

Annual Report - 2022 -2023

Astha Sansthan



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Astha Annual Report 2022-23

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Preface from the Co-Coordinating Directors

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for everyone's ongoing support, as we present the 36th annual report of Astha. It is because of your continuous guidance that we can complete this long journey. The year 2022-23 has remained full of challenges and opportunities- both for us. This year Astha has started the handholding procedure and made changes in the leadership. Following Astha's traditions and values as per the organization's needs, the governing body handed over the leadership responsibility to the senior leaders who have been associated with Astha, for a prolonged period of time. This responsibility has been handed over to two experienced senior colleagues for the program and governance of Astha, and the responsibility of mentoring (& supporting) them has been given to the senior leaders.

This year as per the strategy of Astha, an assessment of the situation of the People's organization has been done so that they can become more independent in carrying out their functions. Currently, we are in the process of further assessing various aspects of the sustainability of people's organization. The strengths of the leaders were analyzed and the potential areas were identified through the means of need assessment, which can further help in identifying where they need the support of Astha in carrying out the programs. It came out in the assessment that the situation varies from Sangathan to Sangathan some might need handholding support whereas some have established themselves in a stable condition. This process helped Astha in gaining clarity on the role that it has to play in the near future. In this sequence, a retreat was held with the Astha team so that the team could strategically take the work forward with an understanding of Astha's values and ethics.

Non-renewal of FCRA has remained a major concern throughout the year, despite that Astha continued to work with the community-based organizations and Ekal Naari Shakti Sangathan with extending its base all over in Rajasthan. Along with working continuously above and beyond at the state, district and village level.

Astha in a combined effort with the collaboration of network partners at the state level advocated for community forest rights, implementation of the PESA act, MGREGA, and social security of single women. The networking group also initiated discussions with the relevant government departments at state and district level for policy level changes and effective implementation. As a part of it a campaign was started to increase the number of days of work in MGREGA and also to increase the minimum wage. This also includes advocating for social security on a broad scale, increasing the pensions of women, the disabled, elderly. Consistent efforts and steps have been taken to initiate the social change.

At the village level with the initiatives of the gram sabha, in addition to local issues, the issues of climate change and the environment, followed by the sustainable use of resources, control, conservation, and utilization along with learning the ways of managing them has been discussed and progressed significantly. For gram sabha to function as a village institution for this purpose preparations to enhance the leadership of men and women have been started so that they can become independent and function on their own as an independent local institution and reduce dependency on Astha.

This year, the issue of women's land rights for single and tribal women has also been our focus area for work. Even for tribal women, this issue was crucial because they were traditionally required to leave their husband's home after their husband's passed away, leaving them vulnerable. The Forest Rights Act now grants land rights to both husbands and wives, resulting in empowering women. Women's participation in management along with the forest management committee and the process of securing their forest-related livelihood has strengthened. Similarly, after the death of her husband efforts have been made to open a final account on revenue land in the name of herself and her children and implement it as per her understanding. The Ekal Naari Shakti Sanagthan's initiatives on women's land rights have helped women become even more powerful.

Women moving forward by doing organic farming work for themselves followed by sharing knowledge with fellow women has proven a milestone in the agriculture sector, people started recognizing women as "farmers". Initiatives such as Nutrition garden, and seed conservation have proven helpful for sustainability and improved health standards over the period at the field level.

The work with The National forum of single women in other states has also gained momentum after covid. The group in a collective manner is trying to overcome the challenges and started working towards the goal for which the forum had been formed -to empower the single women across India. Participants from 06 states met in Udaipur. They shared their reflections while working with women in exercising their rights, they also discussed their own challenges at the meeting. Successful case studies were discussed, and the women took a stand in support of one another.

In the history of the organization, the CBOs base was strengthened and the leaders of the CBOs started operating independently, its results can be seen today from their achievements, they have made their independent identity and have a distinct character at the local, state, and federal levels. One of the reason behind this success is the successful advocacy with the government which also include some joint initiatives. The CBOs have also played an active role in the effective implementation of social security schemes of the government for the needy.

For Astha, Leadership is a social capital. Astha has worked with People's organization for a longer period using a participative approach to the ideals of equality, fraternity, and unity. Where the disadvantaged and marginalized sector get their rights and lead a dignified life. Astha's faith in people has resulted in strengthening the people's participation in democracy.

In continuation to this, we have presented this year's annual report and we hope for your continuous support and suggestions.

Shyamlal Purohit , Kamendra Singh Rathore
Coordinating Directors

Introduction

"Astha" is a Hindi word which means "Faith". Astha has Faith in the people, in their abilities, strengths, and knowledge. Astha believes that these capabilities are being suppressed by the dominant forces of society and as a result, people themselves don't recognize their inherent capabilities. Thus, Astha decided to work with people, to make people recognise their inherent capabilities.

