

# Pashu Sakhis of Alwar

*Ibtada's Model for Delivery of Health Care Services to Livestock*



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*This documentation is the result of field visits, undertaken by Ms Ruchita Khurana, SA PPLPP, to Thanagazi and Umren blocks of Alwar district, where Ibtada has supported livestock health care services through the Pashu Sakhi model.*

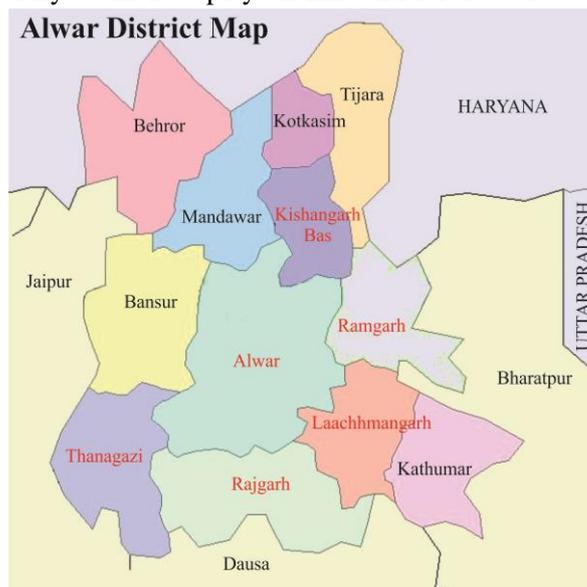
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## Context

Ibtada<sup>1</sup> is a reputed not for profit, non-governmental organization based in Rajasthan. Established in 1997, the mission of Ibtada is to strengthen communities especially women to play an influential role to reduce social and economic poverty and inequality. Their current operations are in more than 350 villages situated in 6 Blocks (Refer to Map) of District Alwar in Rajasthan.

With the primary focus on girl child education, Ibtada's signature programme has been about setting up *Taleemshalas*, which focus on imparting quality education centred on the needs, learning ability and time availability of the girl child, and strengthening the community drive for education of their children especially for girls who cannot attend school regularly. Till December 2009, Ibtada had 121 *Taleemshalas* with 3,350 girls studying.

Ibtada had a very keen focus on animal husbandry as a livelihood intervention. They also found that community skills, attitude and knowledge about good practices was limited in the area, and, therefore, continuous capacity building and services are required to be imparted to SHG members for enhancing incomes from animals. Through its 'Community Development through Livestock Rearing' project, supported by Heifer Project International (HPI), Ibtada has prepared a cadre of women health workers called 'Pashu Sakhis' (Community Health Workers). As of May 2014 there are 85 *Pashu Sakhis* providing services in 120 villages in the Thanagazi Block of District Alwar in Rajasthan.



Ibtada's operational area - Alwar, Kishangarh Bas, Lachhmangarh Rajgarh, Ramgarh and Thanagazi Blocks (labeled in red)

## Methodology

This documentation is the result of field visits to Thanagazi and Umren blocks of Alwar district, where Ibtada has supported livestock health care services through the Pashu Sakhi model. Presently the goat based livelihood interventions are being implemented in the Thanagazi, Ramgarh and Umren blocks, of which up-scaling has been particularly focused upon in the Thanagazi block. The present documentation focuses on the Thanagazi block of district Alwar. Information was collected through in depth discussions with the Pashu Sakhis, Paravets, livestock rearers, SHG groups and Ibtada's staff.

A meeting with practicing Pashu Sakhis in the Umren block<sup>2</sup> of Alwar district was organized to develop an understanding of their work. These Pashu Sakhis had 2 to 7 years of experience as they graduated from providing health care services to small ruminants in the initial years of their practice, to large ruminants now. This was followed by an interview of a Pashu Sakhi, together with beneficiaries in the neighbourhood who have been receiving health care services for their livestock, for the last 5 years. Interviews of other Pashu Sakhis were also conducted in the Thanagazi block.

The main criteria for selecting the Pashu Sakhis, to be interviewed was as follows:

- Pashu Sakhi who received her first training in 2009 and have been practicing for past 5 years
- Pashu Sakhi who received her first training in the mid of 2012 and has been practicing for past one and a half years
- Pashu Sakhi who received her first training in December 2013 and has been practicing only for the past 2 months.

A Pashu Sakhi review meeting conducted every fortnight at Pratapgarh village in Thanagazi block was also attended to understand the planning and reporting procedures followed by Pashu Sakhis.

The community insurance model of Ibtada was launched in 2012. A meeting with the members of the goat rearing group in village Aagar in Thanagazi block was organized to understand the perceptions of livestock rearers on the community insurance model. An interview was also conducted with a Pashu Sakhi who received the insurance claim against the mortality of her goat.

