

Empowering Women Leadership with the support of HCL Foundation

Hardoi district in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Most men work as day laborers. Women work primarily at home, manage livestock and do other household work, typically perform more domestic chores in rural areas. Socially, women can be seen working in certain other professions that provide a living, but only men can be found in occupations like electrician and plumber. In order to increase women's participation in the community technical fields and decision-making processes, NIWCYD in collaboration with HCL Foundation support to empower them and provide equal opportunity by hiring female pump operators, and it has led to the taking of this action by Continuous interaction with the community. It is a social concern project that takes into account the societal perspective.

In this area, Access to water has been a problem here for decades and collecting drinking water is the women responsibility. And hence, it is crucial to give them the responsibility of community programs. Recognizing this need, Sushila Devi have been engaged as a pump operator at the Mahmudpur Water



Site. Sushila Devi has completed her high school education and her husband is a day labour with having very liberal views on gender roles and supports Sushila devi in her work as a pump operator and social worker. His support of his wife's leadership helped her considerably in the empowering women leadership. She is responsible for releasing water twice a day in the community, to check the water quality with a group of women.

Undaunted she is enthusiastic about her work and is also actively involved in motivating other women in the community. Education most women in the area are illiterate, while most men have a primary education. There is increasing awareness in the community about the importance of education and Sushila advocates for girls' education, which is vital for promoting gender equality

in the community. Additionally, she is committed to raising awareness about the importance of pure water and water conservation in the community.

Sushila's appointment as a pump operator has not only provided her with a means of livelihood but has also given her a platform to showcase her leadership skills. By taking up this role, she has become a role model for other women in the community and has inspired them to participate more actively in community affairs. Sushila devi's leadership helped other women become involved as community leaders.

Moreover, Sushila's involvement in the water site has also resulted in a significant improvement in the water supply and quality in the community. Her efforts have contributed towards ensuring that the community has access to safe and clean drinking water.

Results of the women leadership has led to the following changes and impact on the community:

- Decision-making power** • escalated decisive power in the majority of women
- Recognition of the value of women participating in social activities.
 - Acknowledging the ways where women put up to excel their families financial situation.
 - Improved women social relations externals.
 - Augmented the sense of independence because of substantial social mobility.
 - The respect in the male community members for Sushila devi developed and increasing and not only for sushila devi but for the other active women members.
 - The acceptance by men that women can be productive community leaders has been developed in a positive way.

This case study demonstrated that how powerful personal leadership can be, when supported strategically which can lead to significant positive results for gender mainstreaming or gender equality. Sushila devi had the courage to take a risk and implement by breaking up the power of the traditional gender roles and step outside to initiate to bring new opportunities and empower other women out there. In conclusion, empowering women and giving them equal opportunities to participate in community programs and decision-making processes is crucial for achieving gender equality and sustainable development. Sushila's appointment as a pump operator is a step towards achieving this goal and serves as an example of how women's participation can lead to positive outcomes for the community as a whole.
