



# YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

NOV 2019 – DEC 2022



📍 GIWA, PARMARTHNIKETAN,  
RISHIKESH

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## THE BEGINNING: SEED PLANTED FOR A PARTNERSHIP TO BLOSSOM, NOVEMBER 2019

GIWA's Secretary General Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati ji and President of the Divine Shakti Foundation travelled to Nairobi, Kenya in November 2019 to participate in the United Nations' International Summit on Population and Development under the auspices of the United Nations Population Fund.

The conference focused primarily on the development of women and children – their health, security, rights, and ways to develop sustainable economic growth while protecting, preserving, and conserving the environment. During this summit, Sadhvi ji met and invited the UNFPA India Resident Representative to visit the GIWA Secretariat around the time of the New Year.



## **MS. ARGENTINA PICCIN'S VISIT, JANUARY 2020**

In January 2020 Ms. Argentina Piccin, the Resident Representative for UNFPA India & Bhutan visited the GIWA Secretariat and was glad to see the wonderful service initiatives and activities taking place for improving WASH practices and education for women and girls. A partnership with UNFPA and GIWA to impart Life Skills Education and to raise awareness on gender-related issues through faith-based messaging was discussed. This was the beginning of a beautiful partnership.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE PARTNERS**

The Global Interfaith Wash Alliance (GIWA) is a pioneer initiative engaging the world's many faiths as allies in efforts to create a world where every human being has access to safe drinking water, improved sanitation, and proper hygiene. GIWA was formally launched on September 25, 2013, at the UNICEF World Headquarters in New York during the UN General Assembly Meetings.

GIWA's mission is rooted in the power of faith and faith-based messaging to expand the definition of peace by working together across diverse faith traditions to create a just and peaceful world with health, hygiene, and harmony. GIWA firmly believes for the creation of a just, peaceful and sustainable world the role of women and girls is critical and hence has partnered with UNFPA. To make a difference in the lives of youth, impart Life Skills education that encourages them to pursue their aspirations with equality, dignity, inclusion, education, innovative thinking, and sensitive action.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is the United Nations' sexual and reproductive health agency. UNFPA's mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA in partnership with other organisations and governments aims to achieve three transformative results – (i) ending the unmet need for family planning (ii) ending preventable maternal death, and (iii) ending gender-based violence and harmful practices, including child marriage.

The partnership between GIWA and UNFPA has been envisioned with the vision of working together to create a future in which women and adolescents of Uttarakhand receive access to information, skills, and services that expand their consciousness and that of others, improves health, empower them to make informed decisions that result in positive outcomes for their lives and society as a whole and for the protection of the girl child.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTNERSHIP**

- To enhance knowledge, skills and build attitudes to enable young people to take informed and responsible decisions relating to their health and well-being.
- To orient youth leaders through creative activities, regular meetings, and events to lead and support positive change in health-seeking behaviours in their families, schools, and communities.
- To establish linkages with government programs and schemes, to improve access to required services and opportunities for growth.
- To facilitate inter-faith dialogue, communication campaigns, and action to nurture youth leadership and promote gender equality in society.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMUNITIES



Uttarakhand lies on the southern slope of the Himalayas of which 86% is mountainous and 65% is covered by forest. 48% of the population belongs to marginalised communities. 75–85% of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. Migration from the mountain regions down to the plains in search of livelihoods and employment is a matter of great concern for the state.

Basic education, life skills, and vocational skills are absolute necessities to subsist even in the smallest communities. Poor quality education leads to lower economic outcomes and opportunities for youth and correlates to much deeper social issues like harmful gender stereotypes that persist in the state and those who lack the required education and training are likely to be at a severe disadvantage.

Whilst health outcomes have slowly improved over the years, there persist significant indicators of malnutrition, anemia, and stunting which are exacerbated by poor WASH practices and poor health knowledge. The lack of awareness of health services, including sexual health, limits the youth's ability to make informed decisions. While the status of women is improving, much can be done to enable them to realise healthier, happier, more self-sufficient lives.

Under this partnership, GIWA started working in the city of Rishikesh, the first floodplain city along the National River Ganga catchment area, where most of the migration from the higher mountain regions happens and also the city with some of the largest slums in the State. Through the community mapping exercise by the team, Chandreshwar Nagar, Kali Ki Dhal, Mayakund, and Govind Nagar/Kharasharot were identified to start work with the youth of these communities.

## Community Mapping Exercise, September - October 2021

Sl.No.	Name of slum	Total Population	No. of adolescent boys	No. of adolescent girls	Source of Livelihood	Education Facility	Health Care Center	Key challenges
1	Kali ki Dhal	3500	430	270	Daily wages Rickshawallahs	Primary Education	Yes	Gambling Drugs
2	Kharashrot/ Govind Nagar	1200	200	130	Street vendors Ragpickers Prostitution (Kharashrot)	Yes	Yes	Gambling Drugs Red Light area (prostitution)
3	Mayakund	1200	250	150	Daily wages Wood fetchers	Yes	Yes	Gambling Drugs
4	Chandreshwar Nagar	2000	250	350	Street vendors Rickshawallahs	Primary Education	Yes	Drug Center of Rishikesh

### Summary:

**Livelihood:** Mostly daily wage earners (laborers, street vendors, rickshawallahs, rag-pickers). Prostitution is active in Kharashrot.

**Education & Health care centers:** there is access to basic education and health facilities in all 4 communities.

**Challenges:** Gambling and drugs are common across all communities. Prostitution is prevalent in Kharashrot.

[Appendix II – Community Mapping Findings](#)

[Appendix III – Field Visit Reports in Hindi & English](#)

[Appendix 2 and 3 – Community Sites Selection](#)

### **KEY OBJECTIVES**

- To empower adolescents with Life Skills education in 4 urban localities of Rishikesh.
- Advocacy and engagement with faith-based organisations and religious leaders for addressing Gender-based violence and harmful practices affecting the value of girl child.



## ***PROJECT PROGRESS, TRAINING, AND EVENTS SUMMARISED (MAY 2020 – DECEMBER 2022)***

GIWA and UNFPA's partnership formally began in May 2020 but the original course of the programme and planned activities saw significant changes and brought opportunities to make adjustments to continue activities during the Covid-19 pandemic and against the backdrop of lockdowns. The second wave of the pandemic in April 2021 hit much of Haridwar and Rishikesh region and so schools remained closed for most of 2021. In this situation, GIWA and UNFPA mutually decided to move forward with community interventions regarding coping with the lockdown, how to manage the challenges of isolation, and communicating with people who were facing numerous mental health challenges, often confused, sad, afraid, and worried.

### **I. Identification, Selection, and Training of the Team, September – October 2020**

The Project Manager was hired after a thorough interviewing and evaluation process, and the Peer Educators, and Community Mobilisers were selected through direct engagement with the community by GIWA's engagement team. The community mapping and training exercise was completed in all four communities. The training was held online due to travel restrictions.