<sup>1</sup> For more information on Ibtada, please visit their website – [www.ibtada.in](http://www.ibtada.in)

<sup>2</sup> It was in the Umren block that the first cadre of Pashu Sakhis, received training in 2007

## Implementation Strategy

Ibtada, with a mission to develop a cadre of community health workers, initiated its work in the Ramgarh and Umren blocks of Alwar where, as part of UNDP's Animal Husbandry project in 2006, training was imparted to a few selected men to provide livestock health care services. Almost all the trained health workers dropped out, since this was not their main source of livelihood and they started looking for other lucrative jobs. During the year 2007, with the thought of introducing some non-traditional roles for women, and harnessing on the fact that any income from this front would be an additional source of livelihood, the first training to *Pashu Sakhis* was conducted in June 2007. Later, during the same year, as the Heifer International project was to be implemented, it was decided to provide goat units in the villages where the trained *Pashu Sakhis* were already providing services.

### **Selection of Pashu Sakhis**

Some of the important criteria that were laid down for selection of women candidates for the *Pashu Sakhi* training comprised:

- ❖ The woman must be an active member of the self help group and must possess leadership qualities. This was the first and foremost criteria to select *Pashu Sakhis* both from the aspect of ease of nominating them, in addition to their being accepted by the villagers, who are used to seeing them play an active role on the social front.
- ❖ Age and Mobility – This was another important aspect as *Pashu Sakhis* are required to provide door to door service for which they must be mobile. Women with infants or young children or who did not have supportive families, it would be difficult to carry out these services, and, hence, such persons were not selected. It was decided to induct women who were above 30 years of age, as they would be mature and committed to the assigned task.
- ❖ Literacy – While this was kept as one of the criteria for selection of *Pashu Sakhis*, it was not met with much success since most of the women were not educated beyond standard 5.

### **Training of Pashu Sakhis**

In June 2007, 14 *Pashu Sakhis* from as many villages were provided a five day training. The training was provided by the staff of Heifer International as well as a veterinary doctor, who was hired by the project. The training focused on the following aspects of livestock rearing:

- a) Identification of livestock diseases, their symptoms and treatment
- b) Age calculation
- c) Identifying good quality bucks
- d) Keeping track of the weight of new born kids and their development
- e) Management practices comprising feed, water, shed maintenance and regular vaccination<sup>3</sup> and de-worming
- f) Introducing some basic ethnoveterinary practices to treat diseases in livestock.

The approximate expenditure incurred on training of the *Pashu Sakhis* is given below.

<b>Cost of the 5 day training held for 15 Pashu Sakhis</b>	
<b>Component</b>	<b>Total Cost (in Rs)</b>
Medical Kit <sup>4</sup> for 15 <i>Pashu Sakhis</i> @ Rs 4,000 per Kit	60,000
Food and Lodging for 15 <i>Pashu Sakhis</i> @ Rs 250 per day for 5 days	18,750
Travel to Naugaon training centre by bus <sup>5</sup>	6,000
Resource Person <sup>6</sup>	1,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>85,750</b>

<sup>3</sup> In 2007, the livestock were mainly vaccinated against HS, FMD and ET. There were very rare case reported of PPR at that time and, it was, therefore, not considered essential to vaccinate against.

<sup>4</sup> The medical kit provided to the *Pashu Sakhis* cost Rs 4,000 and comprises of some basic medicines for fever, diarrhoea, cold and cough, injections of vitamin b-complex, a pair of scissors, cotton, dressing, antiseptic solution, an apron, castrator, Enema kit, weighing balance, hoof cutter etc. The medicines in the medical kit easily last for 2-3 months by which time the *Pashu Sakhis* develop a fair idea about the amount of medicine they need to purchase and stock, depending upon the frequency of its usage.

<sup>5</sup> A bus is hired to both pick and drop the *Pashu Sakhis* for training at Ibtada's Naugaon training centre, which is approximately 105 km away from Pratapgarh block.

<sup>6</sup> The resource person is usually hired for one day only. These could be retired veterinary officers or resource persons from other organizations/institutes. The training on the remaining days is provided by the Paravets at Ibtada.

The first two days of the training focus on management aspects of goat rearing and next two days are focused on identifying and treatment of diseases. The last day of training is designated to field practice to have hands-on training.

Of the 14 who received training in June 2007, 5 *Pashu Sakhis* dropped out mainly on account of lack of support from their families, who did not appreciate their going out from time to time.

A 2-day refresher training is held every six months and is convened at the Naugaon training centre in Ramgarh *tehsil* of Alwar district. The expenditure incurred on the refresher training is as follows:

<b>Cost of a 2-day refresher training of <i>Pashu Sakhis</i></b>	
<b>Component</b>	<b>Total cost</b>
Food and Lodging for 15 <i>Pashu Sakhis</i> @ Rs 250 per day for two days	7,500
Travel to Naugaon training centre by bus	6,000
Hall Charges @ Rs 800 per day for two days	1,600
Equipment (LCD projector) @ Rs 500 per day for two days	1,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>16,100</b>

#### ***Provision of an Honorarium to the Pashu Sakhis***

During the initial year of them providing health care services, these *Pashu Sakhis* were given a monthly honorarium of Rs 300 under the Heifer International project in 2009. This honorarium support, along with the medical kit, helped to establish the *Pashu Sakhis* during the course of one year, after which it was discontinued.

