

JOINT WOMEN'S PROGRAMME

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

Chapter - I

VISION, MISSION AND STRATEGY

- The Joint Women's Programme is a movement of women & children for freedom from violence, empowerment of women & children, and the creation of a new society characterized by an equal partnership between women and men.
- The JWP currently has a presence in both urban and rural areas, actively combating the multiple manifestations of violence and discrimination against women and children with emphasis on research, awareness-raising, advocacy for policy change, gender sensitization and other grassroots activities.
- The process is through **grass root level organizing of women and the community; issue based campaigns; networking at the regional and national levels among women's groups** and others.
- Systematic studies; research; publications; documentation; cultural action; seminars; conference and workshops related to action are a means of awareness generation & action.
- Issue based legal information & action.
- Nationwide movements with other organizations for amendments to existing laws and for new laws and policies.

II. Achievements

- It was successful in convincing the Indian Government to make amendments to **Section 10 of the Indian Divorce Act, 1869 in 2001**, which made divorce possible for both Christian men and women on equal grounds.
- The JWP was the organization and driving force behind the passage of **Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act, 1984** against religious sanction for Child Prostitution through its study on the Devadasi Problem- Prostitution with Religious Sanction and Advocacy with the Govt. of Karnataka.
- Its 10 workshops on Child Marriage in different regions of India sponsored by UNICEF prepared the data for the passage of the new Act, **The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006**.
- The study conducted on trafficking of women and children in India and its training manual for community organizers and govt., functionaries for the prevention of child trafficking led to the govt. emphasizing the need for schemes for prevention, rescue and rehabilitation-UJWALA.
- Networking with seven National Women's Organizations for the passage of the amended laws on:
 - (a) Dowry Prohibition Act
 - (b) Laws on Rape
 - (c) Women's Reservation Bill
 - (d) Sexual Harassment in the work place
 - (e) Land Rights for women
 - (f) Prohibition of Child Labour
 - (g) PCPNDT Act and,
 - (h) Domestic Violence Act
- Increasingly the legal and socio economic rights of women as well as their struggle for Justice are attracting the attention of Joint Women's Programme.

- **At present, Joint Women’s Programme is part of The India Alliance for Child Rights involved in the Country Review of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Govt’s. position on Missing Children, Child Sexual Abuse and the need for changes in the existing Shelter homes for women & children.**
- **JWP has education cum day care centres for children in slums and rural areas such as “Mera Sahara” in Nithari Village, Noida, UP and others in Delhi, Kolkata & Faridabad.**
- Capacity building programmes with other institutions, both govt. & non-govt. for gender sensitization and human rights.
- Training programmes for legal knowledge has been carried out jointly with other organizations working on this issue.
- Networking with local police desks, women’s cells, National Commission for Women & the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights.



Chapter - II

MEERA SAHARA - PROTECTION AND LEARNING CENTRE

The Mera Sahara Centre for Children and Women in Nithari Village, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India, continues to provide learning, protection and care for community members.

Education Programme



Classes equivalent to 1 to 4 are being conducted to enable the children of this community to reach the mainstream education provided by the Uttar Pradesh state Government School.

Subjects taught in these classes are, English, Social Studies, Science, Sanskrit, General knowledge, Environmental Studies, Mathematics and computer literacy.

Art and craft, music and dancing, morning yoga and exercises and outdoor playing are all a part of this programme for healthy development of mind, body and soul.

Syllabus

ENGLISH

Reading, writing and grammar are taught as per the syllabus.

Dictation, word meaning, questions and answers, fill in the blanks and recognizing true or false statements are incorporated in the learning process.

Teaching aids such as writing on blackboard, pictorial charts, and extra books from the small library, drawing on chart paper by children and teachers, showing education specific videos, strengthen their all round learning.

For grammatically correct writing, small compositions, exercises on exclamations, punctuations, prepositions and using all these in construction of sentences were taught and revised.



SCIENCE

Human Body and hygiene, primary health and how to safeguard from diseases are taught. Treatment for simple cuts and wounds and why one should take the advice of the doctor even in case minor fever etc. are discussed.

Our planet - Earth, Sun, Moon, Stars, Water, Air, Forests and Mountains, Earth and its Orbit, Climate and Seasons and their effect of changing seasons on life are discussed. Soil and its uses and types of grains and vegetables grown, are taught with the intention of promoting knowledge regarding agriculture and its impact on human life are very interesting for these children. Environment protection and the harm caused by pollution due to garbage collection, dirty drains etc. are emphasized.



Creating an environment to reduce pollution and planting trees are very important to control respiratory ailments and these issues have been added to both environmental studies and science.

How to take care of health by eating right and how to treat minor fever, cold and cough, insect bites etc. exercising every day, playing in the open and learning to keep the team spirit and discipline. Hygiene, cleanliness and keeping the surrounding clean are taught as part of science and general knowledge sessions.

MATH

Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, data handling, fractions, decimal points, geometrical shapes, measurements of length, breadth and height, perimeter, area of circle, are part of the teaching process. What is meant by weight, volume and capacity, money, simple interest, temperature are various components for this learning.

HINDI

Hindi being the primary language that is used in teaching is given special attention. Reading, writing and grammar are stressed. Poetry recital, speech making has been quite enjoyable for the children.

SOCIAL STUDIES

A short history of early human life, our country and its people in different regions and different languages are an integral part of this section of education. India as a country with its regional differences is manifest in this Nithari community also and children quickly understand the idea of living together despite differences. Explaining through picture charts and drawing maps on the black board are helpful.

Geographical directions – north, south, east and west



are explained with sun's position. Time is a very intriguing subject for the children. Invention of wheel is a lesson where children ask a lot of questions. Use of pictorial charts is a regular practice to increase the curiosity and understanding of various topics.

Topics on gram panchayat, district administration are part of the learning in this section. The Indian Constitution and rights of the Child under it are explained. A short history of India's struggle for freedom which today emphasizes the freedom of all citizens having equality before law and equal protection before the law are explained.

SANSKRIT

Reading and writing and the use of pictorial charts to teach meanings and word formations are explained. Sentences are translated into Hindi and writing them in their note books for practice and ensured. Oral practice of small couplets and reading is done in every Sanskrit class.

COMPUTER Literacy (familiarization of machine with some basic literacy for the older children):

Learning of some basic knowledge of computer and its parts are the aim of this extra knowledge, which era Sahara provides. Since technology based skill development is essential for their future, skills like cash machine operation, entering stocks at stores and shops, food courts etc. familiarity with computer is necessary.



Classes 2 to 4 are taught basic introduction to the computer.

Theory and oral lessons are on:

1. What is this machine (computer)?types of machine parts of the computer are explained
2. How to open MS paint, short cuts for MS paint – theory and practical
3. How to open MS word, short cuts. Cut, copy and paste. Font, increase decrease, highlight text, numbering and page alignment.



A total of 40 children took the exams in practical and theory of which 36 children cleared the basic grades but four children could not clear the required standard. Those who secured the first three positions were recognized and given prizes.

Primary A and Primary B

'A' section has children from the day care section and some new admissions. These children are new to the concept of reading, writing and focusing. Hence, they go through the routine of learning from alphabets, poems and pictorial charts. If some of them are found fit enough to hold pencils, focus on what is being told by the teacher, they are moved to primary 'B'.



'B' section has children who are slightly older than Section 'A'.

