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2015-2016

Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan

Almora

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CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1-2
1. Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad	2-18
1a. Women's leadership and representation	3-4
1b. Training and workshops at Almora	4-5
1c. Natural resource management.....	6-7
1d. Water	7-8
1e. Meetings in villages	9-10
1f. congregation of women.....	10-13
1g. Medical care for poor women and preventive health care education.....	13-14
1h. Grading of women	14-18
2. Village learning Centres	19-41
2a. Our Land Our Life	20
2b. Reading Habits.....	20
2c. Improving writing skills	20
2d. personal and community hygiene	21
2e. Celebrating national and social festivals.....	22-23
2f. Working with differently-abled children	23
2g. Village level efforts to sustain activities in centres.....	23
2h. Suggestions from supervisors to improve the programme.....	25
2i. Suggestions by the heads of partner organizations to improve the programme..	42
2j. Facilitators in their home communities	25-28
2k. Training of facilitators.....	28-29
2l. Materials provided to the centres.....	29
2m. Monitoring and assessment in village learning centres.....	30
2n. Grading of children.....	30-35
2o. Working with government schools.....	36
2p. Educational fairs.....	36-38
2q. Visits to centres by USNPSS staff.....	39-40
Achievements at a glance.....	41

3. Computer education.....	42-44
3a. Banthok.....	42
3b.Chalmodi gara.....	43
3c.Sunari.....	43
3d. Kanikot.....	43
3e. Tangsa	3
3f. Badhani.....	43
3g. Ukhimath	43
4. Adolescent girls' education	45-56
4a.workshops for adolescent girls.....	47-52
4b. Achievements	53-56
4c. Grading of adolescent girls.....	54-56
5. Environmental Education in Schools.....	56
6. Relief and Rehabilitation in Kedarnath valley, income generation.....	56
7. Research and Publications.....	57-58
8. Evaluation by SDTT, Mumbai	58
9. Collaboration with other organizations/institutes.....	58-59
9a.Scholarship to adolescent girls.....	58-59
9b.Skill training for girls in Sri Aurobindo ashram, New Delhi	59
10. The 7 th B D Pande Memorial lecture	59
11. Samvaad	59-60
12. Annual Review meeting of partner organizations.....	60
12. Meetings of the Governing body.....	60
14. Accounts.....	60
15. Visitors	61-64

Governing Body

Staff

Audited accounts

Introduction

Registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan (USNPSS) is committed towards developing, through education and action, cohesive, knowledgeable communities capable of creating rich, sustainable lives for themselves and future generations. With its extensive experience of almost three decades on working with rural communities and government schools, USNPSS continues to play a pioneering role in fostering the concepts and practice of community learning, ecological security and ecosystem resilience in Uttarakhand. This annual report commemorates printing of the 28th edition and 29 years of working with a network of community-based organizations (CBOs), women's groups, children in informal learning centres and in government schools, teachers, adolescent girls and youth in villages.

USNPSS, also called the Uttarakhand Environment Education centre (UEEC), began to work as a nodal agency for the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development; Government of India in Uttarakhand in 1987 in schools and villages by creating a network of community-based organizations and in-service teachers to work in education and environment across the state. The organization also worked as a regional resource agency for the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, for the National Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC) for more than a decade. Since 2006, major financial assistance came from the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai and the Rajeshwar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust, New Delhi. The Tata Trust support ended in September 2015. Together with the support from the Dayal Trust, Association for India's Development, Washington (AID) and by drawing on our past savings, we continued activities in villages, though at a reduced level. Subsequently, support has been received from the Hari Krishna Kamla Trivedi Memorial Trust, New Delhi for two clusters.

The concepts of village ecosystems and community development, as promoted by USNPSS over the last three decades are concerned with understanding the relationships between forests, agriculture, cattle and human populations, with gender and generational changes as cross-cutting themes. The work has received recognition, both at national and international levels. Besides other awards, the Director, USNPSS has received the *Padma Shree* (2007) and the IIT-Delhi Distinguished Alumni Award (2014).

Over time, USNPSS has successfully run *balwadis* (for 3-6 year old children), *Sandhya kendra* (evening centres for 6-11year old children), *pustakalaya* (libraries), computer centres and *mahila saksharta evam shikshan karyakrama* (women's literacy and education programme) to provide learning opportunities to children and adults, especially girls and women. Provision of centres equipped with a variety of educational material; to be used to conduct well thought-out organized activities; has been a boon in remote Himalayan villages where reach of government programmes and of other organizations is limited.

In association with USNPSS, women's groups as well as individuals work towards restoration, protection, conservation and rejuvenation of forests and water sources. Different approaches in this regard have emerged with time and communities continue to experiment

with new ideas. In addition, about 12,000 safe sanitation facilities have been installed with partial financial support covered by the organization. In such villages, incidences of water-borne diseases have reduced in a significant way, paths/houses look clean and the village residents have cultivated the habits of using a latrine and washing their hands after use. Also, in villages where not a single girl would have completed elementary education in the beginning of the programme now boast of hundred percent enrolments in schools and many girls attending college.

Alongside its engagement with organized groups in villages and with the education department of the Government of Uttarakhand, this year, USNPSS stepped up to nurture the village learning centre as a focal point to engage with and initiate new activities with communities. The idea of developing village learning centres as a point of convergence of all activities that women, adolescent girls, children and youth take up in their communities started to emerge a few years back; and in 2014 USNPSS put it into practice by opening of the centres in villages. Currently, 65 village learning centres in seven districts are functional. Instead of working in isolated villages, village learning centres offer educational opportunities to all neighbouring villages by involving children, women's groups and adolescent girls groups through organized activities to build on their knowledge and skills.

In addition, USNPSS is working with 490 women's groups involving about 16,000 women through a network called *Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad*. Also, adolescent girls groups are functional in 79 villages. The following sections provide the details of activities carried out in 2015-2016:

1. Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad

Created in 2001, Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad (UMP) is a dynamic network of women's groups that builds up institutional and programme capacity of rural women in Kumaon and Garhwal hills. It is the largest network of rural women's groups in the hills of Uttarakhand. In a village, all women are members of a single group called the whole village group (WVG). Irrespective of their caste, economic status, education, all women above the age of 20 years are members of a WVG.

The approach of creating WVGs in the village is different from forming SHGs (self help groups) which focus on savings and income generation activities. WVGs are created with a vision of long term engagement with communities to achieve the goal of gender equality, helping women and girls improve and gain more control over their lives at home and in the public domain. Through their *sangathan*, not *samooch*, women come together to discuss issues pertaining to their own lives and of the village, find solutions to their problems and disseminate successful ideas/activities through regional and state level federations, functional within the network.

Since savings is not the aim of organizing women, WVGs are free to take decisions on whether to take it up or not. In case the WVG decides to save, all members contribute towards the *mahila* kosh (women's fund) or the gram kosh (village fund). The decision to

deposit the money in the bank/post-office or to keep it in the village itself is also taken up by the members of the WVG. Since all women of the village are members of a single group, the amount to be saved is kept to a minimum. In this way, the poor women become the decision makers-they decide how much money they can contribute towards the *kosh* and all members follow the rule. Since, WVGs are committed to long-term engagement, the amount grows with time. In Danya, for example, in the early 1990s each woman was to save two rupees per month. Since 40-50 members were saving, their *kosh* grew with time. From that saving, they have purchased utensils to cook and serve food, furniture (usually chairs and tables), mats, water containers etc. for use in social functions in the village. They also rent out these items which go into the women's fund. Similarly, in many more villages women have been able to raise large amounts in village fund. All decisions regarding the upkeep of accounts, provision of loans, purchases to be made, are taken by women themselves in village meetings. UMP does not interfere in such decisions.

The village level groups federate at cluster level to form the regional federations called the *kshetriya mahila parishad*. The regional federations spread over nine districts of Kumaon and Garhwal constitute the state level federation called Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad. At village level, each WVG has an elected president and a secretary. The regional federations are also represented by a woman president and the secretary. Currently, 490 women's groups represented by 14 regional federations constitute the UMP. Out of a total of 490 groups, 23% belong to socially disadvantaged sections of society (SC, ST and OBC) whilst 51% constitute mixed-caste villages, which also include SC and OBC households. About 26% villages are represented by general caste population.

1a. Women's leadership and representation

Generally, in feminist literature women's leadership is divided between conceptualizing them as subject-in power and of their achieving power and recognition through mass-struggles. As subject-in-power, women are conceptualized to constitute a category to which authority comes automatically through succession in family or as a progression in spiritual or religious cult. Also, a sense of authority, hence power, may come from attributes of caste and/or of economic status. However, it is not clear whether women as subjects-in power can reform social structures or how this designation would promote thinking about women's leadership in the public domain. This observation is especially true for cases when feminine, not feminist, discourse takes precedence in development thought and practice and female representation merely becomes a means of reproduction of the *status-quo*. One of the most visible examples of such a discourse has been the presence of female elites in political parties in India who have won seats either as successors of families involved in politics for a long time or due to their economic status.

Women's involvement in mass struggles and in gender-sensitive movements promises a way of achieving positions of power by ensuring change in their attitudes and values. Also, it has been proven a better way to influence policy and laws. However, achievements in this regard need a careful assessment, particularly because the political domain in itself is situated within the structure of patriarchy. The other limitation is that women act as pressure-groups

largely from outside the system and do not experience power in the way that their counterparts may do owing to their political succession or economic status.

The experience of UMP, however, indicates that though the strategies mentioned above have led to the formulation of gender-sensitive laws and government policies, women's status at home and in communities has not changed much. More recently, girls are being educated but their safety and opportunities for employment remain a matter of concern. Since the presence of isolated individual female leaders in politics has not been enough of an influence to identify and change specific areas of resistance that inhibit ordinary women to achieve political power, UMP has focused on working with village women promoting their leadership in the following ways:

- i. Organize institutional capacity through regular elections in women's groups
- ii. Encourage members of women's groups to stand for elections in panchayats
- iii. Training of elected women representatives to familiarize them with structural, administrative and management issues in panchayats, access to and use of government schemes being a part of these
- iv. Providing support to female representatives who take up women's issues in panchayat meetings and in other forums
- v. Training of all members of women's groups on their rights, including voting rights, and on the constitution of village committees

1b. Training and workshops at Almora

This year, a total of eight training programmes were held for the members of women's groups in Almora (Table 1). The total number of participants was 308, 303 women. Since lack of information is generally perceived as a barrier to development in rural hill areas, a lot of emphasis was paid in that direction. This includes information regarding government programmes and policies; especially MNREGA, various schemes launched by gram panchayats, provision of rations through public distribution systems, women's rights, generational gap and its implications in shaping perceptions, attitudes towards life in villages, migration, health, education and participatory development.

In addition, the following four issues were taken up in a campaign mode this year. Throughout the year, various events such as meetings in and between the villages, *padyatra*, discussions etc. were organized to raise awareness and develop knowledge on the following:

- Female foeticide
- Crop depredation by wild animals
- Cleanliness in villages, personal hygiene
- Participation of women in village committees including the panchayats

Workshops in Almora bring together women of Kumaon and Garhwal regions to provide them the opportunity to share their experiences and learn from each other. Table 1 exhibits the range of issues discussed during the workshops.

Table 1. Training of members of women's groups at Almora.

Serial number	Duration	Number of CBOs	Number of districts	Number of villages	Number of participants			Issues discussed
					Female	Male	Total	
1	22-23.05.2015	6	4	20	41	1	42	group solidarity, Panchayati raj, MNREGA, gender and caste, crop depredation by wild animals, environment, group funds, RTI, women's rights, health education, old age, widow, disability pension
2	21-22.06.2015	5	3	19	50	00	50	group solidarity, Panchayati raj, MNREGA, gender and caste, environment, group funds, RTI, health education, pension, crop depredation by wild animals, women's rights,
3	25-26.08.2015	6	4	21	42	2	44	group solidarity, Panchayati raj, crop depredation by wild animals, MNREGA, gender and caste, environment, group funds, RTI, health education , women's rights, pension
4	01-02.09.2015	4	3	19	35	00	35	group solidarity, Panchayati raj, MNREGA, gender and caste, crop depredation by wild animals, environment, group funds, pension
5	08-09.09.2015	4	4	8	27	1	28	crop depredation by wild animals, group solidarity, Panchayati raj, RTI MNREGA, gender and caste, environment, group funds, RTI, women's rights, pension
6	11-12.12.2015	6	6	14	28	00	28	group solidarity, Panchayati raj, crop depredation by wild animals, women's rights, MNREGA, gender and caste, environment, group funds, RTI
7	14-15.12.2015	7	2	17	43	00	43	crop depredation by wild animals, group solidarity, Panchayati raj, MNREGA, gender and caste, women's rights, environment, group funds, RTI
8	19-20.12.2015	6	3	18	37	1	38	crop depredation by wild animals, group solidarity, Panchayati raj, women's rights, MNREGA, gender and caste, environment, group funds, RTI
Total				136	303	5	308	

1c. Natural resource management

Loss of tree cover and resultant erosion and landslides is a common problem in Uttarakhand. Mass movement of soils and rock particles not only damages the hill slopes but also causes destruction of the land where the debris accumulates. The process of land destabilization, though initiated by deforestation and erosion is further triggered by cloud bursts and heavy rainfall. In addition, expansion of cities/towns and uncontrolled construction activities on the river-beds, old landslide-fans and on steep, unstable slopes may cause further damage to natural resources, adding to a problem that has already compounded over time.

Communities living in villages need forests to meet their daily domestic demands of fuel wood, fodder and water. With dwindling forest cover, women spend more time and energy in meeting domestic needs. In view of this dependence on natural resources, the women's groups have taken several steps to protect and conserve the natural resources.

a. Protection, conservation of forests and afforestation in village land

UMP builds up capacity of women's groups to protect, conserve and manage natural resources including the forests, grasslands, water-bodies and fallow/barren agricultural land. In this regard, the first step is to discuss the issue in meetings held regularly in villages under the leadership of women. Further, the issue is discussed at regional levels and also during meetings held at Almora. Experiences emerging from actually working on the ground are incorporated in and shared during trainings/workshops to spread awareness of the methods that would work in villages. As a result, women's groups have been able to conserve vast stretches of forests in and around their villages.

Rules for protection and better management of natural resources are made in open village meetings through a consensus building approach. Women's groups ensure that everyone in the village is benefitted and receives an equal share of the produce from the common land. Rules and norms formulated during meetings are binding on all. Anyone cutting the trees or grass on the sly has to bear the reprimand from the whole community. Usually, some amount of money is charged as fine and in extreme cases social boycott is exercised.

Declaring a part of the forest as sacred for five-ten years is a strategy that has worked well in villages where large stretches of common land are available. Following meetings in the village, the community sets aside a part of the forest for regeneration and prohibits entry into the land for the next few years. With time, seedlings grow and tree-cover is restored. Also, ban on open grazing contributes towards regeneration of shrubs and herbs improving the biodiversity of the area. In some villages, regulated harvesting is allowed and the produce is distributed equally among all village residents.

Recurrence of forest fires during summers is a common problem in the hills. Members of women's groups take active part in relinquishing the fires both from the village commons and the state-owned forests around their villages. There have been instances when

communities, including women and children, have spent long hours in putting-off fires from the forests and grasslands around their villages.

b. Gender and damage caused by wild animals

Damage to crops and other property by wild animals is a problem that women in the hills have long been complaining about. With increase in prying by monkeys, wild boar, porcupines; and sometimes deer, people in the hills are losing interest in farming. Women say that their hard work through the day does not pay any rewards because at night wild boars invade the fields. Villages once famous for their rich crops of corn, taro root tubers, potatoes, beans, finger millets and a variety of cultivated fruits are now abandoning cultivation because monkeys destroy the fields in no time. This is an issue that needs urgent attention of the government.

This year, UMP raised the issue of crop depredation and loss of human lives by wild animals at various levels including the three-tier structure of the panchayats. Members of UMP who have been elected as panchayat representatives raised the issue in meetings held in villages, block-offices and in districts across the hills. In addition, women talked about the problem in various **meetings and** seminars held at Almora, especially in meetings attended by planners/policy makers and political leaders in *Samvaad* 2015.

In addition, demonstrations were organized in *tehsil*/block offices to demand action from the state. In particular, the protest organized at Dwarahat on the International Women's Day, 8 March 2016, was attended by hundreds of women who had spent their own money to travel to the block office to raise their voices against the menace caused by monkeys and damage to cultivated field by wild boars. The issue of loss of human lives by leopards was also raised by women.

Owing to the state-wide agitations against the problem, the state government has declared wild boar as vermin and has allowed culling for a period of one year. However, women complained that despite the ruling, the state government has not taken any effective steps to cull the animals. They also said that since guns are not available in the village and no person has been authorized by the government to take action, the matter remains as it was. The neighbouring state of Himachal Pradesh has taken some steps to control the monkey menace. Women are demanding that it is time that the state takes appropriate action on the issue.

1d. Water

Despite its ecological importance as a source of water for the country, the villages of Uttarakhand face water shortage problems, especially during the summers. The major rivers that originate from large glaciers in the region are harnessed for power generation for domestic, industrial supply and also for irrigation services but the villages located on the hill-slopes mostly depend on small springs and seepages for their basic domestic needs. Since

collection of water is a gendered responsibility, women and girls spend a lot of time and energy in it.

In addition, with increasing construction-based activities directed towards urbanization and promotion of tourism in the hills, water shortage has taken an acute status. With growing population and more demands for water, pressure on the sources has increased many folds. This year, for example, the local residents faced a lot of problems because of a drought-like situation in the winters and the spring season.

UMP builds up knowledge about the issue by conducting meetings at various levels. Women go on exposure tours to see related work in nearby areas and share their experiences with others. In addition, issue is put forward by elected women representatives in the panchayats to ensure regular supply of water to all households in villages. Further, in many villages, the members of the WVGs take up the responsibility of guarding the spring to prevent any unpleasant situation in the community. With the mission of ensuring equal distribution of water to all in the village, such volunteers devote considerable time and effort in this activity.

With the help of women's groups in villages, UMP has been promoting several techniques, both indigenous and modern, to save, conserve and promote equal distribution of water in villages. Some of the methods that the women's groups have tried over time are as follows:

- i. Building awareness about the issue and develop knowledge regarding the need of activities that could save and conserve water
- ii. Protection and maintenance of traditional water sources such as *naulas* (springs) and *dharas* (seepages): repair and restoration is carried out in partnership between the women's groups, CBOs and USNPSS
- iii. Protection of water sources by making community rules: ban on washing and cleaning utensils near the spring, separate pond to collect water for cattle to drink from, planting broad-leaf trees above the water source, cleaning of the source involving women, adolescents and children
- iv. Equal distribution to all residents is ensured in villages where a large number of families depend on a single water source
- v. Digging rain water harvesting trenches (*chal/khav*) on the mountain slopes to conserve rain water
- vi. Digging small ponds in common land to allow rainfall to slowly seep through the soil underneath. This is a cheap, yet very effective, method of recharging ground water which the ancestors used to practice in villages.

1e. Meetings in villages

The USNPSS staff made regular visits to villages to attend meetings of women's groups (Table 2). The aim of such visits is to connect with women, have face to face interactions to assess the situation in villages and accordingly develop the work of UMP. Participation in village-meetings serves many purposes. Some of these are listed below:

Table 2. Visits to villages to participate in meetings organized by women's groups.

Serial number	Cluster	Village	Date	Participants	
				Number of women	Others (men supervisors, heads of the partner organizations)
1	Nayarghati	Naugaon	18.07.2015	21	4
2		Thangar	20.07.2015	17	4
3	Maichun	Palyun	27.08.2015	17	3
4		Lamudiyar	28.08.2015	23	2
5		Palyun	03.09.2015	16	5
6		Palyun	07. 09.2015	34	15
7		Maichun	13.09.2015	15	0
8	Shama	Ratir	26.09.2015	17	Post meeting- home visits
9		Kimu	28.09. 2015	13	8
10		Liti talla	28.09.2015	8	Post meeting- home visits
11	Maichun	Dhana	28.10.2015	9	4
12		Dhana	04.11.2015	13	2
13		Palyun	06.11.2015	31	0
14		Lamudiyar	07.11.2015	16	0
15	Danya	Munoli	14.11.2015	12	6
16	Maichun	Banthok	18.11.2015	20	7
17		Lamudiyar	19.11.2015	13	0
18	Danya	Munoli	22.11.2015	13	13
19	Shama	Gogina	27.11.2015	8	0
20		Namik	28.11.2015	12	post meeting- home visits
21		Namik	29.11.2015	40	12 men
22		Ratir	29.11.2015	16	0
23		Ratir	30.11.2015	16	5
24	Maichun	Girchola	08.12.2015	18	3
25		Lamudiyar	10.12.2015	8	0
26		Chanoli	10.12.2015	13	0
27		Palyun	16.12.2015	House visits	0
28	Danya	Munoli	13.01.2016	12	0
29		Dharagad	13.01.2016	13	0
30	Ganaigangoli	Tuproli	17.01.2016	20	3
31		Faidiyali	18.01.2016	30	2
32		Bhanyani	18.01.2016	15	0
33	Shama	Bhanardana	31.01.2016	18	House visits
34	Nayarghati	Thangar	01.03.2016	12	0
35	Maichun	Girchola	13.03.2016	17	0
36		Girchola	04.04.2016	19	3
37		Banthok	12.04.2016	15	8
38		Palyun	27.04.2016	15	0

i. Connect with women in their home settings

ii. Make home visits to interact with the family members, especially men. Among other benefits of connecting directly with communities; home visits also serve the purpose of seeking support for women's mobility outside the village. Since families "know the USNPSS staff", they allow women to travel to Almora to attend state level meetings and so on

iii. Provide hands on guidance and direction on issues that women take up as their group activity in villages

iv. Sometimes these meetings serve as the forum for conflict-resolution among community members. Often, some outside intervention is required and in such cases women ask the USNPSS staff to talk to all and solve the problem

v. Planning for regional meetings and on congregation of women is also carried out in such meetings as women appreciate the involvement of USNPSS staff in planning such events in their villages

vi. This year, USNPSS staff attended several meetings of women's groups to conduct PRA and focus group discussions (FGD) under the ICSSR project

During the visits to villages USNPSS staff also met with the partner NGOs and reviewed progress of the work. One of the important issues emerging out of such discussions is the rapid change occurring in villages, especially now that roads have reached to remote places. Further, uncertainty of weather conditions has affected patterns of cultivation and people have been opting for non-farm activities.

Inter-generation gap in perceptions and attitudes towards life and livelihoods in the village have become sharper as all children attend school. While the older generation of women still exhibit an interest in agriculture and in their village, the educated youth seek employment outside their village, preferably in a large city. As the coverage of television and cell phones is increasing, the young people seek alternative life style, away from their villages.

1f. Congregation of women

This year, a total of 12 congregations of women were organized in Kumaon and Garhwal regions. Most of these congregations were held with the full support of women's groups; and for the first time; since the formation of UMP, USNPSS did not cover the financial expenses incurred in the programme (Table 3).

a. Congregation as forums of learning

Over time, the members of UMP have started to recognize these annual congregations as a social practice which need to be organized to display solidarity and as an indicator of action, no matter whether the funds are available or not. However, moving beyond this

conceptualization they also recognize congregations as a practice in which they participate; develop knowledge and skills which are required in their villages, all through the year. Congregations provide a common platform to women, not available to them in the traditional set up of communities, to raise their concerns and find common solutions to the problems that they face in their daily lives.

