

**Impact Analysis of Avehi Abacus Project's
Saath Saath Programme
in Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh (India)**

Report submitted to
Avehi Abacus Project, Mumbai

Duration of Impact Study
August - September 2016

By

Kishorkumar Darak.
Research Consultant

8 Shivam, Gharpure Colony,
1160-61/6 Shivajinagar,
Pune 411005 (MH, India)
Phone: 0091-9423586351
Email: kishore_darak@yahoo.com

Table of Content

| Ch. No. | Title | Pages |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| | Acknowledgements | I |
| | Executive Summary | II-VI |
| | List of Abbreviations | VII |
| | List of Tables | VIII |
| | List of Graphs | IX |
| 1 | Introduction | 1-8 |
| 2 | Research Design and Methodology | 9-10 |
| 3 | Analysis of Data | 11-25 |
| 4 | Conclusions and Way Forward | 26-30 |
| | Annexure I - Tools used in the study | 31-38 |
| | Annexure II - List of field sites | 39 |

Acknowledgements

The present report, which aims at discussing impact of the *Saath Saath* programme of Avehi Abacus Project, Mumbai (AAP) on young girls and women from Lalitpur district of Uttar Pradesh, is an outcome of research undertaken between August and September 2017. Completing this task would have been impossible without the help of various individuals involved at various stages of the research work.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Ms. Simantini Dhuru, Director and Trustee, AAP, for entrusting me to undertake this study and for giving her inputs whenever needed. From research design to reading various drafts of the report, Simantini played role of an insightful, patient colleague. Ms. Chitra Patil, Chief Project Coordinator, AAP played multiple roles - from being a team member of field visits to a careful reader of all tools and initial drafts of this report. As the chief coordinator, Chitra was always ready to help at various stages; from sharing initial data to getting written responses of participants, from planning day-to-day travel in field to seeking appropriate help of her team members. I sincerely thank Chitra for all the timely help and cooperation. I thank Vaishali Nivate, Coordinator and Vanita Darade, Field Representative of AAP for their help in field work and in collating data. Their help in this study was very useful. I also take this opportunity to thank Ms. Ratna Pathak- Shah, Core Team Member, AAP for her valuable time and insightful interview in which she shared some core ideas went into conception of *Saath Saath*. I also thank those members of AAP who helped in collating and counting data. Discussions with Chitra and Simantini were very useful and enriching throughout the present study.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratefulness towards members of partner organisation, Sahajani Shiksha Kendra (SSK), Lalitpur. I would particularly like to thank Ms. Meena and Ms. Kaniya for their help in arranging field visits, for their important interview and hospitality at Mehroni. In addition, I would like to thank Center Supervisors and Center Teachers of SSK who supported this study wholeheartedly and facilitated enriching discussions with participants. I would also like to thank Dr. Madhuri Dixit, Associate Professor, Pemraj Sarada College, Ahmednagar for her help in translation of some tools and for reading drafts of the report and suggesting corrections.

Lastly I thank the most important members of this study. I express my sincere gratitude towards all the 284 participants, who, in spite of their business with harvesting - the most important activity for earning livelihood, made their way from field to SSK centers and participated in discussions. Their responses, both written and oral, form the core of this study. Without their time, presence and participation this study would have been impossible. I am grateful to all of them.

Kishore Darak.

- Executive Summary -

Saath-Saath i.e. *living together in harmony* is a curriculum package developed by Avehi Abacus Project, Mumbai (AAP) for using in schools as well as community organisations in order to contribute to the resurgence of awareness about gender justice and equality. Appreciated for its structured nature and addressing important concerns in the field of gender justice and equality, **Saath Saath** is systematically implemented by AAP with the help of various partner organisations working in the area of gender. Present report is an outcome of a study undertaken to understand the impact of AAP's **Saath Saath** programme implemented in partnership with Sahajani Shiksha Kendra (SSK) from Lalitpur district of Uttar Pradesh in north India.

Through combined efforts of AAP and SSK, **Saath Saath** reaches about 5,600 adolescent girls and women from 62 community centers and almost same number of schools spread over three blocks of Lalitpur, one of the most backwards districts of India on various development indicators. Child marriage, glaring presence of patriarchal practices in day-to-day life, stringent rules of caste system and poverty are some of the characteristic features of the region which is populated mainly with speakers of Bundelkhandi language, considered to be a dialect of Hindi language.

AAP believes that the process of learning is complex and according to its belief aims at creating a wholesome, engaging, and challenging environment where learners are given opportunities to create knowledge and apply it towards enriching their lives. **Saath Saath**, a programme on gender prepared by AAP stands true to this aim with an acknowledgement of the idea that basic framework for learning is constituted by socio-economic and political conditions of living, and that it varies from person to person. This belief leaves a lot of scope for bringing in local experiences and realities in the structured programme like **Saath Saath**. AAP shared its resources and trained members of SSK for implementing **Saath Saath**. After about 18 months from the beginning, AAP wanted to examine the impact of its intervention through SSK. Thus, the present impact study was undertaken between August and September 2017.

In the given context of Lalitpur, it was expected that a programme like **Saath Saath** would help participants :

- take concrete steps to continue education and seek meaningful employment despite family/social pressure
- take initiative in preventing one's own or a family member's early marriage
- encourage boys for sharing domestic responsibilities
- show an evolved understanding of sexuality and exhibit respect for a person irrespective of gender, caste, religion, class
- debate norms and practices subjecting women and girls to secondary treatment in domestic and in public spheres

Some of the important objectives of the impact study were as follows.

- To explore if Sahajani Shiksha Kendra (SSK) functionaries have sufficiently grasped the objectives and the expected impact of **Saath Saath**.
- To understand what the functionaries of SSK involved in implementing the programme have understood of the **Saath Saath** content and of the supplementary learning material (the kit).
- To find how **Saath Saath** has been integrated with the regular functioning of SSK. How has it been adapted in their overall programmatic planning?
- To what extent have the **Saath Saath** objectives/expected impact been realized?
- To know if and in what ways the exposure to **Saath Saath** has impacted participants in the SSK centers/Suchana Kendras. What concrete indicators can be found in this regard?
- To understand if **Saath Saath** is seen as a part and parcel of SSK work by its functionaries.
- To understand the approach SSK has adapted to the plan and implementation of **Saath Saath**.
- To see if SSK will continue adopting/using **Saath Saath** when AAP withdraws its intervention as the resource organization, and to explore its possible ways.
- To suggest improved strategies to AAP while working as resource organization.

The nature of research demanded mixed methods. Qualitative data was captured through desk work that involved reviewing **Saath Saath** study material (kit), field visit reports of AAP members, case stories described by SSK members, FGDs with participants, FGDs and interviews with members of AAP and with members of SSK. Questionnaires seeking answers to specific questions based on **Saath Saath** formed the quantitative part of data. In all, written responses from 284 participants, including 22 married women and 260 adolescent school-going girls, from 11 different community centers of SSK were collected and analysed. The analysis of data led to the following important observations:

- Participants showed transition to awareness about gender – from dominant notions to empowered ones, for example about division of labour and value of labour.
- Reasons for menstrual cycle have reached better to majority of the participants.
- Majority of the participants understand that menstruation is natural, and therefore considering it as a taboo or regarding the female body impure or radiating during menstruation is incorrect.
- There are many cases of participants breaking taboos related to menstruation and some of them exhibited openness and frank attitude towards discussing about male and female bodies.
- About 61% of the responses say that sexual harassment can victimise anyone, not necessarily girls or women. The same indicator had only 12% respondents showing this understanding during a pre-test given at the beginning of the intervention.
- Almost all (about 97%) participants believe that if anyone is subjected to any kind of sexual harassment or eve-teasing, they would take action either by resisting it on their own or seeking help or parents, teachers or even police.
- More than half of the participants acknowledge that giving inadequate food to girls constitutes an important form of gender discrimination.
- Majority of the participants consider importance of personal choice over stereotypical imagination while selecting games, sport or gifts for unknown person.

- Adolescent girls relate education very clearly to every aspect of individual empowerment and consider education as a window to understand the world better. Most of these participants showed clear commitment to taking up higher studies and opposing their own as well as others' early marriage which may hinder formal education.
- Most of the participants show clear understanding of gendered nature of labour as well as how women's labour is neither counted nor paid adequately.

While the participating girls and women showed attitudinal as well as behavioural changes as aimed by **Saath Saath**, the members of SSK who were agents of implementation also acknowledged that **Saath Saath** has given them a lot of clarity in thinking about gender although they have been working in the same field for a long time. The study registers the following observations for the group of center teachers and supervisors of SSK.

- These respondents showed fair understanding of differences between sex and gender.
- On being asked how one understands that a girl/woman is discriminated against a boy/man due to gender borne prejudices, many respondents displayed clear perception.
- All respondents find **Saath Saath** to be a very useful programme particularly because it is well structured and provides them with opportunity and guidance to discuss taboos.
- It is also reported that **Saath Saath** has been instrumental in promoting participation of girls and women to (i) overcome taboo and worries related to menstruation (ii) talk to parents about so called 'confidential' things (iii) resist attempts of early marriage (iv) express clearly a will to continue formal education (v) speak with courage in public meetings (vi) raise individual and collective voice against eve teasing or sexual harassment (vii) confront discriminatory treatment given in family (viii) continue education in case it was discontinued due to some reason (ix) become aware of basic rights (x) raise 'uncomfortable' questions.

The main objective of **Saath Saath** is to achieve gender equity and equality through sensitisation of the sexes, the girls/women and the boys/men. The programme also aims at strengthening girls and women so as they develop understanding of and resistance to traditional patriarchal systems. It hopes to attain this by creating awareness about individual rights and by unpacking social construction of gender as it comes across in various everyday experiences. From analysis of the data following important conclusions can be drawn. The conclusions are interspersed with subsequent suggestions for taking such a programme forward in a more effective manner.

- Data shows that more than 80% of the respondents who participated in the study have developed a clear and nuanced understanding of the difference between 'natural' and 'social' aspects related to gender construction and gender differences.
- A fair level of understanding about the gendered nature of labour is also exhibited.
- **Saath Saath** has succeeded in creating a clearer understanding of how gender is constructed socially.
- Many participants have shown substantial awareness about patterns of gender discrimination in daily practices including amount of food, type of clothing, the nature and choices of outdoor and

indoor games and sports for girls versus those for the boys, etc. Such common things were clearly brought out as the markers of gender based discrimination.

- The fact that family is an important site of discrimination seems to have reached a large number of participants.
- One of the major achievements of **Saath Saath** can be spotted in the awareness about menstrual cycle, health and hygiene during menstruation. The programme not only created this awareness but also strengthened participants mentally to overcome many widespread socio-cultural taboos related to menstruation.
- The programme has also helped participants in overcoming traditional notions of impurity associated with female body.
- This research also perceived a comfortable level of ease on the part of participating girls and women while discussing biological differences between female and male bodies. This should be called a remarkable achievement as it is uncommon in the region, even so on national level.
- The notion of individual right over one's body is not very clearly seen. Even though content of **Saath Saath** focuses on body and woman's right over her body in subtle and direct ways, the social fabric of the site where SSK is implementing **Saath Saath** makes its reach difficult.
- There is a significant positive sensitisation about victimisation due to sexual harassment. About five fold participants compared to pre-test understand that sexual harassment has no bearing on a specific gender, age, style of wearing clothes or time girls/women spend outside their domestic or 'safe spaces'.
- Malnourishment of girls as an effect of gender based discrimination was an important concern expressed by some participants in the study. Majority of the participants (a little above 50%) connected the difference in food given to girls and boys to the social restriction on the girls' choices of outdoor games or sports.
- A clear difference was visible between responses by married and unmarried respondents regarding the relation between education and women's empowerment. Very few of the married respondents related education to empowerment while majority of the unmarried participants expressed that education is the basis of women's empowerment and self-reliance. It seems that the particular input by **Saath Saath** curriculum has successfully created impact on ideas of education of young girls compared to those of adult, married women/girls. The curriculum has certainly added a strong impetus to young girls' desire about education while adult participants were largely using their own experience about education.
- Regarding women's work, labour and its value, it was observed that more than 80% of all the respondents opined that only the outdoor work of women is paid and not the domestic work. From this, it is clear that **Saath Saath** has created desirable awareness among them regarding the issue of valuing women's work.
- Members of SSK who implemented **Saath Saath** in partnership with AAP clearly mentioned that this programme has strengthened their understanding of gender and its operational indicators. Although SSK's work on gender has a special focus on child marriage, the structured and systematic nature of **Saath Saath** curriculum appears to have helped them to develop a deeper understanding of patterns of gender operation and their social implications, and has helped them gather courage to break some of the patriarchal practices in domestic and other

surroundings. When one considers the fact that SSK has a long standing experience in the field and has worked in the area of gender justice, equality and education in partnership with some of India's well-known organisations, their response about changes in their understanding due to **Saath Saath** becomes particularly significant.