They are taught 2 and 3 letter words in English and Hindi. Counting and writing of numbers from 1 to 100. Counting backwards, spelling the numbers and simple addition and subtraction through activities involving children. What comes before and after a particular number?

Names of fruits, animals, trees and vegetables are taught through visual aids, stories, rhymes, indoor games, coloring and drawing. Capital letters and small letters are practiced to understand the difference.

Children copy from the black board to practice writing. Through word building the children are taught how to recognize 2 letter words and 3 letter words.

Making them understand the necessity of bathing, proper eating and playing for a healthy body.

Activities like making pencil stand out of waste material, paper flowers and rag dolls, scrap paper sticking to make geometrical shapes etc. are carried out regularly to engage in motor activity skills.

Charts are made by drawing animals and butterflies and coloring them. Children thoroughly enjoy such activities. Identifying the pictures and naming them is another activity they like.

During the period 17th to 26th March, examinations were conducted for all the children. Results were prepared and a small function was arranged to distribute prizes for children who stood 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in their classes. The Members of the 'War Widows Association' were invited to visit Mera Sahara and distribute the Report card and prizes to the children. There was a small cultural show put up by the staff and children which was thoroughly appreciated by the guests.

Some children have secured admission into nearby Government school, and some others have secured admissions to private schools.

New admissions have commenced and the Centre is continuing to function with enthusiasm and commitment. We feel proud that a number of children are going into the mainstream schools to continue their education.



NURSERY AND DAY CARE

Children between the ages of 1 to 3 are admitted to this class. Most of the learning is through oral repetition, recitation, recognizing items on the pictorial charts and lots of play time. Storytelling, group interaction while playing with puzzles and toys and games are specifically taken care of.

Alphabets, numbers from 1 to 20, names of colors, animals, flowers, trees, and vegetables are developmental activities. Drawing books and crayons are provided to engage them in focusing and improving motor skills.

ACTIVITIES







Preeti Singh informing the community women about the steps taken by the DM to facilitate the scheme of linking Aadhar cards to bank accounts.

Interaction with Gautam Budh Nagar DM, Mr. Nagendra Singh.

23rd January was celebrated as 'International Girl Child Day'. Children who enjoyed the freedom to express themselves in the form of dance, speeches or songs, were encouraged to do so. Boys entertained the girls by singing and dancing for them. The boys took an oath to treat their sisters and other girls with respect. They were also made to understand that their sisters get much less access to health and education and right to choose.

A community meeting with mothers was held on the same day and these traditional practices were addressed including how educating a girl is essential to her wellbeing.

On 26th January, 2015, Republic Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervor. National flag was hoisted and songs and speeches on freedom were presented by the children and staff. To nurture the feeling of peaceful co existence, helpful nature, to lead a life with dignity, respecting each other's rights and responsibilities, the staff and children held a healthy discussion and enjoyed the freedom to air their views.

They were given some awareness on the Indian Constitution regarding the rights of children as citizens.

One Billion rising (campaign for violence against women) meetings were held regularly to involve women to be part of the movement. When reports on domestic violence reach our Centre.

During discussions, domestic workers came up with two kinds of harassment i.e. improper calculation of payments for paid leave, and not counting extra work when calculating monthly salary.

Secondly, they face harassments such as, indecent remarks, being stared at or unwelcome advances. Young girls who were not going to school for the fear of harassment were encouraged to talk.

This year, a specific issue of work place harassment was taken up, discussed and it was decided to put up a play on the 14th February, during the International OBR event.

As part of OBR, we took out rallies and gathered people in the community to talk about violence on girls and women. We were happy to note that teenage boys and village men also expressed their concern and acknowledged the increase in violence.

On 14th Feb, 2015, JWP had been part of the OBR movement since its inception in October 2012, as it believes that violence on women is violence on humanity. This year too, women took part with greater belief and conviction!

8th March, 2015, was 'International women's day' was celebrated with Protest marches, drawing and slogan writing to express the huge concern. Women from all over India had gathered at Jantar Mantar to express their concerns on discrimination, violence and trafficking. Violation of rights and shrinking space for women in terms of safety and security were other concerns expressed on that day in dances, speeches, songs and plays presented by various women's groups.

February and March were also spent on preparing the children for annual examinations and setting question papers.

Examinations were conducted between 17th to 27th March.

Paper corrections, evaluation and results compilation were completed in the next one week.



Centre continued to function as before and children were taken out in the morning to play in the nearby park for recreation and relaxation.

Children were also given more time to read story books, listen to stories read out from books and watching children's movies at the Centre.

The new session has started with many new admissions.

Skill Training and Adult Education

Empowerment of women through adult literacy and skill training continues with same commitment by the teachers.

Our tailoring classes are conducted every day and the community women, who are keen to learn and earn welcome the facility.. They are also part of our literacy programme.

Literacy is imparted in both tailoring class and 'durry' (rug) making class by encouraging them to write whatever they measure or learn through oral teaching. Some women and girls attend both tailoring and literacy class. Their syllabus is equivalent of pre primary class to begin with and goes up to class 3.

This also acts as an interactive time for them to talk to each other observe and learn, which otherwise is not possible with their social restrictions.

COUNSELING

Children and women are counseled regularly to sort out differences through mutual discussions in a spirit of understanding. This activity is considered essential to promote the fabric of social harmony. This is also carried out at different levels through community meetings and interactive sessions that are regularly organized in the Centre. Experts are invited to speak to the parents on issues related to health issues, violence in the workplace and in the domestic sphere, wages they receive as labour-construction and domestic etc.

CONCLUSION

Joint Women's Programme continues to follow its goal of empowering women and protecting the rights of children within its total mandate of inclusive growth. It continues to promote networking with local authority as well as nearby medical centres to enable community members to have quick and easy access in these places. It has helped the community to secure birth certificates for their children, bank accounts, ration and voter ID cards.

The Director, Dr. Jyotsna Chatterji meets the staff regularly to discuss various matters like over all administration, academic concerns. She shares and discusses local and national issues pertaining to women and child rights, laws and how to use them. She also discusses domestic and sexual harassments cases, which she handles with other organizations on rights of women and children. As a consultant and expert on the matter, she gives suggestions to solve difficult situation arising among the staff and their families, domestic violence cases and how to handle them.

Ms. Padmini Kumar visits the Centre everyday to oversee the implementation of all aspects of protection, care and education, handles domestic violence cases, networks with Government authorities like the District Magistrate of the area, local police, village head, local partners and supporters.

Ms. Vimla Pant looks after overall management of the Centre and counsels the teachers, staff and children on issues concerning day to day matters. She also plans and gives suggestions on syllabus related issues, events in the Centre, taking children out to participate in various competitions and events and attending meetings related to education.

Ms. Renu Choudhry and Ms. Manoj Sharma who are our senior teachers regularly counsel children in the age group of 9 to 14 and conduct tutorial classes and adult education.



All accounts are maintained by our accountant Mr. Dharam Narayan, assisted by Vimla Pant. We are happy to inform that all accounting procedures are computerized and well recorded.

Our Volunteer partner Tata Consultancy Services provides volunteer support for extra classes for the community children on Saturdays and Sundays.

Mera Sahara is committed to its resolutions and mandate of working for the education, protection and care of the under privileged children and empowerment of women through skill training and adult literacy.



