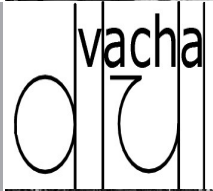


**L
E
A
R
N
I
N
G**

COMMUNITY- YEAR 2



SELECTING A THEME

In year two of the learning community, the girls could choose any topic that affected them.

However, they all ended up pursuing an issue that targeted the restriction of public space for girls.

For this reason, the theme for year 2 of the learning community was

“ Restrictions, Mobility
& Public Safety
for Girls ”

Contents

1. Background to Adolescent Girls
2. Introduction to the Learning Community
3. Learning Community Milestones
5. Akshara's journey with the Learning Community
9. Vidhayak Sansad's journey with the Learning Community
13. Vacha's journey with the Learning Community
17. Aangan's journey with the Learning Community
21. Introduction to New Groups
22. CORO's journey with the Learning Community
26. Stree Mukti Sangathana's journey with the Learning Community
30. Dostii's journey with the Learning Community
34. Vidhayak Sansad, Group II's journey with the Learning Community
38. In Gratitude
39. Note on EMpower



BACKGROUND TO ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Sexual violence in public spaces are an everyday occurrence for women and girls around the world- both urban and rural. On city streets, public transportation or in their neighborhoods, girls are frequently subjected to verbal and physical harassment to assault and rape. Such daily occurrences limit the rights and freedoms of women as equal citizens to enjoy their neighborhoods and cities.

Despite that cityscapes offer greater anonymity, privacy and freedom to girls from conservative familial practices and systems by offering them public spaces, these spaces on the other hand are made inaccessible owing to increasing violence on girls.

The National Crime Records Bureau shows a steady increase at the rate of almost 2-3% per year in violence against women and girls. The State Crime Records Bureau of the Criminal Investigation Department, shows

Mumbai got the dubious distinction of having the highest number of rape cases (221) in Maharashtra in 2011. Also reported in the city were 553 molestation cases, 162 sexual harassment cases and 191 cases under the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act.

For increased mobility of girls, two things need attention. First is, planning and designing safe public spaces that focus on lighting, landscaping, visibility, motorized traffic, pedestrian traffic, signage, security personnel, proximity to other public places, proximity to emergency services, community maps, and access to safe public transportation.

Girls also need nurturing social relations, that allows them to explore their desires and potential to their fullest worth, and quick and effective redressal mechanisms for any violence that they may face. Equally important is to engage the community so that girls do not have to face the social ire and humiliation if

IMAGE

Learning Community Girls playing on the beach

subjected to any kind of violence. This attitudinal change goes a long way in enabling adolescent girls to unburden the pain of the violence they face, and to make better choices about their futures.

As they stand at the threshold of adulthood, girls need, and deserve public spaces that enhance their safety and feelings of safety.

The Adolescent Girls Learning Community aims to facilitate the sharing of wisdom and resources among grassroots organizations that are using a variety of approaches to empower adolescent girls. Importantly, the learning community is putting the reins of deciding and leading change interventions in the hands of the girls themselves, so that they are able to directly address the barriers they face.



IMAGE
Medhavinee Namjoshi
(bottom left)
Project Coordinator,
Vacha Trust & Mentors
and Participants from
LC- 2

about violence against women, domestic violence, intimate partner violence but the girls who too are at the receiving end of this patriarchal, misogynistic phenomenon are neglected in the discourse. They are mentioned when sex selective abortions or genital mutilations are being discussed but there are many more incidences of violence experienced by girls. It is physical, mental and also structural.

The girls face constant threats from systems such as family, schools, neighbourhoods as well as media to follow the set norms, follow the culture of silence and not to question any atrocity, inequality or discrimination.

Girls in India are survivors. By the time they manage to reach second decade of their lives as adolescent girls, they are survivors of neglects, patriarchal beliefs and systems, violence and threats only to have compounded violence in form of restrictions on mobility, sexuality and expressions. These create vulnerabilities in girls that lead to victimization of girls in present and in future as women.

This is the context in which in the year 2012 -13 four Empower grantee partners based in Mumbai formed Learning Community for Adolescent girls, to share ideas, resources and possible engagement in joint problem solving and strategizing work with adolescent girls. Vacha Trust Coordinates the Learning Community.

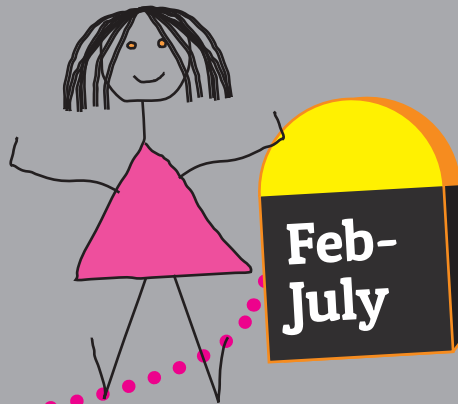
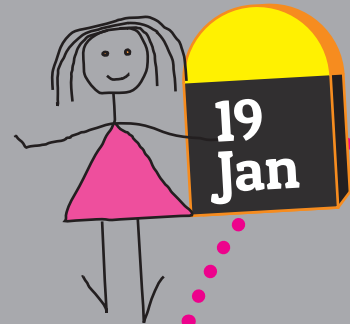
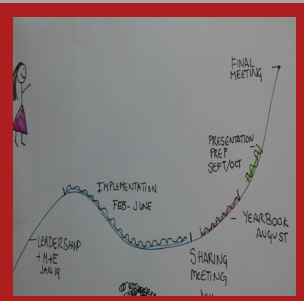
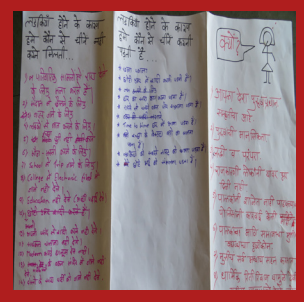
Objectives of Learning community for adolescent girls in Mumbai was making essential interventions for girls to become pro- active and participate in public life and to develop leadership skills. . The theme for year two of learning community was Restrictions, Mobility and Public Safety for Girls.

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women and girls is both overt and covert in nature.

In a country where sex selective abortions and crime against women especially young women are on the rise, we need to critically look at what do we perceive as violence? Is violence presence of danger or whether it is absence of safety, security? What is considered as danger or threat by girls? Where and when is it experienced?

A lot has been debated and theorized

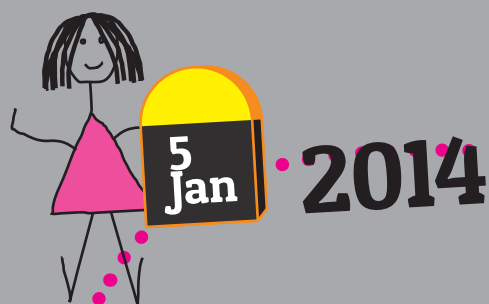


Way Forward to 2014 October 2014-September 2015

Sharing Meeting- August 24, 2014

Facilitated by Lydia Holden, girls presented their activities, achievements & learning with other girls. A news room was created and they were interviewed as celebrities by mentors . Girls were also trained to work on the creative pages they were to create for the year book later. They were trained in photography, designing the page and choosing the content.





