

**Annual Report
of
Water, health and education for women and
children project
April 2019 – March 2020**

**Supported by
Asha for Education**

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Introduction

The drought hit state Rajasthan always fight with climate change, extreme weather conditions and lack of resources in comparison to rest of states of India. Most of the population in Rajasthan survives on rain-fed farming and livestock rearing. The climatic condition makes the situation of people living in Thar more vulnerable. Most of youth migrate in search of livelihood and because of such rampant migration, women, children and elders have been left behind to stay at home this increases the burden of women in families. These women in the rural communities in Rajasthan are marginalized, have very limited rights and are overburdened with livelihood and domestic duties. Osian block of District Jodhpur has a terrain of sand dunes with scattered population and limited transportation facilities to connect many hamlets.

Lives of rural folk in district moves around water therefore GRAVIS has designed its innovation for better utilization of water in finding solution of problems related to water led stresses. With the support of Asha for Education, the project Water, health and education for women and children is covering unprivileged families living in 6 villages through water security, promotion of primary healthcare and education for rural children. The project has served women and girls most as they are prime recipient and strong stakeholder of program. The report presented will show case the progress made through project and impact observed in lives of rural communities.

PROGRESS OF GRANT ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

1. Grant Overview

1.1.	Grant Period	April 2019 to March 2020
1.2.	Reporting Period	April 2019 to March 2020
1.3.	Amount of Grant	Rs 2,275,000.00
1.4.	Name of Project	<i>Water, health and education for women and children in Thar</i>
1.5.	List of communities where project is being carried out	6 villages of Jodhpur district. The list of villages is being attached as annexure in Table 1.
1.6.	Target Group	Women, Girls & other village community.

2. Objective of project

The overall goal of project is to empower women and girls through addressing their needs of water, health and education. Three main objectives have been covered in project implementation:

- Construction of *taankas* for securing drinking water at home capacity building of villagers for the maintenance and management of structure
- Organization of medical camps to increase outreach and generating awareness about young girls on health and hygiene, and
- Promoting girl child education through school program and participatory community events on children day and exposure visit.

3. Project Implementation

The Program Coordinator is overall in-charge of project and oversees the each step of project development – including planning, execution and monitoring. Two field Supervisors support Program Coordinator in better implementation of project and executes activities and monitors them on time to time in field. They with collaboration with local village development committees (VDCs) monitor the on-going progress of project and ensure the timely completion of activities at field. GRAVIS Program office in collaboration with finance team does financial management and monitors the financial outflow and justified expenses. The overall progress of project is overseen by Director of GRAVIS who also provides direction and inputs in project execution.

4. Description of activities in the project:

Following activities have been accomplished in one year of project execution.

4.1 Construction and Maintenance of *Taanka*:

The cylindrical shaped underground cemented structure is a valuable asset for a vulnerable family in Thar Desert. This structure fetches rainwater through artificially built or natural catchment and allows families to get rid of water fetching exercises at least for 5 to 6 months. Beneficiary family in case of less space also connects it with roof to collect rainwater from roof. The capacity of one such taanka is 20,000 litres and such a taanka is just a dream for many families mainly of migrant labours, wage earners and widows. This year also 38 such families have benefited with rainwater harvesting tanks (taanka) and trained on proper maintenance and use of structures. The project also perceived Taanka as a tool of poverty reduction, and many families saved Rs.4000-5000 through taanka and this is an indicator to gradually alleviate poverty by addressing water security for poor families. Our interaction with sample families have indicated that project has very well addressed this issue and though amount of saving could have a larger window depending upon source, time, and distance of water point but all families accepted that they have saved money, time and efforts after taanka construction.

Within the concept of rainwater harvesting the foremost important component is catchments while the 2nd component is storage tank. GRAVIS worked on innovations related to catchment and brought out options to make alternative catchments to fetch rainwater. Preparation and maintenance of catchment is always being an important topic in taanka management trainings. These 38 families also have been taught about proper cleaning of tank before rain, preparation of catchment with gravel and sands, fenced with thrones to avoid animals and children to walk on catchment in two taanka management trainings. It is very useful for families because many have received some unpredicted rain in Jan/ Feb in 2020 and because of their preparedness, this rain has filled the hope of many families.



