

SINGLE WOMEN REPORT 2014-15

April

15th April - Meeting at sutra. Representatives from 20 blocks presented their three month reports. The meeting reviewed and discussed their work and activities. All the members showed their accounts, generating greater transparency in the organization.

18th April - We sent 7 single women from four different blocks for leadership training in Sutra. They were all kindergarten teachers who have a close connection with the kids, young girls and women in village. These trainings play a vital role in developing the scope and effectiveness of their work. They particularly learn the value of their work, how to handle and act in critical situations and how to lead a group.

26th April – A program organized by Nishtha for single women to show the handicraft products made by various members who are interested in generating income through their work. All the participants presented what they had made. These included knitting, macramé and candle making. Madam Philippa and Madam Sonia scrutinized the items and suggested that the women need proper training and guidance to make salable products. Madam Philippa said that it would be very good if they could make enough of such items in so they can sale these products in a shop near Chamunda, where they could get a good price.

At the end of month, our single women activists started preparing every village for the upcoming public hearing and block meetings. Our activists worked hard to reach to those single women who were hesitating about joining and who are not aware of their rights.

May

23rd May – The annual Public Hearing was held at the Lion's Club Dharamshala in the presence of invited guests from the different departments concerned with the affairs of Single Women. They included Welfare Officers, Santosh Katoch and Narendar Jaswal, Tehsildar Pawan Sharma, Anjana Devi from the police department, Jagdish Chander from the Vigilance department and Sutra Co-ordinator Nirmal Chandel. 160 single women participated in this public hearing. The program started with discussion on single women's pensions, low income certificates for Government schemes, cases of domestic violence and other problems. The single women asked various questions and got satisfactory answers from the officers. The Welfare officer announced that the limit to entitle you for a low income certificate is Rs.35,000 per year and if any Patwari refuses to give this certificate despite the woman having below level income then she can come directly to him or any other officer present. A person who is 40% to 69% handicapped will get Rs.550 per month pension and above this will get Rs.770 per month.

June

10th June - Block meeting for Rait Block in the community hall Shahpur. Advocate Roji Katoch and Rohit Katoch were present as legal consultants. The 52 women who participated in this meeting received legal information on domestic violence, land rights, child labour and some other issues. During the meeting some single women shared their experiences with new members. They talked about their work, how they joined the single women's forum and how over the years it has changed their lives. They encouraged other women who find themselves alone to become aware of their rights and stop tolerating violence.

23rd June - International Widow's Day was celebrated in Dharamshala with 160 single women taking our a rally demanding the following:

1. Free travel on buses for single women every 23rd June.
2. Free Medical treatment for single women and their children.
3. Land for those single women who don't own land either in their parent's home or in their in-laws.

4. A home for homeless single women.

We did short rally from the Post Office (Dharamshala) to the DC's office where we meet with the DC and ADC SudeshMokhta. We presented our memorandum to the DC and ADC and the DC assured us that he will give this memorandum to CM of Himachal Pradesh and try his best to do act on this.

July

11th July -Radha attendedthe three monthly meeting at Sutra. The meeting reviewed our ongoing work, checked our accounts and planned future programs. In addition we talked about how to reach into more blocks of Himachal Pradesh to encourage single women to raise their voices against violence.

Village panchyatswho have been using theirgrants under the National Rural Health Mission forthe reconstruction of streams and buildings instead of using the money to provide poor people with the means to access medical treatment. We appealed to all panchyats to use this money for the health of single women and other poor people in the villages.

Ravindra (wenlido trainer) and Dr. Kusum from Nishtha did programs in three blocks on domestic violence and health. In the three blocks we had more than 100 participants. Dr. Kusum gavean interactive talk on how to look after your own health - what to eat to get proper nutrients from your food and how to keep yourself in good health. Ravindra, who is wenlido trainer, talked about wenlido, how it is physically and mentally important for every woman. The response to this programme was very good and and a lot of women, especially the younger women showed their interest in learning wenlido.

August

Throughout this month we heldmeetings with the single women group in every village to get to know the response and effect of Nishtha's outreach clinic. The women commented positively on the following aspects of our clinics:

1. There is a lady doctor in outreach clinic,so it's very easy to share our personal medical problems with her.
2. The small clips of health documentaries in Hindi are easy to understand for kids and older people.
3. The kids watched these videos with full attention because they are cartoon based videos.
4. The information about rich healthy natural products, which are readily available but we are not using because we have become dependent on the market is very interesting. It is new for the younger generation who don't want to make the effort to make food at home. They forget the value of these natural things and run towards spice and easily available products in the market.
5. The women appreciated that this is not just a clinic where you get medicines and that's over. Dr. Kusum gives us health education, which is more important than medicines; she talks about various women's health problem and what we can do about them. The women all spoke very highly of Dr. Kusum.

