

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES



2023-2024

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1. Introduction

The Society for Agriculture Health Environment Literacy Innovations (SAHELI) completed 20 years of existence in 2024 as an organization of poor rural and tribal women and 16 years as a registered charity under the Societies' Registration Act, 1860. The organization has registration with the Ministry of Home Affairs under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010. This registration was renewed till 2025. It has been exempted under sections 12A and 80G of the Indian Income Tax Act. It holds a PAN card and has got registered with the competent authorities for the payment of professional tax. It has fully complied with statutory requirements as a legal entity. The organisation got registration with Niti Ayog too. It is a member in the District Child Protection Committee and the state unit of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)

2. Organisational Affairs

Two new members got enrolled in the year under report making the total strength 23. The Governing Body of SAHELI met twice this year and five members were present in these meetings. The annual meeting of the General Body held once in this year, and it was attended by 21 members. Two members, namely Ms. Minati Ghosal and Ms. Champa Tudu resigned on personal grounds and Ms. Madhusmitha Mohanty and Ms. Sumati Mohanty were co-opted in these two vacant positions. With these changes the team of Governing Body elected during the annual meeting of the General Body in the year 2021 continued to remain in the office.

Given below is the list of the members of the Governing Body now in the office.

Sl.No.	Name	Designation
1	Ms. Dalia Antony	President
2	Mrs. Madhusmitha Mohanty	Vice-President
3	Mrs. Sonali Sahu	Secretary
4	Mrs. Sumati Mohanty	Joint-Secretary
5	Mr. Shaju V. Joseph	Treasurer
6	Mrs. Malati Hansdha	Member

3. Population Reached

The organization is now operating in two districts and the other details of the reach of the organization are given below.

Sl. No.	Particulars	Project 1 ¹	Project 2 ²	Total
1	Districts	Mayurbhanj and Balasore	Mayurbhanj	2
2	CD Blocks	5	1	6
3	Gram Panchayaths	13	9	22
4	Villages	154	35	189
5	Population	60000	20000	80000

¹Enhanced Dignity of Women and Girls in Balasore and Mayurbhanj districts.

²Prevention of Child Marriage and Gender-Based Violence in Baripada CD Block, Mayurbhanj district

4. Project Applications

The organization has constantly been identifying and approaching different donor-organisations to build up partnership. The results of the organization in this regard are presented below.

The first draft of the ongoing project with the partnership of MISEREOR for the period 2024-2027 was submitted in December 2023. Decision on this project application is expected in October-November 2024. This new project is titled “*Enhanced Dignity of Women and Girls in Odisha, India*”. As per the suggestions of MISEREOR, the organization getting ready for an external evaluation in July-August 2024. The decision on the pending new application will be taken after the conclusion of this evaluation.

The project application pending with MANOS UNIDAS, Spain was approved in December 2023 and started operations in January 2024. This new project is titled “**Prevent Child Marriages and Gender Violence in Mayurbhanj District**” and is operating in 35 villages in nine Gram Panchayaths in Baripada CD Block of Mayurbhanj district. A new project office was opened at Debendrapur in Baripada. Four staff persons required for this new project were recruited. The period of this new project is two years and currently it performs well.

Both virtual and real discussions were going on with the Azim Premji Foundation (APF) for a project for the empowerment of adolescent girls in Rasgovindpur CD Block in Mayurbhanj district. This project sanction is expected in the next year.

A Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) by name the LAMP was incorporated under the Companies Act in the year under report. The LAMP is an off shoot of the project implemented with the partnership of MISEREOR and is an organic extension of Women Cultivators’ Collective (WCC) promoted by the previous project. It is an independent entity floated with the goal of making women landless and marginal cultivators to secure sustainable livelihoods.

5. Partnership and Collaboration

The organization built up partnership with National Council for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), NACG EVAC, and various departments and organisations such as DCPU, ICDS, DCWD, DSWO, Child Welfare Council etc. All activities carried out in the year under report were in collaboration with these organization.

6. Projects under Implementation

The organization was implementing two projects. One project is for preventing child marriages and gender-based violence. This project continued to get support from MISEREOR, Germany. This project operated in nearly 150 villages. Presently an extended phase of this project from 2021 to 2024 is in operation. And the areas of operation expanded from two CD Blocks to five CD Blocks. The new CD Blocks added to the existing ones (Basta and Rasgovindpur) are Jaleswar, Morada and Betnoti.

The second project is one with the same objectives. It is being supported by MANOS UNIDAS, Spain. The project operates in nine GPs of Baripada CD Block and the period of the project is two years from 2024 to 2026.

7. Major Achievements

Presented below is an overview of the achievement of the organization during the year under

report. Major Achievements of the organization are presented under two broader heads, viz. immediate results, and overall results of all activities.

7.1. Immediate Results of the Activities Undertaken

1. Villages made free from child marriages

The organization consequent to the hitherto activities made 20 villages free from child marriages. Official declaration of this historic achievement was made in collaboration with Gram Panchayath and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS).