ROADMAP

1. Mentor's Training- 23-24 December, 2013
2. Encounter- 5 January, 2014
3. Leadership & Monitoring- 19 January, 2014
4. Implementation- February-July, 2014
5. Sharing Meeting- 24 August, 2014

Leadership & Monitoring- January 19, 2014

Nisha Dhawan facilitated the training where girl leaders from Year 1 oriented the new girl leaders about the implementation phase. Girls worked in groups on the theme chosen during encounter to put a time line for the implementation phase. They were also trained to design the monitoring plan for implementation phase. Girls then built budgets for their implementation plans.



Mentors' Training- December 23-24, 2013

New members and mentors were welcomed into learning Community and the concept as well as objectives were introduced to the mentors. The two day training covered topics like progress of L.C. in year one, the plan of action for year two, understanding the ecology of adolescent girls, learning mentoring skills.



Implementation Phase- Feb-July, 2014

The implementation phase was from February till July 2014. The girls implemented the plans prepared by them and approved by the Executive directors of their organizations. Each group carried out activities in their project areas during this phase.



Encounter- January 5, 2014

In Maharashtra Nature park, Mahim, 10 girl representatives from each member organization participated, facilitated by the mentors from Year 1. The objective was to lay out the goals of Learning Community, and to plan and finalize activities for their respective groups for implementation. Girls worked on the experience and restrictions of BEING GIRLS.





AKSHARA

Akshara has been working towards building a gender-just society under SPGRC for the past two decades. Our mission is to create a society for women in which they can live without fear, violence and discrimination in their daily lives. We promote equal opportunities for women in every sphere of their life by empowering them to access education, employment and other critical resources that will enable their personal and professional growth.

Akshara has been actively engaged in projects for empowering girls and women. One such initiative is the 'Empowering Dreams Program' through which we provide scholarships for graduation courses to young women from economically weaker sections of society. Had it not been for the timely intervention by Akshara these girls would have dropped out of college either due to lack of economic resources or due to discrimination by their families who did not think it important

to educate girls. Built into this program are knowledge, employability skills and capacity building workshops to enhance their confidence and leadership skills that will empower them to make informed choices and take independent decisions in their lives. The exposure that they get here builds their confidence and helps them to make informed and independent choices.

IMAGE

All participants from Akshara (above). Below, Akshara girls in the implementation phase



MY SPACE, MY FREEDOM

Public spaces usually being male dominated are unsafe and often become hurdles for girls and women to play or roam around freely. So, the Akshara girls have engaged with the theme of "reclaiming open spaces". Girls tried to claim these spaces through regular sports activities. This change will be made easy only if parents and community come forward to support them.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

Activity 1

Survey & Interviews of girls and parents

After understanding the mobility and usage of open spaces, girls conducted survey of 5 gardens to find out what the situation of gardens is in terms of safety and accessibility. They interviewed 70 girls and parents.

They found that girls do not play because spaces are occupied majorly by boys. Basic amenities like lights, water, toilet, police beat and security guards are absent. Also, parents are reluctant to send their daughters to these spaces due to fear of sexual harassment.

Activity 2

Regular ground activities

Every Saturday, girls went to the garden and played games. This helped increase their mobility and presence in the garden. The girls also took up self defense and cycling. During this activity we also had a discussion in study circle on issue of why sports are important for us.

Activity 3

Dare to dream Program

Since, the reaction of parents from the survey we conducted was negative we organized an event with the name- "Dare to dream". We invited young girls from low socio-economic backgrounds who were



professional sports champions to share their success stories and struggles. They highlighted how they negotiated with their parents and society to go down this unconventional career path.

A health expert was invited to talk about the importance of sports for women and its health benefits.

Activity 4

My space My freedom sports day

It was the final activity to mobilize girls to access the ground frequently

during this event the girls distributed 600 pamphlets, collected 400 signatures and more than 1000 people from the community witnessed the increase of presence of girls in the garden that day.

IMAGE

Akshara Girls reclaiming the ground and playing football as part of regular ground activities

Impact of the LC

- Girls began to negotiate with boys to claim their rights to use the place. Over a series of dialogues boys gave the girls their required space by changing their timings.
- Parents are now aware and supportive of their daughters playing. Girls now involve other girls in sports activity.
- Girls joined other sports group due to this initiative

Hamame himmat hamame takad hamame pura dam hain,
koi ye bataye ladki kya ladke se kam hain



Sports activity in ground



Play cycle in
aground



7 Drink tea at the roadside tapari



हमेशा अलग सोचती.
स्नेहा (१८)



सबको काम
समझाती है.
दीपिका (१८)



कछ नया
करु दिखाती.
सुप्रिया (१८)



पढाई में
सबसे तेज.
पल्लवी
(२०)



सबसे छोटी लेकिन है
बड़ी तेज.
अंकिता (१८)



हमारी सिंगर.
सोनाली (१८)



अपने निर्णय खुद लेती
सोनाली. (१८)



नाम करना है
रोशन क्योंकि
ये है रोशन
(१८)



खुद के साथ माँ
को भी पढ़ाती.
विद्यया (१८)



ये हैं निडर
सबकी लीडर.
सारिका (२०)



VIDHAYAK SANSAD

Vidhayak Sansad (VS) was established in 1979 to support the development of marginalized communities in rural Maharashtra. The organization's programs and campaigns emphasize universal education, women's empowerment, eradication of malnutrition, training in human rights, and agricultural development. VS works in close coordination with its allied trade union, Shramjeevi Sanghatana, to reach the most neglected and abused sections of society, including tribals, dalits, impoverished women, and children. Its work fills in the gaps where government fails to deliver, while simultaneously pressuring authorities to fulfill their duties.

It emphasizes the development of self-reliance and empowerment among the rural poor alongside effective government intervention. Drawing on its twenty-nine years of experience, VS regularly updates and transforms its programs to meet the evolving needs of Maharashtra's rural poor.

to educate girls. Built into this program are knowledge, employability skills and capacity building workshops to enhance their confidence and leadership skills that will empower them to make informed choices and take independent decisions in their lives. The exposure that they get here builds their confidence and helps them to make informed and independent choices.



IMAGE

Training in Vidhayak Sansad (above). Below, Girl Leaders for Learning Community, Year-2



CHILD MARRIAGE

Vidhayak Sansad is working for the empowerment of tribal, dalit, women, children and other deprived sections of community for last three decades. We realized that in these communities, owing to higher social and financial risks, and issues of livelihood, child marriages are rampant. Adolescent girls, or girls even younger are married off to save them from the stigma of sexual harassment.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

A group of girls from Vasai block arranged the training of adolescent girls at government run residential schools. A total of 100 girls participated in this training. Our girl leaders have guided girls on the following subjects–

1. Disadvantages of child marriage
2. Anemia amongst women
3. Causes of Malnutrition
4. Physical changes during teenage.

Leaders were also shown documentaries based on issues of adolescent girls. Same training was organized in nearby hamlets of Vasai block.