Annexure “A”

Joint Women Programme [Mera Sahara]

list of the children who joined mainstream schools from 2010-2015

| S.No. | Name of the Student | Govt. School | Other school | Year | Remark |
|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1 | Somistha Sarkaar | Govt. School | | 2010 | Studying |
| 2 | Gautam Halder | Govt. School | | 2010 | Studying |
| 3 | Arun Kumar | Govt. School | | 2010 | Studying |
| 4 | Pritam | Govt School | | 2010 | Studying |
| 5 | Neetu Kumari | Govt. School | | 2011 | Studying |
| 6 | Pooja Kumari | Govt. School | | 2011 | Studying |
| 7 | Sapana | Govt. School | | 2011 | Studying |
| 8 | Shobha | Govt. School | | 2011 | Studying |
| 9 | Pooja singh | Govt. School | | 2011 | Studying |
| 10 | Manish | Govt. School | | 2011 | Studying |
| 11 | Payal | Govt. School | | 2012 | Studying |
| 12 | Roshan | Govt. School | | 2012 | Studying |
| 13 | Rohit | Govt. School | | 2012 | Studying |
| 14 | Lily | | Serv Hitkari Siksha Niketan | 2012 | Studying |
| 15 | Kishan | | Serv Hitkari Siksha Niketan | 2012 | Studying |
| 16 | Ajeet | | Serv Hitkari Siksha Niketan | 2012 | Studying |
| 17 | Sachin | | Serv Hitkari Siksha Niketan | 2012 | Studying |
| 18 | Nitin | | Serv Hitkari Siksha Niketan | 2012 | Studying |
| 19 | Sidhi | | Serv Hitkari Siksha Niketan | 2013 | Studying |
| 20 | Montu | | Serv Hitkari Siksha Niketan | 2013 | Studying |
| 21 | Vikas | | Serv Hitkari Siksha Niketan | 2013 | Studying |
| 22 | Sagar | | Morning Star Public School | 2013 | Studying |

| S.No. | Name of the Student | Govt. School | Other school | Year | Remark |
|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 23 | Sarswati | | Morning Star Public School | 2013 | Studying |
| 24 | Pooja | | Morning Star Public School | 2013 | Studying |
| 25 | Ankit | | Morning Star Public School | 2013 | Studying |
| 26 | Titu | | Morning Star Public School | 2013 | Studying |
| 27 | Deepak | | B.S Memorial School, Nithari | 2013 | Studying |
| 26 | Arun | | B.S Memorial School, Nithari | 2013 | Studying |
| 27 | Arjun | | B.S Memorial School, Nithari | 2013 | Studying |
| 28 | Arun | | B.S Memorial School, Nithari | 2013 | Studying |
| 29 | Neha | | Morning Star Public School | 2013 | Studying |
| 30 | Nitin | | Sai Baba Mandir school | 2014 | Studying |
| 31 | Aditi | | Mother Mary Public School | 2015 | Studying |
| 32 | Simran | | Mother Mary Public School | 2015 | Studying |
| 33 | Sahil | | Mother Mary Public School | 2014 | Studying |
| 34 | Geeta Halder | | GZB School | 2014 | Studying |
| 35 | Poornima Halder | | GzB School | 2014 | Studying |
| 36 | Saurabh | | Durga Public School | 2014 | Studying |
| 37 | Prem | | Durga Public School | 2014 | Studying |
| 38 | Bhupendra | | Durga Public School | 2014 | Studying |
| 39 | Govind | | Drop Out- Tuition | 2015 | |
| 40 | Shabir | | Drop Out- Tution | 2015 | |
| 41 | Kajal | | Drop Out | | |
| 42 | Reshma | | Drop Out | 2015 | |
| 43 | Rachana | | Drop Out | 2010 | |
| 44 | Sneha | | Drop Out | 2010 | |
| 45 | Anuska Mistri | | B.S. Memorial School | 2015 | Styding |

Chapter - III

CHILD RIGHTS PROGRAMME IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WOMEN'S COALITION TRUST & INDIA ALLIANCE FOR CHILD RIGHTS

An Examination of Textbook Content & Classroom Processes to Understand Risks to Children's Learning In India

The study has aimed to explore different settings and contexts of exclusion. It has also emerged that it is necessary to look at perceptions of exclusivity. – in both those groups that may be depicted as better or better off (superior/more deserving/enjoying more benefits), and those that may be less served and may even be deprived or consider themselves to be so. Class and classism emerged as a factor in teaching/ learning environments and teaching/ learning substance.

The project effort uncovered many aspects of teacher training and teacher accountability that need study and analysis. It also uncovered many questions of how portrayals via different channels – of which the school and its study courses are only one – reach and influence children. Teachers and other 'communicators' have a kind of 'sales' task in conveying their communications and messages. Training and accountability of teachers have thus been registered as major concerns; however, this project has not extended to investigating them in depth or detail.

A workshop at ABHAS India Abhas India Office

The main aim was to listen to the perspectives of teachers working in the field on various issues related to course content, classrooms and textbooks.

Key discussion

Ways of teaching students –this mainly covered only how to teach students at different learning levels. There was very little taught about how to deal with students from diverse economic, community and family backgrounds.

There was barely any mention of Special Education in regular training programmes. At best, teachers were taught how to 'handle' differently abled children.

Issues of violence, diversity, discrimination, etc were not prioritized. There was only a single course on Peace Education offered by NCERT and even at the B. Ed. Level these topics were not given sufficient attention.

Positive examples emerged from real life incidents about issues like empowerment, discrimination as violence, chauvinism, etc.

Classrooms are not particularly inclusive. More often than not, students become divided based on arbitrary distinctions like the children of 'makan-maliks' (home owners) and 'kiraidars' (renters) into groups and such groups do not mix often.

Discrimination is something that many of the teachers say begins at home for the students. They remembered that in their own schooldays too, their parents had not approved of their interaction with students from other communities.

Questions on sensitive topics (such as one instance in which a student asked 'Who is a Dalit?') are raised in class and teachers feel that current training programmes do not leave them adequately equipped to answer them.

Students from certain sections of society are made to feel so unwelcome in government schools that they more often than not drop out after a while.

The government schools in the area make little effort to be more inclusive.

These schools are also not accessible for differently abled students. Besides having few disabled-friendly areas for physically challenged students, they also lack special educators or counselors and even students who have simply joined school late have difficulty catching up.

Teacher training programmes and textbooks do not reflect these realities and offer few solutions.

Consultation, United Nation Information Centre, Lodi Estate, New Delhi

A joint-forum approach was used to bring together a range of organizations, experience and expertise to generate a national consultation on the project focus, and to examine how the platforms of formal school education, drama and theater and the performing arts,

media and communication, social development communication, research and social sciences explore and express the concerns of identity and inclusion.

A deliberate effort was made to raise issues of portrayal and attitudes relating to the rights of all living things. The question was posed: do attitudes to other beings/other forms of life connect or influence human attitudes and behavior in relation to other human beings? What role does difference play, and how is difference perceived?

The exercise addressed subject specialists, development organizations, education policy institutions, creative thinkers, communicators, then students of education and child development, then children themselves. , .

The NGOs joined hands as a collective to hold this three-day consultation to probe and discuss what children are learning and how this affects their perception of their world and the relative influence of peace and violence in it — and whether attitudes to the right to life across Nature affect attitudes in human relations. Professionals, researchers, students of development and education, teachers and children explored the links and shared insights and concerns. Participants formed interest groups to take the discussion forward.