- Even though participants in the programme as well as the members of SSK who implemented it have explicitly credited **Saath Saath** for helping them develop a better understanding of gender and its role in shaping individual as well as collective identities, the depth and reach of their respective understandings vary a lot.
- Data shows that implementation of **Saath Saath** curriculum is not as structured as its organisation is. Though genuine local problems are required to be considered and the starting points may possibly vary for different centers of SSK, a system needs to be developed that would check the inter-center imbalance in implementation and may lead to expectations of a more uniform impact of **Saath Saath** programme. It is clear that implementation partner, SSK in this case, will have to share larger responsibility for creating such a balance. It is the partner agency who is better aware of local situations and can anticipate possible hurdles and design appropriate strategies for effective implementation.
- Although AAP provided the partner with some formats of tracking and maintaining data in the context of **Saath Saath**, SSK could not do it to the level expected. Capturing such data within framework of AAP by SSK would have facilitated provision of specific need based inputs to certain centers 'lagging' behind the prescribed schedule of **Saath Saath** sessions or having difficulties in dealing with particular concepts.
- Manual of **Saath Saath** is written in standard Hindi language. Many of the respondents from SSK found that the language was a little difficult to understand given the colloquial Bundelkhandi language. Nevertheless, they unanimously appreciated the value of structured curriculum. It is obvious that a manual would be made available in standard variety of a language to look for a wider reach of the same, which is Hindi in this case, yet local variations ought to be incorporated as and when possible for better dissemination of the programme. For generating 'adaptable' manuals, an organisation would obviously require more resources in terms of time, finance and human resources, but there are more chances that quality of implementation and transaction would definitely enhance. If a partner, SSK in this case, is also unable to adapt it to suit local needs due to various reasons including specific competencies needed in curriculum development, it may consider taking special help for this purpose.

To summarise, **Saath Saath** proves to be an useful programme for creating sense of equality among young girls and women coming from a significantly 'backward' area. It importantly unpacks the patterns of gender discrimination for them. The structured nature of **Saath Saath** curriculum could potentially create opportunities for participants to think about gender in a systematic manner. It also could show them ways of resisting at individual and collective levels. Although not many instances of direct confrontation regarding gender discrimination may be counted in case of the participants, the programme has certainly added momentum to their determination for asserting their rights. Programmes like **Saath Saath** are highly desirable in a society that struggles with multiple kinds and levels of incessant gender discrimination.

List of Abbreviations

Alwar Mewar Institute of Education and Development - AMED

Avehi Abacsu Project, Mumbai - AAP

Focus Group Discussions - FGD

Mahila Jan Adhikaar Samiti - MJAS

Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai - MCGM

Sahajani Shiksha Kendra - SSK

List of Tables

| No. | Title | Page No. |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Table 1 | Outreach of <i>Saath Saath</i> | 7 |
| Table 2 | Respondents at a Glance (Boys/Girls) | 13 |
| Table 3 | Respondents at a Glance (Women) | 13 |
| Table 4 | Data Showing Responses to a question on natural and social aspects of Gender | 14 |
| Table 5 | Responses related to women's image and position in society | 21 |

List of Graphs

| No. | Title | Page No. |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Graph 1 | Percentage of respondents correctly distinguishing between 'natural' and 'social' gender | 15 |
| Graph 2 | Who is victimised by sexual harassment? | 17 |

1. Introduction

The Avehi Public Charitable (Educational) Trust¹, founded in 1981, is a non-profit organisation dedicated to continuing education and critical social intervention through use of media resources. Avehi initiated the Avehi Abacus Project (AAP) in 1990. AAP believes in improving and strengthening the public education system by making it qualitatively better, to reach out to the most marginalized sections of society and to impact mainstream policy on education.

Important contribution of AAP can be recognised in the rich and relevant content that has been accepted by children, teachers and policy makers alike. National and state level policy making bodies have taken a serious note of its sustained and spread out work with teachers and children in public schools. Members of AAP have played a key role in shaping various syllabi and textual material developed at national and state levels.

The following set of goals have guided the work of the Avehi Abacus Project:

- To influence the quality of teaching-learning in schools with particular focus on strengthening the public education system.
- To build awareness in children, teachers and educational planners regarding issues related to social justice and environmental sustainability.
- To equip children with the skills and values that will help them contribute positively to society and achieve their own potential.
- To empower teachers to become active participants in the educational process.
- To actively participate towards influencing policies to institutionalize meaningful and creative teaching-learning curricula within schools.
- To build public opinion and influence policy towards redefinition of the quality aspects of education.
- To influence policy towards the formulation, acceptance and implementation of equal quality free education to all children from 0 to 18 years.
- To foster values that promote harmony and to celebrate diversity.

The organization has developed various resources and has implemented the following educational programmes on a large-scale, in the formal sites like schools as well as in some slums and *bastis*.

- ***Sangati*** (togetherness/harmony): This is a thought-provoking and interactive enrichment curriculum package comprising of a series of 6 teaching-learning kits with interlinked themes which are usually drawn from sciences and social sciences. This programme is implemented in school and non-schools settings with the age group of 11 to 14 years. The *Sangati* curriculum basically attempts to make school education relevant and vibrant. *Sangati* is being used in all (900+) Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and has reached more than 10,000 teachers and more than 2,50,000 children. Since 2015 *Sangati* has also reached 36 'Ashram schools' of Tribal Development Department in Thane district of Maharashtra.

¹ For details, visit the URL: www.avehiabacus.org

- **Manthan** (Churning): A foundation course for trainee teachers who have enrolled for the Diploma in Teacher Education (D.T. Ed.), this programme is currently being used in 6 colleges in Palghar, 6 colleges in Thane and 4 colleges in Mumbai districts of Maharashtra.
- **Saath-Saath - Living together in harmony**: This is a curriculum package developed for use in schools as well as community organisations in order to contribute to the resurgence of awareness about gender justice and equality.

From 2015 AAP's **Sangati, Manthan and Saath Saath** programmes have also found new avenues of partnership. AAP has been playing the role of a resource organisation for other establishments and organisations like Earthian initiative's (Wipro) Continuous Engagement Programme. Centre for Environment Education (CEE) uses materials from **Sangati** and **Manthan** to develop and strengthen components of Education for Sustainable Development in about 20 schools spread in the states of Gujrat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Delhi and Haryana. AAP has also been playing the role of a resource organisation mentoring grassroots partners in north India (Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh) by introducing **Saath Saath** and some aspects of **Sangati** and **Manthan** programmes. AAP's contribution in creating awareness about the most crucial but widely neglected elements of formal schooling is appreciated by many researchers and scholars. For example, in the context of **Sangati**, a recent article comments - "(W)e also need to realize and acknowledge the efforts of those who have been trying to put forward counter narratives, challenging and questioning the process of fabricating history and providing an alternative vision, that is based on the principles of enquiry rather than a final word...Avehi Abacus Project and '**Sangati**' are the living embodiments of such a vision."² A similar vision of a 'counter narrative' with a focus on basic values enshrined in Indian Constitution, especially equality, acts as the fundamental building block of **Saath Saath**.

1.1 **Saath-Saath - Genesis, Rationale and Outreach:**

Even though **Sangati** has been addressing the category of gender among several other social categories, for various reasons the members of AAP have long felt the need for a special programme centered around gender and equality. AAP believes that if critical mass working for equity and justice is to be built by focusing on issues related to socialization and conditioning, then gender becomes a pivotal concern. Gender is indelibly mixed with caste, class, religious identities and state power. Some of the contemporary issues in the larger Indian socio-political sphere also led AAP to develop such a separate programme centered around gender. As one of the members of AAP puts it - "Equality is the most fundamental value... Experience of equality is impacted greatly by gender, caste and economic status. After *Nirbhaya*³, gender was discussed in unprecedented ways. We decided to create special emphasis on gender to reach young adults. It is also an age group that is neglected in terms of additional inputs they get at school level." Considering that gender is constructed in specific socio-cultural and political

² Dwiwedi, Nivedita (2017). In Quest of Togetherness: 'Sangati'. Counter Currents. September 11. Available at <http://www.countercurrents.org/2017/09/11/in-quest-of-togetherness-sangati/>

³ Nirbhaya refers to a case of brutal gang rape in national capital New Delhi in December 2012 in which the victim succumbed to the injuries caused. Strong protests against this heinous crime were seen all over India.

contexts, AAP felt that "there has to be a prototype, but has to be re-done while conducting the programme on field."⁴

Though school is considered as a necessary vehicle of social mobilisation and of upward mobility for every individual, many-a-times the contrary is also true. In the capacity of a perceived 'valid' source of knowledge, school may continue or even perpetuate a patriarchal, stereotypical way of thinking through formal curricula and textbooks as well as through other different processes that are famously termed as 'hidden curriculum' by sociologist Phillip Jackson in the 1960s. Pondering on such reality of Indian schools, AAP recognised an urgent need to intervene in school-life and formulate clear, integrated strategies to critically examine and engage with issues of gender justice in a comprehensive manner. AAP believes that any dialogue about gender needs to involve both girls and boys as important stakeholders since both groups are affected by gendering processes and patterns in the society and both groups must think together, wherever possible, about ways of addressing challenges in the context of gender. To reflect this combined effort the programme was named as '**Saath Saath**' (we are together). The age group of proposed participants, typically what can be categorised as secondary and higher secondary schools students in India (14-18 years), was consciously chosen so that a meaningful intervention can be taken to the group that is forming its ideas about gender and also struggling with it.

The programme began during August-September 2013 with the support received from Archdiocesan Board of Education, Mumbai in terms of their decision to disseminate the **Saath Saath** kit to about 250 schools and to conduct workshops to seek implementation of **Saath Saath**. Soon AAP found that exposure to the course translated into small vital changes in personal lives of the students. AAP observed that the students became prone to take informed steps to continue education and sought meaningful employment despite family/social pressure. They became active in preventing one's own or that of a family member's early marriage. Boys began sharing domestic responsibilities, and showed an evolved understanding of sexuality and respect for a person irrespective of its gender, caste, religion and class. They seemed determined to oppose practice of dowry, and showed nuanced engagement with larger issues of resource distribution/management etc. Although **Saath Saath** witnessed some success with school students, there were restrictions on its implementation due to the exam-centric nature of schools, and the tendency to treat gender education as an extra programme rather than as an essential aspect of entire learning process happening in a school setting. The requirement to take issues centered around gender outside schools was recognised and thus working with organizations outside the formal school system became an important dimension of intervention. With support from American Jewish World Service (AJWS), the **Saath-Saath** curriculum (particularly the module for gender justice aimed at school going adolescents and community groups) has reached women's community groups - Mahila Jan Adhikaar Samiti (MJAS) Ajmer, Rajasthan, Sahajani Shiksha Kendra (SSK) Lalitpir, Uttar Pradesh and Alwar Mewar Institute of Education and Development (AMED), Alwar, Rajasthan. Looking at the performance of the programme we may say that the efficacy, adaptability and universal appeal of this module got considerably validated outside the formal school structure and challenging settings outside urban metropolis where conditions about gender are relatively less oppressive.

⁴ From field notes. Interview of Ms. Ratna Pathak Shah and Ms. Simantini Dhuru dated 15th September 2017.

1.1.1 Objectives of Saath Saath programme:

- Initiate steps to continue education and seek meaningful employment overcoming family/social pressure.
- Proactively defer one's own or a family/community member's early/child marriage.
- Sensitize boys and men (if exposed to the programme) towards gender equity and demonstrate change in their lives for example by sharing domestic responsibilities, sharing food, preventing dowry-pressure, and domestic violence, sexual harassment, etc.
- Develop an informed and mature understanding of sexuality and respect for a person irrespective of gender (and caste, religion, class) among learners and teachers/resource persons.
- Project the need to engage with larger issues of resource distribution/management.

1.1.2 A closer glance at Saath Saath:

Issues of gender and gender discrimination and of subsequent equality have become part of Indian academic and educational discourses mainly after 1980s. The past decades have witnessed increased number of Women's Studies Centers in various Indian universities and of the undergraduate programmes that teach women's studies as a subject. Nevertheless, gender largely remains a muted issue in school and in sites of non-formal education like the adult literacy programme. It is also observed that in the universities that host Women's Studies Centers or full-fledged departments of Women's Studies, gender issues largely remain a concern of those centers or departments, rather than spreading out to other main stream university courses and subjects. Therefore, curricula and pedagogic processes of several university departments that teach courses from other disciplines generally remain unaffected by gender concerns. It appears that attempts of artificially 'including' gender in other disciplines at the most appear to be 'pizza toppings'⁵ rather than fruitfully gendering the discipline. Given these facts, a programme that aims at educating girls and boys, women and men particularly about issues gender and of gender equality in formal settings like schools or in the informal settings like women's cooperatives, youth groups not only sounds significant and required but actually becomes an important input. The merit of such a programme further enhances when it gets presented through a well-thought out systematic curriculum with specific learning outcomes and specifically when it leaves scope for adaptation to suit local needs of its participants. The **Saath Saath** programme developed by AAP is such a programme.

AAP believes that the process of learning is complex and according to its belief aims at creating a "wholesome, engaging, and challenging environment where learners are given opportunities to create knowledge and apply it towards enriching their lives".⁶ The programme on gender i.e. **Saath Saath** prepared by AAP stands true to this aim. **Saath Saath** acknowledges that the basic framework for learning is constituted by socio-economic and political conditions of living, and that they vary from participant to participant. This understanding becomes evident in its content, specifically when issues of gender injustice are placed in the overall context of well being of a democratic society. **Saath Saath** carefully chooses to deal with stereotypes in a creative manner, avoiding direct confrontation (perhaps for the possibility of its being counterproductive) and strives to pave ways for resistance and gender based equality.