By the end of a year, *Pashu Sakhis* are able to earning a minimum of Rs 1,500-2,000 per month. While the project under the Heifer International continued, another project under the SRTT was implemented and the amount of honorarium to the newly inducted *Pashu Sakhis* was increased to Rs 500 per month. This amount was further revised to Rs 700 per month under the Mahilla Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP). Presently, under the HI project itself, the monthly honorarium provided to the newly inducted *Pashu Sakhis* is Rs 1,000 for one year.

#### ***Provision of support to Pashu Sakhis***

With the aim to closely monitor the services provided by *Pashu Sakhis*, to provide them some support and strengthen their capacities, Ibtada inducted Paravets who were diploma holders in Animal Husbandry from a recognized Veterinary University. Qualified to work as Livestock Assistants (LSA), these paravets played a very important role in the establishment of the *Pashu Sakhis*.

As part of another project funded by the Jamshedji Tata Trust, extensive trainings are also being organized for the paravets since 2012. An external agency has been hired to impart a 10-day training programme held at and organized by The Goat Trust, in Lucknow. This 10-day training programme grooms the paravets further on the following aspects:

- ❖ Training on community facilitation
- ❖ Training in tools to form Goat rearing groups (GRGs) and to further train the members of GRGs.
- ❖ Practical training in goat management practices, identifying diseases in goats, identifying good quality goats, buck castration, vaccination, de-worming and tagging etc.
- ❖ Training on the selection and extending support to *Pashu Sakhis*.
- ❖ MIS training to assess the total input and output costs
- ❖ Grading of *Pashu Sakhis*
- ❖ Filling up of formats for buying/selling of goats

These paravets play a very crucial role in sustaining the *Pashu Sakhis* model of providing health care services to the livestock. They provide a constant back-stopping to the *Pashu Sakhis*, right from assisting them over the phone to visiting a particular household, to review and help with services provided by them. The fortnightly records of treatment provided by the *Pashu Sakhis* are closely monitored by the paravets who provide them with feedback on any changes in practices they need to make. A paravet is also responsible for delivering/providing the *Pashu Sakhis* with medicines and vaccines in case they fall short, since there is no provision of storing the vaccines in a refrigerator in their neighbourhood.

The paravets attend all the fortnightly meetings<sup>7</sup> of the *Pashu Sakhis*, which are convened on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> day of every month, and remain in close contact with all of them. They also facilitate and link the *Pashu Sakhis* with the chemist from whom the medicines are purchased on a regular basis.

### **Feed and Fodder**

*Pashu Sakhis* are also trained in preparing low cost feed for livestock. This comprises of mainly two types of feed namely urea treated fodder, also known as '*ture ka achaar*' locally, and, a grain mixture. Urea treated fodder is mostly prepared for the summer months when the green fodder availability is scarce. This involves mixing 2 kg of urea with 20 litres of water followed by sprinkling this solution on hay. This hay is then wrapped tightly in a large polythene sheet and kept in a dry and shaded place for 21 days. After 21 days, the urea treated fodder or silage is ready for feeding the goats and cattle. Goat rearers confirmed that this treated fodder is also good in curing animals which are suffering from indigestion, and is a good substitute for green fodder during the summer season.

*Pashu Sakhis* also prepare a feed mixture using the locally available grains and sell it for Rs 22 per kg. The preparation of this feed mixture costs the *Pashu Sakhis* approximately Rs 16-17 per kg. The table below details the quantity and price of the ingredients used to prepare 50 kg of the feed mixture:

<b>Feed components</b>	<b>Quantity (in Kg)</b>	<b>Price per Kg (in Rs)</b>	<b>Total Cost (in Rs)</b>
Wheat	10	16	160
Jowar	10	12	120
Maize	5	15	75
<i>Bajra</i> (Pearl Millet)	10	12	120
<i>Methi</i> (Fenugreek seeds)	5	32	160
<i>Sarson</i> (Mustard seeds)	5	32	160
<i>Til</i> (Sesame seeds)	3	30	90
Salt	1	10	10
<i>Sendha Namak</i> (Rock Salt)	1	4	4
<b>Total quantity = 50kg</b>			<b>899</b>

### **Goat Rearing Groups**

With the aim to better equip goat rearers with the knowledge of best management practices in goat rearing, and also to encourage peer-to-peer learning, Ibtada introduced formation of goat rearing groups also called *Bakri Palak Samuh* in year 2012.

The basic criteria to be a member of this group are:

- A GRG member must be a member of a Self Help Group
- She must have 3-10 goats or have goat rearing experience in the past.
- She should be willing to get the goats insured.
- She should be willing to avail services of the *Pashu Sakhi*.
- Most importantly, she should be willing to attend the monthly meetings

Training of the members of the goat rearing groups was also introduced by Ibtada in 2012. They are provided a 16 months long, extensive training in goat management practices both by the paravet as well as the *Pashu Sakhis*. The training is spread across 16 sections which is imparted over the period of 16 months. A detailed pictorial manual displaying the various diseases in goats, management practices, goat breeds and feeding practices is used to educate GRG members. As the paravets preside over these training sessions, detailed manuals on conducting GRG workshops are also frequently referred to, in addition to the tools and techniques which are adapted to train GRG members.

