

Synergy Sansthan

2018-19

*Annual
Report*

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ABOUT SYNERGY

Synergy Sansthan, as the name says aloud synergy-collective energy which means it is a not-for-profit organization that is lead by youth volunteers. The organization was formed in 2006. The founders come from the nearby villages who came across the need of disadvantaged social groups like youth, children, women, Dalits and other deprived classes. The objectives of the organization are to engage communities in the processes which can help them to understand their capacities and develop themselves. The organization is creating spaces for the people for jovial participation.

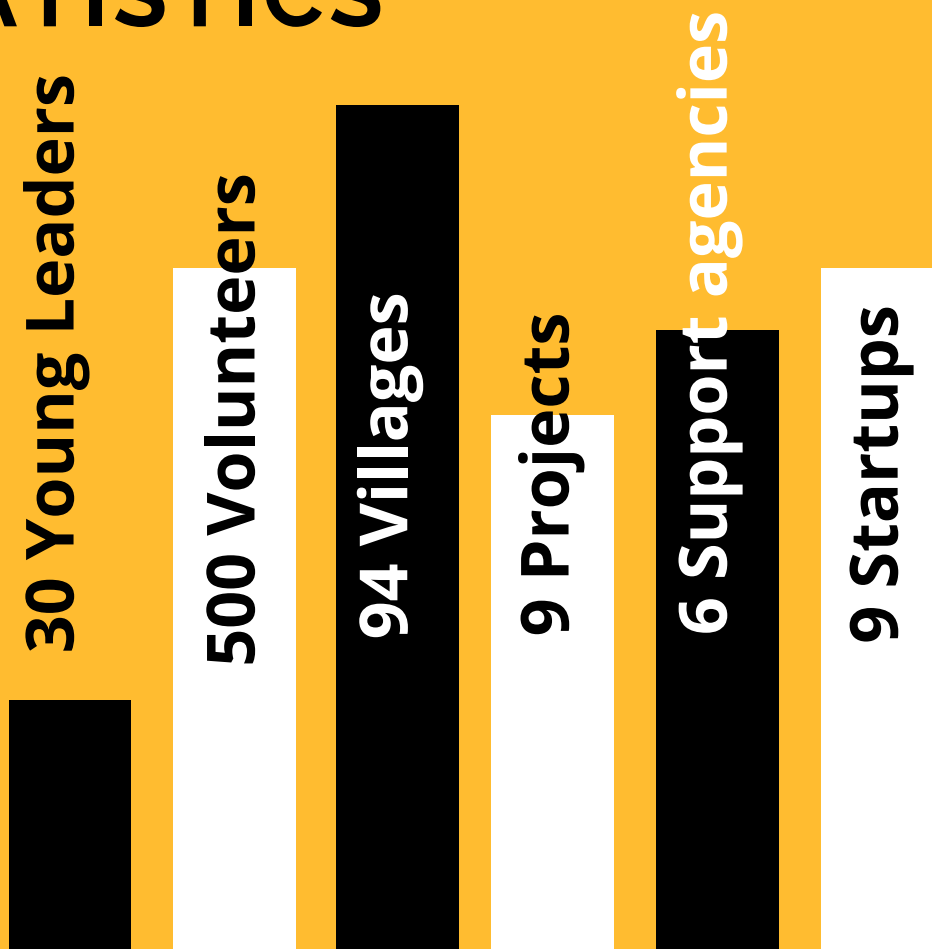


30 YOUNG LEADERS

We had a team of 20 and now we have 30 team members. The average age of the team is 20 years which itself portrays the involvement of youth in the process of their development. The participation of everyone is as per their identified needs of the communities.

