

#HarKadamBetikeSang
#LeadershipKiTarang
#MainHoonLeader



JULY – OCTOBER 2021



#HarKadamBetikeSang

LEADERSHIP KI TARANG 2021

Nationwide Campaign Program on Girls Education



With #HarKadamBetiKeSang: Leadership ki Tarang 2021, Room to Read has ensured that the girls come forward as leaders and share their stories of leadership and resilience. The leaders have shown how self-learning and blended learning are effective models to ensure education endures in the new normal.

From Country Director's Desk



SOURAV BANERJEE

COUNTRY DIRECTOR,
ROOM TO READ INDIA

We are exhilarated to receive overwhelming support from across the nation for our annual Girls' Education Program Campaign- #Harkadambetikesang: Leadership ki Tarang 2021. Starting in July, the campaign transformed into a powerful nationwide movement to celebrate the spirit of leadership and resilience displayed by adolescent girls during the pandemic. Room to Read, brought together multiple stakeholders, to explore and address challenges of girls, in continuing their education.

Since the onset of the pandemic, the educational sectors was severely affected around the country, and especially challenging to those belonging from, low-income households and rural areas. Even in this moment of crisis, some girls have demonstrated exemplary Leadership.

The campaign **#Harkadambetikesang: Leadership Ki Tarang 2021**, thus, voiced the issues around' education and demonstrated the strength shown by girls, their families and caregivers, across the nation.

We are proud to share, we reached 1 Lakh+ people, from adolescent girls to parents, caregivers, teachers and govt. officials through various offline activities, across six different states in India - Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Uttarakhand. Additionally, we gathered 4 Lakh+ impressions online worldwide. We are confident that each parent, community member, and govt. official is now ready to take each step with the nation' daughters with **#Harkadambetikesang: Leadership Ki Tarang 2021**.

Overview: Campaign

#Harkadambetikesang: Leadership ki Tarang 2021, the nationwide campaign applauded the grit and determination of adolescent girls to become active leaders and lifelong learners, even in the face of adversity.

The campaign focused on the positive strides taken by adolescent girls towards their education, health, and life aspirations to:

Maintain educational rhythms

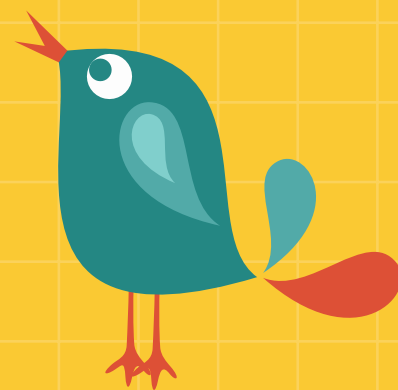
Remain healthy, safe, and emotionally balanced

Negotiate for Study time and access digital opportunities

Negotiate for critical life choices and decisions, including delaying marriage

Lead as COVID-19 warriors advocating appropriate COVID-19 behaviour

Room to Read India witnessed and shared several stories of adolescent girls displaying an array of skills in the form of Critical Thinking, Relationship Building, Setting Goals, Time Management, Effective Communication, Problem Solving, Perseverance, and Decision Making.



Highlights

Key Initiatives

1. 'Main Hoon Leader' videos were the highlight of the campaign, reaching...



20,692
Reach on
Facebook



7,176
Reach on
Instagram



3,367
Reach on
YouTube.



4,931
Tweets on
Twitter



leadership
videos appeared
at **10,003**
feeds on
LinkedIn

Phase 1: Main hoon Leader Anthem



03:47 / 10:00



Chanchal from
Chhattisgarh



Akanksha
from Delhi



Mausam from
New Delhi



Khushi from
Rajasthan



Janhavi from
Maharashtra



Akhila from
Telangana



Varshini from
Telangana



Jharna from
Chhattisgarh



Sudhanshu from
New Delhi



Phase II: Main hoon Leader Anthem



Supriya from
Delhi



Vanshika from
Delhi



Sharda from
Chhattisgarh



Aparna from
Chhattisgarh



Sana from
Uttarakhand



Anusha from
Uttarakhand



Lavanya from
Telangana



Rajyalaxmi from
Telangana



Aamirun from
Maharashtra



Sohana from
Maharashtra



Komal from
Rajasthan



Simran from
Rajasthan



2. 'The campaign received solidarity and commitment from Govt. officials, Athletes, Police officials, and many other stakeholders who stressed the importance of prioritizing girls' education and promoting leadership skills.'



