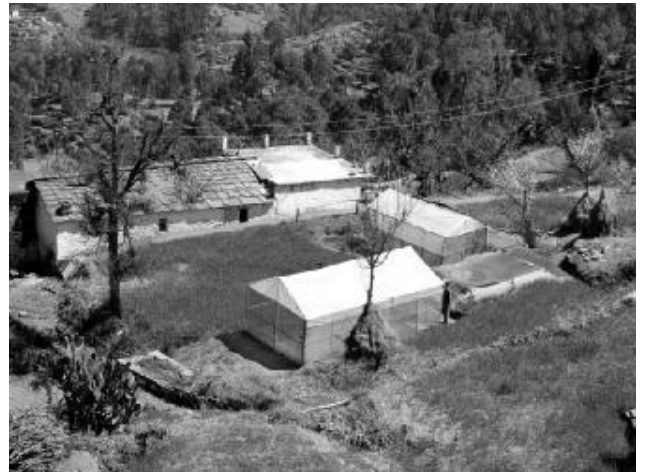




## ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014



UTTARAKHAND SEVA NIDHI PARYAVARAN SHIKSHA SANSTHAN  
ALMORA

# ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014

Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan

Almora

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## Introduction

Registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan (USNPSS) works with rural communities and government schools in the hill districts of Uttarakhand in the Central Himalayas. Started in 1988, USNPSS endeavours to be an organization that supports rural communities and community-based organizations (CBOs) to initiate, strengthen and sustain collective action by crafting institutions of women, youth, children and adolescents for holistic development. Currently, a network of CBOs spread over nine districts in about 490 villages in Kumaon and Garhwal regions of Uttarakhand is active in organizing and nurturing communities and in running educational centres in remote villages, where the reach of the government and other agencies have been negligible. Also, more than 4.5 lakh students in grades 6-8 in government schools of Uttarakhand are studying books on environmental education developed by USNPSS. This annual report commemorates printing of the 26<sup>th</sup> edition and 27 years of work with rural communities and schools in Uttarakhand.

Organizing communities is an important way of stimulating learning and developing knowledge and skills with a variety of needs, cognition and power positions. Organized groups provide space to women, children, adolescents and youth to explore issues, make choices and nurture activities for collective good by taking up responsibilities for their own action. As communities create space and opportunities to question and re-shape their ideas of learning, education becomes relevant and connected to their lives. The enhanced space not only raises conflicts but also provides solutions to problems.

The integrated approach to education, as nurtured by USNPSS, not only creates a balance between traditional, culturally-based ideas of communities and the new ways of learning but also encourages a deeper process of development. It relocates the conventional educational paradigm, which has restricted the idea of “learning” to formal schooling, to an alternative domain, capable of addressing diverse interests of communities. The programme connects formal education with informal learning that happens all the time outside the boundaries of school and thereby shifts the focus from schooling as the only space for education to a transformative process which would adopt multiple approaches (joyful learning, child-centred learning, experiential learning and functional literacy) appropriate for different learners.

The transformative learning approach adopted by USNPSS caters to the needs of different age groups in communities (inter-generational). The process engages attention of all (inter-gender, inter-caste and class) by nurturing thoughts and action that reshape relationships at home and in the village. It also connects communities with each other (inter-village) by organizing and nurturing collective action. Also, the diversity of needs require the programme to be extremely flexible both in terms of methods and contents of learning (inter-disciplinary).

Creating a collaborative, engaging process has meant that space for development of an alternative path for education be nurtured. For this to happen, the communities, including

the teachers/facilitators, have to undergo a lot of unlearning and relearning. The village residents have to deconstruct their own ideas of education where teachers are the suppliers of knowledge and children recipients. Since a majority of teachers themselves are first generation learners, their idea of education is limited to the methods they themselves have experienced in schools. To them, deconstruction of those ideas would mean rethinking and questioning of their own achievements and identifying gaps in knowledge and integrating those in this programme. It is not always that consensus on issues would emerge easily and everyone in the village would readily be a part of the process which has transformation/change its goal. Nevertheless, organizing and attending open discussions on a regular basis is an important part of maintaining co-operation and sense of solidarity which enables the process of transformation in communities. Sometimes, the absentees would accept decisions made in community meetings but many times several rounds of talks would be required and the process would run for months or even years until the desired consensus is achieved. This year, USNPSS has worked with the following groups within and among communities in Uttarakhand:

- Children in pre-primary education centres (*balwadis*): 3-6 years of age
- Remedial education (sandhya kendra) for primary school going children: 6-11 year old
- Environmental education programme in government schools: 11-14 year old
- Libraries and computer learning centres in villages: 11-20 year old and above
- Adolescent girls education programme in schools and communities: 11-20 years
- Youth groups: 21-35 year old
- Women's groups: 21-70 year old rural women of Kumaon and Garhwal
- School staff and facilitators/supervisors in informal learning centres: >18 year old
- Community-based organizations (CBOs): a network, spread all over the hill districts of the state, supported by USNPSS
- Elected female panchayat representatives
- The State Education Department

For some time now, USNPSS is identifying and establishing focal points of convergence of ongoing programmes of balwadi, sandhya kendras, libraries, computer education and women's literacy to relate and bring them under the umbrella of the concept of "community learning". All programmes, mentioned above, put a lot of emphasis in the process of learning. Establishing community learning centres in villages is not a new idea as USNPSS has for many years run educational centres in villages. However, new is the way of looking into centres as spaces where different generations (women, adolescents, youth and children) would meet, interact and reframe issues. Since these centres are located within the village, and not away from the main habitation, access has not been an issue. In addition, convergence of ongoing programmes is already taking place in the following areas:

a. Since education is the focal point around which all programmes supported by USNPSS revolve, community learning centres are perceived as an extension of the ongoing activities.

b. *Bal-bhavans*, constructed fully by communities, by providing voluntary labour and without any outside assistance (except for tin-roof in some cases) were used to run balwadis in remote villages. Owned by communities, the centre (usually a room and a veranda) is now also used for holding classes under the adult women's literacy programme.

c. Women's groups organize regular monthly meetings to discuss issues of development. Since problems of development affect all in the community, bringing it under the umbrella of community learning would only require restructuring of the programme, without any additional demand for budgets.

d. One of the important aspects of the programme has been to remove isolation and develop positive relationships between adults, children, adolescents and youth within and between communities.

In the education sector, there is ample evidence to show that school-community links are supportive of scholastic attainment and the link also helps develop confidence and self-esteem among students and in communities. Our own research and experience in the field of education confirms that community-school relationship must form a part of the educational strategy for parental engagement.

Another objective of USNPSS has been to identify village residents, men and women, who are interested in and can effectively interact with communities to initiate work on education, development, environment, sanitation and related issues. Educational qualification or a formal degree being no bar, the main criteria for selecting workers are their location (must be a village resident), interest and commitment towards communities. Notwithstanding the low honorarium that the workers receive, there is no shortage of applicants, especially because the children who had attended the balwadis earlier have now become young adults. They exhibit a keen interest in joining the programme. Often, after finishing school, young girls run the centres for three-four years and then get married. While working, a majority of girls finish graduation and some even get themselves enrolled for post-graduation. This practice has had a profound impact on communities. Not only the girls are being educated but their age of marriage has also been delayed.

This year, work on two research projects was carried out:

i. An action research project on "Community Driven Climate Resilient Hill Farming in village ecosystems of NW Himalayas (Uttarakhand)", under NICRA, an initiative of the ICAR, coordinated by the Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA) Hyderabad was completed. The final report was submitted to CRIDA in April, 2014.

ii. An ICSSR sponsored research project on gender and development aims to address two themes (i) Gender issues in the development of ecologically fragile zones: A case study of the village communities in Uttarakhand and (ii) Gender and disaster: Disaster widows and their coping strategies in Uttarakhand. The project (2 years duration) has started in February 2014.

The following sections provide details of each activity carried out during the year, 2013-2014:



## 1. Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad

Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad (UMP) or Uttarakhand Women's Federation, a network of women's groups, builds institutional and programme capacity of rural women in remote hill villages of Uttarakhand. The forum has emerged as a result of the direct need for collaboration among community-based organizations (CBOs) and women's groups active on gender issues with a spread of 490 villages over nine hill districts in the state. Currently, UMP is represented by approximately 17,000 women.

In a community, all women are members of a single group, the whole village group or the WVG. *Mahila sangathan*, as groups are called locally, bring together different generations of women to promote solidarity and co-operation in the village. Irrespective of caste, class, education and other disparities, all women are part of a single group. Out of a total of 490 groups, about 51% represent mixed caste villages which include general, SC, ST and OBC population. About 23% groups exclusively represent SC, ST and OBC population. The percentage of WVGs representing general caste population is about 26%.

### 1a. Organizing women

UMP organizes women as groups to promote gender equality at household, community, regional and state levels. In villages, the WVGs are associated with CBOs. Each CBO connects women from at least ten villages so that a cluster of WVGs is formed. Some experienced CBOs work with even 40-50 WVGs. They promote and sustain solidarity, provide guidance and monitor activities with women's groups. Each WVG has an elected woman president, a secretary and sometimes a treasurer. The representatives are elected for a period of three years; unless a group decides to have a term of five years.

The network of UMP brings together women's groups of each cluster of villages to form *kschetriya mahila sangathan* (regional women's federation). Each *kschetriya mahila sangathan* is headed by an elected woman representative called the *kschetriya adhyaksha* (regional head).

The *kschetriya mahila sangathan* federate at the state level to form UMP. UMP organizes women, coordinates activities at village, regional and the state level, raises funds, organizes workshops/training and congregations of women, promotes leadership in panchayat and other village committees and provides a forum to bring women's voices to the fore.

#### 1ai. Village meetings under women's leadership

WVGs hold regular monthly meetings in villages. Meetings provide space to explore divergent interests and perceptions on issues relevant to their lives. Open discussions raise conflicts, friction and dissonance within and between communities and create ways for alternative thinking. Learning through discussions during meetings/workshops and by taking part in women-centred action in villages relies on two features:

1. Purposely creating social processes in which goals are identified and methods are chosen to stimulate learning

2. Consider the ideas, thoughts and experiences of women from their everyday life as examples that either encourage or inhibit learning. In this process responses of women in their daily life situations become important indicators of their comprehension of issues.

UMP links these two approaches together to provide women a wide platform for comprehension and reflection on issues. Regular meetings which stimulate social processes for change are enriched by daily life experiences. The goal of learning is defined but not in rigid terms. There exists a lot of flexibility in the process by which women learn and critique their own action to re-examine issues and reframe the goals. For example, highlighting the role of forests in nurturing agriculture and other life sustaining activities in the village is an important issue. Equally important is to stress the point that work related to forests is gendered and that needs to be valued by society. However, the methods to achieve this goal would vary from village to village. In a village the women's group may want to emphasize the relationship between natural resources to improve availability of water whilst in other villages forest regeneration and protection is carried out to improve the production of fodder for animals. Further, once the desired goal is achieved, the women's group may set some other goal for itself.

Further, the goal of gender equality (which could be envisioned as part of a purposely created social process) is sought by deconstructing women's daily experiences in dealing with the norms and values of patriarchy that place them in a disadvantageous position. Also important is to visualize an alternative composition of society. The process requires continuous dialogue and action providing women (and men) space to create new ideas/alternatives and strengthen those initiatives that they think are necessary to reshape their communities. Through collective participation in thinking about issues and taking part in activities, women learn in an environment which is authentic and driven by problems that they face in their daily lives.

The promotion of the idea of gender equality goes well beyond the boundaries of nurturing discussions and consensus building to sustain a process of continuous change in communities. *Rachnatmak karya* (practical activities) offer several opportunities to WVGs whereby they can strengthen and nourish that process of change in society.

Since the goal of achieving gender equality can cause power imbalances within communities and at home, the interest of different stakeholders in the process of change would vary. For example, women's interests and needs may vary from men. Further, within the group, women may have differences of caste, age, education etc. In addition, family relationships play an important part in determining the nature of participation of women in community activities. For example, from a joint family, either the mother-in-law or the daughter-in-law is likely to be sent to attend village meetings. Similarly, while mothers take part in group activities, their unmarried daughters may finish the household chores. Therefore, involvement of all women in group activities is a challenge, at least in the initial stages of group formation. The organization of women's groups would, therefore, require careful planning. Efforts are required to make the group as democratic as possible, involving women of all ages, caste and educational backgrounds. A diverse composition would be

necessary not only to represent all women as a single group (WVG) but also to nurture and value potential differences and conflicts as a basis for learning.

Unfolding of deep seated emotions (warmth, affection, bias, resentment, rage, anger etc.) is an important determinant of consensus building process within and between women's groups. It is by resolving conflicts that the group members learn to respect and value each other's contribution in initiating and nurturing thoughts and action to achieve gender equality in their community. In our experience, opening up differences at the personal level is very important and the regular monthly meetings provide that space to women. While concealing differences is more the norm, it could be a dangerous option; openness amongst members goes a long way in sustaining WVG's activities in villages. Therefore, conflict resolution can be regarded as an ongoing process essential for creative engagement of women in group activities and planning in gender discourse.

### **1a.iii. Workshops with women's groups at Almora**

UMP has envisaged trust in women's creativity, both at individual and community level to facilitate a process of learning towards gender equality. It is not concerned with unilateral learning process imposed from the top with women as recipients, but seeks to integrate thoughts and activities of UMP and the CBO to ensure that the programmes work for women and their communities.

To facilitate the process of bilateral learning, regular meetings/workshops are organized at Almora. Members of women's groups from Kumaon and Garhwal meet to discuss issues, share experience and learn from each other. During these meetings, women review their work, create a vision for the future and motivate each other. Women representing the older groups, some of them are now 20-22 year old, inspire the new groups and share methods to sustain activities for such a long time. Among other issues, women representing the new groups, learn that the older groups have never compromised on fundamental issues as they maintain transparency, trust each other, challenge authority and work with clarity of purpose. Women from the older groups know that social change is a long-term process. Hence they do not stop after carrying out an activity but keep the *sangathan* alive by developing some activity or the other.

This year, eleven workshops for members of UMP were organized at Almora. A total of 439 participants, 420 women and 19 men, attended. During the workshops all women were encouraged to speak up and share their views on gender, environment and development and even about their own lives. Special efforts were made to ensure that women attending the workshops for the first time shed their hesitation and learnt to talk in public.

When UMP began promoting participation of rural women in panchayats, many were sceptical about the initiative. Men in villages thought that as women would start attending meetings, their mobility will increase and hence they would not devote time to their families. Also, letting women go out to serve as panchayat members was detrimental to male/family pride as many questioned the need of such an endeavour. "*We (men) are here (in the village). We will work. What is the need for women to go out? Are we dead? Are there no men in our*

*village*”, said a man when during the late nineties when UMP started talking about women’s participation in panchayats. The elderly at home argued that elected women will no longer be interested in agriculture and cattle rearing. They will ignore their duties at home. Some men and women believed that illiterate women will not be able to understand the system and men would work on their behalf. The argument that participation in panchayats would be an empowering experience was questioned by many and the debate still continues. UMP keeps this debate alive both by educating women on the issue and challenging the views of men and officials who express doubts on women’s capability. This year, the following issues were discussed during the workshops at Almora:

### **1aiii. Promoting leadership in panchayats**

The most enduring challenge is to deal with the perceptions that women are not interested in political issues and they have “no time to waste” on “matters of no relevance to them”. For a long time, rural communities were of the view that women would not stand for elections, unless they were forced to do so. The perception that even if women were elected they would not find time to attend the panchayat meetings has prevailed over years. The state administration feared that women will not be able to speak up and present before the panchayat committees the plan and agenda for development of their village. In addition, women themselves were reporting difficulties. Some of them are as follows:

#### **a. Challenges**

- The major challenge is gaining confidence to talk during the panchayat meetings, particularly during the first few meetings. However, once women became familiar with the procedure and the initial hesitation was shed, a majority had no problem in the later stages of their tenure in panchayats.
- There is a lot of concern in UMP about the role of literacy in promoting leadership among women. Since the ability to read and write does not necessarily translate into leadership, the question remains what kind of literacy would rural women most benefit from. In general, illiteracy is found to be a barrier but there have been several cases of women who with the support of the community could perform well in panchayats. Experience so far has indicated that members of WVGs give importance to the ability to think and analyze power-relations in panchayats and other village committees. Ability to read and write is beneficial but not a necessity, especially in villages where the female panchayat representatives enjoy full support from the community.
- Need of regular, good quality training is apparent as more than 90% of the women have entered the system for the first time.

Despite resistance from different sections of society, rural women have exhibited tremendous interest in getting elected in panchayats. In particular, members of WVGs who are articulate and have acquired experience in community matters exhibit a keen interest in panchayats. Encouraged by their enthusiasm and interest, UMP has designed four types of training programmes:

- i. Orientation to members of WVGs on panchayati raj
- ii. Training of facilitators/ supervisors on panchayats
- iii. Training of potential/interested representatives, particularly those women who are keen to contest elections with the support of the WVG
- iv. Training of elected women representatives.

Table 1. Training/workshops of women's groups at Almora.

Serial number	Duration	Number of organizations	Number of districts	Theme	Number of participants		
					Female	Male	Total
1	17-18.5.2013	5	4	women's groups- experience sharing and future activities	36	1	37
2	20-21.5.2013	4	3	women's groups- experience sharing and future activities	36	00	36
3	23-24.5.2013	5	3	women's groups- experience sharing	40	2	42
4	20.6.2013	5	3	Community health, female reproductive health	29	3	32
5	24-25.8.2013	5	4	Preparing for panchayati raj elections	43	00	43
6	3-4.9.2013	5	3	Preparing for panchayati raj elections	60	00	60
7	13-14.11.2013	13	8	Panchayati raj and women	57	3	60
8	8-9. 10. 2013	6	5	Women's literacy	22	1	23
9	9-10.1.2013	5	4	Panchayati raj and women	38	00	38
10	22-23.1.2103	7	4	Panchayati raj and women	48	02	50
11	24-25.1.2013	10	6	Health and nutrition	11	7	18
Total					420	19	439

This year, UMP continued supporting women to take leadership roles in panchayats and other village committees. Since the term for the last panchayats was to finish in September 2013, UMP had started preparing for the next elections well in advance (Table 1). Also, in villages, meetings were held to raise awareness on the issue.

A set of four posters to promote women's participation in panchayats was developed by UMP in June 2013 and distributed to all the villages. In addition, 8000 copies of pamphlets were prepared and distributed to raise awareness and promote female leadership in panchayats.

Due to political reasons, the panchayat elections were postponed, though many interested candidates had already started the procedure of filing their nominations in February 2014. The state panchayat elections are now scheduled to be held in June 2014, after the parliamentary elections in the country.

Promoting women's participation in panchayats has proven a positive initiative, especially for the following reasons:

- The increased number of elected women representatives has improved female visibility in the public domain

- Members of WVGs have been able to raise their concerns in panchayat meetings that involve men and government officials
- Mainstreaming of rural women's voice in government schemes/planning has a tremendous potential on development and empowerment related issues
- Though elected women representatives ask for small projects, they are of practical nature and of importance to the community. For example, improving access to water would benefit everyone in the village. Similarly, women representatives may provide wages to both men and women while laying paths in the village or implementing construction related activities
- The members of WVGs, elected as panchayat representatives, have ensured that all widows and women above the age of 60 years receive pension from the state. Had there been no women representatives, the poor women, widows would have had a difficult time accessing the scheme.
- Elected women representatives report that their position at home and in the community has changed. They are respected and considered as of some "worth" to the community while earlier nobody would even take notice of them

#### **1aiv. Women generating money/resources within communities**

The women's groups do not rely on major funding from USNPSS/others to sustain meetings and also for carrying out some activities in their villages. An idea of self-sufficiency is promoted as women on their own can organize monthly meetings in villages. No money is provided to meet the cost of tea etc. Instead, meetings are often held by rotation in the courtyard/house of the village residents. In many cases, the meeting is held in the house of the woman who has either not attended regularly or her participation in group activities has been low. Also, members of the women's group deliberately choose to meet in a house where the family members have reservations about allowing women to attend group activities. This approach has proven very successful, particularly because the rest of the family members also come to learn what women discuss during meetings. Realizing that women are thinking for the "community good" and not talking about something "bad" that could jeopardise "family honour", men do not hesitate in allowing women to attend meetings. Often, the household where the meeting is held takes care of tea etc, though there is no compulsion to do so. It might also be the case that women would bring milk from their house to make tea. This is particularly useful if the hosting household is facing a shortage of milk at the time of the meeting.

In addition, meetings are held in community centres such as *panchayat ghar*, *barat ghar*, *jan milan kendra*, courtyard of a temple, under a tree etc. Further, women find money within the village to develop women's fund (*mahila kosh*) which they operate on a collective basis. The approach of UMP is different from the self help group model (SHG) where small groups of women are formed within communities to encourage micro credit schemes.

## **1av. Health**

UMP recognizes the interconnections between gender and health, especially women's health. Over time, UMP has also promoted the idea that reproductive health issues impact on women's status in communities. More recently, the concept that both adolescent girls and women have rights to information and education to safeguard their health has taken roots in villages where groups are active. During the year, two workshops were held on community health issues at USNPSS Almora:

i. The workshop conducted by Dr. (Professor) Yatish Agarwal on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013 started with an identification of health problems as experienced by participants themselves. A list of about 28 common ailments was prepared by a group of 32 participants. Open discussion on each issue was held. Also, Ms. Rekha Agarwal shared her views on women's health. In addition, Dr. Agarwal saw some medical reports and gave suggestions to patients. The participants were very appreciative of the workshop, as Dr. Agarwal could communicate medical terms to the participants belonging to rural areas in simple language.

ii. A two day workshop on preventive health care was held during 24-25 January 2014 at USNPSS Almora. The workshop was conducted by Dr. O P Yadava, a renowned heart surgeon and the CEO, National Heart Institute, New Delhi. A total of 31 participants, 19 women and 12 men, attended. Dr. Yadava provided information on a range of subjects including the idea of health, common causes of diseases, especially communicable diseases, lifestyle related diseases, balanced and nutritious diet and the importance of exercise to maintain a healthy life. Further, he highlighted the lifestyle problems specific to Uttarakhand which were related to excessive consumption of salt, sugar, tobacco, alcohol, fat and starch rich food, among others. He stressed that the consumption of local-nutritious cereals and fresh vegetables with low salt is one of the best ways to retain good health.

Every day practices which have implications for women and their health and responses of communities to those were central to discussions during both the workshops. Both the doctors were of the view that while treatment and surgery may be a necessity in many cases, preventive health care is an area that needs urgent attention from the community as well as the medical practioners. Occurrence of several diseases could be prevented just by adopting healthy ways of living.

## **Medical relief**

With the support of the Rajeshwar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust, New Delhi, UMP has been able to provide small financial help to very poor women, sometimes men and children, to seek health care services for diagnostic and curative purposes. This year, a total amount of 50,287 rupees was spent in the treatment of 17 patients belonging to the districts of Almora, Pithoragarh (Kumaon) and Chamoli (two women) Garhwal (Table 2). All the patients form a part of the UMP network and, therefore, their intake of medicines and progressive improvement in health could easily be monitored. Some of them would need to continue the medication next year too while others have been cured and leading normal lives.

Table 2. Medical care for very poor people.

Serial number	Date	Patient	Age (years)	Village	District	Health care centre	Amount spent (Rs.)	Ailment
1	3.4.2013	Pushpa Punetha	45	Danya	Almora	District Hosp Almora	1500	Fracture wrist
2	1.5.2013	Mohan Singh	32	Chausali	Almora	OPL Srivastava clinic Almora	900	Inflammation intestine
3	29.6.2013	Narayani devi	55	Lamudiyar	Almora	Base Hosp. Almora	1363	Stomach ache
4	13.8.2013	Indra Matiyani	33	Kasoon	Almora	Anjali Hosp. Almora	671	Spondylitis
5	24.8.2013	Deepa Papanai	25	Dhamera	Almora	Anjali Hosp. Almora	1223	Migraine, fever
6	30.8.2013	Hema Dasila	48	Rugadi	Pithoragarh	K. Swarup clinic Haridwar	6000	leucoderma
7	16.9.2013	Hansi Dasila	45	Rungadi Bankot	Pithoragarh	OPL Srivastava Clinic Almora	2400	Prolapsed uterus
8	18.9.2013	Indra Matiyani	33	Kasoon	Almora	Anjali Hosp. Almora	347	Spondylitis
9	4.10.2013	Kamla Devi	38	Lamudiyar	Almora	District Hosp Almora	422	Kidney stone
10	18.10.2013	Hansi Dasila	45	Rungadi bankot	Pithoragarh	OPL Srivastava Clinic Almora	730	Prolapsed uterus
11	25.11.2013	Bhavna Joshi	22	Jajar	Almora	District Hosp. Almora	366	Lyrenx inflammation
12	4.12.2013	Hansi Dasila	45	Rungadi Bankot	Pithoragarh	OPL Srivastava Clinic Almora	571	Prolapsed uterus
13	10.2.2014	Hema Dasila	48	Rungadi	Pithoragarh	K. Swarup clinic Haridwar	5724	leucoderma
14	13.3.2014	Prema Latwal	33	Chousali	Almora	OPL Srivastava clinic Almora	370	Inflammation small intestine
15	26.3.2014	Mangali Bishit	63	Dogari kande	Chamoli	Himalayan Hosp. Dehradun	10,000	Kidney stone, mental disturbance
16	26.3.2014	Kunti Kimothi	80	Badhani	Chamoli	Dehradun, Govt. Hosp. Karnaprayag	10,000	Paralyses stroke, body swelling
17	26.3.2014	Radha Khanka	44	Muvani	Pithoragarh	Safdarjung Hosp., New Delhi	7700	Osteoporosis, chronic knee pain
Total							50,287	

UMP has linked the issue of providing financial support to patients with improvements in their own awareness about the ailment and of their families who provide care during the time of illness. Detailed discussions, often many times, are held with the patient and the care takers to provide information and develop a positive attitude towards life.

The approach to educating women on gender and reproductive health was found to be promoting mothers involvement at home with daughters, daughter-in-laws. This was particularly true in case of opening up ways of communication on issues that were either considered ‘taboo’ or remained hidden as “not important” to talk about. For example, a mother talking about menstruation to her daughter is considered a taboo while changes in body/emotions are considered issues not worth talking about. However, with adolescent girls being very concerned about these issues, the programme has developed strategies to break this barrier.



Further, meetings held by UMP at Almora focus on preventive health care and education. In particular, discussions are held on water-borne diseases, communicable diseases, common ailments (cold, fever, stomach and headache, watering of eyes, itching and rashes in skin) reproductive health for women and adolescent girls etc. Anaemia and leucorrhoea are common problems among women, so is tuberculosis in the community. Since talking about these diseases is a taboo in villages, meetings at Almora are geared towards breaking silence on the issue. Often, discussions at Almora are followed by a visit to the district hospital by women coming from villages where no health care service is available.

### **1avi. The facilitators**

Each facilitator is responsible for a cluster of 10-12 villages. She attends monthly meetings of women's groups, provides direction and helps in carrying out activities in the village. She provides information to the group members and encourages them to take up activities for their village. She promotes access to government schemes such as MNREGA and ensures that women receive the prescribed wages.

As the trained facilitators go about their villages, they must face disappointment and frustration, particularly because the larger objective of the UMP is to create a network where each group includes all women from the village. Creating and sustaining activities of the whole village group is not easy, particularly in the context of the following issues:

- i. The recent trend of creating self help groups (SHG) is in conflict with the concept of creating whole village groups (WVG)
- ii. Overlapping of interests occur in villages where, besides UMP, some other organization is also working
- iii. Since the government and the large funding agencies cover the whole block/district, the conflict between scale and depth of the programmes emerge

The facilitators face the challenges that emerge from government led schemes in villages and act as mediators, particularly for women who have limited access to information, education and resources. For example, as a self-imposed goal, women's groups tend to scrutinize activities carried out by panchayats in villages. In case of dissatisfaction, women raise their voices but need constant support from the facilitators and the local organizations there. Conflicts with the state and even with high caste, relatively affluent men would put a lot of psychological pressure on the facilitators, particularly in relation to use of resources in the village. For example, atrocities related to water may demand that the women from scheduled caste families meet their need from sources that either are located far away from the village or have limited yield. Even a scheme for piped water supply would face opposition from men who resist installing a stand post in the heart of the village particularly on the ground that menstruating women may touch the pipe making water "impure" for use in the kitchen.

Similarly, the facilitators constantly grapple with the idea of “education” as they have now been exposed to new methods and concepts of learning. Being themselves first generation learners, for most, education is what they themselves had received in schools. However, as facilitators they have expanded upon it by attending trainings and exposure to alternatives. Having been exposed to new or alternative ideas of education, the facilitators would want to introduce those in their own village which in itself is a challenging task.

## **1b. Activities (*Rachnatamak karya*)**

### **1bi. Natural resource management**

WVGs continued to work towards the ecological restoration and protection of forests, grasslands, agricultural land, water sources and water channels to regenerate, conserve and nurture natural resources in villages. The problems of land degradation manifested in shrinking of old natural forest areas, increasing soil erosion, increase in the occurrence of landslides and mud flows, declining water table directly affect the rural communities. Women are the worst affected because the responsibility of performing forest and water related activities to meet household needs is shared by them.

WVGs promote and nurture collective action to maintain the forests and water bodies in the following ways:

#### **a. Protection, conservation and regeneration of forests**

- During meetings of women’s groups issues related to natural resources are discussed. Community cooperation is sought to find solutions to the problems
- Protection of forests and grasslands from forest fires, mining
- Exercising community rights on the forests
- Declaring a part of the forest as sacred and protecting it from any form of human interference for five or ten years. Later, opening the regenerated area for selective harvesting and declaring the other part of the forest as sacred
- Ban on cutting of green trees for fire wood
- Women taking a vigil on the forest on a rotational basis. Sometimes, a *chowkidar* (guard) is appointed to protect the forest. Often, he receives a fixed amount of honorarium from the village. Each household contributes to meet the expenses incurred in guarding the forest
- Leveraging with panchayats, the forest department
- Women work as sarpanch of their villages

#### **b. Protection, conservation and restoration of water bodies**

- During meetings of women’s groups issues related to water are discussed. Community cooperation is sought to find solutions of the problems. For example, equal distribution of water among all village residents is an issue that requires a great deal of persuasion. Communities meeting their demands from traditional water sources devise methods to ensure that irrespective of caste, class and economic status, all

village residents receive an equal amount from the spring or the seepage. Villages receiving piped water supply are required to make sure that stand posts are distributed in a manner that all residents have equal access to water.

- Providing equal access to water to all village residents is not an easy work, particularly in mixed-caste villages where socially advanced sections of the population may undermine the rights of the poor or socially disadvantaged castes.

Villages that experience water shortage problems during the summer face hostility between community members over water. Such disputes are resolved in open meetings under the leadership of women's groups.

