own groups in new villages to achieve the objective of women empowerment. For this sutra approached to Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, New Delhi and till date Sutra received a

credit of Rs. 1 crore and 11 lakh from RMK in installments (after repaying the previous loan with interest) which is given to about 2000 members on loan for income generating activities on 12% interest rate p.a. Major under activities undertaken by women are purchase of milch cattles, opening a shop etc.

At present 163 SHGs are involved in income generating activities as well as extending help to each other through inter loaning and intra loaning.

Education:

- ® On demand of women Sutra started working with their daughters in 1989 to prepare them to face the emerging challenge of Womanhood. Since then sutra organizes awareness camps (residential) during summer/winter vacations. During the camps and village level meetings info is disseminated on woman body, RH & hygiene, Panchayati Raj, Legal literacy, economic self reliance etc. Girls are sensitized against gender based discrimination and violence. At present, sutra is working with 51 Yuvati Sangathans
- ® Sutra initiated in year 1998-99 a programme for adolescent boys (aged between 10 to 14) of block Dharampur, Nalagarh and Nahan. Sutra activists while working with adolescent girls group on process of empowerment comprehended that if similar program is also conducted for adolescent boys then one would have complete programme (boys –girls simultaneously sensitized on gender) which would show results little fast. Sutra is working with 37 Yuvak Mandals.
- ® In September 2003 Sutra initiated a program on Family Life Education with a support from CEDPA, New Delhi for adolescence boys and girls and this is the first time sutra is planning to work with govt. schools.
- ® With a financial support from Center Social Welfare Board, New Delhi, Sutra run 30 crèche units through which provides pre school education.
- ® In the year 1989-90, 100 Non Formal Education centers were sanctioned to Sutra by Ministry of HRD, New Delhi.

Any other initiative:

After getting 2001 censuses data SUTRA launched campaign against declining sex ratio. Data is collected at Panchayat Level and efforts are made to sensitize women men groups, Panchayat members. To mark the protest against this evil . on 2nd october, 2001, birth anniversary of Mahatama Gandhi, women's collectives from grass root took out a Rally at Solan, Nalagarh, and Nahan towns. Women activists, Mahila Mandals, Yuvati Sanghathans, students from urban area, all marched through the town carrying placards, shouting slogans drawing the attention of local administration and state govt. to the fact that Child

Sex Ratio in the has come down drastically over last decade. A memorandum was submitted to the Chief Minister through the Chief Medical officer, Solan demanding strict enforcement of PNDT Act.