



Creating Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities and Building Climate Resilience - Half Yearly Report

(Apr 2025- Sep 2025)

Project *Udaan* (giving wings) - Focused on the Indigenous Women and Girls of Madhya Pradesh, India



Submitted by
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Overview

Indigenous women and girls in Madhya Pradesh face multi-dimensional marginalisation, shaped by their social status, gender and poverty. Living in remote villages with limited access to education, healthcare and stable livelihoods means they are often excluded from development processes. Their dependence on precarious, informal work makes them particularly vulnerable to climate instability, which directly compromises household incomes and food security. For these women, diversifying livelihoods through skill-building and sustainable practices is essential to breaking cycles of poverty and building resilience.



*This map highlights the **Indore District**, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, with a smaller inset in the top left corner showing Madhya Pradesh's location within India*

Programme Participants

Project Udhaan - meaning 'to give wings' as named by the partner organisation, which reflects the transformative power of livelihood building in rural communities. In the first six months of the second year, this project has reached a total of 2,978 women and will continue to reach more in future.

Goals

- Equip women and girls with skills for self-employment through training in areas such as food processing, terracotta production and sustainable agriculture.
- Facilitate access to existing government schemes and benefits to enhance household security and social protection.
- Build collective strength through Self-Help Groups and Vigilance Committees, enabling women to lead community initiatives and participate in local governance.
- Promote climate resilience through awareness-building, adoption of sustainable practices and diversification of income sources.
- Establish market linkages and community enterprises to help women generate sustainable and independent livelihoods.

Key Accomplishments

- 844 Participants reached through meetings on health, governance, and environment
 - Women attended and raised issues in 7 Gram Sabha meetings
 - Local problems were resolved in several villages
- 20 Women completed beauty parlour training
 - Computer training setup initiated
- 10 Women earned income through food processing
- 2 New SHGs formed under NRLM
- 195 Participants trained on climate change
- 350 Saplings planted
- 82 Farmers adopted organic practices
- 154 Individuals linked with gov schemes
- 212 Assisted through special camps



Initiatives and Activities



Climate Change and Environmental Awareness

- A total of **1950 villagers participated** in climate and environmental awareness programmes.
- **82 farmers** adopted natural farming methods.
- **350 saplings were planted**, including neem, mango and jamun.
- **4 women** established kitchen gardens after Environment Day Awareness

Government and Welfare Linkages

- **Women participated** in Gram Sabha meetings **across seven villages**, raising issues such as water scarcity and road access.
- **154 applications** were facilitated for government schemes
- Under Dharti Abha Tribal Village Utkarsh Abhiyan, **212 community members** completed documentation and applied for schemes through the camps set up



Digital Information Centre

- The **Digital Suchna Kendra assisted with government schemes** such as Ayushman Bharat, PM Matru Vandana Yojna, and PM Gramin Awas Yojna.
- **Coordination with government departments** helped villagers apply for and access benefits

Skill Development and Livelihood Training

- **Beauty Parlour Training:** 20 women and adolescent girls underwent a 2-month training, received certificates and developed business plans.
 - Some now provide home-based beauty services, earning a small but consistent income.
- **Computer Training:** A trainer was identified, and the required equipment was procured. Mobilisation for training participants is ongoing.
- **Food processing livelihoods:** 10 Women who received training last year have expanded their product range and are now producing and selling potato chips and sago (*sabudanna*) chaklis.
- **Self-help groups (SHGs):** 2 new SHGs were formed, registered with NRLM and began savings activities.
 - Women were supported with documentation and banking procedures to enable this, improving financial literacy and independence.