#### **1bii. Women's literacy and education programme (*Mahila saksharta evam shikshan karyakram*)**

A literacy component was added through the *mahila saksharta evam shikshan karyakram* to UMP's activities in 2011. The programme aims to improve women's literacy and numeracy as well as their knowledge about socio-ecological and economic issues. Women share experience and learn from each other. They learn about government schemes for their villages and with the help of the facilitators try to access those programmes. Further, women attending literacy classes are encouraged to view their own and other women's lives and achievements as important.

The programme, aimed at educating 600 women over three years. However, the target of reaching out to 600 women was bypassed during the second year of implementation and the programme has reached to about 1586 women. Out of these, 1289 women have become literate. This was made possible by two factors:

- a. An addition of ten centres to women's literacy programme was made possible by the grant provided by the Rajeshwar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust, New Delhi.
- b. A structural orientation to the literacy programme was carried out. Since demand for literacy had come from women themselves, mobilization was not an issue with UMP. Hence, without losing time in campaigning for literacy, the programme directly ventured into running the centres with full community support.

During 2013-2014, a total of 32 centres were run in some of the least developed areas of the state (Table 3). Out of these, the centre in Kuthar village, district Pauri Garhwal, was shifted to village Tairi after six months of operation. In addition, the centre in Malai, district Chamoli, was shifted to Pudiyani for six months. Therefore, keeping the total number of centres at 30, no extra budget was spent. Out of 645 enrolees, a total of 342 women became literate during 2013-2014. The courses are implemented free of charge, mostly at community centres.

From the perspective of the individual woman who has not had the opportunity for basic literacy, either due to non-availability of schools in early stages of her life in the village or due to patriarchy, literacy centres provide an important opportunity for learning. Also,

given women's scarcity of resources and power in social contexts, literacy centres are important in enabling them to widen the pursuit of established community relations.

Table 3. Literacy Centres in villages.

Serial number	Location	Village	Caste composition of the village	Duration of operation of literacy centre		Women enrolled
1	Danya	Rauteliya Shilangdhar	SC	March 2013	April 2014	16
2		Dasili	General	March 2013	April 2014	22
3		Kotyura	General	March 2013	April 2014	16
4		Falyant	SC	March 2013	April 2014	16
5	Muvani	Borizer	Mixed caste	March 2013	March 2014	20
6		Talla Syuni	SC	March 2013	March 2014	16
7	Ganaigangoli	Chaunaliya	SC	July 2012	April 2014	16
8		Movani	SC	May 2013	April 2014	13
9		Bhalugaara	General	May 2013	April 2014	23
10		Gwari	General	May 2013	January 2014	20
11		Talsimoli	Mixed caste	May 2013	April 2014	16
12		Digarkoli	General	July 2012	April 2014	16
13	Shama	Litigaoun	Mixed caste	March 2013	April 2014	16
14		Liti malla dhura	Mixed caste	March 2013	April 2014	15
15		Liti talla dhura	Mixed caste	June 2012	December 2013	18
16		Ratir Kaithi	Mixed caste	July 2012	April 2014	20
17		Gogina	Mixed caste	July 2012	April 2014	20
18		Malkhadugarcha	Mixed caste	July 2012	April 2014	15
19	Nayarghati	Gwadi	Mixed caste	July 2012	April 2014	16
20		Kandi	Mixed caste	July 2012	April 2014	22
21		Hathnur	Mixed caste	July 2012	April 2014	22
22		Tairi	General	January 2013	April 2014	16
23		Kuthar	Mixed caste	July 2012	January 2013	25
24	Kujon	Naini	SC	March 2013	March 2014	20
25		Kujaoun	Mixed caste	March 2013	March 2014	22
26	Badhani	Diyarkot	Mixed caste	July 2012	September 2013	30
27		Kukrai	General	July 2012	September 2013	33
28		Kalyadi	General	July 2012	September 2013	30
29		Maalai	General	July 2012	September 2013	25
30		Aioli	Mixed caste	December 2012	April 2014	25
31		Mathar	Mixed caste	December 2012	April 2014	25
32		Pudiyani	Mixed caste	October 2013	April 2014	20
Total						645*

\*342 completed the course

SC refers to Scheduled Caste families

General denotes villages where a single caste (non SC) lives.

Mixed caste includes villages where both general and scheduled caste population live.

## a. Method

The adult women literacy programme was developed by UMP for three categories of women:

1. Women without any reading and writing skills
2. Women who have relapsed from literacy to illiteracy
3. Literate women attending centres to enhance their skills

Each year, the need assessment survey was carried out and data was analyzed with respect to prospective learner's status. In addition, data of learners enrolled in literacy centres was analyzed with respect to their progressive achievements and challenges that the enrolled

women might face in attending centres on a regular basis. In addition, each learner was tracked till she became literate.

In addition to regular reading and writing several other issues are kept in mind. In particular, reading is made interesting, relevant to the participants' lives, and culturally sensitive by using familiar folk tales, proverbs, and poetry.

## b. The facilitators

The centres are run by female facilitators (Table 4). The facilitators are continuously supported by more experienced supervisors who liaise and consult. Each centre has a group of about fifteen women continuously attending it.

Table 4. Profile of the facilitators.

Serial number	Location	Facilitator				
		Name	Caste	Education	Age	Work experience
1	Danya (district Almora)	Sunita Arya	SC	10 <sup>th</sup>	24	3 years
2		Sunita Dasila	General	12 <sup>th</sup>	22	9 months
3		Rama Dasila	General	10 <sup>th</sup>	24	5 months
4		Deepa Joshi	General	BA	20	1 year
5		Bhavna Bhatt	General	BA	20	6 months
6		Sunita Joshi	General	BA	21	7 months
7	Muvani (district Pithoragarh)	Laxmi Chauhan	General	10 <sup>th</sup>	33	1 year
8		Manisha Sonar	SC	MA	22	3 year
9	Ganaigangoli (district Pithoragarh)	Pooja Tamta	SC	10 <sup>th</sup>	22	18 months
10		Santoshi Pathni	General		36	9 months
11		Poonam Arya	SC	BA	22	13 months
12		Kamla Sharma	General	BA	23	3 year
13		Babita Dasila	General	BA	23	18 months
14		Hema Arya	SC	MA	23	1 year
15	Nayarghati (district Pauri Garhwal)	Fulma Rawat	General	8 <sup>th</sup>	44	18 months
16		Deepa Negi	General	BA	29	18 months
17		Ravita Bisht	General	12 <sup>th</sup>	32	14 months
18		Poonam Negi	General	BA	23	7 months
19		Asha Riyal	General	10 <sup>th</sup>	40	1
20		Geeta Negi	General	10 <sup>th</sup>	44	8 months
21	Kujon (district Chamoli)	Rajeswari Raj	SC	8 <sup>th</sup>	18	1 year
22		Geeta Bisht	General	BA	35	1 year
23	Badhani (district Chamoli)	Neelam Bhandari	General	BA	20	18 months
24		Rajeswari Negi	General	12 <sup>th</sup>	18	1 year
25		Shobha bisht	General	MA	23	1 year
26		Shobha Negi	General	12 <sup>th</sup>	19	1 year
27		Geeta Rawat	General	MA	23	6 months
28		Shanta Negi	General	MA	29	8 months
29		Binita Rawat	General	12 <sup>th</sup>	19	8 months
30		Binita Negi	General	BA	20	6 months

The literacy facilitators are selected by CBOs in consultation with the women's groups. This year, a total of 30 girls have worked as facilitators (Table 4). Out of these, 53% are graduates and post graduates. 20% of the total facilitators belong to the scheduled caste families. The age varies between 18-40 years, except for two. Fulma Rawat who is 44 years old has worked as a balwadi teacher and a supervisor and has a very strong influence in the community. Similarly, Geeta Negi (age 44) has a strong influence in the women's group.

Grading of all the facilitators was carried out regularly by UMP, Almora. Over the last three years, the facilitators have shown considerable improvements in areas of language, expression and communication. Not only their interest in the work has grown but they seem to be more understanding and sensitive to women's needs. Their decision making ability has also improved. However, it was noted that their interest in mathematics and in providing rural women access to government schemes are areas that need more attention.

### c. Learning materials

The literacy curriculum was developed by UMP through a series of collaborative workshops with partner CBOs. Using experience of women's groups as a base, UMP developed a series of three workbooks and other supplementary material including a pre-primer, charts, cards and daily registers to be used in literacy centres.

Table 5. Material supplied to literacy centres during May 2013-March 2014 and the remaining stock at USNPSS.

Serial number	Educational material	Supplied to literacy centres	Remaining stock at USNPSS
1	Chalk boxes	27	23
2	Duster	00	2
3	Crayons	107	None
4	Sketch pen	138	6
5	Ball point pens	422	None
6	Refills	10	10
7	Pencils	377	None
8	Eraser	163	None
9	Sharpener	120	None
10	Copy (200 pages)	179	30
11	Copy (100 pages)	179	78
12	Copy (second phase)	191	283
13	Attendance register	10	13
14	<i>Dainik vivran</i>	11	12
15	<i>Bindu-kram</i>	179	75
16	Alphabet cards set laminated	00	17
17	Black board 2'x3'	00	None
18	Ganit mala	1	8
19	Wall clock	00	None
20	School mat 2'x3	6	3
21	Trunk	00	None
22	<i>Abhyas pustika ek</i>	179	158
23	<i>Abhyas pustika do</i>	179	296
24	<i>Abhyas pustika tin</i>	361	137
25	Number charts and cards	50	238
26	Alphabet charts and cards	50	220
27	Lock- key	00	None
28	Plastic scale 12"	00	None
29	Plain register	10	None
30	Meri baat	00	None
31	pratibhagi ki pragati	00	None
32	Survey prapatra i	00	None
33	Survey prapatra ii	00	None
34	Survey prapatra iii	425	30
35	Mulyankan prapatra (September 2013)	150	None

Educational materials have been developed with the aim of serving as a catalyst to increase women's interest in reading and writing. The curriculum, though structured, does not follow a rigid route but aims at inspiring a holistic way of looking into education. In doing so, we utilize the unique resources available in UMP, working with women to ensure that the collection is relevant and accessible to all women.

Simple extra reading materials as expository texts include basic information regarding everyday activities, health, and hygiene. At times, drama is also used as an educational tool, such as acting out a conversation passage in the reading material between a woman and her mother –in-law regarding natural resource management (Sulochana ki kahani, workbook 1).

In an environment that is conducive to learning women share knowledge/experiences and learn from each other. The trained facilitators provide one-to-one support to women attending classes. In many villages, the young facilitators invite their friends to help them conduct classes. In addition, educated adult women volunteer to help the facilitators run classes in the evenings.

#### **d. Assessment**

A systematic assessment of learner's literacy achievements was carried out. This was done at four stages:

1. Initial survey to assess the need of literacy among members of women's groups
2. Assessment of learning achievements of all women enrolled and attending literacy classes. This exercise was carried out during October 2013 by facilitators
3. Formal evaluation of learning achievements carried out by UMP, Almora by making visits to all the centres
4. Periodic six monthly grading of all women attending literacy centres

1. A survey to assess the need of literacy among women was carried out in March 2013. An assessment of awareness on selected social parameters was also carried out. The results have already been reported in the last year's annual report (2012-2013).

#### **di. Assessment of learning achievements carried out by facilitators**

During October 2013, the facilitators were asked by UMP, Almora to assess the learning achievements of women attending literacy centres. A sheet containing two pages, developed by UMP, was used to assess the learning achievements of 305 women, on the following aspects:

- a. language comprehension
- b. vowel signs (symbols in Hindi language)
- c. mathematical concepts
- d. areas of difficulties regarding content as prescribed in the literacy programme
- e. social issues

#### **a. Language comprehension**

Table 6 exhibits learning achievements of 305 adult women regarding Hindi language. Out of a total of 342 women attending on a regular basis, 305 women took part in the assessment. Out of these 305 women, 91% were able to identify and write all alphabets. They were familiar with the sequencing in the alphabetical chart and could identify any

alphabet on a random basis. In addition, 4.5% women could identify some, not all, alphabets on the chart.

Table 6. Language comprehension in literacy centres.

Serial number	Village	Total number	Language comprehension								
			Alphabets			Words			Paragraph writing		
			Knows	Knows well	Not clear	Small words	large words	All	Knows well	Can copy from the book	Does not know
1	Syuni	24	6	18	0	4	2	18	13	7	4
2	Mallakot	18	5	13	0	2	2	14	10	6	2
3	Banthok	14	00	14	0	5	1	8	8	2	4
4	Mauni	12	00	12	0	0	0	12	12	0	0
5	Gwar	12	00	11	1	1	3	8	8	2	2
6	Lamudiyar	11	00	10	1	0	3	8	6	0	5
7	Kulori	25	00	24	1	6	5	14	17	0	8
8	Gauli	29	00	29	0	3	3	23	15	2	12
9	Dharagad	14	00	14	0	0	1	13	11	1	2
10	Danya	24	00	18	6	7	8	9	8	1	15
11	Okhaldhunga	22	00	21	1	5	3	14	11	2	9
12	Bhayani	20	00	19	1	1	1	18	10	0	10
13	Fadiyali	20	3	17	0	2	1	17	16	3	1
14	Kimu	21	1	20	0	5	6	10	1	0	20
15	Rungadi	19	00	19	0	1	3	15	6	3	10
16	Tuprouli	20	00	19	1	13	5	2	3	0	17
Total		305	15	278	12	55	47	203	155	29	121
			4.9	91.1	3.9	18.1	15.4	66.5	50.8	9.5	39.7

Assessment of language comprehension revealed that about 67% women were able to write words in Hindi. Comprehension of both small and large words was found to be good. 18% women could write smaller words containing two alphabets whereas the percentage of women who could write larger words with vowel symbols was 15. In addition, more than half of the women could use words to write paragraphs. Further, 10% women were able to copy small paragraphs from literacy books supplied to the centres under the programme.

## b. Vowel signs

Women attending literacy centres found use of vowel signs an interesting exercise. In particular, learning vowels with the help of cards and charts had proven not only a fun way of learning but has also enhanced women's capability. At the end of the programme this year, about 75% women could identify vowel signs correctly (Table 7). Out of these, 70% were able to use the signs appropriately.



Table 7. Comprehension of vowel signs.

Serial number	Village	Number of women	Vowel signs			
			Identification		Use	
			Can identify	Cannot identify	Can use vowel signs correctly	Cannot use vowel signs correctly
1	Syuni	24	21	3	19	5
2	Mallakot	18	13	5	13	5
3	Banthok	14	14	00	13	1
4	Mauni	12	12	00	12	00
5	Gwar	12	12	00	11	1
6	Lamudiyar	11	8	3	7	4
7	Kulori	25	25	00	24	1
8	Gauli	29	17	12	17	12
9	Dharagad	14	12	2	12	2
10	Danya	24	11	13	8	16
11	Okhaldhunga	22	20	2	18	4
12	Bhayani	20	14	6	8	12
13	Fadiyali	20	19	1	16	4
14	Kimu	21	20	1	19	2
15	Rungadi	19	10	9	6	13
16	Tuprouli	20	1	19	1	19
	Total	305	229	76	204	101

### c. Mathematical concepts

About 97% women knew the numbers by heart. All of them were familiar with the sequencing patterns. The percentage of women who could use mathematical concepts to add (86.2%) and subtract (77.1%) numbers was higher than those who could do multiplication (37.1%) and division (28.5%). About 75% women could correctly use the measurement concepts to weigh and measure solid and liquid goods (Table 8).

Table 8. Comprehension of mathematical concepts and writing ability.

Sn	Village	Total number	Comprehension of mathematical concepts and writing ability											
			Number series		Addition		subtraction		Multiplication		division		measurement	
			Knows	Not clear	Knows	Not clear	Knows	Not clear	Knows	Not clear	Knows	Not clear	Knows	Not clear
1	Syuni	24	24	0	22	2	20	4	13	11	10	14	20	4
2	Mallakot	18	18	0	14	4	14	4	7	11	6	12	6	12
3	Banthok	14	14	0	14	0	14	0	8	6	8	6	12	2
4	Mauni	12	12	0	10	2	10	2	8	4	8	4	12	0
5	Gwar	12	12	0	8	4	6	6	4	8	1	11	3	9
6	Lamudiyar	11	9	2	6	5	4	7	5	6	3	8	9	2
7	Kulori	25	25	0	23	2	21	4	16	9	13	12	23	2
8	Gauli	29	29	0	25	4	19	10	16	13	14	15	25	4
9	Dharagad	14	12	2	10	4	9	5	5	9	4	10	13	1
10	Danya	24	24	0	18	6	9	15	4	20	5	19	15	9
11	Okhaldhunga	22	21	1	17	5	17	5	6	16	2	20	11	11
12	Bhayani	20	19	1	20	0	20	0	7	13	4	16	18	2
13	Fadiyali	20	20	0	19	1	15	5	9	11	7	13	15	5
14	Kimu	21	20	1	19	2	19	2	0	21	0	21	16	5
15	Rungadi	19	19	0	18	1	18	1	5	14	2	17	13	6
16	Tuprouli	20	19	1	20	0	20	0	0	20	0	20	18	2
Total		305	297	8	263	42	235	70	113	192	87	218	229	76
percentage			97.4	2.6	86.2	13.8	77.1	22.9	37.1	62.9	28.5	71.5	75.1	24.9

It was interesting to note that women do not use the same concepts as children do to calculate costs of articles. Instead of multiplying numbers, women add them up and reach the correct answers.

Also, evidence suggests that rural women find it difficult to convert measures in local units to the modern standard units. For example, all women were familiar with the concept of nali as the local unit of land measurement but had difficulties in converting it to hectare. In addition, nali is also an instrument. Women could identify the picture of a nali but had difficulties recognizing pictures of a litre measure which they perceive as a modern device for measurement.

#### **d. Areas of difficulties**

Across villages, mathematics, especially multiplication and division, were reported to be the “toughest” exercises. More than half of the women (52%) found the calculations difficult (Table 9). Though a majority of women could calculate orally, putting the numbers down in a logical way to reach to the conclusion was most difficult. Learning numeracy, sequencing of numbers were concepts that were easy to comprehend.

Table 9. Areas of difficulties.

Serial number	Village	Total number	Areas that women found difficult during literacy classes					
			Comprehension	Writing application	Filling the bank form	Mathematic	Sentence, paragraph writing	No difficulty
1	Syuni	24	9	2	1	9	2	1
2	Mallakot	18	6	0	0	12	0	0
3	Banthok	14	1	1	0	5	2	5
4	Mauni	12	0	0	0	6	1	5
5	Gwar	12	0	0	0	0	0	12
6	Lamudiyar	11	0	0	0	9	0	2
7	Kulori	25	0	0	0	25	0	0
8	Gauli	29	1	0	0	3	0	25
9	Dharagad	14	1	0	0	12	0	1
10	Danya	24	8	2	0	4	1	9
11	Okhaldhunga	22	6	0	1	14	1	0
12	Bhayani	20	7	3	2	6	2	0
13	Fadiyali	20	2	0	1	16	1	0
14	Kimu	21	6	0	0	10	5	0
15	Rungadi	19	3	1	1	12	2	0
16	Tuprouli	20	1	0	0	17	2	0
Total		305	51	9	6	160	19	60
			16.7	2.9	1.9	52.4	6.2	19.7

#### **e. Comprehension of social issues**

The level of awareness among women attending literacy centres was assessed by asking them questions regarding their understanding of socio-political issues. Solidarity emerged as one of the issues that women value the most. Gender equality was the second in the list of women’s priorities (Table 10). Women’s rights and health are other issues that the neo-literates found important. Awareness about the Right to Information and activism (protest march) were at the bottom of the list.

Table 10. Comprehension of social issues.

Sl	Village	Total	Women's understanding of social issues									
			Gender	unity	MNREGA	Activism	panchayat	RTI	water	rights	health	Not clear
1	Syuni	24	0	8	2	1	2	0	1	3	2	5
2	Mallakot	18	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	5
3	Banthok	14	11	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
4	Mauni	12	0	7	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
5	Gwar	12	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	1
6	Lamudiyar	11	2	3	1	0	2	0	0	3	0	0
7	Kulori	25	10	7	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	2
8	Gauli	29	0	19	2	0	0	0	4	3	0	1
9	Dharagad	14	0	5	8	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
10	Danya	24	0	19	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
11	Okhaldunga	22	5	8	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	4
12	Bhayani	20	3	6	0	0	1	0	0	5	1	4
13	Fadiyali	20	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	15	0
14	Kimu	21	4	10	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	2
15	Rungadi	19	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
16	Tuprouli	20	0	19	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total		305	44	134	21	1	15	1	8	23	27	31
			14.4	43.9	6.8	0.3	4.9	0.3	2.6	7.5	8.8	10.2

\* MNREGA Mahatma Gandhi National rural employment Guarantee scheme

\*\*RTI Right to information

### dii. Assessment by UMP, Almora

A formal assessment of learning achievements of women attending centres was carried out by UMP during October 2013 and March-April 2014. An assessment sheet containing four sections to measure comprehension (both reading and writing) in language, mathematics and knowledge on social issues was prepared by UMP.

To ensure fair and unbiased assessment, the UMP staff made visits to each centre. The assessment was carried out in the presence of UMP, the head of the CBO and the facilitators. A total of 371 women in the age group varying between 20-70 years participated. After the assessment, all the sheets were brought back to Almora for grading and analysis. Performance was graded on a scale of A-D. The criterion for assessment was as follows:

Grade A: all questions have been attempted, right answers, readable hand writing

Grade B: 70-50% questions attempted, satisfactory answers, readable hand writing

Grade C: 50-25% questions attempted, satisfactory answers, readable hand writing

Grade D: less than 25% questions attempted, answers not satisfactory, hand writing not readable

Table 11 exhibits the results of assessment carried out in 28 centres spread over seven clusters in five districts of the state. In terms of performance, Kotyura village in Danya exhibited the highest levels of achievement. All women in the village scored Grade A. Incidentally Kotyura village is inhabited by scheduled caste families. The women's group is active and women were keen to become literate.

Table 11. Performance (Grades) of women attending literacy centres.

Serial number	Location	Village	Total number of women	Grades			
				A	B	C	D
1	Ganaigangoli	Chaunaliya	19	14	3	2	0
2		Digarkoli	11	6	3	1	1
3		Bhalugara	12	7	0	2	3
4		Tal simoli	9	4	2	2	1
5		Mavani	5	4	1	0	0
6	Shama	Malkhadugarcha	11	9	2	0	0
7		Gogina	16	11	2	2	1
8		Litidhura	16	14	2	0	0
9		Kethi	8	7	1	0	0
10		Litigaoun	5	3	0	2	0
11		Liti	9	3	4	2	0
12	Badhani	Mathar	14	6	4	3	1
13		Diyarkot	17	16	0	1	0
14		Kukdai	17	4	5	6	2
15		Malai	18	10	3	3	2
16		Airoli	17	5	3	3	6
17	Nayarghati	Gwadi	11	2	2	4	3
18		Hathnood	16	9	3	1	3
19		Tairi	10	3	2	4	1
20		Kandi	11	9	1	1	0
21	Danya	Kotyura	9	9	0	0	0
22		Falyant	17	3	6	3	5
23		Dasili	22	12	2	2	6
24		Rautiliya	15	11	2	2	0
25	Muvani	Borizer	17	8	3	3	3
26		Talla syuni	10	8	0	1	1
27	Kujon Maikot	Naini	14	6	4	1	3
28		Kujon	15	3	3	3	6
Total			371	206 (55.5%)	63 (16.9%)	54 (14.5%)	48 (12.9%)

In terms of locations, Shama (district Bageshwar) and Nayarghati (district Pauri Garhwal) outperformed during the assessment. Malkhadugarcha, Liti, Kandi, Syuni villages that are remote and not connected by roads performed better than villages approachable by motorable roads.

The overall scores were better than the last year's performance. Out of 371 women, 56% had scored Grade A. The percentage of women who were awarded grade D was almost half (12.9%) of the last year's performance in the D category (22%).

Table 12 shows the age-wise break up of 371 women with their grades. Three points could be summarized by looking at this table:

- A majority of women attending literacy centres fall in the age category of 36-50 years
- Young women perform better than the older women
- Increase in age is inversely proportional to grades achieved

The results of the assessment were shared with all our partner organizations, the facilitators and the women in villages.

Table 12. Age-wise break up of women and their performance.

Serial number	Age group (years)	Total number of women	Grades			
			A	B	C	D
1	20-35	137	93	20	11	13
2	36-50	165	90	31	28	16
3	51-70	67	22	12	15	18
4	>70	2	1	00	00	1
Total		371	206	63	54	48

**1biii. Women's congregation (*mahila sammelan*)**

Although women's congregations were planned and money was sent to the concerned CBOs in advance to prepare for the sammelans, only four congregations could be held this year (Table 13). The reason for this delay has been the political scenario in the state. Since the panchayat elections were supposed to be held during September-December, UMP had scheduled the *sammelans* during February-March 2014. In the meantime, the chief minister changed and the new chief minister postponed the panchayat elections, though the code of conduct had already come into being. The parliamentary elections were held in May 2014. Prior to that congregations could not be organized due to the code of conduct for the parliamentary elections. The congregations in other villages are now scheduled to be held after the panchayat elections in June 2014.

Congregations provide a forum to members of women's groups to share their experiences and learn from each other. In particular, the new groups discuss their problems regarding organizing women and building up solidarity in the village. The group leaders review the work carried out during the year and present it before the community. Future plans are also discussed.

Table 13. Congregation of women held during 2013-2014.

Serial number	Location	Date	Place	Participants			Participation from UMP Almora
				Female	Male	Total	
1	Muvani	6.2.2014	Mahila Ashram, Muvani	75	2	77	Anuradha, Renu, DS Latwal
2	Muvani	8.3.2014	Primary school, Boriser	120	2	122	Renu Juyal
3	Dwarahat	9.2.2014	Jalali	308	6	314	Lalit Pande, Anuradha, DS Latwal
4	Danya	2.4.2014	Chalmorigada	276	5	281	Anuradha, Renu, Rama, Champa, Ritu, Bhumika, DS Latwal
5	Kheti	6 4.2014	JHS playing field Kheti	219	00	219	Anuradha, Renu, Rama, Ritu, Latwal
6	Shama	16.4.2014	High School playing field Ratirkethi	122	11	133	Anuradha, Renu, DS Latwal
Total				1120	26	1146	

The most positive impact of the congregations has been in building up a sense of solidarity among women. During congregations, members of women's groups meet and network with each other. Often, the older, experienced women are invited to new villages to form a *sangathan* there. The older women are ready to volunteer and contribute their time and energy in strengthening networks of women in villages.

This approach to strengthening unity among women has a built-in bias for promoting leadership. Women learn to stand up and express their concerns before the gathering. They learn to respect each other and develop confidence. Also, young women begin to see the worth of the work their elders did in villages. Meeting together and talking about issues in an environment that is conducive to learning, women develop a sense of commitment and accountability towards UMP. The congregations have been strong enough to motivate women to perform in their own village and share the results with other groups every successive year.

This year, *mahila sammelans* witnessed a lot of discussion and debates on women's participation in panchayat. In view of the upcoming elections, skits/plays were performed by women to develop awareness about the procedures of contesting and the role of elected women representatives in panchayats. Women were encouraged to visit the block development office/tehsil to see their names in the electoral roll and to enroll their children who have attained the age of 18 years. Further, members of UMP were requested to file their nomination on their own to learn the procedure and get a firsthand experience of entering into panchayats.

Women who participate in congregations also attend training/workshops at Almora. Since there is no disconnect between issues raised during the congregations and those that women discuss during workshops at Almora, the whole process becomes a connecting and empowering experience. Instead of discussing abstract issues, women learn to speak up and express their views on community/household matters, especially in relation to gender. At Almora, women acquire a broader perspective of issues that are relevant to their lives. They also learn to assert themselves and when back in their villages build on ideas that they have developed in Almora.

#### **1biv. Visits to villages**

Visits to villages were made by UMP staff from Almora to provide guidance to literacy facilitators and to attend the monthly meetings. During the visits efforts were made to meet all the facilitators to get their feedback on activities. Also, meetings were held with the head of the CBOs to review the work and provide feedback. During the meetings, UMP staff met with about 1935 village residents, majority women (Table 14).

The topics of discussions included enhancing solidarity, panchayati raj, violence against women, literacy, affects of disaster, women's health, linkage of women's groups with adolescent girls, education through sandhya kendras, libraries and the computer literacy centres, water conservation and equal distribution, plantation, land-based livelihoods, agriculture and horticulture, instalment of polyhouses and polyhtene-lined tanks etc.

Table 14. Visits to villages by UMP.

Serial number	Date	Location	Theme	participants
1	14.5.2013	Mouni	Plantation, livelihoods	9
2	27.5.2013	Danya	Female literacy	4
3	8.7.2013	Kotyura	Female literacy	30
4	9.7.2013	Gauli	Female literacy, violence against women	11
5	22.7.2013	Nayarghati	Facilitators meeting	6
6	23.7.2013	Gwari	Literacy	7
7	25.7.2013	Tairi	Literacy	13
8	26.7.2013	Badiyun	Review of all programmes	8
9	31.7.2013	Talla dhura	Literacy	3
10	1.8.2013	Okhaldhunga	Literacy	19
11	2.8.2013	Shama	Facilitators, women meeting	33
12	3.8.2013	Shama	Review	9
13	8.8.2013	Movani, Gwari	Literacy	22
14	9.8.2013	Bhalugara	Literacy	15
15	10.8.2013	Ganaigangoli	Review	15
16	16.8.2013	Pati toil	Fisheries	23
17	18.8.2013	Taak sakdena	Violence against women	29
18	18.9.2013	Mathar, Maalai	Literacy	39
19	19.9.2013	Nandasen, kukdai	School visit, literacy evaluation	135
20	20.9.2013	Maikot, Naini	Evaluation, literacy	22
21	22.9.2013	Srinagar	Meeting on disasters	255
22	23.9.2013	Nayarghati, Tairi, Kande, Hathnud	Evaluation literacy	67
23	24.9.2013	Gwari, Kendul	Evaluation literacy, Meeting on agriculture	73
24	16.10.2013	Lamudiyar	Meeting on agriculture	22
25	18.11.2013	Shama	Meeting on adolescent girls education	9
26	19.11.2013	Liti talla dhura	Literacy centre	5
27	20.11.2013	Liti malla dhura	Literacy centre	16
28	21.11.2013	Liti gaoun	Literacy centre	15
29	29.11.2013	Dasili, Rautaliya, Falyant	Literacy centre	21
30	30.11.2013	Kulori	Literacy centre, panchayati raj	17
31	3.12.2013	Boriser	Literacy centre	7
32	4.12.2013	Mallakot, Syuni	Literacy centre, panchayati raj	19
33	7.12.2013	Ukhimath	Meeting with facilitators	4
34	9.12.2013	Semla	Disaster affects	15
35	10.12.2013	Ritholi	Balwadi	18
36	20.12.2013	Nayarghati	Meeting with facilitators	7
37	21.12.2013	Thangar	Panchayati raj	21
38	25.12.2013	Danya	Sammelan kishori	79
39	4.1.2014	Muvani	Sammelan kishori	75
40	5.1.2014	Ganaigangoli	Sammelan Kishori	200
41	6.1.2014	Ganaigangoli	Meeting	33
42	21.2.2014	Danya	Bal mela	90
43	28.2.2014	Sagar	Facilitators meeting	4
44	1.3.2014	Kujon, Naini	evaluation literacy	30
45	7.3.2014	Muvani	Meeting with facilitators	3
46	8.3.2014	Muvani	Panchayati raj, solidarity	120
47	9.3.2014	Borizer, talla Syuni	evaluation literacy	26
48	10.3.2014	Muvani	Review meeting with facilitators	3
49	11.4.2014	Liti gaoun	Literacy centre	3
50	10.4.2014	Pokhari, Dasili, Falyant	Survey, literacy evaluation	75
51	11.4.2014	Pokhari	Survey	68
52	12.4.2014	Rautaliya, Kotyura	Literacy evaluation	17
53	15.4.2014	Shama, Liti, malladhura	Literacy evaluation	21
54	30.4.2014	Bhalugara, Movani, Talsimoli	Literacy evaluation	45
Total				1935

### 1bv. Access to safe sanitation facilities

Since coverage of sanitation facilities continues to be inadequate in Uttarakhand, the programme run by USNPSS creates much demand in villages. Also, water-borne diseases are common in villages, especially during the summer and the monsoons when the demand for

safe drinking water increases many folds. Therefore, the sanitation programme continued with the twin objectives of:

- (a) Providing safe sanitation facilities to communities, especially women and girls
- (b) Improving community health and hygiene in villages.

