

Nirantar Trust Annual Report 2018-2019



At Nirantar, we believe in enabling empowerment through education, seeing and shaping education processes from a critical, feminist perspective. We promote transformative formal and non-formal learning processes which enable girls and women from marginalised communities to better understand and address their realities.

Nirantar also works at the community-level and undertakes research and advocacy, particularly on critical issues which need greater attention from the State as well as civil society. Developing feminist leadership at the community level is an important part of our mandate.

Any part of this report may be used with an acknowledgement of the source. For more details about Nirantar's work please contact us at:

Nirantar Trust

B-64, 2nd Floor,
Sarvodya Enclave,
New Delhi 110017. India

Phone: 91 11 26966334

Fax: 91 11 26517726

Email: nirantar.mail@gmail.com

Website: www.nirantar.net

Writer: Nirantar Team

Editor: Archana Dwivedi, Apeksha Vora

Designer: Sadia Saeed

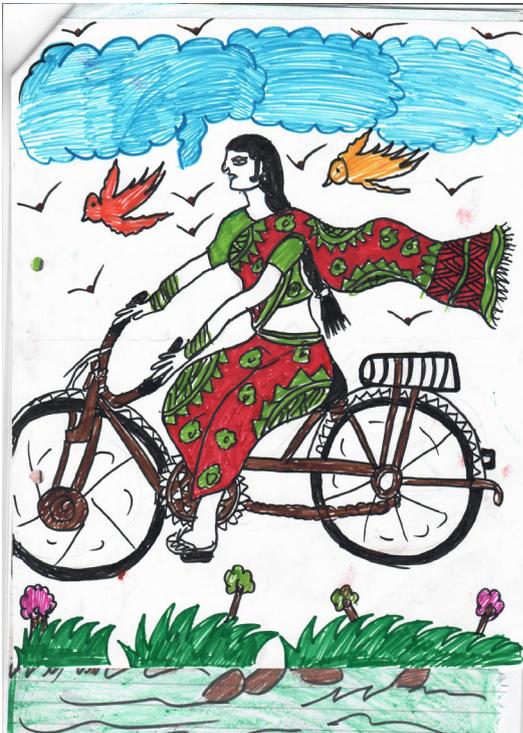
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Introduction

Nirantar is a resource centre for gender and education. Since its inception in 1993, Nirantar has focused on the use of education processes as a route towards enabling women to empower themselves in their everyday lives. Formally registered in 2000, Nirantar was founded to work on literacy for adult women from rural marginalized communities. Over time, our work has expanded to include Dalit, Adivasi, and Muslim women and girls in rural and urban centres, as well as an effort to reach out to transwomen.

We approach our work with a gender and sexuality perspective. To have this perspective is to look at the structural constructions of gendered identities and experiences, and the ways in which individuals and collectives negotiate and make sense of these. This perspective also helps us understand power and the underlying mindsets and modes of control that percolate into everyday processes such as accessing education, teaching-learning processes or the way that women are able to use these skills to navigate their lives.



When education is approached from such a feminist perspective, the focus shifts on creating spaces and processes of teaching-learning that promote gender equality. Within formal and non-formal education, our efforts are to highlight inherent disparities based on underlying social structures along axes of gender, sexuality, caste, class, age, ethnicity, religion etc. We are invested in creating alternative techniques, materials and pedagogies that are able to address and make sense of these, in an attempt to overcome them. In this way, our work is to apply a critical and political perspective to build an in-depth understanding of sexual and gender norms, how and why they impact our lived realities.

As a resource organisation we see our role as being a link between community realities and the processes of policy and decision-making at regional, national and international levels. Being firmly rooted in community-based work, through direct interventions and partnerships, we engage in processes of training, research, and advocacy on issues related to education, gender, and sexuality.

Learning is a lifelong process, and we believe that creating spaces for trainings where activists, educationists and community-organisers to apply a critical perspective to their work and lived realities can enable them to grow personally as well as nuance their own work. Our trainings specifically focus on unpacking questions of gender and sexuality, or to look at other issues of social justice and equity from this perspective. We facilitate a process by which participants are able to make sense of the role gender has played in their own lives or the lives of those they love, and build up from there to understand the structural nature gendered realities.

Simultaneously, trainings and research allow us to understand the needs and struggles of facilitating social change at a community level and helps us identify advocacy agendas. We equally focus our efforts on taking these advocacy agendas to different spaces- whether at a national policy making level or at the level of international aid agencies.

Our Vision

Enabling Access to Information

Information is power, a power that women from marginalised communities are largely denied. We believe that there is a need to enable access to information and knowledge – the creation and consumption of it - in ways that simplify and demystify information and ideas, to present them with a gender and equity perspective.

Promoting Empowering Literacy

Literacy and education processes should be made available to women, especially women from marginalised communities, and should connect with their lived realities, enabling them to take control of their lives by developing and sustaining skills of critical reflection.

