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**POST PROJECT EVALUATION
FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND**

**UNDEF Funded Project / UDF-13-560-IND
Fostering Ethical Democracy and Advancing Micro-Justice in India**

12 September 2018

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to staff and volunteers from DHAN Foundation for supporting the evaluation visit and for sharing their knowledge and experiences with the evaluation. Much appreciated also are the inputs of project beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluator. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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Project Area

The geographical scope covered five states of India comprised Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan Tamil Nadu). In each state the project worked in one block in one district (population size of 50,000-100,000). The evaluator visited Tamil Nadu.



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I. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

This is an evaluation of the 'Fostering ethical democracy and advancing micro-justice in India' project which aimed to increase the engagement of citizens (particularly women, youth and students) in local democratic processes by increasing their capacities and giving access to entitlements and benefits through legal aid services. The project was implemented by the DHAN Foundation, over a period of 28 months, from June 2015 to September 2017 at an actual project cost of USD 213, 750. The project comprised the following main interventions implemented in five locations across India:

- Training of women in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) on democracy to foster engagement in village governance;
- Democracy education for students (under 18 years of age) through a Student Education Programme (SEP) on democracy to encourage participation in community initiatives;
- Training of youths (18-30 years of age) on democracy and the establishment of youth associations to facilitate engagement in democratic structures and community activities;
- Training of local officials and elected representatives and the convening of dialogue meetings with other beneficiary groups in dialogue;
- Micro-justice initiative comprised of training para-legal aid volunteers and the set up of legal aid clinics (LACs) to provide legal assistance;
- Right to Information (RTI) campaign to make communities aware of their legal rights to ask government authorities for information.

The evaluation was carried out in June 2018 by a sole evaluator with the aim of determining whether the project was implemented in accordance with the project document. The evaluation used the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and the added criterion of UNDEF-added value. It adopted a qualitative methodology which comprised of documentary review, including random sampling of original project records onsite, interviews with DHAN Foundation staff and volunteers, site visits in one out of five project areas (Madurai in Tamil Nadu) consisting of interviews and group meetings with project beneficiaries, and an email questionnaire for staff in other locations. In total, the evaluation received inputs from 169 individuals comprising 41 males and 128 females.

The key findings are as follows:

- The project was highly **relevant** and addressed key deficits in Indian democracy in terms of the lack of capacity of marginalised groups to engage with democratic structures and the lack of knowledge and access to benefits and entitlements that already exist. Gender equality and human rights were fully integrated into the design. However, the design was very ambitious

which led to challenges in implementation. The project covered five geographically dispersed states (four of which were new to DHAN's democracy programme), it included new types of intervention (i.e. youth) and aimed at very high beneficiary targets (9,850). It aimed for completion within a two-year time frame and on a modest budget. The project was inevitably over-stretched, it did remarkably well to deliver on its commitments but at the cost of adequate time for follow-up, monitoring of outcomes, reflection and adaptation, particularly to ensure on-going relevance.

- The project was **effective** in achieving eight diverse outputs involving 10,000 beneficiaries. This was verified onsite by the evaluator through a review of sample original project records such as attendance sheets, feedback forms, photographs etc. The Micro-justice initiative and the SEP both have well-tracked outcomes showing a tangible difference made to beneficiary lives as a result of the project. The youth component, likewise, had positive benefits according to anecdotal evidence. For example, youth gained useful knowledge from the training and were inspired to carry out community initiatives such as assisting vulnerable people or promoting democratic participation by helping to update voter registration lists and distributing leaflets on the RTI. The SHG intervention showed the least results attributable to the project; while the SHG women are empowered and democratically active, this seems primarily thanks to work done by DHAN over many years rather than the UNDEF project specifically.
- Resources were used very **efficiently** given that all the above was achieved on a very modest actual project cost to UNDEF of US\$213, 750. This was only possible due to the in-kind support from DHAN's substantial infrastructure, its social capital with communities and its own financial contribution. However, weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation system were evident.
- There were clear tangible **impacts** on individual lives, for example, beneficiaries of the para-legal aid services talked about the difference made to them by receiving pensions, acquiring birth and death certificates, and gaining access to farming subsidies. Students and youths involved reported increased knowledge and confidence from training and the inspiration to do more community work. Also visible were impacts at community level through initiatives related to health such as the organisation of blood donation camps or tuition classes for children as well as environmental activities like tree-planting or village clean up campaigns.
- The project is a rare **sustainability** success story. DHAN has committed to scale up the project activities (i.e. building the capacity of women from SHGs to participate in local structures, RTI campaigns, and Micro-justice/paralegal services) in its strategic plan. Project activities will be replicated in 200 villages with money coming from surplus funds from SHG community savings schemes. The youth associations continue to receive support from DHAN and opportunities for integrating the SEP into distance learning by local universities is being explored.

- **UNDEF** added very special value to this project. The funding allowed DHAN to test long held ideas which were not being funded by other donors, to expand and develop its programme and now seek to replicate these initiatives across the country.

Overall this was a sound investment for UNDEF with significant achievements in terms of beneficiary reach going far beyond an average project. The Micro-justice component was particularly effective; much valued by communities and making a tangible difference to individual lives. The training provided by the project has left its mark on student and youth participants with the potential of engaging new generations in village democratic structures. The effects of work with SHGs under this project were indistinguishable from other work carried out by DHAN over many years to empower and engage SHG women in local democracy. The design was overly ambitious, leaving the project stretched with inadequate time to capture the results of its work and to optimise learning from the experience. A more focused project with limited geographic scope, intervention areas and beneficiary numbers would have been more manageable. Nonetheless, considering the positive effects and prospects of sustainability, UNDEF was able to add real and distinct value by funding this initiative.

The evaluation makes the following *key recommendations* to the DHAN Foundation and UNDEF.

Recommendations for DHAN Foundation

- **Pay more attention to project design** to ensure that it is based on a realistic assessment of organisational capacity to avoid over-reach, particularly in terms of taking on multiple new activities at the same time, keeping the geographic scope manageable and aiming for a realistic number of beneficiaries.
- **Strengthen the M&E system** so that it captures project activities and results throughout the project cycle which means a comprehensive system to measure baseline data, outputs, outcomes and impacts based on SMART¹ indicators.
- **Work in partnership with specialist organisations:** each thematic area has its complexities and it is not realistic to immediately acquire the requisite level of expertise. DHAN would benefit from working in partnerships with organisations with long-established experience especially when it comes to vulnerable groups, such as children, rather than seeking to implement directly.

Recommendations for UNDEF

- **Further assist grantees to check the robustness of project design** and plans before start-up. UNDEF may question grantees on their capacity to deliver in terms of taking on new geographic areas and types of work and adapt design and mitigate risks as far as possible

¹ SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound

within the process.

- **Provide more guidance to grantees on M&E** at the outset of implementation particularly stressing the importance of capturing outcomes and methods for doing so.

Lessons learned that could also be applied to other projects include:

- **Be realistic about organisational capacity** and be self-critical when considering capacity to deliver especially when working in new areas and on new subjects.
- **Plan for sustainability** for every component rather than leaving it to chance.
- **Consider risks to frontline staff working on human rights and democracy projects** who have the task of challenging established power structures on a day to day basis and are likely to face personal reprisals.
- **Remember accountability to beneficiaries.** Non-governmental organisations are used to holding other actors to account, but they too are accountable to the beneficiaries they serve and should ensure the institution of effective complaints mechanisms.
- **Be aware of power dynamics within communities** particularly when bringing different parts of the community together for joint activities and be alert to the need facilitate activities in a way that does not reinforce conventional power structures.
- **Act as a bridge between service providers and users** in locations where services and entitlements exist but are not being taken up.
- **Adapt information to the needs of different groups** when training on rights and democracy issues. It is necessary to consider what information citizens specifically need to exercise their democratic rights.
- **Capture outcomes on an on-going basis**, immediately after project interventions/events and at further stages. Otherwise, the effects of the intervention are lost and become indistinguishable from other interventions.

II. PROJECT CONTEXT

The project and implementing agency

This is an evaluation of the 'Fostering ethical democracy and advancing micro-justice in India' project which was implemented over a 28-month period from June 2015 to September 2017 (including a four-month extension) at an actual project cost to UNDEF of USD 213, 750. The project aimed to strengthen the engagement of citizens (particularly women, youth and

students) in local democratic processes by increasing their capacities and giving access to entitlements and benefits through legal aid services. The geographical scope covered five states of India comprised of two rural states (Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka) and 3 tribal states (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Odisha). In each state the project worked in one block of one district (population size of 50,000-100,000).

The project was implemented by the DHAN Foundation, a civil society organisation established in 1997, with a mission to build the capacity of people and institutions in order to foster self-reliance and alleviate poverty. DHAN works in 14 states in India and reaches 1.7 million families through several programmes involving community banking, agricultural development, coastal conservation, information technology for the poor and the 'Working with Panchayets Programme' which encompassed the UNDEF project. DHAN also comprises the Tata-DHAN Academy, an institution for professional Development



*Evaluation Meeting with Students and Youths
(Credit: A. Naik)*

Management education, as well as the DHAN People's Academy (DPA) aimed at building the competencies of grassroots organisations. DHAN's overall strategy is to organise communities and interest groups into self-governing People's organisations engaged in development processes through an exercise of direct democracy. DHAN is a very substantial organisation which in 2017 managed a Programme fund of US\$ 242.66 million (this includes member savings, loans from banks and other project based revolving funds) and Programme Management funds US\$ 7.62 million (finance mobilised for meeting administrative expenditures and staff costs).