⁵ Pizza topping is used as a metaphor to indicate that inclusion of gender in these disciplines has not altered in any way the basic structure of the discipline, like a pizza base remain the same independent of the topping.

⁶ Saath Saath Kit on Gender, p. 1.

The **Saath Saath** kit contains a manual consisting of 12 session plans that discuss gender issues for adolescents and are meant for teachers or instructors. A handy file of all materials is provided to facilitate photocopying at the receivers' end, along with a video compact disk containing supplementary visual material or attractive printed visual aids where electronic and digital support is not possible. Although the material is written in standard dialect of Hindi language, it is expected as per the explicit mention by AAP members, that partner agencies are encouraged to translate it into varieties of local language and are expected to contextualise the same with locally relevant examples. Such flexibility in principle gives **Saath Saath** a wider reach and appeal.

Some of the other organisations working in India in the area of gender issues too conduct trainings for gender sensitisation. For example, Anveshi Research Centre for Women's Studies, a Hyderabad based organisation committed to research, critical reflection and activism meeting contemporary demands, conducts occasional trainings for teachers as well as workshops and public lectures for common people.⁷ Such programmes, though important, happen to be occasional in nature and additionally, do not cater to young adults from secondary education or the young women in non-formal centers of learning. Secondly, Women's Studies Centers of some universities also try to reach out to local communities yet most of these programmes are by design sporadic in nature and lack sustained efforts over longer period of time. On this background, programmes like **Saath Saath** acquire even more importance regarding requirements of young girls and women from rural background.

Keeping in mind that gender as a concept involves various issues as well as their complex interconnections, the twelve sessions of **Saath Saath** are arranged in graded manner and address the following important issues. -

Brief Summary of the Saath Saath Sessions:

Session 1: Introduction: *Looking at ourselves from the point of view of gender:* The difference between sex and gender; how the sex one is born with affects the gender roles one performs.

Session 2: Growing Up: *Changes during adolescence – physiological, emotional, social:* How natural physical and emotional changes are coloured by the gender expectations of society as children grow up.

Session 3: My Ideas of gender: *Recognizing ones own ideas about the status of women and men:* How we define masculinity and femininity; how language promotes stereotypes.

Session 4: How I've acquired my ideas of gender: *The things we grow up with:* How the different messages we receive through stories, toys and games, television, festivals and cultural practices add to ones image of what a girl/boy should be like.

Session 5: Gender Inequality begins at home: *How our ideas of gender are learnt in our families:* The institution of patriarchy is deep rooted within our families therefore efforts to change must also begin at home.

⁷ For details, visit URL - <http://www.anveshi.org.in/home/>

Session 6: Pressure that I Experience: *The influence peer pressure exerts on our ideas of gender:* How peer groups push young adolescents into making delicate choices; how the complexities of today's information oriented society add to the confusion.

Session 7: The role media plays: *The influence mass media exerts on our ideas of gender:* How mass media is one of the key influences today in creating and exploiting gendered images. How it influences our ideas of how men and women should behave.

Session 8: Women's Work: Invisible but vital: *Who is a Working Woman?* How the fact that the work done by women is socially and economically undervalued adds to their lower status in society.

Session 9: Sexual Violence - Harassment: *Is this mere teasing?* As an increasing number of women step outside home for education and employment, the instances of harassment are on the rise. The questions to ask are 'What constitutes harassment?' 'How do we as individuals and as a society deal with prevalent attitudes?'

Session 10: Sexual Violence - Rape: *Whose Shame?* This can happen as much in confines of our homes as outside and is an expression of power above all. What does the law say? A larger concern is that a rape victim is faces violence not just during the assault but for her life time by the attitudes of society. What can we do to change them?

Session 11: The qualities of an empowered person: *Change is Possible:* Today both women and men are weaving a new fabric of society by beginning to make changes in their own lives. Stories of individuals who have made a difference.

Session 12: Be the change you want to see: *Change Must Continue:* The historical process of fighting for gender equality has yielded some results; through awareness we must consolidate these victories and continue to work towards creating a better society.

Topics included in the kit traverse the terrain of local socio-cultural basis of the concept of gender before turning to the much discussed issues of women's invisible work and sexual violence. This leads the participant to introspect for finding associations and applications of the theoretical concept of gender to one's own living conditions and lived experiences. One of the sessions discusses the participant's individual ideas of gender and their coming into existence along with the pressures she experiences. The kit finds it significant to talk about how gender inequality begins at home and how one recognises qualities of an empowered person. This wholesome approach increases usability and effectiveness of the material. It reduces the gap between theory and practice and simultaneously keeps the possibility of growth open for the module by including local details. The role of media is also noted while thinking of gendered images.

Sessions are arranged in systematic, chronological manner and equips teachers or instructors better. The first page of each session provides its summary, list of any special preparations if needed beforehand, the main ideas and materials required. The presentation of the material in this manner

clubbed with focused training aims at preparing instructors for imparting the content as well as for handling pathological situations that may surface during discussions with participants.

1.1.3 Outreach of Saath Saath Programme:

In the past two years, **Saath Saath** has reached more than 7000 adolescent girls, boys and women spread across three of the North Indian states. The table given below captures this outreach from three different sites in terms of number of recipients of the programme.

Table 1 - Outreach of Saath Saath

| Partner | Mahila Jan Adhikaar Samiti (2015-16) | Sahajani Shiksha Kendra (2015-17) | Alwar Mewat Institute of Education & Development (AMIED) (2016-17) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Community based centers | 19 | 62 | 11 |
| Number of adolescent and women | 600 Adolescent Girls- boys | 4645 Adolescent Girls, women | 275 Girls |
| Number of schools | 5 | 60 | 1 |
| Number of Students | 530 (std 5-8) | 1000 | 60 |
| Grand Total of participants | 1130 | 5645 | 335 |

To reach these girls and women through **Saath Saath**, AAP planned following important activities.

- Translation, printing and production of **Saath Saath** in Hindi (Including teacher manual, student material and visual aids).
- Plan implementation in coordination with field partners.
- Build capacity of grass-root partners’ team of facilitators for use of *Saath-Saath* module.
- Develop tools for monitoring and data-collection and capacity building of partners for its appropriate use.
- Monitor and support implementation of **Saath Saath** in field.

The above plan was meticulously executed to achieve specific impact for attaining gender awareness and action towards gender equality. It was expected that the programme will encourage the personnel from the local organization/youth participants in community to:

- Look at the issue of patriarchy, gender, sexuality, and sexual politics in a comprehensive manner.
- Begin to develop skills to intervene/respond to contextual issues in an informed manner.
- Revisit their organizational issues/interventions and inter-organizational structures from the standpoint of fairness and mutual respect – thereby expanding avenues for personal and organizational growth.
- Look at the issues related with gender in the context of other prevalent hegemonies and will prepare to build their capacities to respond to situations in their area of influence.

With these specific achievement in plan, AAP worked in in partnership with women's organisations in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The partner organisation in Lalitpur district of Uttar Pradesh was Sahajani Siksha Kendra (SSK), where the field work for the present study was carried out.

1.2 Brief Note about Sahajani Shiksha Kendra:

Sahajani Shiksha Kendra (Sahjani-one who helps women), now operational in 175 villages in the Lalitpur district in the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, aims at empowering women and adolescent girls through holistic literacy education. It began its journey as a part of Nirantar, a New Delhi based non government organisation working in the area of gender and equality for more than two decades. Awareness and action on gender, development of analytical and leadership skills and health are key components of SSK's work. The programme helps women and adolescent girls to acquire reading, writing and numeracy skills through health issues. It strives to develop sustainable literacy skills of a core group of women who can then possibly play a leadership role and take forward the agenda of women's empowerment.

AAP proposed to have an external Impact Analysis of ***Saath Saath*** implemented through SSK, considering two important reasons. First, of the three partners mentioned in the table above, SSK reached maximum number of adolescent girls and women. And second, SSK has been associated with AAP for more than 18 months. In case of MJAS, the partnership work is already concluded and for AMED, it is just the beginning. But with SSK, there is continuity of interventions in the second year. Hence it followed that the overall impact achieved by SSK might prove useful for AAP to better its understanding of programme design, intervention by implementation of ***Saath Saath***, type of partnership and engagement with partner organisations, etc. Thus, SSK was an obvious choice of locating the impact study.

The following chapters discuss the research design, data analysis and conclusion of the study taken up during August - September 2017.

2. Research Design and Methodology

As an immediate outcome, participants in the **Saath Saath** programme are expected to begin to think afresh about gender and other issues of discrimination and even make vital changes in their personal lives. This programme is implemented in a setting where girls and women are often denied their human rights due to overarching framework of traditional patriarchal values. Under such circumstances, girls are pressurised to leave formal education at an early stage, say primary or upper primary and get married even before they attain the legal marriage-age or 18 years. Boys in such setting are given special treatment with priorities in day-to-day needs like food, clothing, etc., and in opportunities of growth and development like formal education. They are not supposed to be a part of household or domestic chores and any act of doing household chores by male members of family is considered as a blot on their 'manhood'. Getting dowry is considered as boys' right and girls' fate. Girls are not only expected to maintain a chaste behaviour but are not even allowed to express about issues of sexuality and sexual violence. Considering such a scenario, any intervention programme would be considered impactful if the participants are found to:

- (i) Take concrete steps to continue education and seek meaningful employment despite family/social pressure
- (ii) Take initiative in preventing one's own or a family member's early marriage
- (iii) Encourage boys for sharing domestic responsibilities
- (iv) Show an evolved understanding of sexuality and exhibit respect for a person irrespective of gender, caste, religion, class
- (v) Debate norms and practices subjects women and girls to secondary treatment in domestic and in public spheres
- (vi) Oppose giving and taking dowry.

2.1 Objectives of Impact Analysis:

The context of gender equality, behavioural changes of the participants was important to understand impact of **Saath Saath**. It was felt necessary to explore patterns of thinking by the participants particularly in the context of their present conditions and the kind of future they imagine. It was also expected that following its nature and style **Saath Saath** would also impact the thinking and actions of those who would implement it. The following objectives for impact analysis were set keeping this factor in mind.

- To explore if Sahajani Shiksha Kendra (SSK) functionaries have sufficiently grasped the objectives and the expected impact of **Saath Saath**.
- To understand what the functionaries of SSK involved in implementing the programme have understood of the **Saath Saath** content and of the supplementary learning material (the kit).
- To find how **Saath Saath** has been integrated with the regular functioning of SSK. How has it been adapted in their overall programmatic planning?
- To what extent have the **Saath Saath** objectives/expected impact been realized?
- To know if and in what ways the exposure to **Saath Saath** has impacted participants in the SSK centers/Suchana Kendras. What concrete indicators can be found in this regard?
- To understand if **Saath Saath** is seen as a part and parcel of SSK work by its functionaries.
- To understand the approach SSK has adapted to the plan and implementation of **Saath Saath**.

- To see if SSK will continue adopting/using **Saath Saath** when AAP withdraws its intervention as the resource organization, and to explore its possible ways.
- To suggest improved strategies to AAP while working as resource organization.

2.2 Research Design:

The nature of intervention demanded mixed methods of research. The study was a combination of three data sources – field data gathered from written schedules, data gathered by interviewing functionaries at SSK and AAP, and the data gathered through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in context of **Saath Saath**. In addition to these data, brief analysis of **Saath Saath** content (see section 1.1.2), workshop and filed visit reports provided required material for desk review. Written responses of participants provided for quantitative data while FGDs, interviews with various stake holders and various other reports formed the qualitative part.

Following research tools⁸ were sought, developed and used for data collection, as different from data and reports provided for desk review.

- Written response to questionnaire by respondents (adolescent girls and women participants).
- Interviews of participants reported in specific case stories.
- FGDs with adolescent girls and women from SSK Centers or Suchana Kendra.
- FGD with representatives of SSK engaged in implementing **Saath Saath**.
- FGD with members of AAP responsible for training SSK and doing field work.
- Interviews with director of SSK about relationship with the AAP and impact of **Saath Saath** programme.
- Interviews with directors of AAP to understand nature of programme and partnership.

Initial plan was to collect written responses of about 10% participants from Lalitpur (i.e. about 560 participants spread over 3 blocks). The field work was planned in first week of September 2017 in consultation with SSK. But due to the early withdrawal of monsoon this year, many of the participants, who were supposed to participate in the study could not do so as they were busy in harvest related activities. Consequently a sample of 284 participants amounting to 5% of the total could be collected during planned visit. Frequency count of the participants' response led to quantitative understanding of the impact of **Saath Saath** while responses of participants during FGDs led to broader qualitative ideas.

The two chapters below offer detailed analysis of data thus collected and the conclusions drawn after them.

⁸ Please see Annexures for these tools.

3. Analysis of Data

3.1 The region in which SSK is implementing **Saath Saath** can be termed as 'difficult' in many ways for being unfair to girls and women, particularly those belonging to lower castes and classes. The widespread *chappal pratha* (foot-ware custom) for instance not only expects lower caste or dalit women to carry their footwear in their hands while crossing upper caste houses in the village, but in case of an upper caste *bada bujurg* (senior, elderly man) passing by, all women are expected to carry their footwear in their hand. Caste system is so strong that people of different castes do not mingle in some of the villages. It is in consideration of such caste politics that **Saath Saath** centers in a few of these villages have to conduct activities in two different sites located separately in upper caste area and in *dalit bastis*. The common patriarchal practice of watching women's conduct closely for any transgression and judging their character from their conduct is also prevalent here. As in some other parts of India, women are required to follow the *ghunghat* custom (*ghunghat* is a thin veil that hangs down from the head and covers the face completely). If a woman violates the *ghunghat* tradition, people (mostly elder men) become suspicious and begin to call her names, to mention the least.

