

Community-level Intervention 1- Economic empowerment of women

Rationale:

Economic dependence and entrenched gender inequalities are two, of many factors that exacerbate women's vulnerability to violence within the home. In order to address these factors, the Utthan Safe Cities Initiative is undertaking a broader initiative to empower women economically by strengthening women's self-help groups (SHGs) working in slums. The overall aim of this intervention is to reduce gender disparities and improve the position of women in their families and communities towards reducing violence against women in the long term.



The specific objective of this intervention is to create sustainable women's SHGs, which will ensure continued financial security of its members. Further, in order to address the risk of increased violence, consequent to women's improved economic standing within the family, this intervention also includes discussions on gender and developing capacity of women to enhance their role in household decision making.

Intervention:

This intervention will involve 336 women's self help groups in four cities. Activities, under this intervention, include:

- Financial literacy training for SHG members at the community level to improve their functioning and their ability to manage personal and household finances, as also to enable members to become informed and effective consumers of financial services and avoid risks of over-indebtedness.
- Training on book / record keeping to office holders of selected SHGs– to improve management of group savings, inter-loaning and enable access to financial services.
- Bank linkages – Trainings and interactions to facilitate access to institutional credit.
- Regular monthly meetings – to improve SHG strength and regularize group interactions, discuss gender norms and relations, aspects of household decision making ability, etc. These interactions are crucial to ensure the SHGs continued functionality and independence.
- Exposure visits- of SHG members to observe and learn from successful practices within the state and across the country.