September

On 10th to 12th Sept, the National forum meeting was held in New Delhi In the presence of 21 members from 7 Indian states. The main points of this meeting are as follows:

1. Land issue- we are demanding that single women should be provided with agriculture land for poor single women so they can grow crops and fruits and thus earn some money.

2. In case a single woman gets married and is well settled, thereafter she has no right to sell this property.
3. Single women should have the right to get some share of family land.
4. Preference in MNERGA.
5. No age limit for single women in government job.
6. Low interest loan
7. Separate budget for single women in parliament.
8. Employment for every poor single woman

We participated in an agitation organized by Ekta Parishad, an NGO who is working on land rights issues.

October

Radha attended the three monthly meeting at Sutra. This included a long discussion on the memorandum of the National insurance scheme through which every single woman gets free medical facility along with life insurance. Last year when we met with the CM of Himachal Pradesh he assured us that he will act on this very soon but it has not been implemented yet by government. We have to follow this up.

Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan has completed its ninth successful year and has achieved a prestigious name and considerable fame.

26th to 30th Oct- 120 single women were the beneficiaries of a free dental camp held at Nishtha by a team of Austrian and German dentists.

31st Oct – 7 single women joined the first Aid Training held at Nishtha given by the St John's Ambulance First Aid team from Wales. They learned how to react in medical emergencies such as bleeding, burns, snake bites, shock and heart attack in a proper and safe way.

November

On 11th, 12th, 13th of November 2014, Radha attended the National Forum Meeting at Lodhi Road ISI (Indian Social Institute) Delhi. Where from 7 states (Himachal, Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra) -10 members from every state are coming for the meeting which is centre government affiliated. The meeting is basically recognized as Advisable and Decision making Meeting. Centre government officer is the main head of this meeting. In this meeting 150 members should be present for the meeting, where all the critical and unsolvable cases are discussed here and tried to solve on different issues.

Topics for Discuss:-

- Every single woman have 3000 Pension should be provide by government.
- 5 Gaj plot should be provide to single women who have no source for living anywhere.
- Joint plot registered should be there after a girl marriage.
- Those women who are leaving at their mother house since 2 years have to be eligible for all the schemes . Etc...

17th to 19th Nov – 15 single women from Kangra, Rait and Nagrota blocks were sent for leadership training held at Sutra. During these trainings participants learn how to manage meetings, maintain records and data in a proper way and how to motivate weak women to stand up for their rights.

24th to 26th Nov – Radha, Pammi, Kummo, and Sunita had participated in the Ekal Nari summit held at Amritsar along with 10 members from Rajasthan, Punjab and Jharkhand. The objective of this meeting was to review the full year's work in Punjab. We had some achievements but the conclusion is not very

satisfactory because very few single women in Punjab have become involved in the programme. We made discussed the use of various ideas to mobilizethe single women.

December

Six month meeting

Date	Block	Place	No. of Participants
7 th Dec	Rait	Ladwada	46
8 th Dec	Nagrota	Badoi	40
9 th Dec	Dharamshala &Kangra	Gaggal	48

On 10th Dec – The Nishtha Single Women’s group organized a small rally to gain the attention of the Himachal Government who holds their winter legislative session in their new building at Tapovan. This rally was attended by more than 150 single women who marched from Sidhbari bazaar to Tapowan ground which is near the Legislative Assembly. There we met with MLA Sudheer Sharma who we presented with our request for a Fast Track Court in panchayat which would help us to get fast results in single women’s land or violence cases.

26th - 31st Dec – Sutra Leadership Training for new young single women. This training is to introduce young women to information about the condition of single women in the country and in this state, to tell them how the group are fighting for their rights and how single women can get help through the force of effort of a united group of single women.

January

15th Jan – 15 children from khanyara village visited the ADM office to urge for implementing government scheme “wadanatodo” (don’t break promise). Under this scheme every child has equal rights to food, clothing and education. They also get medical benefits, work to save the environment, protection against caste discrimination, awareness about the infant mortality ratio, child labor and are given a voice against violence.

Radha and Nirmal requested to committee that the EkalNariSamettee must be involve as member, (means : National forum “EkalNariSamettee” should be involve in International forum “Wada Na TodoAbhiyan”) and EkalNariSamettee should be invited in all meetings by the nationl NGO “Wada Na TodoAbhiyan”

17th to 20th Jan – Three month meeting at Sutra focusing on new membership of single women in Himachal Pradesh and a review of the last years work.

February

Radha had long meeting with one of Nishtha’s long term patients from a remote village. She has been HIV+ her whole life. Both her parents have died and she lives with her uncle. Radha found that this young woman is much stronger and more confident than before. She talks good with Radha, said thanks to Nishtha and the single women workers who have been helping her through this difficult time.

14th Feb – Nishtha organized a small rally with the participation of school kids, Nishtha staff and 13 single women to join in the occasion of One Billion Rising. We marched from Rakkar Ground to the mela ground. There the children danced, sang and performed a play based on violence. The kids released some balloons with Hindi and English slogans written on them including:

Slogans:-

Violence free society

No More Violence

We will take the liberty, My sister asked for freedom, My mother asked for freedom.