Further, due to recent disasters and the resultant floods in villages (June 2013), piped water supply systems and sanitary latrines were damaged causing much difficulty to women and children. Therefore, demand for sanitary latrines increased but very limited funds were available to USNPSS this year.

USNPSS covers the partial costs of the latrines by providing an amount of rupees 1800 per household. The users construct the structure and also contribute towards installation of latrines. Often, the poor families construct the structure in phases as and when the required amount is available with them. Since many men know masonry work and stone is available in the village itself, installing the infrastructure is not difficult. In some cases, very poor families use cloth or tarpaulin sheet.

Education on hygiene and preventive health care practices is an integral part of the programme. Since a sanitation facility can only work appropriately in villages where water is available to wash and clean the room, the first step is to ensure provision of water. Then, issues of prevention of diarrhoea, dysentery, stomach ache are discussed with communities, especially women and children.

All decisions regarding the sanitation programme are taken by women's groups in open village meetings. Members of women's groups select the beneficiaries on the basis of their economic status and the level of participation in group activities.

Table 15. Ensuring safe sanitation in villages.

Serial number	Location	Total number of latrines installed	Villages	Village-wise number of latrines installed
1	Gopeshwar	15	Dogari Kandai	2 13
2	Badhani	10	Airoli Pudiyani Chaundali	5 4 1
3	Ganaigangoli	10	Bhanyani Digarkoli Rungadi	3 3 4
4	Galla	7	Supi talla, Len pokhara, Galla Chapad, Galla, Lod Tapook	1 in each village 2
5	Karnaprayag	5	Uttaron Falota Sonali	1 1 3
6	Chausali	1	Chausali	1
7	Ukhimath	1	Paithali	1
Total		49		49



## **1bvi. Relief and rehabilitation in disaster affected areas**

While disasters (earthquake, cloudburst, landslides, mud and debris flow, lake bursts) are not new concerns to the permanent residents of the hills of Uttarakhand, more recently they have taken on a new urgency. In particular, damage caused by the recent cloudbursts has attracted a lot of attention. While Almora, Chamoli and Pithoragarh districts were hit by cloudbursts in 2010 leading to many casualties and loss of property and resources, the cloudburst in September 2012 caused heavy destruction in Ukhimath area. Again, In June 2013, Rudraprayag, Chamoli, Uttarkashi, Pithoragarh districts faced torrential rains and floods leading to heavy loss of property, infrastructure, people and animals (Table 16).

The recent events related to disasters call for much cooperation, information sharing among the government, meteorological and environmental institutions and communities. Solutions need to be sought on a long-term basis. Meanwhile, USNPSS has mobilised resources and initiated activities in villages facing the challenges of disaster in recent times. Clearly, there are many issues that need immediate attention to be able to provide relief to disaster hit communities. However, to begin with USNPSS has focused on the following activities, keeping the option open for later expansion of work to other villages:

1. Immediate response to disaster in Ukhimath (Kedarnath valley)
2. Rebuilding life in disaster hit villages
3. Preparing potential villages to deal with disaster
4. Training on disaster management to women and children

The advantage of USNPSS working in affected areas and also in villages that are prone to disasters is our prior association and work with communities, especially WVGs and CBOs. Following the disaster in Kedarnath valley in June 2013, a team of UMP visited 14 villages around Ukhimath providing emotional and moral support to women who had lost their husbands/sons and other relatives at Rambada and Kedarnath areas. An assessment of the deaths that have occurred in villages where UMP has already been working is presented in Table 16.

During the visit, the UMP team found that frequent changes in weather, occurrence of heavy and sporadic rains, cloudbursts, landslides and floods have increased the vulnerability of the local population, especially women. During the disaster that had hit the Kedarnath valley in June 2013, mostly men died. This was in contrast to the general perception that women and children are more vulnerable than men during disasters, especially because they are at home and landslides, floods would hit them first.

The visit made by UMP revealed that out of a total of 305 local dead men from 46 hamlets in Ukhimath area, 91% were below 50 years of age. Out of these, more than 50% of the men were below the age of 25. Since a majority of women in these villages were married at the age of 17-18 years, they have been widowed now in their 20s. The affect of shock has been so deep that women run across the villages, call out the names of their sons who never returned and cry all the time. Since, the temple is closed for now, women fall back to

agriculture but this increases their vulnerability because landslides continue to occur and damage their fields.

Table 16. Assessment of deaths in villages where UMP has been working in the Kedarnath valley.

Serial number	Village	Age													Total
		11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	
1	Khat	1	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	2
2	Masouna	1	00	00	00	1	1	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	4
3	Raulenk	1	4	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	5
4	Gaddu	4	00	00	1	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	6
5	Badasu	5	8	1	1	1	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	17
6	Talanga	7	5	1	1	00	1	00	1	1	00	00	00	00	17
7	Pithura	1	1	00	00	1	1	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	5
8	Khod bagar	1	00	1	1	00	2	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	5
9	Dangi	1	1	1	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	4
10	Bedula	6	5	1	2	00	2	2	00	00	00	00	00	00	18
11	Dungar	3	00	00	1	00	1	1	00	4	00	00	00	1	11
12	Pathali	1	1	2	00	1	1	1	3	00	1	00	00	00	11
13	Painj	3	2	00	00	00	2	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	8
14	Kimana	7	2	1	00	00	2	00	1	1	00	00	00	2	16
15	Makku	00	1	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	2
16	Luvara	00	2	1	2	1	00	00	2	00	00	00	1	1	10
17	Bhigi	00	1	1	1	1	1	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	6
18	Bajpani	00	1	00	2	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	3
19	Pali	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	2
20	Nyalsu	1	2	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	4
21	Giriya	00	00	2	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	2
22	Lamgodi	00	00	3	00	00	4	1	5	00	1	00	00	1	15
23	Paitoli	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1
24	Semla	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1
25	Trijuginarayan	1	6	4	1	3	3	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	19
26	Rudrapur	00	00	1	00	3	1	1	1	00	00	00	00	00	7
27	Badu Jakhdhar	00	3	2	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	6
28	Karokhi	3	1	1	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	6
29	Uniyana	00	00	1	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	3
30	Jal Malla	1	2	5	6	00	1	1	00	00	00	1	00	00	17
31	Jal Talla	1	5	3	5	2	2	2	00	1	00	00	00	00	21
32	Khumera	1	5	00	1	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	8
33	Dilmi sari	1	3	00	2	00	00	2	1	00	00	00	00	00	9
34	Ravi gram	3	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	3
35	Jammu	1	3	00	00	1	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	6
36	Dewar	00	3	00	00	2	00	1	1	00	00	00	00	00	7
37	Bhatwari	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1
38	Dhani	00	00	1	00	3	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	5
39	Rainsi	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1
40	Usara	00	00	00	1	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	2
41	Barsal	00	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1
42	Lavani	00	00	00	00	00	3	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	3
43	Sem Kurala	00	00	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	1	2
44	Sigoli	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	1
45	jaggi bagvan	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1	00	00	00	00	00	1
46	Biyung	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	1	00	1
Total		55	69	35	31	21	35	18	19	9	3	2	2	6	305
Percentage		18	22.6	11.5	10.2	6.9	11.5	5.9	6.2	2.9	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.9	

Source: UMP Survey, August, 2013.

The monthly meetings of women's groups that UMP supports in these villages have become a forum to share grief and a sense of loss among the community members. Also,

during crisis, women have relied on each other by providing solace and maintaining a sense of solidarity and cohesiveness that the group members provide to each other.

A survey of 142 men from 22 villages who had died in Kedarnath area revealed that 86% belonged to the general caste while 13% were from socially disadvantaged (SC) households. More than half of the total men (55%) who had died were staying at Rambada when floods occurred and 33% of the men had died in and around the temple at Kedarnath. About 6% were swept by water at Kanchula and 4% at Gaurikund. A majority of them (42.9%) were either working in hotels/shops or had been ferrying people and goods from and to the temple of Kedarnath.

Out of a total of 124 women from 22 villages surveyed in Ukhimath area, 50% had lost their husbands while 40% had lost their sons. About 10% women had lost their sons as well as husbands (Table 17).

Table 17. Women who had lost their relatives during disaster in Kedarnath area in June 2013.

Serial number	Village	Number of women who had suffered lost	Relation with the men who had died		
			Husband	son	Both (son and husband)
1	Painj	6	1	3	2
2	Paithali	14	9	4	1
3	Kimana	14	6	7	1
4	Gandhinagar	3	2	1	00
5	Udaipur	3	1	2	00
6	Omkareshwar	1	00	1	00
7	Bhateshwar	1	00	1	00
8	Dungar-semra	14	9	3	2
9	Karokhi	7	3	3	1
10	Usara	1	1	0	0
11	Saari	5	2	2	1
12	Saari Dilmi	2	2	0	0
13	Huddu	3	1	1	1
14	Giriya	3	2	1	0
15	Pali	2	1	1	0
16	Payans	1	1	0	0
17	Mansoon	3	3	0	0
18	Roulek	5	00	5	0
19	Uniyada	3	2	1	0
20	Buruva	3	00	2	1
21	Bedula	13	4	6	3
22	Parkandi-maakumath	17	12	5	0
Total		124	62	49	13

The incidents of cloud bursts, floods and heavy rains had caused considerable damage to roads, paths, school buildings and other infrastructure in Uttarakhand. Damage to bridges had led to a situation where children could not reach schools or they had to walk considerable distance every day. Small and disabled children were in a doubly disadvantageous position. In villages around Ukhimath, Shama, Karnaprayag etc. libraries and sandhya kendras run by USNPSS had proven very useful to communities.

Due to the heavy death toll in villages in Garhwal, especially in the Kedar valley, children were traumatized. An evening centre or library, which could divert their attention to some creative work, had benefitted them a great deal. These centres would provide the children learning space and help them in restoring their confidence and interest in life. Also adults (widows, mothers, brothers and sisters in households experiencing trauma due to sudden deaths) would come and sit in the centres to share their grief and concerns with each other.

#### **a. Immediate response to disaster**

The UMP team from Almora (Anuradha, Suresh and Dharam Latwal) spent about a week in the Ukhimath area providing support and consolation to women and children in villages. The team visited 14 villages where women's groups are active and talked to communities, spent time with them and provided information on how to access the relief materials, including compensation and medical aid provided by the government. The idea was just to be with women who had lost their relatives during the disaster.

The team also took solar lanterns, medicine and some tools from Almora to distribute among the women's groups.

#### **b. Rebuilding life**

This is a long term initiative focused on women and children. Two different types of initiatives have been thought of and executed in villages.

- a. For children
- b. For women

##### **bi. For children**

USNPSS was already running five libraries in villages near Ukhimath and the programme has continued over time. Despite books, library for children contain lots of sports equipment, toys and educational aids. Children find the place very attractive and visit the centre regularly during the evenings.

##### **bii. For women**

The UMP team prepared a list of people who had died and made visits to their houses to assess the need of women and children. Based on this assessment and discussions with the local CBO and others including the members of the nagarpalika, teachers and panchayat representatives at Ukhimath, two types of activities were identified to help women improve their livelihoods. In addition, discussions about access to safe drinking water and sanitation were held.

The USNPSS team again visited the affected villages in December 2013 and March 2014. Village level meetings of women and discussions with local CBO were held to understand what type of supportive interventions USNPSS could make in the area.

During August 2013-March 2014, USNPSS had received an amount of Rs 7, 46,635 from 25 donors to provide some help in disaster affected villages. The amount was utilized to initiate the following activities:

## **i. Distribution of Relief material**

The relief material included solar lights, agricultural tools and some medicines. The material was distributed in Semla, Kimana, Karokhi, Paithali, Dungar, Parkandi and Ukhimath on August 14, 2013 (Table 18). The local CBO identified the beneficiaries after much scrutiny and ensured that the material was used and maintained properly.

Table 18. Material distributed to disaster affected villages near Ukhimath, 2013.

Serial number	Item	quantity
1	Solar lights (15+16)	31
2	grab axe	250
3	Sickle	250
4	Spade	75
5	iron pans (tasla)	75
6	pick axe	60

## **ii. Fruit Processing Unit**

A small fruit processing unit has been set up at Ukhimath. The unit is located in the middle of the town. Access to the unit is easy for communities from surrounding villages. A room of 33.5 ft. ×18 ft. size has been constructed on the roof of a two storied private house. The open terrace space (45ft. ×45ft. size) is also being used. Separate provision for drinking water and electricity as been made for the operation of the unit.

A set of equipment which includes a pulper, mixer grinder, refractometer (to check sweetness), electric balance, containers etc. has been purchased. The secretary of the local CBO has taken up the responsibility of running the centre with participation and cooperation of women and youth from surrounding villages.

The unit has started functioning from January, 2014. Ukhimath area grows citrus fruits abundantly, but due to lack of transport and fruit processing (FP) facilities communities do not receive a suitable price. With setting up of the unit, the communities receive a higher price for raw fruit of malta. This year, a total of 3,098 kg malta was purchased from twelve families in surrounding villages. Besides, 14 village residents, 11 women and 3 men, got part time employment during processing of the fruit at Ukhimath.

Ukhimath area is endowed with abundance of rhododendron trees. The fruit processing unit has also started processing of rhododendron flowers to produce juice/squash on a small scale. 16 women from surrounding villages were employed during the process of extraction of juice. In addition, five men were involved in collection and transportation of flowers from the forests. This year, a total of 320 kg of rhododendron flower was processed.

The unit called the '*Himalayan Khadya Prasanskaran Prashikshan Kendra Ukhimath*' has received registration certificate under the Food Safety and Standard Act 2006.

### **iii. Knitting for women**

During meetings in villages, women had shown interest in learning knitting with machines. On the basis of this demand, 6 knitting machines were purchased and installed in the area.

Starting from April 1, 2014, a total of 17 women from Pathali, Dungar, Semla, Kimana, Mangoli, Gandhi Nagar and Karokhi villages are being trained at Ukhimath. Out of these, 12 women attend regularly. Training at Ukhimath is held in two batches (9.30 am-12 pm and 2 pm-4.30 pm) everyday.

After completing one month's training, the trainers for further activities would be selected from this group itself. In the next phase, training on knitting will be organised in villages under the supervision of selected trainers.

## **2. Remedial Education**

### **2a. Balwadi, pre-primary education centres**

Over the last three years the balwadi programme has been gradually withdrawn as the ICDS centres have opened in villages. This year, only 16 balwadis were operational in three clusters of villages in Bageshwar, Almora and Chamoli districts.

The salient features of the balwadis are as follows:

- The balwadis are functional in hamlets not covered by the government run ICDS programme
- Children learn through child-centred, play-way methods using locally developed educational materials
- Organized women's groups and the CBOs jointly select a girl from the village to be trained as a shikshika (teacher). The selected girl is trained at USNPSS, Almora to run a centre and to work with women's groups functional in villages.
- Each centre is owned by the community. The village residents provide a room to run the centre. No rent or any other incentive is given. Parents send tiffin which the children share and eat together.
- Regular monthly meetings are held to discuss issues on balwadis and children's progress.
- Each training programme is followed by visits of USNPSS staff to villages to clarify doubts and provide on-the-spot guidance to teachers.
- Trained supervisors, who have earlier worked as *shikshikas*, look after the day-to day activities

Table 19. Number of children in balwadis.

Serial number	District	Village	Where does the shikshika work		Number of children					Place
			Own	Other	Total	Boys	Girls	General	SC	
1	Almora	Thali		Yes	17	9	8	17		bal-bhavan
2		Falyant		Yes	15	5	10	00	15	Panchayat ghar
3		Talli Danya		Yes	13	5	8	00	13	Vacant house
4		Pokhari	Yes		11	3	8	11	00	Panchayat ghar
5		Chil	Yes		15	7	8	15	00	Panchayat ghar
6		Khuna		Yes	10	4	6	10	00	Vacant house
7		Dasili		Yes	14	7	7	14	00	bal-bhavan
8		Dayalpur	Yes		11	5	6	11	00	bal-bhavan
9		Chausala		Yes	14	3	11	14	00	Vacant house
10	Chamoli	Ritholi	Yes		18	1	7	18	00	Panchayat ghar
11		Simli	Yes		11	5	6	00	11	Vacant house
12	Bageshwar	Liti		Yes	10	6	4	10	00	bal-bhavan
13		Jadbila	Yes		11	6	5	11	00	bal-bhavan
14		Dana bhanar		Yes	17	10	7	17	00	bal-bhavan
15		Tikta bhanar	Yes		13	5	8	13	00	Panchayat ghar
16		Bhainskhal		Yes	8	3	5	8	00	Vacant house
17		Timulabagad	Yes		10	6	4	10	00	balbhavan

## 2ai. Training

A training of balwadi shikshikas was carried out at USNPSS Almora during 6-10 February 2014. A total of 15 workers attended (Table 20). Their age varied between 18 to 26 years. Out of the fifteen participants four were graduates and two had completed their post-graduation. All of them have studied up to high school.

Table 20. Training of balwadi facilitators at USNPSS Almora.

Serial number	Duration	Number of participants			Educational qualifications				Age		
		Total	Shikshika	Margdarshika	10 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	BA	MA	18-20	21-24	>25
1	6-10.2.2014	15	12	3	5	4	4	2	8	4	3

## 2aii. Grading of shikshikas

The performance of shikshikas was assessed on a grading scale of A, B, C and D (Table 21). A majority of them were found to be very good (A) in developing rapport with the children, and have been regular in opening up the centre for children to attend every day. Cleanliness was also found to be very good. The shikshikas were good in maintaining written records and in establishing connections with the women's group. Understanding about child-centred learning is an issue that needs improvements.

Table 21. Grading of teachers carried out during July 2013- March 2014.

Serial number	Centre	Teacher	Experience (years)	Regularity in centre	Cleanliness	Rapport with children	Understanding	Songs, activities, bhavgeet	story	Environment education	Play way method	Written records	Involvement with wvg	self up skilling
1	Ritholi	Anita	4	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	A	B	B	B
2	Simli	Mamta	2.5	D	C	C	C	B	C	D	C	D	D	C
3	Chil	Khasti	1.6	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	A
4	Pokhari	Bhavna	1	D	B	C	C	C	D	D	D	B	B	c
5	Jadbila	Hansa	1.6	A	A	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	C	C
6	Liti	Champ	4.6	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	B	B	A
7	Thali	Neeta	0.9	A	A	A	B	A	B	C	B	B	B	A
8	Dasili	Lalita	1.4	A	A	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	A	A
9	Danya	Hema	1.6	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	A
10	Falyant	Bhavna	1.3	B	A	B	B	B	B	C	C	B	B	B
11	Khoona	Janaki	0.6	B	B	B	C	D	C	D	C	B	B	B
12	Dayalpur	Hema	1	C	C	C	C	B	B	D	C	B	B	C
13	Chausala	Geeta	0.3	B	B	B	C	C	C	D	C	C	C	C

This year, more than half of the total shikshikas have improved their educational qualifications (Table 22). Also, shikshikas are enrolled for graduate/postgraduate studies.

Table 22. Balwadi shikshikas have improved their educational qualifications.

Serial number	Name of the teacher	Passed the examination during 2013-2014
1	Lalita Bisht	MA
2	Hema Joshi	BA Final
3	Janaki Joshi	BA II year
4	Geeta Pant	BA I year
5	Neeta Bhatt	BA II year
6	Champa Koranga	BA I year
7	Poonam Koranga	Intermediate
8	Khasti Bisht	11 <sup>th</sup>

### 2a.iii. Meetings and supervision of balwadis

During their visit to balwadis the staff from USNPSS also attends meetings of women's groups and tries to meet as many village residents as possible (Table 23).

Table 23. Meetings in villages.

Serial number	Village	Date	Participants	
			Female	male
1	Liti goaun	1.8.2013	8	00
2	Jadbila	2.8.2013	23	1
3	Kulori thali	25.8.2013	7	00
4	Dasili	27.8.2013	15	02
5	Dasili	29.11.2013	8	04
6	Ritholi	10.12.2013	7	00
7	Dasili	1.03.2013	7	00
8	Pokhari	5.03.2013	10	01
9	Danya	3.03.2013	5	00
10	Chausala	3.03.2013	4	02
11	Khoona	3.03.2013	30	00
12	Dayalpur	4.03.2013	3	00
13	Chil	5.03.2013	27	00



USNPSS staff made visits to the centres to provide guidance and to help shikshikas carry out activities in centres and with communities. Table 24 exhibits the details of those visits.

Table 24. Supervision of balwadis.

Village	Date of visit	Total enrolled children	Average number of children Present on the days of visits	Shikshika works in her own or the other village		Status of balwadi			
				Own	Other	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak
Chil	2.5.2013	15	10	Yes	00	00	Yes	00	00
	5.3.2014	15	15	Yes	00	00	Yes	00	00
Pokhari	2.5.2013	13	9	00	Yes	Yes	00	00	00
	5.3.2014	13	8	Yes	00	00	00	Yes	00
Dasili	27.8.2013 29.11.2013 10.4.2014	15	14	00	Yes	Yes	00	00	00
	29.11.2013	14	14	00	Yes	00	Yes	00	00
	1.3.2014	15	13	00	Yes	Yes	00	00	00
Rampur Danya	29.11.2013	11	7	00	Yes	Yes	00	00	00
	3.3.2014	13	13	00	Yes	Yes	00	00	00
Thali	29.11.2013	16	15	00	Yes	Yes	00	00	00
Dayalpur	4.3.2014	11	7	Yes	00	00	00	Yes	00
Chausala	5.3.2014	13	7	00	Yes	00	Yes	00	00
Falyant	3.3.2014 27.5.2013 10.4.2014	15	8	00	Yes	00	Yes	00	00
Khuna	3.3.2014	11	Centre was closed due to wedding in the village						
Jadbila	31.7.2013	10	9	Yes	00	Yes	00	00	00
Liti gaoun	1.8.2013, 21.11.2013, 15.4.2014	10	8	00	Yes		Yes	00	00
Bhanar	1.8.2013	12	5	Yes	00	00	yes	00	00
Ritholi	18.9.2013 10.12.2013	18	16	Yes	00	Yes	00	00	00
Simli	19.9.2013 10.12.2013	11	6	Yes	00	00	00	Yes	00
Tikta	10. 4.2014	10	08	Yes		Yes			
Timulabagar	10. 4.2014	12	12	Yes				Yes	
DanaBhanar	10. 4.2014	14	9		Yes			Yes	
Liti gaoun	11. 4.2014	9	8		Yes	Yes			
Jadbila	12.4.2014	11	9	The teacher was getting married					

## 2b. Sandhya Kendra (Evening Centres)

USNPSS continued running sandhya kendras in villages. A total of 24 centres were functional in collaboration with CBOs in Almora and Bageshwar districts. The programme is structured in the following three stages:

In the first phase, discussions in the community on issues of education of primary school going children take place. Often, the members of the women's groups have asked for a centre in their village. In other cases, CBOs have set up the centre in remote villages where the reach of government and other educational services is low.

Selection of the shikshika (the facilitator) is carried out with community support. Earlier, the shikshika was chosen in an open meeting by the community itself. However, experience showed that factors other than the educational qualifications of the shikshika also

played an important role in running the centre. As a result, the criteria for selection were changed. Now, all applicants take a test in the village itself and the best respondent is chosen. The selected girl attends training at Almora.

In the second stage, the trained shikshika opens a centre in the village. Each centre runs for three hours a day, six days a week. She builds relationships between the child and her mother, between the centre and the community and also connects with the CBO.

During the third stage, the centre becomes fully functional. The shikshika attends meetings of the women's groups and reports the progress of children. Any problem regarding education of children in the evening centre is discussed during the meeting. Also, women are encouraged to speak up and provide feedback regarding their child's learning, emotional and behavioural attainments.

Table 25. Sandhya kendra in villages.

Serial number	Area	Cluster location	Total centres
	Dwarahat	Bhikiyasain	5
1		Dwarahat	8
		Binta	3
2	Maichun	Maichun	5
3	Shama	Shama	3
Total	3	5	24

Table 26. Number of children in sandhya kendra.

Serial number	Location	Centre	Children enrolled (Total)			Children enrolled (General)			Children enrolled (Scheduled Caste)		
			Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	Dwarahat	Chateena	5	12	17	4	10	14	1	2	3
2		Bitholi	8	7	15	7	7	14	1	0	1
3		Chaura	9	9	18	9	9	18	00	00	00
4		Rauna	5	6	11	5	6	11	00	00	00
5		Faldwari	11	11	22	6	5	11	5	6	11
6		Valna	8	7	15	8	7	15	00	00	00
7		Simalgaoun	9	10	19	9	10	19	00	00	00
8		Bedhuli	11	6	17	11	6	17	00	00	00
9		Mason	9	10	19	9	8	17	00	00	00
10		Chouda	4	10	14	4	10	14	00	00	00
11		Bajan	9	11	20	9	10	19	00	1	1
12		Dhamera	11	7	18	11	7	18	00	00	00
13		Kamrar	5	9	14	5	9	14	00	00	00
14		Borkhola	10	14	24	10	14	24	00	00	00
15		Bhataura	11	5	16	7	4	11	4	1	5
16		Parkot	11	6	17	8	2	10	3	4	7
17	Maichun	Mouni	14	13	27	11	7	18	3	6	9
18		Gwar	12	8	20	7	3	10	5	5	10
19		Maichun	15	12	27	15	12	27	00	00	00
20		Kasoon	22	17	39	00	00	00	22	17	39
21		Nakot	5	15	20	3	10	13	2	5	7
22	Shama	Gogina	5	20	25	5	10	15	00	00	00
23		Bhanar	9	13	22	9	13	22	00	00	00
24		Liti	11	14	25	11	14	25	00	00	00
Total			229	252	481	183	193	376	46	47	93

The overall performance of centres was found to be good. In Dwarahat area, the supervisor took a lot of interest in organizing child-centred activities in the centres. As a result, children were found to be regularly attending the centres. Also, school teachers report

that their performance in mathematics and languages has significantly improved. This year, with the support of the women's groups, new and larger rooms were acquired in villages.

The aim is to develop understanding of language and mathematical concepts using innovative methods and educational material that is not available in schools. Since achievements levels regarding language and mathematics have been found to be low among children attending primary schools in rural areas, parents extend full support to the programme.

## **2bi. Training**

This year, a total of four training programmes were held at USNPSS for sandhya kendra workers. A total of 20 new shikshikas were trained on play-way methods of education. Special focused sessions were held on improving mathematical concepts and problem solving skills among the participants.

*Jodo gnan* kit was used during training to simplify mathematical concepts and present them in an interesting way to participants. In particular, the following materials were used:

1. *Ganit mala*: to learn numbers, number series
2. *Rangometri*: create geometrical shapes
3. *Aakar-prakar*: to create geometrical patterns
4. *Jodo straw*: geometrical shapes in three dimensions
5. *Fraction kit*: to learn fractions, the concepts of half, one third, one fourth, three fourth etc.
6. *Jodo cube*: Classification on the basis of colour-shapes etc.

This year joint training for sandhya kendra workers and for librarians focused on record keeping in the centres. Record keeping is an important part of the library programme. During training, maintenance of registers was discussed. Also the joint sessions with the participants from sandhya kendra and libraries included imparting training on how to keep a record of books supplied to the libraries/sandhya kendras. The following points were discussed:

- Stock register in libraries
- Books exchange record
- Attendance register
- Child's development register
- Book labelling and authorization record

Building awareness on preventive health issues was an important part of training. Water-borne diseases, seasonal ailments, reproductive health issues were discussed with

participants. Further, common ailments that occur in villages were discussed under the head of community health. Action-based songs were used to impart messages relating to health, education of a girl child, environmental protection and women's development.

A review meeting cum training of old shikshikas was carried out during 6-7 July 2013 (Table 27). With the objective of experience sharing and learning from each other, the participants spoke about innovative methods that they have been able to promote in villages. The shikshika of Mason centre, shared her ideas of decorating the room with limited resources while the shikshika from Bhatora centre, raised the issue of need of more story books. *"Children have already finished reading all the books that were supplied to the centre and now we need more"*, she said. The shikshika from Chaura centre, asked for more colours, charts and drawing sheets. Some of the participants demonstrated how difficulties would arise when the shikshika does not give due importance to the issue of connecting the centre with the community. In addition, new designs created through origami were shared by the participants.

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Table 27. Training of shikshikas.

Serial number	Location	Duration	Type of training	Theme	Number of participants		
					boys	girls	Total
1	USNPSS	10-11.5.2013	Both sandhya Kendra and library	New teachers training	3	20	23
2	USNPSS	2-4.7.2013	Sandhya Kendra	New teachers training	3	12	15
3	USNPSS	6-7.7.2013	Sandhya Kendra	teachers workshop	3	11	14
4	USNPSS	19-20.11.2013	Organizing pustak mela in the village	Pustak mela preparation	4	31	35

## 2bii. Feedback from supervisors

Trained supervisors make regular visits to centres to monitor progress, provide guidance and help to shikshikas. They also help to connect the centre with communities by attending meetings of women's groups and by discussing the progress of children with their

parents, especially women. This year, the supervisors prepared a list of books that the children found most interesting to read (Table 28).

Table 28. Story books that children in the age group 6-11 liked most.