2018-19

STATISTICS



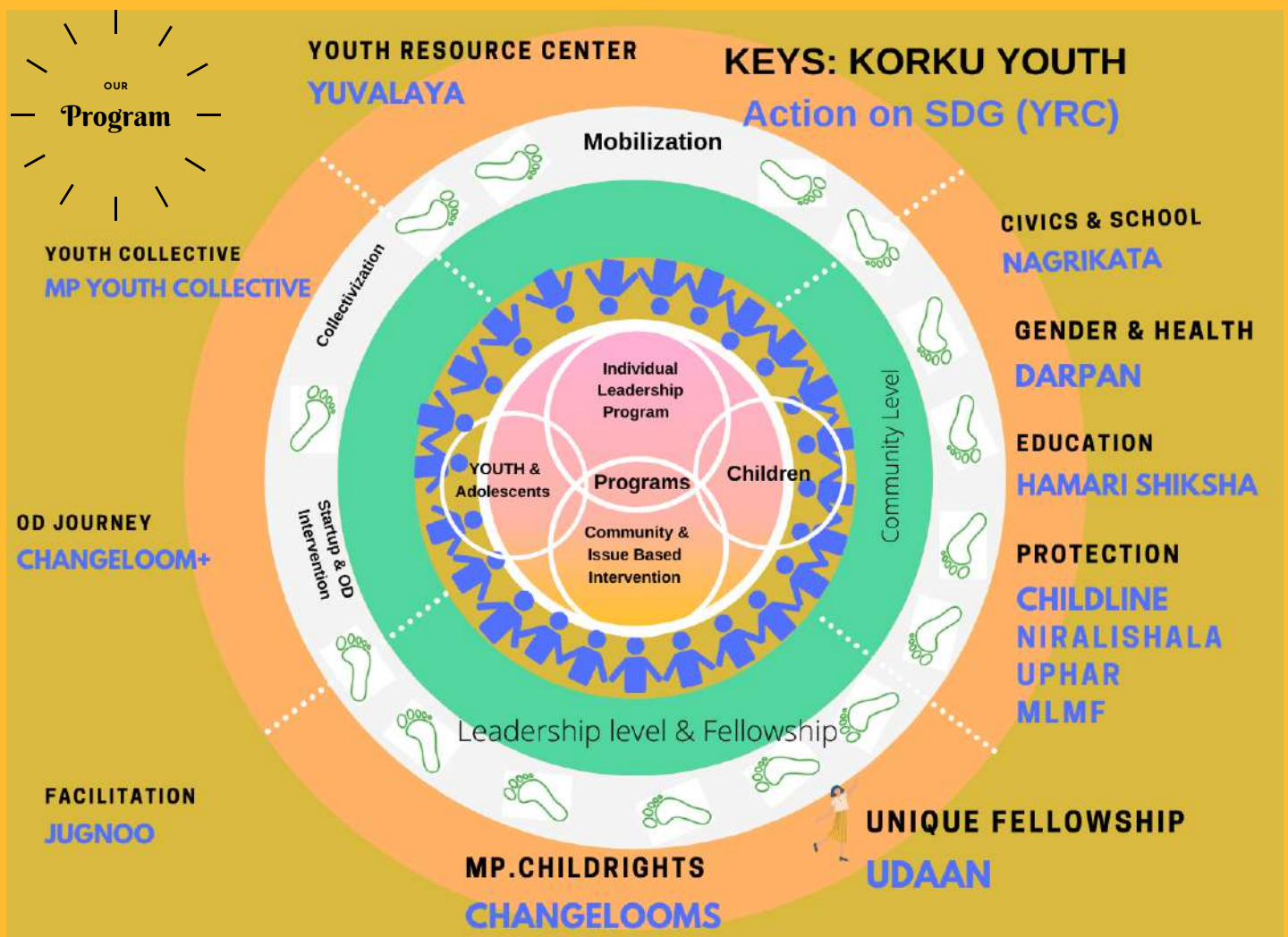
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PHILOSOPHY & UNDERSTANDING OF “DEVELOPMENT”

