

Srijan Foundation

1. Year of Establishment: 2001

2. Mission Statement:

To empower poor, marginalized and excluded communities to demand their rights and entitlements, creating successful models of grassroots development through direct field interventions for replication and developing capacities of CBOs & Civil Society Organizations to promote collective action and influence institutions that shape peoples' lives, especially women and children.

3. Key Achievements:

- Mobilizing 457 self-help groups (SHGs) with 4980 members across three districts, we have trained 1371 signatories on group dynamics and financial literacy. This has empowered women to take charge of their lives, fostering a supportive ecosystem for grassroots development.
- Empowering 150 female sex workers (FSWs) through the JSS program, we have equipped them with knowledge of their rights and entitlements, promoting dignity and well-being within their profession.
- By establishing 13 Alternative Education Centres, we have provided bridge courses to 83 adolescent girls, opening doors to better opportunities and breaking barriers in education. Interactive sessions, including sports and creative arts, have imparted essential life skills to women and girls.
- Through the efforts of SHGs and AGYW (Adolescent Girls and Young Women), we have identified cases of violence against women, including child marriage and child labor. These interventions have contributed to building safer communities.
- Working directly with 424 adolescent girls and 209 young women, we have transformed mindsets and fostered interest in education. Celebrating special days and organizing sports events have further highlighted the importance of child rights and protection.
- By linking women farmers to Krishi Vigyan Kendra's for organic farming, providing poultry farming opportunities, and offering training in mushroom farming, we have enhanced livelihoods and income generation for 150 women.
- Facilitating linkages with various government schemes, we have ensured that 2500+ individuals have access to health, life, livelihood, and social security benefits.

4. Challenges Faced:

- Challenging traditional mindsets regarding women's roles and rights proved difficult in some areas. To address this, we invested in extensive community engagement, conducting awareness campaigns, and promoting success stories of empowered women to foster acceptance and understanding.
- Empowering female sex workers faced social stigma and resistance. We created safe spaces, offered training, and partnered with relevant authorities to advocate for their rights and dignity.
- Introducing sustainable agricultural practices required overcoming skepticism and building trust among farmers. We organized field demonstrations, farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing, and provided input support to build confidence in new methods.
- Promoting girl child participation in sports faced resistance from conservative mindsets. We organized sports tournaments, showcasing the talent and potential of girls to break stereotypes and garner community support.

By adopting a participatory approach, fostering collaborations, and being adaptable, Srijan Foundation has overcome these challenges, creating a more inclusive, empowered, and resilient community. Our commitment to addressing the root causes of inequality and involving stakeholders has been instrumental in transforming lives and shaping a more equitable future for all.

5. Strategies for Success:

Empowering Leadership and Capacity Building: At Srijan Foundation, we believe that empowering women as leaders and building their capacities are crucial strategies for success. By providing them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and confidence, we enable them to take charge of their lives and become catalysts for change in their communities.

Promoting Safe Migration and Countering Trafficking: Our organization focuses on promoting safe migration practices and advocating for the right to mobility, particularly for women and vulnerable groups. By raising awareness about the risks of trafficking and offering support to potential migrants, we contribute to the prevention of human exploitation and abuse.

Community Engagement and Mobilization: We emphasize community engagement and mobilization to ensure that development efforts are participatory and reflective of the communities' actual needs and aspirations. This inclusive approach fosters a sense of ownership and cooperation, strengthening the impact of our interventions.

Creation of a Supportive Ecosystem: Srijan Foundation recognizes that sustainable development requires collaboration and coordination among various stakeholders. We actively work towards creating a supportive ecosystem involving government agencies, NGOs, and civil society to ensure our interventions are well-coordinated and have a lasting impact.

Sensitizing Men as Caring Partners and Responsible Fathers: Gender equality cannot be achieved without the involvement of men. We implement programs that sensitize men to become caring partners and responsible fathers, breaking down traditional gender norms and fostering a more supportive and egalitarian environment.

Building Confidence through Sports Promotion: By actively promoting sports activities like football tournaments and other engaging events, we have instilled a sense of self-assurance and empowerment in the participants. Through these platforms, girls have showcased their talents, challenged stereotypes and gained community recognition.

