



IND-CHR-WEP-P01 – Northern India  
Reporting Period: July – December 2018

## Widows Empowerment Project

**Budget:** \$15,500 per year for 3 years. Year 1 is fully funded!

### Update:

This project is providing economic empowerment for more than 20 widows each year in remote villages in rural Uttarakhand, northern India. The widows are given agricultural equipment and seeds, and taught how to increase their outputs. Some are given a goat and taught how to take care of it. They are provided with business training and networks to sell to, enabling the women to maximise their returns and avoid being taken advantage of. The expectation is that they will eventually be able to send their children to school as their financial situation improves.

During this period, 20 widows, who are all farmers, were given a pair of goats that they are raising, breeding and selling as required. Seeds were also distributed to them according to the size and location of their fields. After harvesting, the ladies brought their crops to the centre where our partners helped them find the best market to sell them.

The women organised themselves into two self-help groups to run a savings program set up by our partners. They met twice a month and were encouraged to save a small amount each time so that they have a buffer when shocks hit. At each meeting they were also trained in farming, animal husbandry and business. Our partners regularly visited each widow separately, checked on her goats and crops and provided advice and support.

Pavitra is a recent widow who joined the income-generation program last year. In her own words she describes how thankful she is for the program.



*"I was given 250g of cabbage seeds and I harvested 160kg of cabbage and made good profits and income from this crop. I also grew gourd, ladyfinger, chillies, beans, beetroot, coriander, brinjal and pumpkin. In all of these I made some profit but the highest I earned was from cabbage. I gave some of the harvest to my neighbours and now they are demanding I give them cabbage seeds so that they can grow cabbage. I used to have to buy vegetables from the market to feed my children but now I am selling to the market and eating some of our own vegetables so I am saving money.....I was also given a pair of goats who have multiplied. I have been able to sell the male goat and the babies are growing well and will soon multiply again. I am now self-dependent, earning a good price for myself to run my family and meet their needs....the self-help group is very important to me as I can rely on that amount for emergencies. The villagers are treating me with more respect and giving me equal importance in the village.....sometimes they are also asking me for some advice on different issues in the village.....i am really happy and satisfied.*

Thank you for your part in helping these women regain their dignity and place in society and for giving them a future.