



## **Becoming Capable, Competent, and Independent – Emerging from the Shadows of Exclusion and Dependency!**



**A house-to-house survey identifies differently abled persons, provides information and motivates them and their families to join Arpana's Differently-abled Persons Organisations (DPOs)**

### **Differently Abled Persons Report 2022**

**ARPANA RESEARCH & CHARITIES TRUST**

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## *Our Founder and Inspiration – Param Pujya Ma*



Motivated and guided by Param Pujya Ma, Arpana members started Differently-abled Persons Organizations (DPOs) for those not leading normal lives due to disabilities.

Ma's perception of the Lord in every person led to the motif of service with respect, dignity, and love for each beneficiary.

Her spontaneous words, flowing with wisdom and bhakti, and her extraordinary life of service to all who came to her, continue to inspire and motivate Arpana members.

*“Seek your happiness in the happiness of all.  
Let the joy of living fill your heart to overflowing.”*

*Param Pujya Ma*

### **A “Vaccine Wall” Built Against COVID-19 in Arpana’s 100 Target Villages**

**COVID CAMPS:** Due to the Covid epidemic, patients with fever, headache, etc. began appearing in Arpana’s 100 target villages. Some villages had to be sealed off to contain the epidemic.

Arpana officers discussed the situation with the Chief Medical Officer, Karnal. Arpana agreed to join with the government team to build a “Vaccine Wall” against Covid in these 100 villages.

- ✚ Arpana trained more than 80 self help group (SHG) women volunteers to inform and motivate each household to get vaccinated.
- ✚ SHG women, along with Govt. health workers, did house-to-house surveys, giving information, quelling doubts and motivating people to get protected.
- ✚ SHG women accompanied nervous families to their vaccinations.



#### **Vaccination Camps**

The Government held large Vaccination Camps and Arpana spread the word through diligent motivational visits of SHG volunteers, informing and motivating village folk to get vaccinated.

Owing to the surge in cases during May 2021, the Covid Lockdown stalled all activities. However telephonic contact was maintained with all DPO leaders and they were given information on government facilities and welfare schemes for the poor and differently abled in rural areas.

In addition, home management and quarantine guidance were sent by WhatsApp to sahayaks and DPO leaders to share with PwDs in their villages.

**94% of the population received the 1<sup>st</sup> dose and 77% the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose by December 2021!**

**And all 1,472 members of the DPOs were vaccinated!**

Thus, Arpana teamed up with the Government and –

**Built a “Vaccine Wall” to Defeat COVID in Arpana’s 100 Villages!**

# TOWARDS SELF-SUFFICIENCY, LIVELIHOOD, AND SKILLS FOR THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED

April 2021 to March 2022

## Differently-abled Persons Organisations (DPOs)

In 2012 Arpana started working with persons with disabilities (PwDs). There are now 1,472 persons with disabilities in Arpana's program in 55 villages in and around Karnal District in Haryana.

Arpana's team has formed 58 village-based Differently-abled Persons Organizations (DPOs) with 1,472 members.

DPOs enable Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) to pool savings, build a credit resource and generate income activities for their future!

They get information on government schemes and benefits in the monthly meetings of their DPOs. They have built up savings and have access to micro-credit loans. They took 1,874 loans for income-generating activities and other purposes.



**DPO meetings are changing the lives of PwDs!**

## Items Dealt With Through DPO Meetings Included:

- ❖ Mr. Ish Bhatnagar, Head of Arpana's Rural Services, had liaised intensively with Govt. Skill Training Center officials to enroll differently-abled persons in their food processing training courses.
- ❖ Arpana's outreach team discussed the opportunity of skill training with all DPO members, and motivated educated DPO members to apply for enrollment in the course.
- ❖ DPO members were informed about eligibility for bus passes and application procedures.
- ❖ Explaining Online Registration for medical certificates, pensions, family IDs, and unique IDs to PwDs: this is now required at newly created village government Computer Service Centers (CSCs) before initiating any PwD's certification and documents.
- ❖ Special focus to get medical certificates made for PwDs with hearing and speech difficulties.
- ❖ Workers checked the vaccination status of PwDs and their family members.
- ❖ Arpana workers worked hard so that DPOs which are weak, practice better group discipline.

## New Group Formations

Ten new DPOs were formed in this Financial Year. Five in existing villages and five in new villages taken up by Arpana.

Five groups were formed in existing villages of Kamalpur, Mukhali, Chandav, Mugul Majra and Randoli. Another five groups were formed after volunteer SHG women, trained as 'sahayaks', conducted Home-to-Home surveys in 5 new villages, i.e. Churani, Sangoha, Malikpur, Norta and Barsat villages. The ten new DPOs opened their accounts and began holding regular meetings.



## Analysis of Survey

• Number of Villages Surveyed	5
• Families surveyed	921
• Families were with persons with disabilities (PwDs) during Survey	174
• Total PwDs identified by staff, sahayaks & govt. health workers	186

## Types of Disability

Locomotor (83), Mental (40), Hearing/speech (13), Visual (31), Autism (4), Multi-disability (15)



## Building Volunteers' Capacities as 'Sahayaks' for Differently abled Persons

The 'Sahayaks' are SHG women volunteers who are being trained to assist and walk with PwDs on the path of development. They are a vital resource in facilitating the empowerment process of PwDs.

