



ANNUAL REPORT: June 2011- May 2012

This year was marked by a change in Sahyog's core identity—a “school without walls” for adolescent girls morphed into a skills-based and mentorship training programme for young women, named Sahyog Umang. Changes were also introduced in Sahyog Jhula and Sahyog Sangharsh to expand their reach.

PROGRAMMES

SAHYOG SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Over the last decade, with access to mainstream secondary education improving in the Jari Mari and Dindoshi communities and with parental attitude towards girls' secondary education becoming more supportive, the significance of the (hitherto) viable option of nonformal education offered by the Sahyog School for Girls in these two communities began to diminish. With a sense of having ably met a critical educational need as well as well as having contributed to a positive change in attitude towards girls' secondary education, the school was phased out from both communities. The last batch of (12) girls appeared for the Class 10 exam from Jari Mari in April 2012.

The same school model which had been introduced in late 2010 in the Shivaji Nagar community at Govandi was in operation with 17-20 regular students. Despite sustained efforts made by Sahyog's teachers to mobilize more students, the long term prospects for the success of the school seemed bleak. Low enrollment, growing irregular attendance, limited span of time to prepare the girls adequately for the Class 10 NOS exam, and inability to find a local person to anchor the programme were obstacles that were proving to be hard to overcome. By the end of 2011, the number of students had dropped to 12. The tough decision to phase out the school was taken, and wound up by February 2012.

To keep the final and small batch of 6 students connected with each other and encourage their desire to learn, we approached Aangan Trust that conducts *Shakti*, an empowerment programme for girls, in the same community. Upon completion of the programme, the girls

were connected to *Shakti* peer leaders who work towards enrollment of the older girls into local municipal and private schools.

The importance of community and context in efforts to scale up a successful model became abundantly evident. The profile of the girls in the Govandi school differed considerably from those in Jari Mari and Dindoshi where girls had enrolled at the age of 12-13 and came from families which had roots in Mumbai—or if migrants, were largely in-state migrants (from other areas in Maharashtra). Thus, even after being relocated from one part of the city to another (Jari Mari to Dindoshi), the feeling of insecurity was lower. The age at which the girls were enrolling in school allowed for a good 4 years to strengthen their foundation in academics before they appeared for the Class 10 exam through NOS. In contrast, the average age of girls in the Govandi school was 15-16 years and they were primarily from families which have migrated from UP and continue to feel “outsiders” in the city—the feeling of insecurity further exacerbated by base living conditions. Reaching the school required the girls to cross a road and enter a commercial area of the community which was disapproved by their family members. Not only were there fewer girls willing to pursue studying, but at this age the girls were also impatient to be brought up to speed with the Class 10 syllabus within a year or two because marriage—or at least getting engaged to be married—was imminent and foreclose the possibility of continuing studies. Additionally, the involvement of local women who assumed the status of role models and had become the mainstay of the Sahyog Schools in Jari Mari and Dindoshi, was missing in Govandi.

SAHYOG JHULA

The decision to extend the reach of the lifeskills programme to communities where Sahyog did not have a school set-up was put into motion last year and was taken further during this year.

During the year, Jhula was conducted with six groups across five locations: Dindoshi, Govandi (Shivaji Nagar and Gautam Nagar), Jari Mari, Kurla (Nehru Nagar) and Mankhurd (Lallubhai Compound). The choice of locations was guided by opportunities to collaborate with other NGOs and community based organisations. We collaborated with PRATHAM by conducting Jhula with women attending their vocational centre in Nehru Nagar and with the Amebdkar Centre for Justice and Peace which operates in Gautam Nagar. In Jari Mari and Dindoshi, Jhula was conducted with the Umang trainees. On an average, there were 20 girls in each of the six groups, ranging in ages from 15-25.

Conducting Jhula for the participants at existing vocational centres triggered the idea to offer Sahyog’s spaces to socially committed individuals to conduct a hobby/vocational course for young women and thereby create a potential group of participants for Jhula. This approach was attempted at Lallubhai Compound and has shown promise.

Several topics in Jhula curriculum were revised and updated. A new session on HIV & AIDS was developed as well as it is a topic both relevant to contemporary times and frequently raised in discussions by the participants. The Jhula curriculum has always been appreciated by the participants as well as individuals/organisations that have seen it in operation or seen the material.

The future plan is to translate the curriculum into Hindi and design it to be more participant-friendly, creative, and contemporary.

