



Expanding Roles of the Differently Abled



DPO Members enact play on Inclusion

"Give happiness to all who surround you and you will gain abiding peace."

Param Pujya Ma

Differently Abled Annual Report 2019

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The Differently Abled – Accessing Entitlements, New Opportunities

Surveys in 55 villages identified 2,200 Persons with Disability (PWDs). 48 Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs) were formed, in which 1,085 disabled persons were enrolled.

Persons with Disability are finding a newfound confidence:

1. through building financial security through small savings.
2. with a credit resource to foster small income generation activities.
3. Their sense of self worth is nurtured as they begin to contribute and support their families.
4. DPOs provide them visibility and a voice: information to secure entitlements.

The Federation of 48 DPOs, the Sangharsh Viklangjan Vikas Sangathan, represents them in the government space and puts forward needs and problems, many of which are resolved quickly.

Seeta

Seeta is a resident of village Dibarki Kalan. She suffers from a disability in her hand. She joined the DPO formed by Arpana in her village in 2010. She took her first loan to start selling bangles and it went well.

She then took a second loan of Rs. 15,000 to purchase special clay used in making 'Tandoors'. She makes Tandoors and sells them and has customers from Panipat coming to buy Tandoors from her. In winter she earned Rs. 10,000 from this innovative and creative enterprise!



Medical Certification – Essential for Benefits!

Each DPO facilitates access to government entitlements, benefits and services for all its members.



Without a medical certificate, PWDs have no recourse to any government service or benefit or pension. Scores of desperate PWDs used to pay touts to obtain certificates, which were often false.

Every Wednesday, Shri Sheo Singh and Shri Naresh, President and Secretary of the Federation, assisted members to get their certificates made from the Civil Hospital, Karnal, and entitlements obtained from officials.

Shri Naresh (center), ensures documents are in order of PWDs wanting Medical Certificates

Certifications

No. of visits to Red Cross	47	Certificates Made	293
PWDs came for certification	484	Referred	9
Visits to Rohtak	4		

Number of Visits	47	Bus passes obtained	33
Rail passes obtained	133	Pensions obtained	215

Disabled Persons all require a Unique ID Card to be made, which in future will secure them all rights and benefits across the country.

Number of villages where UDID certificate information discussed	43
Number of DPOs where UDID certificate information discussed	45
Number of camps held (Karnal, Gharaunda, Badagaon, Budhakhera)	5
Number of UDID Certificates applied for	505



Arpana Holds Special Camp for Unique ID Formation

To obtain Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards, the DPO obtained applications from their members, signed by the Panchayat, and submitted them to the ADPO office so that the greatest numbers of PWDs get their BPL cards made as possible. The process continues so all eligible obtain their cards.

1. Visit to the District Education Officer, the Social Welfare officer and the ADPO. Quarterly reports of the projects were given and all officials encouraged them.
2. Visit to the ADPO for help with BPL cards for PWDs and in October
3. A team of PWDs visited all government officials inviting them to celebrate World Disability Day, Dec. 3 at village Budhakhera. Mr. Shastri, Deputy CMO, was the chief guest.
4. DPO representatives participated in a PWD 'Sammelan' arranged by the Social Welfare Dept
 - a. The Arpana DPO team requested
 - i. that BPL cards be made for all PWDs;
 - ii. that Karnal Hospital issue medical certificates for deaf persons,
 - iii. that loans taken by PWDs be subsidized.
 - b. The Commissioner, Mr. Shastri, addressed the gathered PWDs, urging them to form a collective so they could work together. Mr. Naresh and Mr. Sheo Singh got up, and told the commissioner about the network of 48 DPOs. The commissioner was pleased and promised his support to resolve any problems.
 - c. Mr. Anuj from Sarthak, shared with PWDs and their families, skilling and placement opportunities offered by Sarthak
 - d. The Pan India NGO, Sarthak, informed DPO members about their efforts to train and find jobs for educated but disabled youth between age 18-35 years.