A Feminist Approach to Learning and Education

Teaching-learning spaces – both formal and non-formal – are vital arenas through which gender equality can be promoted. Through a critical engagement

with content and pedagogy from a feminist perspective, learning spaces and experiences for young people can be transformed.



A Positive and Political Approach to Sexuality

Our approach seeks to understand sexuality beyond sexual violence to the exploration and expression of desires; a critical and political perspective seeks to build an in-depth understanding of sexual and gender norms and how and why they impact our lived realities.

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Young People's Education and Empowerment



women are at the helm of important decisions in their lives and face enormous pressures from structures of family, society, economy and polity. Within this context, working with young women may make it possible for them to make sense of their lives differently, and create support groups that may allow them to contribute to decision making about their lives. Nirantar has been working with this focus for nearly a decade, and in the past 5 years, we have undertaken different researches and programs towards this end. These include exploratory research work done with young people in Delhi 'In the Midst of the City' and another action research based work 'Building Spaces & Conversations' which includes alternative narratives on gender and sexuality, using theatre methods with young people.

PACE: Parwaaz Adolescent Center for Education

PACE started in the year 2015, in the resettlement colonies of Delhi and later in the semi urban colonies of Bareilly (UP) as learning centres for the never enrolled and drop out girls. Since then, we have engaged with 20 regional organizations across Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Haryana, New Delhi, Rajasthan and covered 2900 learners and more than 5000 members of various communities



over the past four years. Feminist approach to education has guided the teaching–learning processes at the centres.

Nirantar provides technical support through capacity building of teachers, providing curriculum and teaching learning tools, as well as close and regular onsite support to the teachers to strengthen their pedagogical and academic skills. Adapting these to local languages of the learners is an important part of this process, in order to create an environment for mutual learning. Over the past 4 years, our focus has slowly shifted from hand-holding support to creating a broader dissemination strategy to reach wider audiences with the approach, pedagogy and curriculum developed in the PACE centres.

CURRICULUM BUILDING

As a resource organisation, our efforts have focused on developing a comprehensive curriculum from gender and sexuality perspective for adolescent and young girls. The curriculum includes four major thematic areas: Body, Resources, Science, and Society and History along with Language and Numeracy skills. We have observed considerable changes in the perspective of young girls during the course period and participatory pedagogy used in the sessions have created comfortable space for the girls to share their experiences, challenges, desires and feelings with each other. Girls have been able to critically reflect on their own lives and social structures around them. Our curriculum integrates classroom based activities and exposure visits and thematic walks, so that what is learned in the class is tested against the outside world and vice versa. Continuous engagement with the community is an important way to bring about long lasting and structural changes. Therefore, we do a lot of events and activities that foster this kind of engagement with the girls and the community that they live in. We organise story writing and storytelling sessions as a platform for the girls to communicate experiences and reflections with the wider community, and to start conversations around them.

TEACHER TRAINING

The PACE curriculum departs from regular schooling in terms of approach, pedagogy and the way it is meant to be transacted in a classroom. For this reason, orienting teachers to use this curriculum is critical to its successful implementation. We work with teachers who are from the community and so it is important to first, and continuously facilitate a journey for them that they can then facilitate for their students.

We are constantly innovating with methodologies and infusing new ideas into

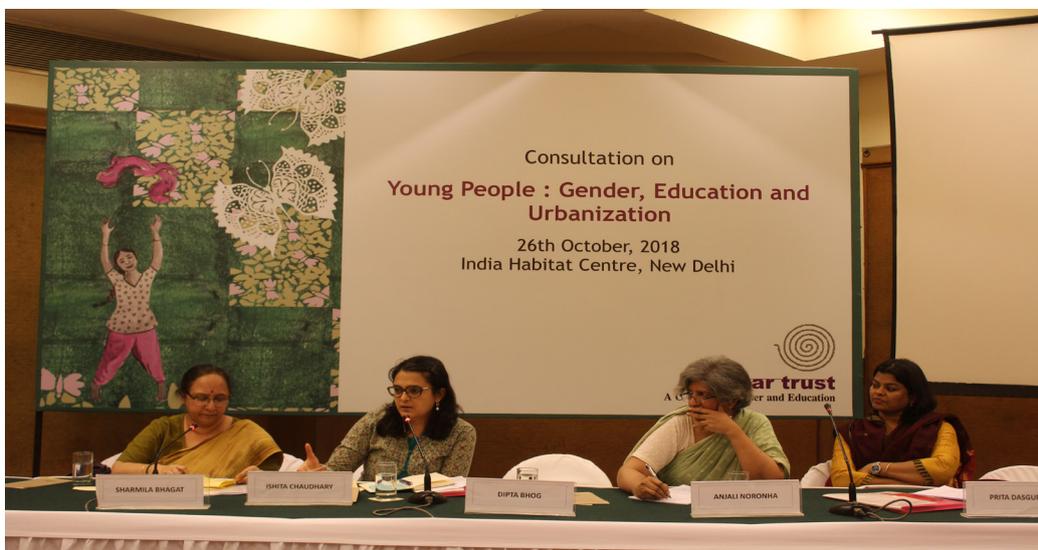
our curriculum, whether it is around storytelling or creating platforms for inter-generational sharing. The role of teachers in organizing and implementing this is crucial, and there is a constant learning curve even for them as they open themselves up to different processes of learning. Over time we have included different tools and processes of conducting evaluations of our work and with the teachers. For teachers to be part of this helps them reflect on their own journeys and challenges and articulate those to wider forums such as meetings with partner organisations, civil society groups and funding organisations.