Evaluation objective and methodology

The evaluation took place after project end with the aim of determining whether it was implemented in accordance with the project document and to see if anticipated outcomes were achieved. The evaluation aims to feed into wider lessons learned in order to help UNDEF devise funding priorities and future strategies relating to its overall goal of strengthening human rights and democratic processes and in improving grant management processes.

The evaluator used the OECD - DAC evaluation criteria for assessment, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability plus an additional non-DAC criterion, UNDEF value-added. Evaluation questions were developed under this framework and guided the evaluation enquiry (see Annex 1). The following mixed methodology was used: 1) documentary review including project management documents and external literature (see Annex 2 for list of documents reviewed); 2) Site visit to one of five project areas and headquarters of DHAN - Madurai (Tamil Nadu). This location was selected for logistical reasons due to prohibitive weather conditions elsewhere and for in-depth onsite review of original project data. The site visit comprised staff interviews and documentary review at

DHAN headquarters as well as visits to nearby field locations for group meetings with stakeholders from project villages; 3) Email questionnaire to project staff in four areas not visited by the evaluator. The evaluation schedule is in Annex 3. A total 169 individuals were consulted comprising 128 females and 41 males - a breakdown of evaluation contributors is shown in Table 1 below. This sample included all key project stakeholders were consulted: project beneficiaries, SHG women, students, youths, recipients of legal aid services and RTI campaigns, and government officials and elected representatives, as well as project personnel - DHAN staff and volunteers.

Category	Male	Female	Total
DHAN Foundation Staff	16	9	25
Self-Help Groups		97	97
Youth	14	5	19
Paralegal volunteers and beneficiaries	4	5	9
Government officials and elected representatives	2	7	9
Students	2	5	7
Community members	3		3
Total	41	128	169

Table 1: Breakdown of evaluation contributors

Development context and problems addressed

India is the largest democracy in the world and despite its vast diversity in terms of geography, culture, language and lifestyle, it has been able to integrate its citizens into a democratic political system. The government has initiated policies and programmes to facilitate building democratic and participatory processes to help citizen engagement such as the Right to Information Act (2005), Social Audits of major government programmes, support to Citizens' Charters and so on.

However, major challenges remain in terms of the accessibility and utility of the democratic system to all sectors of the population. Indian democracy is highly imbalanced in terms of gender, geographic context and institutional spread with communities in rural and tribal areas experiencing the most exclusion. People in these project target areas are often unaware of their rights and entitlements to public services or information and affordable and accessible legal services are missing. This has resulted in poor access to government welfare services among under-served communities. In a system of representative democracy, scholars highlight the risks of power lying in the hands of the elite and those with money, leading to scandals about corruption, cronyism, and vote rigging. These factors hinder the engagement of disadvantaged groups in the democratic process with the result that women and the poor, are in effect excluded from having a meaningful say over their lives.

The project aimed to address these deficits through an intervention aimed at village level governance. The Indian system comprises a third tier of government below District level

administration consisting of Village, Block, and District Level Panchayats. These Panchayats do not have policy making powers but take care of welfare and development functions. The Village Panchayat is at the bottom of the democratic pyramid and is the entry point for the project being evaluated. These Village Panchayats have Voters Councils known as “Gram Sabhas” where the voters meet (at least twice in a year, mandated meetings) and approve Village level development works, give views, and raise local issues with government executives. Politics at this level are non-party based, allowing scope for the participation of independent candidates. In India, there are about 3.2 million elected representatives in the Panchayat system of which about 40% are women and 24% are from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe communities; their participation is enabled by reservation targets set by the government.

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

Project strategy and approach

The goal of the project was to build the capacity of citizens to actively participate in local democratic processes. The project objective was to empower tribal and rural women, youth and students through a strategy which involved training women from SHGs, students and youths, and by providing para-legal aid services through a Micro-justice initiative and Right to Information campaigns to support the wider community. Another core strategy of the project was to complement existing government programmes and systems in order to improve services and demonstrate a workable design for replication in other areas.

The intended beneficiaries comprised:

- Direct beneficiaries – Total 9,850 comprised of 7,500 women (1,500 per area); 1,000 youth defined as 18-25 year olds (200 per area); 1,000 students defined as 12-17 year olds (200 per area); 250 para-legal volunteers (50 per area); involvement of 100 elected representatives and officials.
- Indirect beneficiaries – Total approximately 50,000 persons across all 5 project sites were expected to indirectly benefit from the mass RTI campaign and the provision of para-legal services.

Project implementation was structured over two years: the first year laid the foundation by training women, youth, students and elected representatives/officials; and the second year involved putting this training into practice through community initiatives: the setting up of youth associations, dialogue meetings between citizens and officials/politicians, a RTI campaign and the provision of legal aid services. The project was broken down into eight outputs and two outcomes with four outputs planned to result in the achievement of Outcome 1 in Year 1 and the remaining four outputs to be delivered in Year 2 and result in Outcome 2. The two outcomes of the project were:

- Outcome 1: Develop the capacities of women, youth and students on democratic practices and tools, ensuring their practice and participation in democratic processes.
- Outcome 2: Democracy initiatives through dialogue meetings with local authorities and elected representatives alongside facilitating increased awareness of the Right to information Act and para-legal support.

The project objective and intervention rationale

The project logical framework in Annex 5 aims to capture the project's *initial* logic systematically and attempts to link activities and intended outcomes with medium-term impacts and long-term development objectives, as indicated in the grantee's Project Document.

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

(i) Relevance

The project was relevant to the democratic context. It addressed the following key gaps in local governance in terms of the capacity of women, youth, and students on democratic tools; institutional mechanisms for excluded groups on democratic rights and entitlements; information and access mechanisms on entitlements; and accessible, fast and affordable legal assistance. The strategy of awareness-raising of excluded groups on democratic rights and

Box 1

Villagers speak out about the barriers to accessing entitlements

"I am Nagajothi. I am 55 years of age and live in a village in Tamil Nadu. After my husband died, I tried many times to obtain a pension but without success. Village officials wouldn't help and instead asked me for large sums of money. I felt helpless and anxious. I then went to the Legal Aid Clinic (LAC) for help. They applied on my behalf, there were no more obstructions from local officials and I received my pension in two months".

"I am Parvathi Bai. I live in a village in Rajasthan. I heard about a government scheme where you can get money for building a toilet in your home. I submitted an application but never heard back despite approaching the Panchayet President many times. I then went to the LAC, they forwarded my application for me and I received the money to build a toilet."

"I am Udhayakumar. I am 48 years old and live in a village in Tamil Nadu. I inherited two acres of land from my father as a gift and tried to get a Patta (land registration). Village officials would not help and instead kept asking me for more and more money. I was not happy about this but had no choice. I paid them several times for surveys and other fees but without receiving my Patta. I learnt about the Right to Information Act from a campaign by the DHAN Foundation. I sent an RTI application to the Public Information Officer in my local government office and within a few days, the Patta was granted without the need for further bribes. I was very relieved to sort this out and have told other villagers about the power of the RTI Act"

providing legal support to access entitlements was appropriate as it addressed real problems facing excluded communities.

Evaluation respondents repeatedly referred to barriers faced in the acquisition of basic identity documents (e.g. birth and death certificates) due to administrative obstacles and corruption (see Box 1). The project strategy of working alongside existing services to bridge gaps between service users and providers such as District Legal Aid Services and existing legislation (e.g. RTI Act 2005) was particularly appropriate. For instance, the Micro-justice component raised awareness on rights through training courses and campaigns and then facilitated the provision of legal services through an effective division of labour with the authorities; whereby the government's legal aid department provided legal technical support and training; and DHAN mobilised people to access services.

Gender equality and human rights were at the core of the project design with most beneficiaries being female: all SHG members, and the majority of youth and SEP participants. The project sites were selected based on low socio-economic indicators, pronounced patterns of discrimination, lack of services (e.g. legal aid), and imbalances in the democratic processes (e.g. lack of adequate participation of women in political structures). While villages were chosen for their disadvantage, project participants were not necessarily the poorest/most marginalised in those communities – for example, many of the youth and students met by the evaluator were in higher education. This is because the project served a mix of groups and needs with democratic education provided to those who were willing and interested whereas the micro-justice component aimed to support the most under-served. Caste was not singled out as a characteristic, despite government policy, as DHAN sees this as a separatist approach and rather focuses economic status and poverty.

The project was very ambitious. This led to challenges in implementation (see 'Effectiveness' section) which in turn raised questions about the scope of the original design:

- The geographic spread was very wide – DHAN added on four new states to the one State where it was already implementing its democracy programme (Tamil Nadu). There was rationale in adding on other states to test the model with different vulnerable populations (e.g. tribal vs rural) but adding on so many extra states representing a national coverage of north, south, east and west of the country, had limited value. Notwithstanding the fact that DHAN already had other operations in these areas, the sheer geographic scope was difficult to manage.
- DHAN adopted a number of new interventions under this project – the mainstay of DHAN's grassroots democracy work up to that point was with its SHGs. The UNDEF project added on work with other categories, namely students (under 18) and youths (18 – 30) as well as new types of interventions namely Micro-justice/para-legal aid initiative and RTI campaigns.
- The target of 10,000 beneficiaries was very high and far in excess of typical UNDEF projects –

albeit that these target numbers were low compared to the beneficiary numbers. DHAN as an organisation was already working with in these locations under other programmes. While DHAN was able to achieve these numbers using its base operations in each area, the reality of seeking out new beneficiaries in difficult locations was very time-consuming.