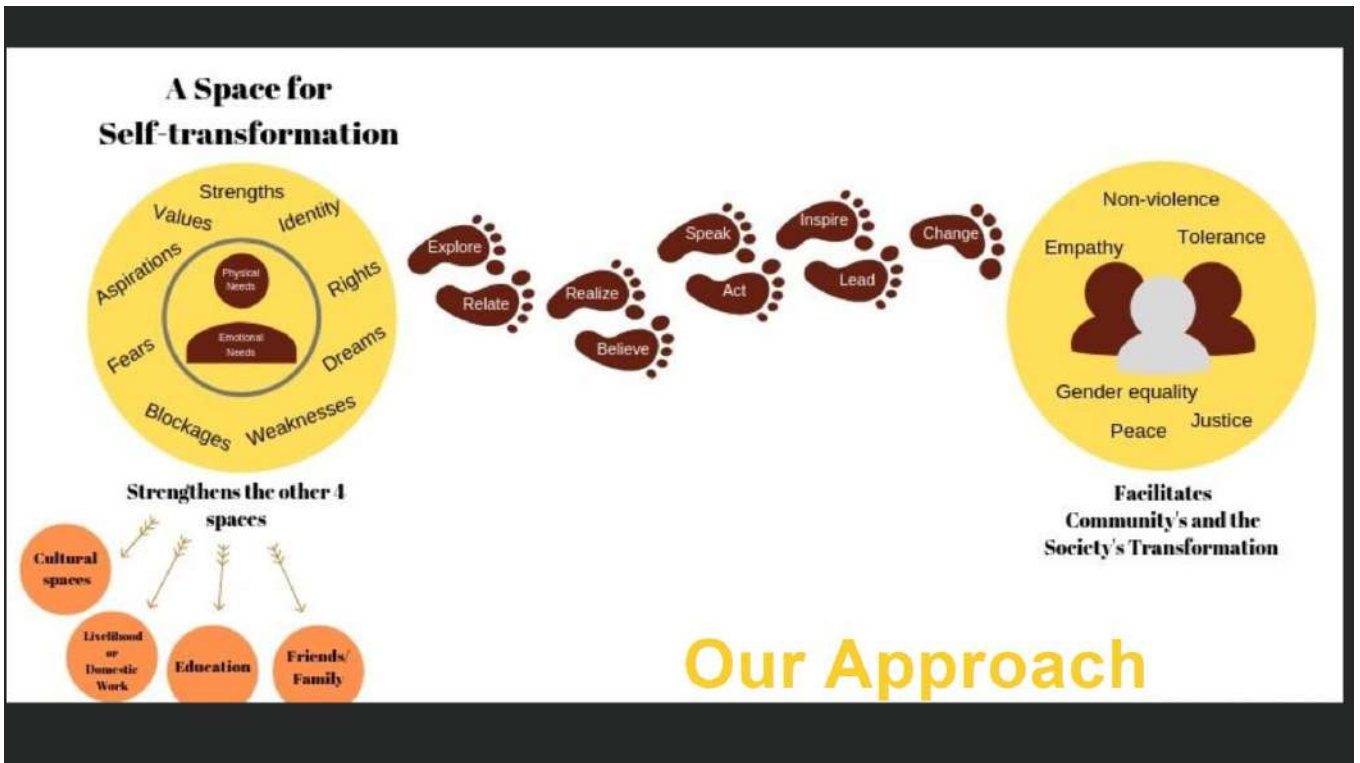
Children & Youth from marginalized and vulnerable communities have limited opportunities for learning, self-development and leadership. They are faced with a lack of resources, information & exposure, and have to contend with challenges of social discrimination. Most importantly, generations of exploitation and oppression have severely dented their self-confidence and sense of equity with respect to peers from more privileged backgrounds. It is imperative that such children and youth have access to platforms which enable them to develop life competencies & leadership capacities, overcome their fears, and discover their true potential. Marginalized youth, so empowered, can then also lead large scale social change by example.

Our interventions are centered upon building the participants’ understanding of self in relation to the world around them, and not in isolation to it. We call this the Self-to-Society journey. Our conception of self-transformation is not of a process of self-absorbed introspection, but rather, a process of action & reflection in light of an individual’s relatedness to others and to the world around her/him. We believe that each individual can effect a positive change in society, while at the same time, allowing the society to facilitate a change or transformation in the individual.

We curate unique learning spaces for our participants. These are safe & empowering spaces – where participants feel that they belong, where they are accepted for who they are, and are spaces for which they feel ownership and responsibility. These are learner-led spaces, not pre-defined by external agencies, but instead driven by the participants themselves or by their needs. Through the use of interactive games, role-plays and exercises, we also ensure that the learning process is a whole lot of fun as well!