Savitri Mandavi

*Pro-athlete and sportsperson,
Bastar District,*



Megha Tembhurkar Sahu

*Additional Superintendent of
Mahasamund Police,
Chhattisgarh*



Dr. Prem Sai Singh Tekam

*(Honorable Minister,
Department of School Education,
ST & SC Development Department)*



Richa Prakash Chaudhary

*CEO,
Zilla Panchayat Bastar,
Chhattisgarh*



Dr. R. Meenakshi Sundaram

*(Ex-Secretary,
School Education,
Govt. of Uttarakhand)*



Parents and caregivers should ensure that girls have all the support, provisions, as well as encouragement they need to continue their studies"

**says Dr. Prem Sai Singh,
The Minister of School Education, Tribal
and Scheduled Caste Development,
Govt. Of Chhattisgarh -**

I appeal to all the adolescent girls that be aware of your rights while aiming for your aspirations. It is important to have goals and aspirations for every person"

**says the Megha Tembhurkar Sahu,
Additional Superintendent of
Mahasamund Police, Chhattisgarh**

3. The Life Skills Clinic workshop, a motivational series on Leadership, was part of the more extensive campaign with mutual participation from Bloomberg volunteers and Room to Read India beneficiaries. This year, the campaign acknowledged the Leadership skill each girl demonstrated despite the challenges they had faced. Through this workshop, GEP participants looked for answers to challenges situations and ways to overcome those barriers. The workshop with Bloomberg showcased the volunteer's lived experiences and journey of growth. A detailed discussion was held on their journey of becoming a leader, how education and Lifeskills played a critical role in shaping their lives and careers and moulded their enthusiasm.



4

Room to Read India disseminated unique and creative solutions across six direct intervention states for the Girls' Education Program.

The campaign utilized the following materials:

1. Take Care (Dekhbhal) cards

The pandemic and lockdown situation was emotionally stressful for everyone, especially adolescent girls and caregivers. Being away from school, teachers, and peers and they had missed on their studies, playing with friends, going to schools, and were mostly confined to their homes. Parents and caregivers have also been going through their struggles of having to work from home or utterly missing work. These challenges have been stressful, overwhelming, and made everyone anxious. Learning to cope with stress healthily can make one more salient and help support their loved ones more constructively. With this in mind, **Dekhbhal (takecare)** cards, were designed and shared with girls and their caregivers. These cards contained strategies on emotional wellbeing which included simple methods and activities to mitigate anxiety and stress among children and keep oneself positively engaged.

2. Activity Worksheets

Various activities were designed and shared to build leadership aspirations among adolescent girls. They were designed and implemented to engage girls and their caregivers on a variety of themes, such as understanding Covid and its effect on mental health, identifying personal strengths to help in problem-solving, and building alternative skills to pursue psychosocial wellbeing and scheduling time to build leadership with peers. Inter-generational dialogues were encouraged by creating family conversation groups called **chaupals** and distributing **worksheets** on managing time effectively. Puzzles, riddles, and GIFs were designed and shared to ensure a fun and positive engagement.



3. National Webinar on “ Girls Education: Driving Leadership in the 21st Century”:

In solidarity with girl students across the globe and in light of the International Day of the Girl Child Room to Read India created a perspective building space through a national webinar to deep dive into the issue of **Shaping schools and self-learning for girls in the new normal.**

National Webinar focus

As governments prepare for back to normal educational institutions, adolescent girls will need additional focus and commitment. Identifying the issues that hinder girls from completing their education and outlining possible actions are going to be the first step. We need to work together in multiple directions – at the level of community, family, governments, civil society engagement, schools and teacher training, and the empowering girls themselves. Together, we need to identify actions that need to be undertaken, to ensure girls are linked back to school and have successfully caught on. Some of the questions that lie in front of us at this point are:

- ✎ Identifying policy level enablers that will help girls get back and flourishing
- ✎ Identifying the direction of community-level work that is required to foster familial and community level commitment
- ✎ Identify direction in terms of curriculum modifications and mapping learnings from the pandemic and building responsive pedagogy
- ✎ Identifying additional aspects for teacher education and school preparedness to reach out to girl students especially and make the school a gender transformative space
- ✎ Identifying areas that supporters must prioritize investing in
- ✎ Identifying priorities for civil society actions
- ✎ Identify the best ways to strengthen the ability and environment towards helping girls foster an identity of a self-learner

What people say about our program....