2. Promoting and Strengthening Community Based Mechanisms

The organisation put good amount of effort in strengthening and activating community-based mechanisms or arrangements to ensure community responses to early marriages and gender- based violence. A paradigm shift had been introduced from 2021 onward after the commencement of the new project approved by MISEREOR for 2021 - 2024. Instead of SAHELI directly promoting community-based groups (CBGs) such as SHGs, AGGs, ABGs, YCs and VVCs, it was decided to work with similar groups already in operations. SHGs and AGGs working under the aegis of the ICDS and attached to Angan Wadi Centres became one clientele group. The specialized community bodies promoted by government to protect the rights of women and children at the levels of local bodies constituted another clientele group. These groups replaced the VVCs in the earlier projects of SAHELI. The third clientele group consists of block and district level government and government related departments and organizations working to protect the rights of women and girls. The basic strategy of stimulating community responses remains the same. But the modus operandi and allies got changed. In the new strategic shift, Angan Wadi Worker (AWW) becomes key personnel instead of Community Mobilisers whereas the role of the latter got changes as facilitators. This changed strategy continued during the period under report.

2.1. Village Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPCs)

The organization had promoted VVC as community responses to child marriage and gender-based violence with a mandate to intervene in such situation to prevent the same. The roles played by the VVCs during the previous years were shifted to Village Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPCs)-cum- Village Task Forces (VTF) consequent to the strategic shift referred to above. There were 144 VLCPCs with 1646 members promoted by SAHELI and 35 more VLCPCs newly formed with 525 members when the activities during the year under report got concluded.

3. Gram Panchayath Level Child Protection Committees (GPLCPCs)

GPLCPCs were already promoted by Block Level Child Protection Committees (BLCPCs). But these were in dormant condition in all Gram Panchayats. SAHELI, in the capacity of member of BLCPCs volunteered to activate all GPLCPCs focusing on holding meetings, capacity strengthening, guiding on how to go about with the cases of child marriage and GBV reported to these GPLCPCs. The organisation activated 38 GPLCPCs, facilitated holding of periodic meeting often GPLCPCs and extended guidance to intervene in 120 reported cases of child Marriage and gender-based violence.

4. Block Level Child Protection Committees (BLCPCs)

SAHELI has been inducted as NGO representative in Basta, Rasgovindpur and Morada BLCPCs. Though not officially inducted in the BLCPCs in Betnoti, Baripada, and Jaleswar, SAHELI attended meetings in all the six BLCPCs. All together the organization attended six

meetings of BLCPCs in the year under report. Besides attending the meetings SAHELI was apart of fifteen joint visits to various villages in connection with reported child marriages and GBV. It was in the team to visit various schools and shops to identify child labour.

5. Youth Club (YC)

Though no new Youth Clubs were promoted in the year under report, the 21 YCs with 304 members that were existed continued to function during the year under report. Their representatives were included in the VLCPCs of the villages in which the work.

6. Adolescent Girls' Group (AGG)

SAHELI ceased to promote new AGGs. Instead, it decided to work with the Kishori groups promoted by the ICDS. But the 45 AGGs with 503 members continued to function.

7. Adolescent Boy's Group (ABG)

SAHELI ceased to promote new AGGs. But the 30 ABGs with 412 members promoted by the organization continue to operate in the year under report.

8. Self-Help Group (SHG)

There had been 174 with total 1842 members when the year under report began. No new SHGs were promoted during this year.

All these CBGs and CBOs helped the project in addressing the child marriages and GBV in the villages where the project operated till June 2021. There after these community groups and organisations continued to identify cases and support in addressing the same in collaboration with VLCPCs and working together with the AWW of the ICDS. Apart from that, these CBOs and CBGs continued to function as effective vehicles for dissemination of information.

9. Awareness Generation

9.1. Discussion Sessions

Discussion sessions to increase awareness of the target population were organized at different locations. Altogether 1587 such sessions were held, and these sessions were attended by 35864 persons.

9.2. Mid-media Activities

As part of public awareness generation 172 mid-media cultural programmes were held and the same were viewed by 12596 persons. Themes of public interest including RCH GBV etc. were presented in the mode of street plays

9.3. House Visits

As a part of one-to-one sensitization and to prevent both early marriage and gender-based violence as well as to promote education and health in general, especially of the adolescent girls, the field staff visited 6108 homes. They visited all community-based organization for motivating them.

9.4. School level Awareness Programmes

As part of creating awareness among adolescent population on child marriage and gender based- violence the organization organized 96 school level awareness programmes attended by 7591 students.

9.5. Legal Awareness

For creating awareness on the legal implications on child marriage and gender-based violence the SAHELI organized 118 village level sessions of seminar attended by 8640 persons.

9.6. YouTube Channel

SAHELI has started its own YouTube channel. It has been named as SAHELI Media. The organization identified a social media expert and studio to shoot YouTube programmes. So far 90 videos have been broadcasted by it.