Girl from Bhiwandi block organized the parent meeting on the issue of malnutrition, also did the survey of Anganwadi centers to get the information of malnourished children, girls gathered the information of same and then did the follow-up at concern government agencies to receive the nutrition food to these malnourished children.



In a month's time, their healths were restored.

Girls also visited the Public Health centers (P.H.C), they had discussion with P.H.C doctors and nurses on the treatments for malnutrition.

Girls created the posters on selected issues, these posters proved helpful during the training sessions.



IMAGE
Implementation phase in Vidhayak Sansad

Impact of the LC

Through this program we reached many remote tribal areas. We got an opportunity to have a dialogue with the girls /women from such a remote surroundings.

Through the trainings girls succeeded to stop child marriage. In Palnapda hamlet of vasai block, after training, one 16 year tribal girl decided to stop her marriage. Her Mother also attended the training, and both cordially decided to postpone her marriage for next 4 years.

Trainings helped girls/women to study/understand the reproductive system, physical changes occurs during teen age, menstrual cycle, anemia and malnutrition amongst women/children.



PARENTS MEETING



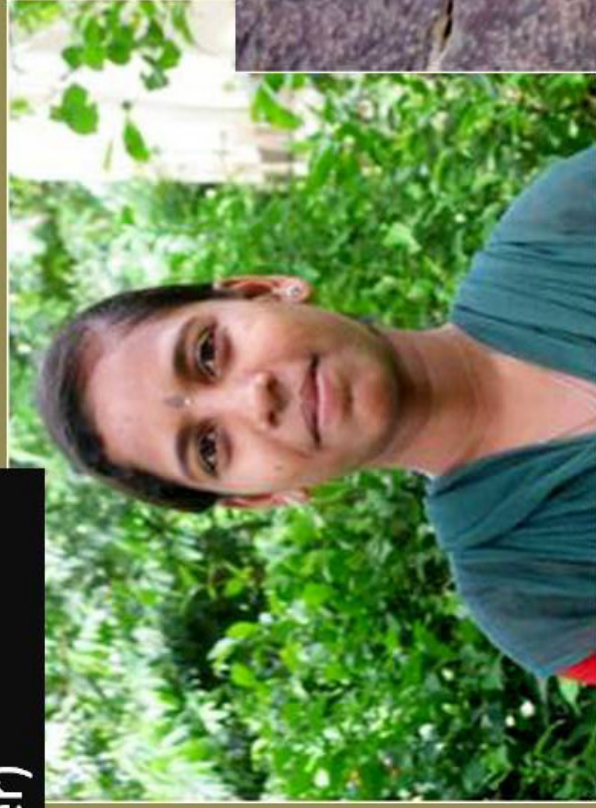
WOMEN AND LEADERS PARTICIPATING IN TRAINING WITH HANDMADE POSTERS



**Pooja Baraf, 20 yrs, In college
(Leader)**



**Ranjana Dalavi, 15 yrs, 9th
std**



**Rukhmini Vaghe, 15 yrs, 9th
std**



**Pooja Kakad, Age-18, 12th std
(Leader)**



VACHA

Vacha helps girls from deprived backgrounds to gain a voice and a space to express themselves, by providing them with life skills, leadership skills and opportunities to participate in public life. The organisation also works with male youth to sensitise them about gender issues. It has been working with girls since the last 20 years, and was one of the first women's resource centres in Mumbai, formed in 1987.

Vacha is active in 17 outreach centres in bastis ('slums'), along with more than 45 schools and colleges in Mumbai and Thane in Maharashtra, and in Valsad in South Gujarat. It works to create safe spaces for adolescent girls within their communities where they learn, interact and become leaders of change towards gender equality.

Vacha's mission is to focus on issues of women and girls through educational programmes, resource creation, research, training, campaigns, networking and advocacy.

Vacha has reached out to 4918 adolescent girls in the last year across Mumbai, Thane and South Gujarat. We create safe spaces for girls within their communities where they learn 21st century life skills such as conversational English, basic Computers, photography, theatre and public speaking. Through the girls' empowerment project 'Urja', and youth empowerment project 'Tejaswi', girls along with their peer boys from deprived backgrounds, gain a voice and work together to become change agents towards gender equality in their communities.

Vacha networks with other

IMAGE

Vacha Girls out on a Signature Campaign (above). Vacha girl taking photograph

organisations to campaign for girls' and women's rights at the local, national and international level. It undertakes research on these issues and publishes resources such as books, booklets, research reports, posters, and audio visual material. A lot of Vacha's publications are by girls themselves where they speak out through writing, art, photography and film.



CLAIM SPACES, REDUCE RESTRICTIONS

Girls chose to work on claiming public spaces by reducing restrictions they face on their mobility and presence. Restrictions come from their families, the community and also due to lack of necessary infrastructure. In the first year of learning community, girls had carried out campaigns to raise awareness with their families and communities to reduce restrictions.

This year, they decided to gather community support for the cause and reclaimed different public places.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

“We are sure that if we just ask, we will find many others who feel just like us!” is the thought with which Vacha girls began to reclaim public spaces. They realised that girls feeling restricted in public areas is a much larger problem. They recognized that they would just have to start asking to find these other voices.

Gather support through signatures: They started with signature campaigns to find out what other people thought about girls’ presence in public places, and also to gather support for girls to be able to move about without fear. They collected more than 200 signatures from 4 bastis in Mumbai, thus gathering support for building community libraries for girls, girls using the public playground, and stopping the practice of bikes being parked by young men in front of the women’s toilet.

Write to elected leaders: Armed with these signatures, girls from each of the 4 bastis wrote letters on the above issues to their corporators, and requested them to help create safe girls’ spaces within the community.

Girls go to the playground: They wanted to send out the message to other girls that if they wanted to come out and play, there was a group ready to take them along and play in

the local playgrounds. Girls bought cricket bats, volley balls and tennis racquets, gathered a group together and simply started playing at local open areas. Soon, other girls joined them, and parents too lost some of their fear about letting their girls go out and play.

Enter the virtual public space: Girls felt that just as they face restrictions and harassment in the real world, so is the virtual space fraught with similar obstacles! They wanted to make themselves heard on virtual platforms too, and decided that blogging would be a good way to start. They started posting their poems, photographs and thoughts on girlhoodindia.org.in, a blog for girls.

‘Capture’ unsafe spaces through photography: There are many places in the bastis that girls feel are unsafe for them, be it in the day or when dark, in lonely or in crowded areas. They ‘captured’ these unsafe spaces on two levels – by actually being there in a group, and also by documenting them with their cameras for the rest of the world to see. These photographs were exhibited at an exhibition titled **‘How Safe Am I?’**, attended by over 400 school and college students, teachers, press reporters, photographers and the general public.

Impact of the LC

Girls reached out to more than 700 people, including parents, peers, community members and local leaders; speaking to them about the sensitive issue of girls’ safety in public places and ways to reduce restrictions on girls.

A community leader took up the issue removing bikes parked in front of women’s toilets which pose a threat to girls and women visiting the toilets.

Girls in 3 bastis go to play in local playgrounds, something that is not allowed to them after they reach adolescence. Not only have they gained trust of their parents, boys playing in the area have also accepted their presence in the playgrounds.

