



Work for Equality WE

WE is the Vision to Enhance Educational, Social and Economic Status of the Marginalized Communities

Work for Equality is an NGO started by Ms. Prabha Vilas (President) and few other like minded people, who wanted to work for the marginalized community, and see positive impacts reflected by the efforts put in.

This led to work among the ST and Nomadic Tribes, especially the Thakar, Pardhi, Vaidu, Bhikshakari, bahuroopi, Dowri, Nandewale Joshi, Dombari and Sonzhari. These communities have nothing of their own, moving from one place to another for livelihood. Children are the most affected, physically and emotionally, and do not have opportunities to study.

The main focus of WE has been Education, for children from 0-18 years of age. Education is a powerful medium to raise awareness such that, these communities are equipped to stand up and fight for their own rights.

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.
Nelson Mandela

THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

The vision and mission of Work for Equality, has led it to work in the area of education. However, statistics show that literacy rates among the disadvantaged is not only low, but has high drop-out rates.

Girls are the most affected, as culturally, no positive outcome is seen in educating them. They are a burden that need to be married off early, resulting in early pregnancies and malnutrition. This leads to a vicious cycle of discrimination and violence, and becomes an acceptable generational lifestyle.

Thus, WE concentrates on girls education because even though the concept has been a matter of social concern and advocacy, it still faces a lot of resistance. This would require advocacy at the government level. What provisions can be introduced and which existing ones that can be improved upon, are all crucial aspects to look into.

I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which the women have achieved.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

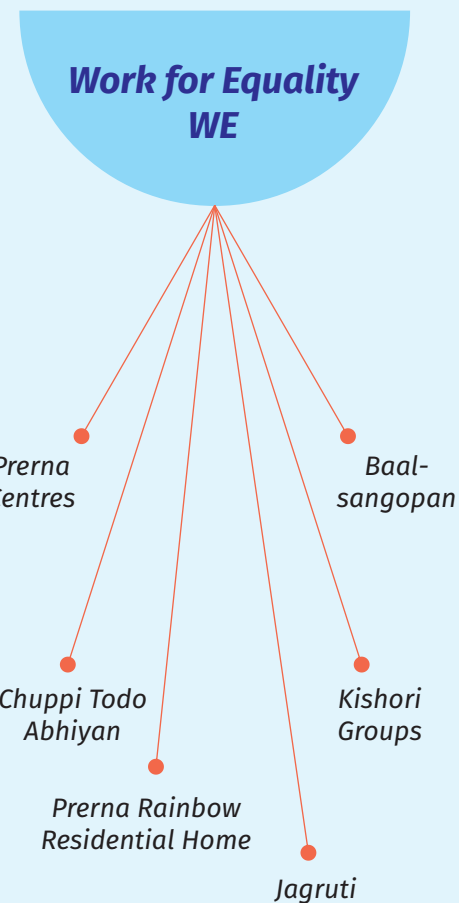
All the people associated with the organization are themselves from marginalized communities, who were first generation learners. They respect the opportunity they got to be educated, and realized its positive impact in their life. Facing challenges and integrating into mainstream community, have been the paramount effects of education.

This motivation and inspiration, was the PRERNA to see others from these backward communities, move forward. Thus, the focus on education. And over the years, a pressing need to focus of girl's education to promote gender equality.

The hope is to reach out to these communities as government policies evade them due to their informal structure and lifestyle, which also leads to fewer people working with them.

The challenges in working with them are varied and huge. For these communities, education is not a priority. Moreover, the need to educate girls is considered unnecessary, and much of their thinking is governed by superstitions. High instances of gender discrimination, violence against women, child marriages, child labour and poverty are prevalent, to name a few.

Acceptance into such communities and financial support for ongoing programs, is a big challenge the team faces.



WE - SCHOOL OUTREACH

At first the bastis/ village/ community is adopted by WE. This is followed by awareness building and rapport building with children, community and schools. The target groups are girls who have never been enrolled in school, are drop-outs or children lagging behind in studies.

A **Prerna centre** is started in the community itself. It is attached to the Zila Parishad schools. Such centers have been started in government schools of 6 villages.

The centre functions outside of school timings. The children are helped with studies and also trained in life-skills, health issues, behaviour, confidence, given exposure, etc.

The workers are from within the community, who are interested in working. This increases acceptance levels, as they are known in the community and they themselves know the community.



