



DIVYA JYOTI MAHILA VIKASH

**Empowering vulnerable women and
girls to improve their quality of life**



2023-2024

Annual Report

Divya Jyoti Mahila Vikash (DJMV) is a nonprofit community-based organization dedicated to creating and implementing innovative programs aimed at empowering girls and women to advocate for themselves and strengthen their communities. Established in 2000, we are currently engaged in collaborating with women's self-help groups and girls' clubs, which directly engage with girls and women in vulnerable communities to address their real-time needs effectively.

Our operations span across more than 50 coastal and tribal villages within the Ganjam district of Odisha.

DJMV is committed to enhancing the living standards of the impoverished and marginalized through community-driven initiatives, active participation, and awareness campaigns.

Our Vision:

A society where girls and women prosper

Our Mission:

Empowering girls and women to improve their quality of life with dignity

Our Value:



**Particip
ation**



Respect



**Accounta
bility**



**Commit
ment**



**Transp
arency**

Our Approach

DJMV implements a community-based, environmentally friendly, inclusive, and gender-centric approach across all its programs.

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From Our President



I am truly delighted to have been engaged as a member of DJMV for the past two decades.

Hailing from a fishing community, I've witnessed the challenges faced, particularly by girls who were often denied basic facilities and married off as young as 14. Their education and health were neglected, and awareness of their rights was minimal.

Motivated to effect change, I dedicated myself to supporting the women and girls of my community, despite the daunting task of navigating a predominantly male-centric society. Through perseverance, I succeeded in integrating women into the societal mainstream.

The journey of DJMV from 2001 to 2023 has been one of continuous growth and impact, culminating in the fulfillment of a longstanding aspiration. It's heartening to witness the positive changes we've achieved together.

"Ganjam district in Odisha serves as a migrant hub annually, drawing numerous individuals to states such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh in pursuit of better income opportunities facilitated by thriving industries. However, this migration often results in the bleak prospects for countless children and unfulfilled aspirations for."

Subsequently, the establishment of DJMV, a women's organization, marked a significant milestone. Its primary focus on the welfare of vulnerable women and children became a reality. Collaborating with national and international agencies, DJMV has tirelessly worked towards enhancing the health and education of women and children.

"To actualize the aspirations of women in the community and foster self-reliance, thus advancing gender equality within society, priority is given to the education of girls, ensuring their sustainable empowerment."

B.Gopamma
DJMV-President

Message from the Directors Desk

I am consistently inspired by the unwavering passion and dedication exhibited by every member of the DJMV organization. I aim to propel the organization forward, and through my diligent efforts, I am proud to say that the organization continues to surpass expectations and realize its objectives.

For quite some time, I have harbored a deep-seated desire to make a meaningful impact on society, particularly in the realm of women's empowerment. Now, I find myself presented with the opportunity to do just that. Over the past three years, I have had the privilege of being associated with DJMV, and I am immensely gratified to be part of this women-led initiative.

I wholeheartedly encourage every one of my to persist in collaborative efforts, to continuously innovate, and to steadfastly support one another as we collectively strive for the organization's triumphs. I firmly believe that my ideas, vision, and talents contribute invaluable assets to our collective endeavors.

Throughout my three-year journey with DJMV, I have forged meaningful partnerships with several esteemed international agencies, amplifying our impact and reach.

I extend my sincerest gratitude for the unwavering dedication and unwavering commitment to excellence demonstrated by each member of our team. It is an honor to lead such an exceptional group of individuals, and I am genuinely excited about the remarkable achievements that lie ahead for our organization.



DJMV is spearheading a kitchen garden program involving 300 women farmers from tribal villages. Simultaneously, we are actively engaged in providing quality education to children in coastal villages, while also emphasizing women's economic advancement.

Sibani
DJMV-Director



About Divya Jyoti Mahila Vikash

DJMV implements a community-based, environmentally friendly, inclusive, and gender-centric approach across all its programs. Like the girls and women, we serve, we are fearless in our approach to social change.