THE PROCESS



KEY IMPACT

13	150	300	10,000
Years	Team members and Volunteers	Villages and Slums Mobilized (Directly and Indirectly)	Youth and Children Directly Impacted

Youth Resource Center-

Youth from marginalized and vulnerable communities are faced with a lack of resources, information & exposure. Most of them are first-time learners, and hence lack guidance and support systems. As a result, few marginalized youth are able to utilize existing schemes & policies for their development. Further, challenges of social discrimination have significantly dented their self-confidence and self-esteem. All of this combines in limiting their ability to effectively address their problems. It is imperative that such youth have access to platforms which enable them to overcome these challenges, chart out a life trajectory and discover their true potential.

Hence, Yuvaalya (or Youth Resource Center) was formed with the vision of creating a space which is for the youth, by the youth and of the youth. As a self-owned and self-designed space of young people, it ensures that they not only gain access to resources that fulfill their practical needs but also creates a platform where they are able to deeply engage with their communities and understand themselves. This multi-faceted approach of yuvaalya results in empowered youth who are positively transforming their lives and their communities.

Currently, Yuvaalya runs in two areas - Handia and Harda block of Harda district and covers a diverse group of population from rural and semi-urban areas of the district.

METRIC (HANDIYA)	NUMBER
YOUTH MOBILIZED	630
YOUTH AT YRC	135
EVENTS	3
WORKSHOP HELD	1
MOBILIATION ACTIVITIES	6
YUVALAYA INTERACTION	2

METRIC (Harda)	NUMBER
Youth Mobilized	695
Youth At YRC	312
EVENTS	5
WORKSHOP HELD	1
PRESS DISCUSSION	3
YUVALAYA INTERACTION	2

Impact

- YRC received major publicity in local media.
- Youth in remote rural villages also became aware of the YRC in Handiya
- YRC has become a safe space for people to understand and work on themselves to improve their attitude and behavior.
- The concept of 5th space has helped people open up and discuss issues that were initially thought of as socially inappropriate.
- Youth groups have been formed in smaller villages to mobilize youth towards YRC.
- Conducted a medical camp in collaboration with local hospitals with A.N.M and Anganwadi workers of 50 villages approx.
- Village heads agreed to attend meetings of YRC and help collecting more and more youth to the cause.

Udaan Fellowship is a year-long immersive journey for young women (16-24 years old) belonging to rural and disadvantaged communities who go through a process of inner transformation and lead social change in their villages by designing and implementing action projects in their communities. Most of the fellowships in India ask for at least a graduate degree and usually work with high-achievement individuals who are proficient in English, thus, excluding the ones who reside in rural areas and could not complete their education but are passionate to learn, pursue their interests and work for the development of their communities. Our experience with the young women from villages of Harda has brought to light their willingness and potential to transform unjust societies if they are given the right exposure and learning opportunities. Therefore, Udaan fellowship was initiated by Synergy Sansthan in partnership with Unniti Foundation keeping in mind the specific learning needs of young women from rural and tribal communities.

What is Udaan?

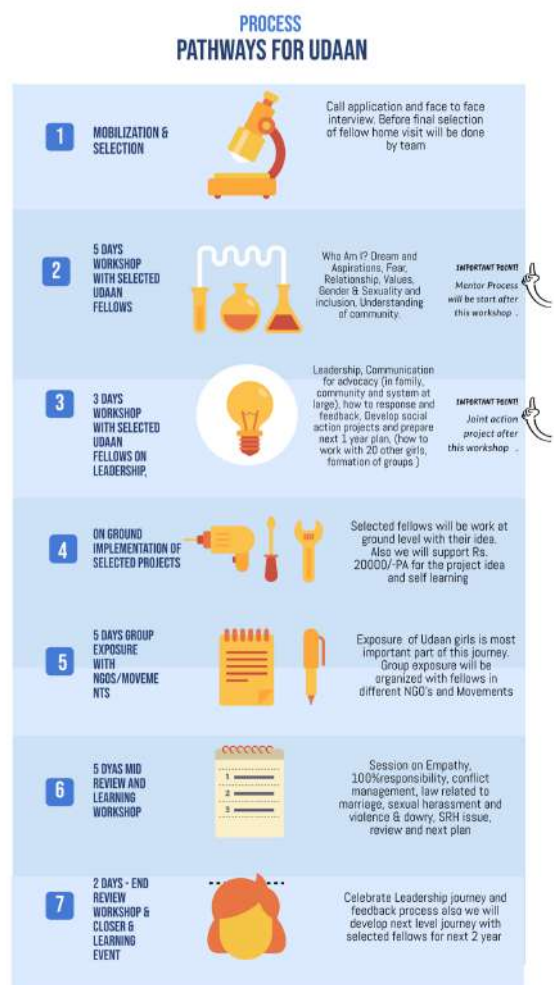
Udaan fellowship aims to empower young women (16-24 years old) from rural communities to take charge of their lives, develop aspirations, identify their potential, gain awareness about the social realities that restrict them from realizing their potential and become role models for other young people by leading social and cultural change in their communities.