9.7. Learning Site

The organization has opened learning sites in two villages and set up a facility in its office for disseminating its learning to other villagers elsewhere. Selected villagers (members of VLCPCs from new villagers pay visit to both office and learning site villages to understand the process adopted by the organization to control child marriages and GBV. One hundred ninety-eight persons in 19 batches visited the learning sites and the office during the year under report.

9.8. Women Cultivators' Collectives (WCC)

The organization promoted two WCC with nearly 100 members belonging to 28 women SHGs. Paddy cultivation was promoted by eight SHGs in eight villages with the participation of 91 women. Vegetable cultivation was undertaken by 61 members of five women SHGs in five villages. Community fishery was implemented by 10 members of one woman SHG in one village. Bee farming was encouraged in three villages and 30 members took part in this activity. A Farmer Producer Company (FPO) by name the LAMP was incorporated under the Companies' Act as an independent legal entity of WCCs. Henceforth all activities for livelihood promotion will be carried out under the aegis of the LAMP.

7.2. Net Result of all Activities

1. Gender based violence

SAHELI intervened through VLCPCs and directly through its own project staff in the 376 of the instances of reported gender-based violence and successfully settled 274 cases.

2. Early marriages (mainly of Adivasi girls below the age of 18)

The organisation intervened in 385 of the 385 reported instances of early marriage of Adivasi girls and 384 of these were successful because no marriage among these cases was reported.

3. Rapport with other stakeholders

The rapport already established by the organization with the Police, the DSWO (ICDS), the ICPS (DCPO), local governments, local educational institutions and rural media CDPO

continued with more active collaboration with all.

4. Block level consultation

The organization organized consultations with functionaries in five CD Block, namely Basta, Jaleswar, Rasgovindpur, Moroda and Betnoti. The BDOs, CDPOs, Supervisors and AWW participated in these meetings. It created more conducive environment and collaborative atmosphere in working together.

6. Recognition by the local population

The organisation continued to enjoy a very high level of recognition by local population. People rightly identify SAHELI as the defender and protector of the rights of women and girls.

8. Staff Position

There were 15 full-time paid staff members for SAHELI during the year under report. Staff meetings were held once in a month on regular basis. Staff meetings reviewed the performance of the organization. The organization experienced very great difficulty in getting suitable hands to the senior positions like Project Coordinator and Assistant Project Coordinator. If identified someone at all, it would be difficult to retain them because the location is remote and underdeveloped where future prospects for such hands are very much limited.

9. Summary of Finances

The organization operates separate bank account for foreign funds. The bank account receiving foreign funds was with the State Bank of India (SBI), New Delhi branch. The utilization bank accounts are being maintained in Kamardiha branch of Canara Bank. Payments for all activities including organizational governance were Rs. 60, 05,088.00. The overall accounts were audited by M/s. N P S M Associates and the project accounts were audited by M/s. S. Sahoo & Co.

10. Future Directions

SAHELI has emerged as an organization for defending the interests of women and girls, especially women and girls among tribal population. It was focusing on gender-based violence and child marriages during the last few years. The ideas for further strengthening its involvement in this sector were pursued by the organization. It has been decided by SAHELI to extend its operation to the entire district of Mayurbhanj.

One line of action is to replicate the strategies along with the activities hitherto carried out. To other areas of Mayurbhanj district. A new project has been submitted to MISEREOR, Germany for this purpose. Another strategy is to strengthen the agency of adolescent population to say NO to child marriage and GBV. A project for this purpose has been submitted to the Azim Premji Foundation, Bangalore. The third attempt is to strengthen the human rights-based interventions to reduce child marriages and GBV.

The overall capacity of the organization as an effective change making CSO has been identified by the organization. Equally important is the capacity enhancing of the staff personnel of the organization. Institutionalised streamlining of project management is being contemplated. Special capacity enhancement plans are being made ready. These two measures would help the organization to improve much.

Through the activities proposed in the above projects, SAHELI is expected to emerge as a leading organization to prevent child marriages and GBV and as a strong as well as reliable partner of the Government of Odisha in its noble target of stopping child marriage by 2030 as stated in the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) published in 2019.

11. Acknowledgement

SAHELI acknowledges the financial support received from MISEREOR, Germany and MANOS UNIDAS, Spain. The services rendered by Ms. N P SM Associates in auditing the overall accounts of the organisation and Ms./S.Sahoo& Co in auditing project accounts are worth mentioning. All officers of the banks, ICDS, ICPS, Police, education department and CD Blocks whole-heartedly cooperated with SAHELI. Leaders of Gram Panchayats and local media persons too supported all activities of the organization. SAHELI places in record its deep-felt gratitude to all those who supported during the year under report.

12. Conclusion

It gives immense pleasure to present this report. With due gratitude to all who associate with SAHEI, this report is presented for consideration of all members of the General Body for discussion and adoption.

Basta,

Sonali Sahu

31/06/2024

Secretary, SAHELI