Organizing congregations of rural women is an interesting yet challenging exercise for UMP. The challenge is to regulate the interactions in such a way that learning is likely to occur among the participants. Since women from diverse educational, economic background and in different stages of their lives participate the trajectories of such learning is also diverse and unpredictable. For example, it is a challenge to recognize which aspects of the discussion would appeal to whom and with what certainty of retention. Also, outcomes may depend on the willingness and flexibility of the learner.

b. Crop depredation and loss of lives by wild animals

The issue of crop depredation by wild animals was raised by women in all congregations. Typically, problems of crop depredation and loss of human/cattle lives by wild animals are addressed in policies by offering the victim certain amount of cash as compensation. The difficulty is that the forests or the village, or the community does not exist in isolation. The problems caused by wild animals in the hill villages must be seen in relation to broader forces, both exogenous and in situ, that play together to constantly change the environment, especially forests and water. In this context, the members of UMP have been raising their voices to attract attention of the elected leaders/bureaucrats so that some appropriate solution could be found.

c. Violence against women

Congregations bring forth the issue of violence against women and girls by enabling communities to speak up and take action on instances of household/community violence, discrimination, hostility, harassment, teasing and sexual assault. During congregation women do recognize various forms of violence, some of which are listed below:

- a. Teasing, harassment of girls on their way to school, market and other public places
- b. Fighting, battering, physical abuse at home
- c. Threats, mental abuse
- d. Restrictions on adolescent girls, widows, unmarried girls, married women
- e. Female trafficking
- f. Female infanticide
- g. Denial of benefits to women which accrue from their own labour

This year the issue of female infanticide was taken on a campaign mode in Dwarahat, Binta and Bhikiyasen clusters. The causes and consequences of violence, with special focus on female infanticide and gender, were discussed in monthly village meetings, cluster level

meetings and during congregations of women. The elected women representatives in panchayats took up the issue in various government meetings in block headquarters.

Further, sex-selective abortion was discussed in relation to physical, mental and emotional abuse during pregnancy and after. Marriage of girls before attaining the age of eighteen years, dowry abuse, affects of frequent pregnancy in female body and issues related to vasectomy and tubectomy were also discussed during village meetings with women and adolescent girls.

The issue of trafficking was addressed by raising awareness and making the women's group accountable to oversee and monitor cases of unknown people approaching the poor households asking their girls for marriage. Discussions during meetings in villages have not only raised awareness about the issue but parents are now conscious of the ill-effects of the practice.

d. Intergenerational change re farming and forest-based activities:

Over the years, it is becoming clear that with progressive generations the interest of women in farming is eroding. Educated girls and young women, no longer interested in agriculture and livestock rearing, constitute a new domain that might throw fresh insights on issues of identity and labour of the hill women, especially in Uttarakhand where women are identified in association with their engagements in natural resource management. Not only the younger generation tend to differ from long-established domestic demands on female-labour but also aspire for paid-jobs in the cities. In their attempt to escape the hardships of physical labour and the rural ways of being, the young women aspire to be a part of the mainstream cityscape and hence the question of who will live in the village becomes a topic of debate during congregations.

e. Reducing gap between women's groups and panchayat functionaries:

Another important aspect of women's congregations is the high level of participation from the members of village committees, especially the elected women representatives in panchayats. Currently 526 persons, 379 women, directly associated with UMP are working as *gram pradhans*, BDC members and as members of the district panchayats. In many cases, they have sought the support of the women's groups not only to win the elections but also to decide on development issues, for example; where to lay the new concrete paths and roads or install infrastructure so that women are benefitted from interventions made by the panchayats.

Congregations in villages provide an appropriate forum to elected representatives to share their concerns and also to provide information to women on various government led schemes through panchayats. Elected female representatives are keen to participate because congregations are perceived as "rural women getting together to discuss issues." Women who have been elected for the first time find the congregations as "a safe place to speak up", "as a forum where men are not there to make fun of them". Further, many women bring their

applications/forms to the congregation and seek help of the panchayat functionaries in filling and submitting those in government offices for further action.

Table 3. Congregations of women.

Serial number	Date	Location	Village	District	Number of Participants
1	28.02.2016	Badiyun	Kinsur	Pauri Garhwal	205
2	28.02.2016	Bhikiyasen	Ghughuti	Almora	137
3	21.02.2016	Sunari	Bitholi	Almora	83
4	06.03.2016	Binta	Bhataura	Almora	74
5	08.03.2016	Dwarahat	Dwarahat	Almora	392
6	08.03.2016	Danya	Chalmorigada	Almora	360 (261 women)
7	08.03.2016	Muvani	Syuni	Pithoragarh	89
8	04.04.2016	Nandasain	school, Nandasain	Chamoli	256
9	13.03.2016	Badhani	Jakh	Chamoli	167
10	14.03.2016	Gopeswar	Sagar	Chamoli	284
11	15.03.2016	Ukhimath	Kimana	Rudraprayag	83
12	21.02.2016	Ganaigangoli	GIC Nayal	Pithoragarh	216
Total					2346

1g. Medical care for poor women and preventive health care education

One of the most effective ways to improve overall health in rural areas of Uttarakhand is to improve people's own ability to care for themselves. This issue is particularly important in the hills where the reach of government services is limited. Medical facilities, if available, remain understaffed and underutilized. In addition, women's access to medical care services is restricted by several other factors that arise from patriarchy and low economic status of women within the household and in the community.

In rural areas of Uttarakhand, women bear the multiple demands of household responsibilities, agriculture and forest-based work, child-care and care of the elderly at home, which often leaves them with chronic fatigue, constant knee and back pain and several other problems. While incidences of tuberculosis remain high, women also suffer from anaemia, prolepses of uterus, leucorrhoea, bone fractures/cracks owing to fall from the trees and in agricultural fields. In such a situation, the question that arises is what should be done about it? Are we to conclude that women should not work or whether they are to be provided with help; such as child care facilities, easy access to safe fuel and other services?

Another issue re women's health in Uttarakhand relates to the government health policies and programmes. For example, policies that emphasize maternal-child health, family planning and focus on productive stages of women's lives offer very little to young unmarried women, adolescent girls and older women who in different stages of their lives require different types of health care services.

Over the years, UMP has provided a platform to rural women to raise and discuss health related issues. Discussions are held in village and cluster level meetings and during congregations of women. In addition, preventive health care issues are raised through organizing skits and through songs in women's congregations. Further, women receive help

and advice from supervisors and partner organizations. UMP also provides help to poor women and their families by offering advice on the kind of the hospital/clinic the patient requires and by bearing expenses, partial or full, depending on the economic status; of the family (Table 4).

Among other issues, the village meetings and discussions in Almora focus on seasonal ailments and provide guidance on prevention of common diseases such as cold-cough, fever, dysentery, diarrhoea, jaundice, typhoid etc. Also, experience has shown that while communicable diseases are the most common forms of health problems, skin infections remain the most common of communicable diseases in villages. Worm infections, gastritis, arthritis and gout, urinary tract infections and respiratory disorders are also common.

Table 4. Medical care for very poor women.

Serial number	Date	Patient	Age (years)	Village	District	Treatment centre	Amount spent (Rs)	Ailment
1	28.05.2015	Hema Dasila	48	Rungadi	Pithoragarh	K. Swarup clinic Haridwar	5000	leucoderma
2	02.06.2015	Mayank Latwal	9	Chausali	Almora	Base hosp. Almora	1176	Stomach ache
3	18.06.2015	Shanti Rawat	27	Surna	Almora	Dist. Hosp. Almora	116	toothache
4	13.07.2015	Hem Joshi	23	Khatyari	Almora	Base Almora + CMI Dehradun	4500	Leg surgery
5	13.07.2015	Mohan Latwal	38	Chausali	Almora	Dr. Srivastava Almora	1484	Stomach ache
6	08.10.2015	Kunti Kimothi	83	Badhani	Chamoli	Dehradun, Karnaprayag	10,000	Stomach ache + weakness anxiety
7	15.10.2015	Surendra Bisht	15	Chourori	Pithoragarh	Base hosp. Almora	3000	Elbow surgery
8	22.11.2015	Rajendra singh	40	Ganaigangoli	Chamoli	Haldwani	2000	Fainting, depression
9	30.11.2015	Satyendra Rawat		Sagar	Chamoli	Rishikesh	10,000	swelling in elbow, wrist
10	16.12.2015	Himanshu Matiyani	15	Kasoon	Almora	Dist. Hosp. Almora	424	Arm fracture
11	17.12.2015	Hema Dasila	48	Rungadi	Pithoragarh	K. Swarup clinic Haridwar	7,000	Leucoderma
12	08.03.2016	Anita Arya	42	Phadiyali	Pithoragarh	Haldwani	3,500	Chest pain, fell from a tree
13	16.03.2016	S. N. Kimothi	7	Badhaani	Chamoli	Dehradun	5,000	Eye ailments
14	16.03.2016	Mahanand Bisht	39	Gopeswar	Chamoli	Dehradun	5,000	Chronic backache
Total								

1h. Grading of women

Grading of members of women's groups in 31 villages was carried out to assess their performance over nine indicators (Table 5). Each indicator was developed on a scale of A to E. In this scale, E exhibits the poorest performance whilst the best is indicated by A.

Table 5 . Village-wise scores of grading of women across all indicators.

location	Champawat, Pati					Pithoragarh, Ganai		Almora, Danya			Almora, Sunadi							Chamoli, Gopeshwar	Chamoli, Badhani		Almora, Maichun		Pauri, Badiyun	Rudraprayag				Pithoragarh, Muwani		Bageshwar, Shama		Total	
Village	Harrodi	Kinwadi	Raulamel	Kanikot	Jankande	Fadiyali	Rungadi	Aati	Dharagad	Kulori	Parkot	Bedhuli	Sanare	Dhunga	Mason	Chaura	Dhamera	Koteswar	Diyarkot	Pudiyani	Lamudiyar	mouni	Thangar	Dilmi	Usara	Karokhi	Pathali	Mallakot	Suni	Kinu	Gogina		
Number	24	25	25	23	25	25	22	25	24	22	25	25	25	10	10	5	25	25	25	25	17	20	25	10	20	20	25	25	25	9	13	649	
Indicators																																	
Monthly meeting	4.08	3.36	3.7	3.9	3.3	4.5	3.5	3.8	4.8	4.2	5	3.3	4.2	4.9	5	5	4.8	4.4	5	4.6	4.2	3	3.2	4.9	4.4	4.8	3.8	4.7	4.2	3.1	1.2	4.1	
Articulation	3.92	3.48	3.5	3.8	3.5	4.7	2.6	4	4.5	3.5	4.6	3.3	4	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.7	4.1	4.1	3.6	2.7	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.7	3.5	4	4	3.3	2.1	3.8	
Participation in WVG	3.71	3.36	3.6	3.9	3.7	4	2.5	3.9	4	3.2	2.4	3	3.8	4.5	4.2	4.2	3.9	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.5	2.6	2.4	4.4	3.9	4.1	2	3.6	3.6	2.2	1.2	3.4	
Health	3.75	3.36	3.4	3.9	3.3	4.2	2.9	3.6	4.2	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.8	3.9	4.2	4	4.1	4	3.9	3.9	3.5	2.6	2.7	4.6	3.2	4.3	2.5	3.9	3.8	2.9	2.6	3.6	
Nutrition	3.83	3.64	3.5	3.8	3.6	4.6	2.7	3.7	4.7	3.3	4	3.5	3.9	4.2	4	4.2	4.1	4.4	4	4	3.4	2.6	3.4	4.5	4	4.9	3.3	3.8	3.8	2.8	3.2	3.8	
Equality																																	
i. gender	3.79	3.56	3.3	4.2	3.4	4.4	2.7	3.6	4.4	3.5	3.1	3.2	4	4	4	4.2	4.1	3.8	4	4	4	2.4	3	4.8	4.3	4.8	3	4	3.7	2.9	2.3	3.7	
ii. among women	3.83	3.52	3.4	3.9	3.6	4.1	3.1	4	4.1	3.3	4	3.2	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.2	4	4.1	4.1	3.9	3.9	2.3	3.4	4.8	4.5	4.2	4.1	4.4	4	1.8	1.5	3.7	
iii. children	3.79	3.6	3.5	4.1	3.6	4.4	2.5	4	4.7	3.4	3.8	3.1	3.8	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.6	4	3.9	3.7	2.3	3.5	4.9	4.3	4.6	4	4.2	4.2	1.6	2	3.8	
Panchayats	3.54	3.48	3.1	3.4	3.6	2.9	2.3	3.8	4	2.7	1.8	2.8	3.8	4.2	4.1	4.2	3.8	2.9	3	3.6	2.5	2.4	2.8	3.6	3.4	4.1	1.9	3	2.7	2.2	2	3.1	
Reading (VLC books)	2.42	2.2	3.2	3.2	3.4	2	1.3	2.4	3.8	2.1	1.4	2.6	3.7	4.2	4.3	4.4	3.7	2.4	3.2	3.8	1	2.7	1.6	2.2	3.1	3.6	1.6	3.6	2.3	1	1	2.7	
Understanding of govt. Schemes	3.25	2.28	2.9	3	3.6	3.4	2	2.3	3.9	2.4	2	3.2	3.8	4.4	4.4	4.6	3.9	2.5	3.4	3.9	2.7	1.9	2.7	3.5	3.6	4.2	2.5	3.4	2.9	1.6	2.1	3.1	
Average	3.6	3.3	3.4	3.7	3.5	3.9	2.6	3.6	4.3	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.9	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.1	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.3	2.5	2.9	4.17	3.9	4.4	2.9	3.9	3.6	2.3	1.9	3.5	
Monthly meeting	4.29	3.4	3.6	4.7	3.6	4.8	3.9	4.4	4.8	4.3	5	4.3	4.3	5	5	5	4.9	4.3	5	4.6	4.2	4.5	3.5	5	4.8	4.9	4.3	4.8	4.8	4	2.7	4.4	
Articulation	4.04	3.48	3.5	4.7	3.7	4.9	3.5	4.4	4.6	3.7	5	4.2	4	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.3	3.6	4.1	3.8	4.5	4.7	5	4.4	4.6	4.4	4	2.7	4.2	
Participation in WVG	3.75	3.6	3.6	4.7	3.9	4.6	3.3	4.4	4.3	3.5	4.1	3.9	3.9	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.4	3.8	3.8	4	3.5	3.9	2.8	4.8	4.6	4.8	2.8	4.2	4.4	3.3	2.5	3.9	
Health	3.75	3.4	3.6	4.7	3.6	4.5	3.5	4.4	4.5	3.4	4.3	4.2	3.9	4.3	4.6	4	4.6	4.3	4	4.1	3.5	4	3.3	4.9	4.4	4.9	2.9	4.5	4.6	3.7	3.2	4.1	
Nutrition	3.83	3.72	3.6	4.6	3.8	5	3.4	4.5	4.7	3.4	4.8	4.4	3.9	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.3	4.6	4	4.1	3.5	4.1	3.9	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.1	4.2	4.3	3	3.3	4.1	
Equality																																	
i. by gender	3.88	3.6	3.4	4.8	3.6	4.8	3.2	4.4	4.6	3.8	4.4	4.1	4	4.5	4.6	4.2	4.2	3.9	4	4.2	4	3.7	3.5	4.9	4.7	5	3.4	4.8	4.4	2.9	2.8	4.1	
ii. among women	3.88	3.56	3.3	4.7	3.8	4.8	3.5	4.8	4.1	3.6	4.9	4.1	3.9	4.4	4.8	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.1	4	4	3.5	3.8	5	5	4.9	4.3	4.6	4.4	2.7	2.2	4.1	
iii. for children	3.83	3.6	3.6	4.7	3.7	4.6	3.3	4.8	4.6	3.5	4.9	4	3.8	4.5	4.6	4.2	4.6	4.5	4.1	4	3.9	3.5	4.1	5	5	4.8	4.4	4.8	4.9	2.3	2.7	4.2	
Panchayat	3.63	3.64	3.4	4.4	3.8	3.4	2.5	4.2	4	2.7	4	3.6	3.8	4.7	4.5	4.2	4	3.5	3.3	3.9	2.5	3.5	2.8	4.5	4.6	4.8	2.4	3.5	3.3	2.9	2.6	3.6	
Reading (VLC books)	2.42	2.84	3.2	4.3	3.6	2.2	1.4	3.4	3.9	2.2	4	3.3	3.7	4.5	4.6	4.4	4	3	3.3	4	1	3.9	2.5	2.8	4.1	4.1	1.6	3.8	2.9	1	1.1	3.1	
Understanding of govt. Schemes	3.25	3.04	3	3.9	3.7	3.5	2.5	3.9	4	2.5	4.1	3.7	3.8	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.2	3	3.6	4	2.8	3.3	3.1	4.2	4.5	4.4	3.2	3.7	3.5	2.4	2.5	3.6	
Average	3.7	3.4	3.4	4.6	3.7	4.3	3.1	4.3	4.4	3.3	4.5	4	3.9	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.4	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.3	3.8	3.4	4.6	4.6	4.8	3.4	4.3	4.2	2.9	2.6	4.0	

Table 6 . Grading of women in the least performing village Gogina, district Bageshwar.

No. of women	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Score
First grading (October 2015)														
Monthly meeting	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.15
Articulation	2	2	1	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.08
Participation in WVG	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1.23
Health	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2.62
Nutrition	4	4	3	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	4	4	4	3.15
Equality														
i. gender	2	2	4	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.31
ii. among women	3	2	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.46
iii. children	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Panchayats	2	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Reading (VLC books)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Understanding of govt. schemes	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.08
Average	2.09	1.91	1.73	1.73	1.73	2	3	1.64	1.64	1.73	1.91	1.91	1.91	1.92
Second grading (March 2016)														
Monthly meeting	4	3	2	1	1	3	4	3	3	4	2	2	3	2.69
Articulation	3	3	2	3	2	3	4	2	2	3	3	3	2	2.69
Participation in WVG	4	4	3	1	2	2	4	2	2	3	2	2	2	2.54
Health	3	3	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3.15
Nutrition	4	4	3	2	3	4	4	3	3	2	3	4	4	3.31
Equality														
i. gender	3	2	4	2	2	4	3	3	2	2	4	3	3	2.85
ii. among women	4	2	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.23
iii. children	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	2.69
Panchayats	2	2	2	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	2.62
Reading (VLC books)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1.08
Understanding of govt. schemes	2	2	3	2	2	2	4	2	2	3	3	2	3	2.46
Average	3	2.64	2.55	1.82	2.27	2.64	3.45	2.36	2.36	2.64	2.55	2.36	2.82	2.57

Table 7 . Grading of women in the best performing village Karokhi, district Rudrapryag.

No. of women	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	score
First grading (October 2015)																					
Monthly meeting	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	4.8
Articulation	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	4	5	4.65
Participation in WVG	5	3	4	4	2	4	3	4	3	3	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4.05
Health	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	3	4.3
Nutrition	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.85
Equality																					
i. gender	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4.8
ii. among women	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4.2
iii. children	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4.6
Panchayats	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4.05
Reading (VLC books)	5	4	5	5	2	2	5	1	1	2	5	5	5	4	3	5	2	1	5	5	3.6
Understanding of govt. schemes	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	3	3	2	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	3	4	5	4.15
Average	4.73	4.27	4.55	4.45	3.64	4.09	4.64	4.09	4.18	4	4.64	4.55	4.82	4.64	4.36	4.27	4.18	4.27	4.45	4.55	4.37
Second grading (March 2016)																					
Monthly meeting	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	4.85
Articulation	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.95
Participation in WVG	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.8
Health	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.9
Nutrition	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.9
Equality																					
i. gender	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.95
ii. among women	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.9
iii. children	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.75
Panchayats	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.8
Reading (VLC books)	5	5	5	5	4	2	5	1	3	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	1	5	5	4.05
Understanding of govt. schemes	5	5	5	5	4	2	5	2	3	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	4.35
Average	4.91	4.91	4.91	4.91	4.36	3.91	4.82	4	4.64	4.64	5	4.82	5	5	4.82	4.91	4.82	4.55	5	5	4.75

Table 5 shows all the nine indicators used for grading. These indicators cover a wide range of issues reflecting different aspects of women's empowerment through organized activities in villages.

This year, a total of 649 women were involved in grading. Out of these 74.11% were represented by the general caste while 21.57% women were from SC households. 4.3% women belonged to other backward classes (OBC) category.

Grading of women was carried out twice with a gap of six months in between. Separate grading sheets were used to record the progress of each individual. Data obtained during grading was used to create a profile of each woman. This was followed by creating a profile of each group/village. Out of 31 villages, 41.94% represented the mixed-caste households while 12.90% villages were totally inhabited by SC population. Also, data was aggregated to see overall progress of women during the year.

Table 8 shows improvements in overall performance of women's groups during the year. Also, the Table records slight improvements in performance in comparison to last year. While the first grading in 2014 exhibited the average score of 2.8 (Grade C), by the end of this year in March, the average score became 3.9 (Grade B).

Table 8 . Grading of 629 women in 30 villages in 2015-2016.

Serial number	Indicators	2014-2015				2015-2016			
		First grading		Second grading		Third grading		Fourth grading	
		Average	Grade	Average	grade	average	Grade	Average	grade
1	Participation in village monthly meetings	3.57	B	4.04	A	4.1	A	4.4	A
2	Articulation of issues	3.14	B	3.8	B	3.9	B	4.2	A
3	Participation in WVG activities	2.63	C	3.31	B	3.5	B	3.9	B
4	Health	2.74	C	3.49	B	3.6	B	4.1	A
5	Nutrition	2.97	C	3.7	B	3.8	B	4.1	A
6	Understanding of and sensitivity towards Equality issues								
6 (i)	On gender	2.75	C	3.55	B	3.7	B	4.1	A
6 (ii)	among women themselves	3.18	B	3.74	B	3.8	B	4.1	A
6 (iii)	On children	3	C	3.73	B	3.8	B	4.2	A
7	Participation in village committees, panchayats	2.34	C	3.13	B	3.2	B	3.6	B
8	Reading (VLC books)	2.07	C	2.67	C	2.7	C	3.1	B
9	Understanding of government Schemes	2.37	C	3.13	B	3.1	B	3.6	B
Total		2.8	C	3.5	B	3.6	B	3.9	B

E=1, D=2, C=3, B=4, A=5

2. Village Learning Centres

Village learning centres offer an intellectually and socially supportive environment for children to engage in an educational discourse and develop their mental, social and emotional construct with the guidance of a trained facilitator. In addition, these centres embody a common theme of community learning in which problems are shared during direct interactions among organized groups and solutions sought with a consensus-building approach.

These centres are run in villages where lack of physical amenities such as hospitals, private schools, bazaar and recreational facilities deter the regular government school teachers to live there. Since professionally trained teachers do not wish to live in geographic and professional isolation, the quality of education of rural children remains an area of concern. In such a situation, the village learning centres not only offer a place for 6-14 year old children to meet in the evenings but also as individuals continuously involved in self-improvement.

