

**SahjaniShiksha Kendra**  
**April 2016 to March 2017**

**Introduction**

The Sahajani Shiksha Kendra has been working with rural and Adivasi women on issues of their empowerment through education and literacy programmes at Lalitpur since the year 2002. SSK is a women's organization that works with a feminist perspective with the women and girls from Dalit, Adivasi and marginalized communities. Various issues like children's education, MGNREGA, child marriage are addressed and information regarding different governmental policies is provided by the organization. The organization works towards inculcating leadership qualities amongst the women and encouraging them to raise their voice on different issues pertaining to their lives.

In the last eleven months, the focus was on running the opened Literacy & Information Centers (LICs) and Literacy Centers qualitatively. Along with this, increasing the participation of community members in Information Centers and opening the remaining Literacy and Information Centers was also in focus. During this period rallies were organized as part of strategy to mobilize community members and other methods were used to for mobilization of women and communities with an intention to increase their participation in Literacy & Information Centers and Literacy Centers.

The capacity building of staff has also been done to effectively run these centers with a thorough understanding of the pedagogy, and by inculcating a critical gender perspective among various levels of staff. In addition, block level camps, village level camps, school shivirs and bridge course were organized. These have been some of the core activities carried out during this period, to support the opening and effective working of LICs and Literacy centers.

**Activities at Glance:**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>No. of Learners</b>
<b>1</b>	Literacy Centers	45	2163
<b>2</b>	Literacy & Information Center	25	1360
<b>3</b>	ICT Center	2	112
<b>4</b>	Trainings for capacity building	5	164
<b>5</b>	Block Level Camp	3	160
<b>6</b>	Village level camp	53	3409
<b>7</b>	School Shivar	132	
<b>8</b>	Bridge Course	1	61

## Major Activities:

### Literacy through Centers

#### 1. Literacy Centre

Literacy center is one of the key strategies for implementing literacy programme. The centers are required for providing a space to women where they can study and at times share their experiences with each other. The center strategy is also necessary for giving impetus to women's learning, as it opens on regular basis. With this objective SSK is running Literacy Centers in three blocks of Lalitpur district; Mehrauni, Mandawara and Birdha. During the period from April 2016 to Feb. 2017 regular support was provided to the 45 centers among which 43 centers ran on regular basis and one center ran through village level camp. One center was closed due to teacher's unavailability. The main activities in the support included mobilization of women to attend the center regularly and providing pedagogical support to the teacher for making teaching learning process engaging and interesting.

At literacy centers learners' literacy skills were focused, at present among 2163 learners 1280 learners can read and write small paragraphs, can count up to 1000, identify random numbers between 1 and 1000, share the place value and could to do addition, subtraction.

#### 2. Literacy and Information Center

Since Literacy Center is a time bound strategy in adult literacy programme after which there are chances of relapse in women's learning due to lack of practice. Hence Literacy and Information Center has been visualized as a space where women can continue their education and strengthen their competencies and skills. Also LIC is conceptualized as a space which will be owned by community and hence it will remain in the community even after completion of the program. With this objective Literacy and Information centers have been established at the Panchayat level so that people in one panchayat can be linked with their respective information center. LICs are not only for women rather engagement of whole community is envisaged and hence list of government schemes and forms related to those schemes have been kept along with the books and newspaper for adolescent girls and boys at the centers.

SSK has established 25 Information and Literacy centers among which 24 centers were running regularly. During this period regular support was provided to all the centers. Like Literacy center the main activities done were mobilization and providing pedagogical support to the teacher. Also the villages where LICs have been opened community meetings were conducted to make aware the community members on different social issues. Hence in order to build capacity of the teacher support was given in conducting issue based discussions so that in future these sessions can be facilitated by the teachers themselves. In these sessions mainly women's and adolescent girls' health issues were covered along with building awareness on adolescents' literacy, education and women's rights. The table given below shows the issue base work happened at the LIC and the number of people benefited.

Issue	Number of beneficiaries
Awareness on Food Security Bill	2855
Facilitated Ration Distribution on actual rates	1500
Awareness about roles and responsibilities of SMC Members	300
Discussion on Child marriage	1100
Helping women in opening bank account	800
Nutrition made available to pregnant women	1000

## Literacy in Camps

### 1. Village level Camps

The key objectives with which village level literacy camps are organized was to develop and facilitate an environment of literacy within the village, to establish the presence of Sahajani Shiksha Kendra in the village and to develop a relationship with the community, so that help can be sought from the community when literacy work continues. The camp also provides a space for women to come together and undertake literacy activities collectively at the village level.