Astha has a rich field-based experience of 34 years; the work area of Astha has been primarily Rajasthan, but also on the national issues and larger forces and policies affect the conditions in Rajasthan, and at the local level it addresses those as well. Astha believes that the capabilities of poor, tribal, marginalized and women; are being suppressed by the dominant forces, and the result is that people themselves don't recognize their underlying capabilities. All through these years, Astha was working with/on/for the issues of the poor, deprived, tribal, marginalized and vulnerable sections of society.

The activities and programs of the organization mainly focus on the rights-based approach – organizing the unorganized poor, marginalized, tribal and women, strengthening the local self governance and discussion, advocacy with government departments. Astha's rich experience of organizing and mobilizing people has led Astha and the associated People's Organizations into important leadership roles as part of larger campaigns and awareness in Rajasthan and at National level. Work of the organization is being assessed by the team through regular monitoring, periodic reviews, internal evaluation process every year and major evaluation by the external evaluators, every three years.

Vision- Mission

Mission: Astha's Mission is to help people to organise, expand their capacities and empower them to bring change in the condition of various deprivations under which they live.

Astha focuses on "bottom-up" strategy meant doing a solid piece of fieldwork, and getting involved with the lives of people.

The fieldwork strategy has evolved to one which helps people to become organised, and aware to work on the problems they face, through a combined strategy of empowerment and constructive action.

Because the problems facing the poor, oppressed, exploited are deep-rooted and complex, Astha also has the strategy of having Resource Units to do the research, networking, linkages and trainings so that those working at the grassroots can be effective in empowered through capacity building for constructive action.

About Astha

What Astha Thinks About.....

Astha does not believe that it is the role of NGOs to "parallel the government", to do what the government does or should be doing. Astha does believe that the poor and

oppressed cannot wait for the government nor for the NGOs, for that matter, to come and solve their problems - they will have to collectively do that work themselves. Astha, as stated above, does believe in the strength and ability of the poor and oppressed, but we also know that in all the centuries of India's history, the poor have not usually gotten organized around injustice or exploitation, have not collectively analyzed their situation all by themselves. Some catalyst or outside intervention is necessary to get this process going and to nurture it to be strong. And that is the role of NGOs, to be that catalyst to help the poor to become organized and aware, to work on the problems they face. The Astha team of social activist educators does what they can do, and The People do what they can do, and together, we bring in a new society marked by more peace, justice, love, equality than what exists today!

Objective

- To work on the economic, social problems of the poor and disadvantaged by helping to bring into existence groups and organizations of the poor and disadvantaged, particularly in the rural areas.
- To work with the groups of the rural poor on the problems they face. This work will include help with program planning, leadership training, issue-based training and linking with others with a similar concern.
- To conduct continuing, functional, liberating educational programs, particularly for the underprivileged sections of the society.
- To conduct participatory research projects on problems affecting the poor and disadvantaged in society, and to place the results of that research before groups, agencies, institution, departments etc, working in that field.
- To collaborate, and maintain links with the other organizations, groups, and networks working with the poor.
- To establish and maintain libraries and documentation resource centers for the related material.

Strategy

- I. ***Independent People's Organizations***– We have observed that ***deprived, exploited, poor people are normally unorganized, due to which they don't understand their abilities and strength and that's why they are unable to change their conditions.*** Astha, with its deep conviction about people's strength, feels that ***until they are organized, they would not be able to recognize and use their collective strength.***
- II. ***The Necessity of Women's Participation and Leadership***- Astha believes equally that ***women's participation and leadership in the processes of social change are very crucial.*** Through our experience, we feel that for sustainable development and social change, it is necessary that women participate in the process in leadership roles.

- III. **Knowledge is Power**– Astha believes that knowledge is power, and knowledge comes from teaching and learning, from action/reflection, from analysis of root causes. Once people have the knowledge, they can make use of it. Thus, the Astha team has decided that ***one of our main strategies would be to do extensive training involving sharing knowledge and analyzing problems, working towards an action plan, carrying out the plan and then back together for reflection-on-action.*** Action-reflection is an effective medium for gaining knowledge.
- IV. **Advocacy for Policy Change**– The fourth main pillar of Astha's work is Advocacy for Policy Change in favour of the poor and deprived sections of the society. It was decided that Astha would focus its attention on ***bringing necessary amendments in existing laws, policies, schemes and Acts, and acting as a pressure group*** along with the People's Organizations, to work for changes in laws, policies, schemes and Acts that are more "pro-poor".
- V. **The "Macro" and "Micro" are linked**– Astha focuses on developing an understanding in the People's Organizations and in the structures of Astha itself, about ***how the global/national/ larger problems and regional/local situations are connected.*** Astha also focuses on ***how, in a democracy, government policies and laws are influenced by the collective action of people,*** and that people's organizations have the strength that is significant to make the government accountable and answerable to the citizens.
- VI. The above five dimensions along with the deep conviction in the strength and capacities of the people have made the dream come true as "Astha". Astha began its work with the commitment towards people and having faith in them. That faith has been confirmed and verified over more than three decades of work.