Production-Cum-Shop and Training Centre (Badgonda)

- The **centre continues to produce and market local products** - chips, papad, terracotta goods, incense sticks, jute bags, Ganesh idols, and rakhis.
- Artisans **created decorative clay items for Diwali** (season of high demand)
- Ongoing **efforts for online presence** to expand digital sales channels

(See stories of impact below for examples of success)



Girls supporting the Snacks Exhibition of Indigenous Women



Basic Computer Skills Training



Computer Skills Training to Indigenous Young Women and Girls



Awarness Session on Climate Change and Environment



A Master Trainer from the Community providing Wellness and Beauty Culture Training

Challenges and Responses for Future

Challenges	Responses	Outcomes
Meetings were difficult to organise as women often prioritised daily work over attendance	This was combated by hosting a larger number of meeting	Overall more women were reached
Women made Ganesh idols and Diwali lamps, but clay cracked due to weather conditions	Production activities are currently on hold	Production will resume once the weather stabilises
Frequent changes in staff (<i>Sewa Sakhis and Centre-In-Charges</i>)	New members were recruited and trained	Field operations were stable again
Unavailability of government officials to tend to issues	Continuous follow-ups via phone calls and repeated visits to respective departments	Tasks were completed after consistent efforts, overcoming uncooperative officials
Beneficiaries lacked required documents, threatening access to welfare schemes	Assisted beneficiaries with documentation and follow-ups across Panchayats, Janpad Panchayats, banks, post offices, and district-level departments	Significant time and repeated follow-ups ensured that women became more familiar with the procedures
Many women were hesitant or fearful to participate in Gram Sabha meetings	Seniors encouraged participation, and repeated meetings helped build women's confidence	Few women successfully participated in Panchayat meetings
Chips and Papad Skill training saw some errors in measuring ingredients during preparation	Trainers provided additional guidance to correct quantities	This enabled the women to improve their methods

Future Action Plan

- Conduct computer training sessions.
- Provide information on 180 government schemes and support beneficiaries in reaping the benefits.
- Form an additional new self-help group (SHG) under the NRLM.
- Hold meetings with the existing NRLM groups and facilitate regular savings deposits.
- Follow up with the Panchayat on issues raised in previous Gram Sabha meetings for resolution.
- Organise camps in 10 Panchayats for school students' Aadhaar card registration.
- Organise a camp in Badgonda Panchayat for the issuance of Sambal Cards.
- Discuss community issues and engage with the Gram Panchayat for necessary action.
- Conduct community meetings.
- Raise awareness among 1,500 community members on climate change.



Stories of Impact

01 Ghoda Khurd: A Small Success of Community Struggle

During a community meeting in Ghoda Khurd village, women raised a pressing issue - the shortage of water. The problem affected the entire village, disrupting domestic chores, animal care, and children's school attendance.

The Centre-In-Charge from MSSN and community members met with the Sarpanch to explain the gravity of the situation, to which the Sarpanch reassured action. Their persistence through regular follow-ups paid off. Within 15 days, a new hand pump was installed, benefitting 40-45 tribal families.

Additionally, after a recent budget allocation, the process of laying a pipeline from the water tank located outside the village will begin, providing the villagers with relief. The villagers expressed gratitude to the Sarpanch and the organisation. The water problem was resolved, making daily life easier.



02 Empowered Voices: Kehraphali's Road to Change



Before Construction:



After Construction:

In Kheraphali, a sub-hamlet under Manglia Village, home to roughly 100 families, reaching anywhere meant travelling through unsafe, unpaved, potholed paths caused great inconvenience to residents. Women repeatedly asked for a proper road, but nothing changed.

The issue became urgent after a tragic incident in 2021, when Babulal, the husband of resident Resham Bai, lost his life after slipping and drowning in a nearby pond. Deeply affected, Resham Bai realised that poor road conditions and negligence were not just inconvenient but dangerous for the entire community.

Determined, Resham Bai filed a complaint through the Chief Minister's Helpline. When state officials followed up, the Panchayat Secretary falsely claimed the road had already been built and even submitted misleading photos. Resham Bai was pressured to withdraw her complaint with the assurance that it would be addressed, but still no road was constructed.

In 2024, during a meeting under the *Udaan* program, this issue was raised again before the *Sewa Sakhi*. Together, Resham Bai, women from the community and the *Sewa Sakhi* presented a written application to the Gram Sabha, demanding action. When officials argued that construction was impossible due to lack of land, women went door-to-door, talking to families about the importance of the road. In an inspiring act of unity, the residents of Kheraphali collectively agreed to donate portions of their land to make construction possible.

Within 2 months of continuous follow-up the road construction was approved and completed. Its completion has greatly improved mobility and safety, marking a significant achievement in collective action and women-led local governance.