Boys, in fact, have actually helped girls raise their voice against sexual harassment. Once, as the girls were playing at the beach, they noticed that there was a group of men who would always stand and leer at women in a hotel on the beach. Girls decided to speak to these men and as they walked up to ask them to leave, a few boys playing nearby joined them in their protest, forcing the men to leave immediately.

सिग्नेचर लेकर पाया लोगों का साथ



मैदान खुला फिर देर
किस बात की



बस्ती के
असुरक्षित
जगहों को
किया कॅमेरा
में कैद



और रखी ये सच्चाई लोगों के सामने





सविता कुमारी, १७ साल

देख घूरती नज़रें
पकड़ लिया हमने
उनको कैमरे में
जा कर डर को मिटा दिया

आज हमने छोड़ दिया डरना
जस्बे के साथ
चल पड़े कैमरे लेकर
अपने दोस्तों के साथ



आयेशा शेख, १८ साल

हमने अपने सखियों के संग

देखते देखते जा पहुँचे उस जगह
जाने में थी जहाँ पाबन्दी
देख उस जगह को वैसे
ले आये कुछ फोटो वैसे



स्नेहा गुप्ता, १७ साल

हैं दोस्त हमारा तू
आ दे साथ हमारा तू भी
भूलना नहीं कुछ बातों को
कल हमें उसे बदलना है



दुर्गा गुप्ता, १८ साल

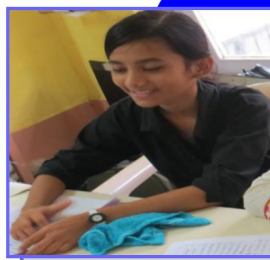
आज सह कर कुछ बातों को
कल हमें उसे बदलना है



सायमा चौगुले, १७ साल



आसिया शेख, १८



सीमा दोसाल, १६ साल

डरना तो नहीं चाहते हम
फिर क्यों लोग हमें डराते हैं
हमे पता है सब हाल
हमारा, फिर क्यों हमे हमारा
हाल सुनाते हो

जान लो हर बात हमारी
कल न हमको यह सहना है
आज उनका विरोध हम
करेंगे

हमको किसी से नहीं डरना है



कोमल वर्मा, १६ साल

डरते

हुए रहने का वक्त
अब बीत गया
डरना डर का काम
हमने तो भुला दिया
क्या है डर का नाम



सबा सिद्दीकी, १६ साल

जानते हैं सब कुछ
फिर भी मानते नहीं
मानते मानते वक्त
बीत गया
फिर भी सच्चाई को
अपनाते नहीं



शहनाज़ खान, १७ साल

वक्त बीतता है
पल थमता है
कुछ बातें याद आती हैं फिर



आँचल मिस्त्री, १९ साल

हमारा आगे बढ़ने का जस्बा जोर लेता है



AANGAN

Aangan is a child protection organization that promotes safe communities for children with a focus on children in dangerous or difficult situations and environments. These are children imperiled by their exposure or vulnerability to isolation, neglect, violence, hazardous or exploitative work, early marriage, juvenile offending, trafficking and abuse. We enable safe communities where children, adults and governments work together to prevent and respond to the harm that these children face.

Aangan works to strengthen or build child protection mechanisms that both prevent as well as respond to children's exploitation and threats to their security and wellbeing. Our prevention work is located in urban bastis or slums where impoverished children and families are supported and empowered to create a safe environment for children. The work of response focuses on strengthening the state's capabilities in rehabilitating

children who have been rescued or have escaped from situations of violence, exploitation or other hazards and are kept in childcare institutions.

Our work is centered around children who are normally invisible such as children hidden away in childcare institutions; working adolescents who do not have the benefit of protection under inadequate labour laws; out of school children who are isolated in their homes or at work in the informal sector, children engaging in illegal and risky activities.

We believe that if children, adults and state authorities engage with one another to identify, build and strengthen mechanisms that ensure children's protection, then communities will be safe for all children.

- We work with the state to implement effective legislation and create a protective environment in which young people are not only physically

IMAGE

Aangan girls in discussion with Girl Leaders

and emotionally safe, but are also able to secure justice and essential services.

- We work with caregivers and communities to identify, create and strengthen social networks of support for children and families within the environments they inhabit—including government childcare institutions
- We work with children to make sure they know their rights and can communicate the risks and challenges they face. Through individual

EVE-TEASING

All of the girls felt that since they had been working on the issue of eve-teasing since the past one year as a part of their LC project, they should be continuing with the same. They felt that there is a lot which still needs to be done in the community. This time they planned to focus on schools, since they would be able to reach out to the boys also through their project.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

1. Organizing mehendi competition in the community to mobilize girls
2. Meeting with mothers in the community
3. Sessions with girls on their safety, awareness about helpline numbers,
4. Survey done to identify areas that show high instances of eve-teasing
5. Signature campaign with an aim to increase police patrolling in unsafe spaces
6. Meeting the police and submission of signature
7. Conducting sessions in schools with girls for awareness of safety measures and with boys to sensitize them towards girls.



IMAGE

Aangan Girls on a signature campaign with Mothers in the locality

Impact of the LC

- Patrolling has been increased in the unsafe areas identified by the girls.
- Boys emphasized with girls on the consequences of eve-teasing and voiced their support to reduce eve-teasing.
- Helpline numbers - 103, 1098 were dialed by girls and boys to know about their services.
- Girls began to speak about the issue of eve-teasing and communicating with the parents to seek their help



IMAGE

Aangan Girls on a signature campaign with Mothers in the locality

IMAGE

Participants from Aangan bonding over Mehendi making



PROJECT NAME :SAFETY FOR GIRLS

LOCATION :BAIGANWADI

60% LADKIYO NE KAHA
CHEDCHAAD KE
KAARAN UNHE BAHAR
JANE NAHI MILTA

HUMNE KYU CHUNA
BAIGANWADI

35%LADKIYO NE KAHA
KI GHARWALO KE DAR
SE WO CHEDKHANI KE
KHLIF CHUP REHTI HAI

SIGNA
TURE
CAMP
AIGN



'SUHANA SAFAR' SESSION SE LADKIYO KO DIYA HOSLA

SIKHA HUMNE KAISE SURAKSHIT RAHE

HUMNE SIKHA MAA-BAAP AUR POLICE HAI HAMARE SAATH

103, 1098 PE CALL
KARNA

LADKIYO NE PEHCHANA
UNKA SURAKSHIT
SAATHI KAUN HAI

LADKO NE SAMAJHA
LADKIYO PAR
CHEDKHAANI KA KYA
ASAR HOTA HAI

HAMARI
MUSHKILEN

JAGAH KI PROBLEM

SCHOOL SE PERMISSION

GIRLS KO SESSIONS ME BULANA

PARENTS KO MANANA



LEARNING

ACTIVITIES KE ZARIYE LADKIYO
KO MOBILIZE KARNA AUR
BAAR BAAR UNKE GHAR
JAANA

LADKIYO KE PROBLEMS,
LADAKO NE BEHAS NA KARTE
HUE SAMJHE, YE CHIZ ACHCHI



LADKE APNE POWER KA SAHI
ISTEMAL KARENGE

LADKIYO KO PROTECT
KARENGE

PARENTS NE KAHA WO APNI
LADKIYO KA SATH DENGE

Mai hu mehnati
Sehar
,namumkin
mere liye kuch
bhi nahi



Mai hu samajdar
Sameena,nasamjhi meri
dictionary mein nahi.