Tribal Development Resource Unit (TDRU)

As a hub for information on tribal matters, the Tribal Development Resource Unit has been established. The main objective of that is to help the community-based organizations of southern Rajasthan to become strong and independent.

- a. To work in the direction of implementation of Tribal Self-Governance Act (Panchayat Provisions Extension Act on Scheduled Areas) and Forest Rights Act.
- b. To take forward the process of increasing the leadership capacity of community-based organizations, nurturing mature and alternative leadership.
- c. To work for policy change in collaboration with like-minded organizations at the state and national level on the issues and problems of tribal society.
- d. Supporting Capacity Building and Organization for Tribal Communities:
 - a. Enabling Village Assemblies for Participatory Village Development Planning.

- b. Enabling Village Assemblies for natural resource management under the forest rights act through accreting Community and Individual Forest Rights.
- c. Ensuring Tribal Women's Economic empowerment through MGNREGA.
- d. Centering tribal women's leadership and equal participation through training of Women and Men Community Leaders in 475 tribal villages.
- e. Access to Government Entitlements – schemes and programs.
- f. Strengthening Communities for demanding accountability and transparency in Governance.

The unit is working on the issues and problems of Adivasis through various community-based organizations in Udaipur, Dungarpur, Banswara, Pali, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Pratapgarh districts of southern Rajasthan. In which, mainly in Kotra, Jhadol, Girwa, Kherwara, Bali, Desuri, Kushalgarh, Sajjangarh, Dungarpur, Jhathri, Simalwada and Sagwada blocks. Continuing the above work, this year also, efforts were made in the role to support community-based organizations and villages to strengthen the work of tribal self-governance, community forest rights and forest management, women's leadership development, economic and social empowerment.

I. Strengthening Village assemblies as per PESA:

Astha believes in bottom-up, inclusive strategy that includes community leaders, members of community-based organisations, and women at its centre. The village assembly serves as the main focal point for tribal self-governance activities. The assemblies were assisted in the execution of the Tribal Self-Governance Act by the People's organisation in the field. According to PESA, the states must grant Panchayats in the Scheduled Areas the rights and authority required for them to operate as institutions of self-governance. This year the focus was to completely fill the Gram Panchayats with villages operating in accordance with PESA standards so that residents could more effectively forward their



local agenda and demands at the Gram Panchayats forum in the form of the village development plan. To achieve this, capacity building of the leaders and community members was actively done by the organization which also includes holding dialogues and stakeholder consultation with the like-minded individuals. As a result, Out of the 475 direct intervention villages this year, 321 of village assemblies have created their own village development plans. These plans are inclusive in character and put a special emphasis on the needs of women, people with disabilities, and other marginalized and vulnerable groups in society.

II. Access to Community Forest Rights-(CFR)

Astha's efforts continued for the forest rights of the tribal community like in previous year's .During this phase, the community and the government were the two main stakeholders, and the focus completely shifted to community forest rights. Using strategies of advocacy, capacity building, and dialogues helped in ensuring that people have access to their entitlements. The campaign's strongest point was that it extended beyond Astha's field area, attracted participation from all around, and gave everyone a sense of significance. In line with this the major accomplishment was when the government itself rolled out the CFR campaign. Another campaign, "Prasasan Sang Gaon" (State Government's campaign for improved local administration with village) in response to the ongoing efforts, which makes it easier to prepare 178 CFR claims, in this year 162 villages has prepared their forest management plan, currently this year 182 villages are exercising to implement forest management plan. In this year after prolonged efforts 90 villages acquire their community forest right entitlement. Astha's field team served as the process's driving force and backend support in the entire process and were there at every step from mobilizing to organizing. They also generated awareness and provided training to the forest management committee members for preparation of claim documents and forest management plans and later-on exercise Community Forest rights and management.

III. Access to Social Security Schemes-

MGNREGA:(Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act):

MGNREGA was one of the focus area work for Astha during this year. MGNREGA has played a vital role in post COVID to provide an alternate



employment opportunity to the marginalised tribal community.The gender-positive NREGA initiative encourages women's engagement by offering pay equity with men.

Astha team in collaboration with CBOs executed Kaam Mango Abhiyan (Campaign to demand for work in MGNREGA)& Pura Kaam Pura Daam (Full wage Campaign), which resulted in 20,575 eligible female family members who hold a job card receiving government benefits and paid work under MGNREGA. To provide acceleration to implementation of MGNREGA and its provisions Astha in collaboration with SR Abhiyan (Network for information and employment) conducted BRP (Block Resource Person) training and of 190 cadre of BRPs were capacitated, which includes 50% of women candidates, available at block level to provide their services to conduct Social Audit. Along with this Astha also imparted Mate trainings (Work Site Supervisor in MGNREGA). The Mate training provided an opportunity to village assemblies to identify youth and eligible people from their respective villages to enrol for the Mate training and advocate for selection of trained youth from their own villages to be appointed as MGNREGA Mates. The Astha team undertook special focused campaign to revive and open new MGNREGA work sites and payment of pending dues of completed MGNREGA work. MGNREGA campaign was organized at the regional level with the objective of economic and social empowerment of the reverse migrants.