"The specialized initiatives of Remote mentoring sessions and self-learning materials have ensured that girls receive the support for their education and mental health during the pandemic." – **says Lucina Di Meco, Senior Director, Girls' Education Program, Room to Read**

"We must focus on strengthening capacity building interventions like life skills education, equal and safe access to technology, creating safe spaces, and mental health education for adolescent girls so that their voices are heard, and they become active participants in policies and interventions meant for them." – **says Sunisha Ahuja, Education Specialist, UNICEF**

"Pandemic has taught us about the vulnerability of human life, inter-dependencies, and inequalities in our society and world. Compassion, creativity, collaboration, and empathy should be the go-to qualities to instill leadership through the educational framework." – **says Dr. Krishna Menon, Professor, School of Human Studies, Dr. BR Ambedkar University, Delhi**

"The pandemic brought challenges for my friends & me. I could navigate it by applying the learned life skills, learning new skills, and focusing my attention on creating time for studies. As schools re-open, I strongly recommend that my peers and I be supported with a safer school environment through proper hygiene and cleaner schools, mental health support, and space to keep our views in front of our teachers and friends." – **says Sonam, Girls' Education Program Scholar, Grade 11th, New Delhi**

"It is now more important than ever, to strengthen the agency of adolescent girls in the process of developing solutions to rethink education globally during the crisis. Policymakers and parents should together find ways to make it happen through understanding the unique challenges, sending girls to school once schools re-open, and incentivizing girls' education." – **says Stephenie Foster, Partner at Smash Strategies, former Senior Advisor and Counselor to the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues US Department of State**

To establish equality in education, SDGs and Gender Inclusion Fund aims to support adolescent girls to ensure their learning continues. Both the solutions offer locally relevant and context-specific support to State Governments, Teachers, Parents, Community, and Girls to facilitate a smooth transition of girls back to school." – **says Dr. Poonam Agrawal, Professor and former Head, Department of Gender Studies, NCERT, New Delhi**

4. Campaign Song and Radio Messaging:

A vibrant song celebrating the leadership efforts of girls was created and animated. The song captured the essence of being a leader-not just for the world but also driving oneself forward in these difficult times.

**Lockdown ki, mushkil ghadi
Ummeed na chodi, datii rahi.
Hausla kar, tu na darr
Khud ko bol, aagey badhi.**

Main hoon leader x4

**School ke timetable ka,
paalan kar, gyaan badhaya.
Bhai behen ki shiksha mei,
maine unka haath bataaya.
Mata pita, samaaj ko
Baraabar bhageedar banaya**

**Khud se kiya waayda main,
Aagey bhi nibhaungi.
Gyaan ki seedi ko chadhkar,
badlaav main laungi
TWO with crescendo (again)**

Main hoon leader



Objectives & Audience

The campaign aimed to bring out powerful leadership stories of girls and their families and caregivers that demonstrate resilience and Leadership since the onset of COVID-19.

The campaign directly reached out to



84,629

Adolescent girls



29,927

Parents & caregivers



4,387

Teachers



Across Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Uttarakhand.

Room to Read India received overwhelming support from around 2,117 government officials and local bodies that amplified the cause of the campaign and increased on- ground outreach.

Through the blended approach for the campaign, Room to Read India reached out to **1,21,120 people offline** and **gained 4,46,887 impressions across social media handles**.

1,21,120

Offline Impressions

4,46,887

Online Impressions



1,47,246

Impressions



28,947

Impressions



35,000

Impressions



60,830

Impressions



1,83,900

Impressions

Geographical Reach



DELHI ●

UTTARAKHAND ●

RAJASTHAN ●

CHHATTISGARH ●

MAHARASHTRA ●

TELANGANA ●

Statewide Reach & Unique Initiatives

Chhattisgarh

20,283

beneficiaries &
stakeholders

Inauguration of Life Skills kit by
Education Minister of
Chhattisgarh, Tractor Rally and
Gulabi Gang's solidarity with
#Harkadambetikesang

On 16th July 2021, the Honorable Minister of School Education and Tribal Welfare Departments of Chhattisgarh, **Dr. Prem Sai Singh Tekam**, graced the occasion by making the formal launch of comic series on some of the themes of life skills like 'Decision making', 'Problem- Solving' 'Assertiveness' and others. These comic series combine fifteen life skills-based comic books, **"सूझ भुज का चश्मा"** contextualized for 179 residential institutions in Chhattisgarh.