SAHYOG SANGHARSH

The disability programme relocated to Ashok Nagar, atop a hill in the Kurla-Ghatkopar area. Here, access to healthcare services is difficult, there are few schools and aanganwadis, and the local municipal school is only till Class 4. A room, approximately 10 ft x 12 ft, spruced up with fresh paint and charts and children's drawings on the walls, has become the new "school" address for 15-20 girls and boys in the ages 4-18 years who spend 3-4 hours daily in it. Of the 17 children who are regular attendees, 10 have a cognitive disability and 7 are hearing impaired. Individualised education plans were developed and implemented.

The focus during this year was early identification of disability and intervention strategies. This was achieved by networking extensively with aanganwadis in the area. The first contact workshops were conducted with 4 aanganwadis to create awareness about and sensitise the workers and their supervisors to early identification of disability. A total of 160 aanganwadi workers were reached through these workshops. The outcome of the workshops was referrals of 56 children. The Sangharsh staff conducted home visits and evaluated most children to be suffering from nutritional deficiencies and related developmental disabilities.

In addition to early identification, the regular activities of assessment; rehabilitation and integration; and identification of therapeutic services were carried out in collaboration with: J.J. Hospital, KEM Hospital, Children's Orthopaedic Hospital, Sarvoday Hospital, Ali Yavar Jung Institute for the Hearing Impaired, Rochiram Thadani School for speech therapy, Bramhan Samaj Sangh and Ghatkopar Samaj Sangh for physiotherapy, and the Radha Krushan Acupressure Center, Rotary Club for acupressure therapy.

Three students were successfully integrated; a 6-year-old hearing impaired and mentally challenged girl was enrolled in S.G. Barve Municipal special school in Kurla (W), a 15-year-old boy with hearing impairment in an ITI course at Chunabhatti, and a 15-year-old girl with a hearing and speech impairment in a tailoring institute run by a Trust in Jari Mari.

A visit to the neighbourhood Ganesh Utsav pandal and across the city to Hanging Garden and Dadar Chowpatty were organized and enjoyed by the children.

SAHYOG UMANG

This year saw the first batch of 25 Umang trainees complete the programme from Dindoshi in February 2012, the start of the second batch at Jari Mari with 22 trainees in November 2011, and the preparatory phase for the third batch at Dindoshi.

The idea for Umang germinated in 2009 when the alumni of Sahyog at an alumni event voiced interest in developing career-oriented skills. It took fruition under the aegis of EdelGive Foundation, with the piloting of Umang, a 2-phase, 8-month part time programme for young women in low income communities to sensitise them to the social sector and provide exposure/preliminary training for pursuing careers in it. The first phase consisted of instruction in spoken English, computer instruction, life-skills training, and perspective

building sessions. The second phase consisted of workshops, field visits, and field work experience/internships with NGOs. Preparations for the first batch began in February 2011 and the programme was launched in June 2011.

The schedule of the Umang programme was customized to suit the time constraints of the trainees at Jari Mari. The batch was split into two groups. While one group attended English classes, the second group attended lifeskills sessions and computer classes, followed by an internship—and then switched to do the same. Perspective building sessions and field visits were scheduled to include both groups.

At both locations, computer instruction was outsourced to a local computer centre and the trainees were enrolled for the state-certified information technology course, MS-CIT. The curriculum adopted for the Spoken English instruction differed at the two locations. While the Dindoshi batch followed an English text recommended by the instructor, the search for more appropriate material continued. We identified Yuva English, instructional material for spoken English developed by Centre for Learning Resources and Tech Mahindra Foundation (Pune) specifically for the needs of socioeconomically disadvantaged youth. The material was used with the batch at Jari Mari and has been found to be effective and engaging. The girls are noticeably confident to speak in English, even when interacting with unfamiliar persons.

The organisations and institutes Sahyog collaborated with for perspective building sessions, workshops, field visits, and internships were: Avehi-Abacus, Centr for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT), Committee for the Right to Housing (CRH), Centre for Studies in Ethics and Rights (CSER), Dilaasa Crisis Centre (Kurla Bhabha Hospital) Garbage Concern, Nirmala Niketan, Viklang Manch (Madhya Pradesh), SNEHA, Ummeed, and Yuva. Sahyog's two programmes, Jhula and Sangharsh also offered an opportunity for an internship for some of the trainees.