mai hu active **Anjum**,rehti
hu main chust,durust,
tandurust



Mai hu
bindaas
Rukhsar,mera
har kaam hota
hai aasan



Mai hu advisor **Afifa**
,meri advice hoti hai
meaningful



Mai hu hoshiyar
Mehjabeen, har
kaam karti hu
perfect



Mai hu madadgar
Zahida ,madad karna
meri aadat



Mai hu writer
Mahenoor,meri
likhawat hoti hai
khubsurat

Mai hu
khuddar
Gulshan,meri
khuddari
mujhko pyaari



Mai hu thinker
Haseena,mere
thoughts aate hai
sabko pasand



ज़िन्दगी कितनी बड़ी है,
हमें भी जी लेने दो
कुछ ज़िन्दगी का मज़ा
हमें भी लेने दो

कभी समाज का प्रॉब्लम
तो कभी लड़कों की परेशानी
क्यूँ दुनिया में नहीं है
लड़कियों को आज़ादी

बहुत तकलीफसे जीना
और बहुत ताने सुनना
क्यूँ नहीं हमें दी जाती
इन खुशियों की वादी

हर वक़्त लड़कोंका साया
हमें जीने नहीं दिया
ज़िन्दगी भर कैद में रखा
ज़िन्दगी भर जीने नहीं दिया

-समीना
पीअर लीडर,
गोवंडी

Summary of poem-this poem
describes the thoughts of a girl who
yearns to live her life. Everyday she
has to face the challenges of the
society. She wants a chance to break
free and be allowed to chase her
dreams.

INTRODUCTION TO NEW PARTNERS



IMAGE

Nisha Dhawan
Program Officer
EMpower

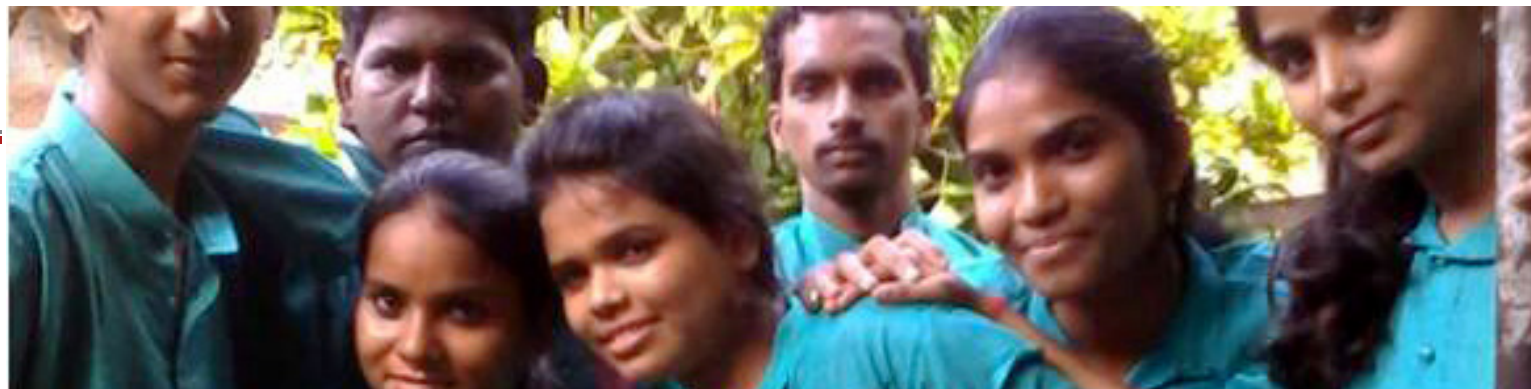
The sharing of resources and joint action of year one of learning community was very encouraging and productive. As a strategy to multiply and replicate this learning and impact each learning community member brought in one more member in the community.

Akshara brought in Dostii Project, Aangan brought in Stree Mukti Sanghatana, Vacha Brought in CORO and Vidhayak Sansad decided to add one more group from their project area.

The rationale behind was to ensure that these new groups have a mentoring partner in older members.

In the year two each of the member brought in one more group to expand the impact of year one. So in the current year, the learning community had eight groups.

The activities for the year two of learning community were targeted at increasing the issue of identification skills, building capacity of planning intervention strategies and leadership skills in adolescent girls. It also aimed at improving the mentoring skills of young team members from all the learning community members as mentors to these girls. Girls have carried out many actions and interventions in their communities in participative manner.



CORO

CORO was formed with the sole aim of propagation of adult literacy in Mumbai slums. Literacy was perceived as a wherewithal to mobilize marginalized people around their own issues. CORO was established primarily by upper caste, upper class, well educated, well employed people who came from outside community. Founders of CORO were intellectually influenced by Paulo Freire's theory of conscientization.

In the last 24 years, CORO has structurally evolved to be grassroots owned organisation lead, shaped and managed predominantly by Dalits and Muslims from the community. CORO's initial focus on adult literacy later culminated into 'integrated community development' approach with community women as leaders. Strategically, CORO evolved from an implementing organisation to an organisation equipped with expertise in training, intervention research and participatory communication through various collaborations.

CORO's 'Unique Demonstrative proposition' over the last two decades has been about facilitating leadership from within community people, especially community women. The focused interventions are on Gender, violence against women, women's sexual-reproductive health, education, basic amenities and saving self help groups.

IMAGE

**Participants from CORO (above).
In implementation (below)**

Combating discrimination based on gender and caste is CORO's motto and empowerment of women has been its focus while dealing with urban issues.

CREATING LEADERSHIP

CORO girls chose their theme as creating leadership from the community to combat violence against girls. The objective is to stop eve teasing in selected communities by various intervention led by community groups.





Girls decided to establish contact and communication with 200 young girls and boys to combat violence against girls in 10 communities of Vashinaka area. Some of the activities undertaken were:

- Formation of “Nayee Umeed” (New Hope) Group through identification of 10 key leaders from the community.
- Capacity building and deepening understanding of issues through series of meetings and small group discussions on each Sundays.
- Mapping of unsafe places for girls in community and advocacy with Police and MCGM.
- “Aao Kuch twists kare” “Gathering of boys and girls for expansion of Nayee Umeed Group.
- Formation of street play group of 10 boys and girls, this group has performed 14 plays in community.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT



Impact of the LC

- The exercise of mapping unsafe places done by girls and advocacy with DCP of zone VI of Mumbai police made huge impact in the community increasing police patrolling. Tata Power is agreed to install street light in identified places and already installed in some of the places.
- Groups of 10 dynamic girls is leading and coordinating the “Nayee Umeed” group of consisting 150 young girls and boys.
- Development of street play group and this group performed 15 plays on “eve-teasing” in Vashinaka area, its result in association of young groups, and also able to create awareness to combat VAWG.