EDUCATION - Beyond the classroom

For wholesome development the approach is multi-pronged. At the school level, teachers are given training and identified children are helped.

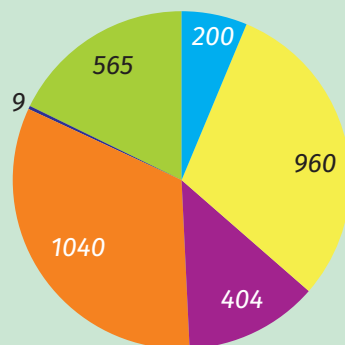
The parents are approached to improve and build on their awareness about child development, good parenting, nutrition, etc.

The community is approached to build awareness about important issues, like girl's health, etc.

Direct Intervention Through Prerna Centres

Communities 7
Centres 12

- 0 to 6 years
- 6 to 10 years
- 11 to 18 years
- Parents
- School
- Families



The numbers have risen slowly but steadily from 2010, a constant reminder that true diligence bears fruit.

As girl's education was never a priority in these communities, it is exciting to see a change in the mindset of the people. They have slowly started supporting girls education, by re-enrolling them into schools. This major change has been due to continued support of the organisation.

Jayshree, Priya, Kalyani, Priyanka, Ashwini, Trupti, Varsha, Komal, Kajal - Community leaders

Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family.

Kofi Annan

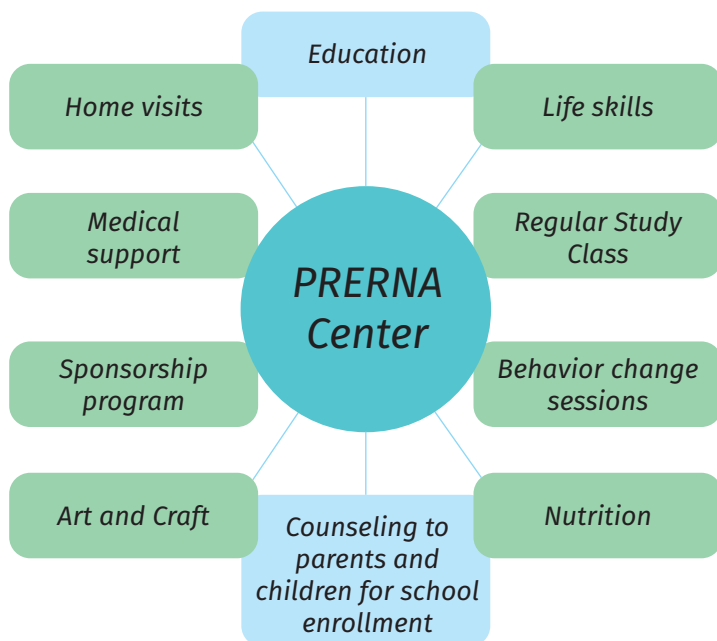


BAALSANGOPAN

This centers around children from 0-3 years, of these marginalized communities. The importance of nutrition is the focus. Awareness is built about good nutrition for healthy growth of the child, while monitoring its growth, with regular follow-ups.

PRERNA RAINBOW RESIDENTIAL HOME is for street children. Girls living on the streets in Pune are the target group. There are 85 such girls, who come to the home for education and all round development. The home does not have restrictions like hostels, and so the children can go home. Importance is given to education, basic health and cleanliness, and confidence building sessions. The aim being to empower them through education, both formal and informal.

The smaller the children the higher is the impact, especially on their confidence and potential.



It's an effort to change the condition of these street children, from one of despair to one where they have education, health and basic amenities, that will assist them in becoming responsible citizens of the future.

Kanchan, Poonam, Shital & Raziya
Prerna Rainbow Home



ACHIEVEMENTS/AWARDS

- Rotary Club of Talegaon MIDC - 2012
- Education Department of Talegaon Dabhade - 2013
- Agriculture Development Trust Baramati - 2014
- Human Rights Champion Award – Lucknow – 2016
- RANRAGINI award– Chakan – 2016
- SAESENAPATI Award – Maval Pratishthan Pune 2016
- NGO leadership Award – Indira group of Institutes 2017
- SERA Award – Talegaon Dabhade Nagar Parishad 2018
- SERA Award- Inner Wheel Club of Talegaon Dabhade-2018
- SERA Award – Sai Sevadham Trust Kanhe Village– 2018
- SERA Award – Durgamata Women Cooperative Bank Talegaon Dabhade– 2019
- SERA Award – Rajmata Jijau Mahila Manch Talegaon Dabhade - 2019

WE - COMMUNITY

JAGRUTI

An effort towards women empowerment. The change in social scenario for children, requires a multifaceted approach, where the parents and community's needs are also identified and met. Jagruti entered the community with health awareness and livelihood opportunities. An increase in income will encourage education of children. Training the women in tailoring and other activities gave an incentive to collect women in groups.

