

**क ह तारा-अक्षर+
TARA Akshar+
1 2 ...पढ़ेगी वो तो बढ़ेगी हम**

#UnlockingHerPotential

“Padhegi Woh Toh Badhenge Hum”
A series on Literacy led Empowerment of Women

Session 6: Empowered Women build Resilient Communities

July 12, 2021 4:30 PM To 5:30 PM IST

PANELLIST

- Rama Iyer**
Director General
WPP India Foundation
- Syeda Inam**
Communications
Coordinator &
Co-founder
National Commission
for Women
- Susali Kohli**
Executive
Vice-President
IIFL Bank
- Sohini
Bhattacharya**
CEO
Breakthrough India
- Dr. Ashok Khosla**
Chairperson
DA Group

MODERATOR

- Pankaj Pachauri**
Editor, *Journo* &
Editor in Chief, *to news*

GO NEWS Media Partner

I-D-F Knowledge Partner

IKEA Foundation Supported By

Development Alternatives Organised By

For more details, contact: akshar@deval.org, +91 8827 538501, <https://deval.org/taraakshar/>

#UnlockingHerPotential: A Webinar Series on Literacy Led Women Empowerment

Development Alternatives has organised a webinar series called #UnlockingHerPotential, literacy led empowerment of women to raise awareness about its flagship programme TARA Akshar+. The Knowledge Series of six webinars has been successful in deliberating collectively on contemporary issues related to marginalised women and how they can be brought squarely into participating on their own terms in society and the economy.

DA has brought together people from various spheres like the world of finance, governance, subject experts and solution providers deliberating on the movement in women’s life and scope of its further consolidation. In addition, the series was designed to explore, share and create wider recognition of the need to accelerate the spread of these basic skills and to motivate the public and corporate donors to participate in taking it forward.

The series has been streaming since the month of March. The sixth session of this series witnessed a discussion by eminent panelists who illustrated the importance of the role of literacy in the lives of women and how it builds resilient communities. The panel consisted of Dr. Ashok Khosla, Chairperson DA Group, Rama Iyer, Director General, WPP India Foundation, Sohini Bhattacharya, CEO Breakthrough

India, Syeda Imam, Communications Consultant & Ex-Member National Commissions Govt of India, and it was moderated by Pankaj Pachauri, Eminent Journalist and Editor-In-Chief, GoNews.

Pankaj Pachauri began the discussion by sharing how the pandemic has forced a sharper divide in the gender gap. Women are now facing increased workload at home and are also providing care for the ones who are unwell. Thousands of women have lost their jobs or are now working without any remuneration.

Adding to this, Ms Imam shared how a woman automatically comes to the centre of any crisis and has to suffer more than others. She added that when the lockdown was imposed, and the government put in helplines for the public to reach out to the authorities, there was a huge amount of calls made to report about domestic violence, occurring in households across the nation. She further highlighted the importance of access to phones for every girl especially in the lower middle class household.

Ms Rama discussed that one of the biggest challenges key stakeholders face in trying to bring about a systemic change for women is being underprepared or not resilient enough to handle crises like a global pandemic and how it affects the growth and progress of women. Moving forward, building resilient communities must be a priority to endure sudden problems, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, so that the gender based negative repercussions don't create obstacles for women and their development towards an equal society.

Ms Sohini Bhattacharya shared that it is important that women reach their full potential not just because it will help with nation building and the economy but also because it is their very basic right. She also discussed that, while the pandemic may have intensified the discrimination and the atrocities against women, the cases of domestic violence and harassment both - inside or outside homes, were very high number even before the pandemic ever hit. It is more important to teach men and boys to restrain themselves than to teach women how to defend themselves. Given the current situation of gender discrimination and gender-based atrocities, the barriers must be addressed and an environment that discourages violence must be created.

Talking about the impact of Tara Akshar+ programme that extends beyond the ability to read and write for the neo-literate woman, Dr Khosla shared with us that the increased participation of women in the Uttar Pradesh elections that were conducted recently, are a testimony of the positive impacts of the programme. He further shared that a significant number of TARA Akshar+ neo-literates have become Sarpanchs or Pradhans in Villages.

We have time and again realized that there is no deficiency of leadership in rural communities and all that a woman needs is a chance to be themselves, and their potential shows up. With this webinar, the six-session long knowledge series came to an end. The series saw various experts coming forth as advocates for literacy as a pressing solution to many other issues.

