

2007-08 ANNUAL REPORT

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Content

Foreword.....	3
The Organization	4
The Operational Area.....	4
The Operational Area.....	5
Flood Support Continues	5
Flood Rehabilitation.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Understanding life After Flood – to evolve sustainable rejuvenation plan	6
Replicating Previous Program	6
HIV/AIDS Counseling Center	7
Comprehensive Eye Service	7
Safe Drinking Water	8
Women Empowerment - Women Health & Safe Motherhood.....	8
Lok Adhikar Yojna	9
Rejuvenating - Health System	9
Rebuilding – Resources	9
Water Resources Development.....	10
New Initiatives	10
Solar Lights.....	10
Quality Embroidery to Enhance and Sustain Livelihood of Poor in Remote	11
Linkages with Government Initiatives.....	11
Network and linkages for Health System Improvement.....	11
Output & Outcomes of year 2008.....	12

Foreword

DHARA, has been working in the difficult terrain of arid region of southwestern Rajasthan. We work for empowering poor and deprived community for increased access to basic requirements such as health, education, drinking water, and resource base in rural areas. DHARA follows the principles of resource development and productivity through efficient management practices, focusing on aspects of sustainable development incorporating; **Promoting harvesting and storage of rain water; Optimizing per unit water productivity; Improving local vegetation to sustain land productivity and Animal husbandry-agriculture cycle re-establishment.**

Our supporters Action Aid, SCF, UNICEF, CEE-UNDP, Government of India, IGSSS and SDTT for further strengthened our even this time of emergency. We are grateful for the cooperation and support of all these agencies if state and national government, international and United Nations agencies. Last but not the least; we thank the people of the communities we worked with. We seek your support and cooperation to keep up our endeavor with dedication and commitment. We promise to all an honest effort.

This year was the year of new initiatives at DHARA Sansthan and its operational Area. It started two initiatives namely **“Enlightening the Huts” with solar lights and “Weaving the Livelihoods” through quality embroidery work with remote villages so as increase their role in market.**

All our efforts together have created some positive results in towards development of poor and deprived section of the area. This report tried to document all our philosophies, actions, processes, learning and achievements so far at different fronts of human development, which we have experienced during the year 2007-08.

Mahesh Panpalia
Chief Executive

The Organization

Vision

To create exploitation free society on the principle of social justice and gender equality

DHARA - Society for Development of Health Hygiene and Rural Action, is a registered society working for developmental of poor and deprived sections with special emphasis on women and child development at health and education front. It also helps system in reaching out to remote and difficult villages and hamlets. Similarly in Education and water resources sector it works as small-scale service facilitator agency. During recent years DHARA started playing role of empowerment of deprived part of community dalits, women, physically challenged and children around development services and basic right issues. DHARA seeks to improve the overall status of rural communities especially tribal through creating awareness and capacity building of providers.

The Mission

To improve the living condition of women by strengthening there livelihood, health and education; enabling them to build accessibility and control over issues affecting their lives.

The objectives

- Creating awareness of various issues pertaining to health (including reproductive health, female-infanticide, gender discrimination, service delivery point etc) in the community
- Capacity building and sensitizing deprived sections of community for local leadership
- To organize rural women (Mahila Mandals) and involve them in the process of development
- To increase accessibility of education facilities for deprived girls, boys and physically challenged
- To facilitate resource (Land, Water, financial, livestock etc) development and management for poor members of society
- To help community to gain knowledge and skill for additional livelihood improvement opportunities

The Operational Area

DHARA Sansthan initially started its activities in Barmer district and now during this year it also spread its activities in adjoining parts of Jalore district.

The operational area the Barmer and part of Jalore districts, except a few isolated hills, characterized by vast sand covered stretches for miles and miles and form part of famous “**Thar Desert**”. The area is known for its dryness extreme temperatures and erratic rainfall. The area has extremes of temperature, sandstorms and paucity of rainfall. In some years the temperature soars up to. Schedule Casts (SCs), Schedule Tribes (STs) and refugees of Indo-Pak wars constitute most of the population of the district. Almost 80%