Young girls find multiple difficulties in accessing schools and continuing education. Apart from social customs like child marriage or early marriage, considering girls' education counterproductive for safeguarding patriarchal traditions and considering female gender as weaker gender there are some systemic issues borne out of state's apathy towards girls and women. For example, many girls are required to walk 4-5 kilometer⁹ for reaching school which consumes a lot of time and energy. Moreover, in many cases, parents feel that such up-down on daily basis is not safe for girls. Thus, limited access to schools becomes a systemic reason of girls' early drop-out.

Taboos regarding menstruation are common among various communities and are observed meticulously. People appear to believe that the monthly menstruation cycle refers to punishment to the feminine gender due to bad deeds in earlier birth. Menstrual blood is considered to be sinful and is thought to pollute the feminine body. It is also believed that a woman's menstruating body emits rays that spoil food. Particularly if pickle and *papad* (thin, cracking snack) is touched by a menstruating woman or even if her shadow falls on them, they will go waste. These traditional beliefs have young girls scolded or beaten up if they try to violate the rules during menstruation.

Child marriage is rampant in the region. One of the respondents stated it to be a canker (*bal vivah to is ilakhe ka nasoor hai*). During the field work, we did meet young girls of 16, 17 or even 15 years old who were married. The only silver lining in the dark cloud we thought of is the situation that most of these married girls presently stay with their parents to complete schooling.

Gender discrimination is also characteristically observed in everyday practices. We were made aware of them by our respondents open references to them during FGDs and informal conversations. It includes less quantity and quality of the food given to girls, lesser choice of school for them, restriction on their movements, different list of places where they can or cannot go, different style of clothing etc.

⁹ Field notes dated 16th February 2017 by Ms. Madhavi Jadhav (AAP) from Girar Center in Lalitpur.

Regarding schooling, we observed that girls are either withdrawn from school early or unlike the boys in the family, are sent to government schools where education costs less. Many of the respondents opined that government schools do not offer good quality education (in their words, *dhang ki padhai*). There is another dimension to the choice of government schools for girls. Though students are usually beaten in both kinds of schools, the difference according to the respondents is that private school offer good education while the government schools are only known for beating students (*privet me pitai hoti hai to padhai bhi hoti hai, sarakari me pitai hoti hai par padhai nahi hoti*). It appears that while one needs to find out reality from both types of schools, it is a widespread impression that government schools are poorly equipped places for purpose of education.

Many of the respondents viewed gender discrimination in terms of domestic chores they are expected to do. In many families, the daughters' share of food is quite less when compared to that of sons'. A respondent clearly stated that it does not matter if the daughter starves but the elder ones would keep the sons overfeeding. The right to freshly cooked food rests with boys, girls can always eat stale food (*Ladki bhukhi rahe to koi farak nahi padata, ladake ke muh me thusate raho. Ladki to basi kha sakati hai, taje khane par to ladake ka hak manate hai na?*)

These practices can be called generic in the sense they are experienced in other parts of the country. Still, what makes this region more difficult to live is the kind of violence and coercion women face upon raising their voice against any of the discriminatory practices. This fact was vouched by many of the women supervisors and center teachers from SSK who narrated their own hardship suffered upon their very first resistance, both at domestic and public levels.

The brief description above in view of the difficult lives of women in the region of SSK's outreach requires to be kept in mind while looking at outcome of present research, discussed below. Another factor that needs to borne in mind is that most of the women and young girls in this region are conversant in the local Bundelkhandi language compared to Hindi. Although census data registers Budelkhandi under the family of Hindi as its dialect, the differences between standard variety of Hindi and its colloquial form increase to an extent where linguistic nuances occur unintelligible to the speaker of standard Hindi. This awareness rose as an important part of the research upon realizing that language remained a restriction as far as written responses were concerned. The tools used for seeking written responses were in standard Hindi and needed to be explained by our field team to the respondents. The same observation recurred when we received different responses on the same or similar questions during the FGDs.

3.2 About the Respondents:

There was a slight difficulty in gathering respondents due to the timing of the field work. It was conducted in the first week of September 2017 when, as mentioned earlier, majority of the girls and women who participated in ***Saath Saath*** were busy in the fields mowing, cutting and thrashing grains.

The farm activities were proponed a little due to early onset of harvest season¹⁰. Despite this unavoidable difficulty of 'calling' the respondents, data could be collected from 284 respondents which

¹⁰ We were told that usually harvesting starts from the third or fourth week of September but this year, due to early withdrawal of rains, the harvest season got pre-poned.

is 5% of the total girls and women participating in the programme. Two of the following tables show details of participants.

Table 2 - Respondents at a Glance (Girls/Boys)

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------|
| Number of Respondent | Females | 260 |
| | Males (boys) | 2 |
| | Total | 262 |
| Number of Centers Visited | | 21 |
| Block wise distribution | Meharoni | 121 |
| | Madhavara | 97 |
| | Birada | 38 |
| Age wise distribution | 12 to 14 | 106 |
| | 15 to 18 | 102 |
| | 18 to 25 | 17 |
| | Age not mentioned | 37 |
| Education wise distribution | Grades 1 to 5 (Primary) | 47 |
| | Grades 6 to 10 (Upper Primary + Secondary) | 115 |
| | Grades 11 to 12 (Senior Secondary) | 44 |
| | Grades 13 to 15 (Graduation) | 25 |
| | Post Graduation | 1 |
| | Education not mentioned | 30 |

Table 3 - Respondents at a glance (Women)

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Number of Respondent | Females | 22 |
| Number of Centers Visited | | 7 |
| Block wise distribution | Meharoni | 8 |
| | Madhavara | 7 |
| | Birada | 7 |
| Age wise distribution | 19 to 25 | 5 |
| | 26 to 30 | 7 |
| | 30 + | 10 |
| Education wise distribution | Grades 1 to 3 | 1 |
| | Grades 4 to 5 | 3 |
| | Grades 6 to 10 | 6 |
| | Education not mentioned | 12 |

3.3 Discussion and analysis of Data:

3.3.1 The 'natural' and the 'social' in Gender:

As an aim, **Saath Saath** strives to make its participants aware that gender is a social (and hence artificial) construct and that it gets manifested in different ways. The study tried to understand the extent to which the notion of gender as 'constructed' difference vis-a-vis 'natural' difference between masculine

and feminine sexes is developed among the participants. The following table shows specific questions asked in this regard and responses given.

Five testing statements were given and the respondents were required to decide whether description in a give statement was 'natural' (N) due to difference between sexes or was a gendered, 'social' (S) practice.

Table 4 - Data Showing Responses to a question on natural and social aspects of Gender

| Statement | Total Valid Responses | Response N | Response S | Correct response | Percentage of correct |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) In my childhood, I was given food only by my mother. | 228 | 86 | 142 | S | 62% |
| (2) The task of giving me birth was taken up by my mother. | 228 | 201 | 17 | N | 88% |
| (3) Sheela is not allowed to climb tree so her brother has to pluck mangoes from the tree. | 228 | 30 | 198 | S | 87% |
| (4) Sohan stays hungry till his mother returns from office as she only would serve him food. | 218 | 19 | 199 | S | 91% |
| (5) Without accompanied by Komal's father, her mother does not go to bazaar because he only can take her out. | 212 | 18 | 196 | S | 92% |

Percentage of correct responses in the above table reflects a clear awareness among the participants regarding correct or desirable notions of gender and gendered division of labour. The first statement is about 'childhood' and about 1 in 3 respondents appear to feel that mothers are 'natural' care-givers to very young children and giving food to young children or babies is their natural duty. Response to the second statement gives some inclination that it probably has some bearing on the language used to phrase the question. During the FGDs, all respondents at all sites unanimously said that women only give birth to children as nature (*kudarat*) has made them capable of it. So giving birth was a natural job of women. It later occurred to us that the word work or task (*kam*) used in the question may have confused some of the respondents. During FGDs, not only that the respondents talked about gendered notions of division of labour, but some of them went on challenging them. A group of respondents began saying that look, this world is for males so they have piled all work that requires hard labour on women (*are yah to duniya hi mardo ki hai, to unhone sare mehanatwale kam aurto par madh diye*).

The following graph represents Table 3 in a clearer manner.

Graph 1 - Percentage of respondents correctly distinguishing between 'natural' and 'social' gender



3.3.2 Me and my body:

It appears that components of **Saath Saath** curriculum like creating awareness about feminine self, feminine body, ownership of the feminine body, health during menstruation and breaking taboos related to it had great influence on girls and women who went through the programme. Our data shows that scientific reasons for menstrual cycle have reached better to majority of the participants compared to ideas like a woman's right to her own body. It may be possible that components like menstruation were taken more seriously by participants as well as trainers as it is a lived experience and is directly related to health and hygiene. In comparison, the idea of ownership of one's own body remains a little abstract in nature. 182 out of 285 responses to the question related to menstruation clearly say that menstruation is natural, and therefore considering it as a taboo or regarding the female body impure or radiating during menstruation is incorrect. We see that two thirds of the respondents have clearly considered menstruation as a part of their being in their written responses.

Box 1 It was remarkable that young girls and women showed openness while discussing about menstruation and changes in their body after attaining puberty etc. As a male, an outsider and a complete stranger to them, I was slightly apprehensive about what kind of responses I would get from them. In addition to that I had some idea about restrictions on expression that women in this area usually experience right from their childhood. The point here was not merely talking to a stranger male (*gair mard*) but talking freely about puberty and menstruation. But right from the first to the last site of my visit, I did not meet with any hesitation on their part in discussing this 'private' aspect of their experience. Many girls could easily tell me about the post-puberty changes in the male body too. Their tone, use of words and ease of expression supported not only their knowledge but also confidence. It was clear to me that the respondents considered the issue to be a part of nature, without any taboo.

Many of the respondents, including the members of SSK, told us similar stories of how they 'broke the tradition' of staying away from eatables like pickle and *papad* etc., during menstruation. When they were convinced about the naturalness of the monthly cycle, many of them adventured to touch a pickle jar or a container of *papad* and proved to their family members that nothing gets spoiled due to the touch, even after 6 months of 'breaking' the tradition.

The tool developed for gathering written responses included a question that asked participants to choose a reason to prevent any man from touching a girl/woman without her consent. Only 128 out of 385 responses (considering multiple choices), i.e. only one third of the responses chosen, matched the desirable option which stated that ownership of a woman's body lies solely with her. Almost equal number of responses opted for the alternate explanation that there is a connection between undesirable touch and a woman's honour (*ijjat*). Looking a little deeper, if the data of girls and women is considered separately in connection with this question, women appear to show more awareness than girls (~50% desirable response) about ownership of their body. 15 % responses related undesirable touch as leading to pregnancy and equal number of responses favoured the answer that a father or a brother would feel bad about such a touch to a woman's body which indirectly implied that resisting an unwanted touch is not for a woman's personal good but for good of male members in family.

Though most of the respondents understand the naturalness of menstruation cycle and of correspondent physical changes occurring in a growing girl they appear to subscribe to patriarchal notions like women's honour when it comes to ownership of one's body. Due to this dichotomy, it would not be entirely correct to conclude that respondents are not aware of their right over their own body. We also need to consider the fact that the regional social milieu is hostile towards a free life for the feminine gender with patriarchal practices like *sati*¹¹ being attempted¹² and respected¹³ even today. Social notions about women and their well being still connect acts of physical violence against women

¹¹ The age-old heinous practice continuing under the name of tradition subjects married women to death by burning alive on the pyre of their dead husbands.

¹² A key respondent told us that a case of attempted Sati was reported from a village in Lalitpur 3 years ago.

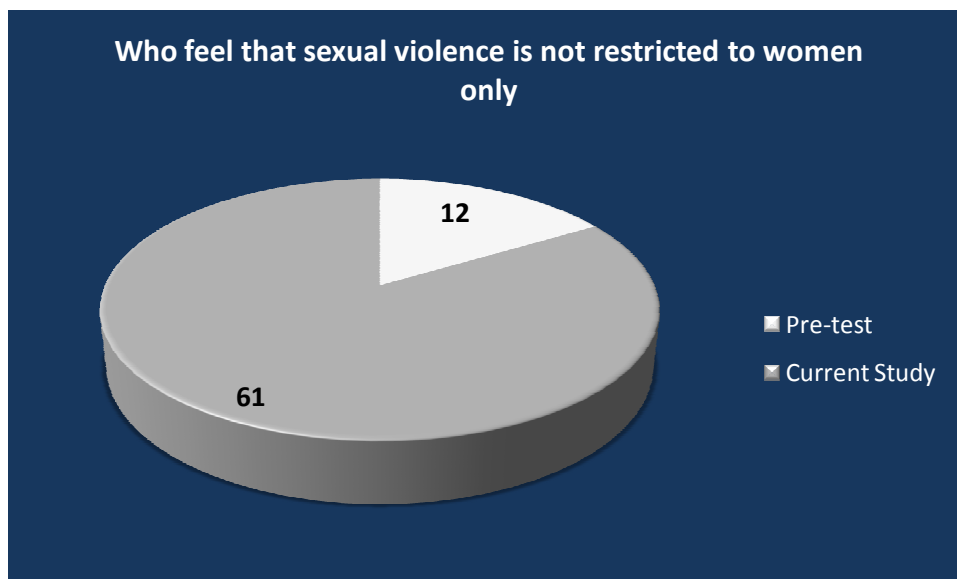
¹³ There are a few temples of *sati mata* in this region where idols commemorating *satis* of past are regularly worshiped.

like molestation and/or rape as stigmatizing honour of the family, community and caste. It is not always easy to disregard or do away with local patriarchal practices. It needs courage, support systems and confrontation with severe domestic violence, if attempted to do so.