Serial number	Book	Serial number	Book
1	<i>Khel-khel mai</i>	19	<i>Gungun karti madhumakhi</i>
2	<i>School ka pahla din</i>	20	<i>Ek tara hu mai</i>
3	<i>Budhiya ki roti</i>	21	<i>Kajri gaai fisalpatti per</i>
4	<i>Hira dil</i>	22	<i>Darpok railgadi</i>
5	<i>Per ghumne chala</i>	23	<i>Dost ya dushman</i>
6	<i>Dosti aur maujmasti</i>	24	<i>Funkaro dosto kato nahi</i>
7	<i>Mere shishu geet</i>	25	<i>Nattu ki dhapli</i>
8	<i>Nanhe munne geet</i>	26	<i>Chitrakar rana ji</i>
9	<i>Gopal bhand</i>	27	<i>Budhiya</i>
10	<i>Bhudiya ki roti</i>	28	<i>Toota pankh</i>
11	<i>Hathi ki hichki</i>	29	<i>Mera bat kaha hai</i>
12	<i>Indradhanush per baithi titli</i>	30	<i>Sameera gai bazaar</i>
13	<i>Khushi</i>	31	<i>Bada murkh kaun</i>
14	<i>Kajri gaai aur kauve ka Christmas</i>	32	<i>Fani ki chanchal chapple</i>
15	<i>Sanp aur Medhak</i>	33	<i>Geejubhai ka khajana</i>
16	<i>Kusti-masti</i>	34	<i>Bade sayane bade chalak</i>
17	<i>Chatpat Bandar aur pencil</i>	35	<i>Lali aur uska ghoda</i>
18	<i>Bhudiya ki roti</i>	36	<i>Chatu ladki</i>

Table 29 exhibits the data obtained from the feedback forms filled by supervisors after visiting the sandhya kendras. The table relates to performance assessment of 13 centres carried out regularly for six months (May-October) in 2013.

Table 29. Feedback from supervisors.

Serial number	Month	children present (average number)	Record keeping		Maintenance of attendance register		Cleanliness					
			Yes	No	Yes	No	Room			Children		
							Very good	Good	average	Very good	Good	average
1	May	14	9	4	13	00	00	12	1	00	13	00
2	June	12	10	3	13	00	00	13	00	1	9	3
3	July	12	11	2	13	00	00	13	00	00	12	1
4	August	12	11	2	13	00	00	13	00	00	11	2
5	September	10	13	0	13	00	00	11	2	00	11	2
6	October	10	13	0	13	00	00	13	00	00	11	2
	Average	12	11.2	1.8	13	00	00	12.5	0.5	0.16	11.2	1.6

Table continued...

Serial number	Work related to physical education			Work related to vital education			Work related to mental education			Use of educational aids		
	very good	Good	Average	very good	Good	Average	very good	Good	average	very good	Good	average
1	1	9	3	3	8	2	1	9	3	1	7	5
2	0	8	5	0	10	3	0	11	2	0	9	4
3	0	9	4	0	7	6	0	12	1	1	6	6
4	0	10	3	0	11	2	0	12	1	0	8	5
5	0	9	4	1	11	1	0	10	3	2	10	1
6	0	10	3	1	8	4	1	10	2	1	9	3
Average	0.16	9.17	3.67	0.83	9.17	3.0	0.3	10.67	2	0.83	8.16	4

Evidence shows that on an average 12 children attend the centres regularly (Table 30). Record keeping and maintenance of attendance registers was found to be of excellent quality.

Cleanliness in the centres has improved considerably. Further, children were found to be clean and tidy.

Performance of children regarding their physical, mental and emotional development was monitored on a scale of three categories that would be exhibited as very good, good and average. The exercise revealed that the overall performance was good. The higher achievements (very good) were observed in the summer season (May), probably because the long days give more time for after school activities. In the winters, when the days are short and the sun sets at around 5-5.30 pm, time available for activities is reduced. Across centres, use of educational materials was found to be good.

Table 30 . Visit to sandhya kendras by USNPSS staff.

Serial number	Location	Centre	Date of visit	Purpose	Attendance on that day		
					Boys	girls	Total
1	Bhikiyasain	Chouda	15-5-13	meeting with the teacher	2	7	9
2	Dwarahat	Rauna	16-5-13	meeting with the teacher	5	5	10
3	Binta	Binta	16-5-13	meeting with the teacher	6	6	12
4	Shama	Bhanar	30-07-13	Supervision	6	4	10
5		Liti	01-08-13	Supervision	13	14	27
6		Jadbila	02-08-13	Meeting with teacher	0	0	0
7	Binta	Parkot	7-08-13	Supervision	11	6	17
8	Maichun	Mouni	23-08-13	Supervision	11	6	17
9		Nakot	29-08-13	Supervision	4	3	7
10		Kasoon	29-08-13	Supervision	6	9	15
11	Bhikiyasain	Dhamera	10-09-13	Supervision	6	7	13
12		Kamrar	11-09-13	Supervision	1	6	7
13		Bajan	12-09-13	Supervision	5	5	10
14		Mason	13-09-13	Supervision	04	3	7
15		Choura	14-09-13	Supervision	Centre closed on the day of the visit		
16	Shama	Gogina	10-09-13	Supervision	Na	na	18
17	Dwarahat	Rauna	29-11-13	Supervision	8	16	24
18		Bedhuli	29-11-13	Supervision	7	8	15
19		Valna	30-11-13	Supervision	9	7	16
20		Rauna	1-12-13	Bal mela JHS Rauna	na	na	125
21	Bhikiyasain	Choura		bal mela	na	na	na
22	Bhikiyasain	Dhamera	4-2-2014	Supervision	3	3	06
23		Kamrar	5-2-2014	Supervision	3	5	08
24		Bajan	5-2-2014	Supervision	2	2	04
25		Mason	6-2-2014	Supervision	2	7	09
26	Shama	Okhaldhung	11.4.2014	Supervision	5	4	09

### 2biii. Feedback from communities

Members of women's groups have reported improvements in behaviour of children. They appear to be more attentive of their surroundings. Their sense of cleanliness at home has also improved. For example, a woman from Mason village, district Almora, said *"my son used to be very careless with his belongings but now he keeps his room tidy and does not lose things in school. Am relieved because I do not have to buy him a pencil every second day."*

Women also report that awareness of children regarding protection of plants has improved. For example, Saraswati Devi of Dogari Kande village, district Chamoli, said, *“earlier children used to pluck flowers without paying any attention to its consequences. I used to tell them that all the things in the world are connected. Even plucking flowers for no purpose was not good. But they would not listen to me. The change occurred when children started attending the evening centres. Now, they have no time in the evening to wander around. They are engaged in some activity or the other. Also they have discussions on issues that are not covered by schools.”*

The retired principal of Bajan village, district Almora, took a great deal of interest in conducting activities in the sandhya kendra. He collected story books from the centre and took them home to read and narrate to young children in the village.

In Kamrar village, district Almora, a differently-abled girl attended the sandhya kendra for a long time. Her parents were very happy with the centre because the girl was able to talk there. Seeing improvements in her abilities, her parents gained confidence to take her to Delhi for further treatment. Her father said, *“It is only when she had attended the sandhya kendra, I realized that she was not “dumb”. Given the right environment she could learn to talk and play with other children.”*

A significant change in gender roles and responsibilities was noticed in villages. Earlier, after school, girls used to finish household chores while their brothers would go out and play with their friends. Now, boys as well as girls are required to attend the centre in the evening. Girls not only get an opportunity to learn but also mix with boys.

It was noticed that in villages the number of children is going down. This is due to migration of people from the villages to the cities.

## **2biv. Feedback from Schools**

School teachers have reported improvements in comprehension of language and mathematical concepts. The teachers report that children attending evening centres are attentive in the class and their ability to talk has also improved. A teacher said, *“They ask questions in the class and do not seem to be afraid of me and that is important.”*

Similarly, the teacher of Amrolidhar village, district Almora, said, *“The sandhya Kendra at Mason is good. Children who come from Mason to my school have continuously performed better in mathematics and languages, both in Hindi and English.”*

Children attending sandhya kendras have also been found to be better in socializing with others. Both boys and girls from sandhya kendra exhibit interest in sports and cultural activities in schools.

## **2bv. Book fair and sandhya kendra bal-mela**

The librarians and the children worked together preparing for skits for the mela. Skits were focused on issues such as weaknesses of elementary education and health care service in

villages, violence against children, abuse related to liquor consumption, female foeticide, discrimination against girls and women etc.

Some librarians had prepared handwritten *akhbaar* (newspaper) which was on display in the stalls for exhibitions of books and other educational materials. Essay writing, drawing and painting, quiz and sports competitions, cultural programmes (folk and patriotic) were part of the book fairs.

In some villages, an arrangement was made to measure the weight and height of children and others. The record was kept in a register and later shared with participants.

Table 31. Book fair and sandhya kendra *bal-mela*.

Serial number	Location	Village/school	Date	Total participants		USNPSS
				Number of children	Others *	
1	Dwarahat	Junior High School Rauna	1.12.2013	120	25	1
2		Binta	25.12.2013	69	19	00
3		Primary school, Chaura	3.1.2013	60	13	1
4	Maichun	Junior High School, Chanoli	20.12.2013	157	47	2
5	Ganaigangoli	Ambedkar Bhavan, Tuproli	19.12.2013	46	37	00
6		Junior High School, Nayal	21.12.2013	225	25	00
7		Library Bhanyani	22.12.2013	38	16	00
8	Nayarghati	Hathnoor panchayat bhavan	22.12.2013	130	80	2
9	Ukhimath	Primary school, Karokhi	25.12.2013	170	30	00
10	Pati	Library Batulyabanj	5.1.2014	80	50	2
11	Karnaprayag	Junior High School, Pudiyan	11.1.2014	150	150**	1
12		Padli	19.2.2014	80	80	00
13	Gopeshwar	Khalla	2..2.2014	60	35	00
14		Govt. High School, Dogari kande	10.2.2014	100	24	00
15	Shama	Gogina	15.4.2014	97	22	3
16		Ratirkheti	16.4.2014	50	9	3

\* Others include elected members of panchayats, officials of the education department (BRC, CRC, teachers, principals), representatives of other voluntary agencies, and members of women's groups, men and youth from communities.

\*\* 10 women from Ukhimath (Kedarnath valley) attended the book-fair.

Besides the students (form primary, junior and secondary schools), women, representatives of panchayats, school teachers also participated. Co-operation of the school staff, students and WVGs (in cases where mela had been organised in the village) was commendable.



In Hathnoor village (Pauri Garhwal), the women's group happily took up the responsibility of organising the event. In Pudiyan village the women presented beautiful folk songs. Speaking on the occasion, the community residents as well as the teachers praised the programme for bringing in notable changes in their village. An old man of Hathnoor village (Pauri Garhwal) said, "*Hamare gaon me aisa vyavasthit karyakram! Mujhe bahut ashchary ho raha hai! Ham pati-patni, dono Delhi me sarkari naukari karte thay... jab gaon chhor kar gaya tou us samay mahilaon ke khul kar hansne par bhi pabandi hoti thi. Mera mann yahan aakar gadgad ho gaya hai!*" (Such a well arranged programme in our village! I am very surprised. My wife and I had government jobs in Delhi. When I left the village, women were not allowed to laugh openly...am very happy to be here!)

Token prizes and gifts (including items like, notebook, pencil, pen, sketch pen set, pencil colour set) were distributed to the winners/participants. Since the fairs were focused on children, an effort was made to maintain an open atmosphere. The special/chief guests were from the community. School teachers, *gram pradhan* or an elderly woman or man presided over the programmes.

## **2bvi. News-letter for children (*Muskaan*)**

Stories, poems, jokes and travelogue written by children attending sandhya kendras (24 centres) and libraries (42 centres) are printed in a six monthly newsletter by USNPSS. Pictures/drawings made by children are also incorporated. To date, 7 issues have been printed and distributed in all the villages covered by the programme.

*Muskaan* provides an opportunity to rural children to write and get their creations published in a news-letter that reaches their own village. Not only parents but also the other village residents take pride in creativity of their children and often the published article/story by a child is shown by her/his parent to even distant relatives. Shobha, from Faldwari village said, "*my article got published and I felt proud of myself. The elderly men of my village also liked my article and came to my house to congratulate me.*"

### **a. Challenges**

- Selection of shikshika is a challenging process because she is required to possess the qualities of a teacher as well as the community worker
- Migration of able-bodied young boys and girls to the cities is a phenomenon that has affected the demography of villages. The number of children in villages is decreasing
- Sometimes, finding an appropriate place for the centre is a problem. Since USNPSS does not pay any rent to the owner of the house, the quality of the place gets compromised. In many villages, community centres such as *panchayat ghar*, *jan milan kendra* are not in good condition and the village residents provide a room or an empty house to run the centre. Leaking roof causes a lot of difficulty for children, especially during the monsoon.

### **3. Village libraries**

The village library programme began in March 2010 with 15 libraries located in 3 clusters in Almora and Bageshwar districts. The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, New Delhi supported the programme for three years, up to February 2013 and from March 2013 the programme has continued with the support of the Rajeshwar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust, New Delhi and Jamsetji Tata Trust, Mumbai. This year, the number of libraries increased from 35 to 42.

#### **3ai. New libraries**

In May 2013, five new libraries were started in Ukhimath area. Who knew that the disaster in June 2013 in Kedarnath would kill several men from these villages and the children attending the libraries would lose their fathers and brothers!

Further, a few libraries were shifted to other villages. All the three centres in Sheraghat cluster, district Pithoragarh, were shifted to GanaiGangoli. In Shama, district Bageshwar, three libraries (Bhaikura, Naukori and Baret village) were shifted to Gogina, Ratirkethi and Namik villages. The area situated near the Namik glacier is prone to disasters.

In Maichun, district Almora, a new centre was started in Daula village. Similarly, the programme has been introduced in two more villages, Nandasain and Jhurkende, in Karnprayag area, district Chamoli.

The change in the location of libraries was made to make the programme more useful and efficient. The cooperation of communities is necessary to run the libraries. Therefore, centres are shifted to villages where communities are demanding and take up the responsibility of monitoring and maintenance of libraries. In some libraries, the librarians have also been changed either due to some personal problems on their part or work was not found satisfactory by the CBO and USNPSS.

#### **3aii. Books and text-books in libraries**

The need of new and good quality books and of new ideas/activities to maintain interest of children in the library is a constant challenge to the facilitators. USNPSS has procured books from renowned publishers, like NBT India, Sahitya Academy, NCERT, Eklavya, CBT, Pratham Books, Tulika, Katha and Rajkamal Prakashan. While selecting books the need of different types of readers (age, gender, education etc.) has been kept in view.

#### **3avii. Daily timings of the libraries**

The village library opens for at least two hours a day in the evening. Depending on the season, the timings vary. During the winter season libraries are functional between 3-5 pm while in the summer the timings are from 4-6 pm. The weekly holiday is on Monday. In some villages the timings of the library are longer than two hours, especially on Sundays and

during holidays in school. In some cases, the family members of librarians volunteer and keep the library open all through the day.

Table 33a. Village libraries supported by Jamsetji Tata Trust, Mumbai.

Sl	Village/Gram Panchayat	Number of Families	Population	Caste	Distance from motor road	Other villages covered by the library	Place of the Village Library
Cluster : - Maichun (district Almora)							
1	Banthok (Banthok)	110	441	General, SC	4	Dhameda, Chagethi	<i>Panchayatghar</i>
2	Chaturbhoj (Kumauli)	39	180	SC	1	Fuladi, Sirmoli	Private house
3	Daula (Dalakote)	80	303	General	5	Dalakote, Nagarkhan	Private house
4	Lamudiyar (Chanoli)	35	125	SC	3	Kumoli, Chanoli	Private house
5	Maniagar (Maniagar)	150	383	SC, General	Nil	Maichun, Jaalbagri, Dhana	Private house
Cluster : Shama (district Bageshwar)							
6	Shama Jarbila	220	80	General, SC, ST	Nil	Badi Panyali, Ramadi, Siri	Private house
7	Malkha Dungarcha	120	876	General, SC	7	Rantirkethi, Sooni, Daliyani	Private house
8	Litidhura	375	1845	General, SC	Nil	Liti gram panchayat	Private house
9	Gogina	350	1758	General, SC	14	Kimu	Private house
10	Namik	150	830	General, ST, SC	18	-	Panchayat ghar
Cluster : Ganai Gangoli (district Pithoragarh)							
11	Rugadi	93	509	SC, General	0.5	Dhikarkoli	Private house
12	Bhanyani	40	155	OBC	0.5	Dasilakhet	Private house
13	Gwari	112	525	SC, General	0.5	Malli Gwari, Talli Gwari	Private house
14	Fadiyali	87	384	SC, General	0.5	Nayal	
15	Tuprauli	35	240	SC	Nil	Tuprauli, Muwani	<i>Baratghar</i>

Table 33b. Village libraries supported by Rajeshwar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust, New Delhi.

SN	Village	Number of hh	Population	caste	Distance from the road	Other villages covered	place
1	Moolakot	180	1100	General, SC	5	Katula, Bhunyya, Kande, Sitoli	Private house
2	Kanikot	53	424	General, SC	6	Jakhola, Kholai, Gutela, Bisauna	Private house
3	Batulabanj (Manar)	90	340	General	1.5	Goshni, Manar, Banjhgaon	Private house
4	Shiling (Jankande)	40	330	General, SC	2	Barkande, Tyarson, Harodi	Private house
5	Chhatradyar (Goom)	35	250	General	2	Dhoora, Pyanli, Bhatyura, Goom	Private house
6	Kandai (Dogari Kandai)	38	298	General	3	Dogari	<i>Barat ghar</i>
7	Terha Khansal	60	470	General, ST, OBC	0.5	Ropa, Sitora	<i>Dugdha Bhavan</i>
8	Khalla	72	400	General, SC	3	Mandal	<i>Panchayatghar</i>
9	Gwad		436	General, SC	1	Devaldhar	<i>Panchayatghar</i>
10	Koteshwar (Banadwara)		350	General, SC	1.5	Bandwara	Private house
11	Pudiyani (Pudiyani)	136	1041	General, SC	1	Koli, Gairoli	<i>Milan Kendra</i>
12	Padali	66	295	General, SC	1	Jakhed	<i>Milan Kendra</i>
13	Chaundali (Chaundali)	78	680	General, SC	1	Lwenta, Silgi, Sera	<i>Panchayat Bhavan</i>
14	Badhani (Badhani)	65	422	General, SC	0.2	Palethi, Majyada	<i>Milan Kendra</i>
15	Ritholi (NP ward)	64	267	General, SC	0.5	Nil	Private house
16	Nandasain (Malai)	45	305	General, SC	Nil	Kaflodi, Ghandiyaldhar, Tuptoli, Shukrisain	Private house
17	Jhurkande (Naini)	35	200	General, SC	Nil	Kanoth, Thapalidhar, Naini	Private house
18	Kandi (Kinsur)	37	123	General, SC	8	Khand, Kinsur	Panchayatghar
19	Kund	108	473	General, SC	1	Dhadukhal, Gindudiya	Private house
20	Kaindul (Malla)	42	143	General, SC	4	Kaindul Talla	Private house
21	Pogatha	41	157	General, SC	5	Maithana	Panchayatghar
22	Hathnood	48	218	General, SC	6	Kuthar, Kyar	Private house
23	Semala	30	170	General,	3	Dungar, Nahra, Kundalia	
24	Karokhi	185	800	General, SC	1.5		Private house
25	Saari	327	1500	General, SC	7	Gwar, Dilmi, Mastura	Panchayat bhavan
26	Mangoli	52	200	General, SC	2	Chunni, Prem Nagar, Brahman Kholi	Temporary tin shed
27	Kimana	107	668	General	1	Kantha, Painj, Pathali	Private house

### **3aiii. Magazines and news-papers**

Each centre receives a daily newspaper in Hindi. Newspapers including *Amar Ujala*, *Hindustan*, *Rashtriya Sahara* and *Dainik Jagaran* are read by elderly people, youth and school going children.

Interest of the readers is kept in mind while subscribing to magazines. The magazines supplied to the libraries include *Cricket Samrat*, *Parvat Jan*, *India Today* (Hindi), *Outlook* (Hindi), *Nandan*, *Aha! Zindagi*, *Baal Hans*, *Nanhe Samrat*, *Grah Shobha*, *Tehalka*, *Aarogya Dham*, *Yugvani*, *Samsamayikee Mahasagar*, *Regional Reporter*, *Safalta* (*Amar Ujala*), *Bhashkar Lakshya*, *Pratiyogita Darpan*, *Nirog Dham* etc. Some of the magazines are supplied by USNPSS while the CBOs purchase those which are locally available in the nearby towns.

### **3aiv. Sports goods and equipment**

Indoor and outdoor games were encouraged. Sport kits for cricket, badminton, volleyball, skipping rope, ludo, carom etc. were supplied to the centres. In addition, games like *kho-kho*, *kabaddi*, *netaji ki khoj*, *tota kahta hai*, *railgadi chhuk-chhuk* etc are popular in villages.

Earlier, the adolescent girls were not allowed to play games. Often, the young girls would play skipping ropes, gitti, *kabaddi* etc. but as soon as they attain puberty, playing was considered inappropriate. Owing to the libraries a change has occurred and girls have started playing additional games like cricket, badminton volley-ball etc.

### **3av. The librarians**

A brief profile of the librarians is exhibited in Table 39. More than 90% of the facilitators are female, majority young unmarried girls. About 80 % are less than 25 years and all of them are below 35 years of age. More than 35% of the facilitators are studying, either regularly or privately in schools and colleges. The village libraries are a boon to them as they get connected to books and earn some money also. The librarians seem enthusiastic and show interest in their job.

### **3avi. Experiences of the librarians**

During refresher programmes and in the course of the visits made by the USNPSS staff to villages, many librarians shared their experience of the programme. Below are some excerpts:

- “A little girl requested me to teach her English and I enjoy doing that. In the library, a majority of children keep themselves busy in games. When it rains heavily, water collects inside the room... in case, I am late from college my elder sister opens the library in time.” - Meena Bisht, village Gwad (district Chamoli)
- “Children say that they have read all the books and they want more... the library is located in my own house... children from scheduled caste families don’t attend,

*perhaps they hesitate because the people where the centre was located earlier had ridiculed them... My mother-in-law says that I should not waste time in the library and just distribute the books.” – Hemlata Rawat, Koteshwar (Chamoli).*

- *“In my village children brought old books from home to the library so that others could also read them... two children (brother-sister) stopped coming because the book they had borrowed got wet in the rain and was torn. They were afraid. I met them and said that they need not worry about the loss. Now they are coming again. But in another case, I asked the child to bring a new book in place of the old one”- Siddhi, Kandai (Chamoli).”*
- *“A girl studying in class 4<sup>th</sup> tore a book...actually she had cut all the pictures from the book. When I complained, her father started scolding me. I was not afraid of him and recovered the value of the book. She has stopped coming to the centre”- Neema, Moolakot (Champawat).*
- *“A girl of 7<sup>th</sup> standard wrote an essay on water. She stood first and got a cash prize of three hundred rupees. Out of that amount she offered to give one hundred rupees to me saying that she had got all the information from books in the library, but I didn’t accept” –Akanksha, Kaindul (Pauri Garhwal).*
- *“A village panchayat member got impressed with the library and gave a cash prize of one thousand rupees. We shall utilize this amount in buying educational material for our library” –Neelam Bisht, Hathnood (Pauri Garhwal).*
- *“Earlier I used to run a balwadi. When the library was started people didn’t know much about it. We told them that adults and women could also come in the library. Now many adult men, boys and girls, visit to read newspapers and magazines. They want to participate in competitive activities in the forthcoming book fair.” - Asha, Paduli (Chamoli).*
- *“There is no proper place to play, therefore, children play in the agricultural fields when they are empty.” - Kamlesh, Badhani (Chamoli)*
- *“When a 8-9 year old child started telling stories of Jim Corbett and the man eating leopard of Rudraprayag, the people were surprised that how could a little boy knew so much...” - Kamlesh, Badhani (Chamoli).*
- *“There is no place for children to play. When I raised this issue in a village meeting, a woman offered the courtyard of her house... We sell old newspapers and use the money to buy registers, paste-gum, shuttle cock etc. for the library.”- Jayasi, Pudiyani (Chamoli).*
- *“Children enjoy sports but express reluctance in reading books. They say that they have studied in school and the evening is the time to play. Children prefer story books with pictures on them. They are also interested in drawing and painting” - Guddi Devi, Saari (Rudraprayag).*
- *“Earlier people didn’t know about the library programme. So they were curious and asked questions about the books and materials available in the centre. I explained to them the objectives of the library and asked to visit regularly. Now, around 25 children, of all castes, come regularly. Children, parents, teachers all borrow books*

- *from the library. If anything is broken, we replace it on our own and no problem occurs.” – Geeta Mehta, Ratirkethi (Bageshwar).*
- *People in the village asked about my work, salary etc. Some said, “why are you working for this little amount?” I replied by saying that nothing was wrong.. that I was learning by reading books and at the same time assisting the children of my own village” –Rekha Bora, Bhanyani (Pithoragarh).*
- In Kund village (Nayarghati), mothers and even grandmothers do visit the library. Since many of them are illiterate, they request the librarian to read stories to them

Table 34. Profile of the librarians.

Serial number	Name	Library village	Location	Caste	Age	Edn. level	work experience in village library
1	Neema Adhikari	Moolakot	Pati	general	21	Intermediate	< 1yr
2	Km. Seema Mehta	Kanikot		general	19	Intermediate	< 1yr
3	Smt. Manju Manral	Batulabanj		general	35	Intermediate	< 1yr.
4	Km. Asha Mehra	Siling		general	20	High School	1 yr
5	Smt. Anita Soradi	Chhatradayar		general	28	BA	< 1 yr
6	Km. Siddhi	Kandai	Gopeshwar	general	19	Intermediate	2 yrs
7	Km. Pooja	Terha Khansal		general	20	Intermediate	3 yrs
8	Smt. Sundari Bisht	Khalla		general	33	MA	< 1y
9	Km. Meena	Gwad		general	19	Intermediate	< 1yr
10	Smt. Hemlata	Koteshwar		general	25	B.Sc, B.Ed.	< 1yr
11	Km. Jayasi	Pudiyani	Karnaparayag	general	23	BA	2 yrs
12	Km. Asha	Padali		general	22	Intermediate	2 yrs
13	Km. Manisha	Chaundali		general	19	Intermediate	1 yr
14	Shri Kamlesh Negi	Badhani		general	25	Intermediate	2 yrs
15	Smt Anita	Ritholi		general	31	Intermediate	3 yrs
16	Shri Ravi Kumar	Nandasain	Badiun	SC	23	Intermediate	<1 yr
17	Lakshmi Bhandari	Jhurkandi		general	19	Intermediate	< 1yr
18	Km. Suvidha Negi	Kandi		general	19	Intermediate	2 yrs
19	Km. Asha Rawat	Kund		general	23	Intermediate	3 yrs
20	Km. Akanksha Kala	Kaindul		general	20	Intermediate	3 yrs
21	Km. Anita Rawat	Pogatha	Ukhimath	general	19	Intermediate	< 1yr
22	Smt. Neelam Bisht	Hathnood		general	30	MA	1 yr
23	Smt. Pramila Devi	Semala		general	35	8 <sup>th</sup>	< 1yr
24	Yashoda Panwar	Karokhi		general	30	B.A.	< 1 yr
25	Smt. Guddi Devi	Saari		general	30	8 <sup>th</sup>	< 1yr
26	Km. Luxmi Dharmwan	Mangoli	Maichun	general	20	Intermediate	< yr
27	Sulochana Devi	Kimana		general	32	BA	< 1yr
28	Km. Deepa Arya	Banthok		SC	20	8 <sup>th</sup>	2 yrs
29	Shri Deepak Kumar	Chaturbhoj		SC	16	10 <sup>th</sup>	< 1 yr
30	Km. Manju Bisht	Daula		general	17	11 <sup>th</sup>	<1 yr
31	Km. Poonam Arya	Lamudiyar	Shama	SC	15	9 <sup>th</sup>	<1 yr
32	Km. Deepa Arya	Maniagar		SC	19	Intermediate	2 yrs
33	Deepak Koranga	Shama Jarbila		general	16	9 <sup>th</sup>	1 yr
34	Km. Gita Mehta	Rantirkethi		general	18	Intermediate	<1 yr
35	Shri Kedar Singh	Litidhura		general	27	BA	4 yrs
36	Km. Lakshmi Arya	Gogina	Ganaigangoli	SC	18	Intermediate	<1 yr
37	Durga Devi Arya	Namik		SC	21	Intermediate	< 1yr
38	Km. Ganga Dasila	Rugadi		general	27	M.A.	1 yr
39	Km. Rekha Bora	Bhanyani		general	23	8 <sup>th</sup>	1 yr
40	Km. Suman Pathni	Gwari		general	18	High school	< 1 yr
41	Km. Suman Mehra	Fadiyali		general	18	High school	< 1yr
42	Nirmala Gangola	Tuprauli		general	19	8 <sup>th</sup>	< 1yr

Table 35. Educational materials supplied to sandhya kendra/libraries.

Serial number	Item	Issued to centres	Balance at USNPSS
Stationary and other materials			
1	Pencil packet	31 boxes	00
2	Poster colour	41 boxes	00
3	White board marker	68 sets	00
4	Ram of white paper	20	00
5	Pencil sharpener	130	00
6	Paint brush	8	00
7	Cut marker	34	00
8	Eraser	130	00
9	Brown tape	24	00
10	Cello tape	12	00
11	Stapler pin	6 boxes	00
12	Crayon colour	91	00
13	Chart paper	375	00
14	Pen	39	00
15	Sketch pen	136	00
16	Globe	5	00
17	Steel scale	10	00
18	Coloured chalk	10 boxes	00
19	Sticker	18	00
20	u-clip	2 boxes	00
21	all pin	2 boxes	00
22	Stamp pad	2	00
23	Fevicol	19 tubes	00
24	Colour pencil	9 packets	00
25	Colour paper	100 sheets	00
26	Register	13	00
27	Diary	32 for facilitators	00
28	Copy	26	00
Jodo gnan for mathematics			
29	Rangometri	29 sets	00
30	Jodo base kit	29 sets	00
31	Fraction kit	29 sets	00
32	Dice block	11 sets	00
33	Jodo cube	11 sets	00
34	Place value cards	10 sets	00
35	Akaar parivaar	11 sets	00
36	Ganeetmala	9 sets	00
Sports goods			
37	Racquet set	14	00
38	Shuttle cock	106	4
39	Pump	17	00
40	Skipping ropes	29	00
41	Volleyball	5	00
42	Cricket set	5	00
43	Ring ball	10	00
44	Ludo	5	00
Management			
45	Plastic mat	20	5
46	Jute mat	3	5
47	Steel jug	3	00

### • 3aviii. Activities in village libraries

On an average, 25 persons including children visit the library every day. They read and recite from books, newspapers and magazines of their choice. Besides, children enjoy drawing, painting, debates and essay-writing in the centre.