ADVOCACY AND DISSEMINATION

By the end of the third year of PACE work, Nirantar organized a consultation on “Young People- Gender, Education and Urbanization” (26 October, 2018) to share learning experiences of working with PACE girls. The aim was to create a common platform for other organizations, especially those who are working with young people in urban spaces to share their learning and develop collective understanding of the emerging concerns in the field of young people’s education. There were 45 participants representing 27 organisations from rural and urban areas working across India on the issues of gender and education with girls and/or with mainstream schools. Educationists, researchers, facilitators, trainers and donor agencies, especially those working with young people had joined the consultation. This was helpful in understanding that intervention for out-of-school girls are focused on creating opportunities, building confidence and providing exposure, but not on educational and academic opportunities.

Majority of the organisations working with young people were focusing more on livelihood, life skills, SRHR and leadership building. It was realised during the discussion that educational intervention with out of school girls have not gained much attention even among civil society organisations. Nirantar team shared about PACE model of educational intervention for out of school adolescents, questioned the existing approach to education and recognized the value of giving opportunities to young learners to engage, analyze the meaning of concepts by experimentations and explorations. It was highlighted during the discussion that engagement with community is important for bringing local voices at the forefront and for promoting education for girls.

While talking about feminist approach to education, we highlighted that Curriculum developed for young people needs to question the prevalent gender norms and keep the scope for review and revisions with change in their needs. More systematic engagement with boys and need for developing curriculum for them had emerged imperative for bringing larger structural change in society.



Apart from ongoing work with school going adolescents, more attentions needed for out of school girls. Over all, comprehensive intervention strategy needs to work out with of school girls with focused curriculum that addresses their emerging concerns. Facilitators and teachers need to question the nature of engagement with young people; develop strategies to create comfortable environment where young people are not judged based on their language, caste, religious and gender based identities. Consciousness of the power as facilitator needs to be taken into account and there is need to encourage young people to speak their minds without being pressurized to speak socially correct views. It is imperative to unravel the complexities of diverse experiences and listen to young people by incorporating their own meaning of experiences. Young people are not involved in decision making both within the system and outside the system. Issues related to gender and sexuality has not been recognized as a crucial issue in the educational discourse for long. Now, it has become imperative to work with both boys and girls to bring structural change in society.

Early and Child Marriage – Action Research

Nirantar in the last 7 years has worked closely with grassroots organisations, policy makers, funders and other resource organisations to focus on gender and sexuality issues in context of young people. The sexuality related taboos, stigmas and age based hierarchies are the largest and deep seated social norms that young people face in their everyday life.

Nirantar undertook an action research study to evolve and build methodologies and tools to create enabling conditions for organisations and eventually for young people to have conversations on issues of gender and sexuality The study was done with 5 partner organisations across 4 states, namely Sahjani Shiksha Kendra (Lalitpur,UP), Vanangana (Chitrakoot,UP), Muskaan (Bhopal, MP), Kislay

(Delhi) and Vikalp (Rajasthan). Through this action research study, we aimed to deconstruct the category that is dubbed as a homogeneous 'young people' category and unravel how different young people from various backgrounds and identities make sense of their contexts. Within this, our interest lay in understanding the role that we, as stakeholders in the development sector and NGOs, can play in creating spaces that may be empowering for the participants. Our particular interest was to look into the possibilities and limitations that lay in honestly talking about complex and difficult socio-economic-political issues related to gender, sexuality, caste, class and religion, with young people within NGO spaces. For the research to be participatory and not extractive, and bring embodied knowledge and experiences into the conversation, we had used techniques from 'theatre of the oppressed' as a method of research and political consciousness building towards these objectives.

The two yearlong studies were concluded and consolidated this with final review and reflection workshop. The 3 days review and reflection workshop was organised in April where all the 5 Action Research partner organisations-participated and shared their experiences and learnings of engaging with action research. The key objective of the workshop was to discuss how these organisations could integrate their learnings of using theatre methods in the existing work with young people. Some organisations had already started using theatre methods in different ways depending on the nature of their work, while some were not sure if they were ready to take it on at the organisational level. While all the organisations expressed that the method proved very useful for establishing conversations and forging new areas of discussion especially related to gender, caste and sexuality, they were not confident if the leadership in the organisation was ready to take it up. However, wherever the leadership was involved in the project, the integration of the theatre work happened much more effectively.

A consolidated report which has a compilation of vignettes is also prepared as an outcome of the action research. The vignettes are developed from the qualitative data that was collected as part of the study, which will also be used as training tools for NGO functionaries. We are also planning to use all the vignettes for the resource portal of Nirantar and hope to convert them in different forms depending on the theme and usage of those stories.