3.3.3 Sexual Harassment:

AAP conducted a pre-test at the beginning of the programme. Three questions from the pre-test questionnaire were included in the present set of response questions to verify any change that may have possibly occurred, and we did find some. One of the questions attempted to know respondents' views about who can possibly be vulnerable to sexual harassment. About 12% of the pre-test responses suggested that any person of whatsoever age can fall prey to sexual harassment. Compared with this our field data shows that about 61% of the responses say that sexual harassment can victimise anyone, not necessarily girls or women. Following graph clearly represents this data.

Graph 2 - Who is victimised by sexual harassment?



During the FGD too, a few respondents clearly said that boys may also become a victim (*shikar*) of men with bad intent (*buri nazar vale log*). This reflects on **Saath Saath's** outlook that does not perceive gender to be merely a feminine concern and refrains from constructing binary opposition between women and men. Despite the social fact that majority of reported instances happen to be of harassment of girls or women, a sensitive and balanced approach to sexual harassment or sexual violence would never consider it to be limited to the female population. It is therefore important to note that more than half of the **Saath Saath** participants are positively sensitized towards this issue.

A part of the gender sensitization of the respondents is their awareness and readiness to not only be aware but to openly talk about sexual harassment. This was revealed when they readily came up with several ideas like dialing 100 for complaining to police (34%), reporting it to parents (25%), talking to the men involved and beating them up if needed (19%), fighting back courageously (13%), seeking help of

teachers and peers (5%) if they enter into an imagined situation of eve teasing. Importantly, none of the respondents connected harassment to either women's ill fate or something that girls and women ought to live with. Their imagined and experienced ways of resistance differed as we understood them, but they showed a strong unanimity over resisting and retaliating in different possible ways.

3.3.4 Food, nutrition and Girls:

One of the first stories in SS handbook tells about a girl called Maya and discriminatory practices she routinely faces in comparison with her brother. We found that discussion after role playing this story is one of the most popular activities among all respondents from all sites of field work. During FGDs also almost all respondents appreciated this story for having a strong connect with their own lived experiences. Discrimination in distribution of food, quality and quantity wise, is a common experience for the respondents in their domestic sphere while male members of the family receive all the priority. The consequence is visible in the stunted growth of several native girls. We understood that it is not always the question of availability of adequate food but the belief that women should eat less than men to look feminine (*mardo jaisi na dikhe*, to put it in words of a respondent). If they are not personally submitted to the practice their mothers, grand-mothers and some of their friends are known to have faced it as a part of 'tradition'. Exposure and freedom of expression received during **Saath Saath** programmes along with other complementary activities of SSK which aimed at creating awareness about food, health and nutrition as well as dietary needs of women during pregnancy, the participants are now more vocal about such discrimination and occasionally assert food as their right. Response to a written question provides the proof. About 40% of girls as well as women feel (that is to say 127 among 320¹⁴ responses from the girls' group and 13 among 32 responses from among the women's group) that giving inadequate food to girls constitutes an important form of gender discrimination (*bhedbhaav ka tarika*). It is difficult for us to decide whether the response occurred due to clearly perceived relation between food and physical growth or because of perceiving the practice merely as discriminatory. We would regard the fact that more and more girls and women voiced this concern as a promising development.

3.3.5 Play and Gender Stereotypes:

Another aspect of gender awareness undertaken by the present study was to explore their understanding of gendered nature of play and the kind of space made available to girls if they want to play. Girls in India are generally prohibited from playing outdoor games or sports once they attain puberty. From the responses we gathered to questions related to their experience about games, sports or simply playing, majority of the respondents stated that after they 'grow up', they are not allowed to play out in open, and on play grounds. If at all they are allowed to occasionally, they are not allowed to play with boys. There were a few exceptions to this rule. Some girls of the age of 16-17 who live in comparatively urban milieu like the Mehroni town, are free to play on ground, even with boys. Talking about sports, many of the respondents mentioned a recently released and popular Hindi film *Dangal* (2016) that depicts success stories of two of India's ace wrestler sisters, Gita and Babita Fogat who have bagged many medals in various international matches. They also expressed their view that discouraging

¹⁴ Some of the questions were such that respondents could choose more than one options. Thus in some cases, number of responses is more than number of respondents.

social attitude towards girls' playing in fact is depriving India of some international medals in sports. While none of them connected playing on ground to physical fitness, many thought that it was a great recreational activity needed for girls as they are subjected to so much of work at home as well as in the fields.

We asked them a few questions to probe possible reasons for restricting girls from playing. More than half of the respondents pointed out that adult girls are not allowed to play because their need of food will increase after playing. The practice of underfeeding girls was sadly connected to restrictions on their playing in open. Some of the respondents also connected restriction to the fear that girls may grow very tall or look boyish if they keep on playing (*agar jyada khel kud karegi to ladako jaisi pahalavan lagegi*).

The study also explored kind of choices respondents would make if they were to think of choosing some gift for a young child. The options provided deliberately listed some stereotyped choices, for instance doll for a girl or gun for a boy. We found majority of the written responses (about 53%) and also their discussion in the FGDs to be in favour of considering the liking of the child than following any stereotyped and readymade choice. It may follow from such choices that the women may be better equipped for gender sensitivity.

3.3.6 Education and Empowerment:

In relating empowerment to individual choices, girl respondents thought of various choices like wearing clothes and eating food of one's choice, getting opportunities to work as per one's choice, etc., but getting education received priority in their reflection. Coincidentally, majority of the respondents in this group are school going girls. At least at two of the field sites, girl respondents related education very clearly to every aspect of individual empowerment. They stated explicitly that if one is well educated then the world is a better place to live in (*padhai likhai achchee ho to duniya hai behatar, nahi to yah hai badtar*). During one of the FGDs, two of the girls asked me a very pertinent question - "Brother, can you do something so that every village gets a college at least up to a level of graduation or 15 grades? If a school or college is away from home, who will send girls to faraway places?" (*Bhaiyya, kya aap aisa kuchh kar sakate hai jisase har gaanv me kam se kam 15 tak kolej ho. skool ya kolej ghar se door hoga to ladakiyon ko kaun bhejega?*) Many of the respondents also credited education for opening an opportunity for them to become an outlier, else they would simply be part of the crowd (*bhid ka hissa*).

Box 2 - Roshni Ahirwar - An empowered outlier

Roshni, 17 is in grade 12 and studies in a school in Mehroni. She comes from a village which lies about 10 km from Mehroni but given the condition of roads, it takes her at least an hour to reach the school by any vehicle. Three years ago, when Roshni started attending activities of SSK and later got exposure to **Saath Saath**, she could confront her parents to stop the marriage of her elder brother who was studying in class 11 then. She had the courage to do so as she could clearly see that her brother's marriage would soon be followed by her own marriage. She convinced her parents and pleaded with them that both the siblings be given some opportunity to complete their education. With Roshni's persuasion, her parents agreed and postponed her brother's marriage for a year. Next year, Roshni again entered into a debate with her father and forced him to postpone her brother's marriage further. And now both of them learn in Mehroni. Her brother is a student of B Sc course and its decided in the family that he would not be married till he finishes his education. She also is determined to complete graduation ("*Ab mai aur bhaiyya dono yahan meharoni me padhate hai. Bhaiyya ab B. Sc. padh rahe hai. Ab unaki padhai puri hone tak mummy-papa unaki shadi nahi karenge, aur mai bhi kam se kam 15 tak padhungi*", she states.). When asked about such unusual, unheard of thing (*ulti ganga*) where a sister coming to rescue of brother, Roshni casually says, "*Jaruri thodi hai ki bhaiyya hamesha bahan ki madad karenge. Agar aap ladaki ko sabala nari manate hai to woh apni aur dusare kisi ki bhi madad kar sakati hai na?*" (Is it always necessary that only brothers should help sisters? If you consider a girl to be empowered, won't she help herself and others too?) Discussing her accomplishment with Roshni it becomes clear that she owes her awareness about gender equality, her sense of an empowerment and spirit of assertion of one's rights, mainly to **Saath Saath**. She specifically talks about the revelation she had when she learnt about family being the first site of gender discrimination. Although she did not face discrimination so much in her own family, the usual conditions of many of her friends along with some of *parampara* and *rivaaj* (tradition and customs) observed in her village confirm that it is the family first that trains women in accepting gender discrimination. Roshni asks, "*Seshan me did jo padhati hai, woh bhi to yahi chahati hai na ki hum apni paristhiti ko samajh kar use badalne ki koshish kare?*" (Whatever we are taught during **Saath Saath** sessions, doesn't our teacher in the centre expect us to understand our situation and strive to change it?) Recalling the last session of **Saath Saath** she says, "*Ham bdalenge tabhi to jag badalega*" (The world will change only when we change ourselves).

Nevertheless, it is interesting that very few respondents from groups of women see education as an explicit way to empowerment. Only 2 out of 19 valid responses from these groups i. e. just above 5% responses linked education to women's empowerment. It may be because many of them are hardly educated and perhaps their experience of life teaches them that there is no relation between schools education and worldly wisdom (*skool ki padhai aur duniyadari ki samaj me koi nata nahi hota*). It may also be because they consider that the door of formal education is closed for them forever.

3.3.7 Understanding about women's position in society:

The curriculum of **Saath Saath** engages participants on issues related to representation and construction of womanhood and girlhood in real life as well as in various types of media and cultural productions. Questions related to image of women, to a woman's space in the home or outside home, and construction of particular images by media, were responded in the right spirit by both the groups. The observations are captured in the table below.

Table 5 - Responses related to women's image and position in society

| Expected Response | No. of Responses | Percentage of responses |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Society tends to portray women as obedient and well-behaved (so that their behaviour can be controlled). | 134 | 46% |
| Women's advices matter more in domestic decisions than anything else. | 112 | 51% |
| Domestic chore is either not considered as work or considered as 'woman's work'. | 172 | 80% |
| Images in the media are exaggerated and are geared to create desire. | 142 | 56% |

While the younger and relatively more educated respondents from places closer to block headquarters emphasized that women do have freedom to exercise their choices and have opportunity to give their opinion, elder women as well as girls coming from relatively remote locations had opposite experiences to share. Some of these girls and women experienced domestic repression when they attempted to exercise their choice or expected male members to help in domestic chores.

3.3.8 Gendered labour:

Regarding gendered nature of work and labour we wanted to know from our respondents if women's work count and whether it counts in terms of money and whether it is valued equally in remuneration.

Many felt that working in fields owned by others as *dehadi majdoor* (daily wage labourer) or other jobs like stitching clothes for others may earn them money. 86% respondents among girls' group and 79% among women's group expressed that women get paid in terms of money only for working outside their domestic sphere. But there was no unanimity among them regarding ownership of money. Relatively elder girls or elderly women with more experience of handling money at domestic level stated that women's work is not paid. Some of the respondents were concerned not only about their work not being paid at all but also about the fact that it was not even noticed or acknowledged. One of the respondents portrayed this lose-lose situation in the following words - "*Aurat ko kam ka jas nahi milata.*" Majority of those respondents who acknowledged that women are paid for their non-domestic work also shared their experience that even when they get money, it finally goes in the hands of men in the family. Many of the respondents wished that women should be able to spend some money according to their choice, but many also felt that such a situation is far from reality. In this discussion, a group of girls who were part of computer learning programme of SSK was the most vocal. They enlisted different types of work they are required to do in the domestic set-up and compared them to what their

brothers of the same age group do on daily basis. Many of them could relate this division of labour to exploitative nature of traditions in the world of men (*mardo ki duniya*). We noted that the respondents were interestingly not blaming boys or men for not doing domestic work but were critical of the traditional patriarchal system. They sensitively registered that even if some boys come forward to work in homes, they are afraid of their peers (males and females both) who may abuse them. One of the outspoken respondents even brought it to everybody's notice that if boys share domestic work, onlookers would not consider them to be 'potent men'. In such circumstances, what can these poor guys do? (*agar ladake ghar ka kam karate hai to baki log unako mard nahi samajhate, fir voh bechare kya karenge?*)

As a researcher analysing impact of AAP's intervention, my overall impression is that a little below two thirds of the respondents show fair awareness about meanings and manifestations of gender differences, and about sites of gender difference ranging from family to school to places of public utility. These respondents attribute their awareness about important personal aspects like menstruation and social aspects like relation between education and empowerment, to the inputs received from **Saath Saath** at SSK centers. The programme has helped them become knowledgeable with required courage to break some traditional practices like not touching pickles during menstruation period. Though it may sound a minor act of protest but given the cultural context and the regional hold of patriarchal tradition or the level of internalisation of patriarchy, it appears an important act of resistance. Many of the young girls are found to aspire for higher education. There are courageous examples of girls stopping their own child-marriages or the ones happening in their neighbourhood. One finds absolute unanimity about the age of marriage being minimum 18 years and also about resisting any attempt to marry off anyone, be it a girl or a boy, before 18 years of age. One of the respondents captured the importance of **Saath Saath** in the following words - "*Ladki hone ki wajah se jo bhi bardasht karana padata hai, use ham badalana to chahate the. Magar kya karenge kuchchh samajh me nahee aata tha. Saath Saath me jo path padhe, jin ladakiyon ki kahaniya suni to ab lagata hai ki ham be apane liye kuch kar sakate hai aur aage badh sakate hai.*" (I wanted to change the situation one faces for being a girl. But I could not understand what I can do. The lessons that we learnt in **Saath Saath**, the stories we listened to, made me think that I can do something for myself and move ahead, make progress and prosper.)