Distribution of Wheelchairs in Panchayat Bhawan

Pandit Deen Dayal Uppadhyaya National Institute, Nilokheri, conducted an awareness creation event on 26th December, 2018, at Panchayat Bhawan, Karnal. Sangharsh Sangathan submitted names of 9 PWDs from DPOs in Arpana's target villages for tricycles.

9 PWDs from Dibarki Khurd, Chundipur and Barsat were given tricycles.



Education and Skill Development

Arpana endeavored to promote education and life skills for children with special needs:



Rukshar and Rehan with their mother

- Arpana sponsored 6 hearing impaired children in Mata Prakash Kaur Institute for children suffering from deafness. All children did well.
- 13 children with mental impairment were supported by Arpana to learn daily life skills at an NGO, Tapan. Children learned to do simple chores and became less dependent on family. However, the NGO shifted to Nilokheri – too far for the children to go to.

- 4 children from villages Sirsee, Nagla Farm, Araipura and Peerbadoli were denied admission in their local government school. With Arpana's intercession with the school principal, and the support of the District Education Officer, the children were given admission.
- 6 other children supported by Arpana to attend the government special resources center, are now all in their local government schools and are doing well.

Thus, slowly and surely the doors to an inclusive environment are opening.

Livelihood

A group of 18 SHG women and persons with disability were provided training in mushroom cultivation in the Krishi Vigyan Kendra near Uchana. It was an intensive 5 days practical course and 98 bags of special mushroom soil were given to each trainee for growing a crop of mushrooms.

***Members of SHGs at Uchana
Research Centre for 5 days training on
Mushroom Cultivation***



Viklangjan Vikas Sahyogi

Two days of training were conducted by Ms. Vandana Bedi on 8th January and 2nd February about the fresh categories included in the Disability law and the roles and responsibilities of volunteers who will be trained as volunteer assistants for the development of disabled persons.

Ms. Vandana Bedi explained how such a volunteer will learn to work with them towards inclusive actions, will know how to form and manage a DPO, work for children's education, enable the differently abled to become more independent and to access benefits and will be able to counsel and deal with challenges.



Such volunteers first have to Identify disabled persons, their problems and challenges and help resolve them. They need to recognize the needs of PWDs, enable children with disabilities to attend school and get facilities and services required for their development. They need to counsel and assist care providers, identify skills and talents of PWDs and enable them to develop those skills for self empowerment and also assist and enable PWDs to access government entitlements and services

Ms. Vandana Bedi, explained how such volunteers should visit families of PWDs and understand their need and circumstances and problem and share information at Arpana's so that need specific actions and solutions be designed and implemented to enhance the quality of life of PWDs

Meetings; Learning's – Stepping Forward Together

The 48 village-based Disabled Persons Organizations conducted their monthly meetings regularly, attended by Arpana animators who give training on a variety of subjects.

The main issues during the year were-

- To get BPL Cards, health insurance, Medical Certificates, Unique IDs and pensions to a maximum no. of PWDs.
- Schooling of children with disabilities
- To promote importance of local govt. meetings and liaison with govt. depts.
- Promoting hygiene/sanitation practices and information about seasonal diseases.
- Planning/participation in village events conducted by Arpana's SHGs.
- Planning for general body meeting
- Knowledge of new Disabilities Law
- Ongoing building of DPOs leaders' skills to strengthen groups, promote inter loaning for livelihood avenues
- Participation in Federation meetings.



DPO Monthly meeting in village Baragaon

DPO Savings and Loans

No. of DPOs Formed till date	48
Membership in 48 DPOs	1,085
Cumulative Saving of 48 DPOs	Rs. 83,694,837
Group Fund	Rs. 296,761
No. of Loans Disbursed till date	1,071
No. of Business Loans Taken till date	165*
Loans for Income Generation up to March 2018	130
Loans for Income Generation during 2018-2019	35

Kinds of Income Generation

Shop	46
Food Carts	17
Cattle	37
Agriculture	17
Purchase: E-rickshaw, Auto, etc.	10
Parlor	2
D. J	2
Tailoring	15
Cycle Repair	19
Total	165

Our Struggle –to Succeed.....