## II. Webinar and Virtual Events

GIWA and UNFPA worked together on gathering faith-based video messages from its Faith Networks that would inspire communities to follow Covid-19 guidelines, reduce the risk of discrimination against vulnerable and marginalised communities, and address issues of domestic violence and gender-based violence during the pandemic lockdown.

A mass media awareness campaign by GIWA's interfaith leaders urged the Muslim community to offer Eid prayers from home and avoid large gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic. The advertisement was published just ahead of Eid May 2020 in the All-India edition of Dainik Jagran and Inquilab, an Urdu edition of Dainik Jagran Newspaper, India's largest newspaper and the paper with the largest circulation in the world.



*Appendix IV - Report of the Interfaith Leader's message before Eid*

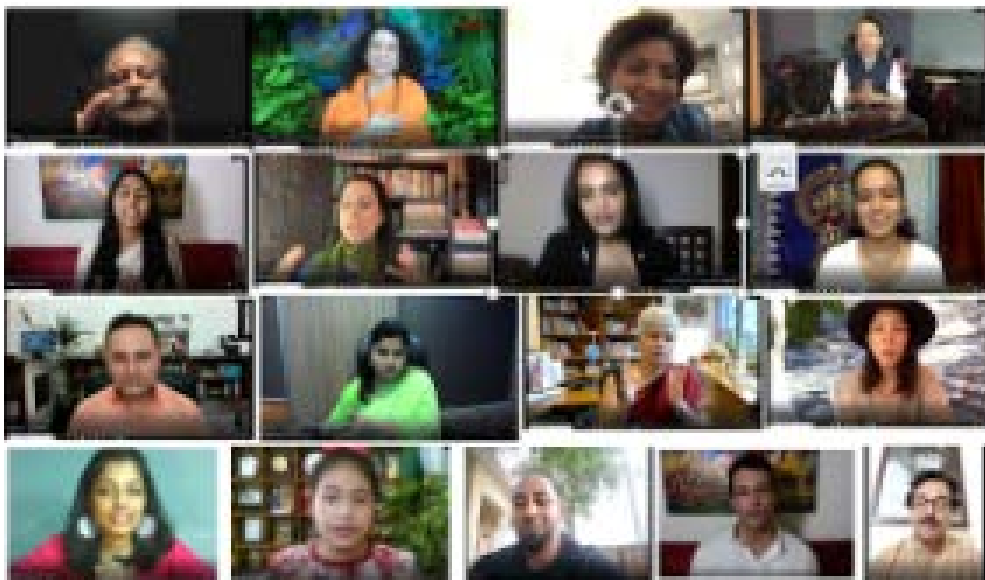
## Youth Engagement for Global Action on International Youth Day, August 12, 2020

GIWA brought together eminent youth leaders along with inspiring mentors, professionals, and entrepreneurs to discuss the key challenges faced by youth today and to affirm positive action, empowering messages and unified commitments regarding how youth in India can become change-makers.

The webinar put the spotlight on youth engagement through three interconnected streams, which guided the discussions:

- (i) Engagement at the local/community level
- (ii) Engagement at the national level (including formulation of law and policy and their implementation)
- (ii) Engagement at the global level

Youth Day Webinar  
With Youth Leaders – 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020



Appendix V - International Youth Day Webinar Report August 12, 2020

## **Leveraging the power of faith for co-creating a Just and Peaceful society, December 22 – 23, 2020**

On December 22–23, 2020 a two-day online workshop with faith leaders representing eight diverse traditions was organised on ‘Leveraging the power of faith for co-creating a Just and Peaceful society’. The workshop aimed to ensure the most marginalised women, girls, and young people have full control over their choices and futures and exercise their agency without fear, pressure, or violence.

The faith leaders were sensitised to share examples of inclusion, equality, and dignity from their faith traditions and reflect on how these apply to women and young people, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that exacerbated the inequalities and discrimination in society. They were requested to deliberate on how their congregation/organisation was addressing injustice, inequalities, violence, the role of women and youth, and their message for creating a more harmonious society.

The webinars brought forth several interfaith insights when imbibed and practiced in the true spirit will have the potential for co-creating a just and peaceful society. Reaching over 3,500 individuals on Facebook and over 400 views on YouTube during the online live stream, the messages from the diverse faith leaders are further being synthesised into diverse communication products, including slogans, videos, Public Service Announcements, and will be used in various advocacy forums including the Kumbh Mela, Ganga Aarti and media vans.

[Appendix VI – Leveraging Faith Webinar Report, December 22–23, 2020](#)

## Virtual Sharing circles for Peer Educators during the lockdown, May – July 2021

As the second wave of COVID-19 halted all training activities, the GIWA team initiated online heart-sharing circles for the Peer Educators. This initiative gave the Peer Educators a safe community to share experiences, find support and stay connected with the GIWA team. The weekly meetings had a theme for each week and were scheduled on Thursdays with an endeavour to provide mental strength and healthy coping strategies during the lockdown.

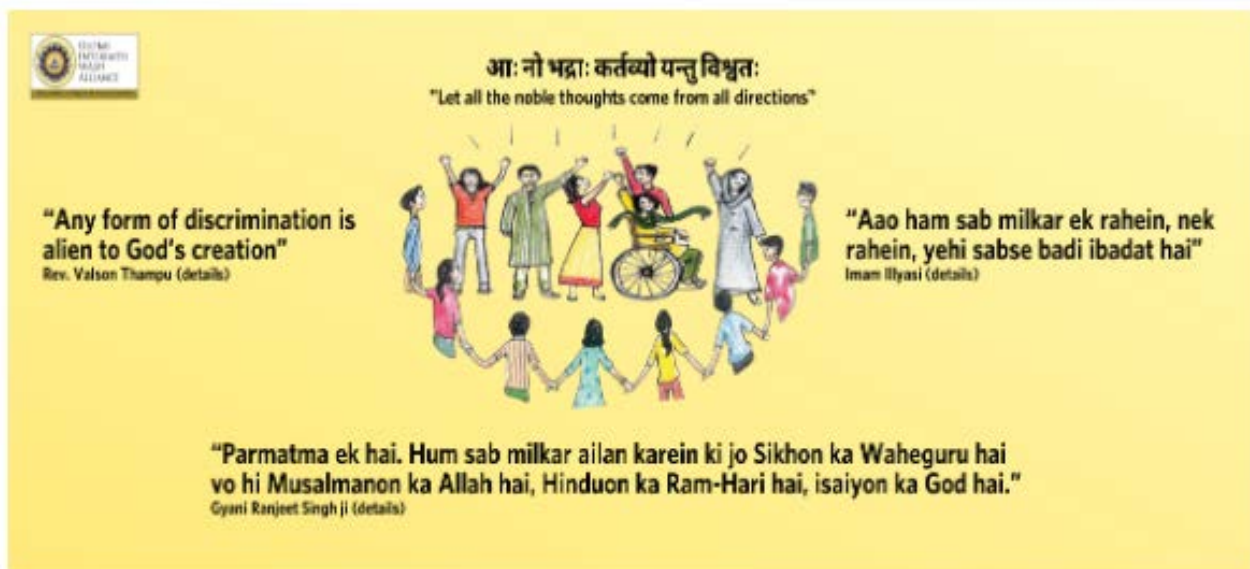


### Overview of virtual Sharing Circles during the lockdown, May – July 2021

Sl.No.	Date	Topic	No. of Participants
1	May 27, 2021	Mental Health Awareness	10
2	June 3, 2021	Basic Introduction on Viruses and COVID-19	25
3	June 10, 2021	Stress & Tension	27
4	June 11, 2021	Stress & Tension Part-2	20
5	June 24, 2021	Good & Bad Touch	26
6	July 11, 2021	Swast Raho Mast Raho	24

### III. Awareness building through Communication and Branding, May – July 2021

Key messages from the two-day webinar entitled ‘Leveraging the power of faith for co-creating a Just and Peaceful society’ were synthesized by a hired Consultant as per recommendation by UNFPA, into diverse communication deliverables, including slogans, videos messages, and Public Service Announcements.



