

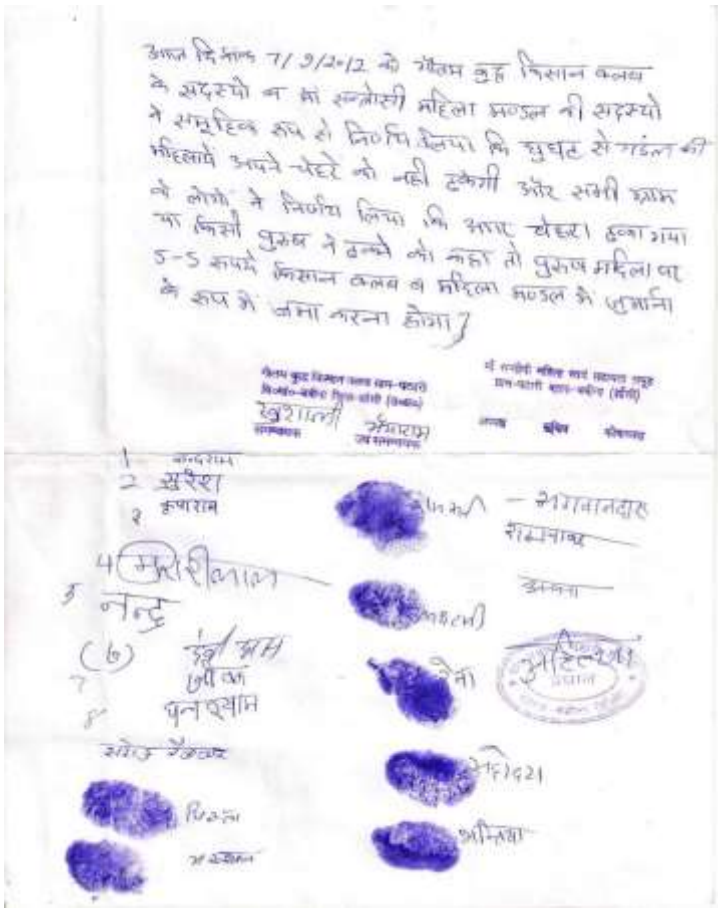
HARIT PRAYAS stepping for the biggest change in Bundelkhand region for giving women freedom from veil (ghunghat system)!

Gender concerns' are something which are always being the cross cutting issue in all the development project, but how it become the focal point in changing the entire system of village could be learn from HARIT PRAYAS....

In HARIT PRAYAS project village at Jhansi community and panchayat ban the ghunghat (veil) system!

In one of the HARIT PRAYAS project village named Pathari (Jhansi), villagers (including members from Mahila Mandals & Farmers club) **along with the Panchayat have taken official decision on 7th/09/2012 to "ban the veil (Ghunghat) system" in the village (attached find the official letter signed by the village community and panchayat) , this could be probably taken as one of the biggest change in the Bundelkhand region;** because if we consider the situation of Bundelkhand region, veil (ghunghat) system is one of the highly dominated system by men and society on women to cover their face and hide their identity front of male members, outside the house, in from of old people.....and many women pass their life without opening their face.....what a life which has covered face through out the life!

Let's know what is ghunghat? In very traditional and rural areas, women use their sari to completely cover the face and neck, concealing their identity to males. There is a small minority women that use the fabric to cover their whole face, bosom, arms, and stomach. This type of veiling is still popular with Hindu brides and is observed on the wedding day. Many women will use the ghunghat as a new bride,



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until their father-in-law advises to unveil. This is to keep the modesty of the bride. Traditionally, in some parts of India, women are supposed to wear a ghunghat in front of family elders and men guests, father-in-law, elder brothers of her husband, except when only in front of other women, husband and younger male family members. The ghunghat is used to show respect to elder males of the extended family.

Situation in Bundelkhand region: On an estimated basis almost in 100% of the villages veil system is strongly followed and hardly any NGO, Government has taken initiative to make women to come out with this....people from the region consider it as the part of culture, respect....but no one knows how this veil(ghunghat) gives strength to culture and respect rather it loses the identity of “women being as a human being”!

How HARIT PRAYAS worked? With the continuous effort of HARIT PRAYAS project team in Jhansi in the form of gender equity 8 (33% reservation for women in farmers club, and other activities) and continuous working with women through making them to participate in gram sabha meetings has made the things possible. Also its not that we wonly worked with the women of ghughat (veil) system, we worked with the men also and through counselling and making it clear that what a women can do without ghughat has made the work more easy....now women from the HARIT PRAYAS villages are leading the farmers club (10% of farmers club formed under HARIT PRAYAS project are lead by women), meeting with government officials, visiting KVK and NABARD offices and all this with their face identity. ..without any ghunghat (veil)!

HARIT PRAYAS has made women capable to come out with their covered face and also made society to accept this!