- The implementation period was very short relative to the scale of operations. The time needed was underestimated as it took more than eight months for project set up meaning that delivery time was tight. It was difficult working in different languages across five areas in terms of arranging the timely and quality translation of course materials. In addition, migrant and transient tribal populations in the Northern locations were often away from the project site for long periods and were difficult to engage. These aspects particularly affected work with the new beneficiary groups, youth and students.

Key risks in terms of DHAN's own capacity were underestimated. DHAN had limited practical experience with children and youth (for instance, prior work consisted of adolescent girls' health activities aimed at addressing anaemia). The project sought advice from teachers and youth organisations such as Nehru Yuva Kendra or the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development on content and approaches. However, the lack of experience could not be quickly compensated in this way and DHAN would have been better off working in partnership with specialist child and youth organisations. These factors compounded the risks already identified in the proposal in terms of poor infrastructure and communications, the problem of central coordination of five dispersed project areas and cultural restrictions on the participation of women. The other two risk factors identified in the project document, extremism and changes in state level government, did not prove to be constraints.

The net result was a project that successfully met its output targets (see 'Effectiveness' section) but was overly-stretched and under pressure in doing so. This left inadequate time for follow-up, monitoring of outcomes, reflection and adaptation to ensuring on-going relevance. For example:

- While the project had a good understanding of the different models of Panchayet Raj in different states in terms of varying degrees of delegation of functions - functionaries and funds - it could not fully test these differences given the lack of systematic tracking of the engagement of beneficiaries in these systems. The project did not follow-up the SHG trainees to see how the training was used and the constraints faced. Nor did it develop an advocacy strategy based on this learning to see how Panchayet structures could be changed to be more responsive to democratic demands. Likewise with legal aid, data was collected on the types of claims made and settled, but there was no time for analysing these trends to see which types of cases were easier to resolve, which were harder, what resources and strategies were needed to solve the most difficult cases, and whether the para-legal aid approach was fit for purpose or if it would lead to a saturation point with a bulk of unresolved claims.
- Uniformity of delivery was difficult to maintain between locations; as DHAN itself observed,

quality standards were easier to achieve in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Odisha as compared to Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh due to the greater challenges of working in less developed tribal areas which were new to DHAN's Panchayat Programme.

- Interventions were not always optimally tailored to the needs of specific groups. For instance, while different methods were used to deliver the training (flipcharts, colourful books, participatory methods), the overall content was similar for all groups and rather academic in terms of providing information on democratic processes. It might have been useful to tailor the learning to different categories of stakeholders taking into account what information they actually needed to exercise their fundamental democratic rights. Some of the details appeared more than necessary for democratic participation: the SEP was equivalent to a politics course; the youth training might better have been delivered alongside training on life skills, livelihoods, or career counselling (as noted by field staff themselves); the SHGs could recall learning on entitlements and benefits but nothing on the Indian constitution. Assessing information needs may have allowed the project to use more creative approaches such as role plays and dramas.
- Time for reflection and refinement was also lacking. Aside from the SEP component which was responsive to on-going feedback as tutors said they adapted methods to groups, using quizzes or subgroups instead of seminars, the pressure on delivery meant that the nuances of project relevance were sometimes lost. For instance, the youth component was justified on the basis that boys in particular were vulnerable to wayward behaviour such as alcohol consumption and also likely to migrate out of villages for work and education. As the project could not find enough boys to participate because the design did not take into account their availability, nor factors which might appeal to them such as sports, far more girls (82.9%) than boys (17.1%) were recruited, thus defeating the original intention. Similarly, with the youth groups, the age range was 18-30 but the majority of the participants met during the evaluation were towards the higher end, with some youth group members being as old as 38 years of age.

(ii) Effectiveness

The project was effective in meeting eight ambitious output targets which comprised activities involving 10,000 direct beneficiaries. This final evaluation, atypically, verified results at this level and details the findings in the table in Annex 6 show that virtually all targets were met or exceeded. The discussion here will now focus on the extent to which these outputs contributed to the two higher level outcomes of the project.

Outcome 1: Develop the capacities of women, youth and students on democratic practices and tools, ensuring their practice and participation in democratic processes

The extent to which capacities on democratic processes increased varied from group to group; students demonstrated a high level of improved capacity as compared to members of SHGs. The increase in **student capacity** is very well evidenced by project records which show that 983

students passed the final exam, a success rate of 98%² thus meeting outcome indicators 1.3.1. on numbers reached and exceeding indicator 1.3.2. (which aimed for 85% of the students being able to answer questions on democracy.) In addition, the project also carried out sample interviews with students to test their knowledge; there was an 80% success rate in this spoken test.

The project case studies capture examples of the difference made to students; one boy testified to his increased knowledge about local governance as a result of the course and said he was inspired to share his knowledge with his classmates and hoped to stand for office himself one day,

"I will participate in the village Panchayat in future and hope to stand for election one day to become village leader and help improve the way our village Panchayat works."

These results were confirmed by SEP beneficiaries met during the evaluation who talked in detail about their learning from the course and the excursions carried out as part of the practicums (see Box 2). They also reported follow-up activities, for instance, passing on the knowledge acquired, particularly on the RTI Act and the importance of integrity in elections (not selling votes) to parents, teachers, and classmates. They participated in community activities such as tree planting, encouraging others to participate in Gram Sabha meetings (children under 18 are not able to participate themselves), assisting with updating voter registration lists and so on.



Student Education Programme Exam, Karnataka
(Credit: DHAN Foundation)

Outcomes from the **youth training** were not captured as systematically. Project staff say capacities increased and there is potential support from participant feedback forms completed at the end of each training. A sample of these forms were seen by the evaluator and show questions on what new learning had been acquired; how this learning would be applied; whether expectations were met and if so in what way; what specific activities the participants would carry out after the event; and course ratings on content, pedagogy, food and logistics. However, as the project did not analyse these forms, the extent and nature of outcomes cannot be established. The outcome indicator on numbers reached (1.2.1.) is met but there is no supporting evidence to show that 85% of youths trained went on to perform democratic practices in accordance with target 1.2.2. The evaluation likewise received limited information as only a few beneficiary youths could confirm they attended the UNDEF courses and attest to

² The evaluator saw a sample of original project documents with lists of named students and marks achieved, exam papers (comprised 25 objective questions as well as longer essay questions), completed exam papers with marks, as well as training feedback forms with comments.

the learning received³. Youth participation in Gram Sabha meetings was again hard to link to UNDEF as the few youths who spoke about this said they had been attending for 4-5 years, possibly as a result of DHAN's influence, but well before the UNDEF project.

Outcomes relating to the increased **capacity of elected representatives and officials** were again not documented by the project as pre-or post-training surveys were not carried out. The numerical target (1.4.1.) was met but there was no project data to support the qualitative target of 60% of trainees being involved in facilitating democratic processes as a result of the project.

Box 2

Practicums – a field visit to Thirali village

The practicums helped students gain exposure to how Panchayat administrations work through visits to model villages. The visits involved interacting with Panchayat level elected leaders, observing Panchayat meetings, seeing development activities taken up by the Panchayat for local citizens. For example, one team of Students in Tamil Nadu went to Thirali Village and learnt about Panchayat activities related to solid waste management, the drinking water distribution system, and support for school education. That Panchayat is headed by a woman leader called, Ms.Chandra; the students were able to ask her about her role in terms of managing and coordinating Panchayat activities and also about her experience as a female leader. Students met during the evaluation visit said that the practicums and particularly the visit to Thirali village were one of the most interesting parts of the course as they were able to see the knowledge they had acquired through books being applied in practice.

The evaluator met one group of officials/representatives who testified that their knowledge had increased through learning about the role, responsibilities and powers of ward members; improvements to the environment (cleanliness, rainwater irrigation, drainage); rights and entitlements (e.g. payments for educated girls aimed at delaying early marriage; benefits for the disabled and retired) and the right of citizens to hold government to account (e.g. ability to audit monies spent on construction works, sanitation, polio vaccines). They

Box 3

Para-legals help with pension

"My name is Mrs. Mohanty. I live in a village in Odisha. I am a widow and after my husband died, I experienced great trouble in receiving the widows' pension that was due to me. My husband used to work as a security guard. He died in 2004 whilst on duty leaving me alone with our 5 children. I approached many government offices for help but all my efforts were futile. Finally I attended the Legal Aid Clinic (LAC) and they arranged legal support. The lawyer studied the case and discovered an error in the dates of birth of 2 of my children which was preventing us from receiving child entitlements from their deceased father. He sorted out this problem for us. We are so relieved".

³ The evaluation had two group meetings with youths and one individual interview: in the first meeting involving 10 persons, only one confirmed attending the 5 day training and was able to describe the contents; the second group talked about training from DHAN on legal aid and entitlements but were adamant that this took place in November 2017 (after the project end); the individual interviewee confirmed attending a training with several other youths at DHAN offices about a year ago where they learnt about the right to information and village development but not the 5 day residential youth training programme.

went on to describe action taken as a result of this knowledge. For instance, one ward representative said she had assisted a community member to acquire a birth certificate, another said he had successfully applied for a scholarship for his son after he learnt about the RTI Act.