In April 2021, 5 days counseling skills training for PwDs and their families was given to the sahayaks.

Sahayaks learned:

- ❖ How to conduct home visits.
- ❖ About the Revised Act on Disabilities.
- ❖ How PwDs acquire skills for income generation.
- ❖ How to conduct surveys.
- ❖ How to facilitate new DPO information
- ❖ How to motivate PwDs.
- ❖ How to strengthen and monitor DPOs.



**Mr. Bhatnagar explains conducting Home Visits**

Home visits are a means of understanding and resolving problems of PwDs, motivating families for their support, for collecting information, etc.



Sahayaks participated in monthly review and planning sessions each month to prepare agendas, plan to attend Free assistive devices camps, learn to enroll in courses at the Government Skill Centre, ensure maximum PwDs get vaccinated and obtaining Medical Certificates.

## Differently-abled Federation Volunteers Assist the Certification Process

Since April, Arpana teams have been informing PwDs of the government's new policy. All those needing medical certification have to get registered at the village Computer Service Center (CSC) showing the necessary ID Documents. Then they go to the Red Cross Center in Karnal for medical checkups, etc.

Arpana trained volunteers, including "sahayaks" and DPO members, help Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) through this important step to get their certifications.

**Unscrupulous touts** exploit PwDs for this very service – charging large sums of money to get their medical certificates made – a process that is free! Arpana's team and DPO leaders have petitioned the authorities to take action against such 'agents'.

Certification Process	Apr '21 – Mar '22	
Number of Days to Obtain Certification (visits to Civil Hospital / Red Cross)	45	 
Certificates Made	369	
Pension Forms Filled	131	

### *A Spirit of Service*

*Shri Naresh Kumar is the president of the Sangarsh Federation of Differently abled Organizations and is dedicated to the advancement of his differently abled brothers and sisters. Every Wednesday he personally ensures that medical certificates are made for persons with disabilities (PwDs) in Arpana's target villages.*

*PwDs are escorted by SHG volunteers who ensure that documentation at the village center is completed before they reach the Karnal offices. They then walk with them to get certification.*

## Partnerships Pay Dividends for the Differently Abled!

A dynamic rapport has been established by Mr. Ish Bhatnagar, Head of Arpana Rural Services, with Dr. Rahul Singh, Head of the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Satellite Center in Nilokheri.



**Assistive Devices for those in Need:** Tricycles, crutches and other assistive devices, promised to 13 PwDs in March 2021, were made available by the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Satellite Center on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

**A Free Screening Camp** was held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2022, in village Randoli by Deen Dayal Upadhyay Centre. Specialists from Delhi were invited by the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Center for screening disabled persons to identify the most suitable assistive devices for each.

Mentally impaired persons also came for counselling.

**Many types of disabilities** affected the PwDs: locomotor, vision loss, hearing impairment and autism. The required devices will be provided shortly.

**Arpana's trained *sahayaks***, SHG volunteers, identified PwDs, checked their documentation beforehand, arranged transport and accompanied them. This hard work resulted in 105 PwDs benefitting from the camp.

**Dr. Rahul Singh, Psychologist, examining patient in the screening camp**



**Growing the Community Spirit:** Arpana's eight self-help women's groups in village Randoli warmly welcomed the camp participants – cooked a meal, served tea and saw to the cleanliness of the area.

### Soma from village Sadarpur

*Soma's family resides in village Sadarpur. Soma, 62 years of age, has lost sight in both eyes. He has 2 sons and one daughter, all of whom are married and settled and live separately.*

*Soma's wife works as a labourer to support her husband and herself.*



*Motivated by Sahayaks, Soma became a member of the DPO.*

*His wife, who attends the DPO meetings, asked for some device whereby he could move around independently.*

*He has now got a smart cane through Arpana's request to the Deen Dayal institute and is feeling confident and independent.*

### Hope for Mentally Handicapped Children

Tapana Rehabilitation Center is helping to improve the lives of mentally handicapped children.

Arpana workers identified ten differently abled children – three from village Sangoha and seven from village Badagaon – and convinced their parents to send them to the Center. They are doing well.

**Differently abled children participate in painting competition**





## Skill Training

On 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021, Mr. Ish Bhatnagar, Director Arpana Rural Services, along with Ms. Sunita & Ms. Kamlesh, the Presidents of the Unnati and Vikas Federations, had a productive meeting with Mr. Bhatia, Head of the Government's Kalpana Chawla Skill Development Institute, to prepare for a workshop with 17 PwDs who had attended a 30 day food processing training at the skill building center.



The workshop – a platform for:

- simple business plans made with the PwDs to use their skills for income generation.
- brainstorming so the PwDs can determine the feasibility of starting a small production center to make pickles and preserves.

Arpana's team also saw the equipment required for a simple production unit, such as peelers and grading machines. The use of all equipment was also explained.