Our Programmed Priorities

- **Children Education(CE):**
“Advancing Access & Quality Education for Primary and Secondary Levels”
“Education is a Foundation for Future Success”
- **Life Skill Training for Girls(LST4G):**
It empowers girls to make informed decisions about their lives
- **Constitutional Value(CV):** The constitutional value of equality ensures that all members of society are treated fairly and with respect.
- **Menstrual Health and Hygiene Management (MHM):** Transforming Lives: The Impact of Menstrual Health and Hygiene Education.



We engage with

- " Children, (aged 5 to 15), are attending remedial classes. Their performance will be compared based on the results of an upcoming exam."
- A girls' club has been formed for adolescent girls in the coastal community."
- Adolescents receive comprehensive training in life skills, constitutional values, gender equality, and menstrual health and hygiene.
- Women are being empowered through training on their rights and entitlements, as well as skills in tailoring and phenyl making for economic self-sufficiency.
- Women are actively involved in agriculture, receive innovative seeds for organic farming and are trained in financial management and their rights.

Our focus is on empowering women, advancing children's education, and upholding the rights and dignity of adolescent girls. Key topics include organic farming, quality education, and menstrual health and hygiene.



DJMV is actively working in two blocks of Ganjam district in Odisha.

- Chikiti
- Rangeilunda

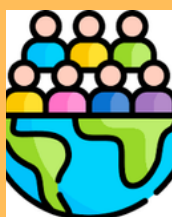
Reach out 2023-2024



4 costal village



**Target group
Women and children**



Total Population 18678



Female population-8238



Male-8940



Executive summary

In 2023-24, DJMV's initiatives have made remarkable strides. The organization's unwavering commitment, coupled with donors' generous support and encouragement, has significantly enhanced the sustainability and well-being of women and children. This year, DJMV has partnered with national and international agencies to empower women and children in coastal and tribal villages.

DJMV, a women-led organization founded in 2001, is dedicated to transforming the lives of rural girls and women. With a core mission to provide quality education to girls in underserved areas, DJMV strives to empower them with knowledge and skills that open doors to new opportunities. Beyond education, the organization is committed to integrating women into the mainstream of society, fostering their economic independence, and enhancing their social standing. By championing these causes, DJMV plays a pivotal role in nurturing resilient communities where women and girls can thrive and contribute meaningfully to their own futures and society at large.







Remedial Class for Adolescent

In the fishing community, many parents participate in short-term migration for work, and mothers are often preoccupied with their livelihoods. This leaves them with limited time to supervise their children's education. Recognizing these obstacles, DJMV established three education centers in a coastal village to support children's learning. These centers are located in Golabanda, Baxipali, and Degipur, with 25, 34, and 36 students attending regular classes respectively.

The primary goal of these centers is to promote gender equality, especially for girls who might encounter cultural or societal barriers to their education. By offering remedial classes, DJMV provides a crucial support system that helps bridge educational gaps and ensures that girls have equal opportunities to succeed academically.

The classes are held twice a day for two hours each session, one in the morning and one in the evening, to accommodate the unique schedules of these families. During these sessions, there is a strong focus on the student's school curriculum to ensure they keep pace with their educational requirements. Additionally, Saturdays are dedicated to sports and general knowledge, fostering a well-rounded education.

Student's Voice:

K. Parbati, an 8th-grade student, shares, "In our home, there's no one to oversee my studies because everyone goes out to work daily. Thanks to DJMV, a tuition center has been established in Baxipali. Now, I attend regular classes here, and Yosada Didi provides invaluable help with my studies."



Promotion and strengthening of Girls club

In a fishing village, DJMV has established four Girls' Clubs, each with 20 members, including a president, secretary, and treasurer. These clubs are vital in engaging young girls and focus on health, nutrition, education, environmental issues, and gender equality.

A primary aim of the Girls' Clubs is to raise awareness about the importance of girls' education within the community. Every Saturday, the clubs organize activities such as signature campaigns, village clean-ups, and educational sessions on marine life. These activities not only promote community welfare but also involve the girls actively, reinforcing their roles as community leaders.

Girls' Clubs are a powerful force, integrating young girls and women into the community, helping them build skills and confidence in a supportive environment.

As part of their initiatives, club members conduct needs assessments to understand pressing issues related to education, health, and finances within the community. Through these assessments, they identify the root causes of various problems and their impacts. These findings are then discussed in club meetings to delve deeper into the issues and brainstorm potential solutions.