Apart from the aforementioned objectives, the aim during village level literacy camps is also holding open meetings with community members in the village where information on topics such as *Khaadya Suraksha* and MNREGA can be provided to everyone in the village in a systematic manner.

In camp before undertaking literacy activities with learners, their capacities in language and numeracy are gauged to understand the learning levels at which they are. This information is used for planning camp activities more comprehensively, keeping in mind the different needs of learners depending on the varying literacy capacities. Before beginning literacy activities at the camps, these capacities were determined through undertaking a basic test paper with learners.

**During this period 53 village level camps were organized; one camp was mainly for 5 to 7 days wherein in total 3409 women participated in which 3348 women were new and not enrolled at centers.**

### 2. Block Level Camps

The objectives of block level literacy camp is to strengthen the literacy skills of the learners who attend literacy centers and village level literacy camps, along with building an understanding on community/social issues. Sometimes the camp is planned and organized for women and adolescent girls who could not manage to give time to the centers and due to which they lag behind in literacy and numeracy skills.

**During the period three block level camps were organized in which 160 women participated.**

Initial assessment of learners was done through written test; based on results the women were divided into three groups and literacy activities were done accordingly. By the end of the camp 46 women reached to the level where they were able to write their name, husband's & village name, nine letters and two matras and in mathematics counting up to 100 and the concept of place value (tens and hundred).

53 women were in second level, were able to write words and sentences and in mathematics they learned counting up to 1000 and the concept of place value (tens, hundred and thousand). These women were also able to do simple and carry over addition and subtraction and some women learn tables till 9 as well.

61 women reached to third level and they were able to read and write paragraph and counting up to 10000. They were also able to perform carry over addition and subtraction of 1000 numbers. Women could also do multiplication and division.

### **3. Bridge Course**

Bridge course is organized for the adolescent girls who are enrolled in the schools but could not attend that due to various reasons like work at home, school is situated far from the home etc. Usually the bridge course is organized for 10 days before which rigorous mobilization in the community is done. In last year one bridge course was organized in which 61 adolescent girls belonged to Dalit and ST communities participated. The objective of the course was to strengthen girls' competencies in language and mathematics along with building understanding on issues related to child marriage and awareness on their own body. For this purpose curriculum was designed accordingly. First day base line test is administered to assess the level and then based on the results girls are divided into groups.

During the course health primer and school books were used for teaching girls. Altogether activities like natak, exposure visit etc. were used to build understanding on various issues. In this period games like cricket, kabaddi, kho-kho, chidiyabilla were organized and played by the girls. These games and activities were helpful in breaking girls' hesitation and building their confidence.

### **Other Activities**

#### **1. ICT Centers - Mehrauni and Mandavra**

Objective of the ICT center is to link scheduled caste and schedule tribe adolescent girls with computer skills. Also there is high demand from adolescent girls for learning computer as their parents do not allow them to go at the district level to learn such skills. They also feel that in absence of computer skills they lag behind to many opportunities. Hence many girls from villages come to the block to learn computer.

The basic course is designed for 3 months; basics of computer like computer parts, doing painting, making file and folders, typing; Hindi and English, creating e-mail id and how to keep check on e-mails etc. are part of the curriculum along with building understanding on the issues like child marriage, gender and sexuality etc.

Total of 2 ICT Centers were opened in which 4 batches were conducted; 112 girls were enrolled during the period and 70% attendance was recorded. The girls who completed the course were also awarded with certificate.

During the computer class sessions on themes such as gender and work, challenges and aspirations of adolescent boys and girls, gender- discrimination in the context of accessing public spaces and opportunities were discussed. Girls also shared that they are not allowed to move out from home, due to economic problems girls studies is stopped and they are forced to get marry, if one or two girls in the community do marriage on their own then other girls from that community are forced to stay in the house and not allowed to go out etc.

## 2. School Shivirs

**With an objective to regularize the children's attendance 132 school shivirs were organized** in the primary and upper primary sections of the school. The *Shivirs* were conducted in each school for two days, comprised of conducting learning activities with students through games and activities, assessing the quality and manner of teaching, the quality of food and the whether or not required facilities exist in schools. As part of the *Shivir*, village level mobilisation was done in order to assess the number of children attending school, thereafter urging families to send their children to school. Furthermore, feedback is given to schools within which the *shivirs* are conducted and a report is given to the block education officer about the assessments made on the quality of the teaching, facilities available and infrastructure.