To foster deep-learning among students the centre needs to be a dynamic, attractive place where ideas and assumptions of other children as well as the facilitators are challenged on a regular basis. Creating such a learning environment in villages involves continuous interactions with adults in the community. Also, co-operation of school teachers, panchayat members is sought to make learning an inclusive experience. During the year the facilitators and the supervisor were constantly challenged to seek knowledge about climate change issues, especially in Maichun cluster. The whole process led to in-depth discussions on the causes and effects of climate change on agriculture in the hill areas.

While surface learning relates to acceptance of facts and figures written in text-books as isolated ideas, deep learning would enable students to inter-relate knowledge and skills in a way that learning makes sense and becomes relevant to the lives of the learners.

Village learning centres are valuable for exposing and challenging misconceptions among students in rural settings. Empirical evidence from the centres has shown that children pass the examinations but their misconceptions go unchallenged throughout their education in schools. For example, the facilitator in Syuni village, district Pithoragarh, spent almost two weeks trying to make children of different grades understand the importance of iodised salt in their food. Similarly, the facilitator in Badhani village, district Chamoli, related an incident when students of grades seven and eight had predicted that heavy objects will fall faster than the light ones because the former has more weight. In another centre in Gwar village, district Chamoli, students of class eight had understood that the oak trees ooze water from their leaves making the soil moist around them. Students predicting that the sun moves from the East to the West direction everyday were also evident from many villages.

Along with the mathematical and language skills, the centres focus on improvements in communication and participation in group activities among children. Freedom to work and learn is often cited by children as one of the important reasons of them attending centres on a regular basis.

One of the issues that concerns USNPSS is to develop methods of assessment of learning for children attending centres.

2a. Our Land-Our Life

Concepts of measurement remain difficult for children. The village learning centres address the issue with conducting various activities with children in the evenings. In particular, students studying in class 6, 7 and 8th who also study environmental education in schools, are involved in practical activities.

2b. Reading habits

Reading habits among children have improved. This has been made possible due to the following two factors:

- i. Provision of an average of 350 books in Hindi in each centre
- ii. Provision of newspapers in each centre. In many villages, this is the first time that a newspaper has reached and read by children and others in the community
- iii. Continuous efforts made by the facilitators to improve learning skills among children who were found to be weak in reading and writing

In Valna, Chaura, Daira, Usara, Gogina, Malkhadugarcha, Namik and Loharkhet villages, the facilitators identified such children and have worked with them for about a year. The following table provides an overview of such an attempt in Shama cluster:

2c. Improving writing skills

Based on the earlier feedback from the centres, efforts were made to improve writing skills among children. In particular, Maichun cluster did a lot of work in this regard. About three months were totally devoted to this activity. As a result, writing and reading ability of children have improved considerably in Maniagar, Dhana and Banthok villages (Table 9).

Table 9. Children who had exhibited improvements in reading and writing skills in Shama cluster during 2015-2016.

Serial number	Name of the student	Class	Village	Area of improvement
1	Deepa	7	Gogina	Reading and writing skills
2	Bhavana	8	Gogina	Reading and writing skills
3	Kamal Kumar	5	Gogina	Mathematics- Addition, subtraction
4	Vinita	4	Malkha Dugarcha	Reads and comprehends stories
5	Vinita	2	Malkha Dugarcha	Multiplication tables-uses <i>ganit mala</i>
6	Luxmi	4	Malkha Dugarcha	Excellent knowledge of angles, bhaav-geet, chetna-geet excellent comprehension, sings songs
7	Gaurav	3	Malkha Dugarcha	Mathematics- Addition, subtraction Multiplication tables
8	Sumit	7	Namik	Drawing, sketching
9	Rajendra	8	Namik	Painting, story-telling skills

2d. Personal and community hygiene

Issues of personal and community hygiene and cleanliness of the village were taken up in a campaign mode this year. The following activities were organized in centres involving children, adolescent girls groups and women's groups in villages:

- i. Children had prepared skits, songs and written poems emphasizing the need of cleanliness in villages and at home
- ii. Special campaigns were organized by facilitators to remove polythene from village paths, spreading the message to reduce use of polythene and of packaged food items
- iii. With a dual purpose of cleanliness of village paths and clearing of bushes in surrounding land; which has become resting space for wild boar, porcupine and other animals, members of women's groups organized regular campaigns on hygiene and cleanliness in villages
- iv. Provision of sanitation facilities has become an important part of the campaign aimed at issues of hygiene and cleanliness in villages.
- v. In Bhaloogara, district Pithoragarh, a group of 36 women assembled regularly to clean their village.
- vi. In Tairi village, district Pauri Garhwal, members of the women's group cleaned about 2 km of the village path on 27-28 November 2015
- vii. In Saari (district Rudraprayag), Sunadi (district Almora) and Ganai (district Pithoragarh) villages adults had joined hands with children to run cleanliness campaigns. Support from the government schools was also sought.

2e. Celebrating national and social festivals

This year, national and social festivals were observed and celebrated with the view of creating knowledge about events. Festivals occupy a special space and have distinct appeal in villages. Both national and social festivals are popular and emanate inspiration, especially among children. However, many do not know why a particular event is celebrated and that too in a specific time of the year.

While the national festivals are applicable everywhere in the country, the same is not true for social festivals. While some of the social festivals are celebrated all through the state, some are observed in a specific region or the community. For example, some festivals that had sprung up organically in relation to the time of ripening of the crop (which may differ in the valleys and high altitude villages) are celebrated in different times in Uttarakhand. Also, each festival has a theme and a distinct method of celebration with a set of rituals and norms observed in communities.

Their popularity, celebratory roles and implications in life are issues that need to be understood in view of social, mental and emotional appeal, both at the individual and community levels. At a community or collective level, festivals bind people together and strengthen their sense of community.

Political nuance of local festivals

While the local festivals such as *harela* (sowing seeds of local grains and worshipping them), *haryalo* (to observe the arrival of the winter season), *fooldeli* (sprinkling flowers on the doorstep to mark the arrival of the spring season) were observed by communities with no outside support, the current interest of the state has given a different twist to such events. For example, this year the state has offered five hundred rupees reward to one winner in each *gram-sabha* for growing “the best seedlings” in a basket. While the local people lament the negative influence of such intervention on authentic celebrations and their socio-cultural impacts, the issue of “reinventing traditions to gain political advantage” takes centre stage. Also, one hears stories of the role of political elites in traditional carnivals such as the *Nanda raj-jaat* which is celebrated every twelve years to mark the departure of the local deity, Nanda, from her parental home in Nandasain to the higher Himalayas.

The issue of interest in community learning centres is not just of observing the local festivals as authentically as possible but also to discuss its other dimensions, such as how with increasing political interference power shifts from the hand of communities to political elites. Also, the issue of the conflicts over meanings of the traditional festivals and the irrationality of the speculation for political gains were discussed with youth, adolescent girls groups and women’s groups.

Specific activities taken up by children to mark the festivities include the following:

- i. Cleanliness campaigns in villages on the occasion of national festivals such as on the Republic Day, Independence Day, 2 October etc.

- ii. Debate, essay writing competitions on national festivals
- iii. Making diyas from clay and other artefacts with paper to decorate the centre on the occasion of Diwali.
- iv. *Rangoli* (traditional art form) competitions were organized in all centres in Badhani cluster, district Chamoli during Diwali

2f. Working with differently-abled children

In many villages, differently-abled children, particularly girls, attend the centre on a regular basis. The location of the centre in the village itself makes it convenient for them to attend. In addition, children feel more comfortable in an informal yet conducive to learning environment in learning centres. For example, in Valna village, a girl who could speak a few words earlier has now learnt to say full sentences. She is also trying to write and pronounce difficult words.

2g. Village level efforts to sustain activities in centres

- i. In Binta cluster, district Almora, the facilitators sold the newspapers to men involved in recycling. The money obtained was used to buy sports equipment for children.
- ii. On an average, parents pay about thirty rupees per month as fee for their wards attending computer centres. The amount is used to pay the electricity bill
- iii. In Dwarahat cluster, children have cultivated plant seeds in used polythene bags. In many other villages, old newspapers are given to poor children. They use the old newspapers either to cover their school books or make envelopes
- iv. In Bainoli village, elderly people were invited to talk about their experiences in life. Children also heard folk tales from them
- v. In Badhani village, along with the children and adolescent girls, the members of women's group planted broad leaf trees in village common land. The women's group has taken up the responsibility of the maintenance of the plantation site
- vi. In some villages, small donations were received from communities. The amount so collected was used to buy stationary or racquets/shuttle cocks in villages such as in Tairi in Nayarghati.
- vii. Different types of leaves were collected to initiate a discussion on their use for animals and their herbal/medicinal qualities.
- viii. In Nandasain cluster, 24 December, the birth centenary of late Indramani Badoni, leader of the Uttarakhand movement, also known as Gandhi of Uttarakhand, was observed. Debates were held to discuss his contributions in Uttarakhand and the national political arena.

Table 10. Number of children attending village learning centres.

Serial number	Cluster	Village	Total children			SC			OBC		
			Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys
1	Ganai-Gangoli	Rungadi	22	9	13	2	0	2	0	0	0
2		Bhanyani	29	14	15	0	0	0	29	14	15
3		Bhalugara	28	14	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
4		Chaunaliya	25	9	16	25	9	16	0	0	0
5		Fadiyali	20	12	8	20	12	8	0	0	0
6	Gopeswar	Bamiyala	40	19	21	0	0	0	0	0	0
7		Khalla	41	21	20	15	7	8	0	0	0
8		Gwar	31	16	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
9		Koteswar	34	12	24	20	8	12	0	0	0
10		Kandei	32	17	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Badhani and Nandasain	Chanudali	30	15	15	2	2	0	0	0	0
12		Jhurkande	28	17	11	4	2	2	0	0	0
13		Pudiyani	41	19	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
14		Badhani	28	10	18	8	3	5	0	0	0
15		Toil	40	25	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
16		Diyarkot	30	14	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
17		Nandasen	27	15	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
18		Jakh	29	19	10	6	4	2	0	0	0
19		Sundergaon	29	15	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
20		Bainoli	26	13	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	Nayarghati	Thangar	21	5	16	12	3	9	9 ST	2 ST	7ST
22		Bagi	29	15	14	29	15	14	0	0	0
23		Kuthar	21	10	11	7	3	4	0	0	0
24		Pongtha	21	11	10	4	0	4	0	0	0
25		Naugaon	17	6	11	3	1	2	0	0	0
26	Sunadi	Ganoli	22	10	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
27		Chaura	18	8	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
28		Valna	17	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
29		Bedhuli	20	8	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
30		Simalgaon	24	14	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	Binta	Bhatura	21	8	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
32		Surna	20	13	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
33		Borkhola	23	12	11	2	1	1	0	0	0
34		Parkot	18	5	13	9	4	5	0	0	0
35		Binta	19	8	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
36		Banthok	27	10	17	11	10	1	0	0	0
37		Maichun	24	9	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
38		Dhana	26	15	11	26	15	11	0	0	0
39		Girchola	29	15	14	4	3	1	0	0	0
40		Mauni	27	12	15	12	6	6	0	0	0
41	Danya	Danya	30	16	14	23	12	11	0	0	0
42		Ukal	26	11	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
43		Dasili	33	20	13	2	1	1	0	0	0
44		Munoli	26	19	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
45		Gauli	30	19	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
46	Shama	Gogina dhara	26	18	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
47		Loharkuda	28	16	12	28	16	12	0	0	0
48		Namik	30	10	20	16	6	10	6 ST	3 ST	3 ST
49		Liti	46	9	37	2	0	2	0	0	0
50		Malka Dugarcha	28	17	11	0	0	0	0	0	0
51	Ukhimath	Saari	37	23	14	12	7	5	0	0	0
52		Usara	23	13	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
53		Dungar	27	12	15	17	7	10	0	0	0
54		Daira	17	7	10	2	0	2	0	0	0
55		Kimana	22	8	14	0	0	0	0	0	0
56	Pati	Rolmel	30	20	10	2	2	0	0	0	0
57		Kimvadi	20	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
58		Kanikot	24	17	7	23	16	7	0	0	0
59		Jankande	18	11	7	1	1	0	0	0	0
60		Harodi	21	10	11	0	0	0	0	0	0

2h. Suggestions by supervisors to improve the programme

This year, during the visits of the USNPSS staff to villages, the supervisors gave the following suggestions to improve upon the programme.

- i. Newspapers are a useful means to connect with communities. While earlier men were not much involved in educational activities of their children, they now visit the centre to read the newspaper
- ii. New books and more sports equipment is required in the centres
- iii. Centres where the facilitators have put in a lot of effort to initiate new ideas/practice should be visited by others from surrounding centres
- iv. Continuous efforts should be made to enhance the involvement of all village residents in activities carried out by village learning centres
- v. *Jodo gnan* kit is now reaching the government schools also. To be different from the system, the centres would require diverse educational aids. Possibly, more equipment related to science could be provided

2i. Suggestions by the heads of partner organizations to improve the programme

- i. Facilitators require more training and exposure on ideas/practices of alternative methods of teaching and learning
- ii. Methods of learning should be more interactive and activity-based
- iii. Activities such as organizing skits, newspaper reading, story writing, debate and essay writing need more focus, especially with 11-14 year old children
- iv. Books/magazines that help in preparation for competitive exams should be provided, particularly because such books are not available in villages, are expensive and young boys and girls need them from time to time. Such books could become an important means of connecting with the youth of the village
- v. Old sports equipment needs to be repaired and replaced by new material.

2j. Facilitators in their home communities

All facilitators are young girls and women (above the age of 18 years) who run the centres in their home communities. Selecting a girl from the village itself has an added advantage of providing educational opportunity to a young girl from the village itself. A majority of the facilitators also improve their educational qualifications by enrolling themselves in college and sitting for exams as private or regular students.

The facilitators are accountable to their communities. For example, in case the facilitator requires leave for some reason, she informs the president of the women's group and also the CBO concerned. She also discusses the progress of children with their parents, both by making personal visits to their homes and during monthly meetings of women's groups in villages.

The cluster co-ordinators make regular visits to centres to monitor the programme. They also help the facilitators organize the meeting with adolescent girls and women's groups on a regular basis. Table 11 exhibits a brief profile of the facilitators and the cluster co-ordinators running the centres in villages.

Table 11. Profile of facilitators and coordinators.

Serial num	Village (gram-sabha, block)	location of the centre	Facilitators			
			Name	Caste	Age	Education
1	Banthok (Banthok, Dhauladevi)	<i>Panchayat Bhavan</i>	Ms. Uma Gailakoti	General	19	studying in B.A. 2 nd year
2	Maichun (Maniagar) Dhauladevi)	<i>Bal Bhavan</i>	Ms. Neeru Banola	General	21	studying in B.A. 2 nd year
3	Maniagar (Maniagar, Dhauladevi)	<i>Panchayat Ghar</i>	Ms. Renu Aagari	OBC	22	studying in B.A. 2 nd year
4	Girchola (Girchola, Dhauladevi)	<i>Panchayat Bhavan</i>	Ms. Pooja Banola	General	19	Intermediate
5	Mauni (Nakot, Dhauladevi)	<i>Jan Milan Kendra</i>	Shri Girish Ch. Joshi	General	52	Intermediate
6	Chaturbhoj (up to June 2015)	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Indra Arya	SC	19	Intermediate
	Adolescent worker	From Maniagar village	Ms. Sonu Banola	General	21	M.A.
	Coordinator	From Toli village	Shri Vinod Kumar	SC	30	M.A.
7	Danya (Danya, Dhauladevi)	Private house	Smt. Sunita Arya	SC	30	High School
8	Ukal (Gauli, Dhauladevi)	Private house	Ms. Gunjan Pant	General	25	B.A. final
9	Dasili (Dasili, Dhauladevi)	<i>Bal Bhavan</i>	Ms. Mamata Dasila	General	19	Intermediate
10	Munauli (Bajaan, Dhauladevi)	Private house	Ms. Neeta Bhatt	General	22	B.A. Final
11	Gauli (Gauli, Dhauladevi)	Private house	Ms. Rekha Pandey	General	20	B.A. Final
	Coordinator	From Danya	Smt. Anila Pant	General	52	Intermediate
	Coordinator for women and adolescent girls	From Rampur village	Smt. Pushpa Punetha	General	49	Intermediate
12	Bedhuli	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Monika Rawat	General	19	studying in BA 2 nd year
13	Simalgaon	private house	Ms. Lalita Bisht	General	20	studying in MA 1 st year
14	Valana	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Prabha Basera	General	20	studying in BA final
15	Ganoli	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Deepa Fulara	General	18	studying in BA 1 st year
16	Chaura	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Bhawna Sah	General	23	studying in MA final
	Cluster coordinator	From Rauna village	Smt. Bhagwai Tiwari	General	46	
17	Surna	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Smt. Shanti Rawat	General	28	High School
18	Bhatora	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Kiran Arya	SC	26	MA
19	Borkhola	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Maya Bora	General	27	BA
20	Simalti	<i>Private house</i>	Shri Harish Ch.Joshi	General	50	Inter
21	Parkote	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Rajni Negi	General	22	BA
	Cluster coordinator	From Simalti	Smt. Maya Joshi	General	42	High School
	Coordinator women program.	From village Shilang	Smt. Hema Negi	General	45	
22	Ghughuti/ Dhameda (up to July 2015)	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Leela Mathpal	General	38	Intermediate
23	Kamrad (up to July 2015)	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Ganga Joshi	General	20	Intermediate
24	Malkha Dugarcha	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Bharati Mehta	General	19	Inter
25	Loharkuda (Gogina)	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Laxmi Arya	SC	20	Inter
26	Dhari (Gogina)	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Ganga Rautela	General	18	Inter
27	Namik	<i>jan Milan kendra</i>	Ms. Sunita Arya	SC	21	BA 2 nd year
28	Liti	<i>Private house</i>	Shri Kedar Singh	General	34	Inter

	Cluster coordinator	From Shama village	Shri Kedar Singh Koranga	General	56	Inter
29	Rungadi	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Hema Dasila	General	21	Inter
30	Bhaloogada	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Rekha Sharma	General	18	Inter
31	Chaunaliya	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Kavita Arya	SC	19	Inter
32	Bhanyani	<i>private house</i>	Smt. Uma Bora	OBC	26	8 th
33	Fadiyali	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Suman Mahara	General	22	Inter
	Cluster coordinator	From Ganai	Shri Rajendra Singh Bisht	General	41	MA
	Coordinator women program.	From Ganai	Shri Bachi Singh	General	48	MA
34	Jankande	<i>private house</i>	Smt. Sheela Bora	OBC	23	Intermediate
35	Raulmel	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Anita Ladwal	General	18	Intermediate
36	Kanikot	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Prema Arya	SC	21	BA final
37	Kimwadi	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Himani Gehtodi	General	18	Intermediate
38	Harodi	<i>private house</i>	Smt. Mamata Mahara	General	27	8 th
	Cluster coordinator	From Toli village	Shri Pitamber Gehtori	General	49	BA
39	Sooni (up to May 2015)	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Neha Sonar	SC	19	Inter
40	Mallakot (up to July 2015)	<i>private house</i>	Smt. Laxmi Chauhan	General	37	Inter
	coordinator women program	From Muvani	Ms. Radha Khanka	General	49	Inter
41	Pudiyani	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Sapna Negi	General	19	BA 1 st year
42	Toli	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Mamta Rawat/ Sulochana	General	19	BA 1 st year
43	Chaundali	<i>Samudayik Milan kendra</i>	Ms. Rekha Rawat	General	21	BA
44	Jakh	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Jyoti Negi	General	21	BA
45	Badhani	<i>Samudayik Milan kendra</i>	Shri Kamlesh Negi*	General	27	BA
46	Nandasain	<i>private house</i>	Shri Ravindra Kumar	SC	21	Graduate
47	Jhurkande	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Laxmi Bhandari	General	20	BA
48	Bainoli	<i>panchayat bhavan</i>	Ms. Divya Chaudhary	General	21	BA
49	Diyarkot	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Deepa Bisht	General	18	Inter
50	Sundargaon	<i>Samudayik Milan kendra</i>	Ms. Neema Sagoi	General	20	BA
	Coordinator-1	From Badhani village	Shri Shiv Narain Kimothi	General	45	MA
	Coordinator-2	From village Chaundali	Ms. Laxmi Negi	General	26	MA
51	Kandai	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Suman Negi	General	19	BA
52	Bamiyala	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Smt. Urmila Rawat	General	21	BA
53	Khalla	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Sundari Bisht	General	37	MA
54	Gwar	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Rita Bisht	General	19	?
55	Koteshwar	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Priyanka	SC	18	BA 1 st year
	Cluster coordinator	From Kande village	Ms. Siddhi Negi	General	22	BA
56	Bagi	<i>private house (shifted from dilapidated panchayat ghar)</i>	Ms. Raveena	General	19	Intermediate
57	Pongatha	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Jyoti Riyal	General	19	BA 1 st year
58	Kuthar (Hathnood)	<i>private house</i>	Ms. Radha Negi	General	19	BA 1 st year
59	Thangar	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Ritu	General	18	BA 1 st year
60	Naugaon	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Ankita Chauhan	General	19	Intermediate
	Cluster coordinator	From village Badiyun	Shri Snehdeep Rawat	General	53	<i>Sahitya Ratna</i>
61	Dungar	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Neeta Rana	General	24	Graduate
62	Daira	<i>panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Pooja Negi	General	20	Graduate
63	Saari	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Reshami Bhatt	General	18	Graduate
64	Ushada	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. poonam Bajwal	General	23	Post graduate
65	Kimana	<i>Panchayat ghar</i>	Ms. Neeta Pushpawan	General	18	Intermediate
	Cluster coordinator	From village Kimana	Shri Pramod Trivedi	General	37	MA
	coordinator Women program	From village Kimana	Smt. Laxmi Pushpawan	General	52	BA
	coordinator Women program	From village Usaara	Smt Pramila Devi	General	27	MA
	coordinator Women program	From Village Ghuttu	Smt. Anjana Devi	General	28	MA

2k. Training of facilitators

Strategies for place-based pedagogy in community learning centres not only involve training of facilitators but also an understanding of what improvements may have occurred after training. This is a tricky area because it involves designing of training and its assessment module in a careful manner. Supporting deep learning among children implies that the facilitators conduct activities that stimulate processes to connect theory and practice. This year, three training programmes for facilitators of village learning centres were held in Almora (Table 12).

Table 12. Training programmes for facilitators of village learning centres.

Serial number	Duration	Number of participants			Number of organizations	Main theme
		Girls	Boys	Total		
1	15-18.06.2015	35	4	42	10	Review of mathematical concepts and activities, language development + methods of story telling
2	24-27.06.2015	23	8	30	8	Mathematical exercises using <i>Jodo gnan</i> material +origami+ nature and arts+ science in everyday life
3	20-22.11.2015	26	4	30	5	Maths environmental education + concepts of measurements using Our land Our life+ shooting for a short film

One of the problems in asking direct questions to assess comprehension among facilitators is the way that responses are made. For example, some common responses are: “I have learnt a lot from this training programme” or “the training course was good. I learnt a great deal in this” or “arrangements were good. I had no problem living here for so many days”. What does the USNPSS team learn from these responses, particularly when one needs to modify/improve the next training based on the feedback from participants in earlier courses?