Women's Literacy, Education and Empowerment



Nirantar views literacy as a skill and as a right that can empower, strengthen and open new opportunities for poor women from marginalized communities to become part of democratic processes. To actualize this vision, we have been working in close collaboration with field-based NGOs, women's organizations and government programmes, creating educational resources and generating links between work on the ground and policy formulation on adult literacy. We have been able to see the linkages of education and literacy with improvement in health conditions, greater participation in governance forums, enhanced access to entitlements and increased awareness and information. Literacy becomes a non-negotiable in livelihood programmes if they work towards nurturing capabilities and skills that engender sustainable employment.

Applied Digital Literacy

In the context of the rapid digitization of everyday lives, where increasingly even the smallest transactions can happen digitally, and leave basic interactions leave behind a digital footprint, we felt it imperative that a whole section of society – i.e. women, not be excluded from these processes. At the very least, we felt that women deserve to have access and a basic understanding of the technologies that are present in our lives and to be able to make sense of the, Thus, we have revisited and re-conceptualized women's literacy work and developed a new framework that not only includes competencies of dealing with



digital tools but also enable environment for adult and young women to become equal and active citizens to challenge the existing structures of power on the one hand. This framework also envisages digital literacy to be a catalyst of livelihood and the scope of entertainment it holds for adult and young women.

In order to understand the need of digital literacy among women and its content, a need assessment was conducted in Grameen Vikas SevaSansthan (GVSS) Pratapgarh, Center for Micro Finance (CMF) Sirohi and Sahajani Shiksha Kendra (SSK) Lalitpur district. In Pindwara and Abu road blocks of Sirohi districts where Grasia community lives, we found that there is no network connectivity or internet connectivity in the area. From this we found that very few individuals, mostly men, possess mobile phones, that too basic ones. Additionally, there were no ATMs in the nearby banks. Only a few women had ever seen an ATM card, a thermometer or a weighing machine. Equally, when asked about what is digital, women shared that according to them thermometer, pregnancy tests, weighing machine and mobile phones are all digital mediums. In one workshop, out of the 150 participants, only 4 had ever used an ATM card, while none of the 120 women had an ATM card.

This helped us understand the need and the nature of digital education required and understand how this can be specifically designed towards women's needs and address their concerns. For this we worked with GVSS, since they focus on women who are members of dairy cooperative society named Shwethdara Mahila Milk Producer Company Ltd. The programme developed focusing on their needs works on digital literacy along with dairy related functional literacy skills. Keeping in mind the context of learners (engaged in dairy work) we developed chapters for language and numeracy primers. Issues of dairy work were included in the chapters while integrating the digital literacy approach. The team has also developed digital materials like videos which have been shared with the teachers.

DIGITAL LITERACY TRAINING

A basic trainings on digital literacy are done with an objective to develop perspective on women's literacy and education and empowerment, they include an in put on pedagogy of language and numeracy and functioning of literacy centre. Another five day training on Gender and Digital has been developed and conducted to aid teachers' basic understanding and perspective on gender, the understating of gender within the digital age and functional knowledge of digital technologies especially smart phone.

For some trainings we invited facilitators from Digital Empowerment Foundation

(DEF) who conducted sessions on use of calendar, alarm clock, managing phone calls, typing message, and use of Whatsapp etc. They also talked about generating e-mail id and Facebook account. These days were very engaging for the participants as they were getting hands on experience of whatever had been taught to them.

Literacy work with long term partners

Aside from digital literacy – Nirantar has a long term engagement with Eastern Uttar Pradesh Direct Intervention (EUPDI) programme with Tata Trusts.

CONSOLIDATED BASIC PHASE REPORT OF THIRD PHASE PARTNERS

It was found in the consolidated report that by the end of 18 months, 43.5% of women had reached to the level of reading and writing sentences in language. Similarly, in numeracy, 56% and 47% of women performed formal addition and subtraction respectively. As the programme also focused on functional aspect of literacy skills, we found that the skills which women used frequently have been easily grasped by more number of women, for example: reading time on the clock and calendar is something which women do almost daily. Learning achievements in these two competencies are 79% and 55% respectively. Using mobile phone and calculator are competencies which are being learnt and used by almost half of the women i.e. 44% and 45% respectively. There was a lower percentage increase in terms of using mobile phone and calculator as most of women do not own them and they practice using these tools only at the centers. It is also important to mention here that while considering the socio-cultural factors which affect the learning levels of women, 100% results from them are not expected.

For the literacy program, we have different arrangements with different organisations in





terms of our support and involvement in their programs. Since SSK is a sister organisation our involvement with them involves support in planning along with visualizing, organizing events and participating in them.

With other organisations such as Youthreach and BIAF, who reach out to us independently, we provide support on a need basis. This year we work with Youthreach in building capacity of their teachers and BIAF in conceptualizing and budgeting women's literacy programme.

