



<http://www.dnaindia.com/>

Women of Surendranagar district talk vote bank

DNA / DNA Correspondent / Thursday, July 12, 2012 17:10 IST

Fourteen villages of Surendranagar district finally had some of their long-pending demands met, thanks to their gutsy women, who put up a 'work first or no vote' theory before prospective gram panchayat poll candidates.

These women villagers of around 20 villages decided to vote for only those candidates who promised to address their long-standing problems. The women had come together following intervention of an NGO — the Society for Women's Action and Training Initiative (SWATI) — to present their demand for better sanitation, road and water in their village to candidates contesting the panchayat elections.

"The women presented their demands and even had it printed in the form of flexi banner to be displayed in the villages. They also decided to vote for those candidates only who promised to address their concerns," said Poonam Kathuria, director of SWATI.

She further said that within six months of being elected, the sarpanch of 14 villages addressed 60% to 80% of the demands made by these women. "This is for the first time we saw results in such a short period. It could also have something to do with the fact that the women united and demanded their due for the elected members," said Kathuria.

Vaniben Gamara, a resident of Ghanshyamghat village said that earlier they had no idea they could demand such things from their elected representatives. "We managed to get the borewells replaced and electricity poles installed. The construction of a bathing space for women is also on," said Gamara. Harshida Chhonsia, a sarpanch of Ramgadh said the biggest problem was in getting funds sanctioned. "I could carry out some of the work because the fund sanction had come when I took over," said Chhonsia.

URL of the article: http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report_women-of-surendranagar-district-talk-vote-bank_1714080-all

Permission to reprint or copy this article or photo must be obtained from www.dnasyndication.com

© 2005-2012 Diligent Media Corporation Ltd. All rights reserved.