Pic 1: Taanka Maintenance Training at field



Pic 2: A taanka beneficiary in Bhakri village



Pic 3: Shanti Devi of Bhakri village with her taanka

Shanti Devi of Bhakri village belongs to poor *Meghwal* community and leads the family of 8 members. She is a young woman of 30 years and has four kids. The burden Shanti faces in daily life is to collect water for family from a pond which is 3 kms from her hamlet. After taanka she is relaxed and is living a stress free life. She has also save Rs 2,200 in last three months. She has estimated to save more than Rs 6,000 in a year because of taanka. She wants to use her saving in health and education of her children. As she was not able to go to school in her childhood therefore she realizes the importance of education and does not want the same condition for her girls. She is dreaming a bright future for her kids and family.

4.2 Medical Camps:

Behaviour change is an important aspect to lead a health and quality life. GRAVIS medical activities are not only focused on treatment aspect of illness but also stimulate communities to understand the importance of healthcare and encourage them to avail medical care from nearest healthcare centre in case of need. Thus GRAVIS medical camps act as bridge between community and health care facilities. GRAVIS medical team leads these camps and chose remote locations and left-out hamlets for organization of such camps. There is also referral in case of critical and symptomatic diagnosis especially in case of eye care, malaria and cough (to confirm TB in patient).

Along with symptomatic treatment, each medical camp also holds two to three hours advocacy sessions into the community to create awareness about being healthy and practice of healthy and nutritive lifestyle for better and safe living. In health education sessions,

discussion was on overall health of common people. These sessions have widely addressed the seasonal problems of malaria, diarrhea, and many issues related to mother and child health (MCH) like anemia, Vitamin – A deficiency and immunization. Initiatives of these sessions have been highly appreciated by people, as they are receiving new information every time. In project 12 medical camps have been organized covering 800 patients in last one year.



Pic 4: Medical camp giving immediate relief to rural community



Pic 5: Rural women are getting medical assistance in camps

4.3 Educative sessions for children and adolescence girls



Pic 6: WASH session organized at Minno ki Dhani school

Practicing sanitation and hygiene is India's silent emergency and among the greatest human development challenges as mentioned in SDG 6. There is a pronounced need to make women and children, particularly in Rajasthan aware of importance of clean drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. 4 WASH sessions have been organized in two schools in project. The objective of such sessions was to address the issue of clean water, better sanitation, teacher training, and hygiene education in schools. This also can improve the health and education of children through behavioural change with playful education with increases school attendance and academic performance of children. GRAVIS volunteers from Lady Irwin College, Delhi developed training schedules and led these sessions. In the training kids were known about hygiene like personal cleanness, use of toilets, taking bath every day, keep teeth clean, cutting nails, wash hand before taking food. Importance of clean drinking water was also discussed with kids. Small films of WASH also have been shown to kids so that they could visualize the role of WASH in their daily life. Along with water and sanitation, importance of nutritive diets also has been discussed during sessions. Benefits of having a balanced diet, disorders caused by nutritional deficiencies were a few things that were covered during sessions. Kids received nutritive fruits like apple, orange and banana according to season in these sessions. They have also received packed snacks in sessions. Everyone was very happy to have things of their choices. Four such sessions have been organized in Minno ki Dhani and Ramnagar (Utamber) schools supported by Asha for education.