The overall reach of WL in 2018-19 was 13,964 women; 900 women from GVSS, 300 women in Youthreach, 2250 women in Bahraich and 10514 women through SSK. We conducted several activities with these organizations for successful implementation of the programme. For example before launching the digital literacy (DL) programme need assessment was conducted at 3 locations. We also conducted teachers' training to develop teachers' perspective and pedagogical understanding. Since in GVSS women who are member of dairy cooperative society are part of the programme hence keeping their context in mind 10 chapters have been developed; 5 language and 5 numeracy. Digital material (videos) have also been developed and shared. Consolidation of previous partners' literacy programme at Nirantar's level was also done in the Review and Reflection. In previous year while conducting several activities we were able to successfully plan and organize the Kishori Sammelan with SSK. More than 250 kishories (adolescent girls) participated in the event wherein their and community responses were overwhelming. Intervention of digital literacy programme and receiving positive response from the participants; teachers and women gave us energy to work further and pushing our material and other processes to be digitalized.

3

Gender and Sexuality



Queering Education

ADULT EDUCATION WITH TRANSGENDER WOMEN AND/OR HIJRA COMMUNITY

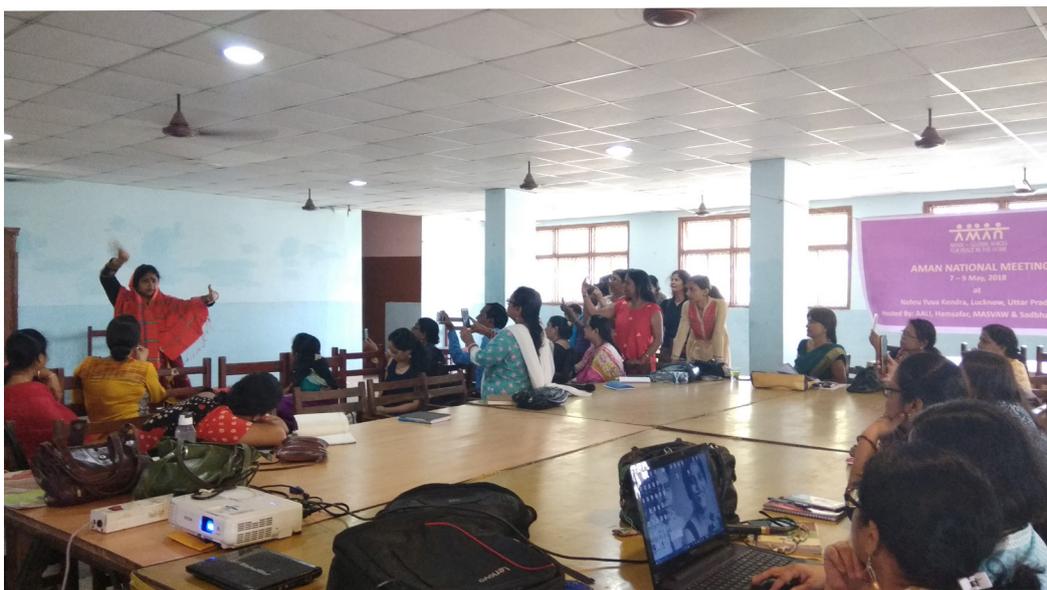
The TransLiteracy project was an attempt to queer education in India and brings in more diverse voices into the fray of mainstream primary, secondary and adult education. Most work on adult, supplementary and mainstream education is focused on either men/boys or women/girls and most work with gender and sexual minorities, specifically transpersons, is focused on health (primarily through HIV interventions), law or livelihood. This project seeks to build, for the first time in India, a literacy model that is relevant to gender and sexual minorities, in both mainstream school and adult education- drawing upon their voices to make education more inclusive. Several transpersons who exhibited gender non conformity have had to drop out of school owing to bullying, harassment, assault, mis-gendering and a lack of understanding and support from faculty, students and parents. Before commencing our current pilot project with a group of Derewale Hijras (Hijras who live with their Guru in an alternative family structure called a Dera), we conducted a baseline assessment and many of them had dropped out between grade 5-8. Many school spaces are not sensitive towards gender non-conforming children and their gender identity, coupled with their caste and class positions, often make it difficult for them to continue schooling and many children/adolescents drop out of school and some even run away from their native spaces to get away from oppressive natal families, communities. Once they drop out, there are barely any education related schemes that address them which could enable them to continue their education - which leads to limited options when choosing employment. Many of the occupations community members engage in such as sex work and begging are also criminalised, which exacerbates their vulnerability. In such an environment, the need for a project that helps them re-engage with education in a way that is meaningful to them, helps systems become more sensitive to myriad gender identities, and a curriculum that is contextual, representative and political, is felt deeply - and this project seeks to fulfil these urgent requirements. In this process first draft of the literacy chapters has been completed.