As measures of learning, such responses have major drawbacks. The phrasing of learning measures is confusing because it does not give any definite answer or direction to the query. From these responses it is not clear whether the facilitators would be able to conduct activities in the centre or if there has been any significant change in their knowledge or whether any new skills were learnt. Further, these responses do not reflect any post-training change in their attitude or behaviour. In this scenario, it is clear that post-training assessment of learning among facilitators requires serious thought. This year, the following three main processes were initiated to support and assess deep learning during training:

2ki. Reducing the number of concepts and activities in training

Reducing workload during training was a strategy that USNPSS has used this year to promote deep learning among facilitators. Experience from the past year had taught us that incorporating too much content in training course leaves facilitators with little time to think and process what they had learnt. So, this year, by and large all training programmes focused

mainly on addressing one or two major themes with other issues having a secondary focus. Since understanding of the mathematical concepts remains an area of concern, two training programmes were devoted to addressing this issue only.

This approach of reducing content of training has proven useful because many facilitators completed their learning with relatively deeper knowledge and felt confident of themselves.

2kii. Promoting peer-assessment during training

One of the activities introduced this year was to promote peer assessment everyday in the evening. Also, the participants were encouraged to write reports of each day's activities and present it the next morning. This method was found to be successful in assessing comprehension of issues discussed during training since facilitators tend to write and talk about issues in their own style, often replacing the academic words with informal colloquial language.

2kiii. Improving the methods of training

At USNPSS, methods of training are constantly reviewed and modified in the light of new experiences and conceptual understanding of issues involved in learning. It is necessary to constantly review the training methods and their effects on participants particularly because all facilitators live in villages. For a majority of them, training of this nature is their first exposure to educational methods other than rote learning which they themselves have experienced in schools. Coming to Almora for the first time, a majority of them think that they have "learnt a lot" but the type of learning could be of lower-level or surface learning, and not deep learning that USNPSS is looking for.

Hence, concerns about the relevance and validity of concepts and activities take centre-stage in designing the training for facilitators.

2l. Materials provided to the centres

The following educational materials were provided to the centres this year (Table 13).
Table 13. Materials provided to the centres in 2015-2016.

Serial number	Item	Provision for each centre	Earlier stock	Purchase in 2015-2016	Remaining stock at USNPSS
1	Charts	10	40	700	50
2	Chart pens	Based on needs	00	10 pens	00
3	Sketch pens	4 sets	2 sets	280 sets	10 sets
4	Crayons	5 sets	00 sets	350 sets	42 sets
5	Pencil colours	3 sets	12	210	36
6	A4 sheets	Half ream (250 sheets)	4 reams	36 reams	4 reams
7	Stamp pad	Based on needs	00	20	00
8	Football	Based on needs	2	40	2
9	Globe	Based on needs	4	7	2
10	Carom discs	Based on needs	00	10sets	00
11	Carom board	Based on needs	00	3	2
12	Mats	Based on needs	16	00	11

2m. Monitoring and assessment in village learning centres

One of the methods to assess cognitive improvements among children attending village learning centres is to map their grades in schools. The other method could be to keep a record of self-reports of learning.

From the point of view of assessing performance of children attending the centres, grades that they achieve in their schools does not appear as a reliable method. There are two reasons for this. First, in formal school settings, assessment by grades offers a restricted range of variables. Second, it is not necessary that grades would always reflect learning among students. Also, a question that the facilitators ask is whether it is appropriate to assess performance through school grades when the programme is not designed in that way. The alternative method, self-reporting by students, has also limited validity particularly because the exercise seems to be difficult for young children.

USNPSS has developed a method of grading of children to record their performance.

2n. Grading of children

This year grading of 1300 children attending village learning centres in 53 villages was carried out to track progress and changes occurring in centres as a consequence of the programme. A set of fifteen indicators were developed to assess performance during the year (Table 14). These indicators reflect various aspects of a child's development that include physical, mental, emotional and social development. Organized as separate sheets for each child, the grading folders were taken to the centres and brought back to Almora for analysis.

Grading of children was carried out in two phases with a gap of six months in between. Profile of each child was created by computing the data obtained during grading. The grades were of the following value:

E=1, D=2, C=3, B=4, A=5.

The next step involved calculating the average of grades across all indicators for each centre. Table 15 and Table 16 reflect performance of two villages as samples. These two villages had shown the worst and the best performance during the year. Pudiyan in district Chamoli emerged as the least performing village while Kimvani village in Champawat district exhibited the best performance.

Table 17 shows the final scores of grading across all fifteen indicators in 53 villages during the year. The table records an improvement in performance from Grade B to Grade A in March 2016. Specifically, reading and writing skills have improved. Also, children's knowledge about their surroundings has improved during the year.

Table 14. Village-wise grading of children, 2015-2016.

Location		Pati				Ganai					Gopeswar					Badhani									
Village		Kimvani	Harodi	Roumel	Kanikot	Fadiyali	Rungri	Bhanyani	Bhalugara	Chounaliya	Koteswar	Kandei	Gwar	Baniya	Khalla	Toli	Nandasen	Jakh	Jhurkande	Diyarkot	Bainoli	Sundargoun	Badhani	Chaundali	Putyani
No. of children		17	29	30	30	14	18	22	23	25	30	27	23	22	30	30	23	29	30	29	36	23	27	30	30
S.N.	Indicator																								
1	Interest in books	4.71	4.21	4.4	3.1	3.2	3.9	4.4	3.8	2.6	4.7	5	4.2	4.5	5	3.4	3.6	3.9	3.4	3.2	2.8	3.5	3.6	3	3.4
2	Writing skills	4.47	3.97	3.8	4	3.4	4.1	4.2	3.4	2.7	4.7	4.7	4.1	4.4	4.8	3.3	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.3	2.8	3.2	3.4	3.1	3.1
3	Reading skills	4.47	3.69	3.6	4	3.3	4.2	4.4	3.4	2.9	4.6	4.9	4.1	4.4	4.9	3.4	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.3	2.8	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.2
4	Socialization with other children	4.76	4.7	4.1	4.5	3.9	4.2	4.7	4	3.2	4.5	4.9	4.4	4.1	4.9	3.5	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.4	2.9	3.8	3.6	3.3	3.6
5	Knowledge about surroundings	4.76	3.55	3.7	4.4	3.6	4.2	4.2	3.8	2.7	4.5	4.6	3.9	4.6	4.5	3.1	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.1	2.4	3.2	3.2	2.7	3
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	4.88	3.66	3.6	4.9	4.3	4.8	4.9	4.4	3.6	4.5	4.5	3.9	4.2	4.4	3.1	3.5	3.9	3.9	3.4	2.5	3.7	3.4	2.6	3
7	Personal hygiene	4.88	4.1	3.9	4.9	3.9	4.4	4.6	4	2.8	4.3	4.9	4.4	4.3	5	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.6	2.9	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.2
8	Participation in sports, games	4	4.07	4	4.9	3.9	4.1	4.4	3.9	3.2	4.6	5	4.5	4.1	5	3.8	3.4	3.9	4	3.3	2.6	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.1
9	Behaviour with adults	4.8	3.97	3.93	4.4	3.9	3.9	4.8	3.9	3.3	4.5	4.9	4.4	3.8	4.9	3.4	3.9	4.1	3.8	3.4	3	3.7	3.8	3.2	3
10	Articulation of issues	4.47	3.67	4	3.2	3.4	3.6	4	3.5	2.4	4.6	4.7	4	4.4	4.7	2.7	3.4	3.6	3.5	3	2.8	2.9	3.3	3.3	2.6
11	Knowledge about the state	4.1	3.14	3.5	3.9	2.8	3.7	3.8	3.3	2.4	4.4	4.5	4.4	3.7	4.2	2.9	3.1	3.7	3.9	2.9	2.5	3	2.9	2.8	2.4
12	General knowledge- nation, foreign	4.88	2.62	2.9	3.1	2.4	3.1	3.3	2.5	2	4.2	4.4	3.9	3.6	3.3	2.6	2.9	3.6	3.4	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.1	2.1
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	4.35	3	2.5	3.6	2.4	3.5	3.5	2.8	2.2	4.1	4.5	3.8	3.7	3.1	2.6	2.8	3.8	3.1	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.2
14	Drawing, painting	4.8	3.31	3.8	4.8	3.8	3.3	4	3.5	2.8	4.2	5	4.3	4.5	4.6	3.1	3.4	3.9	4.1	3.2	2.9	3.3	3.2	3.4	2.4
15	History of the village	3.94	2.97	3.3	4.9	2.4	2.9	3.2	2.4	1.7	3.6	4.6	4.1	4.4	4.1	2.4	2.6	3.1	3.1	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.2	2.3	2.2
	Average	4.62	3.64	3.70	4.17	3.37	3.86	4.16	3.51	2.7	4.4	4.74	4.16	4.18	4.49	3.13	3.4	3.78	3.66	3.11	2.67	3.25	3.22	2.95	2.83
1	Interest in books	4.94	4.34	4.6	3.9	3.3	4.6	4.5	4.4	3.3	4.7	5	4.4	4.8	5	3.8	4	4	4.1	3.2	3.2	3.8	3.5	3.3	3.7
2	Writing skills	4.7	4.14	4	4.8	3.4	4.6	4.4	4.2	3.2	4.8	4.7	4.3	4.5	4.8	3.6	4	4	4	3.3	2.9	3.9	3.5	3.6	3.5
3	Reading skills	4.7	3.83	3.8	4.7	3.6	4.8	4.7	4	3.2	4.6	4.8	4.4	4.6	4.9	3.8	4.3	4	4	3.3	3	4	3.6	3.7	3.4
4	Socialization with other children	4.9	4.07	4.3	4.9	4.1	4.8	4.9	4.6	3.5	4.5	4.8	4.4	4.2	4.8	3.8	3.9	4	4.2	3.5	3.3	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.7
5	Knowledge about surroundings	4.88	3.55	4	4.8	3.9	4.7	4.5	4.2	2.8	4.5	4.7	4	4.5	4.6	3.5	3.7	3.8	4.2	3.2	2.7	3.7	3.3	3.5	3.4
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	4.9	3.66	3.9	5	4.4	4.9	5	4.9	3.4	4.5	4.6	4	4.3	4.5	3.7	3.7	4.1	4.2	3.5	2.8	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.5
7	Personal hygiene	5	4.1	4.3	5	4.1	4.9	4.7	4.5	3.5	4.3	4.9	4.5	4.3	4.9	4	4	4.1	4.5	3.6	4	4.4	3.6	3.9	3.6
8	Participation in sports, games	5	4.14	4	5	4.1	4.7	4.6	4.4	3.9	4.6	4.9	4.4	4.1	4.8	4	3.9	4	4.8	3.3	3.7	4	3.7	3.9	3.6
9	Behaviour with adults	5	4.03	4.1	4.9	3.9	4.6	4.9	4.2	3.6	4.4	4.8	4.5	4.2	4.8	3.9	4	4.1	4.2	3.5	3.2	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.6
10	Articulation of issues	4.76	3.76	4.4	4.2	3.6	4.2	4.3	4	2.6	4.6	4.7	4	4.4	4.6	3.1	3.8	3.8	4.1	3.2	2.9	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.2
11	Knowledge about the state	4.53	3.17	3.7	4.7	3	4.4	3.9	3.8	2.7	4.5	4.6	4.4	3.8	4.2	3.3	3.8	3.9	4.2	3.1	2.7	3.6	3.3	3.7	3
12	General knowledge- nation, foreign	4.53	2.76	3.2	4.2	2.7	4	3.7	3.4	2.6	4.2	4.5	4.1	3.9	3.7	3	3.6	3.7	4	2.7	2.5	3.1	3.1	3.1	2.9
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	4.7	3.17	3.5	4.7	2.6	4.2	3.7	3.7	3.3	4.2	4.6	4	3.9	3.8	2.9	3.9	4	3.9	2.9	2.4	3.2	3.2	3.7	2.8
14	Drawing, painting	4.94	3.41	4	5	3.8	4.4	4.2	3.8	4	4.3	5	4.3	4.6	4.5	3.5	3.6	4	4.8	3.3	2.9	3.8	3.4	3.8	2.7
15	History of the village	4.47	2.97	3.5	5	2.7	4	3.9	3.6	2.4	3.8	4.7	4.1	4.5	4.3	3	3.4	3.2	3.9	3	2.4	3.4	2.8	2.9	2.8
	Average	4.8	3.67	3.95	4.72	3.55	4.52	4.39	4.11	3.20	4.43	4.75	4.25	4.31	4.55	3.53	3.84	3.91	4.21	3.24	2.97	3.71	3.46	3.58	3.29

Table 14 continued.

Location		Danya					Maichun				Sunadi										Ukhimath				
Village		Gouli	Munoli	Ukal	Dasili	Danya	Maichun	Moni	Banthok	Girchoula	Simalgoun	Chaura	Balna	Ganoli	Bedhuli	Surna	Bhatura	Parkot	Simalti	Borkhola	Dungar	Dera	Kimana	Usara	Sari
No. of children		40	27	25	30	30	24	27	27	29	26	18	16	22	14	15	14	17	11	22	28	16	21	22	29
S.N.	Indicator																								
1	Interest in books	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.5	4	4	4.1	3.8	4.4	3.1	3.4	4	4.2	4.6	4.20	3.7	4.8	4.5	3.3	3.90	3.2	4.4
2	Writing skills	3.8	4.4	4.4	4.2	4	4.6	3.8	4.2	4.4	3.5	4.5	3.2	3.4	4	4.1	4.4	4.30	2.6	4.6	4.3	4	4.20	3.5	4.2
3	Reading skills	3.4	4.1	4.2	4.4	3.8	4.6	3.7	4.2	4.5	3.2	4.2	3	3.4	4.1	4.3	4.6	4.20	2.9	4.5	4.4	4.1	4.10	3.3	3.8
4	Socialization with other children	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.2	4.7	3.9	4.7	4.8	4	4.4	3.6	3.5	4	4	4.9	4.70	3.7	4.9	4.7	4.3	4.20	3.6	4.2
5	Knowledge about surroundings	3.6	4.3	3.9	4.3	3.8	4.1	3.4	3.8	3.9	3.5	4	2.8	2.8	4	4	4.8	4.10	3.4	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.10	3	4.2
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	3.6	4.4	4	4.1	4.2	4	3.3	3.4	3.7	3.7	4	2.9	2.9	4	4.1	4.9	4.30	3.1	4.9	3.9	3.9	4.20	3.2	4.1
7	Personal hygiene	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.8	4.6	3.6	4.5	4.9	4.2	4.6	3.6	3.7	4	4.3	4.9	4.80	3.9	4.9	4.7	4.6	4.50	3.8	4.2
8	Participation in sports, games	4.2	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.5	3.9	4.7	4.7	4	4.5	3.9	3.8	4	4.1	5	4.80	3.5	4.6	4.2	4.4	4.30	3.5	4.3
9	Behaviour with adults	4	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.5	3.9	4.7	4.9	3.8	4.3	3.8	3.4	4	4.1	4.9	4.80	3.9	4.8	4.8	4	4.10	3.6	4
10	Articulation of issues	2.8	4.3	4.2	4	3.6	4.5	3.7	4.2	4.1	3.1	4.2	2.8	3	4	4	4.9	4.50	3.6	4.6	4	3.4	3.60	3.2	3.8
11	Knowledge about the state	3.2	3.7	4.1	3.9	3.1	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.7	3.2	4	2.6	2.5	4	3.7	3.9	3.70	2.9	4.1	3.9	3.4	3.70	3	3.9
12	General knowledge- nation, foreign	2.4	3.5	3.7	3.6	3.2	4.1	3.3	3.6	3.4	2.7	3.6	2.3	1.7	4	3.4	3.9	3.10	2.8	3.8	3.6	3.3	3.10	2.4	3.7
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	2.1	3.2	3.7	3.3	3.3	3.8	3.3	3.2	3.3	2.9	3.4	3.1	1.4	4	3.8	3.9	3.60	3	4.3	3.6	3.3	3.40	2.5	3.5
14	Drawing, painting	4.5	3.5	4.2	4.7	4.7	4.2	4	4.2	4.2	4	4.3	3.6	3.1	4.1	4	5.1	3.90	3.5	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.00	3.7	3.7
15	History of the village	1.2	1.9	2.2	2.4	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.9	2.3	2.2	4	3.7	4.3	3.00	3.2	4.5	3.3	2.8	3.00	2.2	2.8
	Average	3.41	3.91	3.99	4.03	3.93	4.31	3.63	4.03	4.12	3.51	4.15	3.11	2.95	4.01	3.99	4.60	4.13	3.31	4.55	4.17	3.84	3.89	3.18	3.92
1	Interest in books	3.6	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.9	4.80	4.8	5	4.4	4.6	3.5	4.1	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.90	4.2	4.9	4.6	4.2	4.40	4.2	4.8
2	Writing skills	3.8	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.2	5	4.80	4.8	5	4.4	4.5	3.9	3.6	4.6	4.9	4.6	4.90	3.6	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.70	4.3	4.7
3	Reading skills	3.5	4.4	4.2	4.1	4	4.9	4.7	4.7	5	4.1	4.4	3.7	3.4	4.6	4.9	4.8	4.80	3.6	4.6	5	4.8	4.60	4.3	4.5
4	Socialization with other children	4.3	4.5	4.2	4.6	4.2	5	4.8	5	5	4.5	4.6	4.3	3.7	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.90	3.9	5	4.9	4.9	4.80	4.5	4.7
5	Knowledge about surroundings	4.1	4.3	3.4	4.3	3.9	4.5	4.3	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.1	3.5	3.4	4.4	4.8	4.9	4.60	3.6	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.60	4	4.7
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	4.1	4.4	4	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.3	3.2	3.4	4.9	4.9	5	4.90	3.4	5	4.8	4.8	4.60	4.2	4.7
7	Personal hygiene	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.6	5	4.4	4.9	5	4.9	4.6	4.4	3.8	4.9	4.9	5	5.00	4.2	5	4.9	4.9	4.80	4.7	4.8
8	Participation in sports, games	4.5	4.3	4.4	4.8	4.4	5	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.7	4	4.9	4.9	5	5.00	3.9	4.8	4.7	4.9	4.80	4.2	4.8
9	Behaviour with adults	4.3	4.4	4.1	4.6	4.2	5	4.7	5	5	4.5	4.4	4.3	3.6	4.9	4.8	5	5.00	4.4	5	5	4.9	4.70	4.4	4.6
10	Articulation of issues	3.2	4.4	3.7	4	4	4.9	4.4	4.9	4.8	3.9	4.4	3.7	3.5	4.5	4.8	4.9	4.90	3.9	4.8	4.7	4.4	4.40	4	4.6
11	Knowledge about the state	3.2	3.9	3.3	3.4	3.4	4.7	4.1	4.3	4.2	4	4.3	3	2.8	4.4	4.6	4.6	4.30	3.2	4.3	4.7	4.3	4.30	3.8	4.5
12	General knowledge- nation, foreign	2.6	3.6	3.2	3.1	3.6	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.1	3.5	3.9	2.9	2.5	4.2	4.4	4.6	4.00	3.2	4	4.5	4.1	4.10	3.5	4.4
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	2.5	3.4	3.7	3.2	3.6	4	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.3	2.2	4.1	4.7	4.7	4.10	3.8	4.7	4.6	4.3	4.10	3.5	4.4
14	Drawing, painting	4.2	3.7	4	3.9	4.5	5	4.5	4.9	4.9	4.2	4.6	4.3	3.7	4.9	4.7	5	4.60	4.2	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.40	4.1	4.5
15	History of the village	1.3	2.8	2.8	2.3	3.2	4	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.9	3	2.7	3.9	4.7	4.8	4.10	3.4	4.7	4	3.8	3.90	3.2	3.8
	Average	3.58	4.09	3.88	3.97	4.02	4.69	4.39	4.59	4.63	4.23	4.33	3.71	3.36	4.59	4.79	4.84	4.67	3.77	4.73	4.71	4.57	4.48	4.06	4.57

Table 14 continued.

Location		Nayarghati				
Village		Naugoun	Hathnur	Bagi	Thangar	Pogtha
Number		21	25	25	28	24
S.N.	Indicator					
1	Interest in books	4.8	3.2	3.5	4.7	4.3
2	Writing skills	4.8	3.5	3.7	4.5	4.4
3	Reading skills	4.8	3.4	3.4	4.6	4
4	Socialization with other children	4.9	3.5	3.7	4.7	4.5
5	Knowledge about surroundings	4.7	3.4	3.1	4.6	3.8
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	4.9	3.3	3.3	4.9	4.2
7	Personal hygiene	4.9	3.5	4	4.6	4.6
8	Participation in sports, games	5	3.7	3.9	4.8	4.8
9	Behaviour with adults	4.8	3.3	3.8	4.8	4.4
10	Articulation of issues	4.8	3.3	3.2	4.6	4
11	Knowledge about the state	4.5	3.2	2.9	4.3	3.7
12	General knowledge- nation, foreign	4.4	3.4	2.7	4	3.3
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	4.3	3.5	2.8	4.5	3.9
14	Drawing, painting	4.3	3.5	3.7	4.7	4.3
15	History of the village	4.3	2.9	3.6	4	3
	Average	4.68	3.37	3.42	4.55	4.08
1	Interest in books	4.9	3.9	4.1	5	4.6
2	Writing skills	4.9	3.7	4.2	4.8	4.6
3	Reading skills	4.9	3.8	4.2	4.9	4.5
4	Socialization with other children	4.9	3.9	4.2	4.9	4.7
5	Knowledge about surroundings	4.8	3.8	3.8	4.6	4.4
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	5	3.8	4	4.9	4.6
7	Personal hygiene	4.9	3.8	4.5	4.9	4.8
8	Participation in sports, games	4.8	3.8	4.3	5	4.9
9	Behaviour with adults	4.9	3.7	4.2	5	4.5
10	Articulation of issues	4.8	3.8	4	4.9	4.5
11	Knowledge about the state	4.7	3.8	3.6	4.5	3.8
12	General knowledge- nation, foreign	4.7	3.6	3.5	4.3	3.8
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	4.5	3.6	3.6	4.6	3.8
14	Drawing, painting	4.3	3.7	4	4.9	4.7
15	History of the village	4.5	3.2	3.9	4.1	3.1
	Average	4.77	3.73	4.01	4.75	4.35

Table 15. Grading of children in the least performing village, Pudiyani, district chamoli. .