<sup>7</sup> A *Pashu Sakhi* review meeting was attended on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2014, details of which can be accessed from a news article on the SA PPLPP website – <http://saplpp.org/news/pashu-sakhi-meeting-convened-in-pratapgarh-tehsil-of-thanagazhi-block-alwar>

### ***Formation of Federations***

With the aim to decentralize governance and extend better services to the SHG members, they were organized into clusters which were further grouped into Federations, which is a registered body under 'The Rajasthan Public Trust Act 1959'. There are a total of 5 Federations in 4 blocks of Alwar namely the Kranti Mahilla Manch in Lachhmangarh Block, Jagriti and Chetna Mahilla Manch in Thanagazi Block, Sangharsh Mahilla Manch in Ramgarh Block and Savera Mahilla Manch in Umren Block.

Each Federation appoints its own *Munshis* and a Manager. The total corpus in March 2014 of the Chetna Mahilla Manch, also known as the Pratapgarh Federation, is Rs 205,000. The Federation also has a fixed deposit of Rs 12 lakhs. About Rs 750,000 was spent by the Federation on various agricultural activities and Rs13 lakhs was disbursed to the goat rearing groups in 2013 for the purchase of goats.

Each member of the Self Help Groups who form part of the Federation has to deposit a one-time fee of Rs 21 to be a part of it. The Federation lends money to SHGs to facilitate purchase of goat units at the annual interest rate of 12 percent. In addition, the Federation also lends personal loans<sup>8</sup> to villagers at the interest rate of 18 percent per annum. The interest earned from the personal loans helps towards building up of the Federation's corpus, strengthening it further to include more and more development programmes.

The approximate membership of a Federation is 3,000-3,500 members<sup>9</sup>. Usually 150-200 SHGs comprise one Federation for example 10-11 SHGs form a cluster and 20 clusters form a Federation.

SHGs at the cluster level have monthly meetings which are attended by 2 members from each SHG. In the Federation meetings, which happen on a quarterly basis, 2 members from each cluster (President and the Vice president of the SHG group) are supposed to attend the Federation meetings.

### ***Livestock Insurance***

Goat insurance formed one of the integral components of the goat unit package which was implemented in year 2007 under the Heifer International Project implemented by Ibtada. The cost of the goat package, comprising 3 goats, was so designed that Rs 400 per goat was fixed towards the insurance amount of one animal. Of the amount, Rs 200 was towards the vaccination<sup>10</sup> and de-worming of goats, to ensure that the goats are vaccinated by the *Pashu Sakhis* and due follow-up is provided by the paravets who would keep track of the system. The remaining Rs 200 was towards the sum insured for each goat. The villages where Heifer International project is still running, the total insurance amount per goat has been increased to Rs 600; Rs 200 towards the vaccination and de-worming of goats for one year and Rs 400 is the sum insured, ten times of which will be reimbursed in case of goat mortality.

Owing to the success of the goat insurance model which formed part of the HI project, the Community Insurance programme also known as 'Samudaik Suraksha Yojana' was initiated in year 2012. The authority in charge of this community insurance system is the respective Women's Federation in that block. The sum insured for each goat depends upon the cost of the goat. The minimum amount for which the goat insurance is done is Rs 100 and maximum is Rs 500 per goat

A comprehensive procedure is followed for insuring a goat. The *Pashu Sakhi* visits the livestock rearer, who wants to get her goats insured, after 15 days of purchase of the goat and conducts a detailed physical health check up, comprising counting of teeth to verify its age, checking the body weight, taking temperature and checking for the coat colour and quality. Some of the major characteristics (identifying features) of the goats are noted down for identification later.

Following are some of the salient features of this community insurance system:

1. Of the total insured amount for a goat, the total amount payable is 10 times of the said amount. For example, if a goat has been insured for Rs 100, a rearer is eligible to claim Rs 1,000 for the goat if it dies, provided it meets the following criteria:

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<sup>8</sup> A personal loan is usually taken for marriage purposes or construction of a house etc. The local money lender provides these loans at a very high annual interest rate of 25 to 30 percent.

<sup>9</sup> Since each SHG has approximately 15-18 group members, the total number of members in a federation are approximately 3,000-3,500.

<sup>10</sup> Four vaccinations were included in this namely ET, PPR, FMD and Sheep pox.

- ❖ Full insurance amount is payable in case of mortality of the animal due to some disease for which prior treatment was given to the said animal. Mortality due to accident or predation is not covered under these criteria.
  - ❖ 40 percent of insurance amount is payable in case of an infertile animal.
  - ❖ 50 percent insurance is provided in case the animal suffers a paralytic attack.
  - ❖ The claim has to be verified by 3 members of the Goat Rearing Group, in addition to the *Pashu Sakhi* and paravet of that area.
2. The maximum insurance amount is fixed at Rs 400 per goat only. Till date the maximum amount of insurance disbursed to the livestock rearer has been Rs 4,000. It is only in case of the rearers who rear breeds like Sirohi, which cost approximately Rs 6,500-7,000, that they are insured for the highest amount. Almost 80-85 families have got their goats insured for Rs 400 for breeds like Sirohi and Totapuri. Livestock rearers prefer to insure only healthy and milking animals.