MAINSTREAM EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS FROM QUEER LENS AND MATERIAL CREATION (INDIRECT WORK):

Similar to the above, due to the education work focused on binary, queer people other than transgender women or/and hijras are excluded. Experiences of queer people with education in terms of the entire binary education process are

not pleasant including the infrastructure, curriculum, behavior and attitude of teachers and peers. Discrimination, harassment, bullying and abuse including verbal, sexual and physical from teachers and peers are lived realities of most of the queer people. They are marginalized within the education system not only based on their gender, sexuality and sex characteristics but their challenges are coupled with intersections of class, caste, religion, region etc. This make their needs different from students belonging to the binary gender of man and woman and are not in conflict with heteronormativity.

Our work such as review, policy advocacy, research, trainings and consultations etc. with regard to queer people fits into this very context and is therefore significant and relevant to the present scenario in India while also contributing to fill in the gaps in the global knowledge related to the same. Especially during our work it has been observed that there is a dearth of queer specific material related to education especially in India. Towards this end, we have joined Project Vistaara, a coalition implemented by SAATHII, that works on understanding ways in which queer identities engage with the law, education and health in India and advocating for methods through which these spheres can be made more inclusive of and sensitive to queer lives. Nirantar is focused on building advocacy around issues within the education sector in India. We have worked on a textbook analysis report of NCERT English textbooks from a queer feminist perspective, with a larger objective of evidence building, policy review and curriculum analysis so as to do advocacy for 'queering education'. The findings have been shared by Vistaara partners with SCERT and NCERT representatives and have also been an integral part of our training workshops with Teachers



in Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, Delhi and Teacher Trainees in Gargi College, Delhi. Apart from a textbook analysis, Nirantar has also been involved in advocacy work, policy analysis and creation of a teacher training module from a lens of gender and sexuality.

Training and Capacity Building

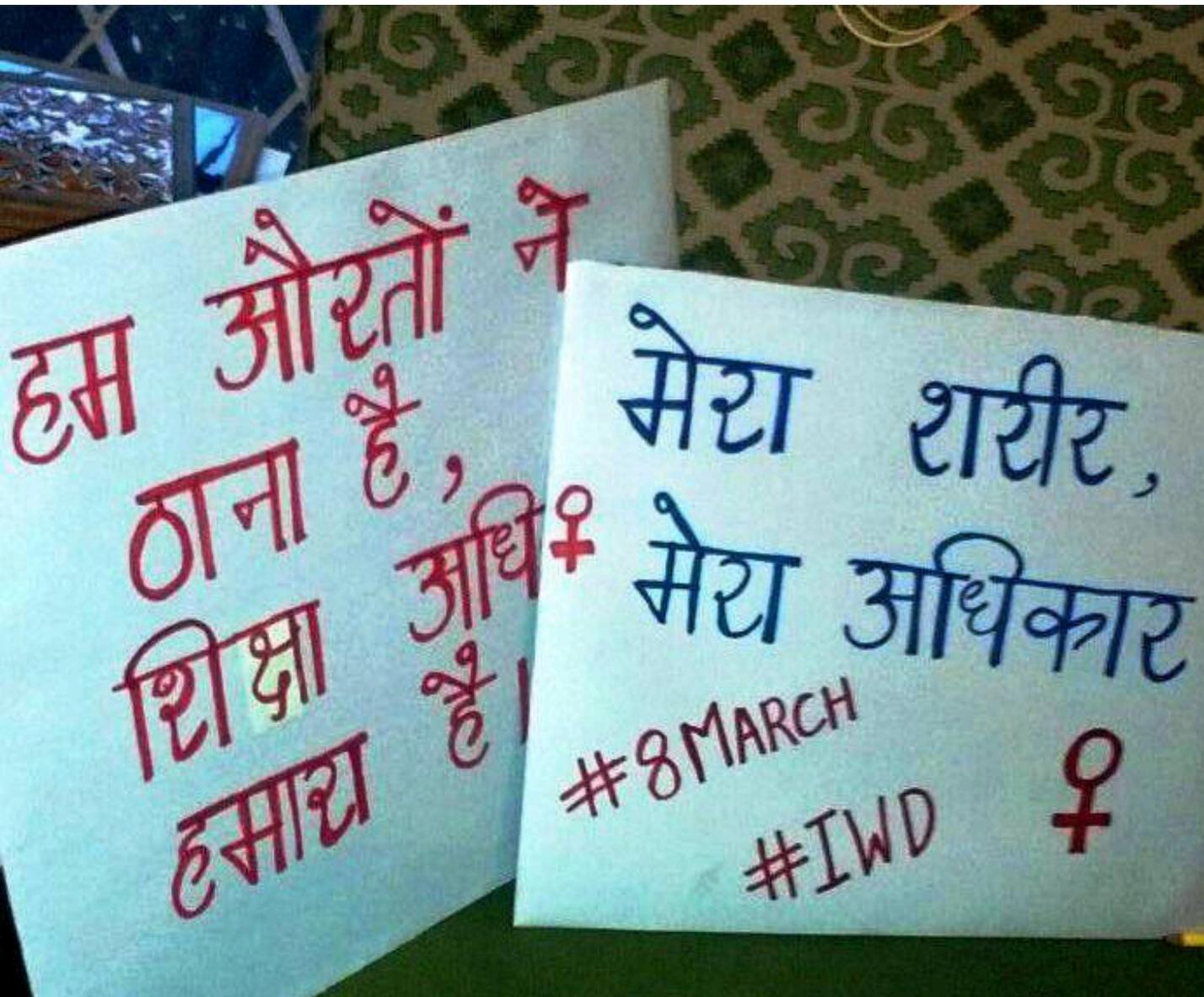
Nirantar believes in the transformative potential of enabling people to access learning opportunities and building their critical perspectives towards social justice and equity. We believe that to critically understand and address lived realities, one needs an in-depth understanding of Gender and Sexuality. As a resource organisation, Nirantar conducts training and workshops on gender and sexuality and their intersections with caste, religion and dis/ability, for NGOs, government programmes and other agencies and organisations. In the past one year, we have engaged with various stakeholders and conducted trainings.