Locating different continents and geographical features on the globe is a popular activity which can keep the children occupied for hours. Experience has shown that learning from the globe is more popular than locating and understanding features on the map.



Teachers have also reported that children in the age group 6-11 years and beyond find the three dimensional view more attractive than the two dimensional view of the maps.

Sports equipment includes carom, cricket set, volleyball, badminton set, ring ball, ludo, skipping ropes etc.

The *jhola pustakalaya* is an important feature of the programme. Once in a while, the librarians carry books in a *jhola* (bag) and take them to nearby schools and villages. This approach has proven useful not only in popularizing the programme but also making books available to the village residents who cannot attend the libraries. Differently-abled children are benefited because the librarian would herself take the books to them.

### 3aix. Training workshops

Two training workshops were held for the librarians (Table 41). Workshops have proven very useful in strengthening the library programme. Regular meetings (monthly or bimonthly) at cluster level were also held so that the librarians could share experiences with others, discuss problems and provide feedback to the CBOs.

Table 36. Training of librarians.

Sl	Duration	Number of participants	Content
1	10-11.5. 2013	23	This workshop was organized for the new workers running libraries and sandhya kendra. Content included programme structure, main features, role of the librarian, maintenance of books, records and registers, methods of conducting indoor and outdoor games with children, daily reading, methods of storytelling to children, <i>Jhola Pustakalaya</i> and use of <i>jodo gnan</i> kit to improve mathematical skills
2	19-20.11.2013	35	Though preparations for the upcoming book fairs was the focus, the content also included use of <i>jodo gnan</i> kit, story-telling, indoor and outdoor games, use of books among different age groups, feedbacks of librarians on the programme and experience sharing.

### 3ax. Visit to libraries by USNPSS Staff

The USNPSS staff made visits to villages to provide guidance and to help librarians solve problems. The overall work was found satisfactory. For example, during their visit to Saari village, district Rudraprayag, on December 2013 the team members found that children were frank and clear about their interests, hobbies and in sharing views about the books that they liked the most. A boy studying in the 7<sup>th</sup> standard told a story with lots of expressions from 'Panchtantra'.

A little girl told a story from '*Chaubees Baal Kahaniyan*', a publication of USNPSS. The level of awareness on regional and national matters and on environmental issues was high. A girl of 7<sup>th</sup> standard said, "*dhumrapaan swasthaya ke liye achcha nahi hai. Maine kiab me padha ki iss se pure fefde kale pad jate hain. Mere chacha dhoomrapaan karte hain. Maine unhen rokne ki koshish ki, lekin we nahin maane, chacha ne meri baat par gaur nahin kiya*" (smoking is bad for health. I read it in the book that smoking turns the lungs black. My

uncle does smoke. I tried to stop him but he did not take notice of me). Following this anecdote, an interesting debate on the causes of lung diseases took place in the centre.

Table 37. Visit to libraries.

Serial number	name of location	name of the centre	date of visit	Participants
1	Nayarghati	Kendul malla	23-07-13	15
		Pogtha	24-07-13	8
2		Hatnur	24-07-13	18
3		Kande	24-7-13	18
4		Kund	25-07-13	14
5		Barau	26-07-13	10
6	Shama	Jarbillla	30-07-13	09
7		Naukuri	31-07-13	Closed due to disaster
8		Burmoula	31-07-13	Closed due to disaster
9		Liti	01-08-13	10
10		Shama		17
11	Ganaigangoli	Bhanyri	8-8-13	13
12		Ringoli	9-8-13	5
13	Pati	Chatridiyar	16-8-13	10
14		Kanikot	17-8-13	13
15		Mulakot	17-8-13	13
16		Siling	18-8-13	9
17		Batulabaj	18-8-13	21
18	Ukhimath	Kimana	15-8-13	Closed due to death of shikshikas husband in Kedarnath disaster
19		Saimla	15-8-13	25
20		Sari	17-8-13	14
21		Karokhi	17-8-13	25
22		Mangoli	17-8-13	22
23	Maichun	Dolla	23-08-13	06
24		Maniagar	25-08-13	36
25		Chaturbhaj	25-08-13	12
26		Lamudiyar	29-08-13	15
27	Shama	Ratirkethi	11-09-13	35
28	Karnaprayag	Pudyani	18-09-13	13
29		Chondali	18-9-13	15
30		Ritholi	19/9/13	Closed
31		Padli	19/9/13	26
32		Badhani	19/9/13	17
33	Gopeshwar	Teda khansal	20/9/13	12
34		Tangsa	20/9/13	Closed due to heavy rains
35		Dogari	20/9/13	12
36		Koteswer	21/9/13	8
37	Nayarghati	Kandi	22/9/13	10
38		Hathnood	22/9/13	22
39		Pogathaa	22/9/13	4
40		Kendul	23. 9/13	17
41		Kund	23/9/13	10
42	Maichun	Lamudiyar	29.10.2013	6
43		Mani agar	29.10.2013	27
44		Mani agar		25
45	Ukhimath	Karokhi	8.12.2013	4
46		Sari	8.12.2013	28
47		Kimana	8.12.2013	14
48		Mangoli	9.12.2013	Meeting with women's group
49		Semla	9.12.2013	12
50	Nayarghati	Kund	21.12.2013	Meeting with women's group

Further, there was an interesting discussion at Ukhimath, district Rudraprayag, about the causes of disaster that had hit the area in June 2013. A group of children held the shifting of the famous Dharidevi temple responsible for the disaster while others claimed that increasing alcoholism and 'bad deeds' (theft, corruption etc.) were responsible. Others thought that the cloud burst and the heavy rains were responsible for the disaster.

Separate meetings with children, library workers and members of women's groups were held during field visits to understand progress of libraries.

In Maichun, regular cluster level meetings of librarians, sandhya kendra and the computer literacy facilitators were directly organized by the USNPSS staff (Table 38). This exercise was useful in getting firsthand experience of the situation in villages. In addition, feedback received from the community and the facilitators was used in designing and modifying training programmes.

Table 38. Cluster-meetings of facilitators and with women conducted by USNPSS staff in Maichun area.

Serial number	Date of visit	Purpose	Village
	14.6.2013	Computer centre	Maniagar
1	15.6.2013	Meeting with facilitators	Maniagar
2	18.7.2013	Computer centre	Maniagar
3	6.8.2013	Meeting with facilitators	Maniagar
4	6.8.2013	Meeting with WVG	Lamudiyar
5	23.8.2013	Library, sandhya kendra	Daula, Mauni, Maniagar
6	23.8.2013	Meeting with WVG	Lamudiyar
7	25.8.2013	Library	Maniagar, Chaturbhoj
8	29.8.2013	Polythene lined tank, fencing	Lamudiyar
9	29.8.2013	Meeting with community	Lamudiyar
10	10.9.2013	Meeting with WVG	Lamudiyar
11	12.9.2013	Meeting with community	Lamudiyar
12	17.9.2013	Polythene-tank, fencing	Lamudiyar
13	1.10.2013	Use of thresher	Lamudiyar
14	6.10.2013	Meeting with facilitators	Maniagar
15	19.10.2013	Thresher	Sent to VPKAS, Hawalbagh
16	24.10.2013	Polyhouse installation meet	Lamudiyar
17	29.10.2013	Meeting with facilitators	Maniagar
18	11.11.2013	Computer , library	Maniagar, Lamudiyar
19	14.11.2013	Ecosystem resilience data	Maichun
20	15.11.2013	Ecosystem resilience data	Maichun
21	17.11.2013	Ecosystem resilience data	Maichun
22	21.11.2013	Computer , library	Maniagar, Lamudiyar
23	25.11.2013	Meeting with WVG	Lamudiyar
24	20.12.2013	Pustakalaya mela	Chanoli
25	1.1.2014	Polyhouse installation	Lamudiyar
26	23.4.2014	Meeting with facilitators	Maniagar

#### a. Challenges

The libraries in Garhwal region are located in remote hilly villages. Out of the four clusters, three (Ukhimath, Karnprayag and Gopeshwar) were affected in June 2013 by cloudbursts and floods.

A library, where children spend two hours daily, should have a proper room with sufficient space and provision of light and ventilation. However, most of the libraries are run in panchayat bhavan or in a room of a private house. Some of these rooms are very dark and moist while roofs in others leak during the monsoons.

Sustaining interest and motivation of the library workers is a challenge. When a new library starts in a village all seem very enthusiastic, but after a year or two interest falls, unless some new activities are introduced on a regular basis.

Though a library is open to all village residents, children attend the most. Interest of adult readers, especially women, is an issue with the libraries.

The village library programme provides reading, learning and educational opportunities to communities, especially children, living in remote areas. The programme is creating an appetite for reading among primary school going children.

#### **4. Computer literacy**

Four computer literacy centres are functional in different districts. Each centre (except Shama) has been provided with three computers, one printer, one inverter, three computer tables and three stools. In Shama two computer sets with accessories have been installed. The details of each centre are as follows:

##### **Maichun (District Almora)**

The computer centre is functional in Maniagar village in a private rented house. Maniagar is inhabited by scheduled caste families and a computer centre in the village is considered a symbol of pride by the community. The girl in charge of the centre, Sonu Banola (BA final private) is an enthusiastic young girl with good communication skills.

During the year, a total of 72 children (50% girls) from Maniagar and Jalbagri villages were enrolled in 4 batches (18 in each). All of them have completed the basic course on computers. Books and sports goods available in Maniagar library are also used by children who attend the centre in the evenings.

##### **Gopeshwar (District Chamoli)**

Located at Kandai village in the ancestral house of Mahanand Bisht, the head of the CBO, the centre has been successful in attracting children as well as women and men. The in charge of the centre, Nand Kishore Bisht, is pursuing his B. Ed. degree and has been involved with the local school.

Children attend daily in regular shifts of one hour each during 2-3, 3-4 and 4-5 pm. This year, a total of 60 children have completed the basic course and received certificates. Currently, 27 children regularly attend the centre. 6 children have been identified as excellent learners.

##### **Shama (District Bageshwar)**

With two computers (with inverters) in the centre, each child gets at least half an hour in the computer. The centre opens for 2 hours every day.

During the year, the total number of learners has been 39 (13 girls and 27 boys). The facilitator, Kishan Singh Koranga, has completed his post-graduation and lives in the village.

### **Pati (District Champawat)**

The centre was shifted from Joshyura to Shiling village in May 2013. During the year, 95 children (54 girls and 41 boys) have completed the basic course. There is a very strong demand from the area for an advance course on computers.

Besides running the centre, the facilitator, Kheema Mehra, is doing her graduation.

#### **4ai. Visits to computer centres**

The computer literacy centres were visited by the USNPSS staff, the CBOs and the others. The centre at Maniagar was visited by Mrs. Pamela Chatterjee (a social worker), Dr K. S. Mallick (a retired government officer) and Dr. Lalit Pande. Computer learning centre at Shama (Bageshwar) was visited during 6-7<sup>th</sup> April, 2013, and Pati during 3-6 May and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2013.

Learning from the initiative in Gopeshwar, the centres at Maichun and Pati have started charging a monthly fee of Rs 30 per child from this year. The collected amount is used to pay the electricity bill and to cover other miscellaneous expenses in the centre. In Shama no such provision has been made.

#### **4aii. Timings**

The computer literacy centres open for 3 to 4 hours daily. Convenience of the learners is kept in mind while fixing the timings for operation. Monday is the weekly holiday. Each learner is given at least 30 minutes on the computer. Duration of the basic course is two months.

### **5. Kishori karyakram (adolescent girl's education programme)**

The adolescent education programme is carried out in partnership with 10 organizations in 85 villages and 30 schools spread over four districts of Uttarakhand. The programme involves rural girls in the age group 11-20 years. Table 39 exhibits the coverage of the programme.

Table 39. The adolescent education programme.

Serial number	Districts	Number of organizations	Number of schools
1	Almora	6	17
2	Pithoragarh	2	6
3	Champawat	1	5
4	Bageshwar	1	2
Total		10	30

This year, USNPSS could reach 1778 girls in 10 different clusters of villages in Kumaon in four districts. Out of the 1778 girls, 29% are SC and 3.4% belong to OBC population. Table 40 exhibits the caste-wise break-up of the girls involved in the programme.

Table 40. Coverage of the adolescent education programme.

Serial number	Location	District	Total villages	Number of girls involved			
				Total	Scheduled Caste	Other backward caste	General caste
1	Danya	Almora	10	205	46	2	157
2	Kheti		10	195	54	00	141
3	Maichun		10	205	95	00	110
4	Dwarahat		09	187	26	00	161
5	Bhikiyasain		09	155	06	00	149
6	Binta		06	144	14	00	130
7	Pati	Champawat	09	162	50	00	112
8	Muvani	Pithoragarh	08	190	121	33	36
9	Ganaigangoli		06	135	64	26	45
10	Shama	Bageshwar	08	200	37	00	163
Total			85	1778	513	61	1204

Table 41. Name of villages and number of adolescent girls involved in the programme.

Serial number	Location	Total girls	Village	Number of girls	Village	Number of girls
1	Danya	205	Danya	19	Falyant	29
			Kotyura	11	Dasili	40
			Thali	17	Kulori	16
			Munoli	14	Khuna jagyura	15
			Gauli	27	Ruval	17
2	Kheti	195	Jajar	27	Siddhi	11
			Falna	25	Kheti	17
			Kalauta	29	Chaura	20
			Dhari	11	Talli jajar	15
			Malan	25	Khoudi	15
3	Maichun	205	Banthok	32	Maniagar	55
			Maichun	23	Supyola	9
			Toli	20	Ootiya	15
			Chaturbhoj	17	Lamudiyar	11
			Chanoli	14	Mauni	9
4	Dwarahat	187	Valna	23	Beduli	25
			Badi	17	Simalgaoun	18
			Kande	15	Mayoli	22
			Rauna	23	Chaura	25
			Faldwari	19		
5	Bhikiyasain	155	Mason	23	Bayera	27
			Dyona	15	Dhunga	11
			Ghughuti	23	Bahera	09
			Bajan	27	Shilang	05
			Belti	15	Bhatoura	54
6	Binta	144	Binta	20	Devaldhar	12
			Borkhola	27	Nayal	09
			Parkot	22		
7	Pati	162	Laghon	22	Harodi	11
			Raulamel	24	Jyosyura	19
			Skadena	17	Piplati	24
			Kanikot	16	Adarshnagar	14
			Thuvamuni	15		
8	Muvani	190	Syuni	38	Varla	18
			Mallakot	32	Pipaltar	26
			Runithal	33	Digra	12
			Musligaad	21	Manoli	10
9	Ganaigangoli	132	Digarkoli	14	Bhanyani	25
			Tuproli	22	Rungadi	34
			Naikana	13	Fadiyali	24
10	Shama	200	Jadbila	39		
			Liti dhura talla	34	Liti	12
			Liti dhura malla	26	Dana bhanar	22
			Okhaldhunga	14	Shama Bhiakura	29
			Liti gaoun	24		

The adolescent girl's education programme is carried out with the following objectives:

- To develop knowledge and enhance understanding about adolescent stages in life
- To address issues of girls education, promote and ensure retention in schools
- To develop self confidence and communication skills
- To raise awareness of health and nutrition related issues, especially changes in body during adolescence and reproductive health
- To enhance equality by gender, caste, class, religion
- To develop understanding of violence against girls
- To promote solidarity to address women's rights

Under the programme, workshops/trainings were carried out regularly in schools, villages and USNPSS as follows:

1. Workshops/training at USNPSS, Almora

- Training and orientation programmes for supervisors, CBOs running the programmes in villages
- Training of adolescent girls

2. Training in villages conducted by USNPSS staff in collaboration with CBOs

- One day workshops for girls
- Two days workshops for girls
- *Kishori Sammelan*

3. Workshops in schools/intermediate colleges

- Two days workshops
- One day workshops
- Four hour workshops

**5ai. Workshops/training at USNPSS, Almora**

This year, two types of training programmes were held at USNPSS, Almora. Training-cum-review for the heads of the CBOs and supervisors were held in July, October and December 2013 (Table 42). In addition, four workshops were held for adolescent girls. A total of 146 girls from 76 villages participated (Table 43).

Table 42. Training/review with representatives of CBOs and supervisors at USNPSS, Almora.

Serial number	Number of districts	Duration	participants	Number
1	4	21.7.2014	Supervisors, head of the CBOS	13
2	4	1-2.10.2014	Supervisors, head of the CBOS	19
3	4	15.12.2014	Supervisors, head of the CBOS	17
Total	4			49

Table 43. Training of adolescent girls at USNPSS, Almora.

Serial number	Duration	Type of training	number of participants		
			Total	Adolescent girls	Facilitators
1	27-28.12.2013	kishori sangathan	46	41	5
2	30-31.12.2013	kishori sangathan	39	35	4
3	14-15.2.2014	kishori sangathan	47	39	8
4	4-5.4.2014	kishori sangathan	39	31	8

Training of adolescent girls at USNPSS focused on issues of enhancing self-development and communication skills, identifying issues with adolescent girls and solutions to their problems, developing understanding of discrimination that adolescent girls face in communities, health and nutrition etc. Girls learnt through open discussions, stories, screening of films, songs and role play. In the evenings, participants took part in various sporting activities. In addition, cultural programmes were held in the evenings. During training at USNPSS and in villages/schools, the following materials were supplied to adolescent groups:

Table 44. Material supplied to adolescent girls during training/workshops.

Serial number	Educational material	Material Supplied to adolescent girls groups	Remaining stock at USNPSS
1	Paper ream (A4 size)	2	1
2	Ball-pen	1643	11
3	Sketch pen	15 set	00
4	Pencil	10	00
5	Scissors	1	00
6	Chart paper	20	00
7	Stapler small	1	00
8	Stapler pin	1 box	00
9	Safety pin	10	10
10	Register	2	00
11	Cello tape	2	00
12	Plastic scale	1	00
13	Dhapli 10 inches	1	00
14	Ring ball	1	00
15	Activity sheet 1- ( <i>aao adhuri kahani Karen puri</i> )	110 sheet	890 sheet
16	Activity sheet 2- Shiksha sahi/galat	137	863 sheet
17	Writing pad	136	00

### 5a. Workshops in schools

Following the feedback from last year, a new approach to adolescent education was taken. Last year the adolescent girls had said that boys also need to be sensitized on gender issues. In addition, the CBOs and teachers had requested inclusion of boys in workshops, especially in co-educational schools.

Workshops involving boys and girls focused on issues of violence against women. Developing a positive outlook towards girls was an important part of discussions and of activities carried out during the workshops. The methods included story-telling and analysis, case study, chart-cards and open discussions. No lectures were given and the participants



were encouraged to speak up. In particular, girls were encouraged to speak up in front of boys and the teachers. In many schools, the principals and teachers were also present.

Table 45. Workshops held in schools/intermediate colleges.

School	Date	Students			Age		Classes					
		Total	Boys	Girls	11-14	15-19	6-8		9-10		11-12	
GIC, Danya	1-2.5.2013	11	00	11	00	11	00	00	00	00	00	11
	26.8.2013	43	34	9	00	43	00	00	00	00	34	9
GHS, Maniagar	12.7.2013	38	20	18	29	9	7	8	13	10	00	00
	16.11.2013	45	22	23	26	19	3	6	19	17	00	00
GIC, Nagarkhan	6-7.12.2013	41	18	23	00	41	00	00	00	18	23	00
	18.7.2013	44	20	24	8	36	00	00	20	24	00	00
GHS, Banthok	25-26.7.2013	123	54	69	97	26	33	36	21	33	00	00
JIC, Shama	30-31.7.2013	99	79	20	00	99	00	00	00	00	20	79
	19-20.11.2013	75	31	44	00	75	00	00	00	00	31	44
GHS, Liti	1.8.2013	50	29	21	35	15	00	00	29	21	00	00
	21.11.2013	20	5	15	4	16			5	15	00	00
GGHS, Parkot	8.8.2013	136	00	136	80	56	00	60	00	76	00	00
	22-23.1.2013	93	00	93	78	15	00	51	00	42	00	00
GIC, Binta	7.8.2013	63	48	15	48	15	00	00	48	15	00	00
GJHS, Khor	19-20.8.2013	25	11	14	25	00	11	14	00	00	00	00
GGIC, Danya	23-24.8.2013	50	00	50	00	50	00	00	00	00	00	50
	27-28.11.2013	58	00	58	5	53	00	00	00	58	00	00
GHS, Nayal	3.9.2013	69	34	35	19	50	00	00	34	35	00	00
GGIC, Ganai	4.9.2013	63	00	63	00	63	00	00	00	00	00	63
GIC, Muvani	6.9.2013	51	31	20	24	27	00	00	31	20	00	00
	12.11.2013	59	30	29	00	59	00	00	00	00	30	29
GGJHS, muvani	7.9.2013	27	00	27	27	00	00	27	00	00	00	00
	13.11.2013	29	2	27	29	00	2	27	00	00	00	00
GIC Nagarjun	12.9.2013	62	23	39	32	30	00	00	17	25	6	14
	9.1.2014	53	39	14	23	30	00	00	14	24	00	15
GIC, Pati	18.9.2013	71	33	38	00	71	00	00	00	00	33	38
GHS, Chaurakot	19.9.2013	66	35	31	16	50	00	00	35	31	00	00
GHS, Nilouti	20.9.2013	58	28	30	35	23	00	00	28	30	00	00
GGHS, Pati	20.9.2013	35	00	35	10	25	00	00	00	35	00	00
GIC, Batuliya	25.9.2013	62	28	34	00	62	00	00	00	00	28	34
	10.1.2014	60	27	33	00	60	00	00	00	00	27	33
GGHS, Jalali	26.9.2013	31	00	31	17	14	00	5	00	26	00	00
	11.12.2013	45	00	45	23	22	5	00	00	40	00	00
Navjyoti IC, Sinar	27.9.2013	61	21	40	21	40	00	00	16	21	5	19
	12.12.2013	65	19	46	26	39	00	00	16	25	3	21
GJHS, Dhura	29.11.2013	46	29	17	28	18	13	8	16	9	00	00
Total		2027	750	1277	765	1262	74	242	362	650	240	459

GIC Government Intermediate college

JIC Jawaharlal Intermediate college

GJHS Government Junior High School

GHS Government high School

GGHS Government Girls high School

GGIC Government Girls Intermediate college.

The following points were noticed during workshops in schools/intermediate colleges:

- Adolescents think of violence as manifested by physical aggression, fighting and verbal abuse. Emotional, mental agony and sufferings are not considered forms of violence

- Forms of domestic violence are not considered important matters to intervene. Both, boys and girls refer to domestic violence as part of everyday life which is considered “normal” and “nothing to worry about”. Also, domestic violence is considered as the internal matter of the household which need not be talked about in public
- A majority of students, even in higher grades, were unaware of the dowry laws. The general perception was that parents were unable to give dowry because of poverty. The perception that if families were affluent, they would have been in a position to pay in cash or kind (car, scooter, TV etc) was prevalent across schools. However, both boys and girls were very interested in knowing about the details of the law. Hence, lively discussions took place on the subject in all schools
- Human fertilization and reproduction related issues are part of the curriculum in high school and higher levels. However, teaching this is considered taboo in schools. As a result, students also share the prevalent perception that women are responsible for the birth of a girl child. The idea that male chromosomes may have a role to play in sex determination was much beyond their comprehension levels
- Decision making on issues related to everyday life is problematic for girls due to pressure from the family as well as the community
- Girls had reported that teachers discourage them from taking science subjects, especially mathematics. The perception that girls cannot handle mathematics and physics was prevalent among teachers and principals

In many schools, interactive sessions were held with teachers and other school staff. The following points emerged:

- Government and other agencies have been organizing gender sensitization workshops in schools/intermediate colleges. However, the reach of these programmes in rural areas, especially remote villages, is almost negligible
- Teachers were of the view that communities are conservative and talking about gender equality would create a bad impression about school in villages. *Keeping to tradition was the best way forward*, one of the teachers said, *it is not America and Europe.... it is India where we live and we worship women as goddesses.”*
- A lady teacher was of the view that trainers from USNPSS could do this kind of work because they were not married. *“Had they been married, it would not have been possible for these ladies to talk like this”*, she said
- In some schools, teachers were very co-operative and welcomed the idea of holding workshops with adolescents. A lady teacher said, “I always thought of the need of such an initiative but could not do it by myself. I think, as a child what if I had also been exposed to such ideas, but at that time nobody talked about these issues. I missed this in my childhood but am glad that girls are now being exposed to these ideas.”
- Some teachers were appreciative of the methods used during the workshops by USNPSS. They felt that other subjects also need to be taught using alternative methods and not through lectures but felt that time was the major constraint
- In government Girls High School, Jalali, district Almora, the USNPSS staff met the members of a school inspection team during their visit to schools. Without any

intimation to USNPSS staff, the team had watched activities carried out under the adolescent education programme. The team was very impressed and asked us to involve more schools. They said that they will take care of the administrative issues. In particular, they requested involving a school which was located about 5 km from the road-head. *“No outsider goes there because of difficult access. Children will be immensely benefitted in case you decide to go there and hold workshops”*, they said.

Last year, students of Government Intermediate College, Batuliya, had exhibited a keen interest in workshops organized by USNPSS. To enhance their understanding of gender issues, the USNPSS staff told them the story of two frogs who venture out on an adventurous tour of the world. The method proved successful in initiating a debate on gender issues in the class. Both boys and girls were very appreciative of the story and the discussion that had followed.

### 5aiii. Feedback on previous workshops

In order to assess comprehension of issues during the earlier sessions, later workshops started with an exercise that required students to fill a form indicating what impacted them the most and whether they carried out any follow up activities in villages and schools. The participants were required to put their main preference/priority of interests in the form, but owing to their multiple interests, the forms contained many issues. Although the total number of forms filled by students was 1520, the results presented in the table do not correspond to that number. An overlapping of issues has occurred, yet table 46 presents an interesting matrix of issues.

Table 46. Feedback on the earlier workshops.

Serial number	Earlier workshop	feedback (number of girls)					
		Selfworth	Relationships	Sports, songs, stories	Life skills	Violence against women	Adolescence, health
1	What did I learn	280	378	1228	634	891	322
2	What did I like the best	125	134	244	450	530	172
3	Who did I talk to and shared my views	my family 902	Other girls 387	in school 599			

Earlier, the head teachers/principals assigned us a period of three hours to hold workshops with adolescent girls. In many schools teachers and principals had also attended the workshops. Based on the feedback from students and the school staff, need of a longer period came up. As a result, two days were given by each school to hold workshops with adolescents (Table 47).

Following these workshops, an assessment sheet to receive feedback from the participants was prepared. Table 48 exhibits the results of computation of 985 assessment sheets from 16 schools.

Table 47. Schools where two day workshops were held with adolescent girls.

Serial number	Name of school	District	Date	Number of participant girls
1	Rajkiya Intermediate College Nagarkhan	Almora	6-7.12.2013	21
2	Rajkiya Uchhatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Maniagar	Almora	10-11.10.2013	44
3	Rajkiya Uchhatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Maniagar	Almora	12-13.7.2013	69
4	Rajkiya Intermediate College, Pati	Champawat	22-23.8.2013	41
5	Rajkiya Intermediate College, Muvani	Pithoragarh	21-22.11.2013	63
6	Nav Jyoti Inter college, Sinar	Almora	29-30.11.2013	59
7	Jawahar Lal Intermediate College, Shama	Bageshwar	19-20.11.2013	48
8	Rajkiya Intermediate College Nagarkhan	Almora	7-8.9.2013	79
9	Rajkiya Kanya Uchhatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Jalali	Almora	8-9.4.2013	52
10	Jawaharlal Intermediate College, Shama	Bageshwar	19-20.11.2013	67
11	Rajkiya Uchhatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Dhoora	Almora	29-30.11.2013	24
12	Rajkiya Balika Intermediate College, Danya	Almora	23-24.8.2013	56
13	Rajkiya Intermediate College, Danya	Almora	1-2.5.2013	10
14	Rajkiya Balika Intermediate College, Danya	Almora	27-28.11.2013	42
15	Jawaharlal Intermediate College, Shama	Bageshwar	30-31.7.2013	89
16	Rajkiya Junior high School, Khori Dachouri	Almora	19-20.8.2013	24
17	Rajkiya Uchhatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Nayal	Pithoragarh	22-23.4.2013	63
18	Rajkiya Balika Intermediate College, Danya	Almora	21-22.9.2013	16
19	Rajkiya Kanya Uchhatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Parkot, Binta	Almora	22-23.1.2014	88
20	Rajkiya Kanya Uchhatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya, Liti	Bageshwar	20-21.3.2013	30
Total				985

Table 48. Feedback based on 985 forms received from 16 government schools.

S l	feedback	Speaki ng up	Understandin relationships	communi cation	Song sport story	Life skill	Dowry	violence	health	None	Dowry laws	Other s*
1	Easiest issue	00	103	46	756	225	131	191	51	24	3	21
2	Toughest issue	14	35	27	83	81	78	109	60	403	10	28
3	New issue, learnt for the first time	1	53	10	254	304	218	268	105	00	25	41
4	Want to learn in the future	00	20	00	435	212	24	40	62	00	26	291

\* Others include skits, poems, general knowledge, computer literacy, sewing and embroidery.

## 5aiv. Village meetings/workshops

### a. Joint sessions –mothers and daughters

In the beginning of the programme, USNPSS and our partner CBOs had excluded women from workshops with adolescent girls because of a perceived tension between parental and child participation. However, in later stages, particularly in the third year of

implementation, when a majority of the girls had already attended two-three sessions on gender issues, the need for joint workshops became evident. As a result, the mothers were invited to attend meetings with their daughters/village girls. Members of women's groups also attended.

In the beginning USNPSS had anticipated passive participation by girls when inter-generational and family issues were being discussed. It was interesting to note that after ice-breaking exercises, many girls were positively participating and a majority of them were not intimidated by the presence of adult women in the meeting. They had also envisioned positive roles for themselves in community matters and were ready to share those with their mothers and the members of the women's groups. Another positive aspect was the open discussions on gender roles and responsibilities between mothers and daughters. Adult women, especially more than 50-60 years of age, were of the view that adolescent girls along with formal schooling should learn nuances of agriculture and forest related work but the girls exhibited negligible interest in these activities.

A fear of being stigmatized was apparent among adolescent girls who thought that in case they talk about gender discrimination at home, it will reflect badly on their parents/families/villages. Mothers also held the view that in case they attend meetings outside the village, it will be seen as their fault and later they might be ridiculed as a parent who has been "uncaring", "not supportive" or "biased towards boys". The sense of being "politically correct" was strong enough to pull some women out of meetings/workshops. However, on the whole, the initiative of organizing interactions on gender between adult women and young school-going girls (especially mother and daughter) was an encouraging step.