Social Security Schemes:

The various Social Security Schemes provide a cushion to the marginalised and poor to face the social and economic imbalance and live life with dignity. It provide them life support system while dealing with natural disasters.

The pandemic and reverse migration has created additional pressure on the existing village owned resources in the tribal pockets of the South Rajasthan and Astha's demographic area of interventions. To ease this



pressure, there was a need to ensure that the various social schemes of the Government such as – Old age pension, widow and PWD pensions, housing, food security schemes, Palanhar scheme, vaccination to pregnant and lactating women etc. were accessible to the most needy and marginalised section of the community. The TDRU team along with the associated Community Based Organisations in Udaipur, Banswara, Bali and Dungarpur districts made a continuous effort which resulted as 2,604 people (men, women children, Old aged and differently abled persons) were successfully accessed various social security schemes.

District	MGNREGA Applicants			Social Security Schemes		
	Women	Men	Total	Ration (PDS)	Pension	Palanhar Yojna (Caregiver Scheme)
Banswara	5,136	1,975	7,111	222	138	57
Dungarpur	3,460	1,451	4,911	271	170	07
Pali	3,439	438	3,877	13	211	13
Udaipur	8,540	2,835	11,375	103	178	06
Total	20,575	6,699	27,274	609	697	83

Major Program Activities completed by TDRU unit during this year:

During this year the TDRU unit has facilitated and organised 211 program activities (Trainings, Workshops, Awareness campaigns and Networking & Advocacy campaigns) which were attended/ participated by 7,866 people (Adivasi community members, Village assembly leaders/members, Key-tribal leaders, and other stakeholders).

1. State Level conventions on tribal issues were organised with participation of 161 Adivasis (tribal leaders). These events were held with the intention of ensuring improved implementation of the amended VDPs in accordance with the PESA statute and to ensure that implementation of PESA become a prioritized agenda for the administration and Government.
2. Issue-based meetings were organised in which 100 people from local tribal communities, subject experts, civil society networks, government representatives and other stakeholders participated to spotlight and mitigate the sudden emergence of unforeseen issues due to natural disaster and changes in various policies.
3. Key tribal leaders network meetings were organised with participation of 112 Adivasis with an objective to strengthen the state level tribal network (have also invited other civil society organisations and tribal leaders outside of the Astha's geographical area of work to these network meetings).
4. Dialogues were organised with block and Panchayat level officials, PRIs, village assembly members, Peace Committee Members including various government officials from Rural and Panchayat Raj, Tribal dept., Women and child welfare, Forest Department, Education, and health departments, tribal leaders and civil society representatives, for the effective and smooth implementation of revised VDPs in PESA area. These Dialogues were attended by 3561 Adivasis and other stakeholders.

5. Annual Conventions of tribal communities were organised at 5 Geographical locations (Kushalgarh, Dungarpur, Jhadol Kotda and Bali)



with the objective of the creation of strategy and directive measures on PESA, forest rights, land and VDPs related issues. 10,093 Adivasis (5,512 women and 4,581 men) attended these annual conventions.

6. State & Block Level tribal young women conventions was organised to establish the tribal leadership and identity of young tribal women which was attended by 728 women.
7. Trainings of young tribal leaders on social security schemes for vulnerable groups were organised with participation of 381 Adivasis, to build the understanding of young tribal leaders and Adivasi community on social security schemes.
8. Awareness campaigns were organised for forest management plan and community forest management as per FRA, on work for all in MGNREGA and social security schemes for vulnerable groups with a team comprising of 302 Adivasis and Peace Committee Members.
9. Workshops and trainings on preparation of forest management plan at Inter-district Level were organised, with an objective to prepare community forest management plan and community forest right (CFR) claim, which were attended by 1364 members includes-Forest management committee members, village level tribal leaders, village assembly member and Astha staff as- facilitators.
10. Advocacy and networking campaigns were organised for better implementation of VDP in PESA area, MGNREGA and Social security schemes and Forest Management Plan and Rights was organised and a team of 269 Adivasis spearhead the campaigns.



Land Rights of women under Forest Rights Act

Astha has started a new intervention focused on women's land rights since 2022. These rights are fundamental pillars in the promotion and protection of women's human rights and in this context, the Forest Land Rights Act 2006 plays an important role. The objective of



this intervention is to create awareness among communities, especially women in the region and help them avail themselves of forest land rights. While doing this in an inclusive manner, we seek to ensure that their right to equality is secured, women's status and role in decision-making is enhanced, and sustainable economic development is promoted. Through this we are initiating discussions amongst the community that women should be given equal share in the land rights.