This will be achieved when they:

- Challenge internalized gender norms, roles, and behaviours
- Build a vision for themselves, their families and their communities
- Work towards that vision by developing strong leadership skills.

Udaan Fellowship

Strengthening Roots, Spreading Wings Background



Changelooms.ChildRight

Changelooms is a 12-month long commitment and the fellows are expected to dedicate at least 10 days in a month on their project ideas.

Apart from three major workshops at the start (5-day workshop), mid (4-day workshop) and end of the fellowship (2-day workshop), the fellows will have to attend Monthly Review Meetings. Along with that, all pairs will be appointed one mentor who will be in regular conversation with them through calls or visits and will assist them in developing their project ideas.



Voice of kids and youth: Promoting amity, equality with soul-stirring music

Abgaon Kala (Harda): The sun is setting over Abgaon Kala – a semi-rural settlement on the outskirts of Harda town – and as one nears the panchayat building in the village, strings of soul stirring music hits one's ears.

Inside a room in the bhavan, captivating scenario is unfolding. Youngsters and children – clearly from different backgrounds – are totally engrossed in singing – accompanied with traditional harmonium and dholak. Smiles, claps and general excitement prevails the air. This is the daily scenario at the panchayat bhavan of Abgaon Kala, which has turned into a practice cum meeting room for the members of 'Voice of kids and youth' group – one of the Changeloomer projects spurred by NGO Synergy Sansthan with support of MP office of UNICEF. Janardan Bagdi and Anuj Mahant – anchor and co-anchor of the project – clearly lead the motley group of 'musicians' ranging from kids as less as seven years of age to youngsters close to 30 years. They belt out song after song – from bhajans to sufi renditions like 'damadam mast kalandar' and the usual bollywood hit numbers and those few just watching them are enthralled.

However, the group also manages to enthrall much bigger crowds as they have started giving professional performances about three months ago. The musical group has already become a talk of Harda town. But though the musical skills of the group are apparent, their inherent objective and achievement is less evident to cursory looker. This aspect however starts to come clear as one starts talking to the different members of the group.

The group is varied not only in the sense of age, but also religion, caste and socio-economic divides. So there are Hindus and Muslims, Brahmins and SC/ST persons and also some few who would normally not be considered 'elite' enough to sit together due to their economic and social status.

The infographic is titled 'An Inside Out Learning Journey' in a yellow oval at the top. It features a background of colorful, abstract brushstrokes. Below the title are six sections, each in a colored oval: 1. 'Development and Learning Workshop' in a pink oval, with text: 'The fellows explore their leadership potential, starting from within by recognizing their strengths and weaknesses and increasing their self-awareness.' 2. 'Mentoring Support' in a yellow oval, with text: 'Each Changeloomer is assigned a mentor who meets up with them throughout the programme, helping them to develop their personal and public leadership skills.' 3. 'Visibility Support' in a pink oval, with text: 'Changeloomers are supported to draw up action plans to help them to design, carry out and demonstrate their social change initiatives, messages and actions.' 4. 'Seed Funding' in a yellow oval, with text: 'Based on action plans and mentoring discussions, each Changeloomer can apply for a small amount of funding to help them carry out or scale up their projects.' 5. 'Network Linkages' in a pink oval, with text: 'Bringing together various youth collectives and actions, enhance liaise within youth initiatives as well as with other allies and liaise with various social campaigns will be facilitated by the programme.'

