

ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019



RUCHI

Rural Centre for Human Interests

Village- Bandh, Bhaguri – 173233
District- Solan, Himachal Pradesh, INDIA
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Registered as a society at village Shalana, Rajgarh 173101, Distt. Sirmour, Himachal Pradesh

Contents

1. About the Organisation

1.1. Background.....	2
1.2. Mission Statement	3
1.3. Vision	3
1.4. Belief System.....	3
1.5 Strategic Objectives.....	3

2. Management and Administration

2.1. Structure	4
2.2. Finance and Accounts	4

3. Projects

3.1. Baddi Integrated Development Water, Health and Agriculture	5
3.2. IVS for Climate Justice	5
3.3. Equal Start Project	6
3.4. Lace for SDGs	7
3.5. Waste Force	7
3.6. Corporate Social responsibility (CSR)	8
3.7. Advocacy & Linkages	8

4 . International Voluntary Service

4.1. International Volunteer Workcamps.....	9
4.2. Student Internships/Placements	10

5. Seminars/Conference

5.1 Stop Climate Change	12
5.2 International Women”s Day	12
5.3. NVDA GA	12

6. Awards

13

7. Audited statement of accounts

14

1. About the Organization

1. Background

The Rural Centre for Human Interests (popularly known as RUCHI) has incessantly worked towards uplifting the living conditions of the underprivileged section in selected regions of Himachal Pradesh, India. RUCHI through active grassroots participation and empowerment of the communities in all aspects of their development strives to minimize their dependence on external agencies. RUCHI's focus on promoting **sustainable anthropocentric development through environmentally, socially and economically integrated activities** ensures the improvement and sustainability of rural communities and their environment.

RUCHI began as a non-profit, voluntary organization in October 1980, set up in the Himalayan foothills of the state of Himachal Pradesh. It was registered as a Society on 16 February 1983 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

A new Technology Resource Centre of RUCHI came up in 1994 in a small village of Bandh in Dharampur Block of Solan District which also houses the headquarters of RUCHI. This great achievement was made possible through the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART), under the aegis of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.

From the onset, RUCHI realized the importance of providing assistance and technical support to facilitate and aid the process of development by encouraging individual and community participation in the process. Accepting and overcoming the various challenges is the key to RUCHI's successful progress which today looks back on its past achievements with pride and at the one ahead with hope.



Thirty five years on, the organization is continuing with its commitment to instill an ambience of improved quality of life, a new scenario of social and economic progress and minimal dependence on others on the part of the communities. RUCHI has remained successful in achieving this only through an integrated, multi-disciplinary and participatory sustainable development.

1.1. Mission Statement

RUCHI's Mission Statement: Integrated rural development through people-centered, environmentally sustainable action.

With this in mind (and a view towards social and economic independence), RUCHI introduces technologies deemed appropriate to the conditions, and uses health and resource management education to socially empower and uplift rural communities.

1.2. Vision

A society which believes in and practices peace, good governance, equality and respect for each other.

1.3. Belief System

- People have an inherent capacity to achieve - even in the face of adverse conditions - provided they are given with help and guidance.
- Resources, goods, information and technology should be shared amongst and between communities.
- People should be empowered to demand services by virtue of being human and as a basic human right.
- Women play an important catalytic role in development.
- Both development and management should be participatory.
- Social change can occur through economic stability and independence.
- Economic stability and independence can be achieved through optimal and *sustainable* use of local resources.

1.4. Strategic Objectives

1. Promote and protect the environment and natural resources, through adoption of appropriate resource management techniques, generally focused at the micro-level of watersheds.
2. Promote education and awareness as a tool to improve the plight of the underprivileged rural poor.
3. Ensure that a participatory approach is used in the conservation and promotion of natural resources.
4. Catalyze the transfer of low-cost agricultural and construction technologies which will aid in environmental protection and community development.
5. Empower women and eradicate gender inequality, namely through micro-credit and self-help groups.
6. Extend our services to the vulnerable section of elderly, and promote independence amongst this section.
7. Develop areas of mutual cooperation amongst Government agencies and NGOs.
8. Improve the community health standard, mainly through preventative measures.
9. Foster an understanding of, and focus on, integrated rural development in the young rural workforce, promoted through non-formal education.