Sl. No	Training/Workshop Conducted	Organization, Location	Dates	No. of Participants
1.	Gender and Sexuality Training	Mahita, Hyderabad	18th 19th April, 2018	30
2.	Teacher Training on Gender and Sexuality	Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, New Delhi	27th June, 2018	40
3.	Teacher's Training on Literacy and education pedagogy	Vanangna, Chitrakoot	12th July to 16th Jul, 2018	15
4.	Gender Training	Jan Sahas, Dewas, Bhopal	23rd to 25th July, 2018	40
5.	Gender and Sexuality Training	Sardar Patel School, New Delhi	3rd and 4th August, 2018	35
	Gender and sexuality training with B.EL.Ed students	Gargi college, University of Delhi, New Delhi	26th September 2018	40

Sl. No	Training/Workshop Conducted	Organization, Location	Dates	No. of Participants
	Gender training	Tata Steel, Orissa	10th to 11th January 2019	30
	Basic Gender Training	Sampark, Varanasi	5th to 7th February, 2019	100
	Gender and Sexuality training	Room to Read, New Delhi	28th March 2019	25

4

Advocating for Change



We, at Nirantar, have been involved in the advocacy work of strengthening educational rights of marginalized communities especially women and girls, as well as in activism in the autonomous women's movement and the queer movement. We believe that it is of immense importance to focus on advocacy for change at local, regional and peer level, apart from that in policy level. Nirantar has been using different platforms to put forward its vision and perspectives. Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter too have been continuously used as online platforms for advocacy and activism.

We have been a part of the planning processes in various forums like Planning meeting on Spotlight Report followed by participating in the National Consultation organized by National Coalition for Education (NCE India) to track the progress on development indicators and preparing Spot light report. We also participated in National consultation on Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Non-Traditional Livelihoods Network

A two days meeting was organized by Azad Foundation in Bhopal. With focus on strengthening the linkages of literacy and livelihoods as well as furthering the agenda of advocacy with livelihoods organizations to link education within their work, we became members of the non-traditional livelihood network which is a platform for organizations working on women's empowerment through livelihoods based intervention. Nirantar is the only organization which is focusing on education in that network and also continuously creating space to engage with education as an enabling step to strengthen livelihoods. We are also part of the steering group of the network and thus influencing the agenda and articulations of the network's vision and mission. We have participated in their annual general body meetings as well as steering group meetings on a regular basis.

National Consultation on CEDAW

Nirantar was part of 2 day consultation on Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for advancing Women's Rights and Equality in July 2018. The consultation was organised by National Alliance of Women (NAWO). Objective of this consultation was to formulate a framework for the shadow report of CEDAW which is presented by NAWO every 4 years. This report was presented by civil society organisations to report on the status of CEDAW implementation in the country. The consultation

was attended by NAWO member organisations, women's rights activists and academics from across the country. Recommendations of the previous shadow report and its current status were discussed during the convention. Nirantar was scheduled to work on the section for education of women and girls in India and led a group discussion with other organisations to lay down the framework of the same.

Planning Meetings on Spot light report

Nirantar has been involved in the advocacy work of strengthening educational rights of marginalized communities especially women and girls by using Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) mechanism nationally and internationally. SDGs 4 is on - Achieving inclusive and equitable quality education for all will require increasing efforts, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia and for vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people, refugee children and poor children in rural areas. Since SDG4 along with four other goals is the focus of next year's review and monitoring, it is a great opportunity for Nirantar to push for adult women's education within the framework of education for all and education to promote equality and justice. We contributed significantly to various mechanisms which were established at the various level to feed into the review process at the national and South Asia level.

Nirantar also contributed and impacted the articulation of education from the gender perspective and brought the lens of gender to highlight issues of discrimination and differential access to education to girls and women from most marginalized communities. We were also part of the national coalition that is responsible for preparing the country level report on SDG4 and contributing one chapter along with reviewing the whole report from the gender perspective.