The insurance amount is usually released within 15 days to one month's time of the day the goat mortality incident is reported. In the present model the unused premium amount lapses at the end of the year. The Federation, however, is already thinking of ways to make the unused premium beneficial to the livestock rearers.

Numbers of claims settled in 2012-2013 were 54 of the 56 claims received; 2 claims were rejected as they were cases of predation. While almost all the goat rearers do renew the insurance policy of their goats, the dropout rate, since inception of this component in the programme, has been about 5 to 10 percent.

The mortality in goats due to diseases, which was 25-30 percent earlier, has reduced to only 5-6 percent now. In the Thanagazi block, including the Pratapgarh village, the total number of households which are covered under the community insurance model, as of March 2014 is 400 and the total number of goats is approximately 1,350. In 2012, when this model was introduced, there were only 100 goats insured from approximately 20-25 households.

### **Monitoring**

With the aim to constantly monitor the progress and pitfalls at an organizational level, Ibtada, practices a Participatory Self Review Plan process on a quarterly basis. Under this PSRP process, the work plans for the forthcoming quarter are designed and the achievements/shortcomings from the previous quarter are reviewed against the projected goals. A similar process is now also followed at the *Pashu Sakhi* level, as well as the Goat Rearing Group level, to closely monitor the ongoing activities and gauge their success and shortcomings.

### **Major Challenges and Up-scaling**

**Literacy:** While literacy was one of the major constraints in up-scaling the *Pashu Sakhi* model, Ibtada tackled it through the continuous support and training provided to the *Pashu Sakhis*. Right after the first training which was provided in year 2007, Ibtada constantly revised their training methodology by way of minimizing the use of technical terms, labeling of medicines using simple to understand illustrations/drawings etc. These illustrations helped *Pashu Sakhis* identify the correct medicines during the initial years. However, gradually through practice and training, *Pashu Sakhis* can now identify the medicines through the colour and font combinations of the label names in addition to the seals marked on the medicines. The *Pashu Sakhis* narrated few incidents where they insisted on buying the original brand of a particular medicine, refusing to purchase the medicine with even minor changes in the seal and brand name.



Labels used on the medicine and tonic bottles for easy identification by *Pashu Sakhis*

**Awareness among goat rearers:** In spite of door to door services provided by the *Pashu Sakhis* it was observed that there was not much change in the management practices among the goat rearers. With the aim to facilitate peer-to-peer learning, Goat Rearing Groups were formed and dedicated training programmes were introduced for the goat rearers. These groups gradually also formed the basis for the expansion of the goat-based livelihood programme as also the community insurance model.

## Pashu Sakhis from the Umren Block of District Alwar in Rajasthan

*“We always thought that there is no cure if an animal falls sick, until we got associated and learnt from the trainings imparted by Ibtada”, says **Pashu Sakhi Geeta***

***Pashu Sakhi Akbari** recalls, “The first large ruminant I treated was my own buffalo. I was very scared, as I needed to prove my skills to my own family. The buffalo responded well to the treatment and the family saved Rs 900 which they would have had to pay if they called a veterinarian”.*



*From left to right: Jamsheda, Akbari, Mukesh, Radha, Sarla, Tara, Barfi and Sarita*

A meeting was organized with the *Pashu Sakhis*, from Umren block in Alwar. These *Pashu Sakhis* have 2 to 7 years of experience, depending upon the first training they received from Ibtada. In addition to providing services in their own villages, they also provide services to livestock in neighbouring hamlets and villages. The number of households catered to by these *Pashu Sakhis* is anywhere between 100 and 500. Health care services are provided to goat, sheep, cow, buffalo and horses too. On an average they are able to earn Rs 2,500-3,000 every month.

The *Pashu Sakhis* shared that they take a round of their village twice a week to check the well-being of the livestock. They keep records of various health care services provided to the livestock and a copy of these records is handed over to the paravets during the fortnightly review meetings. Many *Pashu Sakhis* who cannot read or write themselves, get these records written from their children on daily basis.

All the *Pashu Sakhis* shared that, it was because of the support provided by their respective families that they manage to provide good services to the livestock in the village. Right from staying out for 5 day training, to attending fortnightly and monthly meetings, to travelling to neighbouring villages, their families approved of and appreciated their work, and this has instilled more confidence in them. They are determined to learn more in this field especially about artificial insemination, uterine prolapse and pregnancy diagnosis, as they receive a lot of requests from the village households for this service, in addition to a good remuneration that they would receive.

