

## International Women's Day celebrations at Sehgal Foundation

International Women's Day, March 8, is a day to commemorate and celebrate women and their achievements. This is a celebration that should continue *each* day to honor women, strive for gender equality, end all forms of violence, recognize women as decision-makers, and celebrate their voices and their being.

Women's empowerment is central to all work at Sehgal Foundation. Seeing the remarkable shift from negligible participation by women to active participation in foundation programs and initiatives has been a profound experience for the team. Several women-led initiatives, including the women's leadership schools, *mahila sangathans* (women's collectives), women farmer groups, and girls in the digital literacy classes, have resulted in the creation of a growing number of women thought leaders in villages who drive the development of their communities.

Women's day celebrations at Sehgal Foundation locations across seven states were no less than a festival, as each one presented a colorful bouquet of the fruits of empowerment that have changed many lives in rural areas. Sharing, caring, and exchange occurred like never before. This wave of empowerment is inspiring to see and be a part of! Below are glimpses of the celebrations . . .

**Nuh, Haryana:** A *mahila sammelan* (women's conclave) was organized in village Ghaghas. More than 100 women from all over the district participated and shared their empowering experiences. A new radio series, *Bachpan Express*, on community radio Alfaz-e-Mewat FM 107.8, in partnership with UNICEF and Community Radio Association addressed early marriage and continuing girl child education. Anisha Bano, chairperson of Zilla Parishad, was the chief guest. She was joined by Tahira Begum, chairperson of Block Samiti, and Dr. Renu Sharma, deputy chief medical officer of Nuh District.



A legal literacy camp was held at Village Naushera of Nuh Block in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority, Nuh. Ms. Neeru Kamboj, chief judicial magistrate; Ms. Madhu Jain, protection officer; and Ms Chetna Kaura, head CSR, Sapient India, and officers from Women and Child Development and



Agriculture departments participated along with seven hundred citizens. Special emphasis at the camp was on sharing information about government programs for women.

**Mahendragarh, Haryana:** A health camp was organized for women in addition to a cultural program. Course completion certificates were distributed to the girls of Life Skills Education centers from villages Niyajalipur, Bayal, and Pachnota at village Niyajalipur of District Mahendragarh, Haryana, under the Parivartan Project supported by HDFC Bank. Around 300 women and girls participated in the event.

**Alwar, Rajasthan:** Students from digital literacy training centers participated in a program organized by NGOs Ibtada and Sapna in Alwar. A total of twenty-two students participated in the event, out of which four students also won prizes. A Sehgal Foundation stall featured sharing information about village development and welfare schemes.

**Muzzafarpur, Bihar:** Under the PTC India Pvt. Ltd. supported project, Sehgal Foundation organized a program on women's empowerment that included an interface of women with the elected representatives, government officials, representatives from private agencies, and common service centers. The program was attended by about ninety women from five project villages of PTC Foundation. This was chaired by Smt Poonam Gupta of Motipur Nagar Panchayat. Smt Geeta Kumari, ANM, Motipur, and Dr Ramesh Kumar Singh, chief medical officer, Motipur, also participated in the meeting. Government officials from the Animal Husbandry Department were present for the meeting. Information sharing on social welfare schemes benefited villagers who attended.

**New Delhi:** Sehgal Foundation was invited by UNESCO to be a part of Edit-a-thon organized to mark Women's Day. WIKI4WOMEN campaign was launched in 2018 on Women's Day in Paris, and this year Wikimedia with support from UN Women, UNESCO and Sweden Embassy, launched it in India. UNESCO showcased invited profiles from women across different sectors in India, including a profile of Sehgal Foundation team member Pooja O. Murada.



**Kolar, Karnataka:** A women's day program was held at village Obatti of Malur, Kolar, under CCF-V Jaldhara project. The interaction with village women included a discussion of the role of women in the efficient management of water resources, since



women are the primary handlers of water in households.

**Medchal, Telangana:** In village Lingapur of Medchal, Telangana, women gathered to learn about digital literacy and its benefits. Sehgal Foundation is working on a digital corridor project in village Nuthankal, Medchal with the support of partners including two government ministries as technical experts: National Informatics Center, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Hyderabad; and National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad; a corporate as CSR partner; and Sehgal Foundation as facilitation and implementing partner. Training was done with panchayati raj institutions on digital equipment and for preparing the Gram Panchayat Development Plan.