This activity involved more government officials than originally anticipated in project plans. Officials told the evaluator that they also found the training valuable and gained new information on their role and the rights of citizens. The evaluator observed that officials were more dominant in the evaluation meeting which highlighted the need for the project to be aware of power dynamics when facilitating joint activities. While the evaluator received positive feedback on this project component, it is unable to generalise across all project sites on the basis of one meeting and in the absence of project records able to support these good outcomes.

The group demonstrating the least change in capacity were the **SHGs**. Project staff shared impressions of change but were unable to support these with objective data (e.g. pre-or post-training event questionnaires) to prove the outcome indicators of 80% of women performing democratic practices (1.1.1.) or 65% participating in village council meetings (1.1.2) because of the project.



Self-Help Group Meeting, Madhya Pradesh (Credit: DHAN Foundation)

The evaluation also found little supporting evidence; evaluation respondents could not recall this specific UNDEF training⁴ for the most part, perhaps not surprising given that it was a short one-off event which took place 2-3 years previously. The groups said they attended Gram Sabha meetings regularly, had been doing so for 5-10 years or more, and used them as a forum for raising community issues such as street lighting, drainage, schools etc. Despite evident confusion at times between Gram Sabha meetings and SHG Federation meetings, it is clear that SHG women are empowered and active participants in village governance structures thanks to the encouragement of the DHAN over many years, prior to the UNDEF project. DHAN's community banking team has been working with these SHGs for sometimes as long as 20 years, with interventions concurrent, pre- and post the UNDEF project. It is impossible, therefore, without rigorous monitoring, to attribute any changes in political participation to UNDEF. It was the same with democratic processes within

⁴ The evaluation had 4 meetings with SHGs: one group of 51 persons could not recall the training at all; two other groups of 24 and 6 women respectively, talked positively about DHAN training but it was difficult to differentiate which training they were talking about as sometimes they referred to the paralegal training (a different project component) or training on democracy which occurred before or after the project period (i.e. training from different funds) or training on a completely different subject (e.g. tailoring) or training on subjects which may have formed practical examples of the UNDEF training but where they could not recall the links with democracy (toilets, open defecation, clearing ponds, planting saplings etc) and in the final group, none of the 16 persons present had participated in the UNDEF training on democracy at all.

SHGs; beneficiaries consistently responded that they had organised themselves in a democratic way for many years in terms of participatory decision-making, rotational leadership etc. As such these practices cannot be attributed to UNDEF.

Outcome 2: Democracy initiatives through dialogue meetings with local authorities and elected representatives alongside facilitating increased awareness of the Right to information Act and para-legal support.

Anecdotal evidence suggests increased democratic activity at community level but again project data has not been able to capture these outcomes systematically. The results of the **Micro-justice initiative** are best substantiated by project records which show that 865 cases were handled, and of these 58 were resolved. A consolidated summary of these records is in table 2. In addition, a number of the positive case studies gathered by the project concern beneficiaries of legal aid (See Boxes 1, 3, 4 and 'Impact' section).

The evaluation meeting with paralegal volunteers and beneficiaries heard a number of outcomes from legal support in terms of villagers obtaining birth and death certificates, pensions, and subsidies for drip water irrigation. Beneficiaries who participated in the paralegal training reported increased confidence and new knowledge. The Micro-justice intervention made a large impression on beneficiaries and was repeatedly mentioned in



Evaluation meeting with para-legal aid beneficiaries (Credit: A. Naik)

evaluation meetings by all categories of beneficiaries in different locations. It was sometimes difficult to distinguish which training or event they were referring to as RTI awareness-raising, para-legal training and SHG sessions all had some cross-over in terms of content. There was no unique outcome indicator linked to this activity, but nonetheless, it is evident that the initiative was popular and delivered tangible, relevant and meaningful change to beneficiary lives.

	Birth & death certificate	Pensions (widows and others)	Agriculture	Road facilities	Public distribution system	Patta (land) transfer	Total
Tamil Nadu	36 (10)	126 (0)	18 (3)	10 (0)	32 (2)	29 (3)	215 (18)
Karnataka	15 (5)	91 (4)	7 (0)	4 (0)	13 (0)	12 (0)	127 (9)
Odisha	21 (5)	87 (6)	21 (0)	13 (0)	17 (0)	7 (0)	145 (11)
Madhya Pradesh	16 (6)	67 (7)	9 (0)	7 (0)	16 (0)	7 (0)	106

Rajasthan	48 (3)	81 (4)	13 (0)	6 (0)	31 (0)	17 (0)	148 (7)
Total	136 (29)	452 (21)	68 (3)	40 (0)	109 (2)	72 (3)	741 (58)

Table 2: Applications made to legal aid centres and grievances resolved

The **youth associations** engaged in democracy/community initiatives such as running tuition centres, raising awareness on RTI, activities to keep villages clean, supporting legal aid services etc. Such outcomes were captured in project case studies (see Box 5). However, the full extent, number and type of follow-up activities spurred by the project is unknown as no analysis of project records is available; each association kept a book recording the minutes and activities, a sample of which was seen by the evaluator, but these were not translated or consolidated to provide an overview. The indicator on the set up of five associations (2.2.1.) was met⁵ but it is unknown if each association carried out five democratic actions each.

The evaluator met one formal youth association and heard of their involvement in setting up a blood donation event and awareness-raising on elections. Other evaluation meetings with youth comprised of informal groupings whose links with the UNDEF project were unclear. For instance, one interviewee spoke about being part of an informal youth club which had existed in his village for years. DHAN then got involved and provided training for them to continue doing the community works that they were already carrying out. Another group said that their youth club had been formed by DHAN many years previously (before the project) and that



Youth Association, Rajasthan (Credit: DHAN Foundation)

training was provided to them in November 2017 (after the project) on the RTI Act, welfare entitlements, legal aid, improving the quality of village life (keeping the village clean, providing tuition for younger children) etc. They reported follow-up activities after this training e.g. carrying out a door to door campaign raising awareness on entitlements, or helping a neighbour obtain a birth certificate. Hence, there is evidence of youth mobilisation but not necessarily directly linked to the UNDEF project.

There was mixed feedback in evaluation interviews as to whether youth participation in the Gram Sabha had increased as a result of DHAN's training with some confirming it had while others said they had been attending for years. Overall the youth work appears to have had good outcomes but due to the lack of consolidated records, the feedback is anecdotal and un-

⁵ Although there was a difference in numbers in the project document compared to the final narrative report. There are 202 members across all 5 associations i.e. at least 40 in each DHAN says the reference to 200 members per association in the original project document is an error as this refers to the number trained per region.

supported by systematic records.

There is no systematised information on outcomes of the **dialogue meetings** convened. The project's final narrative report to UNDEF lists the types of issues discussed such as school dropout, environmental degradation, access to water, public distribution systems etc. The evaluation did not receive any specific feedback and there are no outcome indicators related to this component in the project document.

The **Right to Information** campaigns led to various outcomes. DHAN records show that community members filed 112 petitions after the awareness-raising campaign on a range of issues (see Table 3). While this may seem a low number compared to the overall numbers reached, these are indirect beneficiaries, with whom the project had fleeting contact⁶. Several case studies show the difference made by the campaign (see Boxes 1 and 4). The evaluation also heard directly from beneficiaries on this; for example, one man said he had been applying for an education loan for his son for a long time and only obtained it after petitioning under the RTI Act. The targeted number of activities were carried out (2.2.1) but it is not realistic to expect evidence showing that 70% of 50,000 people increased their awareness as a result of project activities (2.2.2.) given the difficulties in measuring effects on indirect beneficiaries with whom the project has no on-going contact.



Right to Information Act Campaign, Odisha (Credit: DHAN Foundation)

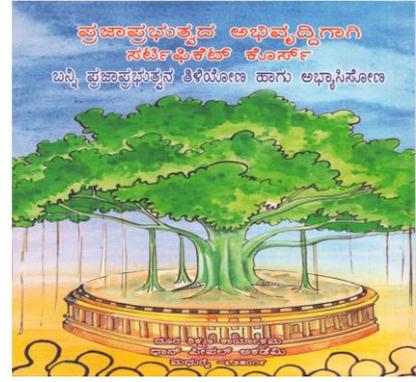
Location	Patta (Land) transfer	Agriculture	Roads	Government Drought Compensation	Public distribution system	Education loans	Total
Tamil Nadu	13	9	7	3	3	1	36
Karnataka	9	5	3	3	4	0	24
Odisha	8	4	3	2	3	0	20
Madhya Pradesh	7	5	2	2	2	0	18
Rajasthan	6	4	1	2	1	0	14
Total	43	27	16	12	13	1	112

Table 3: Petitions filed following the Right to Information Act campaign

⁶ Some funders do not count indirect beneficiaries in target numbers given the difficulty of measuring effects on their knowledge, behaviour or conduct.

Overall effectiveness

The project was implemented as envisaged with minor well-justified adjustments aimed at ensuring delivery, for instance, activities were sometimes reorganised: five-day training course was not feasible for all youth due to work commitments, so this was divided into two parts in some locations; likewise, the number of events for SHGs were sometimes reduced with larger numbers of participants. An extension for four months was requested and approved to enable a dissemination of the findings to take place at an important development forum in order to ensure a better coverage. The content of the practicums was changed from being community initiatives to excursions in response to the lack of confidence among school-age participants in implementing micro-projects, particularly as they are not used to such participatory methodologies in the formal school system. As discussed under 'Relevance', the project activities fitted the objectives but were rather too many for a fully effective implementation.