Introduction of each day

On 29th September: a teachers/educators/communicators/ creative artists/ and NGOs' consultation, asked and discussed where children receive (formally and non-formally) the information and ideas that influence their view and thoughts; (36 participants)

On 30th September: a workshop session, with students and trainees now learning to be teachers, social workers, development workers, communicators, and drama professionals together examined how they view their roles in such communication/ instruction on the issues and values of non-violence and the idea of a caring and sharing social climate for all. The place – and the influence – of other forms of life were consciously invoked to probe where caring – and un-caring – attitudes are rooted, and how the rights attached to anything 'different' and anything seen as "us" influence each other – and especially to examine what role formal education of children plays, in both content and method. (38 participants)

On the 1st October, exploring pathways to non-violence, how to understand and withstand the messages and pressures of violence, and exploration of children's own potential to be messengers and advocates — and examples — of the non-violence alternative in addressing all interactions with all forms of life. (60 participants, primarily adolescent children, mostly girls, mostly attending schools, the majority in low-income "working class" areas and settings)..

Day 1 – 29th September, 2014

Participants: 36 participants from diverse background participated.

Probing the adult ‘expert’ view:

The 29th September meeting explored connections between the content of messaging sent out to children through various sources and how this upholds, criticizes or offsets the concepts of peace and non-violence. The question was raised: how does such messaging make children condone or oppose violence, and how do children make choices? Experts and practitioners from varied backgrounds shared and discussed valuable insights into the intent, design and impact of messages and images children receive, both formally and non-formally. Presenters included Ms. Tripurari Sharma, National School of Drama, Dr. Jyoti Sapru, Sociologist and Researcher, Prof. Biswajit Das from Centre for Media, Culture and Governance, Ms Shwetha Sood & Ms. Richa Thapliyal, Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organizations, Ms. Rineeta Naik of UNIC. It was felt that while forms and channels of this messaging may vary, but whether in course books in school, films and TV, or popular culture and theatre, messages of non-violence and peace as well as violence could be found. Media and culture were discussed both as sources as well as influences on children’s understanding of violence and non-violence. It was realized that further enquiry and advocacy was necessary. In conclusion, need for a clear shift from existing content of messaging for children was underlined and an active interest group of professionals formed to take the discussion forward.

Across all three days, the interrelationship of humans and the environment in school course books was discussed. The meaning of stewardship and its relevance within the framework of a peaceful and nonviolent society was presented. The role of theatre as an interpreter of society was drawn out, with examples of actors’ conscience in portraying certain characters in the context of peace and violence.

Day 2 – 30th September, 2014

Participants: Total 38, 30 teacher training students from Miranda House College and Lady Irwin College participated.

Students of school education, human development and childhood studies (from two colleges in Delhi) examined primary and elementary school course content, the substance of environmental studies, and the ideas and principles children receive from the wider social

environment. The relationship between humans and environment and the questions of interdependence and violence towards nature were discussed in the first half. Theatre experts Tripurari Sharma and Ms. Vandana Vashisht interacted with the students and trainees to examine methods and styles of portrayal, and their impact on young learners. The students were divided into groups for enacting incidents of violence on nature by human beings. Theatre was shown as a platform for sending out a message of peace to society. An example of riots in a Banjara community was shared to illustrate both violent and peace-building action. It was realized that in the context of teaching, the voices of children had to be heard. It was decided that messages would be shared with other colleges and other institutions, to generate wider dialogue.

Day 3 – 1st October, 2014

Participants: 60 children from NGOs and Schools participated

On 1st October, the consultation shifted to children. Sixty children from NGO settings and schools engaged in an interactive discussion on peace and violence, and explored what it means to opt for non-violence. They tried to define this within their world view, examining risks and fallouts in the natural world and in human society. Are children safe — and are they peace builders? A Skype and phone session with children from many states across the country made new connections and many questions were exchanged. Ms. Kiran Mehra Kerpelman, Director, UNIC, took active part in the interaction, underlining how important it is to interact with children directly when addressing issues of peace and non-violence, and facing up to violence. The meeting ended with each child making a pledge to support and peace and non-violence within the framework of home, community and the world at large. In clear expression of potential to become motivated, informed and articulate messengers for a more sharing and caring world, every child present declared a personal pledge to act upon the lessons of this day.



The three day consultation saw a conscious shift in thinking in terms of content of messages received by children and the need to address ethical issues in formal teaching, and in the wider learning space. Concerns were raised on the weakness of school courses on the environment. The linkage of children's rights and the rights of the natural world was well demonstrated. An interest group of committed organizations and individuals will take this discussion forward.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE OF NEGATIVE PORTRAYAL & ITS DISABLING EFFECTS

A Citizens' Consultation Convened to Address the Problems and Explore Possibilities for Fair and Inclusive Portrayal on Thursday, 18th December, 2014 at India International Centre, New Delhi.

Everybody wants to be respected, and to feel welcome in the world. Children are no different. They all expect to feel at home in their childhoods. Unfortunately, many experience exclusion and endure disrespect, and many experience violence. Negative portrayal plays a part in distancing children from each other.

Children can be negatively portrayed because of ethnic difference, social and cultural difference, using 'another' language, dressing differently, coming from 'somewhere else.' growing up with disabilities.

Children can see people like themselves negatively portrayed in school books and lessons, story-books and news journals, films and TV, in art and drama, and in songs and sayings.

Such children grow up feeling they are "not like us." Other children grow up regarding them as "not like us," and learn to have a "we and they" / "us and others" picture of our country and society.

Our national motto is 'Unity in Diversity.' Marginalization has no place in our India. Yet it exists. And children suffer. This is social disablement.

No matter what the difference may seem to be, the so-called "different" child deserves better than this.

Consultation- Image and Impact

DOES SCHOOL EDUCATION OPEN OR CLOSE CHILDREN'S MINDS TO RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY & THE ONENESS OF HUMANITY?

A LOOK AT WHAT CHILDREN LEARN, IN & OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

A Citizens' Consultation Convened to Examine the Present Content of School Lessons, How they are Taught — & What Should Change on the 19th December, 2014

Women and girls attending a consultation on “what do they understand by safety and security”.

Summary of Insights:

Coming as a cumulative exercise following a range of smaller and more single-focused information-seeking activities and interactions, the three-day and three-dimensional, country level enquiry was aimed at positioning a mainly text-book and lesson content assessment in the larger and deeper frame of communication and how it reaches and influences children.

It was effective in showing linkages, and counter-messaging, some of it disturbing. It alerted the participants about the stream of information and misinformation that can and does reach children, and it underlined the urgency and importance of improving the content and style of formal education in the school systems. It underlined also the need for the RTE Act implementation, and also the formations like the RTE Forum, to look at the effect of a misinformation flow to children's minds and hearts.

A few issues were taken up for this project; other issues and concerns emerged in the process. Articles 2 and 3 and 29 of the UN CRC have come sharply into view. So too have the principles of equity and respect for diversity set out in the Constitution of India. The provision of information and 'learning' must have an ethical and rights-upholding intent and character. This is children's fundamental right, and a national obligation.



The project has thrown up a strong argument for a sustained effort to enquire, discover, analyze and improve children's education through both formal and non-formal – and commercial – systems. Children themselves have expressed both insights and concerns.