Pic 7: WASH session organized at Uttamber school

Girls in Rajasthan face many taboos in their developing age and in lack of proper guidance they face many health issue related to their reproductive and sexual well-being. To make these girls understand about physical and psychological changes in their bodies, GRAVIS organized 2 Adolescent girls camps with the support of Ashs for Education. In these camps, they have been taught about the various topics related to their physical changes and upbringings, health, hygiene, nutrition and food. Ms. Veena Mathur and Ms. Sangeeta Inda handled these camps in two distinguished places and dates. In camps, health and hygiene kits were also provided to girls. Around 50 kits have been distributed to these young girls. Kit contains sanitary napkins, nail cutter, inner wears, soaps and shampoos and many other attractive hair accessories. Following topics were discussed during the training sessions:

- Puberty
- Common health problems during adolescence
- Preventive health care
- Reproductive tract infections
- Sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS
- Hygiene knowledge



Pic 8: Adolescence girls camp organized in Harlaya village



Pic 9: Adolescence girls camp organized in Samrau village

4.4 Enabling environment for children through event and exposure

Children's Day is celebrated in India to remember the birth anniversary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, independent India's first Prime Minister. A day marking childhood, Children's Day celebrations focus on children and their enjoyment. Nehru Ji was extremely fond of young children. It is due to his love and passion that this day is marked as Children's Day, thereby honouring childhood. This occasion is commemorated on a national level with celebrations in all schools. GRAVIS also celebrates children day with the support of Asha for Education. In

event children and teachers from Asha supported schools as well from Gagadi School have participated. Teachers organized different cultural programs and events for students. Children participate in various activities, such as singing, dancing, drawing, jokes telling, speeches, and sports. The event was graced by VDC members and parents of children. Volunteers from Germany also participated in event. The objective of event was to give children playful environment and to do some cultural activities and creative competitions. At every activity prizes have been given to winners. Snacks and lunch have been offered to every participant. A total 150 students participated in this event.



Pic 10: Children Day celebrated at Gagadi centre

The children day celebration was also like parents – teachers meeting, in which both of parties interacted with each other and observed the hidden qualities of their children. Everyone encourages girls to perform in various activities.



Pic 11: Drawing competition organized in Children day



Pic 12: Sports played by kids in Children day

Events like children day also become beneficial for these girls, when it was decided to organize an exposure visit to Jaisalmer with an overnight stay at field centre. The tour was long and many parents were reluctant to send their daughters to an overnight stay visit. Because of parents – teachers meeting organized during children day, it was easy to convince

them to allow girls to go for exposure visit. We thought it would be great opportunity to rural girls to visit Jaisalmer first time, therefore encouraged more girls to come to visit. Among 20 kids, 15 were girls in tour. Two female teachers and two GRAVIS staffs also participated in visit. Exposure visit is considered to be an easy learning tool for capacity building, especially for children as it helps in understanding things in a practical way. Children were taken to Defence Museum, Jaisalmer Fort, Lake and many other places of tourism. They have also visited library, desert wild-life and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (Centre for Agri-science) On the way to return their home, they stayed at Kalron centre of GRAVIS for overnight and in morning again visited GRAVIS museum and many field activities. Break-fast, Lunch, Dinner and snacks have been provided to kids. They all returned to home with lovely memories.



Pic 13: Exposure visit to Jaisalmer

Education, particularly girl child, always has been a prime concern for arid state Rajasthan. Girl child is mostly being debarred from getting educated due to social ill practices and using her as a helping hand to do many household supports including fetching water. Asha for Education supports two schools established in Minno ki Dhani and Uttamber villages. These schools have attendance of 68 and 42 respectively and 80 % kids studying in these schools are girls. Because of Covid -19 pandemic all schools have been closed in March and it was not possible to organize any exam for kids. As per govt direction, all students have been promoted to next grade. There is no cut off of salary of staffs and teachers in pandemic.



Pic 14: Kids in Minno Ki Dhani School before lock down



Pic 15 : Local Teachers play important role in schools

Annexure – 1

List of project villages

S. N.	Village	Implemented from
1	Bhakri	GRAVIS sub-center Gagadi
2	Bhim Sagar	"
3	Harlaya	"
4	Saran Nagar	"
5	Samrau (Meghwalon ki Dhani)	"
6	Mahadev Nagar	"