



Change Initiatives

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Change Initiatives, in its ongoing efforts to uplift women, has started a new project in collaboration with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). Committed to empowering women and promoting self-sufficiency, we have conducted and facilitated a series of workshops aimed at building confidence and enhancing the capacity of women. These workshops provide a platform for participants to acquire essential skills, gain knowledge, and broaden their exposure—enabling them to take confident steps toward economic and social independence. Through this initiative, we are witnessing a growing sense of empowerment among women.

Workshops Conducted at Balarampur for Women Empowerment which are as follows:

Digital Literacy and Essentials of Mobile Training

We aim to empower women poultry farmers by providing training on the basic functionalities of mobile phones and foundational computer skills. The training covers practical use of mobile phones for communication, accessing information, and utilizing mobile-based services. Participants are also introduced to MS Word and MS Excel, equipping them with essential digital tools to manage records, write reports, and organize data efficiently. In this workshop, 60 women participated, gaining hands-on experience and personalized guidance. This initiative focuses on enhancing their digital literacy, enabling them to access critical information, manage their resources, and improve their livelihoods through digital inclusion.



Earth Day Celebration – 25th April 2024

Awareness Campaign on Plastic Pollution

To mark Earth Day 2024, an *awareness campaign on plastic pollution* was organized in Balarampur, focusing on the harmful environmental effects of plastic waste—especially in the lowland areas where plastic accumulation is a growing concern.

The campaign aimed to *educate the community*, particularly women, about the impact of plastic on the ecosystem and to promote sustainable practices. Participants were guided through a session on the **do's and don'ts** of plastic usage and disposal, such as:

Don't throw plastic bottles or wrappers in open spaces or water bodies.

Do reuse and recycle plastic items whenever possible.



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Don't burn plastic waste, as it releases harmful toxins.

Do participate in clean-up drives and promote eco-friendly alternatives.

Approximately **15 to 20 women** took part in this event, actively engaging in discussions, sharing experiences, and committing to spread awareness within their communities. The campaign also served as a platform for *social interaction* and collective learning,

reinforcing the role of women in environmental stewardship.

Leadership Training for Women Lead Farmers at Balarampur

At Balarampur, a key focus of our women empowerment initiative has been the development of strong, capable women leaders who can drive change within their communities. **Change Initiatives** planned and executed a comprehensive **Leadership Training Program** aimed at building the capacity of women lead farmers to effectively manage groups, businesses, and community-based activities. This training was **conducted in two phases**, each with focused groups of participants to ensure personalized attention and deeper engagement.

The leadership training was thoughtfully designed and implemented based on a structured plan and methodology, ensuring that the participants not only gained knowledge but also developed confidence and practical leadership skills.





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Objectives of the Training:

- To nurture **essential leadership qualities** such as vision, communication, empathy, and decision-making.
- To equip women with tools and techniques for **effective group management**, including planning, coordination, and delegation.
- To guide participants on maintaining **group dynamics**, managing conflicts, and ensuring inclusivity and cooperation within their teams.
- To provide strategies for **business process management**, including record keeping, task assignment, and goal setting within farmer groups or collectives.
- To help women leaders understand the importance of their role in **mobilizing communities**, particularly during times of social, environmental, or economic challenges.
- To install confidence and resilience, especially for leading groups through uncertain or crisis periods.

Training Components:

- **Interactive sessions** with real-life scenarios, role-plays, and group discussions.
- **Video presentations** showcasing successful women-led groups and inspirational women leaders from similar rural settings.
- **Hands-on exercises** to practice team leadership, planning, and conflict resolution.
- **Peer sharing**, where participants exchanged their experiences, challenges, and success stories, building solidarity and support networks.

Gender Need Assessment Workshop



To ensure that our empowerment initiatives are inclusive, context-specific, and impactful, **Gender Need Assessment Workshop** had organized in Balarampur. This workshop served as a foundational activity to understand the unique roles, challenges, and needs of different genders within the local communities—particularly focusing on the lived experiences of women in rural and agrarian settings.

Objective of the Workshop are as follows:

- How gender roles are structured within the community.



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- What perceptions, attitudes, and inequalities exist around gender—especially in relation to the patriarchal systems that influence household and community dynamics.
- Whether women are treated equally in decision-making processes at home and in farming/business activities.
- How social norms impact women’s ability to participate in community groups, access resources, or express themselves freely.

The Gender Need Assessment Workshop was conducted in two phases, allowing for in-depth discussions and manageable group sizes for meaningful participation. Each phase involved **25 participants**, representing a cross-section of the community—including women lead farmers, group leaders, beneficiaries, and a few male members to encourage inclusive dialogue.

Gender Training and Awareness Workshop for Women

Empowering Women Through Awareness and Equality

Following the Gender Needs Assessment, a two-day residential Gender Training and Awareness Workshop was conducted with the participation of **approximately 40 women**. The training aimed to strengthen women's understanding of gender issues and promote gender equality in both family and community life.

Key Objectives:

- To explain the **concept of gender** and the difference between sex and gender roles.
- To highlight the **role and value of women** in society.
- To address **common stereotypes** and discriminatory practices affecting women.
- To promote **equality between men and women** in all aspects of life.
- To explore **practical strategies** for overcoming gender-based challenges.



Training Approach:

- **Interactive sessions**, discussions, and group activities.
- Use of **real-life examples**, storytelling, and role plays.