Due to these villages being in the interiors, the people have little knowledge about health issues. Superstitions rule the understanding of diseases. And women seek limited health benefits, because of financial constraints, lack of knowledge and fear of talking to male doctors.

Simple discussions in the training groups, led to understanding the health concerns of the village, especially women. This resulted in basic health care and awareness sessions on nutrition, ORS, hygiene, and other important health issues. Home visits helped build confidence in women about addressing their health issues and speaking to doctors.



Jagruti has a major role in increasing awareness among these marginalised communities about health and livelihood, through training sessions, medical camps and home visits. This has not only increased the knowledge and skills of the community, but they get help and support on time.

Indu, Pooja, Namrata, Priya, Ashwini, Priyanka - **Village Jagruti Workers**

CHUPPI TODO ABHIYAN

This is a campaign against violence against women and children. Training sessions to build awareness on sexual harassment are held in schools, collages, communities and companies. A major part of this is dealing with misconceptions and building gender equality, so that people themselves stop harassment.

WE has been working with Gabriel Pvt. Ltd., Continental India, Cosma and Magna International Co., for many years.

Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it.

Marian Wright Edelman



KISHORI GROUPS

These are leadership groups formed among the adolescent girls, from within the community, to generate awareness. These girls are the future of the village and future mothers, thus training them on nutrition, malnutrition, and other social and health issues is instrumental in changing the outlook of their community. They also help with the baalsangopan. Over the years the kishori groups have been instrumental in stopping 2 child marriage.

A LIFE OF SUCCESS



Jayshree Jamabyya Kanadi, of Talegaon Dabhade, is at present a 1st year Nursing student at Talegaon General Hospital.

Jayshree, an orphan, was staying with her uncle and family when Perna came in contact with her.

Jayshree left school in 8th standard and started working as a maid servant, in order to make her financial contribution to her uncle's home. She however, went ahead and completed her 10th as an external student. Despite the odds she was facing, she achieved first grade in 10th standard.

WE came in contact with her and found that she is a motivated girl. The organization supported her and helped her complete 12th standard, all the while providing her counseling to develop her confidence. She showed her interest in nursing, and so with the support of well-wishers and Bhatevara foundation, she got admission into a Nursing college. She is very happy with her efforts and achievements so far and is completing her education.

Children like Jayshree are a representation to the next generation, that shows how far a little motivation, confidence and support can go, in getting educated.

A LESSON TO LEARN



Ravichander Zari Sonar, was a bright student who scored 80% in 10th standard without any extra help. He discontinued education due to lack of proper guidance and finances.

He completed his 12th education as an external student. Despite being a bright student, due to being part of a nomadic community, his vocabulary is basic and he lacks confidence.

When he was discovered by Perna, help was extended to him, and exposure given, making him aware of opportunities, options and courses. However, due to lack of confidence and financial dependence of family on him, he chose only to complete graduation. WE could not pressurize him, as it could have adverse effects. Thus, he completed FY.SY.TY (Commerce) and finished his graduation this year.

Ravichander gave invaluable feedback. He said, "The organisation has to work at developing confidence in the children of his community, from the time they are in 7-8th std., so that they can stand-up for themselves, and consider moving forward".

WE understands the importance of work in this areas. PRERNA has to employ confidence building measures from the time children are very young. Else, potential children like Ravichander will lose out on living up to their potential. This requires help in guidance, training and skill building.



*You educate a man; you educate a man.
You educate a woman; you educate a
generation.*

Brigham Young

FUTURE PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

The work for the past 9 years has been centred around smaller communities and villages. The goal now is to work for advocacy with the government. This will assure a larger impact within a smaller time period. The children will become aware of their right to education.

The Perna module has proved successful at a community level, however it has not been economically viable to take to other villages, where WE has been invited.

Though education is free till the age of 14, it is not conducive in keeping children in schools. Additional educational materials and resources, extra costs, discouraging family background, proper guidance are all decisive elements.

Taking on employment to support family, often dissuades further studies. For such cases scholarships and support for continuing education, is a growing concern and need.