2. Management and Administration

2.1. Structure

RUCHI's daily activities are administered by an executive director. Over and above this, the management of RUCHI rests with the Governing Body, comprised of six members, each of whom is elected for a two-year term.

RUCHI lays great emphasis on 'people's power'. The consequence can be noticed in the environment of team spirit, collective experience, hard work and commitment in which and on the basis of which the whole organization runs. Very essentially this is manifested through the 12 full-time staff who proficiently strives to achieve the objectives mentioned above. Now, more than ever before, RUCHI has long- and short-term volunteers participating in the project activities injecting fresh ideas and knowledge into the strong RUCHI team.

2.2. Finance and Accounts

The details are outlined in Annexure 1 of the audited statement of accounts.

Besides project based funding in terms of grants-in-aid, RUCHI generates income from the following sources:

- Consultation fees.
- Infrastructure usage charges.
- Agricultural activities.
- Public contribution/donations
- IVS projects

At present, RUCHI is receiving funds from the following international funding bodies:

- RNZWCS-NZAID New Zealand
- Rotary Clubs of New Zealand.
- Erasmus+ project partners

RUCHI's Indian sources of funding include:

- Shamdasani Trust
- Dabur India Ltd.

3. Projects 2017-2018

3.1: Baddi Integrated Development Water, Health and Agriculture.

Formally, this ambitious integrated project was completed on 28th February, 2018. The project was executed with a holistic approach with a focus on improving quality of lives of communities through their overall empowerment, improved farming, health care and environmental sanitation. The project was financially supported by RNZWCS under a New Zealand Aid programme.

The project boosted irrigation facilities by 10-15%; brought more land under cultivation, encouraged growing more cash crops, increased accessibility to potable drinking water and better health; made people more informed and in a better position to make use of available government schemes meant for their welfare. The final evaluation of the project by an external team highlighted these results. The report is available on our website.



3.2 IVS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE:

The project seeks to provide new skills in the field of environment and sustainability whilst taking into account ways that the CCIVS network can tackle poverty reduction and health promotion issues. The project uses the pre existing tool of the IVS for Climate Justice campaign which was set up in 2015 as a banner to highlight the actions of different IVS networks on environmental sustainability, and to emphasize the contribution of IVS to the attainment of the SDGs.

The project incorporates 5 phases:

- **Visibility/networking:** Conference on the Role of IVS and Climate Justice including a Forum on this subject in UNESCO, Paris April 2018.
- **Workshops:** practical and theoretical work
 - 1 Bio-construction in Ecuador June 2018
 - 1 Sustainable Food Production in India November 2018
- **Follow-up system:** monitoring, impact measurement, online campus for 31 local projects in Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe.

- **Online Results:** Global communication campaign. Collecting the impact measurement results and the reporting of the process from the local projects and diffusing them internally and externally.
- **Sustainability:** inviting external stakeholders to follow the process and to become engaged with the organizations.

A RUCHI staff attended the Sustainable Food Production training in Bangalore during November 2018 and is now working on promoting permaculture in the area.

3.3 Equal Start Project under Erasmus+ programme of EU:

After the research phase, a Seminar for Youth Workers was organised in Kathmandu (Nepal) during November 2018 which was attended by 2 of RUCHI staff. A training Guide was developed and tried out there.



A 12-day training course was organized in India from the last week of March 2019 aiming to train 20 youth workers from the participating countries in providing entrepreneurial education to marginalised young women. The training course introduced the Guide and followed its structure: it will raise awareness among the participants why is important to do entrepreneurial education with marginalised young women, give tools to instil a sense of entrepreneurial sense among marginalised young women and as well as practical experience on developing a business starting from ideas, to developing a business plan, pitching the business idea and secure financing.

3.4 LACE FOR SDGs Project under Erasmus+ programme of EU:

“Learning, Acting, Creating and Educating for Sustainable Development Goals” (LACE for SDGs) is an innovating project that aims to address and give solution to the issues that are mentioned in 17 SDGs by involving youth initiative through a complete cycle of raising awareness of SDGs, training course and project piloting and evaluating.