If such changes in attitude, in the level of pro-activeness and courage were seen among the learner, what happened to the agents who actively conveyed gender ideas to all the girls in and through their centers? When one 'teaches' ideas like gender from the perspective of non-negotiable equality, does the messenger also get 'affected' by these ideas? I examine these queries in the next session and thereby attempt to capture ways of teachers and supervisors from SSK used to respond to **Saath Saath** at personal as well as social level.

3.2 Saath Saath is implemented through SSK's network of centers, teachers and supervisors. To explore changes brought out by SSK, the two groups of teachers and supervisors who happen to be real change-makers, are required to be studied. The impact study naturally wanted to seek their views on this programme and to know any changes these agents of change may have themselves undergone. The following discussion is based on a FGD with a group of 14 supervisors / center coordinators and on the

written responses from 22 members of SSK, including the 14 supervisors. Although the following points emerge from responses given by both groups, I observed that the supervisors were more conversant and focused in discussion on gender, and were more expressive compared to the teachers.

* The respondents showed fair understanding of differences between sex and gender. Some of them did not hesitate while talking about difference in the genital organs of men and women. According to them, barring this basic natural difference between the sexes, other aspects are socially constructed. Their vision appeared clear from responses such as this: One may find different manifestations of gender difference in different places, but gender discrimination is all pervading (*alag alag jagaho me ling bhed ke alag alag tarike paye jate hai, lekin sabhi agah kisi na kisi rup me ling bhed hota hai*).

* On being asked how one understands that a girl/woman is discriminated against a boy/man due to gender borne prejudices, many respondents displayed clear perception. They explicated some ways in which gender base discrimination can be identified: mourning the birth of a girl child, pushing all domestic chores to only women, punishing women for giving consecutive birth to girls, subjugating women to sexual harassment, restricting girls and women from playing games and sports of their choice or from wearing clothes of their choice, expecting girls to be obedient from an early age, either not supporting or actively hindering girls' education, expecting a woman to carry various markers of culture (*chudi, bindi, sindoor*) on her body, serving different type and quantity of food to girls, etc. The respondent did not forget to mention that the list can only be representative and not exhaustive.

* Meanings of an 'empowered' woman differ for different people. As a group, the respondents felt that a girl/woman can be called as empowered if she has a right to exercise her choice. The choice could pertain to (i) getting education of one's choice (ii) having food one desires (iii) having entertainment according to one's taste (iv) having free time and deciding the way to spend it (v) wearing clothes that are felt suitable instead of following expectations (vi) deciding the age and time of individual marriage (vii) being financially independent (viii) exercising individual human rights (*insano ke hak, ham bhi to insan hai*), etc. It is important to note that many of the respondents have undergone a strong personal struggle to be in the SSK since their families, relatives or communities could not bear women to go out like men do (*mardo jaise*).

Box 3 - Struggle for equality and slow change!

Some of the respondents reported that they had to face severe physical violence at the hands of their husbands and in-laws. But they retaliated by beating up husbands at times or abusing the in-laws. Violating customs like not touching pickle or papad during menstruation had also invited abuse and physical violence for some of them, but with support from SSK and enlightened by the sessions of **Saath Saath**, they walked the path of equality with conviction and free mind (*khula man*). A teacher from Bamauri Bahadursingh center narrated how it was not acceptable to the elderly men (*bujurg mard*) from her village to see her sitting on chair next to men and speaking publicly. She resisted this unwanted demand of compliance silently but firmly and told them that she would continue with her work because it was important, necessary, good and a part of her personality. Such events are far from being one-time event. Members of SSK constantly negotiate and struggle with age-old patriarchal customary demands. They do not always step into direct confrontation but rather try to handle issues in tactful manner. As one of the respondents said, "change will be slow, and though we ought to try, every time it need not boil down to breaking heads" (*badalav to dhire dhire aayega. koshish karo lekin har bar sar thodane-tudavane ki jarurat nahi*).

- * All respondents find **Saath Saath** to be a very useful programme particularly because it is well structured and provides them with opportunity and guidance to discuss taboos. They unanimously stated that genital organs of women and men, menstruation cycle and the care to be taken during that period are some of the major taboo issues in their area. **Saath Saath** gave them an opportunity first to understand these aspects of life and then to openly discuss with young girls and women. Many of them earlier bore many superstitions (*andhvishtvas*) related to menstrual cycle. **Saath Saath** helped them overcome those. It is reported that the programme also helped them develop a comprehensive understanding (*sajha samaj*) of gender and ideas about how to overcome the socially constructed differences.
- * It is also reported that **Saath Saath** has been instrumental in promoting participation of girls and women to (i) overcome taboo and worries related to menstruation (ii) talk to parents about so called 'confidential' things (iii) resist attempts of early marriage (iv) express clearly a will to continue formal education (v) speak with courage in public meetings (vi) raise individual and collective voice against eve teasing or sexual harassment (vii) confront discriminatory treatment given in family (viii) continue education in case it was discontinued due to some reason (ix) become aware of basic rights (x) raise 'uncomfortable' questions. Although these points are selected randomly and do not necessarily form a feature of all participants in all the centers, it is important to note that these changes are attributed to **Saath Saath** and to its structured curriculum.

Thus, the programme does give an opportunity to the local women of systematic thinking about gender and issues related to it. Many of the respondents said that they too were previous perpetrators of discrimination at different level, at home or in community particularly if one comes from upper caste.

But their association with ***Saath Saath*** has opened an opportunity to retrospect their own practices. Such self-interrogation left them with no choice but to change their behaviour. What needs to be registered here is that these small but important changes are not imposed externally or are not exhibited under pressure but are shown as an informed, conscious choice on the part of the participants.

4. Conclusion and Way Forward

The main objective of **Saath Saath** is to achieve gender equity and equality through sensitisation of both the sexes, the girls/women and the boys/men. The programme also aims at strengthening girls and women so as they develop understanding of and resistance to traditional patriarchal systems. It hopes to attain this by creating awareness about individual rights and by unpacking social construction of gender as it comes across in various everyday experiences. The present study strived to understand the nature and level of implementation of a systematically created **Saath Saath** curriculum. It also attempted to find out whether the programme created any difference in the respective lives of its participants. From analysis of the data that is collected through mixed methods, one can arrive at some of the following important conclusions. They are interspersed with subsequent suggestions for taking such a programme forward in a more effective manner.

- The collected empirical data shows that more than 80% of the respondents who participated in the study have developed a clear and nuanced understanding of the difference between 'natural' and 'social' aspects related to gender construction and gender differences. A fair level of understanding about the gendered nature of labour is also exhibited. According to what the majority of respondents have expressed in the present study, **Saath Saath** has succeeded in creating a clearer understanding of how gender is constructed socially.
- Many participants have shown substantial awareness about patterns of gender discrimination in daily practices. They spoke about the amount of food given to boys vis-a-vis that given to girls, the nature and choices of outdoor and indoor games and sports for girls versus those for the boys, higher economic and social value associated with a man's work compared with a woman's work, etc. Such common things were clearly brought out as the markers of gender based discrimination. The fact that family is an important site of discrimination seems to have reached a large number of participants, and a few of them indeed showed readiness about discussing as well as combating it.
- One of the major achievements of **Saath Saath** can be spotted in the awareness about menstrual cycle, health and hygiene during menstruation. The programme not only created this awareness but also strengthened participants mentally to overcome many widespread socio-cultural taboos related to menstruation. Through their actions of cooking, and touching the home made pickle and papad during the menstruation period, the participant girls and women have learnt to test traditional beliefs in the framework of science. They can be perceived as a few ways of resisting patriarchal practices.
- The programme has also helped participants in overcoming traditional notions of impurity associated with female body. It is seen that two participants among every three respondents agree with 'naturalness' of menstrual cycle and give no importance to notions of purity and/or pollution associated with the female body.
- This research also perceived a comfortable level of ease on the part of participating girls and women while discussing biological differences between female and male bodies. This should be called a remarkable achievement as it is uncommon in the region, even so on national level.

Moreover, some of the participants were also found to be sensitively aware about the third gender that questions the usual bipartite division of gender.

- Although a clear awareness about physical processes like menstruation is visible among participants in the programme, the notion of individual right over one's body is not clearly seen. Many of the respondents prioritised protection of girls from undesirable touch not as their right over their bodies but as a part of family honour, under which the act would bring shame to male members of family. Even though content of **Saath Saath** focuses on body and woman's right over her body in subtle and direct ways, the social fabric of the site where SSK is implementing **Saath Saath** makes its reach difficult. It is important to note that Indian public discourse is quite narrow-minded about woman's right over her body. This intolerance is further aggravated at places like Lalitpur (site of SSK's work) where medieval patriarchal traditions restrict growth of progressive outlook on such issues.
- Even though many of the participants did not exhibit explicit awareness of individual right over one's body, majority of them did show awareness about protecting one's body and self from being subjected to any act of sexual harassment like 'eve teasing'. Respondents suggested various ways of fighting back sexual harassment. 13% of them suggested complaining to police, parents, teachers or peers (about 64%) and 13% of them believed in fighting back courageously. 1 among every 5 respondents mentioned that beating up men perpetrating sexual violence would be a correct way of protecting the victims, it would as well teach lessons to the perpetrators. It may sound harsh or 'violent' to an external viewer, but we need to remember that physical punishment is seen as an important way of resolving conflict in the regional social milieu of many respondents.
- It is significant that more than 60% of the respondents are aware of the fact that not only girls and/or women but anybody can become a victim of sexual harassment. This is a significant increase as only 12% of the participants showed this awareness before **Saath Saath** commenced. Thus 5 in 8 participants as compared to 1 in 8 participants, now seem to be more sensitised about the idea that sexual harassment has no bearing on a specific gender, age, style of wearing clothes or time girls/women spend outside their domestic or 'safe spaces'. Thus, more than half of the participants are positively sensitised now towards sexual harassment.
- Malnourishment of girls as an effect of gender based discrimination was an important concern expressed by some participants in the study. Most (a little above 50%) of the participants connected the difference in food given to girls and boys to the social restriction on the girls choices of outdoor games or sports. When asked about the kind of gift to be chosen for a male and a female child, majority of respondents showed inclination towards choosing according to the child's liking than following any stereotypical choice.
- A clear difference was visible between responses by married and unmarried respondents regarding the relation between education and women's empowerment. Very few of the married respondents related education to empowerment while majority of the unmarried participants expressed that education is the basis of women's empowerment and self-reliance. It seems that the particular input by **Saath Saath** curriculum has successfully created impact on ideas of education of young girls compared to those of adult, married women/girls. The curriculum has

certainly added a strong impetus to young girls' desire about education. It was observed that adult participants were largely using their own experience about education in the particular discussion rather than what was discussed earlier during their **Saath Saath** sessions. Given the fact that majority of married respondents had left their schooling long back, lack of desire for education among them may also be due to personal experiences. Comparatively, younger participants (more than 90% of respondents in this study) showed clear impression of **Saath Saath** intervention. Characters like Maya (which is a story in **Saath Saath** curriculum) was mentioned by almost all participants and many young girls expressed their determination for continuing education and completing higher education in the context of Maya's story. It should also be remembered that majority of unmarried respondents were pursuing formal education at the time of this study.

- Regarding women's work, labour and its value, it was observed that more than 80% of all the respondents opined that only the outdoor work of women is paid and not the domestic work. From this, it is clear that **Saath Saath** has created desirable awareness among them regarding the issue of valuing women's work.
- Members of SSK who implemented **Saath Saath** in partnership with AAP clearly mentioned that this programme has strengthened their understanding of gender and its operational indicators. Although SSK's work on gender has a special focus on child marriage, the structured and systematic nature of **Saath Saath** curriculum appears to have helped them to develop a deeper understanding of patterns of gender operation and their social implications, and has helped them gather courage to break some of the patriarchal practices in domestic and other surroundings. When one considers the fact that SSK has a long standing experience in the field and has worked in the area of gender justice, equality and education in partnership with some of India's well-known organisations, their response about changes in their understanding due to **Saath Saath** becomes particularly significant.
- Even though participants in the programme as well as the members of SSK who implemented it have explicitly credited **Saath Saath** for helping them develop a better understanding of gender and its role in shaping individual as well as collective identities, the depth and reach of their respective understandings vary a lot. The complexity is similar to the one observed among members of AAP. It is therefore advisable for AAP and its partner organisations to take special efforts to work on and introspect the understanding of gender among all of its members, so that their programmes achieve better results in future. In this way, persons who would have to handle several open ended questions and interpretative discussions would be equipped better.
- Data provided by AAP from its field visits shows that implementation of **Saath Saath** curriculum is not as structured as its organisation is. For example, by the end of August 2016, Gidoniya center completed 7 sessions, Bamhori center completed 5 sessions and centers like Satvasa, Bhadaura etc. had completed only 2 sessions of **Saath Saath**¹⁵ curriculum. Though genuine local problems are required to be considered and the starting points may possibly vary for different centers¹⁶, a system needs to be developed that would check the inter-center imbalance in

¹⁵ Field notes dated 27th August 2016 by Ms. Suvarna of AAP.

