

SPRING NEWSLETTER

2021



NAE UMEED GROUP SESSION
IN DEHRADUN

TALKING ALOUD ALLOWED

DR. KAAREN MATHIAS, DIRECTOR, BURANS

The lengthening days and warm weather are pushing trees and plants to grow enthusiastically. We are excited that Burans has continued to also enthusiastically engage with the ongoing challenges and opportunities of working with communities through these curious COVID times. Our preliminary analysis of our Nae Umeed (New Hope) group intervention to support caregivers of people with disabilities has shown really great results. We'll share more on that next newsletter. And we now have a new team working in Purola with sixteen new community workers - more about this in our main article. We are also launching a new webinar series through April and May in partnership with the University of Edinburgh with a focus on recovery in low and middle income settings. We'll circulate a flier and opportunity to register in coming days. Fun (मज़ा) is another of our core values. Joy and playfulness are an undercurrent that we look for in our work, in our interactions and in the deeper meaning we find

in our work to support and build mental health in communities. In March the Dehradun team went camping at Cloudend on the lofty Mussoorie foothills. There are lots of good things happening through Burans actions in communities and we are thankful for your interest. Do make contact if you are keen to engage further with Burans



DEHRADUN BURANS TEAM CAMPING TRIP
AT CLOUDEND



"WE NEEDS OUR RIGHTS AND RESPECT"

SAY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (PWD) IN THE YAMUNA VALLEY (YV) - BY ATUL SINGH _ PROJECT OFFICER _ YV

The YV team has supported the facilitation of a Disabled Persons organization (DPO) in Naogaon block named Divyang Sewa Bhartiya Sanstha (DSBS). We asked one of the group members, Bupender, some questions for this newsletter.

What are the biggest needs for PwD living in the Yamuna valley? PwD need support from the government to increase awareness about disability programs and the Disability Act 2016. The expenses of travel and food are also very high to access care, whereby each jeep trip to Dehradun would cost Rs.2000 for assessment and rehabilitation, which could be avoided if there are adequate health facilities in our area.

What are useful services that PwD can avail?

One of the key achievements of DSBS is that a group member is on the District disabled persons -

committee in Uttarkashi and he is able to keep the group updated on the latest developments and services available for PwD including medical camps in the area.

The government now issues a centralized UDID card (Unique Disability Identity Dard) which is very helpful as it is nationally recognised.

What are important priorities ahead for PwD in YV? We need equity in opportunities, we need our rights and honor. We need to find a source of income for our livelihood that can improve our economic status. We would like opportunities for employment and we need it to be easier to get our disability cards without the disadvantages of having to travel from our remote location.



WE NEED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AND WE WELCOME BURANS HERE

JEET BAHADUR - TEAM LEADER - PUROLA

In partnership with the [Mariwala Health Initiative](#) and [True North](#), we officially launched our community based mental health program in Purola on 9th March 2021. Community members expressed their appreciation that we are able to work here and along with the big welcome, assured they would give support whenever needed. The opening program was attended by over 60 people and Mr. Rajesh Samwal, Bharat Bhusan Notiyal Padeep Tomar and Dharam Lal Doriyal spoke on behalf of the Government to welcome our team.

Purola is a small town, situated at an elevation of 1524mts, above sea level in north west Uttarkashi. It is popularly known as the gateway to Harkidoon, a trekking hot-spot within the Govind wild life sanctuary.

"Mental health and epilepsy are significant causes of health troubles for the people of Purola and we recognise ways that we could benefit from Burans work here" said Prakash Dabral, Bhupender and Prabhawati.

Bhagirathi, Roshanlal and Prakashlal are employed as Project Assistant in Purola block. Roshanlal, who is from Purola, has been working for Burans since November 2020. He says "There is hardly anyone working for marginalised groups in our area, and this is a great opportunity for me to work with these groups to improve their quality of life"

The people of Purola have been engaged and welcoming and supported Burans in identifying 16 community workers from the block who will be working with our team.

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COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER TRAINING
IN PUROLA

We started our work in Purola by conducting a baseline equity survey across 1440 households to examine inequalities in knowledge, access to care and experiences of mental distress. We focused on building relationships with the community to understand their current priorities, needs and resources. People described education, health and employment as key needs but recognised their strong cultural identity and connectedness, as well as the potential for income through tourism, agriculture, forests and festivals as key assets of Purola block



GROUP MEETING IN COMMUNITY

COMINGS AND GOINGS

- Sana completed 6 months working as a research officer - wishing her all the best
- Trupti and Ronit are with us from TISS Mumbai as interns - much appreciated input
- Jed is working as an intern with us and helping with data analysis - we're thankful

SUPPORT BURANS

We can only work in disadvantaged communities because of donations from generous people who want to make a difference.

We welcome donations both big and small to support our work. If you are keen to fund a specific program - let's talk. Be in touch!

Contact us at info@burans.org