Barmer district at a Glance		
	Barmer	Jalore
Total area sq. km	28,387	10640
% Of State area	8.29	3.11
House holds		238489
Total Population	19,63,758	1448940
Males (Census 2001)	10,35,813	737880
Females	9,27,945	711060
Total Literacy rate	59.65 %	46.5 %
Male Literacy	73.64 %	64.7 %
Female Literacy	43.91 %	27.8 %
Sex Ratio	896	921
Population density persons /sq. km.	69	136
Sub-divisions	Barmer, Balotra Gudamalani	Jalore Bhinmal
Tehsil	8	5
Development Blocks	8	7
Common Crops	Bajra; Gwar; Sesame: Barley;Wheat; Sarso; Gram	
Maximum Temp.	51 ^o C	48 ^o C
Minimum Temp.	6 ^o C	8 ^o C
Average Rainfall	30 cm	41.9 cm

population in the district is engaged in agriculture while the other main occupations are animal husbandry and handicrafts.

Flood Support Continues

During August 2006 when Flood struck the desert district of Barmer, Barmer district where desert conditions prevail and overall living pattern of the community matches with the water less conditions, but it was sudden down pour which caused a situation which was totally different, this lead to the condition of

collapse of houses-*katcha*¹ and *semikatcha* most of the fertile soil moved away with water flow; 100 % crop was washed out leading to shortage of food grain and fodder. **The situation was beyond the control of local community, voluntary agencies were moving around and were supporting with their available sources, then came forward various agencies.**

Understanding life After Flood – to evolve sustainable rejuvenation plan

As community in desert region and environment conditions both are tuned for water scarcity conditions, but occurrence of flood in Barmer region has left community with a situation of risks for which community is not prepared. Thus DHARA Sansthan felt need of documenting resource situation and taking community views to come up with appropriate solutions and help them in restoring the natural resources situations that existed earlier. **The over all goal of the study is to understand situation of changes taken place in natural resources and environmental conditions in the area and their effects on the overall livelihood of poor community and other forms of life.** The specific objectives of the study are:

The study is already instituted with following activities

- Interaction with community leaders in the affected area (men and women)
- Analyzing all the information available on flood situation in the area with regards to land, water, life, livelihood, plants, animals etc.
- Discussions with scientists' community about the precautionary approaches to prevent floods in desert region. (CAZRI, disaster management cell, KVK, AFRI, metrological department etc.)
- Consultation with agencies involved in promotion of livelihood interventions in the state such as livelihood mission.

Replicating Previous Program

There are many projects, which DHARA initiated earlier in order to support programs of Empowerment of Women and other deprived section through Education and Health. Barmer is a low literacy region especially among girl, mainly due to prevailing gender bias, social taboos, and involvement in household lack of transport availability etc. Thus to address issue of **high drop out after primary education** DHARA initiated "Rehabilitation and education for child labour" and "Nutrition Supplement support for school going children" and creating environment suitable for education – linkage, advocacy and motivation.

For health improvement DHARA focus mainly on preventive measures for disease control through motivation for immunization against life risk diseases of the

¹ Mud house made from local material not able to with stand water;

children and mother. Beside routine immunization, activities also focused to control prevailing anemia among women especially pregnant women and children. This is achieved through continued and regular contact drives.

During the year health camps were organized during summer months pre-flood situation in remote villages of Dharasar and Ramji Basti in the operational area of Ramsar CHC. During the health camp women, children, adults and males were checked and treated for diseases like viral fever, malaria, sexual diseases, immunization of children and pregnant, reproductive problems, cough, stomachache, headache etc. Later health camps were organized for flood-affected areas.

HIV/AIDS Counseling Center

It was in the year 2000 when district hospital and DHARA sansthan started a counseling center on HIV/AIDS at Barmer hospital. The center gets support from Rajasthan State AIDS Control Society (RSACS) Jaipur, through District AIDS Committee (DAC) Barmer. These years there were 233 clients (Male 183 and 50 female) were provided pretest and posttest counseling through the counseling center. From which 128 (Male 83 female 45) patients were found HIV positive to whom medical support provided from the government. It is regular counseling and operational style of center staff, which has gained the confidence of community members, and now more members are coming forward with hesitation some of patients also referred for the clinical treatment. This year 8 out of 233 visitors were found HIV+; the increase in HIV positive patients among counseled members is as given below.