¹⁶ From interview of Ms. Meena and Ms. Kanija by the author of report. Interview dated 9th September 2017.

implementation and may lead to expectations of a more uniform impact of **Saath Saath** programme. It is clear that implementation partner, SSK in this case, will have to share larger responsibility for creating such a balance. It is the partner agency who is better aware of local situations and can anticipate possible hurdles and design appropriate strategies for effective implementation.

- Teachers and supervisors in most of the centers of SSK that were visited during the field work, could not provide exact details about number of sessions conducted and number of attendants in each of those sessions. It was observed that AAP provided the partner with some formats of tracking and maintaining data in the context of **Saath Saath**. Capturing such data within framework of AAP by SSK would have facilitated provision of specific need based inputs to certain centers 'lagging' behind the prescribed schedule of **Saath Saath** sessions or having difficulties in dealing with particular concepts. This gap may be due to varied understanding about use of data by the two partners. It is therefore advisable that AAP as a resource agency should insist on certain requirements of data capture from field of implementation and if required, raise additional resource for this purpose.
- Manual of **Saath Saath** is written in standard Hindi language. Many of the respondents from SSK found that the language was a little difficult to understand given the colloquial Bundelkhandi language. Nevertheless, they unanimously appreciated the value of structured curriculum. It is obvious that a manual would be made available in standard variety of a language to look for a wider reach of the same, which is Hindi in this case, yet local variations ought to be incorporated as and when possible for better dissemination of the programme. Members of AAP appropriately acknowledge that "there has to be a prototype, but has to be 're-done' or adapted while conducting the programme on field."¹⁷ For generating 'adaptable' manuals, an organisation would obviously require more resources in terms of time, finance and human resources, but there are more chances that quality of implementation and transaction would definitely enhance. As one appreciates the situation that any resource agency like AAP cannot have expertise for adapting its prototype into a given local milieu and variety of language, onus of such adaptation lies more on partners. If a partner, SSK in this case, is also unable to adapt it to suit local needs due to various reasons including specific competencies needed in curriculum development, it may consider taking special help for this purpose.

To summarise, **Saath Saath** proves to be an useful programme for creating sense of equality among young girls and women coming from a significantly 'backward' area. It importantly unpacks the patterns of gender discrimination for them. The structured nature of **Saath Saath** curriculum could potentially create opportunities for participants to think about gender in a systematic manner. It also could show them ways of resisting at individual and collective levels. Although not many instances of direct confrontation regarding gender discrimination may be counted in case of the participants, the programme has certainly added momentum to their determination for asserting their rights. It can be seen that compared to the married counterparts, the unmarried, school-going participants have been

¹⁷ From Field notes. Interview dated 15th September 2017 with Ms. Simantini Dhuru by the author of report.

benefited more by **Saath Saath**. This may be also because they foresee a better future in education; and supported by **Saath Saath** inputs, have learnt to assert their right of pursuing education as well.

Programmes like **Saath Saath** are highly desirable in a society that struggles with multiple kinds and levels of incessant gender discrimination. Since **Saath Saath** is a well structured programme with certain defined rubric of conceptual development, its implementation should be taken care of for equally structured and systematic manner, so as to realise aims of the programme to their fullest extent.

Annexure I - Tools Used in the Study for Capturing Data

Tool 1 - Questionnaire for written responses by Participants in SSK at Lalitpur

प्रश्न १ से प्रश्न १३ तक हर सवाल के साथ पांच जवाब दिये हैं। इनमें से सही जबाब पर ✓ निशान लगाईए। ध्यान रहे, किसी भी सवाल के एक से ज्यादा जवाब सही हो सकते हैं।

प्रश्न १. लिंगभेद का मतलब क्या है?

१. स्त्री पुरुष के बीच शारीरिक भिन्नता ()
२. समाज ने बनाये हुये फर्क ()
३. स्त्री पुरुष भेदभाव ()
४. पुरुष के मुकाबले स्त्री को बलवान मानना ()
५. उपरोक्त में से कोई भी नहीं () (2 & 3 are very similar. Can you give another option for 3? -

प्रश्न २. आम तौर पर औरतो का चित्रण समाज में कैसे होता है?

१. आज्ञाकारी और सुशील ()
२. पैसे कमाकर घर की आमदनी में हाथ बंटानेवाली ()
३. औरों से हट कर कुछ नया कर दिखानेवाली ()
४. उपरोक्त सभी पर्याय सही हैं। ()
५. इसके बारे में कुछ कहा नहीं जा सकता। ()

प्रश्न ३. लैंगिक छेड़छाड़ का शिकार कौन होता है?

१. किशोरावस्था की लडकियां ()
२. किशोरावस्था के लडके ()
३. जवान लडके
४. जवान लडकियां ()
५. लैंगिक छेड़छाड़ का शिकार कोई भी हो सकता है। ()

प्रश्न ४. नीचे दिये गये कौनसे कामों के लिए औरतों को अपने घर में पैसे मिलते हैं?

१. खेत में मजदूरी करना ()
२. दर्जी की दुकान में कपडे सिलना ()
३. घर में खाना बनाना ()
४. बच्चों को संभालाना, बडा करना ()
५. इन सभी कामों के लिये पैसा मिलता है। ()

प्रश्न ५. अगर आप से किसीने एक छोटी लडकी और एक छोटे लडके के लिये भेंट लाने को कहा तो आप क्या लायेगी?

१. लडकी के लिये गाडी और लडके के लिये गुडिया ()
२. लडकी के लिये गुडिया और लडके के लिये गाडी ()
३. लडकी के लिये बजार से कुछ नहीं और लडके के लिये शर्ट ()
४. दोनोंके लिये समान वस्तु या खिलौना लाना गैर नहीं है। ()
५. बच्चे की पसंद को देखकर खिलौना लायेंगे। ()

प्रश्न ६. आम तौर पर घर के किसी फैसले में मां की सलाह किस बारे में ली जाती है?

१. बच्चों को स्कूल में दाखिल करते समय स्कूल का चयन करना हो तो ()
२. रसोई में कामकाज की कोई चीज (जैसे कुकर, मिक्सर आदि) खरीदते वक्त ()
३. मकान या जमीन खरीदते या बेचते वक्त ()
४. डाक्टर से घर के बुजुर्गों के लिये दवाई लाने में ()
५. उपरोक्त सभी फैसलों में औरत की राय मायने रखती है। ()

प्रश्न ७. आपके घर में एक पती-पत्नी मेहमान बनकर आते हैं तो वह औरत (पत्नी) कहां बैठेगी?

१. चौके-चुल्हे के पास ()
२. बाहर चारपाई पर ()
३. कुर्सीपर, घर के पुरुष एवं औरतों के साथ ()
४. घर की महिलाओं के साथ ()
५. मेहमान तो भगवान का रूप होती है, वह औरत घर में जहां चाहे बैठ सकती है ()

प्रश्न ८. कौनसा खेल खेलने से आपको लगभग बारह-चौदह साल की उम्र के बाद मना किया जाता है?

१. घर के अंदर लडकियोंका अंताक्षरी खेलना ()
२. सिर्फ लडकियों का दौड़ लगाना ()
३. लडके-लडकियोंका एकसाथ दौड़ लगाना ()
४. घर के बाहर किसी के भी साथ गिल्ली डंडा, सायकल, क्रिकेट आदि खेलना ()
५. उपरोक्त सभी जबाब सही हैं ()

प्रश्न ९. आप के पसंदीदा खेल खेलने से मना करनेवाले वैसा क्यों करते हैं?

१. लडकियोंको खेलने की ज़रूरत नहीं है। ()
२. लडकियां खेलेंगी तो काम कौन करेगा? ()
३. खेल खेलनेसे मैं हड्डीकट्टी दिखेंगी। ()
४. खेल खेलनेसे उन्हें ज्यादा भूख लगेगी। ()
५. उपरोक्त सभी वजह सही हैं। ()

प्रश्न १०. नीचे दी गयी बातोंमें से कौनसी बात आपको गलत लगती है?

१. लडकी को साईकिल चलाने देना ()
२. लडके को घर के काम में हाथ बटाने को कहना ()
३. लडके को रोनेसे टोकना ()
४. लडकी को जितनी भूख हो उतना खाना न देना ()
५. छुट्टीवाले दिन छोटे बच्चों को घर की औरतों के भरोसे छोड़कर मर्दों का बाहर भटकना ()

प्रश्न ११. लडकी/औरत की सबलता के मायने आपकी नजरमें क्या है? (All options put together are very confusing - even for me.)

१. भरपूर मेहनत एवं काम करने के मनचाहे अवसर मिलना। ()
२. अपनी पसंद के क्षेत्र में शिक्षा हासिल कर पाना। ()
३. बाहर जाकर कमाई करनेवाली औरतों का घर के काम को सिर्फ अपनी जिम्मेदारी ना समझना। ()
४. अपने ईच्छा के मुताबिक कपडे पहनना, खाना खाना एवं अपनी रुची का काम करना ()
५. उपरोक्त सभी बातें एक लडकी या औरत की सबलता दर्शाती हैं। ()

प्रश्न १२. माहवारी के दौरान देश के कई हिस्सों में लडकियों/औरतों को अलग रखना जाता है, कोई उन्हें छूता नहीं है. ऐसे व्यवहार के बारे में आपकी क्या राय है?

१. माहवारी में अपवित्र खून लडकी के शरीर से बाहर निकलता है सो उन्हें अलग रखना ठीक है। ()
२. माहवारी एक चमत्कार है इसीलिये लडकियों के साथ ऐसा बर्ताव होता है। ()
३. माहवारी में लडकियों के शरीर से अदृश्य किरणें निकलती हैं सो उन्हें दूर रखते हैं। ()
४. माहवारी में औरतों के छुने से बिमारी फैलती है इसलिये उन्हें नहीं छुना चाहिये। ()
५. माहवारी औरत के शरीर का कुदरती हिस्सा है, इसलिये उन्हें अलग नहीं रखना चाहिये. उपरोक्त सभी तर्क गलत हैं। ()

प्रश्न १३. लडकी या औरत के शरीर को उसके मर्जी के बिना अगर कोई मर्द स्पर्श करता है तो उसे रोकना चाहिये क्यूंकी ...

१. इससे लडकी की इज्जत खतरे में पडती है। ()
२. ऐसे अनचाहे स्पर्श से औरते शर्माती है। ()
३. लडकी के शरीरपर संपूर्ण रूप से उसका अपना अधिकार होता है। ()
४. ऐसे स्पर्श से लडकी गर्भवती हो सकती है। ()
५. ऐसे स्पर्श से लडकी के पिता, भाई या पती को बुरा लग सकता है। ()

प्रश्न १४. स्त्रियोंको ज्यादा काम क्यों करना पडता है?

१. वें दुर्भाग्यी होती हैं, या पिछले जनम का पाप होती है। ()
२. उनके घरेलू काम को काम नहीं समझा जाता। ()
३. कुदरत ने मर्दों को घरेलू काम करने के लायक नहीं बनाया है। ()
४. समाज की नजर में घर का काम औरत का काम होता है। ()
५. उपरोक्त सभी जबाब सही है। ()

प्रश्न १५. नीचे कुछ वाक्य दिये हैं। इनमें से जो काम कुदरती फर्क की वजह से हैं, उनके सामने क लिखो और जो काम सामाजिक भेद की वजह से हैं उनके सामने स लिखो।

१. बचपन में मुझे सिर्फ मेरी मां ही खाना खिलाती थी। ()
२. मुझे जनम देने का काम भी मेरी मां को करना पडा था। ()
३. शीला को पेड पर चढना मना है, पेड से आम उतारने का काम उसके भाई को करना पडता है। ()
४. मां के दफ्तर से लौटने तक सोहन को भुखा रहना पडता है क्यूंकी मां आकर उसे परोसती है। ()
५. पापा साथ ना हो तो कोमल की माँ बाजार नहीं जाती क्यूंकी वे ही उन्हें बाहर ले जाते हैं। ()

प्रश्न १६. चार अलग अलग विज्ञापनों में दिखाई गयी औरतों की छवी नीचे दर्शायी गयी है। अपनी पसंदीदा एक छवी के सामने निशान लगाईए। यदी कोई भी छवी पसंद ना हो तो स्पष्ट रूप से सूचित करें।

विज्ञापन १ - एक गोरेपन की क्रीम के विज्ञापन में दिखाया गया है की उस क्रीम के इस्तेमाल के बाद लडकी की शादी तुरंत तय हो जाती है क्यूंकी वह एकदम गोरी चिट्टी दिखती है। ()

विज्ञापन २ - सारे परिवार के सेहत का जिम्मा उठानेवाली एक मां किसी तेल को शुक्रिया कहती है। ()

विज्ञापन ३ - शेविंग क्रीम के विज्ञापन में दिखाया गया है की गोरी, खूबसूरत लडकी के साथ की वजह से एक जवान लडका दस गुंडों को मार गिराता है। ()

विज्ञापन ४ - सर्दी वाली क्रीम की वजह से एक पांच साल की बच्ची की त्वचा सर्दियों के मौसम में भी बिलकुल नरम और मासूम बनी है। ()

या

- उपरोक्त विज्ञापनों में से कोई भी मुझे पसंद नहीं है। ()

प्रश्न १७. उपरोक्त विज्ञापन वाले सवाल में आपने जो भी जवाब चुना है उसकी वजह लिखिये।

प्रश्न १८. स्कूल में जाने-आने के रस्ते पर खडा लडकों का एक गुट हमेशा आपकी छेडखानी करता है। इससे आपको तकलीफ होती है और गुस्सा भी आता है. ऐसे में आप क्या करेगी?