## **b. Gender stigmatization**

- During a session the mother said that her family is gender sensitive and they treat the son and the daughter as equals. "*in fact my husband loved the daughter the most*", she said. In response to this the daughter asked why had they sent her brother to a private school while she is enrolled in a government school
- In Dasili village, mothers and daughters were asked to make separate lists of activities that they enjoyed. Girls preferred activities like sports, hair-dressing, nail-painting, sweeping and knitting while their mothers came out with a totally different list of activities (winnowing, milking, lighting a fire etc.).
- In Binta, Parkot village, girls were very articulate about gender roles and responsibilities. They said that after school they perform household chores while their brothers go out and play. Similarly, In Jadbila village, a lively debate took place between the mother and daughter when the girl expressed her desire to continue education. Upset, the mother said that there was no use educating a girl because they begin to "talk back" to their parents.

Though joint interactive meetings among women of different generations merit careful designing and facilitation, these certainly affect the current education and development discourse in villages. Table 54 exhibits the details of meetings held by USNPSS staff in villages.

Table 49. Meetings held by USNPSS staff in villages.

Serial number	Village	Duration	Participants			
			Girls	boys	women	Men
1	Liti	1.8.2013	13	00	08	00
2	Jadbila	2.8.2013	13	08	23	1
3	Parkot	6.8.2013	23	00	00	00
4	Kheti Chaura	18.8.2013	17	00	04	2
5	Kulori	25.8.2013	23	08	07	00
6	Rungadi	3.9.2013	00	00	42	00
7	Mallakot	6.9.2013	12	00	02	00
8	Syuni	7.9.2013	18	02	07	00
9	Dasili	1.3.2014	23	07	07	00
10	Danya	3.3.2014	04	00	05	00
11	Chil	5.3.2014	11	03	27	00
12	Tikta	10.4.2014	2	00	5	00
13	Liti Talladhura	11.4.2014	3	00	13	00
Total			162	28	150	3

### 5av. Action taken by adolescent girls

#### a. Dowry and marriage

- In Malaan village, Munni Malana was to get married with a boy from Dasili village, district Almora. The groom's family demanded some dowry and Munni refused to get married to that boy.
- Janaki Joshi of Chaura village was getting married to a boy from Barecheena. The groom's family demanded gold and the bride-to-be rejected the proposal. Her parents were upset but she remained firm.
- In many villages, girls have reported that people from other states of the country have been approaching their parents for marriage. To generate knowledge about the issue open community meetings were organized. Prema Arya of Danya village said that their parents have been approached by two men from Rampur in Uttar Pradesh asking for her marriage with their son. She has rejected the proposal but her mother has other ideas. Prema said that she would not get married unless satisfied with the antecedents of the family that has approached her parents
- Young girls are refusing to get married to older men
- Kavita Arya of Falyant village got married at the age of 14. Dissatisfied with her in-laws, she came back to her maternal home. She started attending adolescent workshops in the village. After two years of counselling, she herself has decided to go to her husband. She says that attending workshops has helped her shape alternative ideas and changed her life.

#### b. Female foeticide

- In villages, the adolescent girls had reported that female foeticide takes place after two daughters were born. Since parents are poor and cannot arrange for dowry, they opt for female foeticide. A joint session of girls and members of women's groups was then called upon to discuss the issue.

### **c. Health and nutrition**

- With growing awareness on health issues, adolescent girls are reported to have been looking after their needs. They have begun to appreciate the need of proper nutrition and some of them are reported to have been eating traditional millets, and not fast-food
- In Syuni village, the adolescent girls have been eating plenty of fruits including guava and *amla* which grows in the surrounding forests. Earlier they used to feed *amla* to their goats.

### **5avi. Achievements**

- Earlier girls would think of gender discrimination as something made by God. Now, a majority of them consider it a social construct. Some girls have also been able to raise their voices at home, particularly in case of unequal distribution of food and in relation to work in agricultural fields.
- Adolescent girls have exhibited a strong interest in learning about preventive health and reproductive health issues, particularly menstruation and child-bearing.
- Awareness about hygiene and cleanliness has improved, particularly during and immediately after menstruation
- Communication skills have improved. As more and more girls are learning to speak up without fear, they are raising voices at home, in schools and villages
- Girls have started raising their voices against stalking and harassment by boys
- Schools have been very supportive of the programme. Across schools, a sense of enthusiasm and cooperation was observed. Teachers as well as principals have been cooperative and have given us time to conduct workshops with adolescent girls
- Joint sessions of adolescent girls and boys have proven very useful, particularly in relation to issues of violence and dowry. Adolescent boys were not even aware of the fact that whistling and stalking a girl is a form of violence. Similarly, the girls did not know that sending unwanted/ derogatory messages by cell phones is an offence
- Despite earlier episodes of resistance from boys and girls to take part in joint sessions and to speak up, interesting debates/discussions were held in schools, particularly on issues of dowry
- Female foeticide was an issue that had generated a lot of interest among adolescent girls. Although, both boys and girls were keen to learn about reproductive health issues, girls were more interested in issues of female foeticide and infanticide

### **a. Challenges**

- Joint sessions of mothers and daughters raise conflicting issues that may pose a challenge to the facilitator
- Joint sessions of boys and girls would sometimes hinder the girls from talking about their problems
- During group discussions it is difficult, at least in the earlier stages to form mixed groups of boys and girls

- Although girls were not in favour of early marriage, parents force it by hiding their actual age. This appeared again and again during the workshops and students requested us to take some action against such incidents
- Lack of information and services is a major challenge in villages. Though students want to do some job and desire for a life in the cities, they do not have resources including information on how to go about it
- Developing confidence to speak up in public is the major challenge that adolescents face across schools and villages

### 5aviii. Workshops held by facilitators in villages

This year, the facilitators had organized a total of 633 one-day workshops for adolescent girls in villages. Table 50 exhibits the range of issues discussed during the workshops. Violence against women, health and nutrition in adolescent stages, emotional development, identity of an adolescent, dowry and enhancing communication skills were some of the common themes discussed during the workshops. In some villages, in view of the upcoming panchayat elections, discussions on participation in panchayats were also held.

One of the major areas of conflict relates to the concept of violence and its implications in everyday life. The advocates of human rights call for prevention of violence of any kind. However, both parents and adolescent girls think that disciplining, even if it involves physical/verbal abuse, is necessary because ultimately it would help the child.

Table 50. Workshops held by facilitators in villages.

Shama				Kheti				Danya			
Village	Number of workshops	Issue discussed	Frequency of issue	Village	Number of workshops	Issue discussed	Frequency of the issue	Village	Number of workshops	Issue discussed	Frequency of the issue
Kimu	9	Communication	15	Malaan	11	Challenges to identity	8	Thali	14	Violence	42
Jadbila	10	Health	38	Dhari	08	Identity	20	Manoli	12	Skits on violence	5
Okhaldhunga	10	Panchayats	10	Chaura	10	Communication	6	Gauli	11	Health	17
Dhura	9	Violence	10	Talli Jajar	08	Relationships	11	Ruval	9	Dowry	14
Bhanar dana	10	Relationships	12	Malli jajar	08	Emotions	2	Danya	11	Nutrition	8
Bhaikura	11	Emotions	07	Siddhi	09	Emotional development	2	Dasili	10	Emotion	8
Liti gaoun	10	Who am I	05	Falna	09	Dowry	13	Kotyura	9	Menstruation hygiene	4
Talla dhura	11	Identity	05	Khori	03	Life skills	7	Kulori	8	Sex education	3
		Friendship	06	Kalauta	10	Violence	21	Falyant	8	identity	5
		inequality	03	Kheti	08	Nutrition	5	Khuna jogyura	7		
						Inequality	6				
						Age of marriage	2				
						Solidarity	4				
						Health	6				
Total	80				84				99		

Table continued..



Muvani				Pati				Parkot Binta			
Village	Number of workshops	Issue discussed	Frequency of the issue	Village	Number of workshops	Issue discussed	Frequency of the issue	Village	Number of workshops	Issue discussed	Frequency of the issue
Digra	10	Sports, songs	65	Piplati	12	Communication	9	Parkot	9	Identity	2
Ruinathal	11	Stories	16	Sakdena	12	Violence	32	Bhatoura	9	Emotions	2
Pipaltar	9	Violence	24	Josyura	12	Dowry	39	Borkhola	8	Health	24
Mallakot	9	Dowry	20	Adarshnagar	12	Life skills	2	Devaldhar	10	Solidarity	5
Manoli	8	Life skills	8	Thuva muni	10	Health	22	Binta	4	Caste, religion	4
Musaligad	10	Health	11	Kanikot	11	Story books	5			Panchayat	18
Varla	14	Panchayats	7	Raulamel	10	Self learning	9			Violence	16
Syuni	11			Harodi	10	Self worth	9				
				Ladhoun	12						
Total	82				101				40		

Table continued...

Dwarahat				Bhikiyasain			
Village	Number of workshops	Issue discussed	Frequency of the issue	Village	Number of workshops	Issue discussed	Frequency of the issue
Simalgaoun	8	Emotions	9	Dyona	9	Story	4
Badi	6	Emotional development	3	Dhamera	9	Dowry	3
Valna	7	Health	17	Bajan	8	Emotions	6
Bedhuli	7	Strength of girls	9	Bahera	5	Traditional health care	2
Chaura	8	Communication	15	Mason	6	Inequality	5
Kande	7	Violence	13	Belti	8	Communication	3
Faldwari	7	Story	10	Ghughuti	8	Violence	11
Rauna	8	Challenges to identity	9	Bayera	4	Identity	7
Mayoli	8	Identity	8	Dhunga	2	Relationships	26
						Solidarity	3
	66				59	Self esteem	3

### 5aix. Workshops/meetings held by partner organizations

This year, three types of workshops/meetings were organized by CBOs (Table 51). They are as follows:

- Residential three-day workshops
- non-residential three day workshops
- non-residential one day workshops

The workshops held in villages were particularly useful to adolescent girls who have either left school or cannot attend classes regularly. For example, Lalita, village Mayoli, had left studies after finishing her intermediate. Her father wanted to get her married off but the mother was supportive. After attending the workshops, she asked her mother to talk to her father who after much persuasion gave her the permission to study as a home-based student. She will be sitting for the examinations this year and intends to talk to her father again.

Following the workshops in villages, kishori sangathans have been formed in Bitholi, Bajan, Dharam and Dahal villages. Asha from Nauri village said that she had been benefitted tremendously from attending these workshops. She said, *"I used to think that my parents will*

*take all decisions about my life. After all they are my parents and will always want me to be happy. However, after attending these workshops I realized that I have a right to think about myself...take decisions about my life... I cannot be dependent on my parents for the rest of my life...I must take responsibility for myself. ”*

Table 51. Workshops/meetings held by community-based organizations.

Location	Type of workshop (days)	Place	Frequency	Duration	Total	
					participants	villages
Pati	1	Sanstha Toli	1	22.12. 2013	60	07
Pati	3	Community centre Toli	1	1.6.2013-3.6.2013	35	09
Pati	1	Pati	1	11.8.2013	40	-
Pati	1	Pati	1	1.2.2014	50	-
Pati	1	Pati	1	8.9.2013	40	-
Pati	1	Pati	1	22.12.2013	50	-
Ganaigangoli	1	Dasilakhet	1	8.12.2013	30	03
Ganaigangoli	1	Tuproli	1	17.12.2013	38	03
Ganaigangoli	1	Fadiyali	1	2.8.2013	19	01
Ganaigangoli	1	Ganai	1	10.11.2013	40	-
Ganaigangoli	1	Ganai	1	17.11.2013	20	-
Ganaigangoli	3	Ambedkar bhavan Tuproli	1	1-3.6.2013	46	04
Muvani	1	Runiathal	1	15.12.2013	38	-
Muvani	1	Sanstha	1	18.8.2013	53	08
Muvani	1	Mallakot	1	10.11.2013	35	01
Muvani	1	Syuni	1	1.12.2013	38	-
Muvani	1	Muvani	1	9.7.2013	46	-
Muvani	3	Sanstha	1	1-6.3.2013	34	06
Binta	2	Borkhola	1	14.6.2013	24	02
Dwarahat	1	Bitholi	1	6.6.2013	32	01
Dwarahat	1	Rauna	1	4.6.2013	30	01
Bhikiyasain	1	Bajan	1	10.6.2013	60	04
Bhikiyasain	1	Dyona	1	11.6.2013	40	04
Danya	3 residential	Sanstha	2	2-4.8.2013	75	-
Danya	1	Sanstha	1	29.9.2013	40	-
Danya	3	Sanstha	3	11-13.6.2013	35	10
Danya	3	Sanstha	1	9-11.8.2013	40	-
Bhikiyasain	1	Ghughuti	1	4.8.2013	47	-
Dwarahat	1	Bitholi	1	9.8.2013	30	-
Bhikiyasain	1	Kamrad	1	11.8.2013	23	-
Dwarahat	1	Sunadi	1	11.8.2013	29	-
Dwarahat	1	Valna	1	18.8.2013	28	-
Bhikiyasain	1	Bayera	1	18.8.2013	29	-
Bhikiyasain	1	Belti	1	25.8.2013	27	-
Dwarahat	1	Bedhuli	1	25.8.2013	22	-
Binta	1	Chaura	1	4.8.2013	35	-
Binta	1	Chaura	1	15.1.2014	23	-
Binta	1	Bhataura	1	11.8.2013	26	-
Binta	1	Borkhola	1	25.8.2013	22	-
Binta	1	Parkot	1	8.9.2013	21	-
Binta	1	Binta	1	22.9.2013	23	-
Bhikiyasain	1	Dyona	1	8.9.2013	23	-
Bhikiyasain	1	Dhamera	1	15.9.2013	25	-
Dwarahat	1	Mason	1	17.9.2013	17	-
Dwarahat	1	Mayoli	1	22.9.2013	26	-
Dwarahat	1	Rauna	1	8.9.2013	25	-
Bhikiyasain	1	Ina	1	22.9.2013	14	-
Shama	1	Liti	1	11.8.2013	37	03
Shama	1	Bhanardana	1	18.8.2013	30	02
Shama	1	Shama	1	25.8.2013	25	02
Shama	1	Liti	1	8.9.2013	25	03
Shama	1	Shama	1	15.9.2013	26	02
Total			55		1746	76

### 5aix. *Kishori sammelan* (congregation of girls)

This year, a total of seven *sammelans* of adolescent girls were held during January 2014 (Table 52). Besides adolescent girls, the village residents, CBOs and USNPSS staff attended. The adolescent girls took the responsibility of organizing *sammelans* in their respective areas. Each *sammelana* was convened by the girls themselves.

*Sammelans* stimulate participation of communities in the education of adolescent girls. Marginalization and oppression of girls have multiple causes. Therefore, multiple approaches need to be adopted to address them. During the congregations of girls in villages, the participants felt that a holistic approach is needed to address the plight of women, especially girls. A sense of solidarity that prevails among girls is in itself a positive aspect to understand political potential which they could exploit for their own benefits.

Table 52. Congregation of adolescent girls in villages.

Serial number	Location	Date	Participants		
			Adolescent girls	Women, men, children	Number of villages
1	Suraikhet + Binta	1.1. 2014	180+12	70+1	14
2	Danya	3.1.2014	68	40	10
3	Muvani	4.1.2014	60	60	10
4	Ganaigangoli	5.1.2014	200	80	12
5	Kheti	12.1.2014	120	30	11
6	Bhikiyasain	12.1.2014	85	45	9
7	Pati	17.1.2014	85	5	9
8	Shama				

An important lesson that has emerged during discussions was the need of organizing events that bring women of all generations together. The initiative of organizing mother-daughter sessions was much appreciated by adolescent girls. The congregations were an appropriate forum to discuss issues as girls were praising communities/parents when they were supportive and were ready to confront them when they had not acted in a transparent and just manner. Members of the adolescent groups were of the view that conflicts occur in the following areas:

- Parents do not want to send girls for higher studies
- Freedom to work independently and make decisions is curtailed due to pressure from parents and community
- Harassment by boys/men in the forest, on the way to school and the market
- Restrictions on mobility of adolescent girls
- The perception that the female body is impure

### 5ax. Needs as identified by adolescent girls

In future, the adolescent girls want to learn the following skills:

- Computers
- Beautician

- Tailoring, embroidery, knitting
- Employment as police personnel, teacher, nurse
- Household work particularly cooking, housekeeping

## **6. Environmental education in schools**

The environment education programme continued with the support of the state education department in all government schools. This year, the PDF files of the workbooks “Our Land Our Life” were developed:

1. New set of workbooks “Our land, Our life” for classes 6-10<sup>th</sup> (soft copies in .pdf format).
2. English version of “Our land, Our life” workbooks for class 6-8<sup>th</sup> (currently running in all government schools in Uttarakhand)
3. Hindi version of “Our land, Our life” for classes 6-8<sup>th</sup> (currently running in Government schools of Uttarakhand) were redesigned and soft copies in .pdf format were prepared.

Dr. G P Pande worked with Dr. M G Jackson during 17-20 September 2013 at Noida to design the workbooks for classes 6-10. He made visits to Government Junior High School Kayala (Hawalbag), Almora on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2014 and to GIC, Hawalbag on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2014.

## **7. National Initiative on Climate Resilient Hill Agriculture (NICRA)**

The National Initiative on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) was launched during February 2011 by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) with funding from Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. The country-wide project had three major objectives viz. strategic research, technology demonstrations and capacity building. Commissioned by NICRA, the project titled ‘Community driven climate resilient hill agriculture in the village ecosystem of North-West Himalayas (Uttarakhand)’ was jointly awarded to USNPSS, Doon University (Dehradun) and GBPIHED (Srinagar Garhwal) in September 2011.

The main objectives of USNPSS were concerned with understanding community perceptions about climate change, exploring village ecosystem health to understand resilience and action oriented research in villages of Uttarakhand. Doon University was concerned with studies on carbon sequestration and climate change dynamics, whilst GBPIHED was concerned with research and documentation of the local and traditional knowledge of communities regarding climate change and agriculture. Whilst USNPSS and Doon University worked together in data collection at the same sites, subsequently the nature and analysis of the work diverged. Therefore, the final reports were presented separately.

USNPSS worked in four clusters of villages spread over four districts of Kumaon and Garhwal regions. Galla village represented horticulture-based economy, while Maichun, Lamudiyar, Kendul and Shama represented subsistence agriculture at different altitudes in

subtropical and temperate agro-climatic zones. The report prepared by USNPSS was submitted in time to the Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA) Hyderabad. The emerging issues are as follows:

During the course of this study, the researchers worked *with* the community, not for them, and from the beginning became conversant with the community perceptions on climate change issues. During analyses use of both the descriptive and the inferential data was made. The descriptive data analysis exposed the factors and the impacts of climate change on communities whereas the inferential data analyses made explicit the relationships between those factors. Further, gender disaggregation of data was useful to interpret participation and labour share of men and women in land-based livelihoods, especially in relation to agriculture.

Focus group discussions, informal interactions with communities (by living in villages for several days in a stretch) oral testimonies and PRA techniques were used to build up dialogue with communities. PRA tools included mapping, scoring, ranking, seasonal calendars and web diagrams. Administered in the beginning of the project, this exercise helped to raise awareness about the project and climate change issues. In addition, as a process, PRA is an empowering exercise in itself.

Collection of gender-disaggregated data regarding agriculture-based roles and responsibilities relied on discussions with rural men and women separately. However, after documentation and analyses, the findings were shared with mixed-group (both men and women of different castes, age, education etc.) of communities in villages and at USNPSS Almora to raise awareness about the need of gender-equitable share of labour. In particular, this exercise was carried out to initiate change and spread awareness about the issue of how women's workload increases during and after a disaster caused by climate change. This is in contrast to the mainstream methods, wherein the researchers would develop the ideas and products in the laboratories, isolated from social, economic and environmental contexts. In addition, when scientists, researchers, civil society organizations and communities, especially women, interacted with each other to develop knowledge it contributes towards building up social resilience.

In the hills of Uttarakhand, cultivation depends on the status of the surrounding natural resources in villages. The close relationship between agriculture and the health of the forests needs recognition in the scientific forum. The conceptualisation of the village as an ecosystem provides a range of ecological indicators that could be used to assess health and resilience of agriculture-based communities and their environment. In this study, values gained from the quantification of the production and consumption patterns of crops, fuel wood, fodder (leaves as well as grass), manure, milk etc. were used to determine health of the ecosystem. Inherently, an ecosystem which is healthy will be more resilient and therefore, be better equipped and able to withstand the shocks created by climate change. The measurements were simple and involved commodities which everyone (including illiterate women) could understand.

The concept of carrying capacity gave an indication of the number of the people the village ecosystem could support and how degraded the ecosystem was. Due to time limitations, the data could not be extrapolated to calculate the future production and requirement values. The issue of sustainability of environmental services provided by the forests could, however, be calculated using a longer time frame. For example, at present communities have been receiving all their fuel wood requirements from the forests but how long it will continue is the issue that requires more research.

Another important issue regarding the village ecosystem relates to its conceptualization as a closed system, isolated from external interventions and politics. However, there would be several interactions occurring within and between ecosystems that need to be measured to get an overall picture of the situation. For example, in a village, food may be coming from outside (the ration shop) or the state government water supply systems might exist. Mobility of people could also be a factor affecting production and consumption patterns. Though, computer models could be developed to elicit information on all these indicators, the present research fell short of this exercise, particularly due to lack of time and resources. However, by considering the commodities which do not have a monetary value, e.g. water, fodder, fuel wood, even at the present stage, the research elaborates certain useful concepts that are relevant to the issue of climate change and its impact on agriculture.

To further the concept of ecosystem health, this research has defined it as the ratio of the actual production per unit of land to the optimum production possible from that unit. Used in combination of other indicators such as the infiltration rate of water in the soil and the canopy cover of the forests, this exercise gave a measurement of the resilience index of the village. However, more work and refinement of the concept is required.

Villages were ranked using the concepts of ecosystem health and resilience index and the major vulnerabilities so emerging were found to be very similar to the perceptions that had resulted from PRA exercises conducted with the communities.

By combining the results arising from these two approaches of (a) quantitative (ecosystem health, resilience index) and (b) qualitative (PRA, focus group, oral testimonies, informal discussions with groups of women) data analyses, a framework emerged which was then used to initiate action in villages.

## **7ai. Action Research**

To build up socio-ecological resilience in villages, several activities were carried out. Plantation of fruit-bearing trees, fencing to improve production of grass, installation of polyhouses and polythene-lined tanks were activities carried out in partnership with communities, especially women's groups. In addition, agricultural tools (rake, hand hoe, hand fork, serrated sickle, root trainer, khurpi, threshers (both rice and millet thresher) were purchased and distributed in villages. Light traps were purchased from the ICAR unit at Almora and installed in villages. Further, USNPSS designed its own set of low cost 33 light

traps for installation in villages. Also, improved varieties of seeds (vegetables, millets and pulses) were grown in villages on an experimental basis.

The acceptance of agricultural tools and technologies varied from community to community. For example, the low-altitude villages exhibited no interest in installing polyhouses. The requirement varied even in those villages that were interested in the activity. Thus, the micro-climatic conditions, both social and ecological, need to be studied prior to initiating polyhouses in villages. A single standard design would fail to capture the requirements of communities.

Enabling communities to learn and experiment with tools and technologies was an important criterion for development of social resilience. As an example of how learning occurs, consider the widespread increase of the *kurmula* (white grub) pest in the villages of Uttarakhand. Scientists have developed a trap to kill kurmula. While introducing the trap in villages the following important issues emerged:

- i. Farmers, especially women, were not aware of the existence of such a device that could help them get rid of the pest and
- ii. When introduced, regular supply of electricity emerged as an important determinant of its use in villages.
- iii. Community cooperation is a precondition for successful trapping of kurmula pest in villages. Whether all the households would cooperate in switching off lights at home during night was an issue that required many meetings with the village residents during the course of this programme
- iv. What would be the disposal methods for the captured pests was an important issue under discussion. To dispose the captured pests, the scientists had suggested insecticides. However, the village residents, particularly women, thought of other means, like feeding the dead to the birds. The strong beak of the blue magpie, a Himalayan bird, was found to be suitable for the purpose. Also, common myna had liked the taste of the grub. The experiment succeeded in stimulating a lot of interest in the community over the origin, growth, life stages of the kurmula pest in Uttarakhand.
- v. Why had the pests increased in recent decades and what if they always existed and their unprecedented growth is not related to climate change but to some other factors was the question that emerged again and again during the process of designing the trap at USNPSS. To the question of why these pests have increased, the farmers themselves recalled that earlier kurmula would dwell in the forests but have now come to the agricultural fields. They realised that the solution was to improve the biodiversity of the forests.

### **7a.ii. Women, agriculture and vulnerability to disasters**

In Uttarakhand, the feminization of agriculture has occurred as men migrate to the cities and women and children take up diverse tasks at home. The patriarchal composition of society ensures that men, even when at home, do not take up responsibility for household

work. Besides cultivation, women are responsible for taking care of their livestock, care for the child and the elderly, collection of fuel wood, fodder from the forest, cooking, cleaning and maintenance of the house. Thus, the role of women goes well beyond agriculture to cover activities that could be described as “management of the village ecosystems”. However, high engagement of women in ecosystem management also presents the risk of confirming to traditional gender roles and responsibilities, a practice that poses structural barriers to those women wanting to expand their choices of work.

The types of livelihoods that men and women seek are influenced by sexual division of labour and gender relations at home and in communities. In the case of women farmers, their unequal status, limited access to information and institutions, lack of property rights at home and degradation of common resources (forests, water, grasslands etc.) are factors that would increase their vulnerability. The capacity to cope with changes brought about by climate change is, therefore, gendered.

However, women are not just passive recipients of changes caused by climate change in village ecosystems. During a disaster, organized groups of women seem to be better equipped to handle stress and manage shock at the community level. For example, during the course of this study, several anecdotes were shared by communities that would demonstrate how women can exercise their agency and deal with stress more efficiently in a collective manner, rather than addressing the challenges on an individual basis. Immediately after the disaster caused by cloud-bursts in Ukhimath, Kedarnath valley, district Rudraprayag (2012), the women’s groups in Mangoli, Chunni, Dungar-Semla, Painj and Kimara villages called each other to provide support and to share information. Since the disaster struck at night, women shared flashlights, cell phone etc. and for days took care of the livestock of families who had lost their cowsheds due to landslides and flooding in the area. They provided emotional and economic support to each other and managed to sustain their household and community responsibilities through collective action. Therefore, in contrast to the widely recognized perception of much deeper erosion of women’s capabilities than those of men in disaster hit areas, this study shows that organized, active women’s groups are better equipped to address issues of climate change; especially the immediate response to disasters is better dealt by communities where WVGs are functional.

Further, the need for collective action by women farmers became apparent when communities had reported the limited reach of government extension services to villages. None of the villages studied under this project had received or purchased even minor agricultural implements such as rakes, threshers and sprayers from the government agricultural extension services. The female farmers had no contact with the department in the region and had not received any direct benefits from the government, except for some seeds and fertilizers at subsidized rates from the local block office. Further, the farmers were not trained and informed about the schemes offered by government through extension services.

In this context, an attempt was made to identify the need of agricultural tools and machines, the use of which could be beneficial to communities, especially female farmers. In a patriarchal set up, where tools and technologies are regarded as the domain of men,



machines designed by agricultural experts could be taken as a reference point to validate their acceptability and friendliness to women farmers.

#### **7aiii. Need assessment and acceptability of agricultural tools/technologies to enhance resilience**

An important aspect of enhancing ecosystem resilience is to strengthen local livelihoods by introducing new ideas, tools and technologies. In general, agricultural implements are considered gender neutral but a deeper probe into the issue of how men and women use the tools and technologies would not only reflect the differentiated needs but also varying dependence.

All the villages (except Galla) selected for this study practice subsistence farming. It was interesting to note that in all villages, communities were receptive of the idea of adopting new tools and technologies both in order to (a) improve the yield and (b) to reduce drudgery of daily work in relation to cultivation. Communities were aware of the fact that new methods could be used to improve production in the fields, though “readiness to adopt the new” was mixed with fear of technology and scepticism.

Women were keen to understand the use and the long-term benefits of application of new agricultural technologies on the land. Further, the use of new tools and technologies was not perceived as an intervention in conflict with their customary beliefs and values. Last year, (annual Report 2011-2012) we had reported the tools and technologies that were introduced in villages. Table 58 exhibits the work done during 2013-14.

A common finding across the villages is that in order to design inclusive and community-responsive agricultural machines and hand-operated tools, it is crucial to question some commonly held assumptions about farmers and agriculture. For example, the rice thresher, developed by VPKAS Almora, an ICAR lab does not suit the needs of those households that continue growing long, local varieties of paddy. Similarly, *khurpi* has little use in terraced fields. Millet thresher that operates using electricity is useful only for the electrified households and cannot be used by socially marginalized families who lack access to electricity (poor, low-income widows etc.).

#### **7aiv. Gender-friendly tools**

Since, systematic research in the area of designing and using gender friendly tools is not available in Uttarakhand, this study focused on two areas:

1. Whether the tools available at the local agricultural research institute (ICAR) are women friendly and
2. To what extent the tools meet the need of female farmers

Table 53. New technology/machines introduced in villages during 2013-2014.

Serial number	Item	Dimensions	Location-wise distribution (includes adjoining villages)				Total
			Galla,	Shama	Kendul talla kendle malla	Lamudiyar	
1	Kurmula trap	in numbers	00	00	00	30	33 (2 Chausali+1 VPKAS, Almora)
2	Root trainer	12 cells (in numbers)	00	00	00	32	32
3	Root trainer	25 cells (in numbers)	00	00	00	32	32
4	Poly house sheet 120 GSM	50m x18ft (one bundle)	00	05	00	00	5
5	Poly house sheet 150 GSM	50m x18ft (one bundle)	00	2	00	2 bundles +5 m	4 bundles + 5 m+ and 10 m USNPSS + 7 m at Kasar Devi
6	Tank sheet 200 GSM	50m x18ft (one bundle)	6 bundle	00	00	2 bundle, 27 meters	8 bundles + 27 m
7	Shade net 50%	3mx50m (one bundle)	20 m	00	00	6 bundles	6 bundles, 20 m + 18m USNPSS and 11m Kasar Devi
8	Millet thresher	00	00	00	00	1	1
9	Bee keeping boxes	50	50	00	00	00	00
10	Bee veil	6	6	00	00	00	00
11	Honey extractor	2	2	00	00	00	00
12	Swarm trap	2	2	00	00	00	00
13	gloves	2	2	00	00	00	00
14	Plastic pipe	10 bundles 40 kg	1 set	00	00	00	00
15	barbed wire	202.84 kg	00	00	00	202.84 kg	202.84 kg
16	Spray machine	4	4	00	00	00	00
17	Water pump	1	1	00	00	00	00
18	Fruit crate	collection crates	150	00	00	00	00
19	Bamboo frame	Thin poles Thick poles	00	00	00	215 123	

The low outreach of government extension services to villages, especially to areas where women work on the fields, has been a matter of concern. The state needs to spread extension services keeping women farmers in mind. For example, serrated sickle, designed by VPKAS Almora, ICAR was much appreciated by women farmers but this was the first time they had come to know that such an implement exists. Table 54 exhibits the ranking of acceptability of agricultural tools and technologies along with their major drawbacks cited by communities after using them for almost a year.