The success of the first batch can be measured in terms of the wide exposure and experience gained by the trainees (especially through the life-skills and perspective building sessions as well as workshops and internships); development of their confidence to negotiate interpersonal relationships as well as physical distances; and the relationships built by Sahyog with other NGOs and resource persons in the course of conducting Umang. The three thematic areas which afforded maximum scope to the trainees for developing skills were social research, disability, and education.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

1. Movies on Sahyog and Umang: July 2011, January 2012.

Three movies were made in the course of the year—two in collaboration with FTEP (Filmmaking Tools for Education Programme) hosted by Whistling Woods International (Film city, Mumbai) and one by Ishani Roy of SurFilms.

A Story of a Teacher describes the journey of a student from Sahyog School who returned to the school as a teacher. It highlights how the experience of education empowers a girl and how she in turn values education.

Life in Silence is a movie about Divya, a girl with hearing impairment who attended Sangharsh and the impact of her disability on her daily life.

Jhalkiyan gives a glimpse of the impact on some of the girls who were students in Sahyog school and thereafter trainees in Umang. Speaking candidly, their words capture the transformative experience of education.

<http://vimeo.com/37644558>

In addition to this, a visitor, Stella Dupius, made a short 3 minute clip on the Sangharsh programme titled '**India, Challenged children in the slums of Mumbai**' and that has been uploaded on youtube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwwJovesVoA>

2. Santa Campaign: 23rd December, 2011

The Santa Campaign organised by Samhita Social Ventures and Project Crayons visited Sangharsh to distribute toys and stationery. The visit delighted the children and staff of Sangharsh and there was much merriment.

3. Exploratory Meet: 9th February, 2012

An exploratory one-day meet on 9th February, 2012 was organized by Sahyog on *Skill Training and Mentorship for the Social Sector* for a small group of NGOs to share the experience of Umang and exchange ideas and experiences in skills training and mentorship of personnel for and in the social sector. The response to Umang as an idea as well as the face-to-face experience with some of its trainees (through internships /interaction at the Meet) was positive from the participants. Interest was shown in the Jhula curriculum and was appreciated by the participants.

Training field level and semi-professional staff in soft-skills, documentation was a need expressed by all present; mentoring was seen as essential but a huge challenge due to constraints of time; finding the right people for the salaries offered—and linked to it the high rate of turnover was seen as a challenge for recruitment and retention of staff; aptitude and attitude superceded qualifications as being desirable in the staff—reasonably good literacy skills were considered as essential and observed as being lacking even in those who have completed higher secondary education .

4. Graduation of Umang Batch 1: 29th February, 2012

On 29th February, the first batch of Umang graduated and a small function was held to celebrate the achievement. Dr. Armida Fernandez, founder of SNEHA accepted the invitation to be Chief Guest at the occasion. Vidya Shah (Exec.Director) and Aditi Thorat (COO) of EdelGive Foundation were also present. The Umang girls interacted with the guests freely and confidently--each girl spoke about herself, her involvement with Sahyog and Umang, and her dreams. Dr. Fernandez addressed the girls warmly, feelingfully, and

complimented them on their achievements. Aditi Thorat and Hemal Ved (who tutored the girls in spoken English and instilled confidence in them) handed out the certificates and with it, each girl was gifted **Yaad ki Rehgzar**, Shaukat Kaifi's book about her life with Kaifi Azmi.

A completely spontaneous and unforgettable incident occurred, which left all eyes in the room moist. All trainees had been asked to bring family and friends for the occasion. Shaziya, one of the trainees, brought her best friend along. Since it was an occasion to share experiences and feelings, she too was encouraged to do so. She spoke achingly about her desperation to study and her family's opposition to it; about how Shaziya shared everything that she learnt in Umang so that 'she felt that she was here, even though she was not'; about Shaziya's support which had made her determined to fill the form for Class 12—almost eight years after having discontinued studies. Overwhelmed by her regrets and perhaps also her strength, she broke down. What unfolded in the next few seconds remains etched as a tableau: the room fell silent, Shaziya reached out to comfort her friend, her friend recovered, the room filled with applause. This sharing illustrated for us the unanticipated and immeasurable impact of Umang.

5. Mapping of Home-based Work in Jarimari and SPPL, Dindoshi: March 2012

A sample survey was carried out in Jarimari and SPPL colony. The survey aimed at recording the range of home-based work in both communities. The purpose of the survey was to identify groups of women to whom Sahyog can offer education and health-related skills development and who can serve as potential trainees of Umang. At Jari Mari the survey was carried out by the staff while in SPPL colony Umang trainees accomplished the task.