The key messages selected from the December online workshops as well as UNFPA videos were broadcasted via a large LED Screen on the Ganga Ghat at the Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh. Public Service Announcements reached hundreds of people every evening during the Kumbh Mela.

GIWA's large fold-out truck was rebranded and designed with faith-based messages with plans to have the truck host puppet shows, stage theaters, and movie nights to spread awareness in communities and inspire youth to come together to infuse positive change.

## IV. Life Skills Education (LSE) Training, February 2021 – March 2022

### **UNFPA Orientation and Refresher LSE Training for GIWA Team, February 11, 2021**

On February 11, 2021, UNFPA held an online refresher training and orientation on Life Skills Education (LSE) with the intention of orienting the newly onboarded Project Managers and Community Mobilisers and to refresh knowledge of the existing GIWA staff so that all coworkers are on the same page.

The UNFPA team outlined the concept, rationale, and characteristics of effective programming for LSE. UNFPA suggested using the PrayasSapna curriculum for communities in Rishikesh and the Adolescence Education Program (AEP) for the school intervention.

#### Appendix 1 – UNFPA Orientation and LSE Training



#### **Summary:**

Total number of Peer Educators from all 4 communities is 38 (Male-10, Female-28).

Female ratios are higher than male ratios in all communities.

Reasons (a) the males are daily wage earners (ragpickers) and (b) Abuse of alcohol and drugs among the males in Kali ki Dhal, Mayakund & Chandreshwar Nagar.

## Peer Educator Selection and Training, February – March 2021

Final selection of Peer Educators and signing of consent forms took place during February – March 2021. Ten youth leaders from each of the four communities were selected based on a careful assessment of their leadership qualities, their ability to be a positive role model to their peers as well as their ability to participate in the Life Skills Program over the course of the year. They were then trained by the Community Mobilisers regarding the importance, expectations, and responsibilities of a community PE.



## Train the Trainer for Peer Educators and GIWA Team, 2021

The PrayasSapna (a blend of the words Prayas and Sapna) curriculum is divided into three phases with 6 lessons in each phase. The curriculum is developed to enhance the life skill capacities of the young people they work with.

Each of the phases of training was first imparted to the GIWA Core Team, they then trained the Peer Educators who then went on to train the Youth Leaders in their communities.





**Summary:**

PrayasSapna curriculum to enhance-

Thinking Skills: Learning to think creatively and critically, developing problem-solving skills and decision-making abilities, turning intention into action

Social skills: Learning to negotiate and develop leadership, interpersonal, and management skills

Emotional Skills: knowing self and being comfortable with oneself.

**Peer Educators imparting LSE training to their peers, October 2021 – March 2022**

Pictures of Peer Educators imparting training to their peers in their Teen Clubs within their communities.





## **LSE Training for Adolescents, February – March 2022**

Peer Educators and Youth Leaders completed 6 sessions of training in four communities during February – March 2022.

### Chandreshwar Nagar

130 Youth leaders were trained by 9 Peer Educators

Gender ratio: 73 boys & 57 girls

Additionally 22 Youth Leaders joined during the training but were unable to attend all 6 sessions

### Mayakund

62 Youth Leaders were trained by 6 Peer Educators

Gender ratio: 28 boys & 34 girls

Additionally 12 Youth Leaders joined during the training but were unable to attend all 6 sessions

### Kali Ki Dhal

94 Youth Leaders were trained by 12 Peer Educators

Gender ratio: 40 boys & 54 girls

Additionally 15 Youth Leaders joined during the training but were unable to attend all 6 sessions

### Govind Nagar

51 Youth Leaders were trained by 10 Peer Educators

Gender ratio: 23 boys & 28 girls

Snapshot of GIWA training/briefing & Community Meetings, March 2021 – March 2022

This is the list of Training, and Community Meetings held by Peer Educators with Teen Clubs. Every meeting conducted was preceded by GIWA training or briefing.

Sl.No.	Topic	Kali Ki Dhal	Kharashrot /Govind Nagar	Chandreshwar Nagar	Mayakund
1	LSE brief and Teen Club	March 7, 2021	March 10, 2021	March 12, 2021	March 14, 2021
2	Brainstorming on Kumbh Social Activity	March 21, 2021	March 22, 2021	March 23, 2021	March 24, 2021
3	Teen club consent form & brief on 3 LSE training	April 4, 2021	April 6, 2021	April 7, 2021	April 8, 2021
4	Phase 1, Meeting 1 training	September 14, 2021			
5	Phase 1, Meeting 2 training	September 26, 2021			
6	Phase 1, Meeting 3 training	October 7, 2021			
7	Phase 1, Meeting-4 training	October 14, 2021			
8	Phase 1, Meeting-5 training	October 21, 2021			
9	Phase 1, Meeting 6 training	October 28, 2021			
10	Phase 2, Meeting 7 training	November 4, 2021			
11	Phase 2, Meeting 8 training	November 7, 2021			
12	Phase 2, Meeting 9A & 9B training	November 14, 2021			
13	Phase 2, Meeting 10 training	November 21, 2021			
14	Phase 2, Meeting 11 training	November 28, 2021			
15	Phase 2, Meeting 12 training	December 6, 2021			
16	Phase 3, Meeting 13 training	January 18, 2022			
17	Republic Day Celebration	January 26, 2022			
18	Phase 3, Meeting 14 training	January 29, 2022			
19	Phase 3, Meeting 15 training	February 1, 2022			
20	Meeting 16 training	February 18, 2022			
21	Meeting 17 training	March 5, 2022			
22	Meeting 18 training	March 15, 2022			

## V. Pravah Phase 1 PrayasSapna Training for Master Trainers & Peer Educators with GIWA team, April 12 – 17, 2021

The Phase 1 six-day training of PrayasSapna was planned from April 12-17, wherein the first three days was for the Master Trainers and the following three days was for Peer Educators to enhance their Life Skills capacities.

Focus area for Master Trainers training:



- Understanding adolescent and their needs (Maslow's hierarchy of needs)
- Experiential learning processes
- PrayasSapna framework and its steps (What is my dream, where am I, what stops me, what do I do next)
- Facilitation skills
- Giving and receiving feedback

On April 15, 2021, the GIWA team invited 25 Peer Educators from the selected communities to Parmarth Niketan for a three-day in-person training on the PrayasSapna curriculum. Unfortunately, the training had to be abruptly called off after the first day due to the government guidelines banning in-person training activities.