Since the use of tools and introduction of new technologies is heavily biased towards men and rich farmers, the need of designing cheap tools which women can access emerged as an issue of concern. This study revealed that farm machines need to be designed in consultation with women by taking into account their different needs and capacities. For

example, the need of machines that take into account women's lower body mass and muscle strength and age-wise postural differences was apparent. Widows and female headed households found it very difficult to transport the rice/millet thresher (designed by VPKAS Almora, ICAR) from one field to the other. Since the fields are small and scattered, transportation would require energy and time causing difficulties to single and old women living in villages.

Table 54. Ranking of the degree of acceptability of agricultural tools and technologies in study villages.

Tools	Village-wise ranking				Drawbacks
	Kendul	Lamudiyar	Galla	Shama	
Polyhouse	8	3	4	1	Not suitable for villages located in valleys (for example, Kendul talla 500-700 m above the mean sea level), in orchards and in areas where the land is rocky
Polythene lined water tanks	Not supplied	1	1	2	Seasonal, not suitable for long time storage
Light trap	Not supplied	2	2	Not supplied	Not useful for low income households in socially disadvantaged villages –the costs of CFL bulbs prevent families replacing the old ones with the new bulbs
Garden Rake	2	4	5	3	loose welding
Millet thresher/paddy thresher	1	-	3	4	Conflict with the traditional methods of threshing. a. In Shama, prior to threshing manduva is soaked in water. Hence, the thresher was not used b. In Kendul, long traditional variety of paddy could not be used in threshers supplied under the project
Hand hoe	4	5	6	5	loose welding
Hand fork	5	6	7	6	loose welding
Kudal	6	8	9	7	-
Serrated sickle	3	7	11	8	Most suitable for harvesting of dry grass and crop residue (seasonal use)
Root trainer	9	10	8	9	In all the villages people had seen the root trainers for the first time in their lives. Adaptation was slow
Khurpi	7	9	10	10	Not used in terraced fields

Installation of cheap, polythene-lined plastic tanks is an initiative that was perceived by communities the most desirable in terms of making livelihoods resilient. A total of 24 and 68 tanks were installed in Lamudiyar and Galla villages respectively. Communities have long been suffering from water scarcity in Galla area. Hence tanks were also installed in surrounding villages. In precise terms, two tanks each were installed at Lodh, Talla Supi, Supi Bhateliya, Len Pokhara, one in Kaafli and seven at Pata village. Although, water tanks are considered gender-neutral in that both men and women need water, consultation with women's groups on how and where to install water tanks was considered central to the processes of building up social resilience in villages.

Introduction of machines such as millet and rice threshers was another activity that was considered important by communities, especially in Kendul talla village, where irrigation has made it possible for the community to grow modern varieties of paddy and wheat.

The low acceptability of root trainers in agriculture-based communities was in contrast to horticulture-dominated areas. In Galla village, the root trainers were used to grow fruit tree saplings that needed protection from snow and frost. Similarly, the community at Shama had raised seedlings of vegetables using root trainers during the winters.

Acceptability of tools depends on socio-economic status of communities and also on amenities available in villages. For example, white grub causes a great deal of damage to crops in Lamudiyar (SC population resides in the village) but due to erratic supply of electricity, light traps could not be used as efficiently as in Galla village.

Table 55. Distribution of improved variety of seeds in Lamudiyar village.

Serial number	Type of seed	Seeds (kg)						Total distribution
		Date of purchase	Quantity (kg)	Galla	Shama	Kendul malla, Kendul talla	Lamudiyar (socially disadvantaged population)	
8	Lahi Haatikan	VPKAS 19.10.2013	1	00	00	00	1	1
9	Methi PEB	VPKAS 19.10.2013	1	00	00	00	1	1
10	Coriander PD	VPKAS 19.10.2013	5	00	00	00	5	5
11	Vivek pea	VPKAS 19.10.2013	10	00	00	00	10	10
Total			17	00	00	00	17	17

This year, improved varieties of seeds of lahi, dhaniya, vivek pea and methi were purchased by USNPSS from VPKAS, Almora and distributed to members of the women's group at Lamudiyar village. Last year, we had provided seeds to Galla, Shama, Kendul and Maichun villages (annual report 2012-2013) but this year, the women of Lamudiyar were encouraged to sow vegetable seeds on an experimental basis. The results were promising and the farmers have demanded more seeds for the coming years. There is a problem for farmers to purchase the quality seeds by themselves. VPKAS produces breeder seeds and other government agencies have the responsibility of mass production and distribution but due to limited outreach, seeds are not available in villages.

In 2013, the CBO at Shama exhibited considerable interest in developing a seed bank of its own in the village. Good quality seed of radish (the local variety) has already been developed in the area.

Evidence shows that agriculture dominated areas were less receptive of the ideas of introducing new varieties of seeds in their fields while the horticultural dominated areas exhibited considerable interest in growing improved varieties of vegetables. The finding is not surprising because communities in horticultural areas have long been practicing cash crop based livelihoods and a system of marketing is in place at Galla and the surrounding villages.

It was, however, interesting to learn that communities in Galla were resistant to the idea of installing polyhouses in their fields, while the agriculture-based communities, especially in Shama (high altitude village) and Lamudiyar (socially disadvantaged section of society) exhibited considerable interest in introducing the technology in the village.

#### **7av. Gender-sensitive, bottom-up response to climate change and agriculture**

The disconnect between the global scientific research and policies on climate change and the local impacts, already felt by communities, calls for new frameworks for research that could focus on bridging the gap by being inclusive of lived ideas and experiences. Climate change negotiations would be more meaningful and relevant to societies when informed by the local (gender, class, caste, rural–urban, institutional, political, legal and cultural) specificities. One way of achieving this goal is to initiate a bottom–up approach by involving communities, especially women, in planning and implementation of village-based projects to build up resilience.

Resilience could be improved by creating an enabling environment for women and poor people to participate in climate change projects and in the process learn and develop capabilities to achieve greater control over resources and their own lives. Attitudinal change is part of this endeavor and so is development of collective responsibility to overcome ecological, economic and social disparities that typically aggravate during crisis and disasters.

The process of building up ecosystem resilience in study villages has relied heavily on our earlier work with communities in Uttarakhand, particularly with women's groups. Building on the existing network of women's groups an attempt was made to introduce new ideas and share information regarding climate change.

In Kendul malla and Kendul talla villages, for example, women's groups have already conserved the forest by (a) regulated lopping of trees and (b) putting a ban on the traditional practice of herds of goats and sheep grazing through the forest every winter; once the shepherd had made a payment towards the village fund. The decision to stop this practice was taken in an open village meeting organized by the members of the women's group. Further, women have been acting as the elected representatives in local committees (panchayat, forest protection committee etc.) and voicing their concerns in meetings headed by government officials. In Galla village, the community has developed methods to overcome shortages of fruit production by shifting apple orchards to higher altitudes. In Shama, the CBO has successfully introduced production of multiple varieties of vegetables and fruit trees that would enable communities to take advantage of rising temperatures due to climate change. The women of Lamudiyar village have strengthened social resilience by organizing themselves as an active group and by exercising agency, especially on issues of natural resource management and agriculture.

In all these villages, the members of the women's groups are aware of the role of broad leaf tree forests in conserving water and have already taken steps to preserve the forests. Plantation, allowing regeneration by protection from grazing animals, regulated

harvesting are some of the strategies that have been adopted by women to improve the status of the forests and other natural resources in villages.

Examples, cited above, reflect the fact that climate change programmes and policies need not always portray women as a group of disaster victims. A shift in development thought and planning is required not only as a measure of acknowledging women's contribution in building up resilience but also to promote an environment where they can sustain activities which have already been started under their leadership. In addition, new groups could be organized and activated in villages that trail behind, especially in villages that were already identified as prone to disaster by the government.

#### **7avi. Building social resilience as a step towards ecological resilience**

Community capacity building is an issue that could easily be sidelined by scientific and large climate change projects, especially those which target development of infrastructure and creating a large quantifiable data-base. Knowledge building, developing skills at community level are issues that are not so easy to quantify and, therefore, suffer from the "invisibility syndrome". Yet, it is the poor, local communities that bear the brunt of climate change and feel the impacts more directly than the global community. Awareness generation, knowledge and skill development of communities was therefore integral to this research programme (Table 56).

Capacity building of communities is required in disaster hit villages and also in areas that are vulnerable. This study took the capacity building approach with an additional dimension of addressing gender concerns in communities because women and men tend to face and address the challenges of climate change differently. Further, capacity building of women is central to the issue of developing social and ecological resilience.

In the process of implementing these activities in villages, issues of gender, caste-class differences are addressed with the twin fold objectives of

- (a) Strengthening solidarity among women and
- (b) Mainstreaming gender in all programmes implemented under the project.

Table 56. Meetings with communities in study villages.

Serial number	Location	Duration	Issues discussed	Suggested solutions to problems	Number of participants
1	Shama	15-16. 5. 2013	Impact on agriculture	Improved tools, poly house	27
2	Galla	20-22 5. 2013	Ecosystem health data	Collection of data and discussion with communities	66
3	Kendul malla and Kendul talla	26-27. 5. 2013	Improved seeds, use of millet-rice threshers and tools	Introduction of new tools and technologies	30
4	Lamudiyar	3-4. 6. 2013	Polythene lined tank		23
5	Maichun	6-7.6. 2013	Ecosystem health data	Collection of data, house to house visits	17
6	Lamudiyar	2.7. 2013	Damgem to crops, seeds by grubs	Light trap, root trainer	22
7	Lamudiyar	7.8. 2013	Water shortage, seed problems	Polyhouse and polytanks	25
8	Almora	9.8. 2013	Exposure tour	Polytanks and polyhouse	13
9	Galla	10.8. 2013	Shift of trees, water shortage	Horticulture polytanks polyhouse	80
10	Lamudiyar	18.8. 2013	how to improve crop, water yield	Polythene lined tank	10
11	Lamudiyar	23.8. 2013	Income generation	Fruit trees and polythene lined tanks	35
12	Lamudiyar	12.9. 2013	Damage to crops by animals	Polytanks, light trap and fencing	18
13	Lamudiyar	14.9. 2013	Damage to crops by animals, pests	Light trap, fencing	12
14	Lamudiyar	16.9. 2013	Fencing	Execution of fencing	16
15	Lamudiyar	23.9. 2013	Improving crop yields	Seed distribution	34
16	Lamudiyar	30.9. 2013	Village meeting	Women's solidarity, participation	30
17	Lamudiyar	1.10. 2013	Ecosystem health data	Collection of data	20
18	Lamudiyar	2.10. 2013	Ecosystem health data	Collection of data	15
19	Galla, Supi, Paata	9-13.10. 2013	Polytank, light trap and ecosystem health	Visits to all villages to disseminate information, assess the impact of light traps and tanks	90
20	Maichun	18- 20.11. 2013	Ecosystem health data, meeting	Collection of data	9
21	Lamudiyar	6.12. 2013	Polyhouse	Introducing the concept	18
22	Lamudiyar	25.12. 2013	Exposure tour	Visit to villages to learn	50
23	Shama and Namik	26-30.12.2013	Meetings on climate resilient crops	Sharing information, awareness	80
24	Lamudiyar	7.12.2013	Polyhouse meeting	Practical benefits of poly houses	10
25	Kendul malla, kendul talla	9-16.12.2013	Ecosystem health data meetings	Dissemination of information, review of work	22
26	Lamudiyar	24.12. 2013	Polyhouse	Installation	30
27	Lamudiyar	1.1.2014	Polyhouse installed	Installation	8
28	Lamudiyar	17.2.2014	Polyhouse installed	Preparation for poly house, assessment of work done so far	17
29	Lamudiyar	19.2.2014	Polyhouse	Material for polyhouse was taken to the village, open village meeting with USNPSS staff	10
30	Lamudiyar	20.2.2014	Polyhouse	Polyhouse installed,	5
31	Lamudiyar	22.2.2014	Polyhouse	Assessment, feedback	20
32	Lamudiyar	24.2.2014	Polyhouse	Material for polyhouse was taken to the village	14
33	Lamudiyar	25.2.2014	Polyhouse	Polyhouse installed	6
34	Lamudiyar	26.2.2014	Polyhouse	Polyhouse installed	2
35	Lamudiyar	28.2.2014	Polyhouse	Material for polyhouse was taken to the village	9
36	Lamudiyar	2..3.2014	Polyhouse	Polyhouse installed	5
37	Lamudiyar	3.3.2014	Polyhouse	Polyhouse installed	6
38	Lamudiyar	6.3.2014	Polyhouse	Polyhouse installed	6
39	Lamudiyar	7.32.2014	Polyhouse	Polyhouse installed	7
40	Lamudiyar	8.32.2014	Polyhouse	Polyhouse installed, monitoring of work done so far, feedback from the community	33
41	Galla	19.3.2014	sheets for water tanks, bamboo poles were taken to the village	Monitoring and assessment of work done so far	10
Total					960

By and large the sequence of initiatives exhibited in box 1 was followed in building up ecosystem resilience through active participation of communities, especially women's groups, in study villages.

### **Box 1. Building community capacity to improve ecosystem resilience**

- Open village meeting to introduce the project
- Meetings of women's groups in all villages
- Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) on issues of climate change and agriculture
- Continue with meetings of women's groups in villages
- Women's participation in regional congregations of women's groups
- Build up capacity in villages (open discussions, house to house visits, meetings etc.)
- Strengthen women's earlier work by providing support, weave climate change issues with that
- Distribution and plantation of fruit trees
- Distribution of agricultural tools and seeds developed by VPKAS, Almora to assess their reach and gender friendliness as women do all agricultural work, except ploughing
- Distribution and installation of light traps (VPKAS) to catch white grub
- Installation of polythene lined tanks started at Galla
- Exposure tours for women to
  - A. extension services of ICAR- Doonagiri and Hawalbagh field research centres, Almora
  - B. to see the orchards, rain water harvesting tanks in Galla and meet the members of the youth network
- Women attend workshops at Almora
- Meeting with women's groups in villages (Kendul, Shama, Maichun, Lamudiyar, Galla)
- Women from study villages attend the UMP meetings at Almora
- Designing the light trap at USNPSS, Almora
- Installing light traps in Lamudiyar village- feedback from the community
- Installation of polythene-lined water tanks in all villages
- Barbed wire fencing at Lamudiyar to prevent damage of crops by wild and grazing animals
- Installation of poly houses in all the sites
- Installation of polythene lined tanks and poly houses continues
- Preparation of report



All study villages are a part of the network of women's groups and took part in workshops organized at Almora on building up women's leadership to facilitate their equal participation in activities at village, regional levels and beyond. Listening to the experiences of women from villages, where disasters have occurred in recent years, has been a revealing experience for women from Galla, Kendul, Lamudiyar, Maichun and Shama. For example, the women from these villages could interact with the disaster struck villages of the Kedarnath valley to develop an understanding of the pressing issues and the solutions that women had sought immediately after the disaster.

#### **7avii. Modifying the designs of the polyhouse**

In response to the feedback that USNPSS had received from communities at Shama where poly-houses were installed earlier under a different project, a change in the design was made. The feedback from the community had raised the following issues:

1. Poly-houses at Shama were totally covered with plastic sheets. Lack of any ventilation facility had posed problems of survival of seeds inside the structure
2. When transplanted, the germination rate of seedlings was much lower than those of the plants grown outside the polyhouse
3. Closed polyhouses were not suitable for villages where temperature fluctuations were high, especially in the valleys, along the river banks and near the ravines

To overcome these practical problems, USNPSS modified the design of the poly house. To facilitate ventilation, use of the shade-nets was promoted. The roll-over doors in the new design could add to the facility of providing adequate ventilation inside the structure. Further, the use of the 50% net was found ideal to facilitate entry of fog and rain inside the polyhouse. The women farmers too found it better suited for growing vegetables than the older design that would become suffocating during the summers.

The width of the terraced fields was a major determinant of the size of the polyhouse which, on an average, was kept to 20ft x 10ft dimension. Proximity to the house was another consideration in selecting the site for installation. Since growing seeds/saplings require regular watering and care, polyhouses were installed near home. In Shama and neighbouring villages 48, in Lamudiyar 14 and at Galla 8 polyhouses were installed. Owing to their unsatisfactory experiences in the past, the orchardists of Galla did not encourage the activity.

During the course of the research, it was observed that the polyhouses installed earlier at Shama, Galla and the neighbouring villages had torn with age. Although the farmers said that it was useful to have a polyhouses at home, they had not been able to repair it with new sheets. Since the frame was intact, USNPSS gave them new sheets but the problem of replacement and repairs would emerge again after a few years.

### **7aviii. Capacity building of the USNPSS staff and the CBOs**

Capacity building of the USNPSS staff and the CBOs was carried out to enable them to understand the nuances of gender regarding climate change issues (Table 57).

Table 57. Capacity building workshops and meetings for the staff at USNPSS.

Serial number	Duration	Location	Participants
1	2-3.4. 2013	USNPSS Almora	The staff of USNPSS and the representatives from all the sites
2	25.4.2013	USNPSS Almora	The staff of USNPSS and the representatives from all the sites
3	9.8.2013	USNPSS Almora	The staff of USNPSS, representatives from all the sites and selected leaders from Lamudiyar village
4	25.12.2013	USNPSS Almora	The staff of USNPSS, representatives from all the sites and selected leaders from Lamudiyar village

## **8. Publications**

### **8ai. Nanda**

4500 copies of Nanda, the rural women's magazine, vol 13; year 12, were printed. The magazine publishes articles written by rural girls, women and the facilitators involved in the programme. The idea behind publishing the magazine relates to two issues:

- i. demystify the myth that reading-writing is the prerogative of educated, urban citizens and in that context promote confidence among rural citizens that they could also publish and share their ideas and work
- ii. Encourage members of women's groups to document their ideas, experiences and share them with wider networks

The in-house magazine is distributed among all members of women's groups during congregations of women and in workshops/trainings held at Almora and in villages.

### **8aii. Posters on Panchayati raj**

8000 copies of posters on panchayats were printed and distributed in villages. It is a set of four posters with the aim of promoting women's participation in panchayats. An in-house production of UMP, the set exhibits women of Uttarakhand in their different and changing roles.

### **8aiii. Pamphlets on panchayati Raj**

8000 copies of pamphlets on panchayati raj were printed and distributed to the members of women's groups during congregations, village meetings and workshops at Almora.

The pamphlet aims to promote women's participation in panchayats and motivates them to take part in fair and just election processes.

#### **8aiv. *Poster on UMP***

A poster titled “ Breaking Barriers, Creating Space: Organizing women in Himalayan village communities-The experience of the Uttarakhand Women’s Federation was developed and exhibited during a workshop in ICIMOD, Kathmandu, Nepal.

#### **8av. *Muskaan***

A total of 400 copies of Muskaan were printed in two phases, 200 copies in each phase. The newsletter contains articles, poems, stories sent by children attending libraries and sandhya kendra. Drawings of children were also published.

#### **8avi. *Calendar***

100 copies of calendar which children could paint and decorate were printed for distribution in centres. Besides children in sandhya kendras, balwadis, libraries and computer literacy, calendars were used to display women’s work in villages. Also, women attending the literacy centres use the calendar to learn relationships between the day and the date.

#### **8avii. 4<sup>th</sup> B D Pande Vyakhyaan**

300 copies of the 4<sup>th</sup> B D Pande Memorial lecture delivered by Sir Mark Tuly were printed and distributed to interested readers.

#### **8aviii. *Samvaad***

500 copies of the booklet documenting deliberations of samvaad 2012, vol 5, year 5 were printed and distributed to interested readers. Copies were also sent to the Government of Uttarakhand.

#### **8aix. *Annual Report***

40 copies of the annual report (2012-2013) were printed and distributes. In addition, the soft cop is available on line in pdf format.

#### **8b. *Films and slide show***

A 16 minute video on the adolescent girls’ education programme was prepared. The film portrays the gist of the programme

After the visit of the UMP team to Ukhimath area during disaster in 2013, a slide show was developed. The presentation includes pictures showing the severity of physical damage to resources, property, roads etc. In addition, it shows the damage to human and animal lives. The impact of disaster is captured with a special focus on women.

## 9. Collaboration with other institutions

### 9ai. Participation in seminars by USNPSS staff

a. Dr. G. P. Pande attended the workshop on *Life Based Open Learning Resource Generation* held during November 18-22, 2013 at Gujarat Vidyapith, Sadra

b. Anuradha Pande participated in a seminar “Matrishakti: The voice of women Power for Peace Building, March 6-8, 2014 at Guwahati, Assam.

### 9aii. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, New Delhi

USNPSS has been facilitating vocational training of adolescent girls in rural areas. Besides providing support to girls to learn tailoring in villages, USNPSS has collaborated with Sri Aurobindo Ashram New Delhi to provide girls with vocational training on different trades available at the institute. So far, 21 girls have completed their six months training. One of the girls from the last batch has been readmitted to pursue further training.

Table. 58. Collaboration with Sri Aurobindo Ashram, New Delhi.

Serial number	Name of the girl	Address	Course opted for	Comments
Batch 1- from April 2013 to September 2013				
1	Ms. Sapna Bora	Village Pawwadhar, Block Gangolihat, district Pithoragarh	Tailoring and weaving	Currently staying in her village, helping her mother in agricultural work
2	Ms. Bhawna Bisht	Village Pawwadhar, Block Gangolihat, district Pithoragarh	Computers	Rejoined-tailoring
3	Ms. Mamata Koranga	Village Bhainskhal (Shama), Block Kapkot district Bageshwar	Library Science	Currently staying in her village
4	Ms. Tari	Village Thuwamoni, Block Pati, district Champawat	Tailoring and weaving	Doing B.A. from Lohaghat
5	Ms. Hema	Village Thuwamoni, Block Pati, district Champawat	Tailoring and weaving	Studying (B.A.)
Batch 2- October 2013-March 2014				
6	Ms. Hema Rautela	Village Mason, PO Jalali, Bhikyasain, district Almora	Tailoring	
7	Ms. Khashti Adhikari	Village Dhunga, PO Jamoli Bhikyasain, district Almora	Handmade Paper	
8	Ms. Madhuri Saklani	Pati, district Champawat	Handmade Paper	
9	Ms. Deepa Mishra	Pati, district Champawat	Cooking, Bakery and Food Processing	
10	Manisha Manral	Village Manar, Batulabanj PO Khetikhan-263628, Champawat	Cooking, Bakery and Food Processing	
Batch 3- April 1-September 2014. USNPSS had forwarded applications of three girls from Binta and Dwarahat area (Almora). All the girls were selected for the training but two of them did not join.				
11	Km. Bhawana	village Valna, PO Bithauli, Dwarahat, district Almora	Handmade paper	

Some of the girls have been getting further opportunities to improve their skills. A few of them have been volunteering in the Ashram. This year, a total of 11 girls were sent to the Ashram (Table 63).

### **9a. Scholarships to girls**

#### **a. Late Mrs. Alka Dhawan Chatrath Scholarship**

In 2013-14, late Mrs. Alka Dhawan Chatrath Scholarship was given to Avantika Barthwal (Date of birth 20-2-95), a resident of Ukhimath in Kedarnath valley, district Rudraprayag. The area was hit by the disaster in June 2013. The scholarship contained an amount of rupees 25,000. Avantika has qualified for a GNM (General Nursing Midwife) course at Sai School of Nursing, Dehradun. The scholarship will contribute towards meeting expenses for her 1<sup>st</sup> year's course. Her academic achievement has been good (first division in High School and Intermediate). Her family income is Rs. 1,200/- per month.

#### **b. The Ahaluwalia Baradri Trust**

Monthly stipend of Rs. 1,000 each was provided to two girls attending college at Almora.

Ms. Renu Negi received the scholarship during January 2012 to June 2013. This year, she has completed her post graduation MA (Sanskrit) in first division from Kumaon University

Ms. Anita Joshi is receiving support from the trust from January 2012 onwards. Currently, she is doing her BA second year at Almora. She obtained 55% marks in her BA first year examination. She belongs to a below poverty line (BPL) family and the scholarship is of great help to her.

### **10. Library and resource centre**

The library at USNPSS is approached by students from the University at Almora campus, research scholars and students from the DIET Almora and sometimes the local residents. The representatives from our partner organizations also visit the library, particularly during their stay at USNPSS. Library subscribes to the local newspaper and few magazines.

This year, under the resource centre, kitchenware (mainly utensils) was purchased for use during lectures and other events at USNPSS.

### **11. Annual meeting with partner organizations (CBOs)**

The annual meeting with our partner organizations was held during 18-19 April 2014. Eighteen representatives from eleven CBOs participated. Each CBO presented an overview of the work during the year 2013-14 and suggested future activities. The issue of funding support for future activities was also discussed. The need of documentation of activities, particularly in relation to the adolescent education programme was discussed in detail.

## **12. Meeting of the Governing Body**

The meetings of the Governing body of USNPSS were held on 21.11.2013 (Gurgaoun) and on 29.3.2014 (USNPSS Almora). The meeting of the General Body was also held on 29.3.2014 at Almora.

## **13. The fifth B.D. Pande Memorial lecture**

The fifth B. D. Pande Memorial lecture was delivered by Shri Javed Akhtar, a renowned poet, lyricist and scriptwriter. Also, he is a nominated member of the Rajya Sabha.

Shri Javed Akhtar talked about the changes in Indian cinema. Since Almora is a small town and people exhibit considerable interest in cinema, his thoughts could influence many. “Badalte samaj ke aaiene mai cinema aur cinema ke aaiene mai badalta samaj” was followed by a long question-answer session. Mr. Akhtar responded to all the questions raised by the citizens of Almora town. Representatives from our partner organizations were also present and met Mr. Akhtar who showed considerable interest in the work that the CBOs have been doing in their villages.

## **14. *Samvaad***

Prior to this year’s Samvaad, a book release function (Samvaad 2012, vol 4, Year 4) was held at USNPSS Almora on the 14.9.2013. The proceedings of the last years Samvaad have been documented in this book and were presented to Shri I K Pande, advisor to the chief minister Uttarakhand and the Commissioner of Kumaon. 75 pesons participated. Recommendations were sent to the Government of Uttarakhand for further action.

SAMVAAD 2013, a two day workshop was held during 23-24.11.2013 with the support of UCOST, Dehradun. About 180 delegates, including a member of the Governing Body of USNPSS, Dr. Harish Pande, participated. Discussions were held on the following topics:

- i. Disasters in the hills of Uttarakhand: problems and solutions
- ii. Problems due to urbanization in the hills of Uttarakhand and their solutions

The proceedings of this year’s deliberations were documented and being printed in the book called Samvaad 2013, vol 5, year 5.

## **15. Accounts**

An audited statement of accounts is attached.