Course materials for democracy training, Karnataka

Box 4

Farmer gets help from government schemes thanks to RTI

“I am Murugesan. I am 50 years old and live in a village in Tamil Nadu. I am a farmer and have five acres of land on which I cultivate Mango, Guava, and Coconut. I tried many times to access government agricultural schemes for help with crop insurance, drip irrigation, and the purchase of farm machinery but to no avail. I came to know about Right to Information (RTI) Act from DHAN volunteers. Following their advice, I made an RTI application to the Public Information Officer in my local government office. Within three days of my application, government officers came to my land and authorised a subsidy for drip water irrigation as well as details of the government crop insurance scheme”.

(iii) Efficiency

The project was remarkably cost effective in reaching 10,000 beneficiaries for an actual cost to UNDEF of USD 213, 750 making a cost per head of approximately \$20. This is not counting the 50,000 indirect beneficiaries, some of whom also acquired tangible benefits from information about the RTI. This figure belies hidden inputs by DHAN including a direct financial contribution approximating USD \$14,000 as well as in-kind support through use of its infrastructure and resources (e.g. free use of rooms and facilities on the DPA campus for running training courses) as well as the social capital built by DHAN over many years which enabled identification of such large numbers of beneficiaries, use of community facilities (e.g. halls) without payment. DHAN should consider articulating these in-kind and financial contributions in future grants in order to show the true cost of delivery.

The ambitious scale of delivery had a price in terms of monitoring as shown by the gaps in proven outcomes. The internal monitoring system captured outputs diligently by recording activities in detail, but outcomes are missing. The successful monitoring of the SEP programme shows that DHAN has the monitoring capacity but it either lacked the time or failed to consider the need to monitor results for each intervention. The project made efforts to collect case studies: 66 were collected out of which 31 in English were made available to the evaluator. The case studies are of highly variable quality – with the best-case studies coming from Tamil Nadu - locations near DHAN's central office- and the weakest further afield in northern states. The internal coordination system comprised of quarterly meetings between the central coordination and field staff as well as ad hoc visits by central staff to the field as well as regular email/phone/skype exchanges. While this may have served the purpose of providing guidance and monitoring at output level, records of these meetings and visits were not maintained and hence contemporaneous observations of outcomes are not available.

DHAN's Panchayet programme has a deep understanding of democratic process and a sound theory of democratic change linked to building community resilience and integration into different thematic areas. But in other ways, there was a noticeable lack of attention to M&E. DHAN provided diligent support to the evaluation and promptly responded to questions and provided documentation. However, evaluation meetings were not always planned in accordance with the guidance provided before visit (i.e. small groups of 10-20 representative of beneficiaries etc.) - some meetings were very large (50+) or comprised of mixed groups from different interventions (e.g. SHG plus youth) which made it difficult to manage meaningful discussions. Meeting participants were not carefully selected, some had not participated in project at all while others lacked reflective capacity (further indicating that the project had not engaged in soliciting feedback). Staff awareness of the need for evidence appeared lacking with a reliance on generalised impressions when giving evaluation answers. Moreover, the same small number of beneficiaries were found contributing through different processes (i.e. the evaluation met many of the project case study subjects) – relying on a small pool does not help vouch for the extent of difference made by the project across beneficiary groups.

The quality of the project's monitoring framework and reporting against it through the final report also raises capacity issues:

- Lack of precision in crafting indicators:
 - Indicators were sometimes missing (e.g. 1.4.);
 - Some are classed as outcome indicators when they are in fact output indicators (e.g. 2.1.);
 - Imprecise wording e.g. Outcome indicator 1 comprises 2 outcomes in effect - increased capacities and participation in democratic processes - whereas outcome indicator 2 is really an output indicator; output indicators were likewise often imprecise (e.g. 1.3. talks about students showing they can answer questions instead of saying they can pass an exam); wording is inconsistent e.g. target 2.3. refers to 'resolved at least 500 cases' whereas other wording refers to 'handling 500 cases'

- Conflicting targets for the same indicator (e.g. outcome indicator 1.1. refers to 70% participating in Gram Sabha whereas the Final Narrative Report (page 7) refers to not less than one third participation);
- Generally, the indicators lacked a credible baseline, the targets were random, there was no supporting data to prove the targets are achieved and a lack of precision (e.g. Outcome 1.2. says of the 1000 youth trained, 85% or 850 youth will perform democratic practices).
- Baseline figures were based on guesstimates from staff, for instance, about existing levels of participation in the Gram Sabha by SHG women. Indeed, on this particular indicator, evaluation findings suggest that there are/were already high levels of participation by women compared to men who did not attend as much due to work commitments. As such indicators might better have been crafted around the quality of participation rather than the numbers attending.
- Results claimed without any supporting evidence e.g. Final Narrative report says “polling percentage increased in the particular panchayets” following the projects election campaign in Tamil Nadu in May 2016 without any records to compare pre- and post-polling figures.
- Indirect beneficiaries are given targets which is not common practice. Moreover, the targets are very unrealistic and unproven e.g. target 2.2. 70% of 50,000 of indirect beneficiaries show awareness, later it says 90% show awareness, in neither case is supporting data provided;
- The Final Narrative Report is not clearly and fully completed, and the content is rather repetitive and descriptive than analytical. There are also new unsubstantiated indicators are included in this report without showing any link to the project e.g. 80% SHG enrolled on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme – MGNREGP)
- Resources were available for audio-visuals. A large number of photos of meetings were taken which were useful for confirming events took place but were not creative enough to capture project activities for case studies in an interesting way.

On the project management side, two risks were inadequately considered. While project management found officials supportive of the project in most locations (more than they anticipated) initiatives which are challenging power structures are always going to carry potential risks, particularly for frontline staff. DHAN staff and volunteers said they faced threats and were blamed by government officials for encouraging people to take up rights and entitlements, which sometimes meant they themselves faced reprisals or delays in receiving services. In a context where asserting rights is a challenge to poor or corrupt practices, it is inevitable that those on the frontline will face comeback. It is necessary for management to devise ways to protect staff by easing or deflecting reprisals.

Another point, given the newness of DHAN's work with children and youth, and especially as some of the training courses were residential, is the need to have clear child protection policies. This is particularly safeguarding in relation to protection from abuse of vulnerable beneficiaries by staff/volunteers in light of the recent scandal involving Oxfam. There is a need for beneficiary complaint mechanisms which can deal with sensitive issues. DHAN is advised to look at minimum international standards in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse⁷ as well as guidance on setting up complaints mechanisms for beneficiaries⁸.

(iv) Impact

Given the short duration of the project it is premature to assess longer-term impacts, but some lasting changes are visible particularly for individual beneficiaries of the para-legal aid and SEP interventions. The evaluation heard of significant changes, for instance, one girl said that as a result of the para-legal training that she and her mother participated in, her family were persuaded of the importance of higher education and had allowed her to go to college. The evaluator also met the para-legal volunteer referred in Box 4 as well as the other villagers she had assisted in acquiring pensions and certificates. Impacts on the lives of family members and particularly children were reported. One of the project case studies recounts the experience of Renduka, a woman living in a village in Madhya Pradesh who was able to access a government scheme called "LadliLaxmiYojna" whereby the government gave her a grant on condition that her daughter was allowed to stay in school. A widow met by the evaluator talked about the anxiety she had experienced in being unable to obtain a birth certificate for her son until the matter was resolved with the help of a lawyer from the legal aid clinic. The project helped resolve neighbour disputes. A project case study about, Aarathi, a member of the women's SHG in Karnataka shows how as a result of the RTI Act information campaign, she was able to file a petition and obtain government assistance in

Box 5 My journey from housewife to social volunteer

"I am Nithya, wife of Mr Kumar who is a driver. We live in a village in Tamil Nadu. I trained as a teacher but in recent years I have stayed at home to be a house wife and look after my children. I was always interested in community issues but did not know what I could do to help improve these things for all villagers. One day I received an invitation to participate in the youth training programme organized by the DHAN Foundation. The event was a watershed moment in my life. Prior to this, I was a shy and introverted person. The training gave me a lot of self-confidence. I became active in the community and met the village president frequently to resolve the sanitation, water logging, and street lighting. I started an evening tuition centre for children which was well-received by villagers. I also share my knowledge, for instance about the Right to Information Act (RTI) with other villagers so that we can exercise our rights without fear."

⁷ See Inter-agency Standing Committee, Minimum Operating Standards (MOS)

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/3_minimum_operating_standards_mos-psea.pdf

⁸ See <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/accountability-affected-populations-including-protection-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse>

preventing her neighbour constructing on common land.

There were community level impacts too arising from follow-up activities carried out by students, youths and legal aid volunteers trained by the project, for instance, the evaluation was told about the setting up of tuition centres for children or the organisation of blood donation camps. Box 5 shows the activities carried out by the youth association in Odisha which have directly improved the lives of other villagers, in some cases, helping them to recover their eyesight. In another case, villagers in Tamil Nadu got their local road repaired by filing a RTI petition to the Highways and Rural Roads department as a result of which all villagers benefitted.