On July 27-29, 2021 after the lockdown was lifted by the government, the GIWA team resumed the phase 1 three-day training programme for Peer Educators and Parmarth Rishikumars at Parmarth Niketan.

In addition to the 6 meetings from the Phase 1 PrayasSapna curriculum, activities like yoga, meditation, interfaith prayer, and tree plantation were also included to add a spiritual and holistic value to the three-day training programme.

#### Pravah Phase 1 PrayasSapna Training for Teen Club members, August 9 – 11, 2021

In the second part of the training, the Master Trainers and 10 trained Peer Educators trained the rest of the Peer Educators and Teen Club members. It was the first-ever residential training at Parmarth Niketan for the youths from these communities held from August 9 – 11, 2021.

Apart from Life Skills Education, the training included nature walks and clean-up activities that were designed to give a holistic experience of peace, health, and wellness and inculcate GIWA's core value of protecting and preserving the environment. The three-day event concluded with a special cultural program to encourage and motivate these young leaders to take back their learnings and be emerging change makers in their communities.



Peer Educators discussing and sharing their dreams & aspirations during the training (Aug 2021)



Peer Educators jump up with joy on completion of the Training (Aug 2021)

### ***Pravah Phase 2 PrayasSapna Virtual Training for GIWA staff, August 16 – 25, 2021***

Online training session for Phase 2 PrayasSapna was organised from August 16 – 25, 2021. The training was for 2 hours each day across 7 days for Project Managers, Community Mobilisers, and GIWA’s supporting team. Swati Sharma facilitated the training and Ishani Sen provided support and guidance on behalf of Pravah.

The theme of the Phase 2 training was ‘Dream of Good Health’ with a focus on building knowledge on health issues that are relevant to self and supporting Peer Educators and Youth Leaders in their effort to fulfil their dream of spreading this knowledge in their communities.



## ***Pravah Phase 2 PrayasSapna Training for Peer Educators with GIWA team, October 29 – November 2, 2021***

A five-day residential training of the Phase 2 PrayasSapna was organised by the trained GIWA team. During the training, Peer Educators shared that conducting health surveys was a new experience. They learnt more about their communities and it invoked a sense of responsibility to address not only their health but the health of their community too. Phase 2 also educates youth about body changes and to become sensitive citizens by developing the ability to identify and fulfil the aspiration of a happy and healthy life. The trained Peer Educators further conducted the Phase 2 training with their teen club members in their respective communities.



**Inauguration Ceremony**



**Peer Educators in an activity to improve concentration.**



**Yoga session with Peer Educators (Oct 2021)**



**Peer Educators after completing an activity**





***Pravah Phase 3 of PrayasSapna Training for GIWA staff, August 26 – 28, 2021***

UNFPA completed the three-day PrayasSapna Phase 3 training with GIWA staff from August 26 – 28, 2021. The Phase 3 curriculum introduces two new dreams – (i) The dream of Healthy and Positive relationships and (ii) the dream of Leading the change.



***GIWA team in an interactive session***



***Gratitude activity “Dil se Dil tak”  
in appreciation for contributing to  
the training***

### **Pravah Phase 3 of PrayasSapna Training for Peer Educator with GIWA team, December 8 – 12, 2021**

The two aspects, the dream of healthy and positive relationships, were covered over two meetings. The first meeting touched upon gender stereotypes and changing gender norms and the second meeting aimed to build the capacities of adolescents to resolve interpersonal conflict.

The 3 phases of Life Skill Training enable the youth to bring a change in their life and to understand their role in ending discrimination in society so that social justice can be established. Peer Educators shared their progress in achieving their dreams which were outlined during Phase 1 of the training.

On the concluding day, Pujya Swami ji and Pujya Sadhvi ji addressed and interacted with the parents of the Peer Educators. The purpose of the meeting was to throw light on some social issues prominent in their areas, like early marriage, alcohol consumption, drug abuse, etc. which the Peer Educators had shared during their training and community meetings. At the end of the session, kits and certificates were distributed to Peer Educators.





***Sadhviji Interacting with Students***



***Swamiji Interacting with Students***



***Swamiji serving food for students***



***LSE student receives certificate from Swamii***

## Snapshot of PrayasSapna Training, April – December 2021

Date	Training	Participants
April 12 -17, 2021	Pravah Training of PrayasSapna Phase 1	Ms. Sheetal, Ms. Sukhnoor, Mr. Satyaveer, Mr. Rakesh, Mr. RC, Ms. Vandana, Dr. Priya <b>Facilitators:</b> Ms. Ishani & Ms. Shruti
August 9-13, 2021	Resumed Pravah Training of PrayasSapna Phase 1	Rishikumars, Community Peer Educators, GIWA Team
August 16- 20, 2021 August 24-25, 2021	Pravah Training of PrayasSapna Phase 2	Dr. Priya, Ms. Sukhnoor, Mr. Satyaveer, Mr. Rakesh, Mr. RC, Mr. Rajesh <b>Facilitators:</b> Ms. Ishani & Ms. Swati
August 26-28, 2021	Pravah Training of PrayasSapna Phase 3	Dr. Priya, Ms. Sukhnoor, Mr. Satyaveer, Mr. Rakesh, Mr. RC, Mr. Rajesh <b>Facilitators:</b> Ms. Ishani
Oct 29-Nov 2, 2021	PrayasSapna Training 2	<b>Facilitators:</b> Dr. Priya, Ms. Sukhnoor, Mr. Satyaveer, Mr. Rakesh, Mr. RC
Dec 8-12, 2021	PrayasSapna Training 3	<b>Facilitators:</b> Dr. Priya, Ms. Sukhnoor, Mr. Satyaveer, Mr. Rakesh, Mr. RC, Mr. Rajesh

*Appendix 4, 5, and 6 – PrayasApana Training for GIWA*

## VI. Case Studies – Impact of PrayaSapna Training

The impact of Life Skill intervention leading to transformation is understood through the life stories of (a) Ganga from Mayakund, (b) Vishal from Kali Ki Dhal, (c) Namita Kali Ki Dhal, and (d) Dheeraj from Mayakund.

### **(a) Ganga’s mission – ‘Say No to early marriage & Yes to education**

Ganga Saini, an intermediate student, resides in the Mayakund community. She lost her mother at an early age and lives with her father and brother-in-law. She supports the family by running a small grocery shop after school. When Ganga turned 15 years of age her father decided to get her married. She was upset and cried silently but was unable to communicate her feelings to her father.

When Ganga came across the LSE program she decided to participate in it. During the sessions when asked about her dreams she confessed that she had never thought she had the right to dream and fulfill them. She shared her fears about early marriage and her inability to say 'No' to her father.

After the training, Ganga with her newfound confidence spoke to her father about delaying her marriage and shared her aspiration of becoming a Police Officer.

