

ACTIONAID ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19



act!onaid

CONTENTS

About ActionAid Association	3
Introduction.....	4
Preserving and Promoting the Commons – Especially Water	7
Land and Forest Rights, Agriculture for Social and Ecological Justice	10
The World of Work - With a focus on women	18
Acting With Women	25
Child Rights With a Focus on Public Education.....	29
Building Participation, Transparency and Accountability in Public Finance, Budgets and Governance	35
Celebrating Diversity and Promoting Harmony and Justice	38
Building South-South Solidarities.....	39
Other Interventions	40
Emergencies.....	42

ABOUT ACTIONAID ASSOCIATION

ActionAid Association is part of a global federation and a full affiliate of ActionAid International that has presence in over forty countries of Asia, Africa, Americas, Europe and Asia Pacific with its headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Since 1972, the poor and the excluded have been at the centre of our discourse and actions in India. In 2006, we registered as an Indian organization called ActionAid Association India. We are governed by an independent General Assembly and a Governing Board.

Over the past four decades, we have extensively worked with Dalits, Tribals, DNTs, Muslims, the urban poor, people living with HIV/AIDS, small-scale farmers, fisher communities, people affected by disasters, and persons with disability, with a focus on the most marginalized and dispossessed amongst them, including women and children. At the same time, our approach has evolved from being a 'service based' to a 'rights based' organization promoting democracy, human rights, ecological rights, and social justice, and seeking to challenge the hegemonic forces of social, cultural, political, economic, and ecological exploitation.

ActionAid is an organization that works in solidarity with the most marginalised communities to further Social and Ecological Justice. We believe in equality and justice for all and support the leadership and empowerment of the marginalised communities in their struggle for a life of dignity as equal citizens of India. We draw inspiration and guidance from the Constitution of India and international covenants that envision a just and equal world.

INTRODUCTION

ActionAid is increasingly inspired by the consolidation of vital and collective voices and actions towards social and ecological justice. We are doing our bit in contributing to the shift in power and change in mindsets towards poverty eradication and gender equality. Our humble efforts at creating an enabling environment by forging alliance with progressive forces, social movements, civil society groups, institutions and individuals is making a difference towards an inclusive India. We have been able to draw attention of and bring pressure on the political governance system at various levels towards policy change and implementation. Our consistent efforts at monitoring state institutions for transparency and accountability in performance continue to result in improved spending and delivery of public services. We are happy to report to you on our work in 2018.

Our women are finding their agency and collective voices vital for influencing duty bearers thanks to the untiring efforts of the 5,000 member-strong district-level platform Mahila Adhikar Morcha (MAM) towards mobilisation and organisation of women's agriculture collectives and securing registration of Nav Bihar Bauhuudeshiya Mahila Vikas Swavlambi Sahkari Samiti (NBBMVSSS) Ltd. under The Bihar Self-Supporting Cooperative Societies Act, 1996, in Nalanda district, Bihar. As a registered cooperative society, these women's collectives are accessing a variety of entitlements, schemes and policies designed for cooperatives.

We are inspired by the momentous victory for the domestic workers of West Bengal as Paschim Banga Griho Paricharika Samity, a state-level domestic workers' collective of 5000 members received recognition as a trade union from the state government. The impact is in terms of the collective agency acquiring more power to negotiate and influence duty bearers for better services including minimum wages, social security and dignified work.

We are reassured our Northeast collectives are making a difference as hundreds of women farmers in Assam's Nalbari district collectivized themselves into self-help groups and took up various income options, with improved livelihoods. Our local ally, Lotus Progressive Centre, formed more than 1,000 women SHGs thereby transforming hundreds of families. We are also happy to share another proud moment when Boka Saul, an indigenous rice variety grown in Assam that needs no cooking was bestowed the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

We are encouraged by the spontaneous solidarity in action in social media where more than 7,300 posts were recorded on Twitter on a day, with a combined reach of 96.54 million views. More than 800 people including celebrities and social media influencers, activists and volunteers participated in our drive, helping raise the issue and funds for the cause. #ActWithHer trended in India for over 5 hours. This is part of our "Support Women Against Violence" campaign, a new supporter mobilisation effort.

We are happy our collective efforts influenced Ms. Prafulla Samal, Minister of Women and Child Development, Odisha, to take forward our sustained campaign against witch branding, as she committed to frame State Rules. We had also carried out a study to make visible the prevalence of witch-branding as one of the heinous crimes against women in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Gauravi, the One-Stop Crisis Centre for gender-based violence in Madhya Pradesh, actively supports witch-branding survivors.