Intensive mobilization had been carried out by SHG women working as 'Sahayaks' or 'facilitators' in the Disability program. After identifying eligible candidates for the Food processing course, they met their families to persuade them to ensure that they attended classes regularly. After getting the reassurance, 19 PwDs were registered for the skilling course in Karnal, which was not residential.

**A Livelihood Workshop** was held on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021, with 17 differently abled persons who had participated in a one month food preservation course at the Kalpana Chawla Skill Development Centre. 10 trained *sahayaks* also participated. The purpose of the workshop was to assess levels of learning and retention of PwDs, who attended the skill development course on food processing. Secondly, it was to ascertain how many PwDs would like to use their skills for income generation activities

All PwDs participated with active interest and made their presentations. After the open discussion, 5 candidates emerged as serious about beginning a small business to make pickles, etc.

It was a day-long session. A fresh tasty meal was cooked and served with affection by SHG volunteers.

***PwDs get ready to make their presentation***



## Rajesh Creates a Livelihood Pathway



Shri Rajesh, of village Abdulapur, is severely growth impaired and both legs are not formed. However, he is blessed with the spark of creativity and makes perfect models of buildings, sketches portraits and is also a tattoo artist.

Arpana had given Rajesh a small grant for a shop where he sells snacks along with his practice as a tattoo artist.

Then, Arpana, the Differently abled Federation and BNB Trust, provided him with a printer and lamination machine to add to his business.

Rajesh was taught how to make unique disability cards for Differently-Abled Persons.

The news spread in SHG meetings that Rajesh could make unique Disability ID cards.

This initiative was widely welcomed as all differently abled persons needed this service and his shop would be convenient for them.



## World Disability Day: 10th Anniversary of the Differently-Abled Federation!

On 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2021, 400 representatives from 53 DPOs celebrated World Disability Day at Arpana's Center in Budhakhera.

The chief guest was the Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Sukhbir, who praised the achievements of the PwDs, and counselled them to get vaccination cover.

Dr. Rahul Singh, Head of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Institute of Nilokheri, also attended as guest of honor.

All PwDs participated with enthusiasm in the Painting, Rangoli and Mehndi Competitions. The Kabaddi competition and races attracted enthused spectators and participants.



**Dr. Rahul Singh promises all assistance to PwDs in need!**



**A role play sharing real life stories of PwDs**

### Sharing Real Life Stories of PwDs

The *sahayaks* presented role plays about the real life stories of the changes in the lives of PwDs.

These lively presentations were received with laughter and applause, as well as leaving a deep understanding of the struggles of persons who are differently abled.

### Experiment in Self-Employment – DPO Food Stalls

An unusual feature of the event was that DPO teams from different villages set up food stalls. The stalls were a big success and the teams earned a good profit, encouraging PwDs in income generating activities.

## Making Shrishti Whole – a Community Endeavour!

*Neeraj lives in village Sangohi and is a member of Arpana's self help group. She has 3 daughters. Her husband is a mason.*

*Her youngest daughter, Shrishti, was born with a hole in her heart. Two years ago, Neeraj took her to Rohtak Medical College where specialized heart surgery was performed.*

*Recently, Shristi began losing her vision and Neeraj took her back to Rohtak Medical College where she was diagnosed with cataracts in both eyes.*



*Rs.50,000 was needed to operate on Shrishti's eyes. Neeraj and her husband had used up all their savings as well as taking loans for the 3 operations.*

*SHG leaders appealed to their group members and collected Rs.12,000/- for little Shrishti's operations. Arpana's Vikas and Unnati Federations contributed Rs. 25,000/-.*

*After the eye operations, Shrishti has recovered her sight and is able to live normally. She is now going to school.*

## Differently-abled Persons Organizations (DPOs) Statistics April 2021 to March 2022

		Financial Data	Rupees	US \$
Number of Villages with DPOs	55	Total Savings in 2021-22	38,04,184/-	50,722
Number of DPOs	58	Total Cumulative Saving	1,73,28,124/-	231,042
Membership	1,472	Total Group Funds	1,96,100/-	2,615
		Cumulative Group Funds	6,68,372/-	8,912
		Loan Amount Disbursed	98,16,155/-	130,822
		Loans Outstanding	1,37,55,102/-	183,401

### *They are Emerging to Embrace Life!*

The Differently Aabled are emerging from isolation and ignominy through Arpana's programs. They are experiencing self worth for the first time as they learn, take responsibility for their lives, begin income generating activities and are treated with dignity.

The ongoing training of *Sahayaks* (volunteer helpers), their regular home visits, counselling and support are contributing to communication and to quality assistance for the differently abled.

Our focus will now be on livelihood enhancement as well as skill building amongst DPO leaders. Children's problems will be taken up, i.e. schooling, health and other support required by them. DPO members tell us, "*We feel so grateful to all who reach out and help us live with dignity.*"

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### *Arpana is deeply grateful to:*

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The Baij Nath Bhandari Public Charitable Trust (New Delhi)  
Mrs. Sushma Lall (New Delhi)

### *for their generous support*

### *Your Support Can Empower Differently Aabled Persons*

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