Approximately 65 households were surveyed in both locations. In both locations, the primary home-based activity was moti-work/piece-work/ zari-work. The next two most popular activities were tuition classes and teaching tailoring. In SPPL colony, an almost equal number of the tutors were either graduate students or had cleared Class 12. The majority of them tutored primary and middle school students. In Jari Mari, all tuition teachers were graduate students. Interestingly, while beautician classes were popular in Jari Mari, they were absent from the households surveyed in SPPL colony.

6. Yaad ki Rehgzar: 10th April, 2012

The members of Umang Batch 1 were invited to Shaukat Kaifi's (Kaifi Azmi's wife) house to interact with her after reading her autobiographical book *Yaad ki Rehgzar*. This book was gifted to the girls at the graduation event and the reading of it had inspired them. The meeting was memorable—Shaukat Kaifi was warm, gracious and charming; the girls asked questions freely, commented on aspects of the book, and felt at-home!



7. Developing a Financial Empowerment Module: April-May 2012.

EdelGive Foundation brought a group of management students from top B-schools doing a summer internship at Edelweiss Financial Services to Sahyog for a field visit, and their interactions with Umang trainees about personal finance motivated them to develop a financial empowerment module, *Saksham*.

8. Umang Graduates initiate a Community Project in Dindoshi: May 2012

Two graduates of Umang who had interned with Avehi-Abacus and grown acquainted with its Sangati curriculum, and were guided by their programme coordinator, Manisha Naik, formed a group of 10-16 year olds and began to meet them weekly to transact the Sangati curriculum.

TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING for SAHYOG

1. Training on Right to Livelihood and Right to Health by MASUM, Pune: July and October 2011

Five staff members attended the training on Right to Health and two members attended the training on Right to Livelihood. Both were 10-day residential programmes.

2. YUVA English Instructors training by Centre for Learning Resources, Pune: October 2011

A team of three members including a trustee, attended the 3-day intensive training designed for instructors of the Yuva English course

3. Impact Workshop by EdelGive Foundation: 14th to 16th November, 2011

The 3-day capacity building workshop organised for EdelGive's investees was attended by a trustee and a coordinator. A range of issues were addressed: impact measurement and evaluation, using information technology for enhancing organizational effectiveness, effective financial planning and modeling, communication, leveraging partnerships and working effectively with the government, driving policy changes through legislative engagement, and HR management.

4. Outreach Programme on FCRA for the Western Zone by Nandi Foundation: February 2012

A workshop was attended to understand FCRA 2010 issues. A presentation on new FCRA, 2010 Act amendments and FCRA, 2011 Act by Ministry of Home Affairs was followed by question/answer session. Compliance with FCRA division and Income Tax department were also discussed. A Handbook on FCRA was released and distributed during the workshop.

5. PUKAR Youth Fellowship programme: 2011-2012

A team consisting of 3 staff members, one fellowship student and three Umang trainees apart from other community youth were selected for the PUKAR Youth Fellowship programme. The research topic selected by the group was *Impact of Displacement on Education and Employment of community youth*. The study was completed and findings will be presented at the PUKAR exhibition in June 2012.

6. Workshop on Early Childhood Development by Umeed:

The 3-day workshop was attended by the Sangharsh team members.

7. Training in Braille by National Association for the Blind: May 2012

One member of Sangharsh team attended the 1-month training.

8. Workshop on Learning Disability by Nair Hospital

A 1-day workshop was attended by a member of the Sangharsh team.

In addition, an English instructor was appointed to enhance the spoken and written skills of the staff. Sessions were held once a week.

TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING BY SAHYOG

A training of trainers (TOT) was planned for 5 trainees of Umang who showed potential to be effective lifeskills facilitators.

SAHYOG TEAM

Two trained social workers were selected to join Sahyog at the start of the year. Sandhya Kamble is a part of the Sangharsh programme and Sangeeta Awaghade has been appointed as a life skills trainer in Jhula. We welcome them!

Two of Sahyog's senior staff members resigned at the end of the year due to personal and health reasons. We are sorry to see them leave and wish them well in their future.

DEVELOPMENT OF PR MATERIAL

An attractive one-page double-sided brochure was designed for Sahyog by Wide Infotech Pvt. Ltd.

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