Federation Models of Peer Groups: Building strong and supportive networks is central to our approach. The federation model of peer groups has played a crucial role in creating a sense of solidarity and collective action among women and adolescent girls. By bringing SHGs, AGYW, and other stakeholders together in federations, we have fostered an environment of mutual learning, sharing, and support.

Child Rights and Protection Program: In the realm of child rights and protection, we adopt a comprehensive approach that includes direct livelihood support to families and linking them with existing government schemes. Additionally, our federation model of peer leaders ensures that children's voices are heard and their rights are protected.

Sustainable Agriculture and Livelihood Program: Our sustainable agriculture and livelihood program incorporates a Farmers Field School (FFS) approach, promoting community practices and reducing drudgery through innovative tools and techniques. We focus on increasing production and ensuring household food and nutritional security by providing training and capacity building to women farmers. Moreover, we advocate for alternative sustainable livelihood options to reduce dependency on traditional practices.

7. Lessons Learned:

- Our journey with Srijan Foundation has shown us that when marginalized communities come together and demand their rights as a collective force, their voices become stronger and more influential in shaping their lives positively.

- We have learned that understanding and respecting the local context is crucial for successful grassroots development. Tailoring interventions to suit the specific needs and challenges of each community ensures more sustainable and impactful outcomes.
- Our experience has taught us that when women and children are empowered, the entire community thrives. By focusing on their leadership and capacity building, we have witnessed transformative change in families and society at large.
- We have realized that sustainable development requires a supportive ecosystem involving government agencies, NGOs, and civil society. Collaborative efforts lead to more efficient and effective solutions
- Sensitizing men as caring partners and responsible fathers has proven vital in promoting gender equality and fostering a safer environment for women and children.
- Promoting alternative sustainable livelihood options and skill development has opened up new avenues for marginalized communities, reducing their dependency on traditional practices and enhancing their economic well-being.

8. Impact Assessment:

- Before implementing any project or program, we conduct thorough baseline surveys and need assessments to understand the existing socio-economic conditions, challenges, and aspirations of the communities we serve. This initial data forms the foundation for evaluating progress and impact.
- We establish clear indicators and outcome mapping frameworks at the beginning of each project. These indicators are aligned with our mission and objectives, enabling us to track progress and measure success effectively.
- To capture the human impact of our interventions, we engage in qualitative data collection methods, including focus group discussions, interviews, and case studies. This enables us to understand the nuanced changes in attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions within the communities.
- Throughout the project implementation, we have established robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Regular data collection and analysis allow us to make timely adjustments to strategies, ensuring our interventions remain effective and relevant.

- Community feedback and input are essential components of our impact assessment. We involve beneficiaries and stakeholders in the evaluation process, seeking their perspectives on the effectiveness of our interventions and areas for improvement.
- Impact assessment is an ongoing learning process for our organization. We continuously analyze the data, learn from successes and challenges, and adapt our strategies to better serve the needs of the communities.

9. Ultimate Strong Point of Success:

Communities at the grassroots level: We have cultivated strong relationships with beneficiaries, ensuring that their needs remain at the core of our strategies. By promoting collective action, we have witnessed how ordinary individuals can bring about extraordinary changes. Our ability to innovate and adapt, keeping pace with evolving challenges, has further fortified our position as a trusted partner in sustainable development.

10. Future Ready:

- We aim to expand our successful grassroots models to reach more marginalized communities across regions, making a broader impact on the lives of women and children.
- Recognizing the importance of resilience, mental health support in vulnerable communities, we will design projects and interventions that focus on equipping them with the necessary tools and skills to overcome adversities and build stronger, more sustainable livelihoods. As part of our future goals, we will incorporate mental health support and awareness initiatives to ensure the emotional well-being of beneficiaries and promote a positive outlook on life.
- By working closely with government bodies and policymakers, we seek to influence positive policy changes that support the rights and entitlements of marginalized communities. Also, strengthening collaborations with corporate entities and international organizations will enable us to pool resources and expertise, driving impactful development initiatives.
- We plan to leverage technology to enhance the scalability and efficiency of our interventions, ensuring a wider reach and higher impact. Embracing the digital age, we will prioritize digital literacy programs that empower individuals with essential digital skills.

- Given the challenges of climate change, we aspire to integrate climate-smart practices into our agricultural and livelihood programs, promoting sustainable practices for long-term resilience.
- We envision engaging and empowering the youth as change agents for community development, instilling a sense of responsibility and leadership among the younger generation.

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