No. of children		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	average	
S.N.	Indicator																																
1	Interest in books	3	5	2	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	3	3	5	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3.4
2	Writing skills	3	3	1	4	3	5	1	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	2	4	3	4	3.1	
3	Reading skills	3	4	2	4	4	5	3	2	3	2	3	2	4	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	5	3	3	3	2	4	3.2	
4	Socialization with other children	4	5	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	4	4	3	4	4	5	4	2	3	4	2	3	3.6	
5	Knowledge about surroundings	3	3	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	3	4	2	4	2	4	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	5	3	2	3	1	4	4	3	
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	3	3	4	3	2	3	2	2	2	4	4	3	4	2	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	5	3	2	4	1	1	3	3	
7	Personal hygiene	2	5	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	5	3	4	4	5	2	2	3	1	1	3	3.2	
8	Participation in sports, games	1	3	1	5	2	4	3	3	1	3	4	3	3	2	4	4	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	3.1	
9	Behaviour with adults	1	4	1	4	4	3	3	2	1	4	3	4	3	2	4	4	3	3	3	4	2	2	4	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	
10	Articulation of issues	4	2	1	2	2	4	2	1	1	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	2	2	3	4	1	4	3	3	3	3	2.6	
11	Knowledge about the state	1	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	3	3	3	2	2	4	2	4	4	2	1	3	1	1	3	3	3	4	2	2	2	3	2.4	
12	General knowledge-nation, foreign	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	4	1	3	2	4	1	4	2	1	3	3	2.1	
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	3	4	2	2	1	4	1	3	2	4	1	4	1	1	2	4	1	4	2	4	2	3	2.2	
14	Drawing, painting	1	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	4	2	3	4	1	4	1	2	3	2	1	3	2	3	3	3	2.4	
15	History of the village	1	2	4	2	2	1	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	3	2	4	2	1	1	4	1	3	2	4	1	3	3	2	1	3	2.2	
Average		2.1	3.1	2.4	2.9	2.6	3.2	2.0	1.9	2.4	3.2	3.1	2.5	2.7	2.9	3	3.3	3.1	2.9	2.6	4	2.2	2.9	3.1	4	2.7	3.1	2.8	2.5	2.3	3.1	2.8	
Grading (second)																																	
1	Interest in books	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3.7	
2	Writing skills	4	4	3	4	4	5	3	2	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3.5	
3	Reading skills	3	5	3	4	4	5	3	2	4	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	5	3	3	3	3	4	3.4	
4	Socialization with other children	4	5	2	5	4	5	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	2	4	4	3	4	4	5	5	3	3	3	4	4	3.7	
5	Knowledge about surroundings	3	3	2	5	2	4	3	4	2	3	4	3	1	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	3.4	
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	3	3	3	4	2	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	5	5	3	4	4	3	3	3.5	
7	Personal hygiene	4	5	3	4	3	5	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	1	3	5	3	4	4	5	4	3	4	3	3	3	3.6	
8	Participation in sports, games	1	3	3	4	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	3	3	3	3.6	
9	Behaviour with adults	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	5	3	4	3	3	3	3.6	
10	Articulation of issues	3	4	2	3	3	4	2	1	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	2	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3.2	
11	Knowledge about the state	3	4	2	3	3	4	4	1	2	3	3	3	3	4	1	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3.0	
12	General knowledge-nation, foreign	3	4	3	3	1	3	1	1	4	3	3	1	3	3	1	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	2.9	
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	1	4	2	3	1	4	1	2	4	4	3	1	3	4	1	3	2	4	2	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.8	
14	Drawing, painting	2	2	2	1	2	3	4	2	4	3	4	3	3	3	1	2	1	2	3	4	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.7	
15	History of the village	2	3	4	1	2	3	1	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	1	4	2	1	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.8	
Average		2.9	3.8	2.7	3.5	2.7	4.1	2.8	2.5	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.3	2.9	3.3	3.2	2.7	3.5	4.1	3.1	3.3	3.6	4.1	4	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.3	

Table 15 . Grading of children in best performing village.

Granding (first) of children in Kimvani village, district Champawat																			
No. of children		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	average
S.N.	Indicator																		
1	Interest in books	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4.71
2	Writing skills	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	3	4.47
3	Reading skills	3	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	4.47
4	Socialization with other children	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	4.76
5	Knowledge about surroundings	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	3	4.76
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.88
7	Personal hygiene	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.88
8	Participation in sports, games	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00
9	Behaviour with adults	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.82
10	Articulation of issues	3	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	4.47
11	Knowledge about the state	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	3	5	3	4.18
12	General knowledge- nation, foreign	2	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	3	5	2	3.88
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	3	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	3	5	4	4.35
14	Drawing, painting	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.82
15	History of the village	3	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	3	5	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	3.94
Average		3.73	4.8	4.8	4.4	4.6	4.33	4.87	4.8	4.6	4.93	4.87	4.73	4.87	4.8	3.93	4.93	3.53	4.56
Granding (second)																			
1	Interest in books	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.94
2	Writing skills	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	4.71
3	Reading skills	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	4.71
4	Socialization with other children	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	4.88
5	Knowledge about surroundings	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	4.88
6	Knowledge of local animals, vegetation	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.94
7	Personal hygiene	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00
8	Participation in sports, games	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00
9	Behaviour with adults	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00
10	Articulation of issues	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	3	4.76
11	Knowledge about the state	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	3	5	3	4.53
12	General knowledge- nation, foreign	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	3	5	3	4.53
13	Length, square, rectangle, area	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	4.71
14	Drawing, painting	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4.94
15	History of the village	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	4.47
Average		4.40	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.93	4.93	5.00	4.87	5.00	5.00	4.87	4.93	4.73	4.07	5.00	3.87	4.80

Overall, progress reflects a shift from grade B to Grade A during the year 2015-2016 (Table 17).

Table 17. Final results of grading of 1300 children attending village learning centres in 53 villages .

Serial number	Indicator	First grading		Second grading	
		Value	Grade	Value	Grade
1	Interest in books	3.94	B	4.31	A
2	Writing skills	3.92	B	4.27	A
3	Reading skills	3.89	B	4.26	A
4	Socialization with other children	4.15	A	4.42	A
5	Knowledge about the surroundings	3.79	B	4.14	A
6	Knowledge of local fauna, flora	3.9	B	4.25	A
7	Personal hygiene	4.19	A	4.5	A
8	Participation in sports/games	4.15	A	4.46	A
9	Behaviour with adults	4.1	A	4.4	A
10	Articulation of issues	3.73	B	4.12	A
11	Knowledge about the state	3.52	B	3.89	B
12	General knowledge- nation, abroad	3.19	B	3.65	B
13	Measurement concepts-length, rectangle, square, area	3.25	B	3.76	B
14	Drawing, painting	3.94	B	4.23	A
15	History of the village	3.1	B	3.56	B
Average		3.78	B	4.15	A

2o.Working with government schools

A majority of educational fairs were held on Sundays in government schools in villages. In all schools, the principals, teachers and other staff took interest in organizing the event, particularly because such activities are rarely organized in remote areas. Despite Sunday being a holiday, all school staff had come to attend the event.

2p. Educational fairs

This year, symbolizing the involvement of women's groups, youth and adolescent groups in village learning centres, the name of the event was changed from *bal-mela* to *Shaikshinik mela* (educational fair).

- i. A lot of effort was put in to develop a quiz programme for children of ages 6-14 years old. USNPSS took up the task of preparing a set of questions suitable for children in rural settings. In particular, emphasis was placed on health, sanitation and nutrition related issues. The programme was made attractive to the audience by the anchors wearing masks and acting like monkeys. The quiz was open for all in the audience
- ii. Team-spirit among the staff of partner organizations as well as between the NGOs and communities was noteworthy
- iii. In Danya and Maichun clusters, the educational fairs had focused on issues of sanitation and cleanliness. In Maichun children had prepared poems on sanitation. In

addition, children wrote essays on the importance of cleanliness in villages and personal hygiene.

iv. Elected representatives from panchayati raj institutions (village, block and district level) had shown keen interest in activities carried out by learning centres

v. Fresh cooked food (potatoes, *halwa* etc.) not biscuits, chips was served to children as well as other participants. Discussions on the adverse affects of eating junk food were also held during the fairs. In addition, use of plastic and thermocol plates/cups was discouraged. In a majority of villages, cooked food was served on the leaves of a local tree (*timil*)

vi. This year, participation in educational activities such as quiz, essay writing, painting and debates acquired more attention. In addition, activities with globe and on maths using *Jodo Gnan* kit were organized.

vii. Items like books, notebooks, pen, pencils, geometry-box, ball etc. were given as prizes

viii. In Dogari Kandeï village, Gopeswar cluster, district Chamoli, children had developed several innovative ideas related to female foeticide. Involving teachers, principals, retired teachers and students from government schools, the issue was highlighted using essay writing, poster competitions, debates, skits and songs.

ix. In Ukhimath area, district Rudraprayag, while the programmes reflected issues of disaster that had hit the villages in 2013, several other issues were also taken up by children and facilitators for discussions. In particular, issues of dowry, female foeticide and alcoholism among men were highlighted during the fair

x. This year, besides educational issues that are of interest to children, other social problems were taken up for discussions. For example, in Maichun cluster the effects of alcoholism and smoking were discussed while in Ganai-Gangoli the children discussed the issue of relevance of science in rural communities. Danya and Badhani clusters took up the issue of importance of locally grown food while in Sunadi the issue of pollution of water sources was discussed

xi. In Gopeswar area, the event was organized in a way that parallel sessions could run in the village. While children were engaged in activities suitable to their ages, the adults, including members of the women's groups, were invited for discussions on village problems. In addition, several retired government school teachers who live in the village and teach the children in an honorary capacity; were praised by participants representing different villages in the area.

Table 18. Educational fairs during 2015-2016.

S n	location	Date	place	children	others	Comments
1	Ganai gangoli, district Almora	25.12.2015	JHS Rungdi	175	200	Women, children, adolescent girls and youth present. exhibition of learning material: books, charts, paper-art, clippings, collection of local cereals/pulses, was organised jointly by all 5 VLCs in the cluster. Competitions like quiz, calligraphy, mathematics story-telling, folk songs/dances, <i>chetna-geets</i> held. Head Master of JHS Rungdi appreciated the efforts of the centres. Members of the women's groups also spoke.
2	Ukhimath, district Rudrapray	27.12.2015	Primary School Usaara	150	100	About 250 persons including 150 children participated
3	Maichun, district Almora	29.12.2015	JHS Girchaula	200	75	VLCs Girchola, Maichun, Dhana, Mauni, Banthok, Govt.JHS, primary schools, women and adolescent girls from surrounding villages participated. Staff of USNPSS and school teachers attended. A group of 17 women and children from Palyoun village and 2 women coordinators from Danya were also present. Skits on health, nutrition and on alcoholism and smoking held. Exhibition of books/learning materials, competitions on painting, essay writing, reading and quiz, folk song-dance held. Prizes (books, pen, pencil, notebook, diary, balls) were given to the winners. Home cooked refreshment and balloons were distributed.
4	Danya, district Almora	03.01.2016	office of the organization	250	200	A large gathering of women, children, and adolescent girls from about 12 surrounding villages. Quiz was found to be the most popular activity for all age groups. Skits on environment and forest protection, use of different tree species folk songs, chorus, dances, essay competition, sports held. The chief guest was a local woman, Members of the District Board. <i>Block Pramukh</i> of Dhauladevi, Chairman of District Cooperative Bank Almora and <i>Gram Pradhans</i> attended. Prizes (books, pen, pencil, notebook, diary, balls) were given to the winners. Home cooked refreshment and balloons were distributed to all children. To avoid the use of polythene/plastic, refreshment served in timil leaves.
5	Binta, district Almora	07.01.2016	Primary School Binta	70	30	programme anchored by Kiran Arya, a VLC <i>shikshika</i> . Songs, skits on health issues and contests like <i>ganit daur</i> , carom, chess etc. were organised.
6	Sunadi, district Almora	08.01.2016	Adarsh Inter college Suraikhet	125	25	Poems, skit (over exploitation of fodder trees), skipping race, quiz, cultural programs held. Presentations by children were original and relevant to their needs
7	Badhani, district Chamoli	23.01.2016	High School Pudiyani	250	100	Melas were held in two clusters. The head master of JHS Pudiyani was the chief guest. The <i>gram pradhan</i> of Pudiyani and <i>adhyaksha</i> of WVG Koli village were also invited to the dais as special guests. Painting, quiz, skits on health and nutrition (encouraging locally grown vegetables and cereals), cultural programmes, skipping ropes and science and maths exhibitions organised
8	Gopeswar, district Chamoli	24.01.2016	High School Dogri-kandei	300	200	Children, women and elected representatives of PRIs attended. The chief guest was the member of the district panchayat. Cultural programs, skits, elocution, chess/carom, skipping ropes etc. were organised.
9	Pati, district Champawat	24.02.2016	JHS Bisari	158	144	Children, women, teachers from different schools attended.
10	Nayarghati, district Pauri Garhwal	28.02.2016	GIC Kinsur	100	105	Children, women, teachers from different schools attended.

2q. Visits to centres by USNPSS staff

This year, a total of 63 visits were made by the USNPSS staff to the centres (Table 19). The aim of such visits is to monitor progress in centres (of children, the facilitator, women and girls) and to provide on the spot guidance. During the visits to centres, the USNPSS staff also held meetings with the facilitators and the partner CBOs to review the status of the programme. While impressions about each centre are exhibited in the table itself, the following list entails broader issues that had emerged during the visits to the centres:

- i. Centres have cultivated the habit of reading among children. In villages where the reach of books, other than the prescribed school textbooks, is almost negligible, village learning centres come as a boon to the community
- ii. As a follow up of last year's observation that the SC children lag behind in reading, special attention was given to improve their skills in the centres
- iii. Many school going children have learnt to write in the centre. This includes children in remote villages where teacher absenteeism is high and also children with special needs
- iv. To facilitate learning, children are divided into smaller groups. The criterion for such a grouping is not the class in which a child is enrolled but the level he/she feels comfortable in. The facilitator moves from one group to another helping them understand the tasks at hand.
- v. The supervisors had made regular visits to the centres and provided guidance and help. The facilitators, young girls as they are, find it difficult to organize meetings of women's groups. Hence, the supervisors were present in meetings in villages
- vi. In some cases the facilitator was able to hold a meeting of the adolescent girls whilst in other villages she had sought the help of the supervisors in conducting meetings on Sundays.
- vii. The idea of *jhola pustakalaya* (books in a bag) has faced many limitations. In some cases, the facilitators were unwilling to carry books to other villages whereas in other villages the adults were not interested in reading
- viii. Newspapers were reaching the villages and adult men and young boys were interested in reading those on a regular basis. In many centres, adolescent children were also found to be reading newspapers.

Table 19. Visits made by USNPSS staff to the centres.

S.No.	Date of visit	Village	Total number of children present in the centre	Comment
1	09.04.2015	Bagrali	16	Cleanliness and decoration not satisfactory
2	29.04.2015	Ukal	14	Clean and well decorated, enthusiastic children
3	01.05.2015	Falyant	17	Children were doing their homework
4	30.05.2015	Diyarkot	25	Facilitator new, needs to develop her own learning material
5	30.05.2015	Badhani	13	Excellent reading skills among children, GK very good
6	30.05.2015	Badhani	13	Meeting with the adolescent girls
7	08.06.2015	Kulori	18	Facilitator should develop her own learning aids
8	29.06.2015	Kanikot	16	Facilitator sensitive towards her work, reading and maths improved
9	29.06.2015	Kimwadi	11	Irregular attendance of children
10	29.06.2015	Raulmel	Closed on the date of visit	Facilitator out of the village, had informed the women's groups
11	06.07.2015	Dharagad	25	Children come regularly, facilitator needs to talk more with children
12	06.07.2015	Munoli	25	need to change the room
13	06.07.2015	Rampur	22	Facilitator does diverse activities with children, story-telling good
14	07.07.2015	Gauli	25	Charts depicting concepts of geography and science have been prepared
15	07.07.2015	Gauli	27	Meeting with the adolescent girls- on violence against women and children
16	07.07.2015	Kotyura	13	Centre has to be clean, more involvement of facilitator is required
17	07.07.2015	Dasili	21	Arrangements in the centre were not satisfactory
18	08.07.2015	Danya	15	Meeting with NGO staff and all facilitators
19	08.07.2015	Kulori	18	Cleanliness of the centre not satisfactory
20	18.07.2015	Naugaon	14	Children's work displayed on wall, involvement of adolescent girls improved
21	18.07.2015	Naugaon	21	Joint meeting of women and adolescent girls
22	18.07.2015	Bagi	14	Facilitator does not talk much
23	20.07.2015	Thangar	20	New facilitator has been trained by the old one, interest in stories
24	20.07.2015	Thangar	17	Meeting of women's group
25	04.08.2015	Mauni	9	Children come regularly
26	04.08.2015	Girchola	17	Lots of charts have been developed for story telling
27	04.08.2015	Maichun	Closed	Facilitator not in the village
28	21.08.2015	Palyun	home visits	Involvement of community in centres
29	27.08.2015	Danya	17	Involvement of community in centres
30	27.08.2015	Dhana	15	Facilitator hard working, reading and maths has improved
31	28.08.2015	Lamudiyar	home visits	Involvement of community in the centres
32	28.08.2015	Chanoli	home visits	Involvement of community in the centres
33	03.09.2015	Palyun	home visits	Involvement of community in the centres
34	07.09.2015	Palyun	40	Meeting with women in the primary school
35	26.09.2015	Ratir	14	Activities were good, involvement of all children in group work
36	26.09.2015	Namik	18	Remote village, need the centre desperately
37	28.09.2015	Kimu	40	Solar lights distribution
38	28.09.2015	Liti	2	Weekly holiday (Monday)
39	18.11.2015	Banthok	35	Shooting for a short film
40	19.11.2015	Lamudiyar	28	Shooting for a short film
41	27.11.2015	Gogina	18	Painting and expressions through skits and songs were excellent
42	27.11.2015	Loharkuda	22	Home visits, facilitator was sick
43	28.11.2015	Namik	15	Workshop in high school + visit to centre in the evening
44	29.11.2015	Namik	Meeting in the village	12 men, 40 women, 15 girls
45	30.11.2015	Ratir	Home visits	Discussions on community involvement in the centre
46	30.11.2015	Liti	15	Children take books to read at home, sports good
47	22.01.2016	Jakh	38	NGO head from Ganaigangoli also visited. Talked to the facilitators
48	22.01.2016	Diyarkot	18	Follow up of issues that had emerged during the last visit
49	25.01.2016	Chaundali	19	Preparation for the educational fair
50	04.02.2016	Mauni	23	All children attend on a regular basis
51	14.02.2016	Banthok	22	Evaluation by Tata Trust
52	14.02.2016	Dhana	25	Centre has shifted to panchayat ghar- Maniagar
53	18.02.2016	Valna	8 children, women, girls	Evaluation by Tata Trust
54	19.02.2016	Nandasen	Visited during the day	Evaluation by Tata Trust
55	19.02.2016	Jhurkande	Visited during the day	Evaluation by Tata Trust
56	19.02.2016	Chaundali	17	Evaluation by Tata Trust
57	20.02.2016	Badhani	12	On the spot training on maths for facilitators
58	08.03.2016	Maniagar	17	Improvements in reading habits of children
59	14.03.2016	Usara	16	Facilitator puts in lots of efforts to run the centre well
60	14.03.2016	Saari	16	Decorated room, nice balance of all activities
61	14.03.2016	Daira	11	Improvements in reading, maths, all activities were carried out
62	27.03.2016	Bhataura	27	Visit from students of the Doon School
63	27.03.2016	Borkhola	18	Visit from students of the Doon School

Table 20 exhibits some of the achievements of village learning centres in 2015-2016. .

Table 20. Some of the achievements re the village learning centres in 2015-2016.

S No.	Group	Theme	Indicators	Village	Achievements	
1	Children	Language development	Improvement in reading habits	All villages	Newspaper reading in all centres, Reading books and magazines	Facilitators taught writing their names, numbers and tables to children studying in class 7, 8
			Writing skills	All villages	Debate, essay writing, dictation	Display, exhibition and competition during bal mela + appreciation from school teachers
		Mathematics	Clarity on mathematical concepts	Gwar and Kandeï village	Measurement of play ground in school and of fields in the village	School teachers were involved, village came to see the tape measure and the method involved
			Practical ways of learning	Rungadi village	Height of children was measured, Methods of calculating the average was taught	School teachers and panchayat members were involved
		Environmental issues	Knowledge and skill development	Tuproli, Dyarkot villages	History of the village sought from the elders, village map and model was developed	School teachers, women's groups involved
2	Adolescent girls	Life skills	Decision making	Dhari village	Nirmala Joshi	Delayed her marriage
				Chaura village	Deepa Pande and Bhavna Joshi	Said we will get married after completing intermediate (12 th class)
				Borkhola village	Gita Bora	Raised voice against her mother asking for dowry
		Gender	Violence against girls	Syuni village	Rita Pori	Raised voice against a boy harassing her, a meeting was called-the boy had to apologise
		Mobility	Local	All centres	Girls go out to attend meetings in other villages	on their own girls came to Almora to attend workshops
				Delhi	Attending vocational courses in Delhi	Living in a hostel in Delhi and pursuing training
			Rudrapur	Valna village	Rekha Basera (president of the adolescent group)	Working in Rudrapur now
				Raulamel village	Hema	Working in Rudrapur now
		Skill development		Nauri village	Girls learning sewing and knitting	Training other girls
3	Women's groups	Leadership	Representation in panchayats	379 women members of UMP have been elected	Gram pradhan, ward members, BDC and Jila panchayat members	Taking gender issues to panchayats, sensitization of the local administration
		Decision making	making informed choices	all villages	In kimana, district Rudraprayag	A woman was attacked by a bear. Another woman called the helpline 108 and took her to the hospital
		Mobility	Mothers supporting daughters to go out	Bitholi village	Mother Geeta Mehra asked her daughters to sit for competitive exams	One of her daughter doing a course re GNM, The other daughter doing a course re ANM

3. Computer education

A total of seven computer education centres are run in villages spread over four districts, two in Garhwal and Kumaon regions each. The programme was started due to the demand coming from villages as children were going to nearby towns and cities to learn computers spending much in commuting and in fees. Also, girls were not allowed to commute daily as parents would worry about their safety.

The centres are run in a room provided by the community. It could be a vacant house or the community centre (*panchayat ghar*) in the village. USNPSS does not pay any rent but actual expenditure on electricity is paid. In the beginning of the programme, children were not charged for learning and spending time in the centre. However, parents were willing to pay the minimum monthly charge and the amount so collected is now used to pay the electricity bills. Table provides the details of each centre.

Each centre is well stocked with a variety of books suitable for learners in different age groups. In addition, a variety of sport equipment is available. Each child gets at least half an hour to work on the computer. Children waiting for their turns read books and play. Also, drawing-painting, paper work, essay-writing, debates etc. are organized in the centre.

Table 21. Computer education centres in 2015-2016.

Serial number	Location	Fee charges (Rupees)	Place	Room rent (monthly)	Electricity charges
1	Danya	50	Sanstha bhavan	None	Actual expenses
2	Banthok	30	Private house	None	Rupees 200
3	Sunadi	70	Community centre (earlier in a private house)	Rupees 350	Actual expenses
4	Pati	25	Private house	None	Rupees 100 in community centre, 200 when run in a house
5	Badhani	30	Private house	None	Rupees 200
6	Tangsa	20	Private house	None	Actual expenses
7	Ukhimath	Nil	Private house	None	None

3a. Banthok (Maichun cluster), district Almora

Starting in Maniagar in 2011, this centre has now been shifted to Banthok village. The centre has 3 PCs, an inverter and a printer. The centre is run by a trained young girl in a private house every day in the evenings.