LACE project was a great experience for RUCHI as it provided young innovator from community to create, implement and manage their own idea in line with 17 SDG's. Our initiative under this project focused on environment and sustainability as we used the acquired support to support WASTE FORCE campaign where we educated and ran cleaning campaigns in 20 public schools for close more than 3 months. After successfully completing our initiative Mr. Mahip Dagar shared results of our campaign during the final evaluation meeting at Sonkhla Thailand from 6-10 September.



3.5 Waste Force:

Since October 2017, RUCHI is continuing with this innovative project called **Waste Force** with the help of interns from India and overseas. RUCHI continues its efforts in educating slum dwellers, rural communities and school children to minimize waste generation, waste segregation and proper disposal. With the ongoing education of people through SHGs we have decided on 10 collection points where people keep their trash ready to be picked up on pre-fixed dates by RUCHI. 6 schools are also involved and their children educated to segregate and put trash in different bags. The trash is then brought to RUCHI where that is further segregated and kept to increase volume. Once we get a truck load ready, we shall take it to Baddi and sell it to Trash Collectors for recycling besides recovering the cost of transportation.



3.6 Corporate Social responsibility (CSR):

Over the last two years, Dabur India has been supporting RUCHI through donation in kind of fruit juices and Chawanprash. RUCHI further distributes the products to the children in some schools and other formal and informal communities.



3.7 Advocacy and Linkages:

RUCHI's focus has always been on empowering communities for their sustainable development. Therefore, a lot of stress is laid on disseminating information on government plan and policies, schemes and their rights. Keeping in view their needs, following activities were organized for them:

- A. Education on Labour Laws: In villages of Dhar, Kendol and Dora independent watershed management groups were formed and linked with the Block Development Office, Dharampur. The groups in villages of Kendol and Dora were subsequently extended an interest free loan of rupees 40,000 each which have to be used for promotion of agriculture and to be returned within one year.
- B. Agriculture Extension Camps: 2 Camps for extension of agriculture practices were held at Damuwala and Surajpur by the State Government Agriculture Office. After the camps, some improved agriculture tools and seeds of onion coriander, shalgam, raddish, were distributed to the participating farmers.

4. International Voluntary Services:

4.1. International Voluntary Workcamps:

Since its inception in February 1983, RUCHI has been encouraging Indian students to take part in social services. Since then, RUCHI has already joined hands with international networks like CCIVS, NVDA and European alliance and their sub-networks. The volunteers placed through the network members help initiate inter cultural exchange, exposures/experience in community development at grass root level besides academic pursuits. Over the past 3 years, RUCHI has also started sending Indian volunteers overseas for their exposure under youth exchange programme.



Small donations raised through volunteers go a long way in taking up small but important need based projects for communities. About 100 students/volunteers visited RUCHI projects in Himachal Pradesh during this year.

4.2. Student Internship/Placements

70 Indian university students visited RUCHI this year to do their internship. The students came from various universities like Himachal Pradesh University (MBA) at Shimla, Central University Assam, Central University Kerala, IRMA Gujrat, DAIICT Gujrat, Mumbai etc. They find their exposure to grass roots issues and how people struggle to find low cost solutions to address their problems very enriching.



MBA students of Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla



Students of Rotterdam (The Netherlands) based University

5. Seminars/Conferences

5.1 Conference on Stop Climate Change:

RUCHI continues to support Stop Climate Change project by regularly participating in plantation activities jointly organised with Forest department. Jointly we have planted more than 2000 trees in 2018 and we continue to do the same for coming years.

The final evaluation meeting for it was held in February, 2019 along with NVDA GA which was participated by Mr Mahip Dagar where current activities were evaluated and new ideas to reduce carbon emission generated by IVS were actively discussed.

5.2 What is our IVS - Global Task Force(GTF):

There is an increasing number of stakeholders and organisations working around international volunteering such as governmental or intergovernmental bodies, companies and individual NGOs outside our networks. In addition, other forms of similar programmes are emerging and becoming prominent such as home and farm stays, trainings and internships, international study exchanges, etc. This changing environment affects the IVS movement in a number of positive and negative ways.