National Consultation on SDGs

A three days national consultation meeting was organized by National Coalition for Education (NCE India) to track the progress on development indicators, especially education using SDG framework and prepare the spotlight Report for submission to HLPF (High Level Political Forum). Nirantar's presence at the event ensured that the issue of gender in context of school education should also take on board for discussion. During the meeting we were also able to draw attention to the Adult Education as lifelong learning goal of SDG.

India Inequality Alliance

India Inequality Alliance is a group of non-profit organizations lead by Oxfam India. It raises pertinent questions around negative impact of globalization and privatization that has widened the gap between the rich and the poor. Additionally, the alliance talks about extreme vulnerabilities and climate change which has risen due to the exploitation of natural resources in an unfair and disproportionate manner. Nirantar participated in its various preparatory and brainstorming meetings.

Partners' Forum

One member from Nirantar attended the PMNCH youth dialogue on the 11th of December 2018 as a youth delegate. The objective of this meeting was to bring together youth delegates of the forum to increase their participation in the Partners' Forum. We also participated in the Partners' forum on the 12th and 13th of December 2018. The objective of this forum, hosted by the Government of India, was centered on improving multi-sectoral action for results, sharing country solutions and capturing the best practices and knowledge within and among the health sector and related sectors. There was emphasis on the importance of people-centered accountability, bringing forward the voices and lived realities of women, children and adolescents through innovative programming and creative projects.

National Consultation on Taking Stock of Experiences of Grassroots Organizations in Using the Law to Address Early/Child Marriage

Nirantar team participated in a consultation on 'Taking Stock of Experiences of Grassroot Organizations in Using the Law to Address Early/Child Marriage in India.' Case workers and field level teams of different organizations had come to



share their experiences and talk about few cases of early marriage. During the sharing, most of these organizations shared field level challenges and strategies used to overcome those challenges.

National convening on early marriage

Girls Not Brides, is a global network to abolish child marriage, which has now established an office in India. The India GNB organized a two days consultation to address child marriage using a social norm approach. Many organizations across different parts of India attended the consultation and brought their valuable experiences to the space. It was a good learning as well as an advocacy opportunity for us. Since, Nirantar is one of the pioneering organizations that started looking at structural aspects of early and child marriage; we also shared some of our emerging understanding on the issue with participating organizations.

Dissemination Seminar on what works to reduce Child Marriage

Population Council conducted a study to understand the training of early and child marriage in high prevalence districts in India. Archana Dwivedi, participated and chaired the session that primarily focused on the sharing of the study findings. This was a good opportunity to talk about Nirantar's experiences of working with young people especially in context of early and child marriage.

Aath March, Saath March (International Women's Day March)

Nirantar has been part of the planning and organizing of the 8th march organized by the autonomous women's movement. We also provided support in developing material and posters, collecting information and disseminating it, mobilization, translation, and so on. It was a good space, and everyone at Nirantar felt energized and connected to the event. Several of us provided voluntary support, and a senior member took lead at the event.

What About Us

Nirantar participated in the workshop on "What About Us" organized by Vikalp, to share and disseminate their study done with young brides who got married before completing 18 years.

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Strengthening Our Team



As a resource organization committed to promoting continuous learning and growth, Nirantar believes in investing in building capacities of its own team as well. During the past one year, Nirantar members have attended several training programmes, workshops and consultations organized by other organizations, to learn and contribute in the process of sharing and building collective knowledge, both at the national and international level. We also have a monthly Sharing and Capacity Building meeting where we share with the rest of the team our learnings from trainings and workshops we participated in, events we had attended etc. From time to time, we have guests working in different work areas and sectors come in and provide us with input on certain topics in order to further build our capacities.

Training and capacity building of organizations, individuals and other stakeholders is a continuous learning process for us as well. The context and everyday lived realities of people differ within and from one training to another. After every training or workshop conducted, we do an internal review and reflection to identify the strengths and gaps in that particular training/workshop. The same is then conveyed to the hosting organization. We also have a well structured and defined process of assessment for the projects as well as project teams. The individual assessment and performance evaluations are given an important place in reviewing the overall performance of the projects. There is an accountability framework which the different projects are required to fill and update from time to time.

Nirantar conducts six monthly and annual reviews with the whole team to evaluate the work done as well as to make plans for the next few months. The quality of work done is an important indicator for us in addition to the completion of the work on time. Thus, peer review mechanism is followed very strictly where all the results produced by the team are put in the intra-team as well as an inter-team feedback process. This is an extremely important and learning process for us in order to strengthen the quality of our work and help us make it relevant and meaningful in the contemporary context. The annual and bi-annual review processes are also learning spaces for us to improve the quality of our work and thrive for better results. The review and reflection process is often mixed with various activities and games that enhance teamwork and camaraderie among the members.

At Nirantar, we are not only committed to creating new knowledge but also committed to taking the existing knowledge for wider sharing and dissemination to developing a culture of dialogue and debate at local, regional, national and international platforms. We are always trying to educate ourselves and keep ourselves updated with the ever changing discourses in the development sector through our discussions and debates.



nirantar trust
A Centre for Gender and Education