Anecdotal information shows that the project affected the lives of individuals and communities in a constructive way, but it is not possible to ascertain the extent of these impacts without systematic monitoring records. Moreover, while impacts can be seen in terms of excluded communities asserting their rights and gaining better access to services, there was little evidence of the project impacting on local democratic structures per se since the project component most directly linked with enhancing direct participation in village governance, the SHG was not monitored for effects at this level.

Box 6 Youth in Action

The ALOK Youth Association (AYA) was formed as part of the UNDEF project in Odisha by around 50 youths with the aim of community mobilisation and volunteering for social causes. The youth have been busy with various activities:

- Organising eye treatment for villagers in the B. Singpur area with eye problems. The youths thought of this idea themselves and with help of DHAN contacted doctors in the eye clinic at the district hospital in Koraput. Youth volunteers helped transfer 12 eye patients to the hospital as a result of which 6 were successfully operated for cataracts and related problems and got their vision back, 3 are under medication in preparation for cataract treatment. 2 persons were unable to receive treatment due to permanent sight loss and were enlisted for disabled allowances and the child with congenital vision problems was transferred to the hospital in the state capital, Bhubaneswar hospital, for treatment.
- Carrying out awareness-raising programmes for women and adolescent girls in partnership with the District Legal Service Authority (DLSA). In Bijapur Panchayat, on “Illegal Girl Child Trafficking for Commercial & Sexual Exploitation” and the “Prevention of Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnosis Technique”. The aim was to make girls aware of not being lured into sex trafficking through fake promises and expensive gifts and to give them advice and help line numbers in case they found themselves in difficult situations.
- Celebrating International Women’s Day on March 8th at Kumuli together with women from local Self-help groups, DHAN staff and local doctors.

(v) Sustainability

The project is a rare sustainability success story. Whatever the challenges in delivering this project, it is clear that DHAN valued the funding given by UNDEF and used it to test and sustain new approaches. Sustainability has been central to DHAN's considerations from the outset. DHAN's five-year strategy, and as confirmed in evaluation meetings with DHAN top management, commits to promoting the para-legal aid clinics and linkages between SHGs and Panchayet, participation in elections and RTI campaigns in 200 model villages including areas which have not yet benefited from the project. The initiative is intended to be self-sustaining with funding earmarked from surplus funds from the SHG community savings schemes. The design of the Micro-justice component is suitable for replication in other parts of the country experiencing similar gaps between users and providers as it builds on existing district legal aid services. The evaluation learnt from beneficiaries that the legal aid clinics are continuing on a monthly basis more than a year after project end.

The youth associations were set up with sustainability in mind as proper registered associations with seed funding, bank accounts, and elected representatives. They will require support to continue which appears to be forthcoming according to youths met by the evaluation. The SEP component is the least easily replicated due to ongoing budget requirements for travel and food for participants. In addition, the impacts are mainly limited to individuals rather than having a wider societal effect unlike the Micro-justice interventions, for example. Nonetheless, given that the materials have already been produced, DHAN is exploring the integration of these products into courses run by local universities.

DHAN has endeavoured to bring the project to the attention of as many people as possible in the hope of catalysing replication with the closure of the project delayed until a suitable opportunity was available. The results of the UNDEF project was disseminated at the Madurai symposium in September 2017; a very large development event which takes place every two years and involves some 20,000 participants. There were 550 participants, including beneficiaries and officials from different project areas. The UNDEF event was verified by the evaluation through a review of presentations, news clippings and photos of the event.

The project has also influenced DHAN's Panchayet programme in a lasting way. The experience and learning from this project has promoted the establishment of the DHAN Panchayet Development Foundation in February 2018 aimed at scaling up democracy initiatives through DHAN Collective Programmes and the thematic areas it works in namely water, agriculture, and SHGs.

(vi) UNDEF Added Value

The UNDEF funding gave very special added value to DHAN's work. It was an excellent fit with DHAN as an organisation with a deep and genuine commitment to democracy. DHAN had initiated its Panchayet Raj programme in 2003 in Tamil Nadu with the aim of advancing direct democracy and good governance for poverty reduction but despite having a very

substantial income from both public and private donors, it was unable to find other funders willing to support its democracy work because few specialise in funding democracy projects and most are interested in other thematic areas. UNDEF funding thus allowed DHAN to test out long held ideas which it used to pick up existing work and expand it to four new States across India, to add on new components (youth, students, Micro-justice, and RTI) and thereby reach 10,000 direct beneficiaries and 50,000 indirect beneficiaries. Indeed, the reason for this overly ambitious design stems from an enthusiastic desire to make the most of UNDEF's unique funding.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation arrives at the following conclusions accompanied by a number of key recommendations directed at the DHAN Foundation and UNDEF. The recommendations include explanatory text and there are further suggestions and ideas for taking the work forward in the body of the report.

Conclusions

The project is highly **relevant** to the context and addresses key gaps in Indian democracy in terms of the lack of capacity of marginalised groups to engage with democratic structures and the lack of knowledge and access to benefits and entitlements that already exist.

Gender equality and human rights are fully integrated into the design; with a strong emphasis on women (who constitute most of the beneficiaries) and micro-justice for the poor.

Project implementation was challenging given the ambitious task taken on by DHAN of covering 5 areas (including 4 new areas dotted all over the country), moving into new types of work with youth, students and legal aid, and seeking to reach 10,000 direct beneficiaries and 50,000 indirect beneficiaries in a two-year time frame. The design was over-ambitious, it left the project over-stretched, running to achieve commitments and without the time for adequate follow-up, monitoring of outcomes, reflection and adaptation.

The project was **effective** in achieving eight diverse outputs reaching a very large number of 10,000 beneficiaries. Outcomes arising from this work were not consistently captured so the extent of project effects are not fully known. Two project components were well tracked: the SEP was systematically monitored and showed an increased knowledge on democratic processes among participants; the Micro-Justice initiative incorporating para-legal aid clinics and awareness-raising on RTI was much appreciated across all beneficiary groups. It led to very tangible benefits in terms of the acquisition of pensions, birth and death certificates, and farming subsidies. The youth programme also led to increased knowledge and community engagement according to anecdotal evidence. It is difficult to say what difference the project

made to the SHG; while DHAN has no doubt empowered SHG women and increased the democratic participation through work over many years, it is impossible to attribute these effects to the UNDEF project.

The project was **efficient** and value for money, it was carried out in time and funds were used in a highly efficient manner given that all of the above was achieved on a very modest grant of US \$225,000. This was only possible due to the in-kind support available from DHAN's substantial infrastructure, programming and its social capital with communities as well as a financial contribution of approximately US\$14,000. It is important to note that even discounting the outcomes related to SHGs which cannot be proven, the project reached at a minimum 1,350 direct beneficiaries of the student, youth and micro-justice components in a demonstrably impactful way.

The monitoring and evaluation system had significant weaknesses as shown by the inadequate capture of outcomes as well as the need to better understand UNDEF reporting and M&E requirements.

There are clearly tangible **impacts** in terms of individual lives, particularly for those who accessed benefits and entitlements as a result of the micro-justice initiative (e.g. recipients of pensions or farming subsidies) or students and youth who learned about democracy. There are some impacts at community level too through village health initiatives (blood donation camps, eye clinics), environmental activities (litter pick-up) and democracy campaigns (voter registration, right to information etc.). The impacts on democracy structures are less discernible as they were not captured by the monitoring system.

The project is a rare **sustainability** success story. DHAN planned with sustainability in mind. The linkages with Panchayet (SHG, right to information, micro-justice/paralegal work) are being scaled up through 200 villages, including new project areas, to be funded by surplus funds from DHAN's community banking scheme which includes funds held by the women's SHGs. The youth associations were set up as formal associations with seed money but require further support which seems to be forthcoming from what was seen by the evaluator. DHAN is exploring opportunities to integrate the SEP into distance learning by local universities. The project was disseminated at a large development event with the hope of further replication. Moreover, this experience has enabled DHAN to consolidate its work by establishing the Panchayet Development Programme in February 2018 to integrate the issue of democracy throughout its work.

UNDEF had very special value for DHAN. The funding gave distinct and unique value and enabled DHAN to test out long-held ideas through funding which is not available from other donors. It made the most of this opportunity by trialling a range of interventions which it is now committed to fund.

Recommendations

Recommendations for DHAN Foundation

Pay more attention to project design

It is important to pay more attention at the planning stage to ensuring projects are designed in a realistic way with a self-critical assessment of organisational capacity so as to enable fully effective delivery within the time and budget available. A more focused project would have allowed sufficient time for working in-depth on specific activities or with particular groups and to track and support follow-up rather than reaching larger numbers more superficially.

Work in partnership with specialist organisations

DHAN undertook work in this project on issues and with beneficiary groups with which it had little or no experience. Working with children and youth, for example, is a specialised area and DHAN would have benefitted by partnering with others on delivery. For instance, learning on democracy or community initiatives could readily be built into life skills programmes run by other youth/children's organisations. Work on legal aid and justice is another area where DHAN could look to more experienced organisations. For instance, even though DHAN coined the phrase 'Micro-justice' for its own work, the word has been used before, a quick search of the internet, for example, reveals the work of Micro Justice 4 All (<http://microjustice4all.org/mj4all/>), while other organisations may have different approaches or definitions, partnerships such as this seem worth exploring.

