

Case study — Doosra Dashak

The Foundation for Education and Development (FED), a Jaipur based non-profit organisation, is carrying out activities within its '**Doosra Dashak**' programme in the Abu Road block of Sirohi district, south Rajasthan, since 2003. The block is home to the primitive Garasia tribals.

There are high levels of poverty and low levels of education, which is reflected in primary school enrolment, which is as low as 30 per cent. Over 90 per cent of the women are illiterate. Against this backdrop, the **Doosra Dashak** programme set about building empowered organisations of youth and women in 25 villages.

In 2006, a teacher attached to a middle school in Bahadurgarh village, attempted to sexually harass and humiliate a few girls. They brought this to the notice of the Yuva Shakti Sangathan (YSS), the youth group, which approached the block education officer for restitution. Not surprisingly, the official chose to turn a blind eye.



This spurred over 22 boys and 25 girls to collectively march to Sirohi, the district headquarters and stage a demonstration in front of the Collectorate and district education office. Galvanised into action, the officials immediately transferred the errant teacher, initiating disciplinary action against him.

In August 2007, the central government introduced the scheme of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV) for the education of girls at grade VI-VIII level. Girls who had attained the level of grade V during the four-month residential course run by

Doosra Dashak filled all the 50 positions in KGBV located in Khadag village of Abu Road block.

However, they found the staff absent, and no arrangements for boarding or lodging. Approach at the block level proved fruitless. A group of 36 members of the women's groups, 40 girls from KGBV, and 20 members of the YSS staged another demonstration in front of the Collectorate.

The Collector, sympathetic to their cause, gave clear instructions for the provision of all facilities and instructional arrangements. As a result, the KGBV began to function properly immediately after the Diwali break.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (NREGA) has greatly enthused the members of the groups. With training input from the larger NREGA network of Rajasthan, and support from the district, the YSS were able to get job-cards made for 98 per cent of the families.

More than 140 women, village volunteers, members of YSS, and a large number of school students travelled on foot from one village to another, covering 14 villages, in a rally in September 2007. This created an interest among the people, and Abu Road has since become a success story in implementation of the Act.

The annals of the **Doosra Dashak** programme abound with such inspirational incidents. The Trust has been supporting the **Doosra Dashak** activities of **FED** since 2007. The Trust support is towards spreading such work in two remote blocks – Desuri in Pali, and Bassi in Jaipur district

respectively, while strengthening the process of institutional development of youth groups across locations.

Through its **Youth and Civil Society Initiative**, the Trust focuses on encouraging youth development, and youth action in development. Besides supporting youth focused organisations, the initiative also encourages organisations working with youth as beneficiaries across different sectors – education, health or livelihood – to centre youth development in their interventions.