And the teachers and educators consulted have become aware of serious questions. NGOs must play their part in seeking just and fair answers. In view of the Government of India's intention to take up a national school curriculum review, these first findings are of value for decision-makers.



Chapter - IV

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES IN NITHARI VILLAGE AND FARIDABAD

Community programme at Nithari, Noida.

June, a community meeting was arranged to educate the parents on the importance of Birth Certificates. Every Week we collected the mothers in Mera Sahara and prepared the necessary documents, got signatures from the authorized government officers and finally obtained the birth certificates from the Chief Medical Officer. The process of obtaining one birth certificate takes three months. The vaccination certificate is essential for registration in the schools. We helped the parents with this process also. They have started realizing the necessity for possessing and preserving such documents as the children would need these documents when they reach 12th std. to get their school leaving certificates.

July, was devoted to getting the voter ID for the staff, mothers and anyone who needed help in this matter.

Parent – Teacher meetings and community meetings were on regular basis. Six meetings have been conducted on the rights of domestic workers as most of these parents work in this field. Legal rights of women under the Constitution of India and other protective laws were also conducted. Our legal consultant, Advocate Bulbul Das is very effective.



August, Teachers Training programme was also conducted to once again orient the teachers about the responsibilities of a good teacher and , methods of teaching and needs of individual children in the area of education, nutrition and health. We had an interesting workshop for the community women who had passed 12thSTD on 'How Parliament Works'? Two days of workshops had educated the participants regarding rights and duties as citizens and how to choose their leaders. They understood the rights and duties of a citizen in choosing their leaders. They also understood the process of parliamentary procedures, how a bill is presented to the respective ministries etc. Our teachers had also participated in the workshop. The exercise brought a lot of interaction and mind stimulation on how to identify issues, prepare schemes and policies with their respective budgets and present to Parliamentarians for discussion and action. The issues discussed were, violence against women, unsafe public spaces, lack of hospitals and toilets for women. The discussions after the workshop were quite animated and enjoyable.

September, Teachers Day was celebrated in the adult literacy class and tailoring class to remember Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. "Need for clean environment in your neighborhood" was organized in Delhi by CARITAS, which was attended by representatives from our community group. We organized an event on 'Domestic Violence' on women in our Nithari community.

October, A 3day Dussehra festival was celebrated in Mayur Vihar, a neighbouring colony. Our women's group presented a play on Domestic Violence and won the 1st prize for presenting such a sensitive drama.

Our staff meets the community women in their homes on a regular basis every month.

Some of our older children and staff visited to Bal Sahyog, an orphanage run by the Govt. of India during the Dussehra Craft Bazaar and also learnt how to make Craft made out of paper, like dolls, bags and baskets.

Deepavali was celebrated with community women and children in Mera Sahara. The Director, Dr. Jyotsna Chatterji, teachers, staff and children lit lots of lamps/diyas, decorated the Centre with flowers and paper decorations. Sweets and snacks were distributed. It is a policy in Mera Sahara not to burst fire crackers to avoid noise and air pollution. We also made aware that breathing air polluted by the fire crackers causes illnesses related to eyes and lungs.

There was a very important meeting on 24th October. The Domestic workers had gone on strike to protest against the colony security authorities. They were asking the workers to renew their entry passes every three months for a fee of Rs. 1,000 /- us as community workers helped them to draft a letter to the colony authorities to not charge any fee. There was a survey conducted and forms were to filled address the problems faced by the domestic workers. The domestic workers meet was held on October 30th. Our legal counselor Dr. Bulbul Das addressed the workers and discussed their legal rights. She talked to them about Aadhar Card as ID proof, widow's pension and registration of marriages. They also talked about not having toilets in working places. There were 45 women who participated from our community. They were encouraged to form into groups and meet the colony authorities to build toilets for them. Dr. Das also talked about work place harassments and how to deal with them.

November, Ministry of Woman and Child, Delhi, had invited JWP to prepare a play on the "Girl Child". For the last three years JWP has been taking part in this event and presenting small plays. These are appreciated and well received where ever they are presented.

December, Our Community worker Amrita Singh has been regularly meeting women, talking to them and helping them with getting the various Identity cards, opening bank accounts and advising them to report to Mera Sahara staff in case of domestic violence. They have also been encouraged to form Self Help Groups.

Staff meetings are held every week where the Director of JWP, discusses the functioning of the Mera Sahara Centre, problems of children and the community, achievements and concerns. Ms. Padmini Kumar and Ms. Vimla Pant add their valuable inputs in these meetings.

Women of the community have been coming to seek advice, counseling on various family matters. To help sort out many issues, JWP has been in touch with local Pradhan, women police cell and other civil society members.

The Centre remained closed for Winter Vacation from 25th December to 11 January 2015.

From January onwards the community women's programme included home visits and family discussions on issues concerning child health, pre and post natal problems especially to enable women to become conscious of their own bodies and how to protect them.

Issue related to sanitation and health hazards due to dirty and unclean roads and drains and the role of the community to ensure a clean environment became a major concern for the community.

Domestic violence and its impact on child development and learning capacity was of great help to the parents who are today anxious to ensure good education for their children.

Our community programmes and gatherings are awaited by all members of the community who seek guidance and understanding of existing conditions, laws and their use which are necessary for holistic development.

Mehka Angan, Faridabad, Haryana

JWP Coordinator, Ms. Kiran Arora, conducts awareness generation training programmes for women and oversees a tailoring centre in village Tigaon in Faridabad, Haryana, in a potters' mohalla.

This programme is conducted thrice a week. The women learn to stitch simple dress items of daily use. The programme is continuing to impart more skill. The women are also taught to learn how to read and write to become self dependent as much as possible.

Twenty three girls and women participate regularly in the awareness meetings on laws pertaining to women. The salient points of law awareness programmes were:

What is the Constitution of India?

What is meant by 'Law'?

What are the Policies?

What are the Sections?

What is an Act?

What are the Rules?

They were also introduced to the judicial structure, Civil and Criminal suits and various aspects of disputes.

How to go about complaints, petitions and suits?

Detailed discussion on Appeals.

Introduction of PILs and Writ Petitions.

The women were pleasantly surprised to know that it is our fundamental right to take help of the Supreme Court in safeguarding their rights. The next issue taken up was regarding free legal aid.

Vidhik Sewayen Pradhikaran 1987 is an Act that empowers the following groups for free legal aid:

Women and Children.

Victims of illegal trades and bonded laborers.

Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people.

Physically challenged people.

Victims of riots, floods, droughts, earthquakes, Caste violence and industrial disasters.

Industrial laborers.

People who are in prisons, juvenile homes, protection Centres, mental asylums or nursing homes.

The people who earn in a year less than the limit set by governments. This limit may vary from state to state. A simple affidavit of annual income less than the limit is enough to get free legal aid.

Right to Information Act (RTI) -this law is also thoroughly explained to women so that they could use it.

Ms. Arora described in detail why RTI is important.

Information comes from many sources – governmental or administrative reports, minutes of meetings, copies of entries in registers, rules and procedures of departments, maps and drawings of projects under construction, bills and vouchers of purchases etc. All these things are information for a common citizen.