*“My elder brother who lives in the neighbouring village, once picked me up at 2 a.m. as his cow was suffering from a severe stomach ache. No other doctor would be available at that time”, shared **Pashu Sakhi Radha**.*

***Pashu Sakhi Barfi** shares, “We keep a check on the cleanliness of the shed and drinking water. Livestock rearers, unlike earlier, now have a lot of expectations from us”.*

## Case Studies

### *Livestock rearer's perception of services provided by Pashu Sakhi Radha*

A meeting was organized with a few women livestock rearers of the Nanglimegha village in Ramgarh block of Alwar district of Rajasthan, where *Pashu Sakhi* Radha has been providing health care services to the livestock for the last 5 years. Radha, who is educated till class five, received her first training from Ibtada, in livestock health care in 2009, and, has since, been providing services to livestock of not only her own village but to neighbouring villages as well. Kallo, a livestock rearer, shared that earlier, a frequent mortality in calves was observed due to *galghotu* (Foot and Mouth Disease) and white worms in the stomach. However, after provision of health care services by Radha, she confirmed that calf mortality has now come down. Another livestock rearer, Santra, shared that the rate of abortions in goats was high. Now, however, after feeding the goats, on a regular basis, with mineral mixture, the number of abortions has come down. 'Due to poor nutrition the cows and goats were not coming to oestrus, for which Radha suggested that the animals be fed on sprouted wheat grains for 5-6 days', shared Santra. She added that this was a very effective method of treating temporary infertility in livestock. The livestock rearers shared that, the veterinary officer who rarely visits their village to take stock of the livestock health, never contradicts the treatment provided by Radha. Rather, many a times, when he prescribes a certain medicine for the livestock, he indicates that they should collect it from Radha, who generally stocks all the basic medicine for fever, diarrhoea etc. Radha's neighbour Kallo informed that earlier no one in her family was ready to take any services for their livestock. However, now her husband himself, asks Kallo to call Radha if any of their livestock is ailing.

### *Pashu Sakhi Meena*

Meena and her husband, Om Prakash, are residents of Madanpuri village in Ramgarh block of Alwar district in Rajasthan. They have three school going children. Om Prakash is an electrician by profession. The family owns one and a half *bighas* of agricultural land, on which wheat, *jowar* and *bajra* are sown. Their land is rainfed, however, they buy water from their neighbour, who has a bore well, at Rs 70-80 for one hour<sup>11</sup>.

Radha has studied till class five. She has been a member of the Ganga Self Help Group since 2007. It was during the same year that she was unanimously nominated by the group to receive her first *Pashu Sakhi* training.

'In spite of getting trained in providing livestock health care services, I lacked confidence, and for almost a week after the training, I did not try venturing out and looking for ailing livestock, until I was contacted by my immediate neighbour to treat her goat who was suffering from severe diarrhoea', shared Meena. She added that on the same day, she was also called for treating a buffalo that was suffering from a severe cold and was shivering. 'To my own surprise, both the goat and the buffalo recovered well, and I was thinking how easily I could have saved my 3 heifers that died of diarrhoea just a month prior to receiving this training', marked Meena. She added that none of her own livestock has died of any disease ever since she received the training and has started providing health care services. Meena has been attending all the refresher trainings, which happen every six months. She shared that the refresher trainings every six months helped them to remain updated and was also a good opportunity to exchange one's knowledge and learning and experiences.

Meena shared that earlier there were 150-200 goats in her village, and in one day she could easily vaccinate all of them at a stretch starting at 9 a.m. in the morning. She shared that the number of goats has now come down to 100 approximately, while the number of buffaloes has increased.



<sup>11</sup> Wheat requires 3 irrigation cycles, and, for one and half *bighas* of land, one cycle of irrigation takes approximately 5 hours costing Rs 1,200 at the rate of Rs 400 for each water cycle.

Meena received an honorarium of Rs 500 per month when she first started providing services to the livestock, and presently she is able to make a monthly earning of Rs 3,000-3,500. While people readily pay for services provided to cattle, they are still reluctant to pay for treatment of their goats and prefer to wait for their goats to recover and only then are payments made. She shared that in situations where she realizes that the health condition of an animal is severely deteriorated; she immediately recommends that the veterinary doctor be called.

‘My sister in law is quite motivated by my work and earnings, and has several times asked me to also teach her the basics of animal health care services’, told Meena. She further shared that she is most keen on learning more about pregnancy diagnoses in cattle as it also involves a good remuneration. She shared that the veterinary doctor for this diagnosis charges Rs 100 per animal and if the results are positive, the veterinarian is paid Rs 200 for the same diagnosis.

Meena narrated an incident, where a family from the neighbouring village had called upon her to treat their ailing buffalo at 9 pm in the night. ‘I was reluctant to go to the neighbouring village assuming that my in-laws would object, as my husband was also out of town. To my surprise my mother in law herself asked me go out and help and took care of my children till I got back home’, shared Meena. She added that, over the past few years, she has earned a very good name and respect for herself, both from her own family, as well as from the villagers. ‘It makes me feel proud and I wish to continue providing these services to the best of my knowledge and ability’, marked a smiling Meena.