“We had seen the religious, caste-based and socio-economic divide so apparent in our village that it made me question the very basis of humanity,” Janardan Bagdi, the anchor said. “Meanwhile it also struck me that though there are so many differences, music flows in every bit of our village that has several families of traditional musicians – singers as well as percussionists. This set me thinking why music can’t be used to diffuse all the divides and this was why I proposed the project under Changeloomer,” Janardan adds.



The display project, “Empowering Korku Youth on SDG” was started in July 2018. It was aimed at building youth leadership for realizing Goals 3 (Good Health and Welfare), Goal 4 (Quality Education), Goal 5 (Gender Equality), Goal 13 (Action on Climate Change) in 10 tribal Korku villages of Harda district and fulfill the agenda of “Leave No-one Behind”

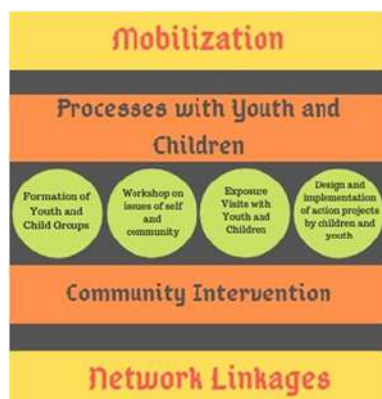
Synergy has been working with youth and children belonging to rural communities for the past 13 years and has built processes that provide them with access to necessary resources as well as provides them with opportunities to build their leadership skills and take action for change in their own lives, families, and communities.

The model of ‘Youth Resource Center’ which had been conceptualized and initiated in 2013 aimed at building a space for rural youth and adolescents where they can not only access services and information but also explore and build their potential by engaging in activities with other youth, adolescents and members of their community. These envisioned processes lead to deep self-awareness as well as build an individual perspective and motivation for change around them.

Through this one year’s journey, we aimed to engage with the tribal communities of Harda district, assess their cultural context and their needs and conduct activities by building and testing Youth Resource Centers.

Thus, while keeping the model of Youth Resource Center and accompanying processes in the center, budgeted activities were undertaken in the villages. This report is a six-monthly account of that work.

Impact



Youth Groups have been formed in every village and they have gained confidence to ask questions and take ownership in their villages. Youth from 6 villages are very active.



6 applications filed in Panchayats of Bothi, Amba, Khari, and Javardha on issues related to Road, anganwadi, school and water with effective action on 3 applications in Bothi, Amba and Khari



Youth from 6 villages (10 on average from each village) have organized their campaigns in their villages which was attended by various stakeholders and they directly reached out to 180 people in the community.

Campaign on water conservation by youth group of Amba village

A group of 4 enthusiastic youngsters from Amba village attended our 2 day residential workshop on Human Rights and SDG. At the end of the workshop, they sat together to probe on an issue that they believed was needed to be addressed in their village and related to one of the 'Sustainable Development Goals'. They identified the issue of water wastage in their village to be a matter of concern.

Last year, a motor was installed in the village which ensured unlimited supply of water at all hours. Without much facility of storage, the village found itself in a state of constant water exploitation. The motor was on 24*7 making the soil around it damp, and a breeding ground for the mosquitoes. The women and men used to come all day long to the pipe to fill water or wash clothes or take a bath. Even when no one was using it, the pipe lay on the ground with water flowing away.

After learning about the shortage of water supply in the hilly tribal areas during the workshop, the participants decided to organize a campaign on the same in their village.

The campaign resulted in an active debate and discussion among the community as well as youth on the issue of water conservation.



They collected and held a meeting with 10 other young people from their village and decided to first organize a rally and then went from home to home to fix the time for the motor.

They invited the Sarpanch in the rally and submitted an official letter demanding that the time of motor be fixed for 3 hours in the morning and then 3 hours in the evening. The youth group took the responsibility for monitoring the timings of the motor. Apart from that, they decided to test it for a week and in case of inconvenience with the time for the rest of the villagers, they would organize a community meeting to bring about changes.

Know more please visit!

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