Who gives us this right was also described in detail. How a citizen can demand information was also explained. In case our request for information is delayed or rejected, we can lodge a complaint with Information Commission or get redressed through judiciary. The RTI is for all the citizens of India including government servants.

Schemes run by states

The girls and women were introduced to various welfare schemes run by the government, such as widow pension, old age pension, Ladli Yojna and schemes for the physically challenged so that the women can avail the benefits of these schemes.

The women were also introduced to many health issues during pregnancy and lactating mothers after delivery. They were made to understand the importance of nutritional diets during these critical phases.

Rights of working women

These rights were explained:

Minimum wages.

Fixed working hours.

Rest and leaves including a weekly off day.

Regular and timely payment of wages.

Maternity conveniences.

Several training manuals are used for the awareness programme.

Ms. Manisha teaches tailoring to girls.

Ms. Poonam runs the adult education Centre.

Ms. Nirmal visits the women in their homes and brings them together to participate in the programmes.

Dr. Jyotsna Chatterji, Director of JWP, and Ms. Kiran Arora take the legal awareness classes.

Another issue discussed was sexual exploitation of women; the points mentioned were:

Attempts for physical contact, striking sexual relationship or demanding such favours.

Comments and/or jokes of sexual nature.

Showing obscene books or photos.

Any type of undesirable and indecent action.

The women were informed about the steps to check this menace with special emphasis on the Supreme Court ruling. These rules have jurisdiction over government, semi-government and private work places.

The women were also informed about the provisions of compensation in case of work related accidents of laborers.

Depending on the age and wages of the labourer, the compensation for diseases was also discussed.

They were also made aware about Lok Adalat and contract labour. While discussing the condition of laborers in unorganized sector, they were told that generally these issues are related with social welfare. The legal rights were explained in detail to enable them to continue to struggle for their rights.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 was also discussed during the period.

The salient features of this Act are:

One person from each family is entitled to employment for at least 100 days in every financial year.

In case of absence of gainful employment, there is the right to get unemployment allowance on day to day basis.

The women were told about who can get employment and how to get it. They were explained the implications of 100 days of guaranteed employment and how to apply for it and when to expect it and where in great detail.

The facilities to be provided at places of work and treatment and compensation for accidents were made clear to them.

What to do in cases of not getting employment even after applying was also taken care of.

When does unemployment allowance become due and who will pay it, were also explained minutely.

The conditions or situations that debar one from unemployment allowance:

If someone refuses to do the work allotted to her/him.

Not reporting for work even after 15 days of calling.

Someone who is absent from work a week without proper permission or authorization or goes on leave for more than a week every month.

Bonded Labour was explained in detail including its definition and laws related to it.

Bandhua Mukti Morcha vs Union of India (1984 3SL.C 161) makes it amply clear that:

Those who force bonded labour can be imprisoned for up to 3 years.

They can be fined up to two thousand rupees.

While touching on socio-religious issues, they were informed about anti untouchability laws with provisions for punishment for its practitioners.

How to safeguard our rights:

By registering complaints in a Police Station.

Providing complete details of the accused – name, address and the offence committed.

One special Act has been promulgated for the weaker castes of society named as Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocity) Act 1989.

The Act takes care of punishment and compensation for crimes committed against them. The phone number for lodging complaints was also provided.

Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1971 was explained and this programme is still running.

Our adult education and tailoring classes are running smoothly.

The topics for discussion for the future are:

Adoption laws.

Hindu Marriage and Inheritance Act.

Inheritance law applicable to Muslims.

Christian marriage and inheritance.

It is sincerely hoped that these programmes will help the women to face challenges of life with more confidence and assurance – the avowed aim of women's empowerment.

Chapter - V

NETWORKING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

JWP along with other organizations sent a Memorandum to the Government of India to express their concern regarding the Union Budget which seemed to ignore the real and actual needs of peoples, especially women. The Memorandum sent to the Finance Minister is as below:

“We the undersigned womens’ organizations are writing this memorandum to express our deep concern and resentment about the anti-people and anti-women character of the Union Budget of 2015-2016. We note with concern that while your government has provided several sops and tax reductions to the corporate sector, it leaves much to be desired when it comes to addressing the problems of the mass of the laboring people in general and the women in particular.

We are particularly concerned because the trend in the last few years has been that the actual expenditures are lower than the initial allocations, as reflected in the mid year Revised Estimates, irrespective of the party in power. The biggest cuts at this stage too are faced by social sector, employment, and rural development. This imposes a double cut – one when the finance bill is passed and one when the funds are given to the concerned ministries. This year, a third alarming announcement in the budget followed by the Niti Aayog is to reduce support for centrally sponsored schemes. This is in sharp contrast to the promises made in the manifesto of the Bhartiya Janata Party which had promised the opposite.

This is particularly evident in the long term direction for the withdrawal of the state from the social sector, which has been reduced from 16.3% in 2014-2015 (BE) and 15.06% (RE) to 13.7% of the Central budget outlay in 2015-2016. Within this, the amount of funds intended exclusively for women have fallen as a percentage of the Union Budget and GDP in 2015-16, indicating reduced priority for women.

Women and Child Development

This is reflected in the Gender Budget Statement (GBS) 2015-16 and the allocations to the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD). The Gender Budget too has been severely cut by 20% from about one lakh crores to Rs 79,258 crores. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) is the nodal ministry for the “welfare, development and empowerment of women”. The budgetary allocations to the Ministry have declined from Rs. 21,193 crores in 2014-15 (BE) to Rs. 10,382 crores in 2015-16 (BE). In particular we wish to draw your attention to the following:

Most of the schemes for women and children that were fully supported by the Union Government have either been discontinued, or will in all likelihood be withdrawn in the near future. The Scheme for Assistance to States for Implementation of Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh and Restorative Justice to Rape Victims have zero allocation. Allocations to Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA), Women’s Helpline, Swadhar Gruh and one Stop Crisis Centres have been drastically cut. Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana will continue to be implemented in only 53 districts on a pilot basis.

The Government has reduced allocations for a number of schemes such as the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), Rashtriya Uchcha Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) and the Indira Awas Yojana. This despite the fact the Prime Minister declared on the occasion of the International Day of Women that “Mahatma Gandhi said when a woman is educated, two families are educated. I will add...not just two families but two generations are educated.”

The biggest hit is the shared ICDS. The Union Government allocation to ICDS in BE 2015-16 is Rs. 8,754 crore as against Rs.18,391 crore in BE 2014-15.

Similarly, there is an abysmally low allocation of Rs. 402.23 crores for the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), a centrally sponsored scheme which brings together multiple existing child protection schemes under one umbrella.

Another Rs.1000 crore has been added to the Nirbhaya Fund making it a total of Rs.3,000 crores. On the face of it this may be a welcome step, but we wish to point out that the previous allocations under Nirbhaya fund also went unspent as the government has no concrete plan to implement this fund. It appears that the allocations to Swadhar Gruh and SABLA are coming from the Nirbhaya Fund. Resources under the Nirbhaya Fund were meant for substantive interventions for safety and security of women and not for meeting expenses under other ongoing schemes.