During these shivirs open meetings were conducted with SMC and community members. To increase students' interest in studies some activities were conducted with them, as a result it was seen that students came to schools in more numbers. In order to build children's understanding on the issues related to gender some quizzes were also organized.

## 3. Monitoring and Information System (MIS) for Literacy Programme

MIS system is established to track the progress of the programme. Under this to assess and record the initial literacy level of the women, the baseline of enrolled women is conducted. To monitor *Sahjani's* literacy programme on a monthly basis, an excel sheet was created wherein data about every supervisor, center, information centers can be entered. An another excel sheet is created for block level data entry, for everyone to be able to assess how the programme ran for that particular month and how many learners attended the centre in the month.

## 4. Mobilisation and Jattha Rally

Mobilization is an important activity undertaken in three blocks Birdha, Mandavra and Mehrauni as a precursor to opening new literacy and information centers. As part of the process of mobilisation, *jatthas* and rallies were taken out within villages in the blocks; literacy related slogans were raised in the rallies and these slogans were also written on walls. Communities are mobilized in this manner before centers are functional in an effort for a higher number of women to join the literacy centers and information centers, and for the men in the community to be supportive of them attending the centers. Through the *Jattha*, staff at

SSK was able to communicate the objectives of the literacy and the information centers at length and in a substantial manner. During this process, communities supported said activities by providing space to carry these out and aided in the process of decoration at mobilisation-related events. The villages wherein mobilisation was done were selected in accordance with the needs of the community as well as the nature of prevalent issues; those villages were specifically chosen wherein literacy levels were alarmingly low and which were located in the interiors of the block.

## Capacity Building

**In order to effective programme implementation capacity building of the staff at different level was done in the last one year.** The major objective of these trainings were to build an understanding on the women's literacy programme and its objectives, pedagogy, building an understanding of the centers (how they should run, what all, these should include), and on records to be maintained at the level of the centers and for the programme.

A 6-day long training **was organized for the newly appointed teachers of** the Literacy centers and Literacy Information centers. 11 field staff members also participated along with 42 teachers in the training. Further, a 4 days residential training workshop was conducted with 38 participants comprising of information centers' teachers and supervisors. In this training the aim was also for the participants to engage with and inform themselves of the issues of the community and build an understanding of how these can be worked with. Since Information centers are operating at Panchayat level hence participants were also given information and knowledge with regards to the structure of the *Panchayat*. A 7 days training was organized with 46 teachers and an another training was organized for two days in which participation of 10 teachers took place.

Furthermore, training for building an understanding on ICT centers was conducted wherein SSK staff comprising computer center teachers and block coordinators participated. The objective of this training was to build an understanding on how basic computer literacy should be taught at the centers, the essential requirements for an ICT center i.e., what the center is going to look like, what the environment of the center should be, the teaching-learning material at the center that should compulsorily be provided etc.

## Issue Based Work

One of the important areas of work that SSK does is building awareness on rights and entitlements and facilitates the process of accessing and getting the same. During this year SSK built awareness on Food Security Bill, Right to Education Act, MGNREGA, ill effects of early and child marriage etc. For this purpose meetings were held with community members, to discuss the issues, meetings were conducted with parents to discuss the issue of early and child marriage. The number pertaining to the outreach made is given below:

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Issue persuaded</b>	<b>No. of Villages</b>	<b>No. of Members</b>
<b>1</b>	MGNREGA	30	1500
<b>2</b>	Demand followed under MGNREGA	30	606
<b>3</b>	Awareness on RtE Act	35	700
<b>4</b>	Roles and Responsibilities of SMC	35	300
<b>5</b>	Awareness on Food Security Bill	40	2570
<b>6</b>	Rashan card on line	40	2000
<b>7</b>	Rashan Distribution	40	5000
<b>8</b>	Awareness on issue of early marriage	50	4000 (1700 girls, 800 boys, 1500 women)
<b>9</b>	Ujjawala Yojna	25	1000 women gas distribution
<b>10</b>	Hausala Poshan Yojna	20	250 nutrition distribution
<b>11</b>	Bank account opened	100	1000
<b>12</b>	Jani Adhikar Samiti meeting	62	2200