Comprehensive Eye Service

With the specific purpose of “Sustainable, accessible, affordable and acceptable quality Comprehensive Eye Services including rehabilitation and education” in Siwana block of Jaore district DHARA Sansthan and Sight Saves have come together and started this initiative with the specific objectives of.....

1. All identified visually impaired children are integrated into mainstream education facility
2. To identify irreversible blind and low vision persons of the project area and provided rehabilitation service to them
3. To identify person with low vision and eye problems (3800 children, 6340 adults) and provide them with proper counseling and treatment.
4. To spread awareness among the village community, its elected representatives and concerned government functionaries in the project area (118 villages) about all the aspects of Comprehensive Eye Services

5. To develop local human resources in the form of CES workers who belong to the project area to address the various issues of eye care in the block during the project and after completion on the project
6. To advocate the local administration to take appropriate measures for addressing any gap in the eye care related services that are to be provided to the people in the area.

During this year the project activities included following activities

Safe Drinking Water

In desert regions during flood situation one of the major issues that works at fore front is availability of safe drinking water. Therefore volunteers were identified and trained for testing water quality monitoring with parameters such as testing pH values in water; how to convert brackish water into potable water; purification of available water

Women Empowerment - Women Health & Safe Motherhood

Barmer district is known for low sex ratio and situation of other Human Development Indices (HDI) is also not very good. All these symptoms putting together are indicative of gender bias existing in the society. DHARA Sansthan is specifically focuses its activity to reduce this bias existing in the society and trying to bring women in mainstream development of the nation. The specific intervention can be classified as one of the common characteristics of Barmer is that of poor health status of women, High MMR, IMR and anemic women and children. Considering these facts DHARA Sansthan started working on the issue of **“Women health and safe motherhood”** programme. This programme is presently attended through two projects supported by **Sir Dorabji Tata Trust-SDTT, Mumbai and Indo-Global Social Service Society- IGSSS, New Delhi**. The project is implemented with the specific objectives of problem faced by women in Barmer.

Activities included

1. Organising women Groups
2. Capacity building
3. Training of TBA (Traditional Birth Attainers)
4. Linkage and strengthening of ANM based grassroots level health system
5. Flood Relief and rehabilitation support
6. Organising village health committee
7. Networking with government system
8. Immunization drive for pregnant women and children
9. Promoting Family planning
10. Registration of pregnancy, ANC & PNC

Sl No	Particulars	IGSSS Support	SDTT Support	Action Aid	Total
1	Number of Villages	10	22	5	37
2	Block	Chohatan	Ramsar	Ramsar	2 blocks
3	Families in villages				
4	Total SHGs	8	18	18	44
5	SHG members	98	186	205	489

Lok Adhikar Yojna

Lok Adhikar Yojna is an initiative of Action Aid India to “**empower deprived section of community**” focusing on dalit community through information and organization about their rights. The project includes operating Panchayat Resource centers in three Gram Panchayat of Barmer, Shiv and Pachpadra block. The project included formation of groups like **Dalit Self Help Groups, Women Self Help groups and Youth groups**, Village and Panchayat Dalit Committee. Project also participated in district level rally of physically Challenged Children; women right; management of drought work organised by LAY network. During the year training were organized on the aspects leadership building for women groups; and Dalit rights.

Rejuvenating - Health System

Dhara Sansthan, as reflected in its name “Development of Health, Hygiene and Rural Action” indicates its deeper linkages to the issue of health. DHARA it self has grown with the issue of health. Barmer is an area spread over in 28783 sq km and poorly connected remote villages. It is observed that in Desert villages, where health facilities are located at long distances and transport facilities are poor, any minor ignorance/delay causes “fetal” situation. There are many diseases, which if given attentions and timely action is taken, losses can be controlled. Therefore one of the key focuses of DHARA activity is awareness generation, skill building, and local treatment etc of deadly diseases. Some of the initiatives are; HIV/AIDs Counseling Center (VCTC); Immunization Campaign; training of ASHA members training under NRHM of central government.

Rebuilding – Resources

Desert area offers conditions, which hampers natural growth of child mainly due inability of their parents on account of proper food, shelter, cloths and education.

The capacity of parents to provide proper growth environment to their children is dependant on resource ownership and annual weather condition to support. This year was again a year of difficulty for community in these region livelihood resources have faced problem due to flood situation affecting.