IMAGE
CORO boys and girls presenting Street Play

CORO works on violence against women (VAW) by ‘working with men and women to combat VAW. CORO’s intervention research titled Yari Dosti and Sakhi saheli, and also in institutional setup forms basis of this approach. Intervention on VAW includes environment building, training and leadership building, counseling and legal aid, and working with men on gender related attitudes.

CORO identified 10 young leaders from the community, to assess and develop strategy to deal with “eve-teasing” issue. We train them in law, policies, system to advocate the issue.

Along with girls groups, we have involved boys very purposefully in this initiative. We arranged induction sessions with these girls and boys each Sundays on various topics.

"I am aware about the harsh reality of issues girls face, but first time I encountered these issues which people faced in day today life, and I learn to work in groups to overcome them."

- Shabnam Sayyed, group leader, age 19 years, studying S.Y. Bcom



Nitu Shinde, group leader, age 19 years, studying IIT second year: "I learn many things in learning communities, and it's changed my perspective."

Shrdha Shrivastav, Group leader, age 16 years, SSC: "Learning community change my thought process, I am proud that I am Girl, and I get an opportunity to work with community."

Usha Dhotre, street play member, age 19 years, 7th std: "I get new friends in learning community, earlier my mother not really allowed me to participate in street play, but she saw my role in street play and she became fan of me."

"Learning community help me to facilitate my leadership skills."

-Bushara Khan, group member, age 18 years, S.Y. Bcom



"I never talk eye to eye with any person, but since I am playing an important role in street play through learning community, now I am confident that I can face any problems in my life."

- Naina Vishwakarama, street play member, age 19 years, HSC



"I learnt to convert our weakness into strengths."

*-Neha Sharma
Group member, age
14 years, 8th STD*



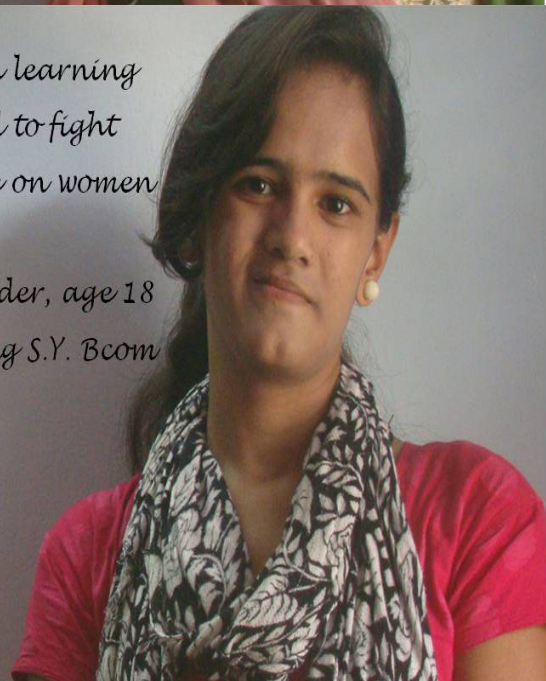
"Learning community gave me confidence and now I am confident."

*- Rubina Shakil Shekh,
group member, age 19
years, S.Y.Bcom*



"I find my confidence through learning community, and able to stand to fight against injustice and violence on women and girls."

*- Aarti Thakur, group leader, age 18
years, studying S.Y. Bcom*



"My point of view has been changed, now I think more mature way, Thanks learning community."

*- Muskan Gaware, group leader,
age 16 years, SSC*





STREE MUKTI SANGHATANA

Women's liberation organization- was established in 1975. SMS has directed its efforts towards the upliftment of women, chiefly by creating awareness in the society about women's issues related to equality, peace and development, through various activities such as setting up 8 Counselling Centres for distressed women and 8 Day Care Centres, Adolescent Sensitisation Program and conducting large-scale awareness campaigns in various parts of Maharashtra and India using the medium of theatre, poster exhibitions, seminars and talks. Besides these, SMS has also to its credit the publication of 25 books and magazine as well as production of educational audio & video cassettes and CDs. SMS started working with women waste pickers from 1999. At present SMS is working with 4000 waste picker women in 5 cities through activities like SHG, Access to credit, health camp, training in leadership, composting and biogas etc.etc.



IMAGE
SMS girls planning for implementation (above). Below, SMS girls in Leadership Training

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In 2006 SMS started Education promotion program for children of waste picker women with the help of EMPOWER. While working with adolescent girls we observed that adolescent girls are not allowed by their parents to attend the activities outside their community. Girls face eve teasing, molesting in their community. But they never raise their voice due to the fear that the parents will blame them, discontinue their education, and force them to marry the boy of their choice. Therefore they do not dare to protest. But this issue was raised by girls again and again and was finally chosen by them as theme.

Eve teasing affects their fundamental rights to move freely in the public spaces. Instead of supporting them parents restrict and reprimand them. It makes negative impact on their education, health and personal growth and stops their socialization.

However girls unanimously decided to speak up against this to reclaim public spaces.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

Girls planned four activities to spread awareness and sensitization on Eve-teasing. They took efforts in planning the sessions, arrangement of venue, invite resource person, developing mobilization strategy and mobilization in their respective communities. Before the activities began, girls had meeting with their parents and explained them about the activities which they would like to conduct in the community and convinced their parents on how beneficial that will be for them.

Session on Eve-teasing

Group leaders organized 5 Sessions on Eve-teasing in 5 communities for more girls and they also called their parents for these sessions. To their surprise more than 100 girls participated in these sessions. Each session, The trained counselor informed them about their constitutional rights. She also informed them that if they require any emergency help, they can dial on 103 helpline for women and children and seek help from Police.. In this session they were also informed about Domestic Violence Act and IPC-498A and how to use these provisions, how to file First information Report, where to approach in Rape case and importance of Medical check up in Rape Case.

Film screening

Hindi Tele-film show "Aparajita"

on gender sensitization and equal opportunity was organized by the leaders in 3 communities in Month of April . They observed that due to gender discrimination girls not get equal opportunity. More than 90 girls participated in these 3 sessions. They were inspired after watching this show and related themselves to the Central character of the movie. They realized that girls have to face many challenges, if they want to get higher education or want to do the job. Aafter the show they discussed about the equal opportunities. The resource person answered their questions on Eve-teasing which is the theme of the project.

Performance of the Play

Girls have planned performance of a play "Mulgi Zaali Ho" for girls and their parents from all 6 communities' on 7th October 2014 at Gandh-kuti Hall, Ghatkopar, Mumbai. They are very excited about this event and working hard to make it successful. They have also planned to exhibit Poster exhibition on Eve-teasing in the same venue. So that, after the play people can visit this Poster Exhibition and understand the issue.

Career Guidance

Career Guidance session was held on 29th June 2014 by Ms. Tanuja Kabre. This session was

also organized and coordinated by group leaders. 53 girls from 6 communities participated in this session. Ms. Tanuja provided various career options to girls. She had also answered questions by girls. Most of girls asked the information about how to get enrolled as Police, Doctor, Nurse and airhostess.