Since June 2015, a total of four batches involving 15 boys and 26 girls have been trained. A majority of these students study in classes 7-12th in nearby schools. In addition, a woman, 55 years old, has also enrolled in the centre.

3b. Chalmodi gara (Danya cluster), district Almora

The centre is run in the office of our partner organization in Danya. Starting from October 2015, a total of 45 girls have been trained in three batches. While a majority of these girls were studying in class 9th, some of them were doing graduation courses. The centre has three desktop computers, an inverter and a printer. The facilitator is also improving her educational qualifications. Currently, she is enrolled in BA second year.

3c. Sunari (Dwarahat cluster), district Almora

Functional since June 2015, the centre hosts two PCs, one printer and an inverter along with two computer tables, four chairs and a mat provided by USNPSS. The facilitator belongs to socially disadvantaged section of society but hardworking as she has done her college degree, has obtained a degree on education (B. Ed.) and completed a certificate course on computer application. She is 24 years of age.

A total of 41 students (36 girls) from Simalgaon, Kande, Paithani, Bedhuli and Mohani villages have completed their three month training in the centre. Out of these 41 students, 37 were in 14-21 year age group.

3d. Kanikot (Pati cluster) district Champawat

In Pati area, one of the most backward development blocks of the state, the computer literacy programme was started in Joshyura village in June 2011. In March 2014, the centre was shifted to Silang village followed by a shift again to Kanikot village in June 2015. The centre was closed temporarily in December 2015.

3e. Tangsa (Gopeshwar cluster) district Chamoli

Computer literacy programme in Gopeshwar area started in March 2013 in Dogari village. The centre was shifted to Tangsa village in August 2015. The centre has two PCs, one inverter and a printer.

3f. Badhani (Karnprayag cluster) district Chamoli

With a PC and a Lenovo all-in-one, one inverter, two computer tables, two chairs and mats supplied by USNPSS, this centre is functional in Badhani village since January 2016. The facilitator of the village learning centre shares the additional responsibility of providing instructions on computer literacy to children attending centres in the evening. The room for the centre is provided by a local resident of Badhani village.

3g. Ukhimath (district Rudraprayag)

Started for children in disaster-hit villages (Kedarnath-2013), the centre has 2 PCs, one printer and an inverter. The centre was functional during April to July 2015. It was

closed during the monsoons because of the fear of being struck with a disaster again children were not coming in the evenings. A new batch with 11 children (5 girls and 6 boys of standard 8 to BA) for the next 3 months was started in April 1, 2016. Table 22 provides details of two centres, one each in Chamoli and Rudraprayag districts.

Table 22. Performance of two centres in different locations.

Serial number	Indicator	Sub indicator	Badhani centre district Chamoli	Ukhimath centre, district Rudraprayag
1	Number of learners	Total	10	24
2		Girls	2	19
3		Boys	8	5
4	Caste	SC	0	2
5		General	10	22
6	Enrolled in schools, college	Class up to five	0	1
7		Class 6-8	2	3
8		Class 9-12	3	9
9		Under graduate	5	10
10	Current status	June 2016	A batch of 12 students, starting from April 2016	A batch of 11 students, starting from April 2016

Since all computer centres are located in remote areas, procuring equipment is an issue. Therefore, computers and other related equipment and furniture are procured at Almora. Repair/maintenance of computers is also carried out at Almora. This year, the following purchases were made:

Table 23. Equipment provided to computer education centres in 2015-2016.

Serial number	Item	Location			
		Sunari	Danya	Maichun	Badhani
1	New centres	Started in June 2015 with AID support. Equipment provided in June 2015	Started in October 2015 with HKKTMT support. Equipment provided in October 2015	-	Started in January 2016. Equipment provided in December 2015
2	PC	Lenovo desk top (all in one) computers – 2sets	Lenovo desk top(all in one) – 2 sets (1 pc was provided in 2014	Lenovo desktop (all in one) - 1 set provided on January 28, 2016	Lenovo desk top (all in one) -1 set, 2PCs were provided in 2013
3	Printer	Canon laser shot-1	provided in 2014	-	printer was provided earlier
4	Inverter with battery	Micro-tech- 1	Micro-tech- 1	-	Micro-tech- 1
5	computer table	2×3 feet size-2	2×3 feet size-2	-	2×3 feet size-2
6	Plastic chair	Cello-2	Cello-4	-	Cello-2
7	Extension board	3 (1 with 5 meter wire and 2 with 3 meter wire)	3 boards	-	-
8	electric wire with bulb holder	5 meter length-1	-	-	-
	CFL bulb	15 watt-1	-	-	-
	Plastic mat	6×9 feet size- 1	-	-	-
	Sign board of the centre	1	1	1	-
	Others	-	-	1 key board and 1 mouse in December 2015	-

4. Adolescent girls education

The adolescent education programme is executed by eleven partner organizations in 79 villages of seven districts in the hills. Table 24 provides an overview of the coverage of the programme.

Table 24. Coverage of the adolescent girls education programme.

Serial number	District	Number of organizations	Locations
1	Almora	3	i. Sunadi ii. Binta iii. Shilang iv. Maichun v. Danya
2	Pithoragarh	2	i. Ganaigangoli ii. Muvani
3	Champawat	1	i. Pati
4	Bageswar	1	i. Shama
5	Chamoli	2	i. Badhani ii. Gopeswar
6	Rudraprayag	1	i. Ukhimath
7	Pauri	1	i. Badiyun, Nayarghati
Total		11	

Table 25 exhibits the caste-based break up of adolescent girls involved in the programme.

Table 25. Caste-based distribution of adolescent girls involved in the programme.

Serial number	Location	Number of villages	Number of girls		
			Total	SC	OBC
1	Sunadi	5	98	11	00
2	Binta	5	73	27	00
3	Shilang	3	45	0	00
4	Danya	8	141	27	00
5	Kheti	4	69	2	00
6	Maichun	6	128	64	00
7	Ganaigangoli	6	135	59	16
8	Muvani	6	121	87	26
9	Pati	5	122	12	00
10	Shama	5	124	58	00
11	Badhani	10	283	40	2
12	Gopeswar	6	98	10	00
13	Ukhimath	5	89	0	00
14	Badiyun	5	101	27	00
Total		79	1627	424	44

Table 26 shows the clusters and village-wise distribution of adolescent girls involved in the programme.

Table 26. Village-wise number of adolescent girls involved in the programme.

Location	Village	Number of girls		
		Total	SC	OBC
Ganai-gangoli cluster	Fadiyali	27	27	0
	Bhaloogara	14	0	0
	Rungadi	46	0	0
	Tuproli	19	19	0
	Bhanyani	16	0	16
	Chunaliya	13	13	0
	Total	135	59	16
Muvani cluster	Syuni	38	38	0
	Mallakot	20	20	0
	Ruinathal	26	0	26
	Musligar	10	9	1
	Pipaltad	18	14	0
	Varla	9	6	0
	Total	121	87	26
Sunadi cluster	Valna	18	5	0
	Simalgaon	19	0	0
	Bedhuli	20	1	0
	Chaura	16	0	0
	Bitholi	25	5	0
	Total	98	11	0
Binta cluster	Parkot	14	8	0
	Bhataura	20	11	0
	Borkhola	15	3	0
	Almiyagaon	7	4	0
	Surna	17	1	0
	Total	73	27	0
Shilang cluster	Baajan	17	0	0
	Dhamera	14	0	0
	Ghughuti	14	0	0
	Total	45	0	0
Maichun cluster	Maichun	19	0	0
	Girchola	27	0	0
	Banthok	30	12	0
	Chaturbhaj	20	20	0
	Maniagar	32	32	0
	Total	128	64	0
Danya cluster	Rampur	16	11	0
	Gauli	28	0	0
	Dasili	28	0	0
	Ukal	14	0	0
	Dharagad	18	0	0
	Kulori	13	13	0
	Manoli	12	0	0
	Kotyura	12	0	0
	Total	141	27	0
Kheti cluster	Jajal	21	0	0
	Dhari	11	0	0
	Kheti	17	0	0
	Chaura	20	2	0
	Total	69	2	0
Shama cluster	Loharkuda	15	15	0
	Malkhadugarcha	24	6	0
	Namik	35	20	0
	Liti	20	2	0
	Ratir	30	15	0
	Total	124	58	0
Pati cluster	Kanikot	30	12	0
	Harodi	12	0	0
	Jankande	35	0	0
	Kimbadi	10	0	0
	Raulmel	35	0	0
	Total	122	12	0
Ukhi math cluster	Pathali	21	0	0
	Dungar	16	0	0
	Saari	16	0	0
	Mangoli	18	0	0
	Kimana	18	0	0
	Total	89	12	0

Badhani cluster	Nandasain	24	1	0
	Jakh	38	2	0
	Badhani	20	6	0
	Bainoli	25	6	0
	Pudiyani	38	0	0
	Diyarkot	41	5	0
	Jhurkande	26	9	2
	Toil	19	0	0
	Chaundali	31	6	0
	Sundergaon	21	5	0
	Total	283	40	2
Gopeswar cluster	Khalla	17	4	0
	Kandei	17	0	0
	Bamiyala	14	0	0
	Gwar	17	0	0
	Dogari	20	0	0
	Koteswar	13	6	0
	Total	98	10	0
Badiyun-Nayarghati cluster	Thangar	28	10	0
	Pogtha- Tairi	16	0	0
	Naugaon	15	0	0
	Baagi	17	17	0
	Kuthar	25	0	0
	Total	101	27	0

4a. Workshops for adolescent girls

This year, three types of workshops were held for adolescent girls:

1. Day long workshops for girls in the space/office of the partner organization
2. Workshops at USNPSS, Almora
3. Workshops of girls in villages

4ai. Workshops at USNPSS

This year, two workshops were held at Almora in which 98 girls from 35 villages and 10 adults, mostly supervisors, participated. The number of partner organizations from Kumaon region was eight while from Garhwal three organizations took part in these workshops. Out of 108 participants, 26% belonged to SC households (Table 27).

Table 27. Number of adolescent girls in workshops at USNPSS, Almora.

Duration	Number of Organizations	Number of villages	Number of participants	Supervisors	Number of girls	Caste	
						SC	General
03-04.01.2016	6	15	42	5	37	4	38
06-07.01.2016	7	20	66	5	61	21	45
Total	11	35	108	10	98	25	83

The workshops at Almora were attended by girls varying in age from 13 – 23 years; a majority were 13-17 years old. The average age of the participants was 15 years (Table 28). All of these participants were enrolled and studying in schools/colleges. The workshops were organized in January when schools are closed for the winter break.

Table 28. Brief profile of adolescent girl participants.

Duration	Age (years)			Education					
	13-17	18-20	21-23	8	9-10	11-12	Graduates	Post Graduation	B. Ed
03-04.01.2016	29	8	0	1	13	19	3	2	1
06-07.01.2016	37	21	3	2	18	24	15	0	2
Total		29	3	3	31	43	18	2	3

The workshops were attended by three types of participants. Some of them belonged to villages where the programme is running for the last five years. In some other villages, the programme was operational for the last one year. In some villages the programme had just started and hence the workshop was the first exposure of this kind for adolescent girls. Table 29 exhibits the difference in perceptions/attitudes of these girls.

Table 29. Difference in perceptions/attitudes of girl participants involved in the programme.

Serial number	Indicator	Involvement in the programme		
		Last five years	One year	New
1	Participation in the workshop	Fully involved	Partial	Least
2	Articulation of issues	Focus on issues, not scared	Focus on issues, not as confident as the group that has been exposed longer	Learning to talk about adolescent girls problems, shy
3	Confidence	were able to talk to their parents at home and school teachers about adolescent girls issues	talking among themselves about gender and caste-based inequality	Trying to understand issues –first exposure of this kind
4	Change	Could talk about their problems in community meetings, demanding change	Could talk but have not yet not demanded change	Learning to talk in meetings
5	Participation in group work, cultural programmes	Good quality focused conversation on issues	Team-work good, articulation needs improvement	Learning to work in groups, said never done that in schools/colleges
6	Participation in cultural programmes	High	High	High
7	Participation in sports/gamed in the evenings	Good	Good	Good

At the end of the workshop, the participants were given a set of the following three questions each to receive feedback.

1. Has the workshop benefited them personally?
2. Once back, what changes will they think of making in the village?
3. What changes can they make in the future at a personal level?

While all the participants had reported that the workshops were beneficial to them, they had also qualified their statement by identifying the specific areas of their concerns. Overall, they offered 28 areas where benefits were recorded. In this, issues like increase in self-confidence, less hesitation in talking and standing before people, knowledge about life skills, self-identity, knowledge on health issues, particularly reproductive health, first time exposure to issues like strength and weakness of the self, methods of making protests against exploitation, harassment, unequal distribution of resources, child marriage and benefits of organized collective action were reported by the participants.

The second question of assessing perceptions regarding changes that the trained adolescent girls can make in villages was related to redistribution of gender-based attributes. The responses, however, formed a mixed-bag of gender specific and gender-redistributive methods of promoting change in society. A majority of girls reported the issue of gender inequality as their major concern. Improving hygiene and cleanliness in the village was also reported as one of the important issues. In addition, providing space and opportunities to girls to play, talk and express themselves was identified as a symbol of change in communities. Violence against women/girls and boys taking decisions on their own were also reported as issues that adolescent girls wanted to work on for bringing in change in their communities.

The third question of self-development was attempted by all the participants and diverse and detailed responses were received. The most frequently cited response was change in eating habits in which the participants reiterated the importance of eating home-grown fresh food. The participants could also understand the issue that local cereals, pulses and vegetables are rich in nutrients and must be consumed by village residents themselves to maintain healthy bodies. Promoting equality among all village residents was another area that the participants thought of changing from personal level efforts. Making decisions for their own life was also cited as a response that individuals could start after receiving training on the issue.

- Smriti from Badhani village, district Chamoli, said that “whenever any marriage is fixed, people ask about dowry. Earlier, I thought that nothing could be done about it, it is as it is. But when the group of adolescent girls was formed, we began to talk about the issue. I realized that one can protest against things. This year, my parents started talking about my marriage. I was very uncomfortable but did not know what to do. Finally, I gathered courage and told my parents that I shall not be married off in a family asking for dowry. My parents have understood my sentiments but this was not easy”.
- Pushpa Rawat from Valna village, district Almora, said, “in case a boy is employed in government sector, parents think that there is no need to look into other aspects. Take my case. My marriage was getting fixed. The boy was employed in government sector. His parents said that they would like to have a car as dowry. The boy also agreed. I said that I did not want to get married into a greedy family. My father became very upset with me. He scolded me and said if I had behaved properly the boy

would have had agreed on getting a motor-cycle. I don't know what happened to me. Usually I do not answer back but on that day I yelled, you talk about giving him a motor-cycle. I will not even take a cycle as dowry, let alone a motorcycle. I think that I got this courage from attending the meetings in the village. I understand how bad the practice of promoting dowry is. Each of us has to take a stand against it. It is we who constitute society. If each one of us takes a stand how we could have the problem of dowry”.

- Kavita Bora, Ganaigangoli, district Pithoragarh, said “Girls in my village could only study up to class 8th. They had to drop out because the nearest school for higher studies was quite far. Parents would send the boys but girls were asked to help in household work until they were married. I wanted to enrol myself in class 9th. I asked my parents but they said that not a single girl from the village is going to attend a school located in such a distance why would you go? I insisted and although the village residents were not pleased with me, continued studying. This year, I have passed intermediate. Now, everyone is saying how wonderful I am! Anyways, the positive aspect is that now many more girls from my villages have started studying in class 9th,”
- Sapna Rawat, Nandasain, district Chamoli, said, “In case a girl cannot pass the exam in school, people say that it does not matter, she has to cut grass only. Now, that we have formed an adolescent girls group in the village, we discuss such issues. As a result, I enrolled myself for higher studies. Now I am doing my graduation. In addition, I thought of learning sewing and knitting. Today, I stitch clothes for my whole family. Sometimes the village residents also ask me to stitch clothes for their children. Now, am thinking of joining the police force. I have to prepare for that”.
- Ritu Negi, Bainoli village, district Chamoli, said, “I had discontinued studying after passing my class 10th exams. When the group was formed I realized that everyone was going to school, only I was left at home. I felt ashamed of myself. So, I got myself enrolled in school. Then, I asked my mother about participation in sports. My parents said no but I joined N. C. C. Now, I take active part in all sports in my area”.
- Jyoti Rawat, Simalgaon, district Almora, said, “I had dropped off from school after completing my 12th standards. In the meetings of adolescent girls we used to discuss importance of education in women's lives. After two years, I enrolled myself in college. This year I am in my second year of graduation.

A residential training programme was also held in my village. After attending this training, two girls from Simal gaon had decided to pursue science as career. Today, both of them are doing a course of A. N. M (Auxiliary Nurse Midwife)”.

- Sheela Rawat from village Bedhuli, district Almora, is the first girl who chose to study science. Currently, she is doing her B. Sc. She has also applied for the posts of village pharmacists.

- Pooja Bhatt, village Danya, district Almora, said, “We are six sisters. When I finished intermediate, my father told me that he cannot allow me to study further. I insisted and now my first year of graduation is complete. I got the courage from talking and discussing issues in village meetings.
- This year, several members of adolescent groups have taken decisions regarding their lives, especially with respect to marriage. Rekha Rawat from Valna village, Kiran Negi from Simalgaoun, Kala Rawat from Bedhuli village took the decision of spending the rest of their lives in the village. And got married accordingly.

4a.iii. Workshops in villages

During the year USNPSS staff made regular visits to villages to conduct meetings/workshops with adolescent girls groups. These meetings/workshops were of the following three types:

- a. Meetings/workshops for all adolescent girls in the village
- b. Inter-village meetings of girls
- c. Joint meetings of women and adolescent girls

During meetings with members of adolescent groups, issues such as life skills, identity of girls/women, physical and emotional changes during adolescence, reproductive health, nutrition, and caste and gender inequality were discussed through group discussions followed by presentations, stories, songs and games. On the other hand, joint meetings of women and girls involved issues such as attitudes towards girls and boys, rights of women and girls, health and nutrition, violence against girls and activities that women and girls can take up in villages Table 27 exhibits the number of participants in these meetings.

Heera Arya, village Banthok, district Almora said, I live in a mixed caste village. I used to think of myself as less than the others. After attending the kishori workshops, I began to understand the issue of equality. During the workshop we were asked to complete a story and then I realized that am no less than the others. Girls from general caste are shy but I have learnt to raise my voice. Now, other girls also think that am somebody and they cannot ignore me”.

Asha Arya, Danya, district Almora, said, “The upper caste families think less of us. When our girls group was formed, we began to discuss this problem. We girls treat each other as equal but the adults discriminate. We used to keep quiet but now we do not”.

Kareena Bharti, Badhani, district Chamoli, said, “Though I wanted to attend village meetings, was scared to do so. When Luxmi didi and Kimothi came to the village and talked to us, I collected myself and went to participate in a meeting. I could not utter a word there. But slowly, I began to understand things. Girls from upper caste families were like me. They did not ask me to go away. Now, we all sit together and discuss our problems.”

Santoshi Arya, Ganaigangoli, district Pithoragarh said, “People say that we should not discriminate against each other and that we are all equal but in real life things are different. When the people from the *sanstha* came to our village we realized that somebody is thinking about us too. Then, I went to Almora to attend a meeting. There everyone was treated as equal, girls from different villages, belonging to different castes sat together, ate together. We all shared a dormitory. I was very happy to learn that there are people in our Uttarakhand who have been thinking about caste-based differences and wanted to solve this problem.”

Table 30. The number of participants in village workshops.

Location	Village	Date	Number of participants			
			Girls	Boys	Women	Men/gram pradhan, ward member etc.
Shama	Namik	28.11.2015	18	12	0	6
		29.11.2015	15	0	16	18
	Ratir	30.11.2015	9	0	12	0
Maichun	Maniagar	06.12.2015	28	7	0	0
	Girchola	06.12.2015	28	0	0	0
		08.12.2015	17	0	9	0
		24.12.2015	31	0	0	0
	Banthok+Girchola	25.12.2015	31	0	0	0
Danya	Munoli	11.01.2016	12	0	10	0
	Gauli+Ukal	11.01.2016	32	0	0	0
Maichun	Maichun+Maniagar	12.01.2016	16	0	7	0
Danya	Dharagad+Kulori+Munoli	13.01.2016	22	0	0	0
	Dasili+Danya	14.01.2016	25	0	10	0
	Fadiyali+Bhalugada	16.01.2016	18	8	0	0
	Rungadi	17.01.2016	14	0	5	0
	Tuproli	18.01.2016	12	0	0	0
Shama	Ratirtalla+Malla	26.01.2016	22	16	8	20
		27.01.2016	15	0	0	22
	Gogina+Dhari+Loharkuda	28.01.2016	23	4	3	12
		29.01.2016	18	4	0	13
Ganaigangoli	Bhanyani	21.02.2016	14	0	10	0
	Rungadi	22.02.2016	12	0	15	2
Badiyun	Kuthar, Tairi	29.02.2016	20	0	17	0
	Naugaon	29.02.2016	10	0	18	0
Maichun	Maniagar	13.03.2016	26	5	0	0
	Maichun	15.03.2016	15	0	6	0
Danya	Gauli, Ukal	25.03.2016	22	0	0	0
	Dharagad+Munoli	26.03.2016	15	0	0	0
Total			509	66	131	93

4b.Achievements

- Initially, boys used to keep themselves away from workshops held for girls in villages. However, this pattern has changed with time. Now, in villages where USNPSS has been conducting meetings/workshops for the last four-five years, boys also express interest in attending such meetings. In particular, boys from Ratir Kethi, Namik and Gogina villages, district Bageswar, took part in kishori workshops and joined in group-discussions, sports and in organizing the workshops.

- In Fadyali and Bhaloogara villages, district Pithoragarh, adolescent boys took a lot of interest in quick question-answer sessions and story-telling.
- Joint meetings of adult women and adolescent girls have proven very useful in creating an understanding of the challenges girls face in their lives.
- Understanding about the need of caste-based equality has improved in villages, especially among young girls who seem to be less inhibited by caste-based taboos and prejudices.
- Inter-village meetings had been useful in building up solidarity among girls in the host village. They took up the responsibility of organizing the event. In some villages, girls arranged for refreshments using money that they had saved.
- A majority of groups took up cleaning of the village in a campaign mode involving members of women's groups and children in organizing events around the theme.
- Having understood issues of female infanticide and dowry, some girls registered their protests at home and neighbourhoods. Awareness about the issue has increased in all villages where adolescent girls groups are functional.

4c. Grading of adolescent girls

The first grading of 190 adolescent girls was carried out in 30 villages in five clusters. The second grading of the same 107 was carried out in four clusters of villages. Out of these 10 girls did not provide reliable information. Hence, the rest 97 girls were involved in grading for the year.

Table 31 exhibits the results of grading of adolescent girls. The exercise was carried out twice during the year, jointly by the USNPSS staff and trained supervisors. The method of grading of adolescent girls was the same as discussed earlier for the women's groups and children in village learning centres. The number of girls involved in grading was 510.