GIWA volunteers counselled Ganga's father regarding the importance of her education and fulfilling her aspiration. Reflecting on the advice, Ganga's father admitted that he was making a mistake by getting her married without paying attention to her aspirations.

He agreed to delay her marriage and he now wants her to study and pursue her dream. Ganga as a Peer Educator is training 60 students from her community. She is a role model to her friends, classmates, and young girls in the community. She regularly speaks to them about the importance of education.

Ganga along with nine other peer educators of Mayakund stopped two girls, Nandini and Lakshmi, from early marriage and encouraged them to rejoin school. They are now in Grade 10 and both want to become teachers.

Today Ganga's father admires her self-confidence and courage to stand up for a cause and help others realise their dreams.

LSE helped Ganga to realize what she wanted and that she had the right to pursue it. She summoned the courage to speak to her father and with confidence resolved her issue. The Life Skills training brought a change not only at an individual level but also at the community level. Parents in the community were made aware of the importance of educating their children and supporting them to pursue their dreams.



### **(b) Vishal's journey from stammering to mentoring**

Vishal Kumar belongs to the Kali Ki Dhal community. Vishal shared that initially, he lacked the confidence to speak to his teachers and friends as he used to stammer. He did not express his thoughts publicly as he feared being ridiculed.

His parents encouraged him to participate in Life Skills Training. During Phase 1 of the training, he was uncomfortable speaking to his peers or trainers. But during Phase 2 of the training, Vishal slowly opened up and started talking and expressing his thoughts with confidence. He even came forward to distribute masks and sanitisers during the Covid pandemic.

With his efforts, the teenagers were sensitised to the dangers of substance abuse and its long-term consequences. He was able to influence nearly 20-25 teenagers in his community to lead a drug-free life. They became a part of his Teen Club and got trained in Life Skills.

Vishal is now a Peer Educator, and while conducting a Health Survey he came across some teenagers who were taking drugs. He along with other Peer Educators and GIWA volunteers organized a drug de-addiction rally, held health camps, and weekly counseling sessions in his community. With his efforts, the teenagers were sensitized to the dangers of substance abuse and its long-term consequences. He was able to influence nearly 20-25 teenagers in his community to lead a drug-free life. They became a part of his Teen Club and got trained in Life Skills Education.



LSE transformed a shy person who stammered into a confident person with clear communication. With his positive attitude, Vishal is now a catalyst for social change in his community. He has saved many from drug abuse and helped them to lead meaningful lives. Community members approach him for his advice and help.

### **(c) Menstruation – Break the silence**

Namita Kumari, a first-year college student, from the Kali Ki Dhal community took part in GIWA's LSE Training and is now a leading Peer Educator in her community.

Namita learned that the women and girls in her community lacked knowledge about the onset of puberty, menstruation, and wet dreams. Though menstruation is an integral part of a woman's life, it is not discussed openly due to superstitions and myths followed by the families and others in the community. They believed that girls should marry as soon as they attain menarche.

Namita always wanted to be a beautician post her graduation. But after she underwent the LSE training, her mission was to spread awareness about menstrual hygiene, break the taboo and empower the women in her community.





With the help of GIWA's volunteers, she conducted a few awareness sessions about menstruation and wet dreams for the girls and women of the community. They in turn passed on this knowledge to other members of the family.

Namita works tirelessly as an Educator visiting schools and communities to conduct training on menstruation. She worked with a group of 111 teenagers on LSE and has trained nearly 340 children on MHM.

Namita's path was paved by LSE. She is determined to spread awareness of Menstruation and Hygiene, break the silence on menstruation, and empower the women and girls living in cities nearby Rishikesh.

#### **(d) Dheeraj's rise above his fears**

Dheeraj, a Grade 11 student is from the Mayakund community. He lives in a makeshift tent with his parents and two sisters. For their livelihood, his parents collect dry wood from the wilderness. Dheeraj is a troubled youth as he was affected by polio and has an alcoholic father.

The neighbours jeered at the way he walked. They called him Langda-Langda (a person who limps). They taunted him for not being normal like the other children and told him that he would never succeed in life.

The feeling of being a failure gave rise to feelings of inferiority. He isolated himself as he did not trust anyone to be nice to him. He was frustrated, angry, and lonely. He quarreled with his sisters and mother. He did not help with the home chores and was not regular at school.

Dheeraj heard of the LSE programme through Peer Educators and decided to attend it. After receiving support and encouragement from the GIWA volunteers and Peer Educators, Dheeraj opened up during Phase 3 of LSE.



GIWA volunteers counselled his father and made him aware of how his drinking habit was disrupting the family life. After several attempts by both volunteers and Dheeraj, his father gave up drinking.

LSE taught Dheeraj to accept himself and he is now confident of making a new beginning. He tries to maintain harmony at home and is mending broken relationships with his family and neighbours. As a Peer Educator, he now teaches school children under the streetlights of Mayakund.

During a parent meeting with volunteers, his mother thanked the LSE program, GIWA, and Parmarth Niketan for bringing a significant change in Dheeraj.

## **VII. Culmination of the LSE Programme with Youth Festival on International Women's Day, March 8, 2022**

International Women's Day was celebrated at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh on March 8, 2022, to commemorate the culmination ceremony of Life Skills Education. The programme was jointly organized and hosted by the Teen club members and the GIWA team.

This day is marked special as it commemorated not only the success of the partnership but also the achievement of Peer Educators and Teen Club members who completed the year-long Life Skills Training programme amidst the pandemic and the challenges of containment.

The event brought together 338 youth from four communities of Rishikesh under one roof – Kali Ki Dhal, Mayakund, Govind Nagar/Kharashrot, and Chandreshwar Nagar. The Youth Festival was a platform not only to create general awareness of Health, Education, and Skill development, but also to listen to inspirational success stories and for the youth to communicate their thoughts, ideas, and talent.



## **Counselling Sessions**

Tobacco Counsellors, Career Counsellors, Skill counsellors, and Health counsellors from various Government departments working for women and youth empowerment met with youths to counsel on issues that mattered to them.



## **Panel Discussion**

A special panel discussion was held with experts from the Health & Wellness, Skill Development and Education Departments of Government of Uttarakhand - Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), State Council Of Educational Research and Training (SCERT).



## Experiential learning

During the second half of the Youth Festival, the youth presented skits on Early marriage, Nasha Mukti (Stop Drug abuse), Bade ho rahein hain janein badlavo ko pehchane (Physical changes experienced during adolescence), and Yon sankraman se na lajana, jaldi ilaaj karvana (Addressing Sexually transmitted diseases - STDs).



## Sharing success stories

An interactive session that emphasised the significance of perseverance, grit, determination, and resilience essential for success. Stories were shared by Mr. Himanshu Rawat, Founder Director of Alliance IAS Academy, Mr. Bhuvneshwar Prasad Bhardwaj, Founder of Seeds in the Heart NGO, Mr. Vinay Rawat, Founder of Sports Academy, Mr. Gulzar Sahaspur and Ms. Aishwarya Baiwalwal, Accessor for Skill India, Ms. Neerja Goyal, International Para-Badminton player, Ms. Ritika Tanwar from Drug de-addiction NGO, Mr. Ashish Ranghar, member of Parmarth Youth Congress and Mr. Shyampur and Mr. Prabhjit Singh, Rishikesh Block Development Committee members.