To enhance effectiveness, each Girls' Club maintains a meeting register where the secretary records minutes and collects member signatures. This practice strengthens organizational skills and ensures a structured record of activities and decisions.

Voice of the Girls' Club Secretary:

K. Tanuja, a dedicated ninth-grader and Secretary of the Jalapari Girls' Club, shares her excitement: "Being part of the club is incredibly fulfilling. Every Saturday, I learn something new and valuable, and it brings me immense joy to contribute to our community."

"Sindhu's Journey: Fulfilling the Dream of Education"

In a quaint fishing village, Sindhu's life moved to the rhythm of the sea. Born into a family entrenched in the fishing trade, the ocean's song was her daily soundtrack. Despite the challenges, Sindhu dreamt of a quality education. However, her family, occupied with their demanding livelihood, couldn't support her academic goals. Her father spent long hours at sea, while her mother labored from dawn to dusk. This left Sindhu struggling with her homework and lessons, as she lacked the needed guidance at home.

Amidst these challenges, DJMV emerged as a beacon of hope. To support the village children, DJMV set up a tuition center offering remedial classes for those struggling with academics. Sindhu eagerly joined, and it soon became a crucial part of her life. The classes helped her tackle homework difficulties and reignited her passion for learning.

Alongside attending the tuition center, Sindhu joined the Girls' Club, another DJMV initiative. The club offered a platform for girls to develop skills like public speaking and community engagement. In this supportive environment, Sindhu thrived, honing her presentation skills and gaining confidence.

Within a year of joining the tuition center and the Girls' Club, Sindhu transformed from a struggling student to a top performer, excelling in school exams and shining at the center. At just 12 years old and now in class 6, her achievements reflect her resilience and determination. Sindhu's story highlights the transformative power of education and community support, lighting the way for other children in her village.



Sindhu is at her house



“Urmila” is cultivating an organic garden in her backyard.



Awareness of basic rights, entitlements & Indian Constitution

To seamlessly integrate constitutional values into everyday community practices, DJMV organized two comprehensive training sessions for 80 members of the Girls' Club. These sessions were designed to educate the girls on their fundamental rights and to highlight the importance of the Constitution in safeguarding these rights. Recognizing that girls often face challenges in asserting their rights effectively, the training aimed to empower them with a *Thorough understanding of six core rights:*

- **Right to Freedom**
- **Rights against Exploitation**
- **Right to Freedom of Religion**
- **Cultural and Educational Rights**
- **Right to Constitutional Remedies**
- **Right to Equality**

The sessions emphasized that basic rights and entitlements enshrined in the Indian Constitution are not just theoretical principles but are essential for every child's well-being, growth, and active participation in society. These constitutional protections provide a vital framework for ensuring that all children can develop and thrive within a just and equitable community.

By integrating these constitutional values into the community practices and everyday lives of the Girls' Club members, DJMV aims to build a foundation of awareness and empowerment. This initiative helps the girls understand their legal rights and instills in them the confidence to assert these rights, thereby contributing to a more just and equitable society. Through such educational endeavors, DJMV is nurturing future generations who are not only aware of their rights but are also equipped to advocate for themselves and others in their communities.



Training on Gender

Gender norms pose significant challenges to achieving equality within communities. Recognizing this, DJMV organized comprehensive training sessions on gender for adolescent girls and boys, with the primary objectives of empowering women and girls, addressing gender-based violence, improving health outcomes, enhancing development efforts, and fostering inclusive communities.

Supported by the NFI team, DJMV's training on gender dynamics delved deeply into the complexities of gender norms. The training illuminated how these norms can perpetuate inequality and impact countless lives, emphasizing the importance of promoting gender balance and equity as a foundation for societal progress.

Understanding that gender imbalance remains a pervasive issue affecting millions, DJMV prioritized its internal team's education on gender dynamics. This foundational training equipped them to effectively implement gender-focused education and initiatives within the broader community, striving to build a more equitable and inclusive society.

By focusing on these efforts, DJMV aims to address and dismantle the barriers that contribute to gender inequality, ensuring that all community members can participate fully and equally in their social, economic, and cultural lives.