Inspired by Gandhiji's Satyagraha a hundred years ago in 1917, we were witness to a

historic coming together in Champaran (Bihar) of local communities, social activists and academics for the Satyagraha Shatabdi Samvad Yatra, a march organized as part of the centennial commemoration. The Yatra sought to bring to light the life-conditions of tenant farmers and sharecroppers 100 years after Gandhiji espoused the cause and struggle, the need to create access to high-quality public education and secure water and land as Resource Commons.

We are also delighted by significant advances towards women's economic empowerment following 18 long years of persistent and consistent efforts. The Tamil Nadu Dalit Women's Movement secured a momentous victory by securing housing plots for 54 Dalit women in Nemili village in Thiruvallur district.

We are inspired by the Oracle-supported project to do more and better even as 750 farmers in 16 women's farming collectives have been formed across 15 villages in Pithoragarh district, Uttarakhand as a major marketing and networking forum for women collectives. Motivated by their achievements at a recently-organized Kisan Mela in Pithoragarh, these women farmers will expand the production and collectively market their produce.

We are very happy that a unique Iftar programme during Ramzan was well taken and scaled up. Our colleagues and volunteers initiated cross-community gatherings around the Iftar meal. The campaign sought to influence the practice of charity during Ramzan towards solidarity-giving. We are glad to see that during this period, nearly 200 Iftar gatherings were held with street vendors, rag-pickers, domestic workers, slum-dwellers and Rohingya refugees. In addition, a social media campaign - #MyIftarParty - was rolled out. Social media posts showed #MyIftarParty events in Delhi, UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, HP, MP and Gujarat.

We are elated by the recognition awarded to our work to further rights of women and girls in the Category: "Gender Equality", as the Most Promising Social Programme – 2018, by CauseBecause, a media entity.

We love that our consistent advocacy with the State Elementary Education Department, helped develop a clear definition for out-of-school children in Odisha (Children who consistently remain out- of-school for 45 days without any prior information). The Nai Pahel project in Uttar Pradesh has identified nearly 10,000 out-of-school children from 20 districts.

As a result of nearly 60,000 women from 5,000 women's groups from 965 villages and 3 urban areas in Odisha, forming a human chain with a strong message against child marriage; we influenced the District Magistrate of Subarnapur to issue notices to all temple authorities, priests and tent-house owners in the district that action would be taken against them if they were found party to the solemnization of any child marriage under The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

We activated and strengthened systems of child protection through trainings, orientation, inter- departmental coordination and increased vigilance of local administration and Gram Sabhas for effective rescue and rehabilitation of child trafficking victims in Rajasthan and Jharkhand, along with the British High Commission.

Over 400 informal sector workers met at a Convention in Rajasthan to raise their issues. The Minister concerned reminded the workers gathered that the Unorganized Workers' Social Security Board has already been set up in the state and announced a pension scheme of Rs. 1,000 for all informal sector workers from January 1, 2019.

More than 300 empowered Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) from marginalized communities have started intervening on issues of human rights violations in atleast six states. Cases of caste and religion- based atrocities are monitored. More than 50 fact-finding missions of human rights violations were conducted. In Ajmer, Rajasthan, the HRDs supported 41 families belonging to De-Notified Tribes (DNT) who were evicted by the district administration and in Madhepura, Bihar they rescued 14 Dalit bonded labourers trapped in Jammu & Kashmir. They are being rehabilitated.

We are working with the Labour Resources Department, Bihar to support migrant workers, both in source (Gaya) and destination areas (24 cities). Under this intervention, Worker Facilitation Centres were set up in source areas and Migration Support Centres at destination sites.

We are very happy for the children of Katingpani, a tribal village in Nuapada District, Odisha whose school closure order has been revoked by the education department thanks to District Collector ordering the Block Education Officer to assess the number of children in the school. Following school closure on the pretext there weren't enough students, we facilitated collective village-level discussions, petitions to the District and State authorities, media advocacy highlighting the adverse impact of the school's closing down on the 34 students of the village.