At the village level, there are many women and kishoris, who want to join the organization. They desire to improve their capacity, and use it to the benefit of their community. However, such ventures for community and confidence building require financial assistance and expertise.



FROM THE HEARTS OF THE BENEFICIARIES

Priya Avsarmal lives in Ramabai slums with her mother, father and 4 sisters. She used to sell balloons. Their mother goes to wash utensils, because the father is a driver, but a drunkard and works only sometimes. He harasses their mother regularly.

The first time she came to the organization, she used to run away. Now she is bright and dynamic, takes part in everything and is good in English. Because of the home environment, she prefers being in the centre. Her mother is also happy with her progress and that the child is in a good environment.

At her young age, Priya is aware of the plight of her village children. She wants to become the prime minister when she grows up. She says, "I want to help the people who are homeless and beg on the roads"

Wisdom.... comes not from age, but from education and learning

Anton Chekhov

Rutuja, studies in the 4th and is from Eainade basti. Her parents work in a brick kiln. She is part of the Perna centre in her basti and likes the studies and songs taught there. She wants to become a doctor when she grows up, and help people with their health. She specially wants to help girls with their health issues. For this she knows that she has to work hard.

Naem Sheikh, originally from Assam has been residing in Pune for the past 12 years. A labourer at construction sites. He lives in Talegaon, with his wife and 4 children, in a makeshift hutment, made with advertisement banner. Financial difficulties and his wife's mental instability forces him to stay at home many times, and had him always worried about feeding his family. Thus, he never thought about educating his children.

Now that the children are with the Perna, he has peace of mind. He can see that his children are happy, and can express themselves. He can now focus on his work, get his wife treated and save up for his children's future

A WORD FROM WELL-WISHERS

It's good see that many stakeholders including the community are part of organisation's activities, which will sustain the programme... I wish WE the best as it continues its efforts to work for the protection of rights of vulnerable communities, especially children on the street. I am sure while conducting 2019 summer camp and future programmes with the Children & Communities, the organisation would build their confidence by looking at the progress made so far and that would inspire them to commit & dedicatedly work more towards achieving their Vision & Mission.

Srilatha Morampudi

State Programme Manager, Rainbow Homes Programme,
Rainbow Foundation India & ARUN

For nearly four years, we have been working with WE, in disseminating information about various subjects and therapeutic approaches, to enable the workforce at the grassroots level... Our involvement becomes more fruitful by providing useful information, approach and skills to the participants and making it more meaningful and intensive.

Prabhatai is ever prepared to increase public relations and mobilize people, to help in the struggle for reaching the disadvantaged community, expanding the work for their development, and wishing them to come back to the equitable society.

Vandana Kulkarni

Coordinator,
Samwadini, Criticism

Having known Prabha since the inception of WE, I can state that she is a very committed and resourceful social worker, working for disadvantaged people and communities with passion... I am sure that with the initiatives started through WE, Prabha will be successful in reaching out and impacting maximum number of disadvantaged people. I wish Prabha and Work for Equality the best for all their future endeavours.

Meghana Marathe, CSR Consultant

Kirloskar Oil Engines Ltd. has been working with WE for the past 4 consecutive years. It has been an immense pleasure and honor to work with an organization whose efforts is to sincerely reach underprivileged group. Prabhatai personally visited each and every house, and reached out to children deprived of primary education due to a nomadic lifestyle. I wish you all the best and keep up the good work.

Nikita Deshpande, CSR – Kirloskar Oil Engines

Work for Equality has been associated with Schindler India for the past five years to bring positive and long-lasting change in the lives of people in and around Chakan MIDC area in Pune. WE, supports Schindler India's CSR program "Fulfil Futures", Rural Sustainable Communities project by executing various programme mainly in holistic child development, women empowerment and community health & development... Schindler India would like to thank the entire team of WE for their outstanding work in the Chakan area and wishes them all the best for the future journey."

Schindler India CSR Team

I am proud to be associated with "Work for Equality", Once I have visited. You are really doing a great job towards equality for the under privileged section of society.

We wish you all the success in this noble cause. God Bless You all.

Ghanshyam Bhagwani

Spain



Work for Equality

Girja Park, Phase III, Flat No 8, Rao Colony,
Near Bhandari Hospital, Talegaon Dabhade, Maval,
Pune 410 506, Maharashtra India

@ work4equality@gmail.com

f workforequality

workforequality.org

9545734545 / 9373032369

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