Community Equality Initiatives by DJMV

Yashoda's Reflections on the Impact of Gender Equality

Hello, my name is Yosada, and I am a community teacher at DJMV. There was a time when I wasn't allowed to leave my house. I was often told that it was acceptable for boys to go out and earn a living, but not for girls like me. This deeply entrenched gender gap was a significant obstacle in my life.

However, this challenge also became my motivation. Today, I am proud to say that I have overcome these barriers and achieved economic independence. Through my work with DJMV, I support myself and advocate for gender equality, inspiring others to break free from the limitations imposed by outdated norms.



Training on sexual reproductive health and hygiene

Key points highlighted

- To address this issues Divya Jyoti Mahila Vikash launched a program to promote menstrual hygiene awareness and access for young women in rural and coastal Odisha.
- **Information Education and Communication:** Developed materials debunking myths and promoting best practices in menstrual hygiene.
- **Community Workshops:** Conducted workshops for adolescent girls and young women to educate them about menstrual health and hygiene.
- **Network Expansion:** Collaborated with adolescent groups, schools, ASHA workers, and women's self-help groups for distribution and advocacy.



Training on Leadership

Leadership Training for SHG Women: Empowerment and Community Development Leadership training for women in Self-Help Groups (SHGs) is vital for fostering empowerment, enhancing capacity, driving community development, achieving financial independence, and advocating for their rights. Recognizing the importance of leadership, DJMV provided targeted training to women in community SHGs. This initiative was part of the NFI ANKURAN program, where the organization's leaders were first equipped with leadership skills. These leaders then extended their training to women within the community. This cascading model ensured that effective leadership skills were instilled at all levels, reinforcing the idea that strong leadership is essential for both organizational success and community well-being.

A proficient leader provides critical insights and strategic guidance. SHGs organized comprehensive training to empower women, enhancing their leadership skills. Now, these women confidently lead their groups and inspire their communities.

By enhancing their leadership capabilities, women in SHGs are better positioned to drive positive change, lead their groups with purpose, and contribute meaningfully to community development. This training fosters not only individual growth but also collective advancement, paving the way for a more empowered and dynamic society.

Women Testimony:

Bisnu Priya, a 35-year-old Community Resource Person (CRP) for her SHG, shares her transformative experience:

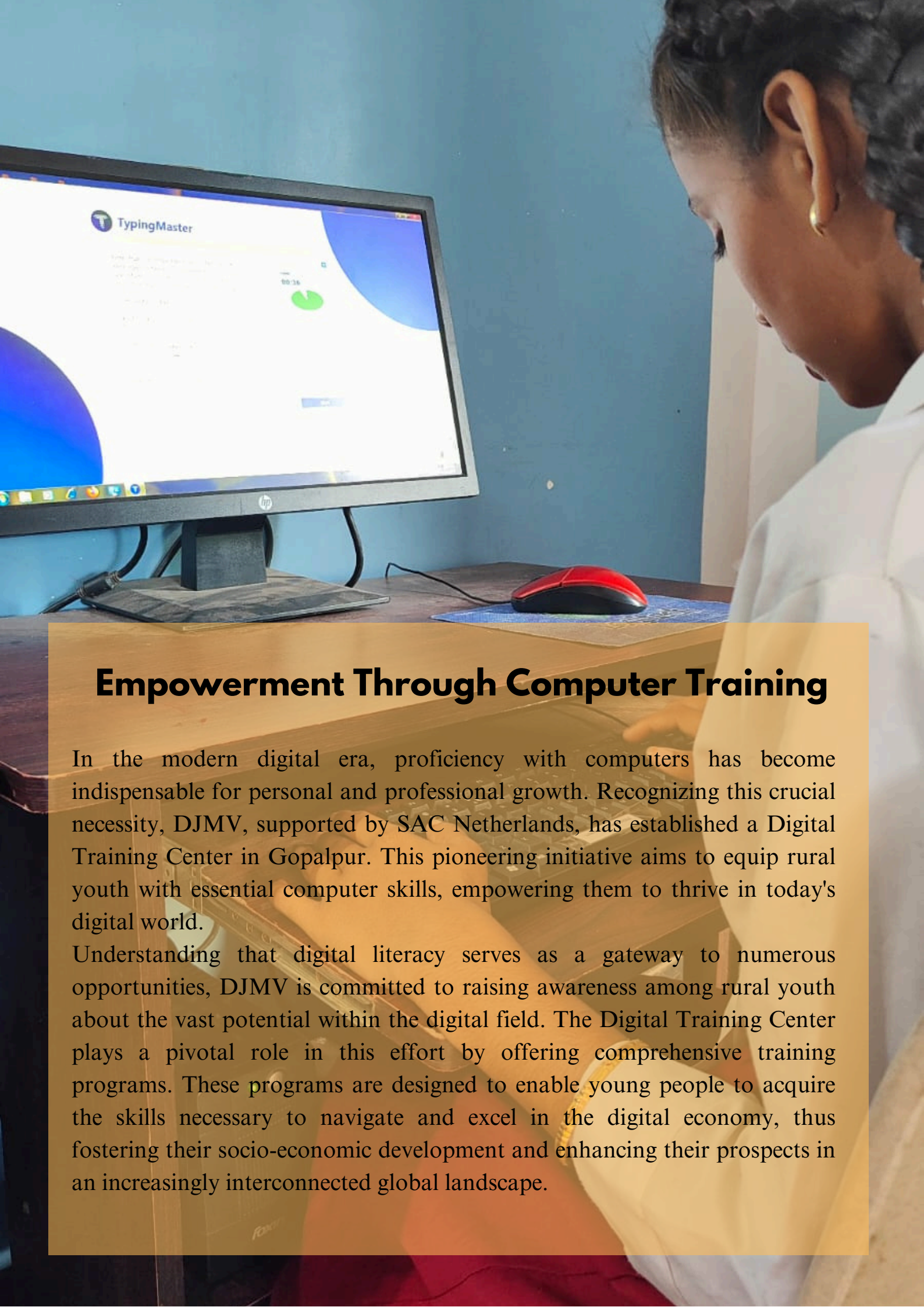
"Before the leadership training from DJMV, I never imagined I could take on a leadership role. However, after completing the training, I gained the confidence and skills to lead my SHG group effectively. This training has truly empowered me to step up and guide our group with conviction and competence."