March

7th March – We held a monthly meeting at Nishtha with all the single women’s activists. During these meetings which take place each month, they submit their reports to Radha and make a plan for their future work. If any activist is facing difficulties in their work or has other problems they try to work out a solution. These monthly meetings are also attended by Dr. Kusum, Dr. Barbara and Madam Philippa.

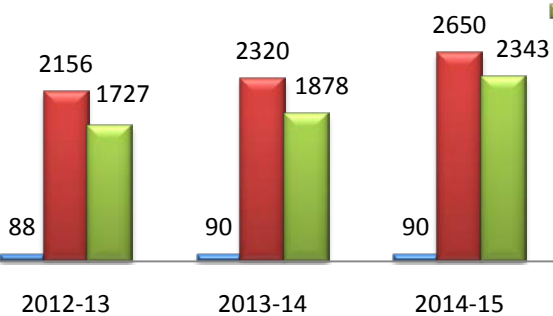
8th March – Kummo, Shilpaand Ghayani single women activists attended a women’s day program held in Dharamshala, which was organized by Jagori NGO.They only attended and enjoyed the program. Radha and Sunita had gone to Salol for a case regarding nonviolence that day.

Single women comparison data of last Three years

	Panchayat	Members	Register Member	Widows	Separate	Unmarried	Divorced	HIV	Muslim	Handicap.	Husband missing
2012-13	88	2156	1727	2069	42	8	26	2	3	2	4
2013-14	90	2320	1878	2228	50	8	24	2	2	2	4
2014-15	90	2650	2343	2529	41	15	34	1	4	2	24

Three year comparison Data

■ Panchyat
■ Member
■ Register Member



Single Women Activist:-

Radha – she is coordinator of single women group and member at national level. In 2006 she started her career as activist, after abandoned by her husband she has been living with her only son. The quality in her is to grasp and understand the points very quickly. She said from the time she has been working with single women organization, she doesn't feel herself alone. Such an attitude helps her to achieve her goal either it's to be coordinator or member at national level. She is very good orator and writer has written lot of article for single women newsletter. According to her, when rural single women, alone or in group fight for their right or raise their voice against violence gives her satisfaction that her efforts work. But some time she got sad when her effort to give someone justice baffled under the government rules and regulation, especially in single women pension scheme. Those single women whose children are in government job are not eligible for this scheme but they doesn't see, Are the old single women have any support from children or not.

Kummo – she has been working as coordinator in Nishtha single women program, In 2006 she joined single women group as an activist after getting swindle divorce from her husband, she have no idea what to do, how to do totally helpless. At that moment senior member calmed her and promised to give her justice. With the help of single women group she appealed in Supreme Court after disappointing from high court decision, she got compensation from his husband in Supreme Court. She have four children in which three son and one daughter. She is working in Rait block from 9 years and has trust of single women in that area, she always ready to help single women either its day or night.

Shilpa – she joined single women in 2011. Radha meet her in one of the single women meeting where she came with her mother and requested for work. She has been living with her mother since her husband abandon her, she said her husband beaten her brutally and fight everyday on the small issues. Her family survives on small income of her mother after the death of her father. However, Nishtha appointed her as assistant in 2011, she got divorced in 2013 with the support of single women organization and got compensation of Rs 80000. She was shy but with the time she is getting confident.

Sunita – She is widow and has three sons, In 2010 her husband suicide and left her in trouble, she didn't have any source of income from which she can survive with her children. In 2011 Nishtha appointed her as single women activist and sponsored her son for education. She is working in Nagrota block. She is really hard worker and dedicated for her work, women as well as her colleague praise her work and say she is the most active field worker. She feels sad for poor and unfulfilled government scheme for single women and weak bureaucracy.

Pratibha – she is widow and has two children, In 2013 she appointed as activist in Nagrota Block. She is highly educated which help her in field work to understand legal and document work. She is new but grasps quickly everything; which is good for her as well as for organization. She believes in honest work so she always advice to single women that never afraid from menace and raise your voice against violence. She gets so angry on Indian culture and rituals where people worship the goddess in temple and abused the women at home.

Pammi – she is widow and has two children. She joined Nishtha single women program as activist in 2011 and appointed activist in Rait block. At present she has not been working due to long ailment, nowadays she is staying in Nishtha clinic for better treatment and rest. She have some family problem, her son is drunken which is most difficult for her to treat with him. However she is very good in field work and has good communication skill. We pray for her good health, it's hard to get such a dedicated and honest worker.

Gyani – she is 72 years old and the oldest worker in group she is working since 2013 in rait block and assisting other activist. She has amazing energy in this age which boosts other activist to do work with full effort. She is widow and has two children. She is very good communicating with women's.