Realising the need that IVS networks need to define and strengthen their common values and find common strategies for further development and improvement, a Global Task Force was created having members from 6 international networks, namely, **ALLIANCE** (Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organizations), **CCIVS** (Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service), **EAVS** (Eastern Africa Voluntary Service Development Network), **ICYE** (International Cultural Youth Exchange), **NVDA**



(Network for Voluntary Development in Asia) and **SCI** (Service Civil International). After several round of Skype meetings as well as physical meetings in Tokyo and Kathmandu a Strategic Paper on IVS was produced in January 2019.

Mr. Dharamvir Singh, Executive Director of RUCHI, represented NVDA on this platform.

5.3 International Women's Day:

RUCHI celebrated the International Women's Day with the management staff and workers of Rieke Packaging India Pvt. Ltd, at Baddi on 8th March, 2019. More than 70 women attended the event where they were informed of their rights, peace, justice, laws against exploitation, successful women entrepreneurs etc.



5.4 NVDA GA:

This year the General Assembly of NVDA network was held at Kathmandu (Nepal) during January, 2019. Mr. Mahip Dagar, RUCHI Coordinator attended the meeting on behalf of RUCHI as well as the Vice-President of NVDA.

He also attended an EC meeting of NVDA in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the next 2 years. As a Vice President, Mr. Dagar will be responsible for External Relations and further strengthening of NVDA network during his term from 2018-2020.

6. AWARDS:

The Tong-Len Charitable Trust awarded RUCHI Tong-Len award for "Promoting the values of Peace, Good Governance, Equality and Respect for Each Other" at an impressive ceremony at their office in Dharamshala on 19.11.2018.

The Executive Director of RUCHI had the honour of receiving the award from the Chairman of National Book Trust and Guru Ji of the Tong-Len Charitable Trust.



RURAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN INTERESTS (RUCHI), BANDH (H.P.)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31, 2019

Prev. year 2017-18	Liabilities		₹	Prev. year 2017-18	Assets		₹
727,596	CAPITAL FUND As per last account Additions to fixed assets Depreciation of fixed assets	727,596 - (104,364)	623,232	718,096	FIXED ASSETS As per schedule attached		613,732
860,897	CORPUS FUND As per last account		860,897	3,804,850	INVESTMENTS Fixed deposits		3,950,000
646,474	RESERVES & SURPLUS As per last account Deficit for the year	646,474 (48,558)	597,916	-	GRANTS RECEIVABLE As per statement attached		162,354
664,780	GRANTS UNUTILISED As per statement attached		-	32,973 2,545,268	CURRENT ASSETS Cash in hand Cash at bank	33,389 1,655,090	1,688,479
4,324,298	REVOLVING FUND As per detail attached		4,316,298	137,042 96,346	LOANS & ADVANCES Tax deducted at source Advance/imprest	129,015 -	129,015
110,530	CURRENT LIABILITIES Expenses payable		145,237				
7,334,575			6,543,580	7,334,575			6,543,580

AUDITORS' REPORT

As per our report of even date attached.

For R. Ahuja & Associates
Chartered Accountants
Firm Regn. No.: 003226N

Rajiv Ahuja
Rajiv Ahuja, Proprietor
Membership No.: 082182
Panwano, September 06, 2019

For RUCHI



Director

RURAL CENTRE FOR HUMAN INTERESTS (RUCHI), BANDH (H.P.)

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

Receipts	₹	Payments	₹
Opening balance		Expenditure met from grants	2,445,665
Cash in hand	32,973		
Cash at bank	2,545,268	Expenditure met from other sources	26,375
Fixed deposits	<u>3,804,850</u>	Administrative expenses	534,751
	6,383,091	Decrease in revolving fund	8,000
Grant in aid received	1,618,531		
Interest income	481,568		
Consultancy income	8,000	Closing balance	
Public contribution	21,000	Cash in hand	33,389
SHG income	2,000	Cash at bank	1,655,090
Income tax refund (net)	8,027	Fixed deposits	<u>3,950,000</u>
Increase in expenses payable	34,707		5,638,479
Recovery of advances	96,346		
	<u>8,653,270</u>		<u>8,653,270</u>

AUDITORS' REPORT

Audited and found in accordance with the books of account & other records produced before us.

For RUCHI

Director

For R. Ahuja & Associates

Chartered Accountants

Firm Regn. No. 003228M

Rajiv Ahuja, Proprietor

Membership No. : 082182

Parvanoo, September 06, 2019