Training on Biofertilizers

In the quest for higher crop yields, conventional agriculture often relies heavily on synthetic pesticides and chemical fertilizers. However, an alternative approach using local resources like (Handi Khata) and (Jiba mruta) can yield comparable harvests while promoting sustainable practices. These biofertilizers not only enhance soil fertility but also contribute to a healthier ecosystem and produce nutrient-rich animal feed.

Acknowledging the manifold benefits of organic farming, DJMV has launched comprehensive training initiatives across 15 villages. These sessions aim to educate local farmers on the preparation and application of (Handi khata) and (Jiba mruta), leveraging Indigenous knowledge and resources. By empowering communities with these biofertilizer techniques, DJMV seeks to foster sustainable agricultural practices that enhance productivity without compromising environmental health. This initiative underscores a commitment to promoting holistic farming methods that support both livelihoods and ecological balance, ensuring a resilient agricultural future for generations to come.



Empowerment Through Computer Training

In the modern digital era, proficiency with computers has become indispensable for personal and professional growth. Recognizing this crucial necessity, DJMV, supported by SAC Netherlands, has established a Digital Training Center in Gopalpur. This pioneering initiative aims to equip rural youth with essential computer skills, empowering them to thrive in today's digital world.

Understanding that digital literacy serves as a gateway to numerous opportunities, DJMV is committed to raising awareness among rural youth about the vast potential within the digital field. The Digital Training Center plays a pivotal role in this effort by offering comprehensive training programs. These programs are designed to enable young people to acquire the skills necessary to navigate and excel in the digital economy, thus fostering their socio-economic development and enhancing their prospects in an increasingly interconnected global landscape.



Essential Knowledge on Digital

Digital literacy is crucial for fostering gender equality and empowering women economically. It provides access to information, career opportunities, and enhances communication and networking. Additionally, it supports health and safety in online spaces.

Access to Information and Resources:

Digital literacy equips women to navigate and use digital platforms effectively, granting access to vast information and resources. This empowerment broadens their knowledge and enables informed decision-making in all areas of life.

Economic Empowerment

Leveraging digital technologies empowers women economically through entrepreneurship, remote work, and digital economy participation. Digital literacy allows them to market skills and products online, access global markets, and build sustainable livelihoods, reducing economic disparities and boosting financial independence.