Recommendations for UNDEF

Further assist grantees to check the robustness of project design and plans before start-up

The project is evidently over-ambitious given the sheer number of beneficiaries and activities involved. UNDEF may carry out further work with grantees before project start-up, if the UNDEF process allows, to test the robustness of project design and particularly whether target numbers are realistic and to see if the organisation has the capacity to deliver, especially when it is working with new beneficiary groups and in new geographical locations. A project of this scale was a risk for UNDEF; it was only delivered successfully thanks to the substance and commitment of DHAN as an organisation; it is likely that other grantees would have struggled to cope with size of delivery.

Recommendations for DHAN Foundation

Strengthen the M&E system

DHAN diligently collected data on outputs confirming that the activities had been carried out as planned but it largely missed capturing outcomes. There is a need to follow a systematic process which tracks progress from baseline towards outputs, outcomes and impacts using objective data and SMART⁹ indicators. DHAN likely has this capacity in its other programmes (e.g. community banking and financial tracking) and similar approaches should be applied to

⁹ SMART indicators are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

its governance work. It may look to digital solutions to help capture and analyse data in an efficient way. Expectations of donors may differ; some may be content with reporting on activities and outputs, but for institutional donors such as UNDEF and for the positive growth of DHAN’s own work in the field of democracy, an approach which allows deeper more focused work would be worthwhile.

Recommendations for UNDEF

Provide more guidance to grantees on M&E

UNDEF has guidance on M&E in its project document guidelines and templates. Considering the eleventh-round version - which would not have been available to the DHAN project - it appears that some of the materials could be clearer and also better harmonised across the M&E process. For instance: UNDEF has its own definitions and interpretations of the OECD/DAC criteria used for project evaluations which are not identical to those used by OOECD/DAC.; and evaluation report requirements would benefit from further internal harmonisation. Other examples: the results framework does not show what to do if an output feeds into different outcomes; and UNDEF may also wish to consider if indirect beneficiaries should be included in targets especially where, as in this case, the contact between the project and the individuals concerned is relatively superficial and fleeting comprised a one-off interaction in a large group setting. In addition, guidance and examples of tools and methods for capturing outputs and outcomes would be useful. Particularly as it is important to ensure that grantees are advised what types of records they should keep capturing both outputs and outcomes and also check on this during the project implementation rather than wait until the end of the project and a potential evaluation when it may be difficult to gather such data.

VI. LESSONS LEARNED

To strengthen the outcome and similar projects in the future, the evaluator recommends to UNDEF and project grantees the following lessons learned:

Lesson learned:	Be realistic about organisational capacity.
Rationale:	It can be easy to over-promise when seeking funds, but it is important to consider the implementing organisation’s capacity to deliver especially when working in new areas and on new subjects. It should call on the expertise of other organisations if appropriate.
Lesson learned:	Plan for sustainability
Rationale:	The project provides a good lesson in how to plan for and think about sustainability for every component rather than leaving it to chance. The experience suggests that projects which deliver tangible benefits to communities may even be sustained by the communities themselves.

Lesson learned:	Consider risks to frontline staff.
Rationale:	Frontline staff in all manner of democracy and human rights projects which involve challenging established power structures are likely to face personal reprisals. It is important that management are aware of these risks and take measures to protect staff, for instance, by ensuring the backing of a large organisation and the presence of senior management is known and visible at the frontline too.
Lesson learned:	Remember accountability to beneficiaries.
Rationale:	It is easy for non-governmental organisations who are focusing their efforts on promoting the greater accountability of government and the private sector to remember that they in turn have an accountability to the beneficiaries they serve, particularly where projects are funded by public money. It is important to ensure the institution of effective complaints mechanisms to enable beneficiary feedback.
Lesson learned:	Be aware of power dynamics within communities.
Rationale:	Bringing different parts of the community together for joint activities, for instance in this case elected representatives and officials, may give rise to power imbalances which affect implementation. It is important to be aware of such dynamics and facilitate activities in a way that does not reinforce conventional power structures.
Lesson learned:	Act as a bridge between service providers and users.
Rationale:	In locations where services and entitlements exist but are not being taken up, as shown by this project, a civil society organisation can play a critical role in bringing together both sides, making users aware of what is available and helping service providers reach beneficiaries.
Lesson learned:	Adapt information to the needs of different groups.
Rationale:	When training on rights and democracy issues, it is necessary to consider what information citizens specifically need to exercise their democratic rights, for instance, academic information on democratic institutions and structures may not be useful for all. Consider adapting the information and using creative methods such as role plays, dramas, art or delivering information alongside other activities which meet beneficiary needs (e.g. sports, life skills, livelihoods) to bring key messages across.

Lesson learned: | Capture outcomes on an on-going basis.

Rationale: | It is vital to use methodologies that capture the difference made by a project intervention at different stages, immediately after the event and at further times. Otherwise, the effects of the intervention are lost and become indistinguishable from other interventions.

Annex 1: Evaluation Questions

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? ▪ Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? ▪ Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse? ▪ Was the design/strategy appropriate? Was a training-based strategy most effective in dealing with the core issues? Was the geographical scope too large and would a narrower remit have been more effective? Was the breadth of activity and numbers of target beneficiaries appropriate and manageable?
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent have the project's objectives been reached? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were the targets achieved and how are the results stated in the Final Narrative report supported by project records/data and by qualitative feedback from evaluation participants e.g. 1/3 target women started attending Gram Sabha or 80% SGH members enrolled in MGNREGP)? What evidence is there that target beneficiaries (particularly women and youth) became very active and empowered, and demonstrated their democratic practices in organizing their SHGs and youth associations as well as participating in local decision-making bodies and other project activities? - What was the role and performance of the Dhan People Academy (DPA) – main training provider of the project?

Effiveness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How were the school-age students trained (distance, and outposts) and were there any notable results? The Student Practicum was implemented, which was not in line with the original intention (more mini projects for democratic practice by students), as exposure visits, what was the justification for this change? - The target for training local officials was exceeded (182 instead of 125 original target) by including the local service providers/officials, were they adequate participants? What is the qualitative feedback from this group on the training and follow-up? - What activities did the Youth Associations carry out and what is the sustainability of this initiative? - How are the paralegal support centres functioning, what types of requests they have been receiving and what types of support have they been giving. Any sustainability issues and a long-term strategy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not? ▪ Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? ▪ What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What constraints and challenges did it face e.g. human/financial/cultural/language barriers, challenges to legal aid implementation etc,? The project reports indicate that it was very hard to overcome language issues and that translations and interpretation of training materials were provided. In addition, reaching vulnerable populations e.g. youth living in tribal areas was a particular challenge. Did such aspects lead to the underachievement of some planned outputs? ▪ 2.5. In what way did the project take account of gender issues and human rights principles in its own implementation?
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Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? ▪ Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability? ▪ Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives? ▪ What was the cause of changes and delays in project implementation and how did these affect the outputs and outcomes of the project?
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address? - What difference did the project make to village level democracy? What was the difference made by the provision of legal aid services? - Skills and knowledge of women, youth, students, paralegals trained by the project and how beneficiaries put this learning to use, and with what impact? ▪ Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? - How did the project contribute to wider community awareness on democratic processes and the right to information etc.? - How useful were the joint meetings and also the dissemination event? What difference did these activities make? ▪ To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? ▪ 4.4. Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why? Examples?

Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact? ▪ Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable) ▪ How are beneficiaries and communities sustaining the learning and activities of the Project? ▪ How will Dhan follow-up? How is it monitoring the impact of the training? What has happened to the groups trained? What kind of training model did Dhan use e.g. if it did not use Training of Trainers methodology, would this have been a more effective way in sustaining the project's impact?
UNDEF Added Value	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What was the value of UNDEF specific support to the project? Could the objectives have been achieved through by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc)? ▪ How far did UNDEF-funding provide value added to work that was already up and running by the NGO?

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

UNDEF

- Final Narrative Report
- Mid-Term Progress Report
- Project Document
- Milestone Verification Reports
- Financial Utilization Reports
- Project Officer's Evaluation Note

DHAN Foundation

- Project feedback forms
- Training schedules and training materials
- Participant registers and lists, examinations
- Press clippings
- Photos
- Minutes of activities
- Dissemination workshop documents
- DHAN Foundation Strategic Plan, 2017-22
- DHAN Foundation, 2017. 12th Round, UNDEF proposal

Other sources

- Government of India/Ministry of Panchayet Raj, Report of the Task Force on State Finance Commissions and related matters, 2013
- Kumar, A, Panchayati Raj System and Community Development in India
- Rajkumar V, Indian democracy and governance, May 2016, WACC
- Rudolph L, New Dimensions in Indian Democracy, January 2002, Journal of Democracy
- UNDP India, 2018, webpage available at: <http://www.in.undp.org/>

- Various papers on democracy in India provided by DHAN Foundation and with unnamed authors: The story of Indian democracy, 2015-16 (21/1/2015), Social change and development in India; Panchayet Raj in India; Role and performance of Panchayet Raj institutions