Saroj



Saroj is a resident of village Taprana and a member of Nai Umeed DPO formed by Arpana in her villages “My life has changed since I became a member. I learn a lot about keeping my family well and healthy’

She knew tailoring and says’ I built up my savings and then took a loan of Rs. 40,000 to buy a motorized sewing machine.” This makes it possible for her to take more orders, enabling her to earn up to Rs. 10,000 per month.

Suresho

Suresho is also a resident of village Sadarpur and suffers from a disability in one hand.

She has recently taken a loan of Rs. 40,000 and started a grocery shop in which her son works with her and presently her monthly income is Rs. 7,000 each month.

“Our lives have changed and the information we gain in each meeting helps us stay healthy and get our rights.



Sangarsh Divyangjan Vikas Sangathan



DPO representatives gain a deeper understanding of norms important for DPOs, in a session conducted by Ms. Kamlesh in the Monthly Federation Meeting



Executive Committee members complete Federation records after the monthly meeting

The Federation of DPOs is the larger platform for all DPOs and their members. Arpana worked hard to:

- Foster solidarity and a spirit of collective actions
- Nurture savings and promote self employment and income generation activities
- Build skills of DPO leaders to strengthen and energize their village level organizations by proper norm abidance, attendance, record maintenance
- Regularize planning and implementation of activities to promote access of PWDs to secure their entitlements through understanding of processes
- Build liaison with government agencies so DPO members may pursue other matters independently in appropriate departments

Number of Federation meetings held at Arpana	12
Number of DPOs which are members in the Federation	44
Cumulative Savings in Federation	Rs. 392,025
Total loan amount outstanding	Rs. 21,300
Total number of business loans	89

Preparing for Annual Meeting of Sangarsh Federation

DPO Leaders, Trainers Make Script

DPO leaders and 10 SHG trainers, along with Arpana staff, enthusiastically stepped forward to design a script for a play depicting achievements of the DPOs and Federation members. On 15th, 28th, 29th November and 2nd December, the team rehearsed the play with gusto. It is a sign of many inhibitions dissolving and a new confidence and optimism being generated!

Networking Meeting

On 27th November 2018, the self help groups of Abdulapur, conducted a networking meeting facilitated by Arpana staff and Mr. Ish Bahtnagar, Program Coordinator.



The women of Abdulapur volunteered to organize the Aam Sabha to be held on 3rd December at village Budhakhera.

Different groups took responsibility for managing the community kitchen, the water management and welcome committee along with PWD leaders.

It was the inclusive climate being fostered which was very encouraging.

General Body Meeting of Sangarsh Federation on World Disability Day

The Sangarsh Federation of Disabled Persons Organizations held its annual general body meeting, which was also World Disability Day, on 3rd December 2018, at Arpana's center in village Budhakhera. The Deputy CMO graced the occasion as chief guest and inaugurated the program.

Mr. Ish Bhatnagar thanked all those present and introduced the project activities for the inclusion and integrated development of persons with disabilities (PWDs). He shared that 43 DPOs in 45 villages are functioning effectively to change the lives of over 1,000 PWDs who are DPO members in Arpana's target villages.

The collective goal of the DPOs and the Federation is to work of equal rights, status, opportunities and access in an inclusive social and barrier free environment. On 3rd December, over 400 PWDs from 43 DPOs participated in the Aam Sabha.

After Mr. Bhatnagar introductory speech, Mr. Sheo Singh, President addressed the audience thanking Arpana for its endeavor to enable and empowering all who are disabled. He shared his personal experience and the success of other PWD members their confidence, self esteem has grown and how their information base has widened and also their capacities to meet challenges.

A lively play was performed which was greatly enjoyed by all.

Dr. Krishan Kant, Deputy CMO, addressed the audience with words of encouragement and praise for their endeavors. He told them of the Health insurance scheme and how it would benefit them. He assured the audience of his support in getting their health insurance card made.