Forest Rights Act 2006 (FRA) was enacted to establish democratic community-based forest governance and secure forest-dwelling communities' traditional and customary rights. FRA vests rights over Community Forest Resources (CFR), NTFP, and empowers Gram Sabhas to govern, manage and conserve these resources. The Act expressly recognizes women as equal rights holders in their own respect, to own, use, access and govern forest resources, whether individually or collectively. For the first time, women's full and effective participation in a decision-making body has been made mandatory by law. Spirit of FRA also gives power to protect, conserve and Govern Forest. CFR management and conservation committee when it constituted by Gram Sabha it MUST include at least one third women, as mandatory for FRC. In Spirit of FRA to include women fully in Governance of Forest and Forest Resources. To deal with the forest land rights issue and to ensure its effective implementation Astha has started programs in association with Womanity Foundation. It has been envisioned to make the program reach to the last mile.

Women Empowerment Resource Unit:

Astha first approached the problem of Single Women in the year 1997. At that time the work targeted widowed women. It soon expanded in vision to include, along with widows - divorced, separated, older never-married women whose spouses suffered from serious

physical or mental conditions. Astha recognized the vulnerability of Single Women in a patriarchal society, where marriage continues to be the cornerstone on which women's lives are built. For low-income Single Women, the dual vulnerabilities of being women and of being single are further compounded by resource poverty and low levels of formal education. Astha believed that if Single Women were organized, to help each other, they could together work to change their situation. Astha and the Single Women we worked with have come far in this direction, since the time we began.. The unit is facilitated by women animators, motivators, and implementation officers, who are followed by a unit head. The overall number of members now stands at 90,600 after this year's addition of 3,633 new ones in the state of Rajasthan. The program is being expanded to 29 districts, 108 blocks, and 550 gram panchayats. The program frameworks have been created in a way that they can go the extra mile. With the participation of key stakeholders like the government, local leaders, Panchayati raj members, district members, and the zonal administration.

1. Astha's work with Single Women -
 - 1.1. providing "back support" to the Association of Strong Women Alone or Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan, Rajasthan (ENSS).
 - 1.2. Housing and running the Secretariat of the national network - National Forum for Single Women's Rights (NFSWR)

Major Program Activities completed by Women Empowerment Resource unit during this year:

- **State-level meetings**
 - 55 female leaders attended the state-level meet-up. The meeting's discussion centred on the cases that the animators were working on, the difficulties they were facing, the success stories of their cases. A session of legal advice from the advocate also took place followed by the future planning of their activities. The women also shared an update on the group members they have added to the Sangathan and the token fees they have been collecting.
- **Staff meetings at Udaipur, Jodhpur, Kota cluster**
 - Monthly staff meetings have been organized regularly to discuss the progress made by the women animators/motivators, followed by discussing the challenges at the field level. This monthly meeting empower the animators and motivators and give them a platform to express themselves.
- **Women's Empowerment Day**
 - The women empowerment day has been celebrated in 90 panchayats in the state of Rajasthan starting from 2nd to 7th November. The program has been started from Kota in 2016 and in the current scenario is being celebrated at the panchayat, block and district level. Not only women but the male members also

participated in the program with enthusiasm and zeal. This year the program has been widened to 7 district level , 20 block level and 330 panchayat level. In the program a total amount of 3,30,000 has been raised by the local stakeholders and total 7663 members participated. The bureaucrats also participated and



the chief guest of the program was state minister dheeraj gurjar. This program extend the ties of love, unity and solidarity among women belonging to different caste, culture, race and religion. There were stories of change and revolution of women in and around. And in the future this will act as a strong foundation for single women.

- **Sisterhood celebrations (*behanadooj, Jashn-e-behanchara*)**

Behanadooj was celebrated between 2-7 November, 2022 in 7 districts, 20 blocks and 330 panchayats. 7663 members participated in the program. This program is further strengthening the spirit of harmony, love, and helping each other amongst the sisters of all community and religions. This festival will be an example of sisterhood in times to come.

Women's Land Rights: Land right was one of the focus areas during this year for Astha.

For women to be able to exercise their right to equality and a sufficient standard of life, land and other productive resources must be accessible to, used by, and under their control. Women's poverty and exclusion are correlated with gender disparity when it comes to land and other productive resources all over the world. Lack of adequate legal standards and/or ineffective implementation at the national and local levels, as well as discriminatory cultural attitudes and practises at the institutional and community level, are common obstacles that prevent women from having access to, control over, and use of land and other productive resources.

This program enables the women to access their right of land which is directly link with their right to live with dignity and equality. The program and activities has been designed in such a manner that it empowers and strengthens the women in and around. Currently there are 20 animators that are involved in working on the issues of women land rights, through this programme we are trying to-

- To generate awareness related to WLR among rural women in and round rural areas where Astha works.