Tool 2 - FGD Guide for participants at Lalitpur

प्रश्न १. लिंगभेद का मतलब क्या है? कौनकौनसी चीजें हमें लिंगभेद से अवगत कराती हैं? कुछ उदाहरण दीजिये.

प्रश्न २. आम तौर पर समाज में स्त्रियों का चित्रण आज्ञाकारी और सुशील, सबकी बात माननेवाली, मिलनसार के रूप में होता है? ऐसे चित्रण की वजह क्या हो सकती है? क्या ऐसा चित्रण सही है?

प्रश्न ३. औरतोंको कौनसे काम के पैसे मिलते हैं? कौनसा काम काम ही नहीं माना जाता? जो औरते 'सिर्फ' गृहिणी होती है, क्या उनके काम का कोई मोल लागाया जा सकता है? कैसे?

प्रश्न ४. हम जब बिलकुल छोटे होते हैं तो लडके और लडकियों के लिये अलग अलग खेल और खिलौने पाये जाते हैं. इसकी वजह क्या हो सकती है?

प्रश्न ५. घरके अहं फैसले पिता या दादा करते हैं. क्या यह फैसले मां या दादी नहीं कर पायेंगी? क्यों? क्या फैसला करने की क्षमता मर्दों में ज्यादा होती है? यदी हां, तो क्यों? यदी नहीं तो इस संदर्भ में औरत और मर्द में इतना फर्क क्यों दिखाई देता है?

प्रश्न ६. आप के पसंदीदा खेल खेलने से या जब चाहे पसंदीदा खाना खाने से या उछलकूद करने से आप को घर में कौन रोकता है? वह लोग ऐसी रोकटोक क्यों लगाते होंगे?

प्रश्न ७. लडके और लडकिया कौनसे काम करेंगे या कौनसे काम नहीं करेंगे इसमें साफ अंतर दिखाई देता है. आपकी राय में यह अंतर क्यों दिखता होगा? इसे कम करने के लिये या मिटाने के लिये आप क्या कर सकती हैं? लडके या मर्द क्या कर सकते हैं?

प्रश्न ८. लडकी / औरत की सबलता के मायने आपकी नजरमें क्या है? कौनसी चीज कर पाने के बाद या हासिल करने के बाद आप अपने आप को सबल मानेगी?

प्रश्न ९. लडकी / औरत का सबल होना और उसकी शिक्षा इसमें क्या ताल्लुक है? क्या हर पढी-लिखी औरत सही मायने में सबल होती है?

प्रश्न १०. आपकी पसंद की कोई भी फिल्म या सिरीयल या विज्ञापन के बारे में बताये जिसमें दर्शायी गयी औरत की छबी आपको पसंद है? वह छबी क्यों पसंद है? फिल्मों, टी.व्ही सिरीयलों या विज्ञापनों में ज्यादातर दिखाई देनेवाली औरत की छबी से क्या आप सहमत हैं? अगर है, तो क्यों? अगर नहीं तो आपको इनसे क्या दिक्कत है?

प्रश्न ११. हाल ही में आप के राज्य के कुछ हिस्सों में अंटी रोमिओ स्कवाड बनाया गया है. क्या आप इसके बारे में जानती हैं? (यदी नहीं तो फेसीलिटेटर उसके बारे में बताये) क्या आपको लगता है की इससे लडकियों की छेडखानी कम होगी? लडकों को लडकियों की छेडखानी से रोकने के लिये और क्या तरीके हो सकते हैं? क्या साथ साथ कार्यक्रम इसमें किसी काम आ सकता है?

प्रश्न १२. आपने चोटी या बाल काटनेवाली औरतों के बारे में सुना होगा. हाल ही में झारखंड में एक औरत तो चोटी काटनेवाली समझकर जान से मार दिया गया. आप इस सब के बारे में क्या राय रखती है?

प्रश्न १३. साथ साथ कार्यक्रम में कौनसी चीज आपको सबसे ज्यादा अच्छी लगती है? क्यों? इस कार्यक्रम की कौनसी चीज आप बदलना चाहेंगी? क्यों?

प्रश्न १४. क्या आप ऐसा कोई वाकिया, किस्सा या अनुभव बता सकती है जिसे आपने साथ साथ कार्यक्रम में एक सीख की तरह पाया और अपनी रोजमर्रा की जिंदगी में इस्तेमाल किया?

प्रश्न १५. लडके और लडकियों में अलग अलग तरीकों से भेदभाव किया जाता है. क्या यह भेद कभी नहीं मिट सकता? यदि इस भेद को मिटाना हो तो आपकी राय में क्या क्या करना संभव है?

Tool 3 - Tool for written responses and FGD by members of SSK at Lalitpur

सूचना: निम्न लिखित सभी सवालों के जबाब संक्षेप में लिखें। (यदि आप bullet point के रूप में जबाब दें तो बेहतर होगा।) किसी सवाल का जबाब आप ना देना चाहे तो स्पष्ट रूप से बतायें।

प्रश्न १. आप के मुताबिक लिंग और लिंगभेद में मुख्य फर्क क्या है? तीन-चार मुख्य मुद्दे लिखें।

प्रश्न २. आप की राय में किसी भी लडकी/महिला के साथ लिंगभेद होने की पहचान कैसे की जा सकती है? तीन-चार अहं मुद्दे बतायें।

प्रश्न ३. क्या इस कार्यक्रम का हिस्सा बनने के बाद लिंगभेद से जुड़ने के आपके काम के तरीके में कोई बदलाव आया है? यदि हां तो उसका कोई उदाहरण दें।

प्रश्न ४. आपकी राय में किन चीजों को 'महिलाओं का सबलीकरण' कहा जा सकता है?

प्रश्न ५. आप की राय में क्या आज भी साथ-साथ जैसे कार्यक्रमों की जरूरत है? क्यों?

प्रश्न ६. साथ-साथ कार्यक्रम के मुख्य उद्देश्य क्या है? इस कार्यक्रम की दो-तीन मुख्य विशेषताएं बताएं।

प्रश्न ७. आप की राय में क्या साथ-साथ में कोई कमियां (limitations) हैं? यदि हां, तो कृपया दर्ज करें।

प्रश्न ८. इस कार्यक्रम की वजह से लडकियों/महिलाओं में दिखाई देनेवाला/वाले मुख्य बदलाव के बारे में संक्षेप में लिखें. अगर कोई बदलाव नहीं पाया गया हो, तो स्पष्ट रूप से बतायें।

प्रश्न ९. साथ-साथ के अंतर्गत कौनसी गतिविधी लडकियों/महिलाओं को सबसे ज्यादा पसंद है? क्यों? सिर्फ एक गतिविधी के बारे में बतायें।

प्रश्न 10. इस कार्यक्रम की वजह से खुद में कुछ बदलाव हुये है क्या? कौनसे?

Tool 4 - Interview Guide for interview with core members of SSK

Q1. What is your view on gender and sex? Is there a difference between these two? Please explain.

Q2. What ideas of gender did you carry before joining this organisation and before Sath Sath program? How did the organisation / Sath Sath change it. Please provide some examples.

Q3. Do you think that Sath-Sath is an appropriate programme for gender sensitisation of girls and women? If yes, how? If no, what are the reasons?

Q4. Has Sath-Sath created any noticeable change in the girls / women with whom it is being implemented? If yes, what kind of changes are these? Can you give some examples? How do you know that these changes are due to Sath-Sath and not anything else?

Q5. What is the most effective component / session of this programme? Why do you think so?

Q6. Please describe the training you received from Avehi Abacus. Were you satisfied with the quality and rigour of the training? Given a chance, what components of training would you definitely like to retain and what components would you like to remove/change?

Q7. To make Sath Sath more effective, what changes would you suggest to Avehi Abacus? What changes would you recommend to your own organisation?

Q8. In what ways did you collect data from the field to understand the effectiveness of the programme? did Avehi Abacus supply any rubric? Was it useful?

Q9. Did you receive any post-training support from Avehi Abacus? If yes, describe its nature. If no, did you need any support? What did you do if you did not get any support?

Q10. What are your views on content of the Sath Sath manual, the descriptions and language, etc.? Do you think girls and young women undergoing this programme can connect with the content? If yes, give examples. If no, give reasons.

Q11. What are the most important 3-4 strengths of Sath-Sath? What are its limitations or weaknesses?

Q12. If you were to describe this programme in only three or four words, which words would you choose?

Q13. How is Sath Sath jelling with your organisation's ideology/ideals?

Tool 5 - Tool for FGD with members of AAP, Mumbai

- (1) According to you what is main objective of **Saath Saath** Programme?
- (2) Please explain important components of **Saath Saath** programme?
- (3) Do you think that the SS programme is universal in nature or does it require any specific variations? If universal, explain. If required modifications, what kind of modifications are possible?
- (4) What kind of minimum background is required for becoming (i) A Master trainer (ii) A local trainer (iii) Participant in SS?
- (5) How does the content of SS help (i) urban girls/women (ii) rural girls/women understand gender differences and ways of fighting those? Please give specific examples.
- (6) What according to you are strengths of your partners organisation? What did you notice as their weaknesses in implementing SS?
- (7) When you went to field in Lalitpur, what are the important differences did you notice in girls/women of same age around you and in the field?
- (8) Can you tell me about some striking/memorable experiences on the field (excellent/poor for furthering the programme)?
- (9) What kind of impact of SS would be short-lived and what kind of impact would be long-lasting?
- (10) Has your participation in this programme brought any changes to the way you perceived and dealt with gender issues (personal or otherwise experience.)
- (11) What are some of the important difficulties / issues you faced in implementing SS through SSK? What learning have you got from this experience?
- (12) What are important strengths and weaknesses of SS? If there are any weaknesses, how are you planning to overcome those?
- (13) Any other relevant information you would like to share?

Tool 6 - Interview guide for core members of AAP, Mumbai.

- (1) AA already had a programme like Sangati which was a comprehensive programme and also included gender. So why did you think of conceiving a special programme on gender?
- (2) Explain in brief the genesis of Sath Sath.
- (3) What were the main objectives of Sath Sath Programme when it was first developed? Did the objectives change over time? If yes, what were the changes and what were reasons for those?

(4) Please explain important components of SS programme? Are there other important components of gender sensitisation which could be a part of SS? Lot of emphasis on body of woman. Is there any specific reason?

(5) Do you think that the SS programme is universal in nature or does it require any specific variations? If universal, explain. If required modifications, what kind of modifications are possible?

(6) What kind of minimum background is required for becoming (i) A Master trainer (ii) A local trainer (iii) Participant in SS?

(7) How does the content of SS help (i) urban girls/women (ii) rural girls/women understand gender differences and ways of fighting those? Please give specific examples.

(8) What according to you are strengths of your partner organisation? What did you notice as their weaknesses in implementing SS?

(9) What kind of impact of SS would be short-lived and what kind of impact would be long-lasting? Can you give some examples?

(10) Has your participation in this programme brought any changes to the way you perceived and dealt with gender issues existing in larger society? Some particular examples will be helpful.

(11) What are some of the important difficulties / issues you faced in implementing SS through SSK? What learning have you got from this experience?

(12) SSK expressed a concern about the language and a worldview having urban tilt expressed through content of the SS booklet. How do you look at this issue? Is there any way you think can be employed to address these concerns?

(13) What are important strengths and weaknesses of SS? If there are any weaknesses, how are you planning to overcome those?

(14) Any other relevant information you would like to share?

Annexure II - List of Field Sites Visited during the Study

| No. | Date | Name of SSK Center | Block |
|------------|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | 05.09.2017 | Bamauri Bahadursingh | Mehroni |
| 2. | 05.09.2017 | Satwasa | Madhavara |
| 3. | 06.09.2017 | Budani | Madawara |
| 4. | 06.09.2017 | Devran Khurd | Mehroni |
| 5. | 06.09.2017 | Saurai | Mehroni |
| 6. | 06.09.2017 | Brahmori Kala | Madhavara |
| 7 | 06.09.2017 | Interview of Core members of SSK | - |
| 8 | 07.09.2017 | ICT Center | Mehroni |
| 9 | 07.09.2017 | Khajuriya | Mehroni |
| 10 | 07.09.2017 | Kallodhara | Mehroni |
| 11 | 07.09.2017 | Dongara Khurd | Mehroni |
| 12 | 08.09.2017 | Chilha | Mehroni |
| 13 | 08.09.2017 | Pali | Mehroni |

In addition to the above table, AAP Mumbai office was visited on 15th September 2017 for FGD with team members and interview of core team members.