Out of a total of 38 villages involved in grading, 16 were represented by mixed caste households and 2 villages were totally inhabited by SC population. The number of girls from Scheduled-Caste households was 132 whilst 378 girls represented the general caste population.

All seven indicators used for grading are shown in the Tables 31,32, 33. These indicators reflect different aspects of personality covering issues from self-development to leadership, health and nutrition, education and life skills.

Grading was carried out in two phases with a gap of six months in between and a data sheet was generated to compute their progress. A profile for each girl across the seven same indicators was created. Grades were given the value as follows:

D=1, C=2, B=3, A=4.

Table 31. Village-wise scores of grading of adolescent girls, 2015-2016.

location		Danya					Badhani										Pati	Sunadi				
Villages	kulori	dharagad	Munoli	Rampur	Gauli	Badhani	Bainoli	Chaundal i	Nandasen	Diyarkot	Pudiyani	Jhurkand e	Jakh	Sundarga on	Toli	Kanikot	Borkhola	Valna	Chuguti	Dhamera	Bajan	
No. of girls	19	16	12	11	16	11	2	10	5	7	6	5	5	5	5	21	30	31	8	11	11	
indicator																						
Socializatio	2.68	3.81	3.75	3.55	2.63	2.82	2.5	3	2.8	3.14	3.17	3.2	3	3	3.2	2.24	3.9	2.42	3.38	3.36	3.27	
Expression	2.68	3.5	3.5	3.27	2.44	2.73	3	2.7	3	3.14	3	3	3	3	3	1.38	3.87	2.39	3.5	3.36	3.27	
Language	2.89	3.75	3.92	3.18	2.56	2.91	3	3.5	2.6	3.57	3.33	3.2	2.8	3.2	3.4	1.38	3.8	2.39	3.63	3.45	3.27	
Health, nutrition and hygiene	2.95	3.38	3.42	3.09	2.31	2.73	2	3	2.6	3.29	3.17	3.2	3	3.2	2.8	1.95	3.87	2.84	3	3.18	2.91	
Equality by gender, caste, class	2.68	3.81	3.92	3.09	1.44	2.91	3	3.1	2.8	3.29	3	3.4	3	3	2.8	1.48	3.53	2.26	2.75	3	2.73	
Life skills	2.47	3.31	3.25	3.09	1	2.91	2.5	2.5	2.4	3.14	2.83	3	2.8	3	3	1.19	3.57	2	3	2.91	2.82	
Future planning	2.21	3.31	3.17	3.18	1	3.18	3	3.1	2.6	3.43	3.17	3.2	3.2	3	3	1.76	3.53	2.55	3.63	3.18	3.27	
Average	2.65	3.55	3.56	3.21	1.91	2.88	2.71	2.99	2.69	3.29	3.1	3.17	2.97	3.06	3.03	1.63	3.72	2.41	3.27	3.21	3.08	
Indicator																						
Socialization	3.37	3.88	3.75	3.27	3.44	3.09	3	3.6	3.2	3.43	3.17	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.4	2.67	4	3.42	3.75	3.55	3.73	
Expression	3.37	3.69	3.58	3.36	3.38	3.36	3	3.4	3	3.29	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.2	3	2	4	3.42	3.63	3.55	3.73	
Language	3.47	3.88	4	3.73	3.38	3.36	3	3.8	3	3.57	3.5	3.8	3.4	3.6	3.2	2.14	3.97	3.42	3.75	3.55	3.64	
Health, nutrition and hygiene	3.37	3.5	3.42	3.91	3.06	3.09	3	3.3	3	3.29	3.5	3.2	3.4	3.2	3	2.29	3.93	3.52	3.25	3.27	3.18	
Equality by gender, caste, class	3.42	3.88	3.92	3.91	2.5	3.18	3	3.5	3	3.29	3.5	3.4	3.2	3	3	1.76	3.93	3.16	3.13	3.27	3	
Life skills	3.21	3.25	3.25	3.64	1.19	3.27	3	2.8	3	3.29	3.5	3.2	3.2	3	3	2.05	3.97	3.03	3.25	3.09	3	
Future planning	3.63	3.38	3.17	4	1.25	3.55	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.71	3.5	3.4	3.6	3	3	2.1	3.97	3.19	3.63	3.27	3.36	
Average	3.41	3.63	3.58	3.69	2.6	3.27	3.07	3.43	3.11	3.41	3.45	3.4	3.31	3.17	3.09	2.14	3.97	3.31	3.48	3.36	3.38	
Location	Ukhimath						Nayarghati					Gopeswar				Maichun				Total number of girls		
Villages	Karokhi	Usara	Huddu	Dungar	Painj	Pathali	Bagi	Thangar	Hamur- Kuthar	Pongtha - Tairi	Koteswa r	Khalla	Dogari kanderi	Maniaga r	Maichun	Girchola	Banthok					
No. of girls	20	19	14	10	19	20	18	20	18	9	12	9	9	29	13	10	14	510				
indicator																		Average				
Socializatio	3.7	3.79	3.57	2.9	2.42	3.45	2.89	3.1	1.72	2.89	3.92	3.44	3.78	2.31	2.31	2.2	2.29	3.04				
Expression	3.55	3.37	3.36	2.7	2.79	3.1	2.72	3.05	1.78	2.56	3.33	3.11	3.78	2.24	1.92	2.4	2	2.91				
Language	3.8	3.74	3.64	3.3	3.05	3.75	3.11	3.3	2.11	2.67	3.92	4	4	2.79	2.62	2.6	2.5	3.17				
Health, nutrition and hygiene	3.55	3.58	3.71	2.9	2.89	3.4	3	3.5	2.06	2.22	3.33	3.11	3.67	2.79	2.46	2.5	2.43	2.97				
Equality by gender, caste, class	3.85	3.68	3.71	2.7	2.63	3.3	2.89	3.45	1.94	2.11	3.08	3.22	3.56	2.52	1.69	2.3	1.57	2.87				
Life skills	3.8	3.74	3.57	2.1	2.16	3.3	2.83	3.1	1.89	2.11	3.33	3	3.56	1.31	1	1.1	1.07	2.62				
Future planning	3.7	3.74	3.71	2.4	2.53	3.35	2.94	3.1	2.06	2.56	3.92	4	3.78	1.28	1.08	1	1.29	2.85				
Average	3.71	3.66	3.61	2.71	2.64	3.38	2.91	3.23	1.94	2.44	3.55	3.41	3.73	2.18	1.87	2.01	1.88	2.92				
Indicator																						
Socialization	4	4	3.86	3.6	3.68	3.95	3.5	3.65	2.33	3	3.92	3.78	3.89	3.1	2.85	2.7	3	3.43				
Expression	3.95	3.89	3.93	3.8	3.84	3.8	3.22	3.3	2.56	2.67	3.33	3.67	3.78	3	2.69	2.7	2.64	3.34				
Language	4	4	3.86	3.6	3.89	3.9	3.78	3.5	2.67	2.89	3.75	4	4	3.62	2.85	3.3	3.21	3.53				
Health, nutrition and hygiene	3.95	4	3.93	3.5	3.63	3.9	3.44	3.4	2.44	2.33	3.58	3.33	3.78	3.69	3	3	2.93	3.33				
Equality by gender, caste, class	4	4	4	3.6	3.84	3.8	3.39	3.55	2.56	2.22	3.58	3.22	3.67	2.76	2.38	2.6	2.21	3.25				
Life skills	4	4	3.93	3.4	3.63	3.8	3.06	3.25	2.17	2.78	3.5	3.11	3.78	1.48	1.08	1.4	1.36	3.00				
Future planning	4	3.95	3.93	3.4	3.63	3.95	3.5	3.2	2.56	2.89	3.83	3.78	4	2.03	1.23	1.4	1.43	3.21				
Average	3.99	3.98	3.92	3.56	3.74	3.87	3.41	3.41	2.47	2.68	3.64	3.56	3.84	2.81	2.3	2.44	2.4	3.30				

Table 32. Grading of adolescent girls in the least performing village (Kanikot, district Champawat).

First Grading (August 2015)																						
No. of girls (21)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
indicator																						
Socialization	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2.24
Expression	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1.38
Language	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1.38
Health, nutrition and hygiene	3	2	2	3	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.95
Equality by gender, caste, class	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1.48
Life skills	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1.19
Future planning	2	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	1	3	2	2	1.76
Average	1.71	1.43	1.43	2.57	1.86	1.29	1.14	1.86	1	1.14	1.71	1.57	1.57	1.71	1.71	1.57	2.43	1.57	2	1.43	1.43	1.63
Second Grading (February 2016)																						
Socialization	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.67
Expression	2	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Language	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.14
Health, nutrition and hygiene	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2.29
Equality by gender, caste, class	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1.76
Life skills	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	2.05
Future planning	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2.1
Average	2.14	2	2.14	3	2.57	2	1.71	2	1.71	1.57	2	2.29	2.14	2.57	2.14	2.14	2.57	2.29	2	2	2	2.14

Table 33. Grading of adolescent girls in the best performing village (Karokhi, district Rudraprayag).

First Grading (August 2015)																						
No. of girls (21)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
indicator																						
Socialization	2	1	2	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2.24
Expression	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1.38
Language	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1.38
Health, nutrition and hygiene	3	2	2	3	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1.95
Equality by gender, caste, class	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1.48
Life skills	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1.19
Future planning	2	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	1	3	2	2	1.76
Average	1.71	1.43	1.43	2.57	1.86	1.29	1.14	1.86	1	1.14	1.71	1.57	1.57	1.71	1.71	1.57	2.43	1.57	2	1.43	1.43	1.63
Second Grading (February 2016)																						
Socialization	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2.67
Expression	2	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Language	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.14
Health, nutrition and hygiene	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2.29
Equality by gender, caste, class	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	1.76
Life skills	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	2.05
Future planning	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2.1
Average	2.14	2	2.14	3	2.57	2	1.71	2	1.71	1.57	2	2.29	2.14	2.57	2.14	2.14	2.57	2.29	2	2	2	2.14

In the next step averages of grades across all indicators for each village were generated. Karokhi in district Rudraprayag appeared as the best performing village whilst Kanikot in district Champawat emerged as the best performing village.

Table 34 shows that during the year, the first grading exhibited the average score of 3 (Grade B) and by the end of six months the average score became 3.30 (Grade A).

Table 34. Grading of 510 adolescent girls in 38 villages.

Serial number	Indicator	First grading		Second grading	
		Average score	Grade	Average score	Grade
1	Socialization	3.04	A	3.43	A
2	Expression	2.91	B	3.34	A
3	Language	3.17	A	3.53	A
4	Health, nutrition, hygiene	2.97	B	3.33	A
5	Equality by gender, caste, class	2.87	B	3.25	A
6	Life skills	2.62	B	3.00	B
7	Future planning	2.85	B	3.21	A
Average		3	B	3.30	A

5. Environment education in schools

The programme on environmental education in schools continued under the aegis of the Education Department, Government of Uttarakhand. The textbooks developed by USNPSS “Our Land Our Life” are used in all government schools in classes 6-8. Some of the concepts from the workbooks are used in village learning centres.

6. Relief and rehabilitation in Kedarnath valley, income generation in other villages

The fruit processing unit at Ukhimath continued to improve local livelihoods of women from disaster-hit villages in Kedarnath valley by providing them assistance in collecting and processing of *malta*, *amla*, mint and rhododendron flowers to produce juice/squash for sale, locally.

In addition, women continued to use knitting machines to produce sweaters, scarves woollen caps etc. for sale in the local markets. After attending the training programmes conducted by USNPSS and the partner CBO at Ukhimath and in surrounding villages, about 60 women have bought their own knitting machines. The finished products are put for sale on the Kedarnath *yatra* route and in shops at Ukhimath. Women have also received orders from local school for knitting sweaters for students.

The fruit processing unit at Galla village, district Nainital, continued to process apple and other fruits which were taken to Delhi and Nainital for sale.

A combination of vegetable cultivation and fisheries in Pati, district Champawat, has ensured regular income to hundreds of households almost for a decade now. This has been a pioneering initiative to develop a model of fish cultivation in the hills.

All through the year, members of UMP took up various activities supported by MNREGA to diversify their livelihood options and improve income. Though, work under MNREGA is only available for 15-20 days a year, and not for 100 days, women made the best use of whatever was available to them. In addition, a few groups had received money under the *vidhayak nidhi* from the local MLAs for infrastructure development in their villages. Members of the women's groups ensured that both men and women receive equal amount as wages for the same kind of work.

7. Research and Publications

7a. Research

Started in February 2014, the research project on gender, development and disaster continued with the support of the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi. Surveys in villages were carried out during the year. Data compilation and analysis work continued and report on each village covered by the study are under preparation. Also, work on writing of the final report had started.

A national seminar on “Gender Generation and Labour in Uttarakhand: Exploring Inter-sectionality through the prism of social Ecology”, 6-7 June 2015, was held at USNPSS, Almora. This was a part of the research project funded by ICSSR, New Delhi. The seminar was attended by renowned academicians, educationists and gender experts from across the country.

Dr. Lalit Pande and Ritu made a presentation of the initial findings of research in a workshop organized by ICSSR in Lucknow.

While one of the research associates left in June 2015 to pursue her higher studies, Ms. Manjari Mehta, Dehradun, joined to form the writing team for the report.

7b. Publications

- Documentation of activities carried out by women and adolescent girls continued with the publication of the 15th issue of *Nanda*. Reflecting on their experiences and understanding of issues, members of women's groups, facilitators of village learning centres and our partner NGOs wrote articles for the magazine.

This is the first time in the state of Uttarakhand that a magazine for rural women and girls groups is published in order to enable them to reflect and write about themselves. 2000 copies of *Nanda* were printed and distributed in villages.

- *Muskaan*, a bi-annual newsletter, publishing stories, articles, poems and drawings of children attending village learning centres was brought out in March 2015 and November 2015. This year, 160 copies were printed for the edition in March. 200 copies of the November issue were printed.
- The recommendations of the workshop on SAMVAAD were sent to the state Government and a detailed report of the deliberations was sent to the U-Cost, Dehradun. Samvaad 2015 was printed and distributed
- *Pahari Striyan: Kahi, Ankahi, Adhkahi Batein*, a book documenting the work of UMP was written by Anuradha Pande. It is being published by the Doon Library and Research Centre, Dehradun.

7c. Development of a website

A website for the organization was developed by Mr. Sandeep Jain, Indore; The Communion. No remuneration was paid to him and he did the whole work on a voluntary basis. Mr. Ranjan Joshi, was instrumental in developing the website as he extended help by corresponding with USNPSS staff and The Communion. The website is now available at www.sevanidhi.org.

7d. A short film on USNPSS

Mr Ken Reed and his wife Zoila, USA, Following a visit to USNPSS last year, offered to make a short film on activities carried out by USNPSS and its partner organizations. They came to Almora in November 2015 and visited several villages to talk to women, children, CBOs and the facilitators running the village learning centres. Editing was carried out in the USA and Mr. Reed and Zoila presented the final version of the film in April 2106. All expenditure incurred in developing the film was borne by Mr. Reed and Zoila.

8. Evaluation by SDTT, Mumbai

This year, SDTT Mumbai carried out an evaluation of activities supported by the Trust during 2011-2015. A team of two members came to Almora on 14.2.2016 to evaluate the work. The team members visited Danya during 16-17 February 2016 and Valna village on 18.2.2016, district Almora. During 19-20.2.2016 villages in Badhani area, district Chamoli, were studied and on the 21.2.2016 the team visited Binta cluster, On 22.2.2016 they visited Ganai gangoli cluster in Pithroagarh district and held discussions in Almora on 23-24.2.2016.

9. Collaboration with other organizations/Institutes

9a. Scholarships to adolescent girls

1. 'The Ahaluwalia Baradri Trust Scholarship' was given to Ms. Anita Joshi up to June 2015. She belongs to a BPL family and is one of five daughters. She got a monthly scholarship @

1,000/- per month from the trust since January 2012. She has passed BA from Kumaon University as a regular student.

2. 'Late Mrs. Alka Dhawan Chatrath Scholarship' was awarded to Master Abhay Raj Singh Bisht who has got admission in Sainik School Ghorakhal (dist. Nainital) in sixth class. Abhay comes from rural background with weak financial status. His father, Rajendra Singh, is a social worker and has been associated with USNPSS for the last two decades. An amount of Rs. 30,000/- has been paid as a partial support to meet the expenses (tuition fee, hostel/mess etc.) Abhay is doing quite well in academic (scored 8.8 grade points out of 9), life skills and performing arts (A grade).

9b. Skill training for girls in Sri Aurobindo Ashram, New Delhi

USNPSS encourages, facilitates and supports rural girls to participate in vocational training programmes in the Ashram which are of 6 months' duration.

This year 3 candidates had applied, but finally 2 joined the programme which started from April 1, 2016:

1. Babita, 19 years, village Paithani (Dwarahat). She has passed Intermediate (Science)
2. Shri Santosh Singh, village Dyona (Bhikiyasain). Passed Intermediate.

So far 24 girls have been facilitated by USNPSS to enrol themselves in the training programme (Since Sept 2011).

10. The 7th B.D. Pande Memorial Lecture

The 7th B. D. Pande Memorial lecture was delivered by Dr. Sunita Narain, a renowned environment activist; and the Director General of the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi. The event was held at USNPSS Almora office on the 9th April 2016. Dr. B. K. Joshi presided over the function. The members of the Governing Body and representatives from the Rajeswar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust, New Delhi also attended the event.

11. *Samvaad*

The citizens committee Almora and USNPSS hosted the Samvaad workshop during 30-31 October 2015. Each day, about 150 participants including the MP and the MLAs, local lawyers, representatives from the government and the municipal corporation of Almora, civil society organizations participated in the discussions. This year, 48 women associated with UMP came from district Almora (Dhauladevi, Bhaisiyachana, Dwarahat, Bhikyasen blocks), Chamoli (Karnaprayag, Dasholi blocks), Pithoragarh and Rudraprayag districts.

Since 2009, *Samvaad* is held every year in memory of the late chairman of USNPSS. The financial support was provided by the U-Cost Dehradun. This year, the focus was on two issues:

- i. Menace caused by wild animals in the hills of Uttarakhand
- ii. Status of Health care system in the hills of Uttarakhand

A report of the deliberations of the workshop was prepared and sent to U-Cost and other government institutions. Recommendations were also sent to the state government for further action.

12. Annual meeting of partner Organizations

The annual meeting with our partner organizations was held during 11.5.2015-13.5.2015. The meeting provided an opportunity to all our partner organizations and USNPSS to reflect on the activities, share experiences and plan for the future year.

13. Meetings of the Governing Body

Meetings of the Governing Body were held on 27 April 2015 and 9 January 2016. Mr. Sartaj Singh, Mr. Susheel Dubey and Dr. Ramesh from the Rajeswar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust, New Delhi also attended the meeting at Almora.

14. Accounts

An audited statement of accounts is enclosed.

15. Visitors

Ms. Ratna Sudarshan and Ms. Anandita from NUEPA Delhi visited during 24.4.2015-27.4.2015 in connection with a study on education and gender equality programmes in KGBVs. Ms. Anandita stayed at Danya during 27.4.2015- 1.5.2015 to conduct survey of the students at KGBV

Prof. K. S. Valdiya and Mrs. Indira Valdiya stayed at USNPSS on 27.4.2015 to help organize a lecture delivered by Bharat Ratna Prof. C. N. R. Rao

Dr. B. K. Joshi and Mrs. Beena Joshi stayed at USNPSS during 27.4.2015-28.4.2015 to preside over the lecture delivered by Bharat Ratna Prof. C. N. R. Rao

Meeting of the Governing Body was attended by Brig. Sartaj Singh, Mr. Susheel Dubey and Dr. Ramesh on 27.4.2015. They came again on the 29.4.2015 to discuss the programme supported by Dayal Trust, New Delhi

Mr. Avadhesh Verma from Papaarshali visited on May 1, 2015. He came again on 25.5.2015 to discuss issues on education with the director

Mr. Ashish Sah, WIPRO Delhi, visited on 6.5.2015 to discuss the school environmental programme started by WIPRO

Mr. Bishan Dutt Joshi, Bajeena-Dwarahat visited on 7.5.2015 in connection with his book on Indian classical music

Ms. Vibha Puri Das, retd. IAS, visited on 8.5.2015

Mrs. Nivedita Joshi and Mr. Sanjay Joshi, New Delhi, visited on 17.5.2015

Mohan Chandra Kandpal, Dwarahat came with his daughter on 17.5.2015

A three day workshop on theatre was held by "Darpan" involving 14 children. During the workshop a play was created on a story, Lokma, by Mahadevi Verma. The play was held on 18.5.2015 at USNPSS

Falguni, an intern from the Symbiosis University, Pune worked with USNPSS during 24 May 2015- 6 June 2015

Mr. Dasauni, C Tewari and R Bhatt visited on 2.6.2015

Mr. Deep Chandra Pant, Divisional forest Manger, Almora visited on 2.6.2015

A national level seminar on gender was held during 6.-7 June 2015. Supported by ICSSR, the research project was started in 2014. The seminar was held to present an interim analysis of the data collected by USNPSS research team and to seek feedback from the experts. 24 experts participated in the seminar and gave comments on the work

Mr. Ken Reed, Paula Reed, Naina Rao and Jaijee Rao visited during 9-10 June 2015 to discuss the work carried out by USNPSS in villages. Following this meeting, Mr. Ken Reed, Director Wisdom Garden Institute, USA, proposed to make a film covering the activities in villages

Ms. Manjari Mehta, Dehradun, visited on 6.6.2015 to discuss the work under ICSSR project

Mr. Rithondhi, USA visited on 13.6.2015 to discuss the issue of aspirations of youth in the Himalayas

Mr. Surendra Pundir, Mussoorie, came on 15.6.2015 to meet the director

Two audit assistants were sent to USNPSS by the CA to prepare preliminary report during 15-17 June 2015

Mr. R. K. Joshi, Trivedi Trust, New Delhi, visited during 16.6.2015-19.6.2015 to see the village learning centres in Maichun Cluster, district Almora. He also attended a training of VLC facilitators at Almora

Mr. Mahesh Galia and Bachi Singh Bisht stayed at USNPSS on 24.6.2015

Mr. Atul Pant, Pawan Gupta, Chitra and Ranjan Joshi conducted a workshop for primary school teachers from Pyura and Maram villages (Dhauladevi) during 23.6.2015-28.6.2015

Mr. P. C. Tewari came on 25.6.2015 to discuss a PIL on building by-laws in the hill towns of Uttarakhand

Dr. H. C. Pande came from Nainital on 25.6.2015 and stayed over night

Rishi, an intern came from China for two weeks internship at USNPSS, He worked with us from 30.6.2015 to 14.7.2015.

Bhoomika Joshi, ICSSR, left on 30 June 2015

Ms. Chitra from Jalna visited on 2.7.2015 to discuss participants feedback on the workshop held during 23-28.6.2015

Mr. Anjan Himadri Pande visited on 3.7.2015 to discuss possibilities of work with USNPSS

Mr. Gopal Prasad, Director, Jan shikshan Sansthan Bhimtal visited on 9.7.2015.