As the campaign geared up across the states, the girls, their parents, and community members came forward to create awareness by organizing rallies and community events adhering to the COVID-19 protocols. Female community members led the rallies on two-wheelers and tractors, disseminating the campaign's message for creating greater community awareness and encouragement of girls' Leadership by breaking gender stereotypes like riding a tractor.

In Tilda Block of Raipur, the Gulabi gang is the extraordinary women's movement

existing since 2018 with the support of local police. They took the lead in creating awareness about various wrong practices prevalent in their society, like Alcoholism, Dowry, Child Marriage. They organized a rally with their members and a few scholars to create awareness about girls' education and promote the GEP campaign. During the campaign, Room to Read received the support of the Gulabi gang members to promote the message of our campaign to every corner of the villages of Tilda.



Delhi

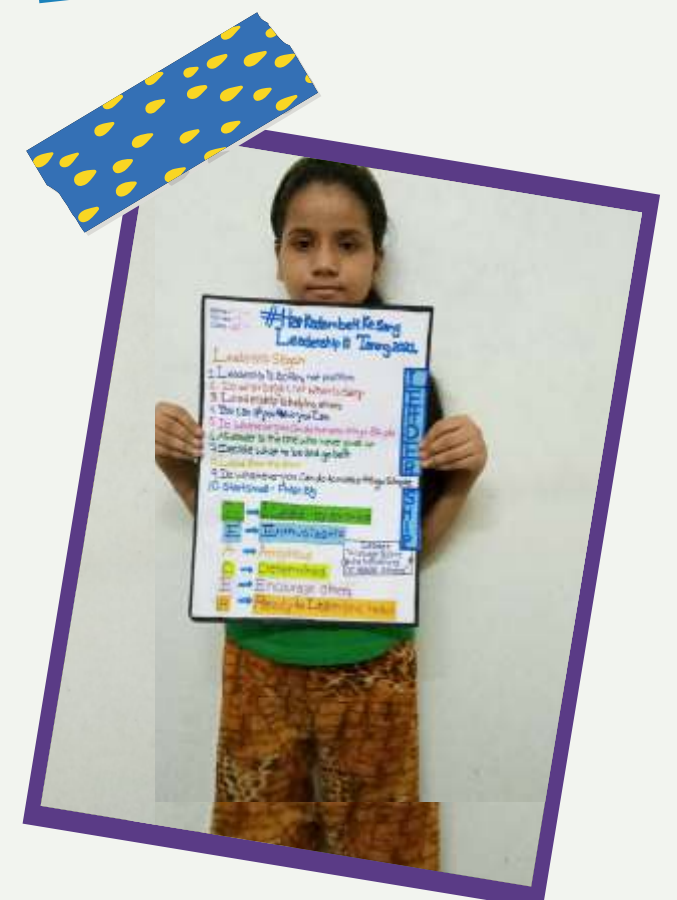
28,702

beneficiaries &
stakeholders

Leadership webinar series in
collaboration with Sharda
University and Bloomberg live
interaction with adolescent girls

Room to Read collaborated with the School of Media, Film, and Entertainment (SMFE), Sharda University, and Suno Sharda, CR, for conducting a webinar series on life skills for their students. The first webinar was held on 28th July on 'Community Leadership, Being Assertive' on 11th August, followed by setting priorities and closing with the webinar on "I can Lead".

In addition, senior representatives from Bloomberg came together to have an informal and open two-dimensional interaction with adolescent girls from Grade 9-10 Scholars.



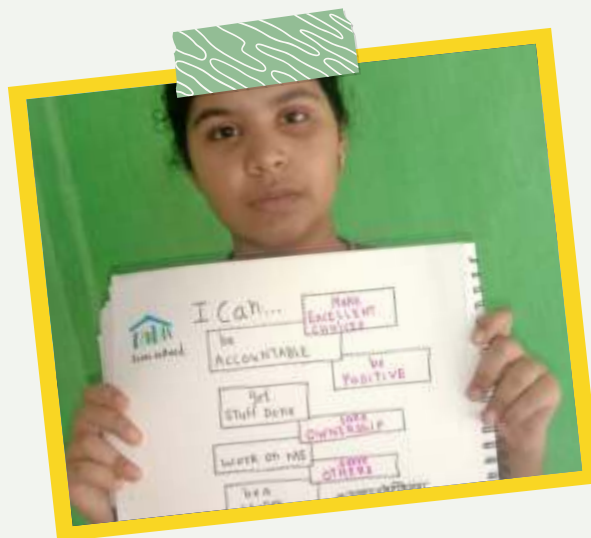
Maharashtra

19,482

beneficiaries & stakeholders

Webinar and Offline initiative
'Power to Lead'