Annex 3: Schedule of Interviews

20 June 2018	
Arrival	
21 June 2018	
Group Meeting 9.30 – 16.00	DHAN Staff at DHAN offices - Mr Janakiraman, CEO, Panchayet Foundation; Mr Vasimalai, Executive Director; Mr Singarayam, program leader (overall coordinator UNDEF-DHAN); Mr Rajan - program leader/CEO; Mr Sukumaran, program officer (Panchayat theme)
Group Meeting 16.00-17.00	DHAN People's Academy (DPA) staff at DPA campus - Mr Ganesan (faculty, coordinator SEA component); Mr Kannan (faculty); Mr Palpandi (faculty)
Group Meeting 18.00-20.00	DHAN staff - Mr Janakiraman and Mr Singarayam meeting continued at hotel
22 June 2018	
Travel 9.30 – 10.30	Travel to project sites
Group Meeting 10.30 – 12.00	SHG members at Velliayampatti village (51 persons – all female)
Group Meeting 12.00 – 1.30	SHG members (24 persons - female) and Youth Association (10 persons - male) at Manickampatti village
Lunch break 13.30 – 14.45	
Group Meeting 15.00 – 17.00	Paralegal volunteers and beneficiaries (7 persons – 5 female/3 male) at Manickampatti village
Travel 17.00-18.00	Drive back to hotel

23 June 2018	
Travel 9.30-10.30	Drive to project sites
Observation 11.30 – 12.00	Observation at Annual General Meeting of Federation of SHG in Alanganallur
Group Meeting 12.00-12.45	Meeting with elected representatives and government officials in Mettupatti village (9 persons - 7 female/2 male)
Group Meeting 12.45 – 13.30	Meeting with students from SEP programme (7 persons – 5 female/2 male) and youth in Mettupatti village (8 persons – 5 female/3 male)
Lunch break 13.30 – 15.00	
Group Meeting 15.00 – 16.00	Meeting with leaders of Federation of SHGs in Palamedu village (6 persons – all female)
Group Meeting 16.00 – 17.00	Meeting with DHAN staff and volunteers (12 persons - 9 female and 3 male)
Interview 17.00-17.15	Meeting with legal aid lawyer (1 male)
24 June 2018	
Document Review	Inspection of original project documents with DHAN staff at DHAN offices and at hotel
25 June 2018	
Group Meeting 10.30 – 11.15	Meeting with SHG in Maravapatti village (16 persons – all female)

Interview 11.15 - 12.00	Meeting with youth representative in Maravapatti village (1 person – male)
Group Meeting 12.00 – 12.30	Meeting with community members/farmers (3 persons – all male)
Travel 12.30 – 13.30	Travel back to hotel
14.30 – 18.00	Mini-workshop with DHAN managers - Mr Janakiraman, Mr Singarayam, program leader; Mr Rajan; Mr Sukumaran to examine evidence for emerging findings on outputs and outcomes
26/27 June 2018	
Travel 10.00 – 10.15	Travel from hotel to DHAN office
Group Meeting 10.00 – 11.00	Debrief evaluation findings with DHAN management (Mr Janakiraman; Mr Vasimalai; Mr Singarayam; Mr Sukumaran)
Departure	

Annex 4: Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DLSA	District Legal Services Authority
LAC	Legal Aid Clinic
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RTI	Right to Information
SHG	Self-Help Group
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation – Development Assistance Criteria
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

Annex 5: Project Logical Framework

Project Activities and Outputs	Medium Term Impacts	Long Term Development Objectives
<p>Output 1.1 – 500 training sessions on democracy and democratic processes for 7500 members of 500 Women’s Self-help Groups; Output 1.2. – 100 training sessions on tools for democracy for 1000 youth; Output 1.3. – 2 Student Education Programmes on ethical democracy for 1000 students including 50 practical exercises; Output 1.4. – Training of 25 select Elected Representatives and government officials on the content of ethical democracy.</p>	<p>Tribal and rural women, youth and students are empowered, through increased knowledge on citizen rights, and by exposure to democratic tools; alongside initiatives for community outreach on the Right to Information (RTI) Act and a Micro-Justice Initiative.</p>	<p>The capacity of citizens to actively participate in local democratic processes is built.</p>
<p>Output 2.1. - 5 Youth Associations established, and democracy action exercises completed under mentorship; Output 2.2. – Information outreach campaign (175 events) on the Right to Information Act and its usage to reach 50,000 people; Output 2.3. – 10 dialogue meetings between SHGs/youth associations/students and local authorises and elected representatives (2 meetings in each target area) Output 2.4. – 50 para-legal trainings for 250 para-legal volunteers, 50 para legal clinics established and at least 500 cases handled. Output 2.5. - Production and dissemination of final project report.</p>	<p>Democracy initiatives through dialogue meetings with local authorities and elected representatives alongside facilitating increased awareness of the Right to information Act and para-legal support.</p>	

Annex 6: Achievement of Output Targets

Output Target	Output Result	Evaluation Verification Method
Outcome 1		
<p>Output 1.1. - Training sessions of 3-4 hours for 7500 members of women's SHGs on the democratic system, democratic tools, Panchayet Raj/Gram Sabha and benefits/entitlements through 500 training sessions.</p>	<p>Target exceeded as 7663 members of 500 Women's SHGs were trained through a reduced number of training sessions (310 instead of 500).</p>	<p>Onsite review of sample of original project records from each of the 5 locations showing training schedules; course materials in different languages; photos of training events; and typed lists specifying the date, group, village and number of participants for each training event.</p>
<p>Output 1.2. - 100 training sessions on democracy for 1000 youths aged 18-30 comprising a 5-day course (both residential and non-residential) on democracy, the Indian administrative system, the Indian government, the role of the Panchayet Raj, the role of the citizen and democratic tools and practices.</p>	<p>Target met in terms of beneficiary numbers but through a reorganised number of training sessions (100 instead of 50).</p>	<p>Onsite review of a sample of original project records from each of the 5 locations showing the 5-day training schedules; photos of training events; and handwritten lists specifying the date, name and signature of each participant as a minimum (and sometimes also further information such as age and village).</p>
<p>Output 1.3. - Training 1000 children under 18 through the Student Education Programme (SEP) delivered by the Dhan People's Academy (DPA), The course on ethical democracy combined distance learning using self-study course books interspersed with 3 optional contact classes. The course content covered the history of India and its political system, the Indian Constitutional Act, different levels of government (central, state and local government Panchayet Raj), the</p>	<p>Target partially as 1000 students trained through distance learning with 870 of those choosing to attend optional contact classes but practicums reorganised - they involved 540 students involved in 15 practicums comprised of a larger number of beneficiaries instead of 50 smaller groups.</p>	<p>Onsite review of a sample of original project records from each of the 5 locations showing summary records by area of the numbers enrolled, the number and date of classes conducted, the date of examinations with the numbers attending and the examination results; details of practicums by region, the number of practicums and students participating; details of convocation ceremonies by region, date, venue and number of</p>

concept of democracy and democratic institutions and tools such as Social Audit, Gram Sabha, Right to Information Act, Elections and Micro-Justice, India in the 21 st Century and Youth Development.		participants; photos of seminars, practicums and convocation ceremonies.
Output 1.4. – Training sessions 125 elected representatives and government officials on ethical democracy.	Target exceeded as 182 persons trained.	Verified by sample of original project records showing photos of the training event in each location and a summary table of area and number of participants.
Outcome 2		
Output 2.1. – Establishing 5 youth associations, one in each project area, with the aim of fostering community initiatives.	Target met as 5 youth associations were established.	Onsite review of a sample of original project records from each of the 5 locations showing details of each association in terms of date established, bank account details, and names and contacts for office bearers; photos; and in the case of Tamil Nadu, handwritten records of attendance at meetings (names, village, occupation, mobile number and signature) as well as a book of minutes with a record of activities.
Output 2.2. – Information campaigns events in villages on the Right to Information (RTI) Act carried out through talks and leaflet distribution and reaching 50,000.	Target exceeded as 50,405 indirect beneficiaries reached through 175 events.	Verified through project records listing each event in the 5 project areas with details of date of activity, village, place (e.g. worksite or school), number of participants (estimated rather than head counts as campaign took place in open settings), and nature of event (e.g. leaflet distribution, talk etc.) as well as leaflets distributed.

<p>Output 2.3. – 10 dialogue meetings held between SHGs/youth associations/students and local authorities and elected representatives in order to foster dialogue.</p>	<p>Target met as 10 dialogue meetings were held involving 253 participants.</p>	<p>Verified through review of original project records and data from 2 meetings in Tamil Nadu involving 93 people with typed summary of date, place and number of participants accompanied by handwritten lists with name of participants, responsibilities, village, contact number and signature, as well as photos of dialogue meetings in Rajasthan and Odisha.</p>
<p>Output 2.4. – Training 250 para-legal volunteers and then establishing 50 legal aid clinics to provide support on 500 cases on legal and administrative matters.</p>	<p>Target met as 250 para-legal volunteers trained, 50 para-legal clinics established, and 853 cases handled (latter in excess of target).</p>	<p>Verified through review of sample paralegal clinic registers containing location, date, name of petitioner, aspect, content and action; sample Registration book for the paralegal clinic, a list of clinics; a consolidated summary of legal services provisions; and records of training records with date, location, participants names and signatures.</p>
<p>Output 2.5. – Final report and five final workshops</p>	<p>Target met in revised fashion; instead of five separate workshops in each state, the project held local level consultation meetings in each state and then convened a final workshop as part of the Madurai symposium in September 2017 which participants (both staff and sample beneficiaries) from all 5 locations could attend. Symposium documents comprised a presentation and a workshop report –</p>	<p>Verified by evaluation through review of symposium documents and photos of the event.</p>

	project says this was forwarded to UNDEF. There is no separate final report to the UNDEF final narrative report.	
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