The festival came to a close with a magnificent rally leading up to the traditional Ganga Aarti. The youth carried banners and slogans they had created on different themes like child marriage, drug misuse, gender equality, and sexual reproductive health.



## VIII. Overview of Social Activities, February 2021 – January 2022

Peer Educators were very enthusiastic to participate in social action projects and to organise awareness campaigns in their communities around social issues they were learning in their LSE meetings. Peer Educators were asked to brainstorm on the topic that they would like to present and how the GIWA team could best support them.

### Awareness campaigns in all four communities

#### **Chandreshwar Nagar – Breaking the silence around Menstruation, February 2021**

The GIWA team led a special event to raise awareness of menstruation and periods in Chandreshwar Nagar. Discussions and dialogues were held to bring out the taboos and common misconceptions in their communities and the importance of breaking the silence around menstruation. Fun activities such as drawing a red dot on their hands to symbolise their pledge was integrated into the interactive session. The Peer Educators shared that volleyball was the sport of youth in the community. They shared that while the boys played in tournaments they also wanted the girls to play in tournaments. GIWA supported this cause by sponsoring 5000 INR for the first prize trophy.



### **Kharashot – Value of girl child, March 8, 2021**

The Kharshot Peer Educators organized a powerful, emotive play which they scripted themselves outlining the importance and value of the girl child. On International Women’s Day, March 8, 2021 the Peer Educators led a nukkad natak (street play) on what it means to be a girl in Indian society today and the importance of educating boys to respect girls.



### **Kali Ki Dhal – Drug-Free Rally, April 10, 2021**

Peer Educators organised a Nasha Mukti Rally for their Kumbh Mela social action project on April 10, 2021. They researched and had in-depth discussions on the implications and causes of addiction which may be due to a lack of social support, sheer boredom, or escapism.

A group of 60 participants marched around the entire village chanting freedom from drugs. The rally lasted nearly 1.5 hours and was successful with many community members understanding the importance of the rally and joining the rally. They congratulated the Peer Educators on their efforts to spread the message on drugs. The Peer Educators felt a sense of togetherness with the community and also felt a sense of pride and importance in their work.





### Mayakund - Child Marriage, September 1, 2021

Peer Educators and the youth team club members performed an act on Child Marriage to educate community members on gender equality and motivate them to say 'No to Child Marriage'.



## Snapshot of Social Activities at Community sites, February - November, 2021

Peer Educators and the youth team club members performed an act on Child Marriage to educate community members on gender equality and motivate them to say 'No to Child Marriage'.

Sl. No.	Date	Activity	Community
1	February 5, 2021	Happy Periods Day	Chandreshwar Nagar
2	March 8, 2021	Play outlining the importance and value of the girl child on International Women's Day	Kharashrot/ Govind Nagar
3	March 21, 2021	Painting competition	Chandreshwar Nagar
4	April 10, 2021	Swachta drive & stop Drug Abuse rally	Kali ki Dhal
5	August 10, 2021	Bhootnath Temple Abhiyan	All
6	September 1, 2021	Act on Child Marriage	Mayakund
7	September 5, 2021	Nature walk and rally by Peer Educators to inspire and encourage children who were selling flowers on the banks of Ganga for their livelihood	All
8	October 11, 2021	International Day of Girl Child	Chandreshwar Nagar
9	October 30, 2021	Breast Cancer Awareness Month	Kali ki Dhal
10	November 4, 2021	Nutrition Day	Kharashrot/ Govind Nagar

### Independence Day celebration with LSE Peer Educators & their guardians, August 15, 2021

It took a great deal of trust on part of guardians to allow their children to stay at Parmarth Niketan for the duration of the training so after the training the Peer Educators parents were invited to honour and appreciate their consent in this process and to inform them about Life Skills education. The parents were shown video highlights of the three-day training. They all were overwhelmed with happiness and pride at the positive changes in their children's behaviour and their commitment to their responsibilities. Some shared that their children never wanted this training to end as they were so happy being amongst the trainers and at Parmarth Niketan. As a token of love and appreciation, they were offered aloe vera plants as a symbol of how one can thrive amidst difficult circumstances and umbrellas to keep them dry during the rainy season. It was followed by Bhandara served by GIWA and the Parmarth volunteers.



GIWA invites parents of Peer Educators to Parmarth Niketan after the Phase 1 LSE training. (Aug 2021)

## Republic Day Celebration with Communities, January 2022

### Govind Nagar/ Kharashrot

Teen Club of Govind Nagar performed a powerful skit highlighting the negative impact of drug abuse which helped to spread awareness in society. Amidst limited resources and the proximity of Rishikesh's landfill dump, they had succeeded in decorating the space beautifully for the programme. Besides the skit, there were group dance performances to patriotic songs like 'Ae Watan Abad Rahe Tu'.

### Kali Ki Dhal

The Teen Club members sang patriotic songs and staged a skit on 'Mat Paalo Tambaku ki lat, nahi toh hogi buri gat,' delivering a message on the hazardous effects of tobacco among users. Adolescence is a fragile and vulnerable period in which youngsters can get influenced by such issues hence it is essential to raise awareness amongst the youth and community.

### Mayakund

Peer Educators staged a play emphasising the need of preserving and protecting Mother Ganga and its tributaries from pollution. The play aided in spreading awareness among community members regarding water-borne diseases that can spread by contaminated water bodies. Following this, the Teen club members sang patriotic songs like 'Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon', and many others.

## Chandreshwar Nagar

The teen club members sang patriotic songs and presented cultural dance performances.



Highlights from the Republic Day Celebration

## IX. Publications & Meeting with Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh, October 2021

### **Publications**

GIWA published new brochures to bring the world of information at your fingertips. The topics included:

#### **Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management**

Women are the backbones of society but during menstruation, they are isolated from the family. The purpose of this book is to remove the misconceptions about menstruation prevalent in society and provide the right information.

#### **Sexual & Reproductive Health**

This book will help adolescents learn about sexual health, understand and accept the changes of adolescence. It will not only enhance their skills to stay physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy but will also develop the ability to make independent decisions.

#### **Equity and Justice**

Focus on the positive change that can be ushered in society through the power of religion. Religion and religious activities promote equality, harmony, compassion, justice and dignity. Social problems like gender-based violence can be deeply understood and even eliminated if religious principles are understood with their true spirit and values.

#### **Government Schemes about Adolescents**

'Path pradarshika' has been published so that with sustainable development in all areas of society, reflective and thoughtful youth can come forward at the ideological level and help the society to root out the pervasive poverty, inequality, hunger, crime, and corruption.



## Meeting with Smt. Anandiben Patel, Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh, October 2021

The four publications were presented to Smt. Anandiben Patel, Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh during her 3-day visit to GIWA Secretariat, Parmarth Niketan Ashram.