### **Pashu Sakhi Geeta**

*Pashu Sakhi* Geeta Kanwar is a resident of Narhet village in Pratapgarh tehsil of Thanagazi block of Alwar district in Rajasthan. Geeta lives in her own house with her husband, Rajveer Singh, and 2 school going children. They own 2 *bighas* of agricultural land on which wheat, mustard and *bajra* are grown. The land is irrigated using bore-well. Geeta’s husband works in Jaipur as a security guard. Geeta owns a cow, a calf and a heifer and 3 goats who have been insured.



Geeta received her first training in 2009. She started with providing health care services to goats and later extended health care services to cattle as well. Geeta has studied till class five and was not able to read any labels on the medicines.

As a member of an SHG, she received an opportunity to visit the neighbouring Saalwari village as part of an exposure trip to see the functioning of goat rearing groups and *Pashu Sakhis*. Post this exposure visit, there were discussions in her SHG, regarding the *Pashu Sakhi* training programme for which Geeta readily volunteered. ‘Our financial condition was also very poor at that time and, I thought that this training would provide me with a good livelihood opportunity’, shared Geeta. She said that she also convinced her husband and in-laws who agreed to support her and look after her children. Geeta also did not have any livestock at that time.

After the training, Geeta provided her first service to their immediate neighbour’s goat, who was suffering from severe diarrhoea. The goat was saved and this was a motivating factor for Geeta. However, soon after one of her recently purchased goats got ill and despite treatment, Geeta was not able to save the animal. ‘I was tense and thought it best to work outside my village for some time, both to gain experience and to not lose goodwill among my own village members’. During that time, a number of goats in Bhuriawas village got sick and she was called



upon to provide vaccination services there. 'It was a great opportunity as I vaccinated almost 150 goats on one day in addition to treating 9 goats for diarrhoea and severe cold. I was both excited and concerned and, therefore, the following day, I set out to visit the village early in the morning', shared Geeta. 'It was a great relief to see that all the vaccinated and treated goats were doing well. I even received Rs 150 for treating 9 goats; the medicine used for treatment was already a part of the medical kit, I was provided during the training', added Geeta.

Gradually Geeta started provided services to large ruminants too. Geeta shared that more and more livestock fall sick during the winter months when she has to attend to as many as 4-5 cases on daily basis unlike summer month when she is called once in 2-3 days.

Geeta charges Rs 5 for vaccinating goats and Rs 10 for vaccinating cows and buffaloes. She charges Rs 20-30 for administering medicine for cold and cough, Rs 30-40 for fever and Rs 10-12 for administering replanta, a medicine that induces shedding of placenta after delivery.

Geeta also encourages livestock rearers to insure their goats, and shares that, in her village, people are positive about this venture. Geeta, in her capacity of a *Pashu Sakhi*, has herself approved of a couple of claims of goat rearers, which have been disbursed to them in good time.

'Many livestock rearers in the village tend to buy medicines on credit and, therefore, I not only keep a record in my register, but also hand over a slip, with the due amount mentioned, to the livestock rearer for future reference', told Geeta. 'I was also regular with going around in the village and visiting households to check their livestock management practices until last year, when my son contracted cancer, after which I have been constantly pre-occupied and focusing upon his treatment', shared Geeta. Her son is undergoing chemotherapy from Jaipur and requires a lot of post-chemo attention.

Geeta is keen to learn about pregnancy diagnosis, in addition to treating prolapsed uterus, artificial insemination and cleaning procedure after the abortion in livestock. Geeta narrated that once her own buffalo fell ill and in spite of all the treatment she was not able to cure it and had to call upon the veterinary doctor who attended to the buffalo and gave her a calcium supplement to feed the buffalo. Geeta mentioned that the doctor refused to take any fee and, said that they were in the same profession and, therefore, he would not charge her. 'I felt so proud of myself at that moment', marked Geeta.

'My profession as a *Pashu Sakhi* has helped me a lot to cope with financial problems few years back, and even today, as we are spending all our savings on getting good treatment for our son. I am hopeful that I will be able to continue to support my family', said Geeta. 'I have earned a lot of goodwill and respect from my village, owing to the timely health care services provided to their livestock, and I am, therefore, hopeful that my son will soon recover from this dreadful disease.

### **Pashu Sakhi Suman Devi**

*Pashu Sakhi* Suman Devi is a resident of Bhuriawas village in Thanagazhi block of Alwar district of Rajasthan. Suman and her husband, Leelaram, 2 school going children and a 3-year old son, live in a joint family. Suman has studied till class 5. The family owns 1 *bigha* of rainfed land, on which *bajra* and maize are grown. They also own 10 goats comprising 3 does and 7 kids. Leelaram works as a wage labour and takes up construction related work in neighbouring villages and manages to earn Rs 400 per day. Prior to the birth of their third child, three years ago, Suman and Leelaram used to migrate to Punjab for 8-9 months at a stretch to work at the brick making units and earn Rs 200-250 per day.

Suman shared that she was in need of work owing to the poor financial condition of the family and, therefore, when the SHG members suggested her name for the training, Suman readily agreed. Suman received her first training in December 2013. It was a six day residential training programme which was held in Naugaon, 100 km away from the Bhuriawas village. 'I took my three year old son along for the training, while the elder children were looked after by my mother-in-law', shared



Suman. For the 2-day refresher training Suman went to Lucknow, where the training was convened by 'The Goat Trust'.