The BJP Manifesto said: “Women’s welfare and development will be accorded a high priority at all levels... women healthcare in a mission mode...relief and rehabilitation of rape victims... create an Acid Attack victims welfare fund... Expand and improve upon the network of women / working women hostels... Review the working conditions and enhance the remuneration of Anganwadi worker’s...Special adult literacy initiative ...with focus on SCs, STs, OBCs, and slum residents...loans to Women Self Help Groups would be available at low interest rates...check female foeticide, dowry, child marriage, trafficking, sexual harassment, rape and family violence...transform the quality of life of women in Rural India”

DEMAND :

There should be a restoration and enhancement of allocations to the Ministry of Women and Child Development. In particular:

The Umbrella Scheme for Protection of Women should be strengthened. Given the huge increase in sexual crimes against women, the allocations for the scheme (Restorative Justice) for the relief and rehabilitation of rape victims should be enhanced. The Central assistance for the implementation of the PWDV Act should not just be restored but increased considering that state governments are reluctant to fund it. The Acid Attack Victims Welfare Fund for covering treatment costs, as committed in the BJP manifesto should be introduced.

There should be adequate funds for setting up at least one “One Stop Crisis Centre” in every block on a priority basis to ensure immediate relief to women survivors of violence.

The Nirbhaya Fund of Rs 3000 crores should not be diverted to other schemes, and should be utilised for putting in place comprehensive measures including relief and rehabilitation of victims, safety plans for women, gender sensitisation training, etc. It should be administered by the WCD Ministry with a clear mechanism for utilization.

Assistance for construction and running of shelter homes for single women/destitute and widows is grossly insufficient and needs to be enhanced so that there is at least one such home in each block in the country.

Instead of cutting funds for the ICDS program, it should be universalised, for which an allocation of at least Rs 24000 crores should be made in the current budget.

Maternity entitlements should be universalized and extended to all districts.

A realistic budget should be allocated for the ICPS to ensure that the purpose for which the umbrella Scheme was created is fulfilled.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

One of the big casualties of this budget has been the MNREGS which has provided some employment particularly to rural working women. The allocation of Rs.73270 crores under the Ministry of Rural Development for 2015-16 is down from Rs 83852 crores in 2014-15. Under MGNREGA there were unpaid wages in the year 2014-15, to the tune of about Rs 6000 crores. Accounting for these unpaid wages, the effective allocation stands at only about Rs. 27,200 crores, a cut of Rs 6000 crores from the previous year. Yet the Prime Minister declares “If India has to increase its GDP, we have to increase the participation of women in our economy.”

DEMAND: The allocations for MGNREGS should be such as to provide for payment of minimum wages for at least the promised 100 days of work, and include payment of arrears on account of wages.

Food Security

On food security, the BJP Manifesto promised, “...‘universal food security’ is integral to national security... and that the right to food does not remain an act on paper or a political rhetoric”. It is unfortunate that this has been totally overlooked.

Though there has been a small increase in allocation under food subsidy in absolute terms in the current budget (i.e. Rs. 124,419 crores in 2015-16 (BE) against Rs. 122,676 crores in 2014-15 RE), food subsidy as a proportion of GDP and the total Union Budget has remained around 1% and 7% respectively. In its economic survey the budget criticizes the PDS systems and argues for the uniform application of the cash transfer scheme through JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhar and Mobile network) as a means of implementing food subsidy. Experience shows that this policy measure has failed to ensure proper nutrition for women as it cannot ensure adequate food for them.

DEMAND :

The food subsidy should be increased substantially to at least 2% of the GDP in order to universalise the Public Distribution System and provide a minimum of 35 kgs of cereals at not more than Rs 2 per kg, along with other essential commodities at affordable controlled prices.

Social Security

Women’s organizations and trade unions have been persistently demanding universal social security coverage for all women workers. But there is no special focus on the needs of working

women, especially in the unorganized sector, in this budget. While the budget creates a pension, old age pension and social safety net fund, it makes little financial commitment to these schemes. There is a virtual phasing out of schemes like shelter homes for single women and there is only a meager allocation of Rs. 30 Cr for hostels for working women.

DEMAND: The government should provide for a minimum universal non-contributory publicly funded pension at no less than 50% of the monthly statutory minimum wage or Rs 5000, whichever is higher, per month for all women above the age of 55 years, and for all widows and disabled women irrespective of age. Special pension schemes for women who are victims of state violence, the “half widows” of Kashmir, and those affected by violence in conflict areas should be designed with adequate funding.

Adivasi and Dalits

The Union Budget 2014-15 has violated guidelines to allocate Plan resources for the Tribal Sub Plan and the Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCSP) at least in proportion to the ST and SC populations at 8.6% and 16.6% respectively. Instead the allocations are 7.8% for SCSP (down from 10.3%) and 5.1% for TSP (down from 6.4%), respectively. In Rupee terms the fall in TSP is from Rs 26715 crores to Rs 20536 crores and in SCSP from Rs 43208 crores to Rs 30851 crores.

DEMAND: The constitutional rights of these sections should be maintained through adequate provisions in the budget; all ministries must fulfil and report their obligation in this regard, the Government must ensure non-diversion and full utilization of allocated funds. The cuts in allocations for sub-plans for dalits and tribals should be restored, the budgets enhanced in line with the proportion of these sections (8.6% for ST and 16.6% for SC) in the population. There should be a substantial increase in the allocation for the development of minorities. There should be at least 30% allocations for women within schemes for SC, ST, Denotified Tribes, Minorities and other socially deprived groups.

Health

On Health, the Election Manifesto of BJP promised: “India needs a holistic care system that is universally accessible, affordable and effective and drastically reduces the out of pocket spending on health.” And yet, the National Health Mission (NHM) is one of the most important schemes in the health sector whose allocation in Budget 2015-16 shows a decrease of about Rs. 3900 crores. Overall, health outlay has declined by about Rs 6000 crores from Rs 37965.7 crores to Rs 32068.2 Crores (BE).

DEMAND : At least 6% of the GDP should be allocated for public health care with emphasis on strengthening rural health care infrastructure. All forms of user fees in the public health system should be withdrawn and essential drugs and diagnostics provided free of cost in all public health facilities. The entire essential drug list should be brought under price control. The approach towards women's health should also focus on a life-cycle approach, to address the different concerns related to women's health. There should be enhanced allocation for training of nurses. Funds should be made available so that ASHA workers and Anganwadi Workers and Anganwadi Helpers are regularised with appropriate remuneration as skilled workers at no less than the statutory minimum wage and provided with social security.

Education

Allocations for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) have declined from Rs 28258 crores to Rs 19800 crores; allocation for Mid Day Meal (MDM) has declined from Rs 13215 crores to Rs 7775 crores. The total allocation of the Department of School Education and Literacy and Department of Higher Education together, in 2015-16, is Rs. 69,075 crores, which is a 16.5% decline from 2014-15 (BE).

DEMAND: At least 6% of GDP should be allocated towards implementation of the RTE Act, improving quality of education and enhancing higher education.

Concessions and Sops

The 'Statement of Revenue Impact of Tax Incentives under the Central Tax System' states that the aggregate revenue impact of tax incentives is projected to be Rs.589285.2 crores for 2014-15. The revenue foregone is estimated to be 43.2% of total tax revenue for the year 2014-15. Exemptions of corporate profits given to industries located in SEZ are estimated to be Rs.19,000 crores. Custom duty exemption given to gold and diamond traders is Rs 75,592 crores in 2015-16. This is 56% higher compared to the exemption given in the previous year. Effective tax rates for cement manufacturing companies are as low as 5.84%. Some mining contractors are charged with an effective tax rate of just 7.23%. In the financial services sector, leasing companies are charged with a very low effective tax rate of 1.84%. Effective tax rates for some of the film distribution firms are 9.23% against the statutory rate of 33.27%

DEMAND: Measures should be taken to reverse the current trend of declining government expenditure. Public expenditure for employment generation, basic needs and the social sector must be increased. The government must stop giving tax concessions to the rich and corporate

sector and instead raise taxes on the wealthy and the corporate sector. It should take effective measures to unearth and recover huge accumulation of black money in the economy, including unaccounted money in tax havens abroad and use it for strengthening social security programmes.