Mr. Ashish Sah came from Gurgaon to conduct the Earthian workshop by WIPRO on 22.7.2015. The workshop was attended by 6 school teachers and a representative from the Azim Premji Foundation, Almora

Mr. Jamuna Prasad Tewari, Government Intermediate College, Batulia, Dwarahat stayed at USNPSS during 22.7.2015-23.7.2015. He had come in connection with the Earthian workshop to Almora

Ms. Babita Galia and Jyoti from Galla village, district Nainital, stayed at USNPSS on 29.7.2015. They had come to sit for an examination

Mr. Raju Bisht, Ganaigangoli, district Pithoragarh visited during 9.7.2015-10.7.2015

Mr. Mahesh Pande and Mayank Pande visited on 10.7.2015

Ms. Richa Joshi, a researcher from USA (referred by Ms. Bina Agarwal) came on 11.8.2015 in relation to her work in Uttarakhand

Mr. Naveen Pangty from Village Salla, visited on 14.8.2015 to discuss his innovative work on rainwater harvesting and on collection of children stories

Mr. Navneet Pandey, Additional Director Urban Development, government of Uttarakhand and the Executive Officer Municipality of Almora visited on 17.8.2015 to discuss urban planning and development in the hill towns of Uttarakhand

Mr. Belwal, Assistant Registrar Cooperative Society, Dehradun visited on 18.8.2015 to explore possibilities of cooperatives with USNPSS

Ms. Harshwanti Tewari and Mr. Naveen, Almora College, visited to use the library on 22.8.2015

Mr. M. C. Joshi, retd scientist, Defence Research Laboratory visited on 20.8.2015

Dr. Amlan Tripathy, IRS, Commissioner of Income tax (Appeals) from Kolkata and Dr. Kusum Arunachalam, Doon University visited during 20.8.2015-21.8.2015

Mr. Manish Khanna, CA Nainital visited on 20.8.2015-21.8.2015 to conduct audit

Mr. Prahalad Lal and Diksha Arya, New Bajeti, Pithoragarh, visited on 8.9.2015 in connection to a survey

Mr. Saurabh Joshi, The Bodhitree School, Laxmeshwar came to meet the director on 9.9.2015

Mr. I Pande, retd. Chief Secretary, Government of Uttarakhand, and Mrs. Leena Pande visited on 11.9.2015

Dr. Aslam Sara Rai, Allahabad University visited on 11.9.2015

Ms. Susan Germain, Sydney, Australia visited during 17.9.2015-18.9.2015 to explore the possibility of her PhD on education in Uttarakhand

Mr. Rishi Kumar, Neelkanth-Rishikesh, district Pauri Garhwal came on 1.10.2015 to meet the staff of USNPSS. He stayed on till 3.10.2015 to meet the partner NGOs of USNPSS and attended a meeting

Ms. Nidhi Fuloria, Kumaon University, Almora visited the library on 5.10.2015

Dr. M. G. Jackson and Ms. Nyla Coelho stayed at USNPSS during 7.10.2015-16.10.2015

Representatives from SEVA Sanstha, Almora visited on 23.10.2015 and 30.1.2016

Samvaad 2015 was held during 30.10.2015-31.10.2015

Ms. Geeta Pande and Ms. Renu came from Nainital on 2.11.2015

Ms. Harshita Tewari, Neelam and Raghuveer Singh, Kumaon University, Almora consulted the library on 4.11.2015 and 5.11.2015

Ms. Chitra from Jalna visited on 9.11.2015

Mr. Ken Reed and Zoila Reed stayed with us during 16.11.2015-23.11.2015 in relation to shooting of a video film on the activities carried out by USNPSS and its partner organizations

Ms. Moni, Ambedkar University, New Delhi and her family visited USNPSS on 21.11.2015

Ms. Harshita Tewari, Kumaon University, Almora campus consulted the library on 27.11.2015

Col C. S. Pant and Dr. Mrs. Pant, New Delhi, visited USNPSS on 2.12.2015

Ms. Catherine Addor, France and Mrs. P. Chatterjee, Kausani visited USNPSS on 10.12.2015

Mr. Noel from CERES, Australia visited us on 20.12.2015

Dr. M. G. Jackson stayed with us during 25.12.2015-6.1.2016

Mr. M. S. Miral, Sumeru College, Almora visited on 11.1.2016

Mr. Anand Pande, New Zealand, and Mr. Ishwar Iyer, Bombay visited during 16.1.2016-18.1.2016

Mr. Roop Singh Mehta visited on 4.2.2016

Mr. Purushottam Sharma, Taleswar, Deghat, Jawahar Lal Bindukhatta and Mukul from Bhadaipur, Udham Singh Nagar stayed at USNPSS during 8.2.2016- 9.2. 2016

Ms. Tara, Kumaon university, Ranikhet came to consult the library, 10.2.2016

Ms. Swati Chakrabarthy and Ms. Tanya came to evaluate the work supported by SDTT, 14.2.2016. They visited Danya during 16-17 February 2016 and Valna village on 18.2.2016. During 19-20.2.2016 villages in Badhani area were surveyed and on 21.2.2016 the team visited Binta. On 22.2.2016 they visited Ganaigangoli and held discussions with USNPSS staff at Almora during 23-24.2.2016

Mr. Manoj Pant and Piyali Pant, Mumbai visited during 23-24.2 2016

Mr. Himanshu Kandpal, Kumaon University Almora visited the library on 26.2.2016

Ms. Neerja Joshi, AAROHI, Pyura visited on 5.3. 2016

Mrs. Pamela Chatterjee visited on 9.3.2016

Mr. Tejit Pabari, Utkarsh Agarwal and Mahip Agarwal, The Doon School, Dehradun, visited with their teacher during 26.3.2016-30.3.2016. they went to Binta to see the village learning centres

Mr. Shekhar Kandpal, Sunadi and Minu Sati, Mumbai visited on 30.3.2016

The annual meeting of our partner organizations was held during 30.5.2016-31.5.2016.

Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora

List of Governing Body members for year 2015-16

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

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 st 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 2015-16

SNo	Name	Sex	Qualifications	Work exp in USNPSS
1.	Dr Lalit Pande Director	M	Ph.D.in Mechanical Engineering, Purdue University 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 IITDelhi Distinguished Alumni Award 2014	29 years
2.	Ms.Anuradha Pande	F	MSc. (Geology), Kumaun University Nainital, Post Graduate diploma in environmental management, Lucknow	23
3.	Ms. Rama Joshi	F	Intermediate, U. P. Board	22
4.	Ms. Renu Juyal	F	B.A. Kumaon University	12
5.	Sri Kamal K. Joshi	M	M. A. (History), Kumaon University, Almora campus	22
6.	Sri D. S. Latwal	M	B.A. Kumaon University	12
7.	Sri Kailash Papne	M	MA (Education), MA (Political Science). Kumaon University	8
8.	Sri Jeevan C Joshi	M	Inter science	27
9.	Sri Suresh Bisht	M	Intermediate	22
10	Ms. Bhoomika Joshi	F	MA (JNU), MSc (Oxford)	3
11	Ms. Ritu	F	MA (TISS, Mumbai), MPhil, IIFM, Bhopal	2
12.	Sri Divan Matiyani	M	Class 11	16
13.	Sri Mohan Singh	M	Class 8	7

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, 2016, 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.

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 27, 2016

Place: Camp Almora



Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora
Balance sheet as at 31 March 2016

Sources of funds

Corpus Fund

Opening balance	3,929,795.27	
Add: Corpus donations	167,809.20	
Total corpus fund		4,097,604.47

Reserves

General Reserves

Opening Balance	2,477,963.12	
Less: Effect of grant Received from Aid, treated as donation in previous year	- 13,993.05	
Add: Current year's appropriation	356,736.38	2,820,706.45

Specific Reserves

Opening Balance	6,006,756.04	
Less: Expenditure met from reserves	-515,788.50	
Less: Effect of grant Received from Aid treated as donation in previous year	-79,293.95	
Add: Current year's appropriation	1,335,264.86	6,746,938.45
Total reserves		9,567,644.90

Total sources of funds 13,665,249.37

Utilization of funds

Net current assets

Current assets

Cash in hand	154.00	
Cash in bank	3,850,975.97	
Balance in bank in fixed deposits	10,955,051.00	
Income tax deducted at source	389,169.00	
Total current assets		15,195,349.97

Less Current liabilities

Unspent grants in aid [Annexure A]	1,530,100.60	
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Net current assets 13,665,249.37

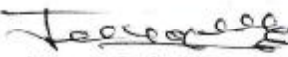
Total utilization of funds 13,665,249.37

Notes to accounts and significant accounting policies - "B"


For Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan

This is the balance sheet referred to in our report of even date

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


Jeewan C. Joshi
Accountant


Dr. Lalit Pande
Secretary


Manish Khanna, FCA, DISA(ICAI)
Partner
Membership Nos 077858
Dated: August 27, 2016
Camp Almora



Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora
Income and Expenditure Account
for year ended 31 March 2016

<u>Income</u>	Amount [Rs]	
Administrative charges	493,220.81	
Receipts from imparting training workshops	296,066.73	
Donations	513,801.00	
Interest on bank deposits	1,074,754.00	
Miscellaneous Income- Sansthan	400.00	2,378,242.54
		<hr/>
Total Income		2,378,242.54

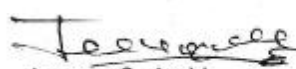
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Bank Charges	1,047.30	
Boarding and lodging	225,834.00	
Books	6,899.00	
Insurance	11,837.00	
Meeting Expenses	6,508.00	
Miscellaneous expenses	1,950.00	
Printing	3,300.00	
Scholarship	36,000.00	
Staff Welfare	1,026.00	
Travel	26,802.00	
Village learning centers	306,713.00	
Workshop	58,325.00	
		<hr/>
Total expenditure		686,241.30

<u>Current year's surplus appropriated</u>		<hr/>
a. General Reserves	356,736.38	
b. Specific Reserves	1,335,264.86	
		<hr/>
		1,692,001.24

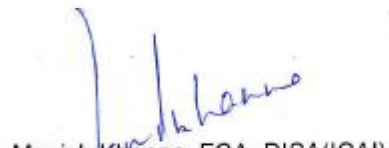
This is the income and expenditure
account referred to in our report
of even date

For Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan

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


Jeewan C. Joshi
Accountant


Dr. Lalit Pande
Secretary


Manish Khanna, FCA, DISA(ICAI)
Partner
Membership Number 077858
Dated: August 27, 2016
Camp Almora



Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora
Receipts and Payments Account
for the year ended 31 March 2016

Receipts	Amounts [Rs.]	Payments	Amounts [Rs.]
Opening balances		Utilization of grants	
Cash in hand	3,508.00	1. Rajeshwar Susheel Dayal Charitable Trust	1,963,283.62
Cash in bank	6,230,980.12	2. Jamseiji Tata Trust	2,203,739.00
Fixed Deposits	8,111,330.00	3. ICSSR	1,784,845.00
	14,345,818.12	4. SAMVAD/UCOST	85,797.00
Grants Received (including interest earned on grant funds)		5. HKK Trivedi Mem Trust	685,906.16
1. Rajeshwar Susheel Dayal Charitable Trust	2,445,014.00		6,723,370.78
2. Jamseiji Tata Trust	52,508.50	Revenue Payments related to Sansthan	
3. ICSSR	1,979,641.00	Bank Charges	1,047.30
4. SAMVAD/UCOST	70,000.00	Boarding and lodging	225,834.00
5. HKK Trivedi Mem Trust	856,063.00	Books	6,899.00
6. AID	585,640.00	Insurance	11,837.00
	5,988,866.50	Meeting Expenses	6,508.00
Revenue Receipts		Miscellaneous expenses	1,950.00
Administrative charges	445,000.00	Printing	3,300.00
Receipts from imparting training workshops	296,066.73	Scholarship	36,000.00
Donations	513,801.00	Staff Welfare	1,026.00
Interest on bank deposits	1,074,754.00	Travel	26,802.00
Miscellaneous Income- Sansthan	400.00	Village learning centers	306,713.00
	2,330,021.73	Workshop	58,325.00
Capital Receipts			686,241.30
Corpus donations	167,809.20	Payments from reserves	
		Repairs and maintenance	75,275.00
		Rural Development Program	142,968.50
		Salary	273,500.00
		Asset purchased	24,045.00
			515,788.50
		Income tax payments	
		Tax deducted at source	100,934.00
		Closing balances	
		Cash in hand	154.00
		Cash in banks	3,850,975.97
		Fixed Deposit receipts	10,955,051.00
			14,806,180.97
	22,832,515.55		

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(ICA)I Membership Nos 077859]
Partner
Dated: August 27, 2016
Camp Almora

For Ultrakhand Seva Nidhi Parvavaran Shiksha Sansthan

Dr. Lalit Pande

Jaewon C. Joshi

Uttarakhand Seva Nidhi Paryavaran Shiksha Sansthan, Almora

Financial Year ended 31 March 2016

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

Name of the grant	Balance as at 1.4.2015	Receipts during the year			Amount spent/ Adjusted	Balance as on 31.3.2016
		Amount received during the year	Interest credited to grant	Total grant funds available		
1. Rajeshwar Susheela Dayal Charitable Trust	13,015.38	2,400,000.00	45,014.00	2,458,029.38	1,963,283.62	494,745.76
2. Jamsetji Tata Trust	2,199,451.31	24,318.50	28,190.00	2,251,959.81	2,251,959.81	-
3. ICSSR	12,072.00	1,941,450.00	38,191.00	1,991,713.00	1,784,645.00	207,068.00
4. SAMVAD/UCOST	-5,000.00	70,000.00	-	65,000.00	85,797.00	-20,797.00
5. HKK Trivedi Mem Trust	-	842,600.00	13,463.00	856,063.00	685,906.16	170,156.84
6. A.I.D	-	678,927.00	-	678,927.00	-	678,927.00
Total	2,219,538.69	5,957,295.50	124,858.00	8,301,692.19	6,771,591.59	1,530,100.60



Latika

[Signature]

SCHEDULE NO. "B"

Financial year 2015-16

(a) SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1. Assets are stated at cost , as reduced by amounts that have been met by persons other USNPSS. Those assets which are funded wholly put of grant funds and are not returnable to the donor at the time of completion of the project are stated at a nominal value of Rupee One.
2. Assets acquired by USNPSS are treated as application of income for charitable purpose and charged to revenue in the year of acquisition.
3. 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.
4. Investments are stated at lower of cost or realizable value.
5. Cash basis of accounting is followed except for expenses on account of grants received which are accounted on accrual basis.

(b) NOTES TO ACCOUNTS

(i) Assets acquired by Sansthan till 31 March 2016 either out of grant funds or own funds are :

Description of asset	Amount
Office Equipment	557,544.96
Vehicle	708,852.00
Furniture and Furnishing	41,346.00
Computer	93,078.00
Library	437,178.50
Solar Water Heating System	23938.00
Multifunction system	88,200.00
Portable hard drive	5,600.00
Inverter with battery	29,900.00
Scanner	4,300.00
Computer	24,045.00

These assets are carried at nil value.

(ii) During the year computer for Rs 24,045 was purchased from previous years' reserves





An inter-village meeting of women at Kimana village Ukhimath, Kedarnath valley, district Rudraprayag.



An inter-village meeting of women's groups at Badhani, district Chamoli.



Meeting of a newly formed women's group at Daira village, Ukhimath, district Rudraprayag.



In villages, men and young boys help organize congregations of women. This photo is from Sagar village, district Chamoli.



Women who had attended the literacy programme during 2011-2014 keep practicing and upgrade their skills in writing, village Rampur-Danya, district Almora.



Women from Munoli village coming to attend the congregation at Chalmorigara, district Almora.



Congregation of women on the occasion of the International Women's Day, Danya, district Almora.



A congregation of women at Jakh village, Badhani, district Chamoli.



A congregation of women's groups at Sagar village, district Chamoli. Holding the event in the village ensured participation of men and youth from Sagar and surrounding villages.



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



The Director General, CSE, New Delhi, listens to the problems caused by wild animals in Uttarakhand. Crop depredation and loss of human lives and of cattle by wild animals are deviating women from taking agriculture and forest-based activities as their primary livelihood options.



As apathy towards crop depredation by wild animals continues in the government departments and other institutions, women use their sarees to protect crops in the fields.



Meetings at USNPSS provide a unique opportunity to rural women of Kumaon and Garhwal to meet and share their lived experiences and build upon new ideas.



Rural women take part in a role play during a meeting at USNPSS, Almora.



Rural women of Kumaon and Garhwal learn yoga in the morning during their brief stay at USNPSS, Almora.



Rural women exhibit a lot of interest in organizing congregations in villages. Also, it becomes a matter of pride for the community. Natural resource management, gender, caste-based inequalities, female infanticide, health, education, participation in panchayats are some of the issues that women take up during congregation





An inter-village meeting of women's groups at Ghuguti village, district Almora.



Members of women's group at Chaundali village, district Chamoli, gather for evaluation carried out by SDTT, Mumbai in February 2016.



As a result of the meetings led by women at Badhani, district Chamoli, the community took up a collective decision to renovate a naula (water spring) which was lying buried under debris for many years.



Sex-selective abortion was taken up as an issue of concern during meetings of women's groups at USNPSs, Almora.



As a follow-up of the meetings at Almora, women took up the issue of sex-selective abortion during congregations. In this photo, the *Block Pramukh* and the village development Officer are seen attending the congregation, Binta, district Almora.



Sex-selective abortion was discussed during an inter-village meeting at Ghuguti village, district Almora.



In many villages, the learning centre is run in a community centre (panchayat ghar, barat ghar, jan milan kendra etc.) or in a vacant house. The centre is hosted by the community, no rent is paid by USNPSS.





Children in a village learning centre at Chaundali village, district Chamoli.



The supervisors make regular visits to village learning centres and provide help and guidance.



Girls learn to operate computers at sundai village, district Almora.



Children perform a “*bhav-geet*” in a centre at Maichun cluster, district Almora.



Finding places in a globe is a popular activity in villages. This photo is from Girchola village, district Almora.



The village learning centre at Bainoli village, district Chamoli.



Young girls learn to play carom at Surna village learning centre, district Almora.



Children use different types of educational materials to learn mathematical concepts in village learning centres.



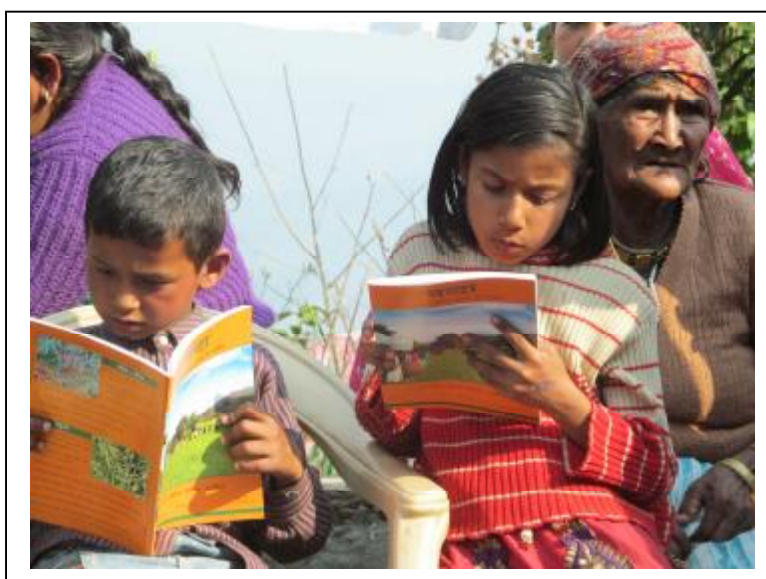
Children display their favorite books in Munoli village learning centre, district Almora.



This is the first time in many villages that children get to read newspapers.



Children engage in multiple activities in the centres. This photo is from Badhani, district Chamoli.



Parents/guardians are encouraged to see what their wards are learning in village learning centres.



Educational materials in village learning centres: in addition to materials provided by USNPSS, the facilitators and children create their own learning aids-charts, posters, various types of seeds for counting, herbarium collection etc. Also, see the photo below- a weighing scale made of steel plates at Huddu, district Rudraprayag.





Children learn to measure the area of the land in Banthok village learning centre, district Almora.



The results of measurements are recorded in a note-book to be discussed later.



Young children use straw to understand the concepts of shapes and their area, volume etc., while the older children go out in the fields to take actual measurements.



Training of facilitators at USNPSS, Almora. The participants learn to create various artifacts with paper to take back to their villages.



A representative of the Trivedi Trust, New Delhi (providing support to centres in Maichun and Danya cluster) interacts with the facilitators during a training session at USNPSS, Almora.



During a training session at USNPSS, Almora, the facilitators practice to take measurements of various dimensions.



A computer learning centre at Badhani village, district Chamoli. Racks to keep the computers were donated by a village resident. He has also provided the room for free to run the centre.



The facilitator in her computer learning centre at Sunadi, district Almora.



Girls come directly after school to learn computers at Banthok centre, district Almora.



Training of adolescent girls at USNPSS, Almora.



During training, girls are encouraged to play and take part in various sporting activities.



A workshop of adolescent girls in Ganai-gangoli, district Pithoragarh.



A fruit processing unit in Ukhimath, district Rudraprayag was installed to help the affected families to improve upon their livelihoods following the Kedarnath floods in 2013. Local fruits from the surrounding area are collected and used for making squash/juice etc. In addition, training on knitting is also provided and many families now own knitting machines.



Often, installation of a poly-house is accompanied by provision of a cheap water tank nearby to ensure regular supply of water for irrigation. This photo is from Lamudiyar village, district Almora.



Inside the poly house: women grow off season vegetables to sell in nearby markets, village Lamudiyar, district Almora.



Rural women read articles in Nanda, village Bainoli-Jhurkande, district Chamoli.



Nanda is distributed during congregation of women at Jakh village, district Chamoli.



A woman in Ganai gangoli, district Pithoragarh, sings a song from “Chetna Geet”, a collection of songs compiled by Uttarakhand Mahila Parishad, Almora.



Ms. S. Narain delivering the 7th B. D. Pande Memorial Lecture at USNPSS, Almora.



A national seminar on “Gender Generation and Labour in Uttarakhand Exploring Intersectionalities through the Prism of Social Ecology”, 6-7 June 2015 at USNPSS, Almora. This was a part of the research project supported by ICSSR New Delhi



Meeting with the partner CBOs at USNPSS, Almora.



Samvaad 2015 was attended by the Speaker *Vidhan Sabha*, Uttarakhand- Mr. G. S. Kunjwal, the MP Mr. A. Tamta, the MLA Mr. M. Tewari and the Chairman, Mr. P. C. Joshi Municipality Almora.



The District Magistrate and the conservator, Forest Department, Almora, listen to the rural women's concerns about the menace caused by wild animals.



During Samvaad-2015, the session on "Health" was attended by the government and private doctors, other officials of the health department and the rural women from across the hill districts of Uttarakhand.



A quiz competition during a bal-mela at Danya, district Almora.



Bal-mela at Ganai gangoli, district Pithoragarh.



Bal-mela at Girchola village, district Almora.



Workshops with adolescent girls from Kumaon and Garhwal regions, USNPSS Almora.