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- **Safe space** for women to share experiences and reflect.

Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of **gender inequality** and its impact.
- Improved confidence to **speak up and take initiative**.
- Commitment to promote **equal roles** in family and society.

Understanding and Addressing Local Climate Change Impacts

Responding to Heat Stress and Its Effects on Rural Communities and Livelihoods

With rising temperatures and increasing **heat stress**, climate change has started to visibly impact both **humans and livestock** in rural areas. In response to this, **Change Initiatives** facilitated a discussion and awareness session focused on **identifying and managing local climate-related challenges**, especially during the peak summer season. The discussion highlighted key issues such as dehydration, heat-related illnesses, and reduced productivity in both humans and livestock. Women lead farmers actively shared their first-hand experiences of managing extreme heat conditions. Based on these inputs, practical suggestions were provided, including methods to cool poultry shelters, ensure adequate hydration, adjust daily work routines, and adopt climate-resilient practices. This initiative aimed to raise awareness and build local capacity to cope with the ongoing effects of climate variability in a sustainable and community-centered manner.

Training on Group Dynamics and Women Empowerment

To strengthen the role of rural women farmers in collective decision-making and community leadership, Change Initiatives conducted a training on **Group Dynamics and Women Empowerment in Balarampur**. Recognizing that a single-day gender training is often insufficient for rural communities to fully grasp deep-rooted societal challenges, this session was designed to offer **in-depth engagement**. An expert facilitator spent quality time with the participants, helping them understand their **basic rights and responsibilities**, while identifying areas where they might lack confidence or clarity. The training emphasized the importance of effective group functioning, building collaborative spirit, and using collective strength to identify and address social barriers. Over **40 women lead farmers** from Balarampur participated in the session, which not only enriched their understanding but also inspired them to manage their roles more confidently and smartly. Participants expressed that the session was both enjoyable and empowering, reinforcing their belief in the strength of unity and shared leadership.

Handling of poultry feed machine (Poultry feed-making using a feed machine):

To strengthen the technical capacity of women-led poultry farmers in Balarampur, a dedicated training session was organized on the handling and operation of poultry feed machines, with expert support from the **Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI)**. The objective of the training was to equip women farmers with the necessary skills to independently operate the feed machine and prepare nutritionally balanced poultry feed by mixing the right proportions



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of ingredients such as grains, vitamins, protein supplements, and additives. The session began with a detailed demonstration of the machine's parts, functions, and safety precautions, followed by a practical, hands-on component where each participant practiced feed preparation. Special emphasis was placed on understanding feed formulation techniques that

promote poultry health and productivity while reducing dependency on expensive commercial feed. A total of 10 lead women farmers actively participated in the training, all of whom showed great enthusiasm and quickly developed confidence in running the machine independently. This initiative not only empowered them with a new skill set but also contributed to greater self-sufficiency, cost-efficiency, and improved livelihood sustainability within their poultry enterprises.

Ethno-Veterinary Training

In Balarampur, recognizing the proactive role of lead women farmers in managing poultry health, **Change**

Initiatives organized a practical session on **Ethno-Veterinary**

Training. The training aimed to equip women poultry farmers with traditional, low-cost methods to treat common poultry ailments using natural, locally available ingredients. During the session, participants learned how to prepare



homemade herbal remedies to address issues like digestive problems, respiratory infections, and general immunity support in poultry. These remedies are not only **cost-effective** but also reduce dependence on commercial veterinary drugs, making poultry care more accessible and sustainable. Women also received **sample herbal medicines** during the training for practical



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use. This approach empowered farmers with indigenous knowledge to manage their poultry more efficiently, ultimately contributing to better productivity, reduced costs, and improved **livelihood resilience**.

Health, Hygiene, and Nutrition Training

In Balarampur, a **Health, Hygiene, and Nutrition Training** was conducted for women farmers to promote overall well-being through affordable and practical practices. The session emphasized the importance of maintaining daily hygiene, including proper cleaning, safe cooking methods, and personal cleanliness. A major focus was placed on low-cost, balanced diets, highlighting easily accessible and nutritious foods such as lentils, green vegetables, eggs, and seasonal fruits. Participants were also introduced to the concept of a **kitchen garden**, encouraging them to grow their own vegetables and nutrition-rich plants if they have available space at home. Additionally, the training included guidance on **child nutrition**, stressing the need for including protein-rich and vitamin-rich ingredients like eggs, fruits, and vegetables in children's meals to support their healthy growth. This initiative aimed to empower women with simple, cost-effective strategies to improve the health and nutrition of their families.

Gender-Based Nutrition Training

In Balarampur, a **Gender-Based Nutrition Training** was conducted to highlight the impact of gender inequalities on the health and nutrition of women and children. Using **storytelling and real-life scenarios**, the session explored how **early marriage, lack of education, and neglect of girls' nutrition** can lead to long-term health issues. A significant part of the training focused on the **care of pregnant women**, emphasizing the importance of **regular meals, iron and calcium intake, adequate rest, personal hygiene**, and regular health check-ups during pregnancy. Participants were encouraged to support pregnant women in their families and communities, recognizing their **nutritional and emotional needs**. The session also introduced **kitchen gardening** to meet household nutrition needs and included a practical demonstration on **ORS (Oral Rehydration Solution)** preparation to manage dehydration. The training aimed to equip women with the knowledge and practical skills needed to improve family health, while promoting gender equality in nutrition and care.