- To provide justified required legal and financial assistance to rural women with objective to gain access over land.
- Capacity Building of existing women leaders into experts on land laws and processes on ground i.e., Women organized and armed with information, assured of guidance from expert sources.

Women land right leadership training

The land rights leadership training has been carried out in two phases with a total of 60 participants. Where they were given legal guidance in the cases associated, and oriented about leading the women groups, the methods to ensure timely conversation with the other women, followed by sharing their progress and challenges that they face on the ground.

Women's land rights conventions- Block level

This has been conducted in 5 blocks- Bali, Baswada, Kotra, Dungarpur, Jhadol with 100+ participants from around the block, out of which 80% were women. The main objectives of these conventions were to highlight the status of women's land rights in the tribal areas and to develop communication with the line departments functional in the area. Further,



the convention also plays a focal role in breaking the ceiling and highlighting the leadership taken by the women at various levels w.r.t the land rights.

Tribal women leaders training

Capacity building of the tribal women leaders on the legal aspects as well as on the developmental laws and policies being functional around them was the main objective behind this training. Women's Land Rights Program gives Astha the opportunity to work intensively on issue of Women's land right for the tribal and single women and build in capacity of grassroot women leaders to support and prepare them in claiming access, control, and rights over land more ably.

Women Farmers

Globally, women farmers play an essential role in reducing world hunger. Women entering organic farming as new farmers increase access to food and quality nutrition for their immediate family, as well as families in their community. Women tend to farm smaller plots of land, focus on producing food for their community, and choose organic and sustainable farming models over commodity crop production.

Additionally, women tend to farm with fewer machines and more hand tools, and they employ farming models that benefit and promote family, nutrition, community development, and the environment. Women farmers have begun to receive



recognition at the panchayat and block levels in 32 panchayats and 16 blocks as a result of the team's ongoing efforts to inspire and equip them with knowledge and useful information. This also resulted in making them access the security schemes at the panchayat and the block level and also shifting the base towards organic farming and agriculture. There are instances of women who switched completely too organic farming, which resulted in increasing their output and productivity in the process. They are given social and economic mobility through agriculture, as well as an improvement in their level of living.

In line with this and inspiring from the various women framing models the process to promote women leadership in farming sector began when Astha started working directly with the women who are associated with farming and started building their capacity on topics of importance.

The women's farming initiative has been going on since 2019, in 16 blocks, 32 panchayats, and 13 districts. With a total reach out to 1,000 women in all these areas. Till now 350 women have received training on organic farming so far. Out of these more than 200 women opted for organic farming in their fields. Free from fertilizers and promoting the use of organic manure. 30 women have made vermicomposting and have been practicing vermicomposting. The exchange of seeds remains a constant practice in the process with the promotion of kitchen garden practice at the field level. They also advocate the issues that came out in the village, district, and state meetings.

Membership and Meetings

Each panchayat has 20-25 members with a mix of widow and married women. There exist 16 animators in 16 blocks who look after 32 panchayats. With monthly meetings with the member women, followed by monthly staff meeting, quarterly meeting. Leadership trainings and meetings form the base of the capacity building for the women farmers. Monthly meetings have been organized to give women the recognition and dignity they deserve as farmers.

Exposure Visits of Women

The women visited Krishi Anusandhan Kendra in Kota, to understand more about the basics of organic farming. 220 women were given the capacity building training. Whereas two women also visited Tirupati for the similar purpose of gaining experience and exposure.

Networking and Workshops

Networking and workshops has been organized which focusses mainly on climate change and its impacts on life and land. 40-50 partners in and around from Udaipur participated in that. A plan of action has also been developed from the similar meeting.

National Forum of Single Women Rights

The National Forum of Single Women Rights has been formed with the objective to create an enabling atmosphere for the socio-economic-political environment for single women in India in 2009 with the triple goals of a) promoting organisations of single women in states where there are none already, b) promoting sharing and learning between state organisations, and c) advocating for the rights of single women to live with dignity. So that they can lead a dignified life in the country.

The forum's objective is also to create a platform for learning and sharing for women across the states to learn about the laws, policies, and current events and happenings, happening in and around.

The previous meeting of the National Forum was conducted in the month of December in Udaipur. Where participants from 06 states participated and shared their views and opinions and also the progress that has been made in their respective states in combating the issues related to social security, violence related issues of women.

In the meeting the women also put forward their challenges while enabling the other women to access rights. Successful case stories were shared and the women stood with solidarity with the other women.



Activities related to Communal Harmony: With an objective of improving communal harmony between different communities ASTHA undertakes active role in peace-making at time of communal tensions/riots. With support of other community-based organizations

and local administration, there were Mohalla meetings were organised to diffuse communal tensions and establish peace in the society. Recently, two Muslim youth killed a Hindu tailor in Udaipur; Citizens group has done the fact-finding to understand the situation and report was submitted to local administration to take necessary steps.