On this occasion of World Disability Day, Arpana also organized a Unique ID camp for those PWDs who had not got their Unique ID Cards made on December 3rd 42 PWDs were able to get their Unique ID Cards made.

Finally, lunch was served to all in a spirit of congeniality.



SHG Women and DPO memebtrs enjoying the play



SHG women and DPO leaders presenting a role play on real Stories of PWDs



DPO leaders presenting a gift to Deputy CMO



UDID Camp held at Budhakhera on the occasion of World Disability Day



Deputy CMO talks of government schemes for PWDs and weaker sections



DPO members and SHG members enjoying the meal served with love

Harish - a Resolve to Succeed

Harish is a son of Shri Shalender of village Nagla Farm. ***He and his mother both suffer from disability in their hands. The family was extremely poor and Harish and his brother would go for daily labour with their father to feed and shelter their family.***



When Arpana formed the DPO in Nagla Farm. Harish and his mother Ranbiri also became members.

Harish was attending school also and learnt the computer and became very keen on computer learning and kept improving his skills. Harish took a loan from his DPO, bought a computer provided services from home such as payment of bills, getting information, filling forms etc. His home became an information center and he became well known in the village. He paid off his loan and set up a computer stall near the toll booth at the Yamuna bridge. He provided services to truckers and others.

When Harish repaid his second loan, he and his mother took a loan to enable his father to purchase a vehicle for cartage. The family is doing well owing to the courage and initiative of Harish and his mother. They have a proper pukka house with all the amenities. The shadow of poverty has been dispelled by the sunshine of the family's endeavors.

Kamlesh

Kamlesh, married to Ram Dhari lives in village Badagaon. She has disability of an arm and leg and has suffered much adversity for this reason and has been a victim of domestic violence also-constantly harassed with verbal abuse and often turned out on the streets.

The family was burdened by extreme poverty which added to her misfortune. Kamlesh started doing daily labour but with time, and also developed arthritis. She has 3 children who were in the government school.



In March 2014, Arpana organized PWDs in Badagaon into a DPO, and Kamlesh became a member and gradually a ray of hope entered the darkness of despair in her life. She began depositing Rs. 10 saving each month from her Rs. 100 daily wage.

She first took a loan of Rs. 1,500 and purchased a young calf and began rearing her. She then took a loan of Rs. 3,000 and motivated her husband to start a pavement stall for selling vegetables. Her husband began selling vegetables and started earning Rs. 400 a day. Kamlesh then persuaded her son to join a D.J shop to learn the job.



After repaying the loan, she took a loan of Rs. 8,000 and she and Ram Dhari took a shop on rent and expanded their vegetables sales and their venture started doing well.

She then took a loan of Rs. 29,000 and helped her son Rohtas purchase sound equipment to start his own D.J business. He is now earning upto Rs. 12,000 a month from his enterprise.

Kamlesh with her son who is Now a successful D.J

Kamlesh is now happy and proud that all the family members are earning their livelihood. One son has learnt motor cycle repairs and is doing well, the second has his micro business and the third helps Ramdhari and herself with the vegetable stall. She has been able to marry two of her sons who now have separately. This journey of enterprise and courage began in 2014!

Kamlesh has repaid all her loans in time and on January 2019 she has taken a loan of Rs. 63,000 to repair the roof of her house and also gradually make it Pukka.

Kamlesh has been prompt in availing of all the benefits, she is entitled to, as advised in the DPo each month. She has got Health cover insurance for all the family and personally had her medical certificate done and is getting her disability pension and her BPL card has been made. The family is financially stable and Kamlesh has won the respect of her village folk who do not mock her but address her with respect as Kamlesh the vegetable vendor.

***Kamlesh, with the president of her DPO,
Naresh, who has shown her the way forward***



Conclusion

Arpana is profoundly grateful to all our friends and partners whose magnanimity makes it possible for such transformations to occur! For the opportunities thus created for our less fortunate and brothers and sisters to take charge, and build their lives anew, in spirit of hope and confidence. They experience the self worth, self esteem and also the respect of their families and communities, which impacts and enriches their lives.
