



SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION CULTURAL TRAINING AND RURAL ACTION (SPECTRA):

Sustainable Livelihoods Development Programme



Letz Dream Foundation has closely collaborated with **Society for Public Education Cultural Training and Rural Action (SPECTRA)** since June 2013. SPECTRA is a non-governmental social development organisation working on community development and women empowerment. This partnership was initially focused on improving governance at gram panchayat level and introducing sustainable livelihood opportunities in **Ratakhurd**, a socio-economically disadvantaged village in Kishangarh Bas block in Alwar district, Rajasthan. This intervention has now been scaled to 8,500 households across 6 Gram Panchayats, by deploying the 'Graduation Approach' for poverty alleviation, targeting the most vulnerable households within the community.

The challenge

At the time of baseline assessment, it was observed that the economic condition of the households in Ratakhurd village was very poor. At the time of baseline assessment, the average annual income of a household was ₹18,000. The population suffered from acute malnourishment and resultant health problems. Women in these households were financially dependent and subjected to exploitation and abuse.

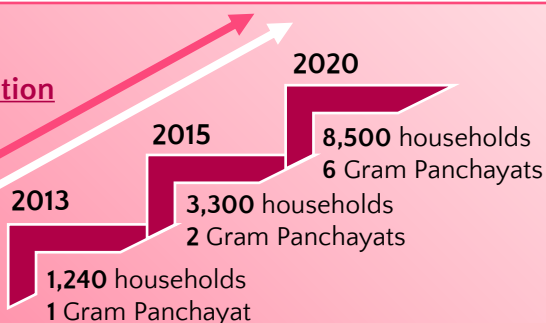
Rajasthan Grameen Aajeevika Vikas Parishad implementation of the National Rural Livelihoods Mission in Alwar only in 2019-2020. Therefore, there was limited access to government schemes and public funds for the local population, who had no clear incentive to organise themselves into community institutions.

The intervention

Recognising the problems on-ground, SPECTRA executed a multi-stage Sustainable Livelihood Development Programme:

- **Institutional Strengthening:** SPECTRA has mobilised 2400 women into 240 self-help groups (SHGs) for regular cash transfers to help them improve their socio-economic status. Market linkages have also been created through the establishment of farmer producer companies.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Support has been provided to SHGs to open bank accounts and avail credit facilities.
- **Capacity Building and Livelihoods Support:** Through these SHGs, SPECTRA has shared best practices with women farmers and micro-entrepreneurs for improving agricultural production, enhancing livestock rearing capacities, and initiating goat and poultry farming. SPECTRA has also improved linkages to the government's MGNREGA programme. Additionally, women have received training to become Community Resource Persons or Sakhis (Pashu Sakhi, Adhikaar Sakhi, Krishi Sakhi, etc). Capacity building of local leaders was also completed.

Scale of intervention



- **Agricultural Practices and Dairy Development:** Agricultural training was introduced to increase crop yield and productivity. Loans were extended for the purchase of buffaloes. SPECTRA in collaboration with Saras Dairy opened up milk collection centres. Through a partnership with Heifer International 2400 women were provided with female goats to kick-start their micro-entrepreneurship journey.
- **Convergence:** SPECTRA helped beneficiaries leverage government schemes and services like Crop Insurance scheme, Animal Insurance, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Human Life Insurance, Kisan Credit card, skill development program etc.
- **Need realisation:** SPECTRA helped local communities identify and prioritise their governance-related needs and requirements, including setting up of basic civic infrastructure.

Support from Letz Dream Foundation

As a grant making organisation, Letz Dream Foundation scouts for partner organisations who are working to ensure effective governance and improve public service delivery. Operating with a high-touch model of engagement with partners, we also provide:

- Strategy and programme development support
- Monitoring and evaluation support, including development of a MIS, impact assessment studies, and capacity building of the NGO programme team
- Stakeholder facilitation with government, donors, and implementation partners
- Operational handholding, including streamlining of internal processes such as procurement, recruitment, etc.

Letz Dream Foundation is a public charitable trust that helps central, state and local governments to deliver their priorities more effectively and efficiently.

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The impact

- **365%** increase in average annual income levels in Ratakurd (from ₹37,200 in 2013 to ₹1,73,000 in 2019)
- **95%** of the SHGs formed by SPECTRA follow operational wellbeing practices and have 100% loan repayment rates
- **₹15.8 crore** of funds unlocked by SHGs through bank credit linkages
- **₹3,015** earned as extra profit per acre of land using new agricultural practices
- **40%** increase in milk yield after dairy development interventions
- **100%** agricultural households in Ratakurd have Kisan Credit Card (KCC) and access to crop insurance, livestock insurance and medical insurance

Increased income also led to **better nutritional intake**, leading to **improved health indicators** in Ratakurd:

- Body Mass Index among children 0-5 years:
 - **91.8%** of children in Ratakurd have healthy weight, as compared to 4.5% in similar regions
- Anemia amongst adolescent girls:
 - Only **7%** of girls are anaemic in Ratakurd versus 80.3% in control areas
- Weight gain of mothers during pregnancy:
 - **88%** of mothers in Ratakurd attain healthy weight gain during pregnancy, as compared to 13% in control regions.