A week after Suman came back from training at Naugaon, she was called by her neighbour to check on their cow, whose placenta had not come out after giving birth to a calf. Suman administered Replanta powder along with some water to the cow, and soon after the cow shed the placenta. As Replanta formed part of the medicine kit provided to Suman, she only charged Rs 10 towards treating the cow. Later, during the same week, she was joined by paravet Motilal, to vaccinate 7 goats against Enterotoxemia (ET), for which Suman charged Rs 5 per goat. She mentioned that in her village, people are still apprehensive to get their goats vaccinated and, have at most agreed to only get de-worming done. She shared that a livestock rearer who keeps 50 sheep got all his sheep vaccinated against sheep pox in February 2014 for which Suman charged Rs 5 per sheep. Suman shared that she was also contacted by a few households in the neighbouring hamlets, to vaccinate their goats against PPR and ET in February 2014, for which she had charged Rs 5 per goat. 'I vaccinated a total of 100 goats for which cash payment was made only for approximately 60 goats; the remaining is on credit until now', shared Suman.

'It has only been 3 months since I started practicing and, therefore, in order to ensure that I prescribe the correct medicines, I call up either the paravet Motilal or Ibtada's Field Coordinator, Shyoramji, to discuss the health condition and the medicine that I am prescribing', mentioned Suman. Suman shared that the closest veterinary dispensary is in the Pratapgarh village and there has been no veterinary doctor there, for the past one year. She added that there has not been an incident that she had to advise the livestock rearer to call upon the veterinary doctor. 'It is mostly between me, Motilal ji and Shyoram ji, that we have handled all the difficult situations together.

Suman receives a monthly honorarium of Rs 700 and manages to earn Rs 300-400 from the services provided to the livestock.

### **Pashu Sakhi Beela**

*Pashu Sakhi* Beela is a resident of Neenjara village in Thanagazi block of Alwar district. Neenjara is a remote village with 60-70 households, inhabited by the Gujjar and Meena community. Beela belongs to Gujjar community and has four children aged between 4 and 9 years. Her husband works as a driver in the mines in the neighbouring village and visits the family once in 7-8 months only. His monthly income is Rs 5,000. The family owns 2 *bighas* of well-irrigated land and harvests both *Rabi* as well as *Kharif* crops of wheat, mustard, *bajra*, *jowar*, maize and vegetables like onions and lady finger. They also own 20 goats comprising 4 bucks, 8 does and 8 kids.

Beela received her first training in December 2012. 'Soon after the training, I vaccinated my own herd of goats against Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). After four days of coming back from training, one of my neighbour called me to treat her goat that was suffering from stomach pain, which I successfully managed', shared Beela who has by now vaccinated more than 125 goats (50 each against PPR and FMD and 25 against ET) most of whom belonged to the people who are not a part of the goat rearing group. Beela shared that her husband was very apprehensive about sending her for the training as most people in the neighbourhood influenced him by saying that if any livestock died while treatment, they will have to compensate the family for the loss. Beela's mother-in-law, however, supported her and Beela went to Naugaon for the 5 days training. 'It was for the first time that I travelled by train; even my husband has never been in a train till date', said a smiling Beela.

Beela is a member of the Bajrang Self Help Group and Tejaji Bakri Palak Samuh. In May 2013, Beela took a loan of Rs 30,000 from the federation to buy 5 goats, at an interest rate of 12 percent per annum. She pays an EMI of Rs 1,000 every month. Beela got all the five goats insured for Rs 250 each, in addition to getting her two earlier goats insured too for the same amount. Beela lost two of her goats a couple of months ago; while one of the goats just got lost in the wilderness while grazing and never came back, the other one died of developing infection in an injury caused by a sharp object. Beela received the claim of Rs 2,500 in one and a half months. 'I assume that a leopard took my other goat away, as it never came back', lamented Beela. She shared that *Pashu Sakhi* Nawaldei from the neighbouring Kalopara village, which is 4-5 km away, came to verify the claim submitted by Beela.

Beela shared that, in addition to 5-7 families who are member of the goat rearing group, and have bought goats and insurance, after availing loans from the group, she has additionally motivated 8 more families to get their goats insured. She informed that due to proximity to the forest, the predation of goats by leopards is very rampant and, therefore, many people are not willing to get their livestock insured, since there is no provision of claim on predation.

Beela shared that people are reluctant to pay for the treatment provided to goats, until and unless they get cured completely. She added further that, because of their caste difference, the Meena families in the village are reluctant to take services from Beela.

‘I shall get my remaining goats re-insured as the insurance term ends in few months’, said Beela. She added, ‘To receive 10 times of the insured amount is a big thing for me, for at least I got something back, else it would have been a big loss incurred due to the death of my goat’.

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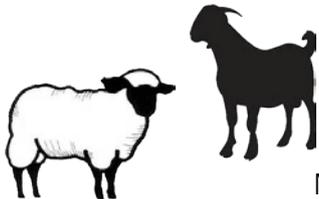
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