- Land degradation due to washing away of fertile top soil
- Encroachment of fields by sand moved in along the flood
- Water storage tankas/tanklis were breached /filled with water
- Most of the cattle and small ruminants died during flood and diseases afterwards
- Seeds, implements, washed away and remain submerged in water for longer duration
- Landlords were not in position to cultivate their fields reducing opportunity for landless community for labour.

Water Resources Development

In desert region water is one of the most important resource but highly scarce commodity. A good amount of household labour, time and money is spent on arrangement of water. Lack of proper storage is one of the contributing factors to this long lasting problem in the area. DHARA has been active in the field of water harvesting and water storage support and guidance to community in remote and difficult areas. Till 2008 March DHARA could help poor families in remote Dhanis of villages through support of construction of Tanka and Tankali. Further to reduce drudgery of women this year DHARA brought out new concept of fitting handpump on Tanka and Tankali reducing efforts and also protecting the source from contamination in all hand pumps are installed

New Initiatives

This year was the year of new initiatives at DHARA Sansthan and its operational Area.

Solar Lights

It was a long awaited dream come true for DHARA, as it had been trying to convince various stakeholder for bringing light to the huts in remote desert region, but it was only this year we could convince a well meaning organization BASIX who in their – livelihood Triad Fund under SDC support included the promotion of solar light for remote Dhanis. This is innovative project in it self also as it is the first project

DHARA has been doing as the component of community buying the light. In this project there are three parties involved BASIX-DHARA and Grameen Surya Bijali Foundation (GSBF). Till now 52 families have already opted and installed. Later it was recognize that there are some families who can not pay the cost at a time thus a component of loan is also incorporated in it and 10 people have also bought it for loan.

Quality Embroidery to Enhance and Sustain Livelihood of Poor in Remote

Linkages with Government Initiatives

Collaborating with government and improving access of poor families to government schemes is one of the major thrust areas of DHARA. In this strong belief to work with government, this year there were continuation of different previous initiatives and also start of various new initiatives

Network and linkages for Health System Improvement

DHARA believes that health facilities in the form of PHC, CHC and DHC can be effective through proper trained and dedicated staff to cover villages spread over in a district with large spread area. DHARA is a participating agency involved in facilitating health staff

(Lab Technicians; Senior technical supervisor and Data entry operator)

in association with the office of CMHO, Barmer. DHARA Sansthan participated in preparation of District

Net works where DHARA is involved as member and resource trainer

1. Rajasthan Voluntary Health Association, Jaipur
2. Umangdhorari (Chetna, Jaipur)
3. Dist. Coordination Committee
4. Dist. AIDS Committee, Barmer
5. Swayam Sidha Yojna (ICDS, Barmer)
6. Lok Adhikar Network (Action Aid, Barmer)
7. Former member of Block Bounded Labour Society
8. Master Trainer in Health Management (ASHA & Other)
9. Resource Person for State Sanitation Program
10. Member Jilla Mahila Sahayta Samiti, Barmer

Health Action Plan for in survey data collection, analysis and development of Action plan in association with SPRI () under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).

Output & Outcomes of year 2008

Through various intervention of DHARA Sansthan in 67 villages of Barmer and Jalore Districts has result into some of the positive changes for the overall benefit of community development. These achievements are

- This year DHARA could able to provide water storage capacity for 260 families 12 two villages, mainly to flood affected community. This helped in reduces water purchase cost for these families by 30 %.
- We could able to increase access of poor families to health system in 32 villages of seven Panchayat in Barmer Panchayat Samiti.
- DHARA could able to help AIDs Suspect cases in identification and counseling.
- As an active member of Lok Adhikar Manch we are able to create vibration within society. Panchayat and local groups have recognized DHARA as a change agent and started coming forward for new initiatives.
- Harvesting of Rainwater has helped 260 families in reducing risk of Fluoride a effect due to mixing of water.
- Around 700 women in different villages are organsied into 67 Self Help Groups, who have started thinking in line of "WE" and started better livelihood options through bank loan.
- Our involvement with Health System in Barmer helps us to motivate infrastructures for the betterment of society and larger coverage.
- Initiating installation of hand pumps on water storage tanka and tankali saving efforts for women and children and also protecting the sources from contaminations.
-