The offline campaign initiatives, including Leadership Paheli Worksheets, Take care cards, were well received by Girls, Parents, Teachers, and other school officials. These initiatives witnessed an influx in the girls' and their families' participation from non-intervention areas in the state. Further, the webinar titled 'Power to Lead' held in the Marathi Language on 9th October, celebrated the spirit of leadership and resilience by adolescent girls.



Rajasthan

28,170

beneficiaries & stakeholders

Wall Paintings and Tarang Samuh was hosted in solidarity with local communities

Community members expressed their solidarity and commitment towards girls' education by participating in the organized activities. Four wall paintings were designed and painted by community members. Tarang Samuh activities like Village Chaupal and Poster making presented the scholars as emerging leaders in their community. Village elders enthusiastically became a part of Tarang Samuh discussions and participated in talks around menstrual hygiene, the importance of girls' education, repercussions of early marriage, etc.



Telangana

17,983

beneficiaries & stakeholders

LeadHERship State Culmination Virtual Event, IVR, Talk series with parents and teachers, and launch of Model Life Skills Centre

Room to Read India conducted a state-level webinar on 'LeadHerShip' as a Culmination event of the campaign on 31st July 2021. The event was graced by the presence of Ms. Sirisha Raghavendra, Addl. DCP, SHE Teams Bharosa as the guest of honor. Dr. Mamatha Raghuvver, Founder and Director, Tharuni, was the Guest Speaker at Keynote's address on 'Transcending adversities: taking Charge and Leading their own decisions'. The entire virtual event was anchored and hosted by two of our adolescent leaders from Telangana. Through Integrated Voice Response (IVR) platforms, Room to Read India promoted the campaign message through radio jingles, songs that covered a wide variety of topics, including school preparedness, leadership skills, take care cards, women inspiration, etc. Further, a series of 8 talk events through online and offline mediums was organized for Parents to send girls back to schools and support children in continuing their education. In addition, 5 Teacher Training Virtual Workshops were organized on Student Wellbeing to help teachers identify stressors in students, tips, and techniques to offer supportive communication



for students' wellbeing. A unique Pilot Model Life Skills Center was inaugurated, graced by the presence of Collector and DEO of the district to disseminate campaign materials like take care cards, school readiness posters, and highlight the vital support for adolescent girls.

Uttarakhand

10,277

beneficiaries & stakeholders

Offline Initiatives, Community Radio Stations, All India Radio, and Doordarshan Uttarakhand

Offline initiatives like Family Reading Time (Family Chaupal) and reflection activities with girls and their families were the key highlights of the entire campaign. The girls' leaders drew hand-made sketches and drawings to internalize the learning from the campaign initiatives. Room to Read engaged three local community radios to reach out to the remotest corners of the state. The community reporters from Kumaon Vani, Mandakini ki Awaaz and Himgiri ki Aawaz covered the inspiring stories of leadership, determination, and achievements. The worksheets/puzzles were broadcast to children through radio episodes. These community reporters also shared the testimonials and responses on worksheets/take care cards via various virtual means. #HarKadamBetikeSang anthem was also broadcasted through AIR Radio in Garhwal and Kumaon region while the Main Hu Leader anthem was telecasted over Doordarshan Uttarakhand during the campaign



Way Forward



Working with approx 14,000 girls across India, Room to Read India has ensured that adolescent girls have recognized and understood their strengths and talents and contributed positively to their surroundings despite hurdles plaguing distance and online learning. Girls have demonstrated critical thinking and displayed the ability to complete tasks, chores, or assignments successfully, even amid challenges and obstacles. The campaign showcased stories of leadership and hope by adolescent girls and their caregivers, demonstrating a commitment to their education, health (physical and mental), future (career and marriage, etc.) during the pandemic.

Room to Read India, thus, successfully completed the first phase of the campaign from 18th July to 31st July and the 2nd phase of the movement from 28th September to 12th October, which turned into a nationwide movement and ignited the ideas of girls' education and gender equality.



When girls are educated, their countries become stronger and more prosperous.

– Michelle Obama



Room to Read®

To learn more about our program head to
www.roomtoread.org