Devolution to States

Though the share of states in central taxes and non-plan grants as share of GDP does show an increase, the total Union resources transferred to states has declined because of the sharp reduction in central assistance to states from Rs 3,29,712 crores to Rs 1,95,778 crores. Therefore even as national income grows, the transfer to states as a share of GDP falls from 6.2% to 5.9%.

DEMAND: The Union Government must provide the financial resources through the provision of a higher proportion of flexible or untied funds to States for them to fulfill the bulk of the economic and social developmental activities as per their constitutional responsibility. This is particularly important at a time when several Schemes are being transferred from the centre to the states. The sharp cut in the plan funds and central assistance devolved to the states must be reversed and devolution must be brought up to at least 8% of GDP”.

JWP has been working on issues related to trafficking and prostitution was disturbed by the Govt’s proposal to legalize prostitution and joined hand with 13 other women’s organizations to oppose the same through a Joint Statement. The Joint Statement is as follows:

“WHY NATIONAL WOMEN’S ORGANIZATIONS OPPOSE THE PROPOSAL TO LEGALIZE PROSTITUTION

The recent discussions around the proposal to legalize prostitution in India, which has also been supported by the newly appointed NCW chairperson indicate a policy shift which would directly affect women’s rights to equality and a life of dignity. The national womens’ organizations, and others who have been working with women in prostitution for a long time strongly feel that women who have been prostituted, and often trafficked must have their basic rights recognized and safeguarded. However, this must not be confused with the issue of legitimizing sex trade, and creating a section of “sex workers” as an employment avenue, such that women from poor and socially oppressed backgrounds, or women with no skills and little option for alternative employment fall prey to the pressures of the market economy, to serve the interests of the profiteers running this trade. The use of tradition to recreate and reinforce the chains of patriarchal bondage, due to which women from certain communities

and castes have been forced to enter into prostitution with hardly any choice in the matter, must not receive a new legitimacy from the law makers. Earlier consultations initiated by the NCW have validated the stance against legislating prostitution, as this would increase trafficking of women and young girls significantly. These recommendations must be taken note of by the Commission, as well as by the Ministry, before any legislative change is brought about.

In this context we wish to clear certain misconceptions, and explain our common stand against legalization which is as follows:

The legalization argument fails to address the multiple exploitation that women and girls in prostitution are subjected to. Their situation can hardly be ameliorated by licensing the root cause of their oppression. In a legalization framework, it is not the prostituted who are protected, but the traffickers, pimps, procurers, and the buyers of sex. Legalization is wrongly assumed to be a potential tool to increase prostituted women's social protection, reduce prostitution-related crimes, and curb sex trafficking. However, this is not the reality. Increasing studies and evidence show that countries that have legalized or decriminalized prostitution, such as Germany and the Netherlands, are witnessing an exponential increase in sex trafficking. Moreover, legalization of prostitution increases the demand for prostitution, since men are given social, moral and legal permission to purchase women and girls for sexual acts based on violence, sexual harassment and inequality.

Hence, it is imperative to understand the coercive nature of the trade, and the fact that the whole process is mediated through an exploitative network. Survivors of prostitution have repeatedly shared the violence they experience in brothels, on the streets and elsewhere and reiterated their desire to exit and to prevent other women from being equally exploited. This can be better achieved by preventing trafficking, rather than indirectly advocating it through the law.

Those who support legalization do not pay adequate attention to how women enter into the trade. A large section of prostituted women and girls are most often victims of trafficking, usually at a very young age. A majority of them belong to the most oppressed, backward castes, Dalit and tribal communities. This is an expression of desperation, which has little to do with "voluntary choice". Giving legal sanction to prostitution can hardly convert prostitution into decent, dignified and safe work as defined by the ILO.

Thus, we feel strongly that the emphasis should be on prevention of trafficking, and implementation of ITPA to ensure strict punishment for the pimps, traffickers, etc. There is

also an urgent need for the stricter implementation of Section 370 of the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013, which mirrors the definition of trafficking in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking Against Persons, Especially Women and Children (the Palermo Protocol) that India ratified. In fact, the Government of India would undermine these principles should it opt for the legalization of prostitution.

Most importantly, we would point out the need for a comprehensive policy framework to ensure that health, safe and independent housing, legal protection, education and financial needs of those in prostitution are taken care of. The generation of alternative livelihoods for women and children in prostitution, and active steps to facilitate rehabilitation should be prioritized. Education for their children and for them should be ensured; better livelihood options for women should be provided. It is only thus that the human rights of women in prostitution can be safeguarded, and not by legalizing prostitution, as proposed.

We, the undersigned national women's organizations, and concerned groups demand:

Recognition of the rights of women in prostitution to basic citizenship rights, including BPL card, coverage under ICDS, access to free health services, free education for them and their children, and freedom from violence and sexual harassment.

Stringent punishment to traffickers, pimps, agents, etc, and effective implementation of the ITPA.



Provision of comprehensive rehabilitation packages and alternate options for those wanting to opt out of the system. Their safety must be guaranteed by the Government.

Creation of alternative livelihood opportunities for women, in both urban and rural areas”.

Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2012.

Another action by the Government was to amend the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2012. Organizations working for the rights of children and against child labour came together to protest against the same. The Campaign Against Child Labour (CACL) organized a round table meeting with Parliamentarians, Trade Unionists, Lawyers, Writers and child right Activists to discuss the approval given by the Union Government to the amendments.

The amendments were made to the clause dealing with children below 14 years. The amendment says that the employment of children below 14 years to be prohibited in all occupations and processes with an exception where the child helps his family or family enterprises including field and forest gathering, and where the child works as an artist in an audio visual entertainment industry.

This amendment legitimizes childrens’ involvement in traditional family occupations at an early age, which is likely to induce them to continue working in the same occupations, preventing

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their social ability. Childrens' unregulated participation in audio-visual and entertainment industry can also create a lot of tension and trauma for children. These amendments will legitimize the exploitation of children, will rob them of their childhood. These changes are therefore against all efforts made by child rights organizations to ban all forms of child labour up to the age of 14 years. JWP joint the movement as its stresses on child education and therefore has been campaigning against and preventing child labour in all forms.

Drawing Competition on World Water Day



Chapter - VI

OUR GRATITUDE

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We are very grateful to our Board Members who are concerned about JWP's development and advise us on actions to be taken.

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JWP's accounts are audited by **M/s. A.K. Nair & Co.**, Chartered Accountants, New Delhi, who have stood with us with their professional advice and support. Finally we extend our gratitude to the JWP Board Members who have advised us and have supported us in all our decisions and actions.

OUR DEDICATED STAFF





Tata Consultancy Services Continues to give its support with dedication and skill through its Nithari Computer Literacy Programme.

Children Who participated in the Math Olympiad