## 16. Visitors

- Dr. Kusum Arunachalam, Prachi and Priya from the Doon University, Dehradun and Dr. AK Srivastava, VPKAS, Almora participated in a meeting on NICRA, 2.4.2013, at USNPSS Almora
- Sunita Upreti, Kheti spent a week at USNPSS during 9-14. 4. 2013 to sit for their college exams
- Dr. Sanjay Mishra, Advisor and Scientist 'G' DST, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, New Delhi visited on the 9.4.2013 to see the work of USNPSS
- A group of 11 girls from Laxmi Ashram Kausani stayed for a night on the 9.4.2013
- Anita Iyer and Sarah Iyer, New Delhi visited on the 12.4.2013
- Mr. Suresh Balodi from PLAN India visited on the 21.4.2013-22.4.2013 to discuss the possibility of work in future. He made a visit to Maichun and Maniagar villages in the evening and saw the library and the evening centre
- Mr. Avadhesh Verma visited on the 22.4.2013 to discuss issues of education
- Ms. Asha D'Souza, former International consultant on development, Gender and Labour Rights visited on the 22.4.2013 to discuss the problems of waste disposal at Almora
- Prachi, Priya, Richa and Pooja from the Doon University, Dehradun visited during 25-29.4.2013 in connection with work on the NICRA project
- Dr. A K. Srivastava, VPKAS Almora visited on the 30.4.2013 to discuss the NICRA project
- Dr. H. C. Pande from Lucknow stayed with us during 4-6.5.2013 and 31.8.2013-3.9.2013
- Dr. Purnima Bali, A cosmetologist and a homeopath from the Bliss Lado Sarai village, New Delhi came over on 4.5.2013
- Mr. Ajith Basu, Chief Programme Executive, Agastya International Foundation, Bangalore made a visit to USNPSS on 4.5.2013
- Ms. Mekhala Sengupta, New Delhi, visited on 4.5.2013
- Mr. Abhay Gandhe, SDTT, New Delhi visited on 8.5.2013 to discuss a programme on *ringal* (high altitude bamboo). He met our partner organizations also and held discussions on the possibility of ringal production and expansion in Uttarakhand
- Mr. Balwant Koranga and Harish Koranga from Shama, district Bageshwar, visited during 11-12.5. 2013
- Mr. Amar Arya, Advista Naintial, came on the 12.5.2013 to design the posters on panchayats. He visited again on 29.10.2013 to design the cover page of Nanda magazine
- Mr. Manish Khanna, Nainital visited during 17-18.5.2013, 18-19.7.2013, 2-3.8.2013, 4.9.2013
- A team of members from the Municipality Almora came over to discuss issues of cleanliness of Almora town, 21.5.2103

- The Director Jan Shikshan Sansthan, Bhimtal, Mr. Gopal Prasad, came over on the 23.5.2013, 24.9.2013
- Mahesh Galiya, Ramgarh came to collect sheets of polytanks and had discussions on the possibility of expanding activities in the area, 27.5.2013
- Ms Suman Pande, New Delhi, visited on the 29.5.2013
- Ms Pamela Chatterjee and her sister from Poona visited on the 3.6.2013
- Mr. Chandan Dangi, New Delhi came on the 8.6.2013
- Ms. Arundhati Deosthale and Mr. Arvind Kumar, New Delhi and Ms. Kavita Mahajan (a writer from Maharashtra) discussed the possibility of writing books on adolescent education programme on 12.6.2013
- Ms Chitra from Jalna visited on 12.6.2013, 22.6.2013 and 12.3.2014
- Ms Anjali Naronha and Anwar Jafri from Eklavya Bhopal visited on 14.6.2013
- Dr. Yatish Agarwal (Safdarjung hospital, New Delhi) and Dr. Rekha Agarwal (NCERT, New Delhi) visited during 17-23.6.2013. Dr. Agarwal conducted a workshop on health at USNPSS on 22.6.2013
- Ms Bhagwati Joshi, Ashish and Charu Joshi along with Ms. Preeti Joshi, Head Public Administration, Jaipur University visited on the 21.6.2013
- Mr. Manu Malhotra, the Doon School, Dehradun and Sanjeeta from Azim Premji Foundation, Dehradun visited on the 7.7.2013
- Dr. Shivangi Verma, Neelam Negi and Bhavana Joshi from DIET Almora visited on the 7.7.2013 to discuss the sandhya kendra programme
- Mr. Kishan Rana visited on the 18.7.2013 to discuss the possibility of future work with UMP
- Mr. A. S. Nayal, commissioner Kumaon, visited on the 26.7.2013
- Mr. Manoj Pant, Chief Executive, Shankh inc., Mumbai visited during 1-2.8.2013. He visited again during 12-15.12.2013. A workshop on use of information and technology was held at USNPSS on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2013
- Members of the Samvaad committee attended a meeting at USNPSSs on the 2.8.2013
- A workshop and film screening on the third death anniversary of Girda was held on the 22.8.2013. About 75 delegates from Almora, Nainital and Garhwal participated
- Mr. Kamal Joshi, a research scholar, IGNOU visited in relation to his work on the patwaris of Uttarakhand, 11-12-13.9.2013
- Ms. Ritu Sugani, a consultant, Jaipur, currently at Paparsali visited on the 12.9.2013
- Book release on Samvaad was held on 14.9.2013. 75 delegates participated
- Ms. Megha from Aarohi, Pyura came on the 15.9.2013 to discuss the computer literacy programme
- Mr. Ashok Dayal, Brig (retd.) Sartaj Singh and Dr. Ramesh from the Rajeshwar Sushila Dayal Charitable Trust, New Delhi visited on the 28.9.2013. Representatives from the Mangal Deep School Almora also came to discuss their work
- A group of 12 female students from Banasthali and Kurukshetra University stayed at USNPSS on 5.10.2013
- Dr. Rashmi Pant, IP College, New Delhi came on the 5.10.2013 and on 9.10.2013



- Mr. Kailash Puspawan, Ukhimath visited on the 6.10.2013 to discuss installation of a fruit processing unit to help women in disaster hit villages in Kedar valley
- Mr. Umesh Joshi, Kapkot came on the 9.10.2013 to discuss schooling of children in disaster hit areas in Pindar valley. He came again with his colleagues on the 26.11.2013
- Mr. Michael Currie and Kyle, Delhi Caledonian Society, the British School, New Delhi visited on 9.10.2013 to discuss possibilities of work in disaster hit villages in Uttarakhand
- Mr. Arvind Kumar, A and A publishers, New Delhi came on the 31.10.2013
- Rajeev and Uma Joshi, UK visited on the 1.1.2013
- Dr. A. K. Srivastava came from Dehradun, stayed at USNPSS during 19-21.11.2013, and held discussions on the NICRA programme
- Rashmi and Rajneesh, Avani, Berinag visited on 2.1.2013
- Ms. Kiran Aswal, MAII (Geography Department) came to consult in connection with her thesis, 12.12.2013
- Ms. Pat Horn, International coordinator, Street net international, Durban, South Africa and Mrs. Pamela Chatterjee visited on 13.12.2013
- Mr. Atul Pant UK conducted a workshop on use of modern technology in education during 14<sup>th</sup> and followed it up with teachers and students from Mangal Deep School from 15.12.2013 onwards for two days. For almost a month, the students kept practicing on the equipment that Mr. Manoj Pant had installed at USNPSS
- Dr. O. P. Yadava and Mrs. Yadava New Delhi visited on 24.1.2013 and 27.12.2013
- Mr. Anand Pande, New Zealand, and Mr. Ishwar Iyer, Mumbai visited during 27-29.10.2014
- Ms. Pankhuri Chaudhari and Ritu came in connection with the ICSSR project on 28.1.2014
- A group of eight Australians from CERES visited during 1-3.2.2014
- A team of officials from the Income Tax department, Almora visited on the 6.2.2014
- Ms Piyali and Mr. Manoj Pant, Mumbai visited during 24-25.2.2014
- Dr. Andreas Benz, Freie University, Berlin centre for development studies, department of geography visited on 11.3.2014

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Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora

List of Governing Body for year 2013-14

Sl.	Name	Occupation	Address
1	Shri Arun Singh (Chairman)	Former M.P. and Union Minister	Binsar P.O. Ayarpani, Almora
2	Shri D. P. Joshi (Member)*	I.F.S. (Retd.)	Jubilee Villa, Cantt., Nainital 263002
3	Dr. H. C. Pande (Member)	Former Vice Chancellor	1/97 Vijay Khand Gomti Nagar, Lucknow
4	Dr. B. K. Joshi (Member)	Former Vice Chancellor	217, Indira Nagar, Phase 1, P.O. New Forest, Dehradun
5	Shri Suman Dubey (Member)	Editor	N-125, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi- 110017
6	Ms.Ratna Sudarshan (Member)	Advisor, ISST	India Habitat Centre, Upper Ground Floor, Core 6A, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110003
7	Ms. Manini Chatterjee (Member)	Editor	B-27, Press Enclave, New Delhi - 110017
8	Dr. Lalit Pande (Member Secretary)	Director USNPSS	Manorath Sadan, Champanaula, Almora 263601

\*deceased July 2013

Special Invitees:

9	Prof K. S. Valdiya, F.N.A.	Scientist	Shubhangan, Longview Compound, Nainital
10	Dr. M. G Jackson	Former Professor	D-92, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Sector 36, Noida (U.P.)- 201303
11	Shri K.S. Mallick	Retd Civil Servant	Ganga Niwas, Kasar Devi, Almora 263601
12	Smti Anuradha Pande	Social worker	USNPSS, Almora
13	Shri Vikram Mehta	Brookings, Delhi	Binsar, Almora
14	Col C.S. Pant (Retd)	Consultant Radiologist	Green Park, New Delhi
15	Shri Deb Mukharji	IFS Retd, former Ambassador	C-71 IFS Apartments, Mayur Vihar-1, Delhi -91
16	Dr O.P. Yadava	CEO, National Heart Institute	Kassar Devi, Almora

**USNPSS Almora**

**Staff 2013**

<b>SNo</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Work exp in USNPSS</b>
1.	Dr Lalit Pande Director	M	Ph.D.in Mechanical Engineering, Purdue University USA S.M.in Mechanical Engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. USA B.Tech (with distinction) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi Awarded <i>Padma Shri</i> by the President of India	26 years
2.	Ms.Anuradha Pande	F	MSc. (Geology), Kumaun University Nainital, Post Graduate diploma in environmental management, Lucknow	20
3.	Dr G.P. Pande	M	MSc. PhD Botany, Kumaon University, Almora	19
4.	Ms. Champa Joshi	F	M. A. (Hindi), Kumaun University, Almora campus	18
5.	Ms. Rama Joshi	F	Intermediate, U. P. Board	18
6.	Ms. Renu Juyal	F	B.A. Kumaon University	8
7.	Sri Kamal K. Joshi	M	M. A. (History), Kumaun University, Almora campus	18
8.	Sri D. S. Latwal	M	B.A. Kumaon University	8
9.	Sri Kailash Papne	M	B.A. Kumaon University	5
10.	Sri Jeevan C Joshi	M	Inter science	25
11.	Sri Suresh Bisht	M	Intermediate	19
12.	Ms. Jaishree Pokharia	F	M.Sc. Botany, Kumaon University, Almora (SRF)	2.5
13.	Ms. Deepika Dimari	F	M.Sc. Life Sciences, Doon University (SRF)	2.5
14.	Sri Divan Matiyani	M	Class 11	11
15.	Sri Deepak Pande (PT)	M	MA Sociology, Kumaon University (PT)	12
16.	Sri Mohan Singh	M	Class 8	5

मनीष खन्ना एण्ड क.

सहद लेखाकार

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### To The Members of Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryawaran Shiksha Sansthan

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of **Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryawaran Shiksha Sansthan** which comprise the Balance Sheet as at March 31, 2014, the Income and Expenditure Account and the Receipts and Payments Account for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of these financial statements. This responsibility includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with the Standards on Auditing issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India. Those Standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error.

In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Company's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of the accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.



Nature is a great economist - Gilbert White.

• Independence

• Integrity

• Fidelity

• Professionalism

मनीष खन्ना एण्ड क.

समद लेखाकार

Manish Khanna & Co.

Chartered Accountants

30, 1st Floor, Pichari Bazar, Mallital, Nainital - 263001

Telefax: +91-5942-238757

Greenmail: Karma.and.prayers@gmail.com

**Opinion:**

In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the accounts, read together with the Statement on Accounting Policies and Notes to Accounts attached thereto give a true and fair view in conformity with the accounting principles generally accepted in India:

- in the case of Balance Sheet, of the state of affairs of the entity as at the end of its financial year; and
- in the case of the Income and Expenditure Account, the surplus for its financial year.
- In the case of the Receipts and Payments Account, the receipts and payments reflected therein

For Manish Khanna & Co.

Chartered Accountants

Firm Registration Number : 008584C

Manish Khanna, FCA, DISA(ICAI)

Partner

Membership Nos 077858

Dated: August 14, 2014

Place: Nainital



Nature is a great economist - Gilbert White.

• Independence

• Integrity

• Fidelity

• Professionalism

**Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora**  
Balance sheet as at 31 March 2014

**Sources of funds**

**Capital Fund**

Opening balance	36,15,220.27
Add: Corpus donations-FCRA	1,60,715.00
Total capital fund	37,75,935.27

**Reserves**

**General Reserves**

Opening Balance	13,23,126.88
Add: Current year's appropriation	7,31,317.19
Specific Reserves	20,54,444.07
Opening Balance	19,35,848.93
Less: Expenditure met from reserves	- 3,29,797.00
Add: Current year's appropriation	33,25,557.75
Total reserves	49,31,609.68
Total sources of funds	69,86,053.75

**Utilization of funds**

**Net current assets**

<b>Current assets</b>	
Cash in hand	15,163.00
Cash in bank	34,52,298.62
Balance in bank in fixed deposits	1,03,35,536.00
Income tax deducted at source	2,04,437.00
Total current assets	1,40,07,434.62

**Less Current liabilities**

Unspent grants in aid [Annexure A]	32,45,445.60
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**Net current assets**

**Total utilization of funds**

1,07,61,989.02
1,07,61,989.02

Notes to accounts and significant accounting policies - Annexure - "B"

For Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan

*Jeewan C. Joshi*  
Jeewan C. Joshi  
Accountant

*Dr. Lalit Pande*  
Dr. Lalit Pande  
Secretary

This is the balance sheet referred  
to in our report of even date  
For Manish Khanna & Co. (FRN 008584C)  
Chartered Accountants

*Manish Khanna*  
Manish Khanna, FCA, DISA(I/CAI)  
Partner

Membership Nos 077858  
Dated August 14, 2014



Camp Almora



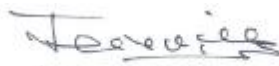
Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora  
Income and Expenditure Account  
for year ended 31 March 2014

<u>Income</u>	Amount (Rs)
Administrative charges	3,15,000.00
Receipts from imparting training workshops	3,49,500.00
Donations	35,55,003.00
Interest on bank deposits	6,51,233.94
Miscellaneous Income- Sansthan	1,410.00
Interest on income tax refund	3,301.00
	<u>48,75,447.94</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>48,75,447.94</u></b>

<u>Expenditure</u>	
Asset purchased - application of income for charitable purpose	6,500.00
Bank Charges	1,079.50
Boarding and lodging	2,09,664.50
Books and Periodicals	16,392.00
Electricity, Water and Taxes	15,984.00
Miscellaneous expenses	10,638.00
Scholarship	25,000.00
Insurance	12,117.00
Legal Expenses	5,000.00
Meeting Expenses	9,870.00
Postage and telephone	5,052.00
Repairs and maintenance	62,086.00
Livelihood generation programmes	68,829.00
Salary	2,54,519.00
Staff Welfare	9,798.00
Stationery	6,885.00
Travel	9,401.00
Workshops	89,758.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b><u>8,18,573.00</u></b>

<b><u>Current year's surplus appropriated</u></b>	<b><u>40,56,874.94</u></b>
a. General Reserves	7,31,317.19
b. Specific Reserves	33,25,557.75
	<b><u>40,56,874.94</u></b>

For Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan


  
Jeewan C. Joshi  
Accountant

  
Dr. Lalit Pande  
Secretary

This is the income and expenditure account referred to in our report of even date

For Manish Khanna & Co.  
FRN : 008584C  
Chartered Accountants



  
Manish Khanna, FCA, DISA(ICA)  
Partner  
Membership Number 077858  
Dated: August 14, 2014  
Camp Almora

Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Payavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora  
Receipts and Payments Account  
for the year ended 31 March 2014

Receipts	Amounts [Rs.]	Payments	Amounts [Rs.]
<b>Opening balances</b>		<b>Utilization of grants</b>	
Cash in hand	57,742.00	1. Rajeshwar Sushreea Dayal Charitable Trust	24,42,912.00
Cash in bank	12,04,280.87	2. Jamselji Tata Trust	53,16,769.19
Fixed Deposits	74,39,385.00	3. NICRA	15,94,246.00
<b>Grants Received</b>		4. ICSSR	84,125.00
Rajeshwar Sushreea Dayal Charitable Trust	24,42,924.00	5. SAMVAD	94,566.00
Jamselji Tata Trust	47,77,434.00	6. Usha Bhagat Girl Training Programme Grant	20,285.00
NICRA	15,78,592.00		
ICSSR	19,41,450.00	<b>Revenue Payments related to Sansthan</b>	96,52,904.19
SAMVAD	87,945.00	Asset purchased - application of income for Charitable purpose	6,500.00
	1,08,28,345.00	Bank Charges	1,079.50
<b>Revenue Receipts</b>		Boarding and lodging	2,09,664.50
Administrative charges	3,15,000.00	Books and Periodicals	16,392.00
Receipts from imparting training workshops	3,49,500.00	Electricity, Water and Taxes	15,984.00
Miscellaneous Income- Sansthan	1,410.00	Miscellaneous expenses	10,638.00
Donations	35,55,003.00	Scholarship	25,000.00
Interest on bank deposits	6,51,233.94	Insurance	12,117.00
Interest on income tax refund	3,301.00	Legal Expenses	5,000.00
	48,75,447.94	Meeting Expenses	9,870.00
<b>Capital Receipts</b>		Postage and telephone	5,052.00
Corpus donations		Repairs and maintenance	62,086.00
	1,60,715.00	Livelihood generation programmes	3,77,445.00
<b>Other Receipts</b>		Salary	2,75,700.00
Income tax refund	59,969.00	Staff Welfare	9,798.00
		Stationery	6,885.00
		Travel	9,401.00
		Workshops	89,758.00
		<b>Income tax payments</b>	11,48,370.00
		Tax deducted at source	1,21,613.00
		<b>Closing balances</b>	
		Cash in hand	15,163.00
		Cash in banks	34,52,298.62
		Fixed Deposit receipts	1,03,35,536.00
			1,38,02,997.62
	2,46,25,884.81		2,46,25,884.81

For Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Payavaran Shiksha Sansthan

*Jeewan C. Joshi*

*Dr Lalit Pande*

This is the balance sheet referred to in our report of even date For **Manish Khanna & Co.** (FRN 008584C) Chartered Accountants



Manish Khanna, FCA, DISA(CAI) Membership Nos 077858]  
Partner  
Dated: August 14, 2014  
Camp Almora



Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Parvavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora

Financial Year ended 31 March 2014

Annexure "A" to Balance sheet - Grants-in-aid

Name of the grant	Balance as at 1.4.2013	Receipts during the year			Amount spent	Balance as on 31.3.2014
		Amount received during the year	Interest credited to grant	Total grant funds available		
1. Rajeshwar Sushela Dayal Charitable Trust	11.38	24,00,000.00	42,924.00	24,42,935.38	24,42,912.00	23.38
2. Jamsetji Tata Trust	16,81,191.00	47,07,000.00	70,434.00	64,58,625.00	53,16,769.19	11,41,855.81
3. NICRA	16,408.41	15,78,592.00		15,95,000.41	15,94,246.00	754.41
4. ICSSR	-	19,41,450.00		19,41,450.00	84,125.00	18,57,325.00
5. SAMVAD	-12,949.00	87,945.00		74,996.00	94,566.00	-19,570.00
6. Usha Bhagat Girl Training Programme Grant	2,85,343.00			2,85,343.00	20,286.00	2,65,057.00
Total	19,70,004.79	1,07,14,987.00	1,13,358.00	1,27,98,349.79	95,52,904.19	32,45,445.60

Deputy

Secretary



## Uttarakhand Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan

Financial year : 2013-2014

### Significant accounting policies

1. Method of accounting: Items of earnings and expenditure are accounted for on cash basis.
2. Accounting of fixed assets: Fixed assets acquired out of grant funds are carried at values arrived at after deducting the amount received for their acquisition. Fixed assets acquired out of own funds are treated as application of income and reflected in the income and expenditure account in the year of their acquisition.
3. Accounting of grants: Amounts received by way of Grants are reflected in the Balance Sheet until utilized and upon utilization, the balance if any, is transferred to the Income and Expenditure Account.

Unutilized grant is considered as income if not refundable and conversely, excess expenditure on grant if not recoverable is treated as expenditure.

### Notes to accounts:

Total assets acquired by the Sansthan till March 31, 2014 either out of grant funds or from own funds are :

Office equipment	557,544.96
Vehicle	708,852.00
Furniture & Furnishing	41,346.00
Computer	93,078.00
Library	437,178.50
Solar Water Heating System	23,938.00
Multifunction system	88,200.00
Portable hard drive	5,600.00

In terms of accounting policy no. 2 mentioned above, the carrying value of the assets is nil.

During the current year fixed assets amounting to Rs 6,500 were acquired

*Calilande*  
*Tejveer*





Members of women's groups from Kumaon and Garhwal participate in a training programme on panchayati raj. Women are encouraged to contest elections and support each other. Photo was taken at USNPSS, Almora.



A meeting of the members of women's groups at USNPSS, Almora.



A meeting of the members of women's groups from Kumaon and Garhwal at USNPSS, Almora.





Posters developed by UMP were put on the walls in villages. This photo is from Muvani town, district Pithoragarh.



Members of women's groups displaying the posters during a congregation at Jalali, district Almora.



UMP staff from Almora displaying the posters on panchayats at Danya, district Almora.



UMP staff in a women's literacy and education centre at Airoli village, district Chamoli.

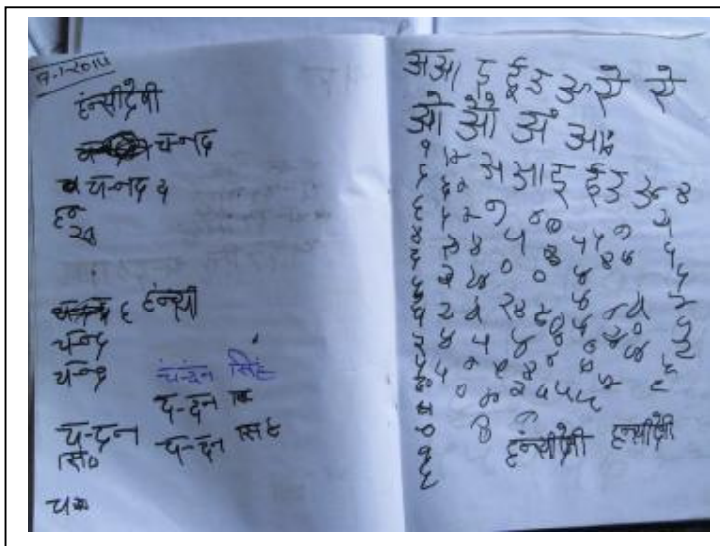


Women's literacy and education centre at Gogina village, district Bageshwar.

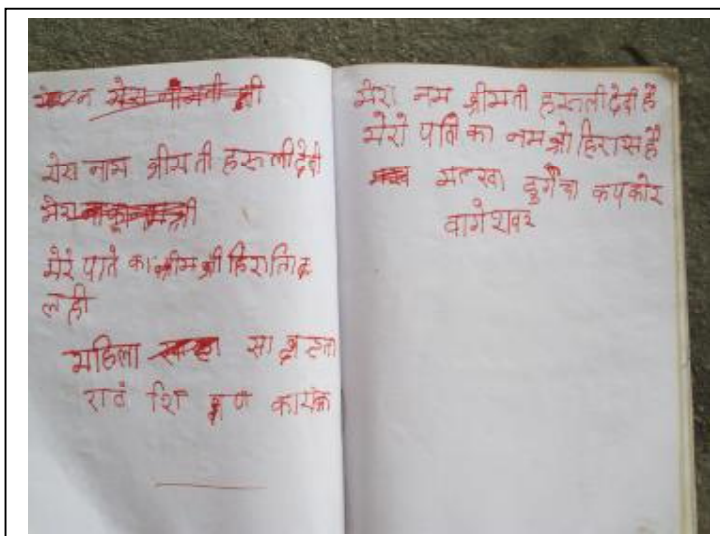


Women's literacy and education centre at Dasili village, district Almora.

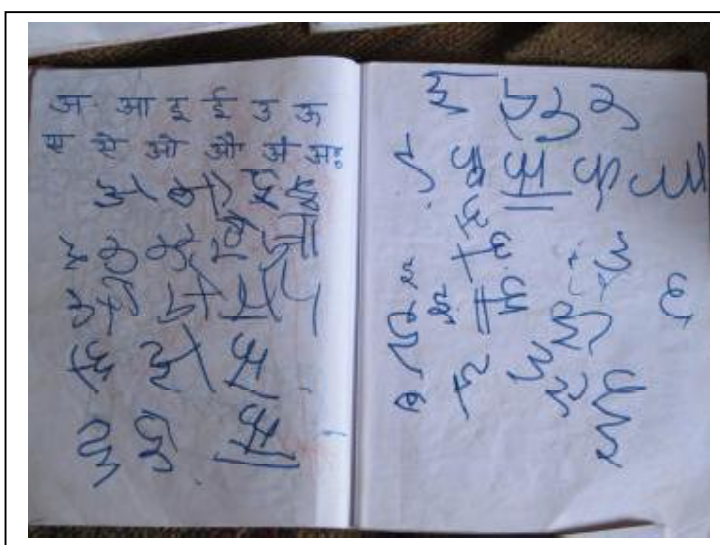




A woman attending the literacy and education centre learns to write her name and numbers and alphabets. Village Movani, district Pithoragarh.



women learn to read and write the address of their village Malkha dugarcha, district Bageshwar.



A woman learns to write alphabets in Diyarkot village, district Chamoli.



A Women's literacy and education centre at Malkha-dugarcha village, district Bageshwar.



A learner at Ratirkethi village, district Bageshwar.



UMP staff from Almora helping women out in leaning at the literacy and education centre at Liti-dhura, district Bageshwar.





Pamphlets were prepared by UMP to promote participation of women in panchayats. Kukdai village, district Chamoli.



Pamphlets to promote participation of women in panchayats were distributed during village meetings, Shama, district Bageshwar.



Posters on panchayats were put up in villages. This photograph is from Ukhimath, district Rudrapur.





Evaluation in progress at  
Digarkoli village,  
Ganaigangoli, district  
Pithoragarh.



Evaluation in progress at  
Kukdai village, district  
Chamoli.



UMP staff from Almora for  
evaluation of the  
programme at Malkha-  
dugarcha village, district  
Bageshwar.



Rural women's congregation at Jalali, district Almora.



Women come to participate in a mahila sammelan (congregation) at Badhani, district Chamoli.



The Director, USNPSS, addresses a rural women's congregation at Jalali, district Almora.





Widows are encouraged to speak up during village meetings and congregations of women. Photo from Danya, district Almora



A widow addressing women during a congregation at Dwarahat region, district Almora.



A widow addressing the village meeting at Gogina village located a few miles away from the Namik glacier, district Bageshwar.



A sanitary latrine at Kandi  
village, district Pauri  
Garhwal.



A sanitation facility at  
Chaundali village, district  
Chamoli.



A sanitation facility at Naini  
village, district Chamoli.



Young women were widowed due to floods in Kedarnath valley in June 2013. Ukhimath, district Rudraprayag.



Six months Pregnant, Prema, lost her husband during the disaster at Kedarnath, district Rudraprayag.



This old woman at Chunni village had lost her son during the floods at Kedarnath. She is left with her daughter-in-law (in the picture) and very young, differently abled children.





Girls get married at an age of 17-18 years in villages around Ukhimath. This woman lost her husband during floods in Kedarnath, district Rudraprayag, June 2013



A young member of UMP from Paithali village lost her husband due to floods in Kedarnath area in June 2013. Twice a day she walks uphill and downhill to leave her son at school.



This woman at Gwar village had lost her 21 year old son during the disaster at Kedarnath. Now, calling the name of her son, she runs through the village and comes back with wet eyes.



A shelter to install fruit processing unit was constructed at Ukhimath, district Rudraprayag.



Women, especially widows, from disaster hit villages in Kedarnath valley were involved in the process of extraction of juice from malta (a locally grown fruit), Ukhimath, district Rudraprayag.



Women in Kedarnath area were trained in knitting. This is to strengthen their base for alternative livelihoods as pilgrim-based income has been jeopardized due to the recent disaster (June 2013). After training, they will take the machines to their villages to involve more women.





Learning material in  
a balwadi. Locally  
available material is  
used to create  
educational aids.  
Danya, district  
Almora



Children in a  
balwadi in Ritholi  
village, district  
Chamoli.



Children in a balwadi  
at Simli village,  
district Chamoli.





Training of facilitators running sandhya kendras and the libraries at USNPSS, Almora.



Adolescent girls are not allowed to play in villages. During training at USNPSS Almora, an effort is made to break this taboo.



During training, facilitators of sandhya kendras and the libraries play in the evening at USNPSS, Almora.



Children in a sandhya Kendra,  
Shama, district Bageshwar.



Children learn fractions in a  
centre at Ratirkethi, district  
Bageshwar.



Girls are encouraged to take  
part and learn from various  
activities in the sandhya  
Kendra. This photo is from  
Shama, district Bageshwar.





After a very successful event of *bal-mela* children in Bhanaar centre receive a scale and pencil each. District Bageshwar.



Remoter the village, greater is the number of children attending libraries and sandhya Kendra. This photo is from Ratirkethi village, district Bageshwar.



Children in a sandhya Kendra at Gogina, District Bageshwar.



Children attending libraries bring out their own newsletters and put them up during *pustakalaya-bal mela*, (children-book fair) village Badhani, district Chamoli.



Girls are encouraged to play. This photo is from Batulabanj, district Champawat.



Girls take part in essay writing, debates, painting and chart making competitions during the *pustakalaya-bal mela*, (children-book fairs). Photo from Pati, district Champawat.





A village library at disaster hit village in Ukhimath area, district Rudraprayag.



Libraries at disaster hit villages became counselling centres for communities. Children were kept busy to divert their attention from sadness and grief that prevailed in villages due to death of men at Kedarnath in June 2013. This photo is from Karokhi village, district Rudraprayag.



Children in a library at Mangoli village, district Rudraprayag. The village was hit by a massive landslide in 2012 in which more than 20 people including children died.



Adolescent girls learn computers at Shama, district Bageshwar.



A school-going girl attends computer literacy centre at Dogari kandeï village, district Chamoli.



Children attend computer literacy centre after school, Maniagar, district Almora.





Adolescent girls attending a workshop at USNPSS, Almora.



Adolescent girls attending a workshop at USNPSS, Almora.



Adolescent girls attending a workshop at USNPSS, Almora. Girls are exposed to different ways of learning and creating educational materials on their own.



Adolescent girls attending a workshop at Nagarkhan, district Almora.



Adolescent girls are encouraged to take part in group discussions and present their views before the USNPSS staff and school teachers. This photo is from Pati, district Champawat.



Adolescent girls attending a workshop at Muvani, district Pithoragarh.





A workshop with the adolescent girls in Ambedkar Bhavan, village Tuproli, Ganaigangoli, district Pithoragarh.



*Kishori sammelan* at Dwarahat, district Almora. Girls are encouraged to speak up.



*Kishori sammelan* at Bhikiyasain, district Almora. Members of women's groups also attend.



*Improved varieties of seeds of millets were provided to farmers. Mandua (local millet) crop at Kendul village, district Pauri Garhwal.*



Threshers were supplied to selected villages under NICRA project.



Millet thresher in use at Lamudiyar village, district Almora, was provided under the NICRA Project.





Traditional methods of threshing of paddy. Photo from Kendul village, Nayarghati, district Pauri Garhwal.



Paddy thresher was provided by USNPSS to communities to reduce the drudgery of women's work. Photo from Kendul village, Nayarghati, district Pauri Garhwal



Old people living alone in villages were benefitted by the availability of paddy thresher. Photo from Kendul village, Nayarghati, district Pauri Garhwal







Installing a polythene-lined water tank at Lamudiyar village, district Almora.



Communities use water from the polythene-lined tanks for domestic purposes, except for drinking and cooking, village Lamudiyar, district Almora.



Polythene-lined water tanks at village Galla, district Nainital. Water from these tanks is used for the purpose of raising apple and peach saplings in the village nursery.



Installing a green house at Lamudiyar village, district Almora.



Modified design of the poly-house and a water tank at Lamudiyar village, district Almora.



Fencing of the village commons to prevent damage to vegetation from wild and domestic animals. Selling grass is a livelihoods option at Lamudiyar, district Almora.

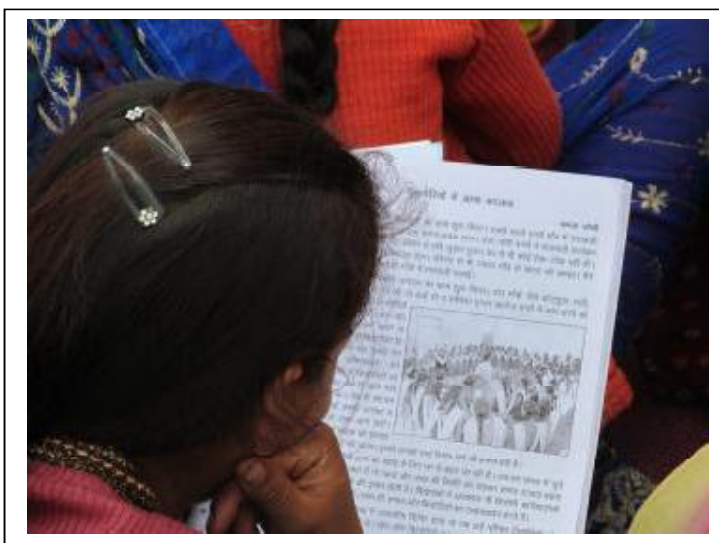




Nanda, A rural women's magazine, is read by women all over the hills of Uttarakhand. This photo is from Danya, district Almora.



Rural women and girls are encouraged to write for the Nanda magazine. This photo is from Muvani, district Pithoragarh.



Adolescent girls read and write for Nanda magazine. This photo is from Nayarghati, district Pauri Garhwal.



SAMVAAD-2013 at USNPSS  
Almora.



Shri Javed Akhtar speaking on  
the occasion of the 5th B D  
Pande Memorial lecture at  
USNPSS, Almora



During his visit to Almora, Shri  
Javed Akhtar met the  
representatives of community-  
based organizations from  
Kumaon and Garhwal regions.