On occasion of Hiroshima Day, meeting was organized, with the support of other likeminded organizations to deliver message of global peace and disarmament. 'Communal unity and harmony' is regular theme in meetings/trainings organized by ASTHA and other organizations network. Significant efforts are made to involve members of minority community in activities of ASTHA.

Activities related to women empowerment in Panchayat Raj: ASTHA is collaborating with various state level women and panchayat raj networks to train and upskill newly appointed women sarpanch and other representative in village panchayats. Astha organized multiple development camps in Rajsamand under the leadership of newly appointed women sarpanchs. In addition, training camps were organized (with support of local organization) for newly elected panchayat representatives to apprise them on topics like MNREGA, food security, women and child health, social audit, etc.

In 16 blocks of Rajasthan issue-based support is provided to women empowerment related work in gram panchayats. In Khamnor block, woman sarpanch is presiding village meetings and guiding block development officer. Women sarpanch are developing GDP and also tracking progress as per GDP. In addition, women sarpanchs and representative have formed organization with an objective of building confidence of women representatives. Regular meetings are organized with District Development Officer to apprise them about progress of development work in their panchayats.

Support Units

- I. **Administrative Support Unit:** The Administrative Support Unit extends its support and nurtures the Resource Units of Astha with administrative services. The Unit is based at Central Office (Udaipur) constituting of accounts section, computer section and support staff.
 - (a). **Account and Finance:** Proper books of accounts are being maintained for FC and Local funds using fund accounting method. The books of accounts are maintained on a day-to-day basis. The financial reports are being prepared as per the requirement of funding agencies (quarterly, six-monthly, and yearly) and final accounts of the organization (audited statements of accounts) being prepared at the end of the financial year (April-March) duly signed and sealed by Auditors and authorities of the organization. At present, there are three full-time staff working in the accounting section of the organization. Astha produces annual accounts/ institutional audits. Astha maintains computerized books of accounts using Tally 9.0 accounting software since 2008. The internal

auditor has been appointed and auditing regular books since 2008. The internal auditor has been appointed and auditing regular books for the last five years.

- (b). **Computer Section:** The computer section extends its support to the Resource Units for typing of reports, newsletter, preparing press notes, and publication of booklets, pamphlets, and leaflet. The staff of the section is the capable in publication and maintains data for survey and small research studies.
 - (c). **Human Resource Cell:** The cell is responsible for managing the records of human resource engaged in the resource units. It provides support in workers/ staff etc., keeps personal records, and helps in extending security (insurance for personal accident, vehicle, and property). Students from social work institutes come to Astha for an exposure visit to and worked with the resource complete their placement period and gain working experience from the organization.
- II. **Astha Training Center, Bedla:** The Astha Training Centre facilities are used to strengthen those working with poor, exploited and marginalized. Capacities enhancement of grassroots workers working in the field of health, literacy, communal harmony, food security, budget analysis, gender equity, drought relief, soil and water conservation keeps regular engagement of the training center almost throughout the year. During the reporting year, a total of 97 events (training/ workshops/ meetings) were held at the Astha Training Centre and a total of 2513 people (763 women and 1750 Men) participated in these events.
- III. **Planning Monitoring & Evaluation (PME) Support Unit:** Monitoring is an integral part of any social development initiative. The PME Support Unit at Astha has been engaged in tracking the progress of interventions at the central level but it has further scope to be strengthened and institutionalized at the grass-root level. The PME Support unit constantly engaged in collecting, filtering, managing, processing and analyzing data from the field to assess the outcome and impacts of ongoing interventions. This also helps in better planning at central as well as the grass-root level. It is Astha's aim that field workers and community leaders become aware of themselves about the concepts of monitoring. Astha has formed an Outcome and Impact Monitoring team comprising of senior program coordinators, field staff and the PME Support Unit which regularly monitors program implementation and respective outcome indicators. Monitoring was done by field visits to sample villages in the project area and interaction with community and collection of data related to planned activities.

Staff List

Sl. No	Name		Sl. No	Name
1.	Ganesh Gancha		13.	Pawan Uddhani
2.	Ganpat Singh		14.	Pradeep Kumar Pradhan
3.	Hemlata Shrimali		15.	Prem Shankar Paliwal
4.	Jitendra Agrawal		16.	Raj Kumar Jalora
5.	Kamlendra Singh Rathore		17.	Ramesh Nagda
6.	Kitri Joshi		18.	Ramesh Paliwal
7.	Lahar Singh		19.	Reena Sharma
8.	Man Singh Sisodiya		20.	Shyam Lal Purohit
9.	Mangi Lal Gurjar		21.	Sohan Gameti
10.	Manglesh Joshi		22.	Wagataram Devasi
11.	Manohar Singh		23.	Mahima Choudhary
12.	Nandini Singh			
Consultants				
1.	Ashwani K Paliwal		2.	RD Vyas
3.	Bhanwar Singh Chadana			