Impact of the LC

- Four activities instilled a sense of confidence in girls.
- At Community level support of women's group and youth group increased and helped them to tackle issue of Eve-teasing.
- Girls realized that, they have to raise their voice against injustice done to them.
- Girls are informing other community girls about the use of 103 and 100 helpline in the case of unpleasant incidents .
- Girls developed their skills and knowledge in planning and executing the activities.
- Girls learnt how to work and support each other as a team.
- Parents started supporting them to participate in various activities which contribute to their personal growth.
- Girls became far more bolder about reporting cases of sexual harassment or violence without the fear of stigma.





शिल्पा बंध

माँ नन्दी के
रश्मिका सुक्ता
→ अभिमान
के।

हमें आरक्षण चाहिए।
और
भारतवर्षी भी चाहिए।
कविता शेखरक



103 और 100
नंबर का
इन्वेंशन किया

कीमल बंड



राविना शेखरक



माँ भरी माँ-बाप से
जुने दिन से
जानने नहीं



कीमल कांबळे

आपने अधिकार
और हमको के
लिना
नदना हो चाहिए

दुनिया में परिवर्तन
माने के लिए
जुद मे परिवर्तन
होना चाहिए।
आखिरी नकल



भारिरीक हिंसा
नहीं।
→ शानमान चाहिए।



शान्त मण

सुख पीने का
और
छिछा लेने का
काहिकार है।



भारती शुक

हमारी दोस्ती में
नन्दी और नन्दी
दोनों चाहिए।
पार्वती काके

हेडलाड का किराए
रश्मय पर ही
करना चाहिए।

→ रश्मि श्यामलता





DOSTII

The Haribhai Harkishindas Trust has the DOSTI PROJECT in a few Slums in Mumbai.

The Philosophy of the Trust is to create and promote a sense of self-discipline and self-sufficiency within the community and by the community in the Slums. The development of the community will be geared to health, education and income generation.

The “Haribhai Harkishindas Trust” started the Dosti Project in the slums of Worli in 1997. The objective of the Trust was the physical, mental and financial development of the children and women in the slum.

The Project started with Balwadis (Nursary for children aged 3 to 5 years) in Marathi and moved on to remedial classes for children studying in Classes I to VI. The children in this slum go to the local Municipal School but used to mostly drop out as their parents are illiterate and very busy earning a meager living. The children even in class IV were not able to read or write Marathi (the medium of

of instruction) or do simpler arithmetic. The children needed to be helped in their studies taught to recognize alphabets and numbers and also given a boost to their self-esteem. This is where DOSTI (Friendship) came in.

We reached to the women through Savings / Self-Help Groups. Many of the families are in debt to money-lenders whom they approach in times of crisis especially illness, accidents, but also for weddings and other celebrations. The money-lenders charge exorbitant rates of interest and repaying loans is never ending.

IMAGE

Dostii placards for the rally (above). Dostii participants during the rally & play (below)



SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is our subject. The girls chose this subject because they want to rise their voice against daily sexual harassment and violence.



ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

Girls decided to work on eve-teasing. We focused on boy's playing carom boards in public areas who pass comments on girls. In our community, people think girls should wear proper clothes and behave properly. So we chose this topic.

Community Mapping

As part of this we interviewed 50 families.

Candle light Rally

We rallied with the poster

“GIVING EVERY WOMAN THE RIGHT TO DIGNITY, SECURITY AND FREEDOM. LEARN TO SAY NO AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT.”

Street play

The script of street play was eve-teasing and sexual harassment. We worked on the street play, and it was based on real life incidents which occur in our urban area. In Worli, we performed street plays in 5 different places. 233 people signed. We focussed on boys who whistle and pass comments on girls. We informed that sexual harassment is criminal and against the law.

Signature campaign

We first had survey on girls. We found where the girls feel unsafe & their problems. After which we made pamphlets on girl's safety. The pamphlet contained how the bikes are parked on both

We began in 2013-14 with 10 girls. In our area, there are many boys who eve tease & sexually harass girls. We conducted awareness programs like street plays, signature campaigns etc, to raise voice against harassment. We reached about 650 women & girls. We were severely criticized for our efforts. Boys believed that we were targeting them, so we met them. We spoke to them about their behaviour. They seemed to understand that we are not against boys. We condemned their actions, not them.

So far, we have reached three communities with 1000 pamphlets sharing message on eve teasing & sexual harassment. 800 people supported us with their signature.

IMAGE
Participants from Dostii



sides of road and lewd comments passed that makes girls feel unsafe. There should be proper parking places for bikes. It also included demand that there should be complaint box for women and the patrolling of police in our community must be increased.

Many such demands were listed on the pamphlet where we took 800 signatures of locals. The local police and corporator also supported us.



Impact of the LC

- Girls for the first time raised voice against sexual harassment in our community.
- The mentality in the community is changing with our intervention.
- Activities such as street plays has built the confidence level of girls.
- In our community, the main issue was eve-teasing based on clothes and lifestyle. Now it has stopped.



Pahale shoshn ghar se band karo; Tab shikayat karana samaj se Har bete se kaho ki har beti ki ijat kare kare aaj se.... Bat nikali hai to dur tak jani chahiye.





SUPRIYA JADHAV
17 YEARS OLD



PRITI SHETTY, 14 YEARS OLD



SAKSHI PATIL, 14 YEARS OLD



VIDHAYAK SANSAD-II

Vidhayak Sansad (VS) was established in 1979 to support the development of marginalized communities in rural Maharashtra. The organization's programs and campaigns emphasize universal education, women's empowerment, eradication of malnutrition, training in human rights, and agricultural development. VS works in close coordination with its allied trade union, Shramjeevi Sanghatana, to reach the most neglected and abused sections of society, including tribals, dalits, impoverished women, and children. Its work fills in the gaps where government fails to deliver, while simultaneously pressuring authorities to fulfill their duties.

It emphasizes the development of self-reliance and empowerment among the rural poor alongside effective government intervention. Drawing on its twenty-nine years of experience, VS regularly updates and transforms its programs to meet the evolving needs of Maharashtra's rural poor.



IMAGE
Children of migrant laborers suffering from malnutrition (above). Girls during implementation program. (below)



MALNUTRITION

This year vidhayak Sansad selected two issues from the community, Child Marriage and Malnutrition. Vidhayak Sansad is working for the empowerment of tribal, dalit, women, children and other deprived sections of community for last three decades. During our work on the Malnutrition issue, we have realized that reasons for malnutrition are not just less opportunities of livelihood, poverty, limited access of Public health centers but with these reasons early marriage of adolescent girls, anemia amongst pregnant women are also the major reasons of Malnutrition. Therefore through this opportunity we have selected these issues which will help us to create awareness about disadvantages of child marriage and it will indirectly help in eradication of Malnutrition.

ACTIVITIES AND IMPACT

A group of girls from Vasai block arranged the training of adolescent girls at government run residential schools. Total 100 girls were participated in this training. Our girl leaders have guided girls on the following subjects. – Disadvantages of child marriage, Anemia amongst women, Causes of Malnutrition and physical changes arise during teenage. Leaders also shown the documentaries based on the issues of adolescent girls.

Same training was organized in nearby hamlets of Vasai block.