Education and Lifelong Learning:

Digital literacy enables continuous learning and personal development through online courses and educational platforms. Women can acquire new skills, stay updated on industry trends, and pursue educational opportunities, boosting their competitiveness and professional growth. DJMV's digital literacy training for women emphasizes equipping them with crucial skills for the digital era, enhancing access to information, economic empowerment, safety, and security. This holistic approach bridges the digital divide, fostering inclusivity and resilience, and ensuring women contribute effectively to societal and economic progress in a digital world.



CH. Indu, a second grader, is reading an English book at home.



Life skill Education

Children in coastal communities often encounter hurdles in decision-making and exhibit tendencies toward aggression, which can impede their personal development. To address these challenges, DJMV initiated two life skills training programs involving 83 participants from four girls' clubs, with boys also actively participating. Anita Mahalika from Berhampur University served as a resource person, focusing on enhancing the children's confidence through various techniques.

Targeted life skills training equips children to navigate challenges and make sound decisions, fostering personal and academic growth even in adversity-prone coastal communities. DJMV's initiative highlights the importance of empowering children to overcome obstacles, build stronger communities, and pursue their aspirations. These programs lay the foundation for resilient youth who can shape a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

The training sessions covered the following essential life skills:

Self-awareness: Understanding one's strengths, weaknesses, and emotions.

Decision Making: Learning to make informed choices and consider the consequences.

Communication Skills: Developing effective verbal and non-verbal communication abilities.

Problem Solving: Acquiring techniques to identify and tackle challenges effectively.

Emotion Regulation: Managing and expressing emotions in healthy ways.

Empathy: Increasing the ability to understand and relate to others' feelings.

Conflict Resolution: Strategies for peacefully resolving disagreements.

Resilience: Building the capacity to bounce back from setbacks.

Goal Setting: Establishing achievable goals and working towards them.

Assertiveness: Confidently expressing concerns, needs, and opinions while respecting others.

Empowering the Youth: Merry's Journey of Advocacy and Constitutional Values

Fifteen-year-old Merry resides in Baxipali village, a close-knit fishing community where she lives with her father, mother, and two brothers. Her father earns their livelihood by fishing in the nearby sea, while her mother works diligently as a laborer, contributing to the family's income.

Merry's life took a transformative turn when the DJMV organization intervened in her village. They provided comprehensive training sessions to all students on fundamental rights and constitutional values. Merry eagerly engaged in these sessions, which deepened her understanding of her rights and social responsibilities.

Through the training, Merry embraced fundamental freedoms such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, right to privacy, and right to equality in her daily life. She educated herself on these rights and took it upon herself to raise awareness among her peers. Merry initiated discussions on human rights violations, discrimination, and social justice, fostering a more informed and equitable community.

In Merry's words, "To thrive in society, one must assert their rights," a sentiment she attributes to the valuable lessons from DJMV. Now empowered, Merry confidently advocates for her rights both at school and within her family circle. She stands as a beacon for her peers, embodying constitutional values and actively promoting them through her actions and interactions.

Through her dedication and newfound knowledge, Merry has become a catalyst for positive change, striving to create a society where justice and rights are upheld by all.



A photograph showing three women in a room, likely a training center, working on sewing machines. The woman in the foreground is smiling and looking towards the camera. She has dark hair tied back with a green hair tie and is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. The woman in the middle is wearing a blue shirt and a yellow shawl. The woman in the background is wearing a dark shirt. They are all focused on their work. The room has a window with yellow frames on the right side.

DJMV Empowers Women: Tailoring Training Promotes Gender Equality and Economic Independence

Skill Development: Thirty-five young women in a coastal village acquired proficient skills in blouse cutting and garment making through a dedicated 4-month tailoring training program.

Empowerment through Entrepreneurship: Participants like Jhili Behera, U. Kmari, and Sujata Behera demonstrated outstanding progress and enthusiasm, planning to invest in sewing machines and start their tailoring businesses.

Promotion of Gender Equality: DJMV's initiative aimed at integrating women into mainstream roles by providing equal access to education, employment, and economic opportunities, thereby fostering gender equality in the fishing community.