ELECTED EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Sr.No.	Name and Address	Designation
1.	Ms. Anita Mathur,	President
2.	Sh. Ashwani Paliwal	Secretary
3.	Ms. Madhu Sarin	Member
4.	Sh. R.D. Vyas	Member
5.	Mrs. Suneeta Dhar,	Member
6.	Ms. Sofia Khan	Member

THE GENERAL BODY MEMBERS

Sr.No.	Name and Address	Designation
1.	Ms. Anita Mathur,	President
2.	Sh. Ashwani Paliwal	Secretary
3.	Ms. Madhu Sarin	Member
4.	Sh. R.D. Vyas,	Member
5.	Mrs. Suneeta Kar Dhar	Member
6.	Ms. Sofia Khan Pathan	Member
7.	Sh. Bhanwar Singh Chandana	Member
8.	Sh. Nand Lal Pande	Member
9.	Dr. Ginny Shrivastava	Member
10.	Ms. SejalDand	Member
11.	Shri Kamleendra Singh Rathore	Ex-Officio
12	Shri Shyam Lal Purohit	Ex-Officio

Financial Statements

ASTHA SANSTHAN
Regd. Office: 13-C, II Floor
Category - II, Vijay Mandal Enclave
New Delhi, India



CONSOLIDATED

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2023

Particulars	Sch.	31.03.2023	31.03.2022
SOURCES OF FUNDS			
Corpus Fund	1	26603393.92	31921961.92
Capital Fund	2	7729614.25	11698514.25
Reserves & Surplus	3	815105.02	(4784869.06)
Motor Cycle Fund	4	291604.00	273604.00
Staff Gratuity Fund	5	7146116.35	6386915.00
Staff Welfare Fund	6	2353231.86	2541103.86
Total		44939065.40	48037229.97

APPLICATION OF FUNDS

Fixed Assets	7	7729614.25	11698514.25
Investment LIC Group Gratuity Cash Accumulation Plan		7146116.35	6386915.00
Current Assets, Loans & Advances			
1 Cash & Bank Balances	8	32627503.46	34205508.21
2 Loans, Advances & Other Current Assets	9	996112.00	1710855.00
3 Overspent amount Recoverable on Projects	10	466219.60	60654.00
	(A)	<u>34089835.06</u>	<u>35977017.21</u>
Less: Current Liabilities & Provisions			
1 Other Liabilities & Provisions	11	39137.00	0.00
2 Unspent amount Payable on Projects	10	3987363.26	6025216.49
	(B)	<u>4026500.26</u>	<u>6025216.49</u>
Net Current Assets (A-B)		30063334.80	29951800.72
Total		44939065.40	48037229.97

Significant Accounting Policies & Notes on Accounts 16

For Astha Sansthan


 Co-ordinating Secretary Accounts & Finance
 Director Coordinator

Place : Udaipur
Dated: 24.09.2023



In terms of Our Report of even date attached

For B. L. Pagaria & Co.
Chartered Accountants
FRN: 001821C


 (Anand Pagaria)
 Partner
 M.No. 401182





INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED ON 31st MARCH 2023

Particulars	Sch.	31.03.2023	31.03.2022
INCOME DURING THE YEAR			
Grant In Aid received	10	21778379.76	21256392.69
Donation Received		105500.00	245000.00
Interest Earned		1801983.00	2042214.60
Other Receipts	14	2114199.00	1715279.00
Membership Fee		121.00	396.00
Total	(A)	25800182.76	25259282.29
EXPENDITURE DURING THE YEAR			
Programme Expenses	12	22381597.98	26138601.58
Administrative Expenses	13	5255119.53	6637055.96
Dedit Balances Written off/ Written Back	15	0.00	407247.14
Total	(B)	27636717.51	33182904.68
Excess of Income over Expenditure (A-B)		(1836534.75)	(7923622.39)
Less: Net excess of Overspent/Unspent grants balances carried to Balance sheet - Difference over last year balances		2443418.83	1877548.23
Net Allocable Surplus/ (Deficit)		606884.08	(6046074.16)
Less: Appropriations:			
(i) Transferred to Staff Gratuity Fund		0.00	7047.00
(ii) Transferred to Staff Welfare Fund		120308.00	132464.00
(iii) Transferred to Capital Fund (Acquisition of Fixed Assets)		205170.00	471862.00
Net Allocable Surplus/ (Deficit) transferred Reserve & Surplus		281406.08	(6657447.16)

Significant Accounting Policies & Notes on Accounts 16

For Astha Sansthan





 Co-ordinating Director Secretary Accounts & Finance Coordinator

Place : Udaipur
Dated: 24.09.2023



In terms of Our Report of even date attached

For B. L. Pagaria & Co.
 Chartered Accountants
 FRN: 001821C

 (Anand Pagaria)
 Partner
 M.No. 401182



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