Peer Educators got an opportunity to interact with her. She motivated them to become responsible and socially conscious leaders of their community. She also inspired them to become role models, embracing the responsibility to protect the physical and social environment, the future of our planet, and to make this world a better place for generations to come.



## X. Meeting with Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Hon'ble President of India, November 2021

Peer Educators were overwhelmed when they met Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Hon'ble President of India who is an inspiration to every youth of India. His life is a divine example of how tenacity, hard work, and selflessness can blossom into ultimate success.

The Hon'ble President was glad to hear from Peer Educators about how they were working to confront harmful social practices in their communities.



## XI. Distribution of LSE Kits, Comics, and Certificates for Peer Educators, 2021

LSE Kits were distributed to Peer Educators by the GIWA team. UNFPA comics, a powerful and interactive tool for explaining and creating awareness of social issues was distributed to the youth of Rishikesh.





## XII. Free Medical Camp in all four communities, December 2021

Teen club members conducted a door-to-door health survey in all four communities of Rishikesh. According to the survey report, the most common diseases in these slums were skin and ear infections, dental problems, lack of nutritious diet and hygiene, indigestion/dyspepsia, joint pains, diabetes, high and low blood pressure, and other common diseases.

A free medical camp was organized to give initial care, medicines, and medical advice for their illness, its treatment, how to cope, and prevention. Medical camp posters and pamphlets were distributed to people and the community. Before the camp, banners were displayed in high-traffic and high-visibility locations like bus stops, community halls/centers, schools, etc.

The doctor team led by Dr. Vivek Sabhrawal, Consultant Internal Medicine Diabetology, Dr. Himanshu Aeran, Director Principal, HOD Prosthodontics from Seema Dental College, Dr. Avinash from Seema Dental College and Dr. Priya Parmar from Parmarth Niketan Ashram rendered their excellent services. The sevaks of Parmarth and GIWA played a major role in the planning and coordination for the smooth functioning of the camp.



*Appendix 12 – Free Medical Camp*

# **FAITH-BASED ADVOCACY & INTERVENTION TOOLKIT ON GENDER EQUALITY, GBV, AND CHILD MARRIAGE**

## **Initial Brainstorming Session, March 10, 2022**

In the initial brainstorming sessions with the GIWA and UNFPA teams, it was decided that faith leaders and faith-based organizations will be identified by both teams and the toolkit will be drafted by the GIWA team. The toolkit to include faiths like Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, and Buddhism the offshoots of Hinduism, and indigenous religions that emanated from this sacred soil. This approach would cover over 70% of the population.

Roundtable discussions will be organized to orient Faith Leaders on the issues and their relevance and discuss progressive actions through faith-based interventions. The toolkit draft will be shared with Faith Leaders for their feedback and review.

The initial phase would help the team to understand the process and its effectiveness and based on its experience, the future course can be suitably upgraded.

## **First Round Table Conference, Orientation of Faith leaders and feedback on the toolkit, June 7, 2022**

The fifth day of the seven-day Seva Celebrations in honor of the 70th Birth Anniversary of Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati ji and the 50th Birth Anniversary of Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati ji was dedicated to Gender Equality, women's rights, ending violence against women and ending child marriage, in partnership with UNFPA India.

The morning began with the ongoing masik (monthly) Sri Ram Katha with the following Hon'ble Dignitaries gracing the occasion:

1. Shri Arif Mohammed Khan ji, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala
2. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati ji, President of Parmarth Niketan, Founder of Global Interfaith WASH Alliance & Divine Shakti Foundation
3. Giani Ranjit Singh, Head Granthi (Priest) Gurdwara Bangla Sahib, New Delhi
4. Mr. Jaydeep Biswas, Chief of Policy, Advocacy, and Partnership Unit, UNFPA India
5. Sant Shri Murlidhar ji, eminent Kathakar
6. Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati ji, President of Divine Shakti Foundation & Secretary-General of Global Interfaith WASH Alliance
7. Devi Chitralkha ji, renowned Bhagwat Kathakar
8. Brahmakumari Dr. Binny Sareen, Peace Ambassador Spiritual Leader, Rajyoga Expert, Mount Abu
9. Atmarpit Vidhi ji, Senior disciple of Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshbhai Javeri (Jain)
10. Rajyogini BK Sapna Didi ji, a renowned Hindu Female Faith Leader
11. Dr. Yogendra Giri ji, representative from Dev Sanskriti University
12. Gurumaa Smt. Meena Murlidhar ji
13. Karam Tej Singh ji, Buddhist Scholar
14. Padmashri Sivamani, World famous percussionist
15. Runa Rizvi Sivamani, Sufi singer
16. Dr. Rachna Bimal, Professor, Delhi University
17. Sushri Ganga Nandini, Director of Project Implementation & Communication, GIWA

After Sri Ram Katha, the Hon'ble dignitaries shared powerful speeches. Following this, the leaders collectively led the audience (and those watching LIVE across several countries) to take a pledge to end violence against women and ensure that our women and girls have access to their human rights of safety and reproductive health.

Post lunch, Dr. Nilesh Deshpande and Dr. Anuja Gulati from the UNFPA India team led the Roundtable discussion with Faith Leaders. They set the tone of the discussion with an introduction to the issues of Gender Equality, Gender-Based Violence, and child marriage. They shared statistics that were informative and insightful to faith leaders to understand the issues, and the need for action by developing the Faith-Based Advocacy and Intervention Toolkit.

The Orientation Toolkit that was presented emphasized its objective, its structure, and dissemination plan of the messages.

The Faith Leaders also shared their valuable experience, and knowledge by providing references from religious scriptures to be included in the toolkit to create awareness regarding intended topics.

***Annexure: First Round Table Report***



## **Second Round Table Conference, Review of the toolkit, October 11, 2022**

The second Round Table Conference to Review the faith-based Toolkit on Gender Equality, Gender Based Violence was organized on October 11, 2022, on the occasion of International Girl Child Day by GIWA in partnership with UNFPA India, in the premises of Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh.

The conference was graced by the following Hon'ble dignitaries:

1. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati ji, President of Parmarth Niketan, Founder, GIWA
2. Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati ji, Secretary General, GIWA
3. Ms. Andrea M Wojnar ji, UNFPA India Representative
4. Kusum Kandwal ji, Uttarakhand State Women's President
5. Devi Chित्रलेखा ji, renowned Bhagwat Kathakar
6. Pujya Sadhvi Shilapi ji Maharaj, Veerayatan (Jain)
7. Ven Bhikkhu Sanghasena ji, Founder-President, Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre
8. Goswami Sushil ji Maharaj, Head of Monastery, Maharishi Bhrigu Foundation
9. Sardar Paramjit Chandhok ji, Chairman, Delhi Gurudwara Bangla Sahib
10. Brahma Kumari Dr. Binny Sareen, Peace Ambassador Spiritual Leader, Rajyoga Expert, Mount Abu
11. S. Mahinderpal Singh Anand ji, Member Minorities Council Govt of NCT Delhi
12. Piara Singh ji, Gurmat Sangeet Bal Vidyalaya, Rishikesh
13. Giani Gurmail Singh ji, Kathakar, Gurudwara Sri Hemkunt Sahib, Rishikesh
14. Dr. Rachna Bimal, Professor, Delhi University
15. Sushri Ganga Nandini, Director of Project Implementation & Communication, GIWA

During the Ganga aarti on the holy banks of Mother Ganga, Devi Chitralekha ji initiated a pledge with the leaders, and the audience of many thousands (and the audience watching LIVE across several countries) to end violence against women and ensure that our women and girls have access to their human rights of safety and reproductive health.