Girl from Bhiwandi block organized the parent meeting on the issue of malnutrition, also did the survey of Anganwadi centers to get the information of malnourished children, girls gathered the information of same and then did the follow-up at concern government agencies to receive the nutrition food to these malnourished children. After almost a month of follow-up there is improvement in their health status

Girls also visited the Public Health centers (P.H.C), they had discussion with P.H.C doctors and nurses on the treatments for malnutrition.

Girls created the posters on selected issues, these posters proved helpful during the training sessions.



IMAGE
Mothers of girls in Vidhayak Sansad

Impact of the LC

- Through this program we reached many remote tribal areas. We got an opportunity to had dialogue with the girls or women from such a remote surroundings.
- Through the trainings girls succeeded to stop child marriage. In Palnapda hamlet of Vasai block, after training, one 16 year tribal girl decided to stop her marriage. Her Mother also attended the training, and both cordially decided to postpone her marriage for next 4 years.
- Trainings helped girls/women to study/understand the reproductive system, physical changes occurs during teen age, menstrual cycle, anemia and malnutrition amongst women/children.

Learning community program has given an immense platform to the tribal girls from rural settings. It helped boosting the confidence of girls. This program has given a chance to these girls to study insight the issues which are actually related with their day to day life. It was a very fruitful journey as these young girls got an opportunity to train the adolescent girls, women from their community areas. Through the program they got a chance to had conversation with Public health center Doctors, Nurses, Anganwadi workers, village head. It indirectly helped them to study the structure of village/Local self government. They understood the issues of women/girls from their community; they also studied the issues of migrant laborers. They got an opportunity to visit brick kilns to check the status of malnourished children. Girls understood that documentaries, posters, trainings can prove an effective tool to pass the message and to create awareness. Learning community program helped to create young Leaderships amongst tribal girls, these young leaders learned that they can play a role in creation of an equitable society.



CHILDREN OF MIGRANT LABOURERS FROM
BRICK KLINS SUFFERING FROM MALNUTRITION

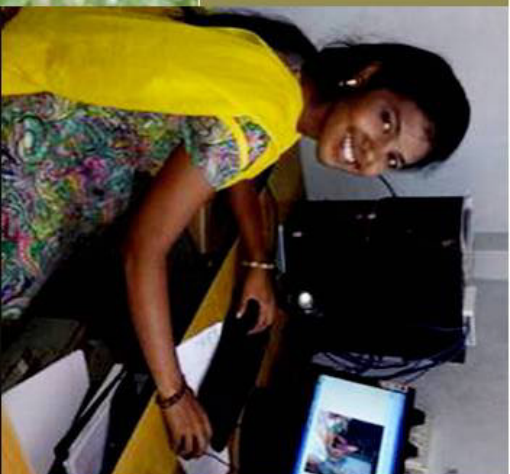




Darshana Bhoje
Age-16, 10th std



Chandra Jadhav, Age-15, 9th std



Asha Choudhari
Age-21, In college



Mamata Sutar
Age-21, In college



Devika Kambadi
Age-16, 10th std (Leader)



Darshana Ghala
Age-16, 10 std



Dipa Vaghamare
Age-16, 10th std

IN GRATITUDE TO

We would like to thank the following people.

Our mentors without whom there wouldn't be a learning community: From Vacha Trust - Deepali Kamble, Amrita De , Yagna Parmar, From Aangan Trust - Shubhangi Bhong, Nishat Ahmad, From Aakshara - Manasi Acharya, Varsha Bansode, From Vidhayak Sansad- Anita Ramu Dhangda, Saurandi Manjula Kishor Vaidya, Rekha Nitin Vilat and Hindvi From Dostii- Sonali More, From CORO - Rohini Kadam, Sushama Kale, From Stree Mukti Sanghatana- Chitra Zende, Sunita Pawar and Tushita Mukherjee from Vacha for monitoring .

For Support, Training and Guidance: Sonal Shukla of Vacha Trust, Cynthia Steele, Carmen Morcos and Lee Takakjian of EMpower and Lydia Holden

For Crucial Financial Support (via the grant to EMpower - The Emerging Markets Foundation) which has made the Learning Community possible: The Nike and NoVo Foundations

For your resources: Abhishek Mehra and The Mirador Hotel Andheri East, Savitribai Phule Gender Resource Centre of BMC, Balakanji Bari, Juhu.

This yearbook was collated and designed by Arpita Phukan Biswas.

Thank You,

Medhavinee Namjoshi
Learning Community Co-ordinator, Vacha Trust

Nisha Dhawan
Empower Program Officer in India



ABOUT EMpower

EMpower – The Emerging Markets Foundation supports locally-led organisation in EM countries that provide at-risk youth, age 10-24, with the tools and resources they need to lead health, productive lives. Inadequate education, poor health and nutrition, limited job skills and scarce opportunities for economic advancement pose high hurdles to young people seeking to survive, much less thrive in a rapidly globalising world.

EMpower funds: local NGOs in 14 emerging markets countries that are working to improve the lives of at-risk youth through support

for livelihoods, education, leadership development or health and well-being.

EMpower in India: Since its establishment in 2000, some of EMpower's very first grants were in India with grant making growing every year since. India currently has the largest number of EMpower grantee partners – 17 across Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi/NCR. 7 are in rural areas and 10 are in urban areas. We have a country office and local staff in Delhi.

IMAGE

Lydia Holden with mentors in the Learning Community

To learn more please visit:
www.empowerweb.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/empowerweb

Twitter: @empowerweb



Enriching young lives in emerging markets



LEARNING VACHA YEAR TWO VACHA
AKSHARA COMMUNITY YEAR 2014 LEARN
EARNING COMMUNITY YEAR TWO VACHA
RESTRICTIONS COMMUNITY VIDHAYAK 2014
AANGAN SANSAD YEAR 2014 VACHA
RESTRICTIONS ON MOBILITY IN PUBLIC SPACES
LEARNING STREET MUKTI SANGATHANA TWO
AANGAN COMMUNITY YEAR TWO VACHA
RESTRICTIONS IN DOSTII IN PUBLIC SPACES
AANGAN EMPOWER YEAR 2014 AKSHARA
LEARNING MOBILITY 14' YEAR TWO CORO 2015
LEARNING CORO STREE YEAR 2014 AANGAN
EMERGING MARKET ON MOBILITY IN PUBLIC SP
EMPOWER COMMUNITY YEAR 2014 AANGAN
RESTRICTIONS ON MOBILITY IN PUBLIC SPACES
LEARNING AANGAN YEAR TWO EMERGING MAR
KET- EMPOWER YEAR 2015 VACHA
LEARNING COMMUNITY YEAR RESTRICTIONS
RESTRICTIONS ON MOBILITY IN PUBLIC SPACES
LEARNING MUKTI SANGATHANA YEAR TWO VA
RESTRICTIONS ON MOBILITY IN PUBLIC SPACES
EMPOWER COMMUNITY YEAR 2014 VACHA
DOSTII 2014 EMPOWER ON MOBILITY IN RESTRI
LEARNING COMMUNITY YEAR 2014 VACHA
MOBILITY COMMUNITY YEAR PUBLIC SPACE 14'

“Restrictions,
Mobility
& Public Safety
for Girls”