Ms. Andrea M Wojnar ji, UNFPA India Representative, and the UNFPA team had an interactive and fruitful session with the peer educators from all four communities - Kali ki Dhal, Mayakund, Govind Nagar, and Chandreshwar Nagar. They shared gender-related issues dominating their societies, their experiences, learnings, and the challenges they faced while carrying out community meetings with the teen club members. They expressed gratitude for the training which prepared them to not only help themselves but their families and other community members.

[Annexure: Second Round Table Report](#)



## **Review of the Toolkit, December 10, 2022**

The toolkit is the culmination of a multi-step process which began on the 7th of June 2022, where GIWA, in partnership with the UNFPA, brought together a network of eminent faith leaders to chart the path forward in creation of a toolkit to empower faith leaders across traditions to inspire a more peaceful and just society.

On the auspicious occasion of Human Rights Day with faith leaders, scholars, academicians, and artists from across different sections of society discussing and addressing gender inequalities, gender based violence and related issues like child marriage were key to a sustainable, balanced and healthy society.

Following a beautiful presentation on orientation of toolkit by Ganga Nandini ji was a dialogue with faith leaders including what are the key stereotypes and inequalities that women face and how true human rights and sustainable development goals must be led by women. It looked at scriptural references and stories that show examples of women empowerment and gender equality in faith tradition.

The occasion was graced by the following Hon'ble dignitaries:

1. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, President of Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh
2. Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, Secretary General, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance
3. Pujya Goswami Sushil Ji Maharaj, Head of Monastery, Maharishi Bhrgu Foundation
4. Sardar Paramjit Chandhokji, Chairman, Delhi Gurudwara Bangla Saheb
5. Pujya Rajyogini BK Sapna Didi ji, Renowned Hindu Female Faith Leader
6. Geeta Kathpalia Ahuja, Secretary, All Religion Parliament of India
7. Khensur Jangchup Choden Rinpoche, Deputy Secretary General, IBC

8. Triveni Acharya, Founder of Rescue Foundation
9. Smt Neera Misra, Chairperson–Draupadi Dream Trust, Author, Visiting Prof. Public Speaker
10. Professor Prodyutt Dutta, Professor of Folk Dance, Creator of Dance Dramas for Social Awareness
11. Mahesh Prasad Jaiswal, Script Writer & Scholar
12. Dr Kanchan Chandan, Professor Punjab University of Gender Studies
13. Secretary, Gurudwara Bangla Sahib Jaspreet Kaur
14. Ganga Nandini, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance



### ***Launch of the Toolkit, March 8, 2023***

In the gracious and esteemed presence of Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, President of Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, Secretary General, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance and retired lieutenant general Gurmit Singh, the governor of Uttarakhand, Ecstatic Rhythm and Soul percussionist Drums Sivamani and Sufi singing by his wife Runa Rizvi and spiritual leaders, motivational speakers, experts and yoga teachers from around the world the faith-based Toolkit on Gender Equality, Gender Based Violence was launched on 8th March where more than 1,100 participants from nearly 90 nations of the world were officially welcomed at the 35th annual IYF.





The world renowned annual event was organized with the support of Incredible India, Ministry of Tourism, in association with the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India has grown to international acclaim and draws yoga teachers and seekers from every corner of the globe. The launch of the toolkit beautifully aligned with the themes for India's presidency of the G20: 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' and 'One Earth. One Family. One Future,' inspiring participants to share the messages of equality more powerfully to the world.

### **KEY RESULTS**

The Life Skills Education program of this grant resulted in the trained 38 Peer Educators across four needy communities in Uttarakhand resulting in 338 Teen Club Members who were directly trained through the curriculum developed together with UNFPA. Over the project cycle 10 individual events/rallies were held across the four communities bringing youth together to challenge some of the biggest and longest standing issues in the communities. Throughout this project cycle the youth leaders were activated and inspired to become positive social ambassadors of change in their communities. Many astounding transformations were witnessed and recorded throughout the project cycle with unmistakable changes in the future life trajectories of not only our youth participants but other community members.

The inspiring nature of this project began to gain the awareness and attention of several top leaders of the country towards the end of 2021 with our Youth Club Members being honored with a meeting with Smt. Anandiben Patel, Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh in October 2021, and meeting with Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Hon'ble President of India, November 2021.

Throughout 2022, the development and delivery of a Faith Based Toolkit to address gender inequalities is the culmination of a multi-step process which began on the 7th of June 2022 in the presence of Furthermore in June 2022 Shri Arif Mohammed Khan ji, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala. This process brought together where GIWA, in partnership with the UNFPA, brought together a network of eminent faith leaders to chart the path forward in creation of a toolkit to empower faith leaders across traditions to inspire a more peaceful and just society. Two roundtable conferences were held followed by a final review with the final toolkit being launched together with the Honourable Governor of Uttarakhand Lt. Gen. (Retd) Gurmeet Singh at the International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan on International Women's day on March 8th 2023 in front of over 1000 people and other esteemed faith leaders and yogacharya.

### **KEY LEARNINGS**

Through carrying out this training in Life Skills Education in these communities, it quickly became apparent that the relationships within the communities and toward GIWA began to develop. Not only did the course material help the youth relate better to themselves and others, it enabled the GIWA team to emotionally connect in a deeper way with the communities and see another perspective on the ground realities & problems, and assist more proactively in helping to address issues in their lives. The Life Skills Based Education approach was seen by the GIWA team to enhance outcomes and has seen application in other areas of our community work.

Due to the subject matter of the course, initially it was required the team first communicate & satisfy their parents' questions, this resultant buy-in of multiple generations became instrumental to the success of the project. During this program, there were no financial incentives for the teen club members, it was required for GIWA's team to be much more flexible and patient with the youth to keep engagement rates high, ensuring activities were engaging, energising and fulfilling was of utmost importance.

The program provided many varied opportunities for realising one's potential through practical experiences, such as events, rallies, coaching classes, extra curricular activities and through providing youth with a sense of belonging, importance and recognition of the work they were a part of.

Much was learnt in working with faith leaders of different traditions of the Toolkit for Gender Equality, it provided all leaders from the respective traditions, through the multiple dialogue sessions, to come to a deepening sense of the significance and importance of equality in our traditions, and how and where this is falling short. The consultation and resultant development of the toolkit brought a clarity, through the diligent consultation with UNFPA enabled a product to be developed which spoke to traditional wisdom in a way which met with modern and scientific perspectives so that from this clarity many future faith communities will benefit.

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**Annexure: First Round Table Report**

**Annexure: Second Round Table Report**