Programme Reach Out

Local Rights Programmes <i>(Long term projects)</i>	61
National Fund <i>(Short term project)</i>	149
Alliance and Network Allies <i>(In issue-based formations with movements, trade unions, civil society organisations and community-based organisations)</i>	1000+

PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE COMMONS

– ESPECIALLY WATER

Access to water is a human right. However, today in cities and villages throughout India many people are denied this basic right. According to Niti Aayog's report '[Composite Water Resources Management report](#)',¹ India is suffering from the worst water crisis in its history and millions of lives and livelihoods are under threat. Currently, 600 million Indians face high to extreme water stress and about two lakh people die every year due to inadequate access to safe water. The crisis is only going to get worse.

Submitting comments on Draft National Forest Policy 3 zonal consultations and response to Ministry

ActionAid organised 3 zonal consultations on the Draft National Forest Policy, 2018 with more than 110 people representing social and tribal people's formations, and including people working on forest protection at different levels in different states. This was in reference to the Office Memorandum issued by the Forest Policy Division, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (F.No. 1-1/2012-FP (Vol.4) dt. 14 March 2018) inviting comments/suggestions/views of stakeholders on the draft policy. *Consolidated comments were submitted to Ministry before the deadline of 14th April 2018.*

Policy draft on protection of commons

Protection of commons in the country has been a neglected area for long although a large section of people depend on commons for various purposes. Commons are largely encroached by powerful and influential for individual interest rather than using it for common people. Our country lacks a national level policy for protection of commons although few states have developed commons policy. There have been efforts to develop a draft policy on commons for last few years by different groups and organizations working on this issue. ActionAid has been part of the national process to draft a national policy on commons and influence Government to adopt it. Taking this process further a National consultation organised in Ahmedabad in January along with Janpath (a network of CBO/NGO) and MARAG. Activists from Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat participated in this consultation. A draft policy is in the process of being drafted.

Consultation on People's Participation in Protecting Bio-Diversity

ActionAid organized a **one-day consultation on "Peoples' participation in protecting bio-diversity"** to raise awareness on the Biological Diversity Act and status of its implementation on 1st October 2018 at Bangalore. It was in the wake of the threat to biodiversity caused by continuous loss of forests, mountains, hills, grasslands, lakes, rivers, coastal areas, agricultural land and other commons in the name of industrialisation, urbanisation and tourism. Around 60 Environmentalists, activists, farmers and tribal community members from 15 districts participated in the consultation. Dr. Purushottam B.V, Deputy Director (AYUSH) & Member of Karnataka Bio Diversity Board was the chief speakers. Community members also shared the difficulties faced in formation of bio diversity committees. They contributed to prepare the bio-diversity register which has not been

¹ For full report refer to http://www.niti.gov.in/writereaddata/files/document_publication/2018-05-18-Water-index-Report_vS6B.pdf

recognized by bio-diversity board.

Study on Impact of Mahanadi river on livelihood of riverine communities in Odisha and Chhattisgarh

ActionAid and civil society members have collectively taken up a study on the impact of various developments on Mahanadi river on the livelihoods of the riverine communities of Odisha and Chhattisgarh. Primary data collection and collection of stories from community have been finished. The findings of the study will be used for larger advocacy.

Study on water commons initiated to understand the indigenous knowledge and technology for conservation of rain water in arid zone of Rajasthan and Gujarat

A study on water commons in arid zones of Rajasthan and Gujarat is being conducted in 6 districts of Rajasthan and Gujarat to understand the indigenous knowledge and technologies used for conservation of rain water and protection of different forms of water commons in arid zone. This study will help us identify the traditional technology and bring it to policy discourse for conservation of water in desert.

Manual on FPIC developed and translated in 7 languages including 4 tribal languages, as part of global campaign FAO

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a specific right that pertains to indigenous peoples and is recognised in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which is not being followed in many cases in our country where mining and industrial projects are planned in tribal areas, except public hearing where opinions are manufactured rather than generate consent. A manual developed on FPIC for awareness generation has been translated in 7 languages including 4 tribal languages.

Water Volunteers initiative launched

ActionAid launched 'Water Volunteer' an innovative programme to enhance greater participation and involvement of people in conservation, protection and keeping water bodies clean and safe. **Press meets were organised before launching of programme in Varanasi in May 2018.** Similarly, an orientation programme was facilitated for 50 volunteers before launching of this programme who actively participated in the mass meeting held in May on the bank of Ganga River. **Around 200 Water Volunteers gathered** on occasion of Ganga Dusehara at Bhaissasur Ghat of Ganga River in Varanasi on the same day **and promised to keep Ganga clean and safe. Around 3000 people were oriented as water volunteers in the state of Uttar Pradesh.**

On World Water Day and International Forest Day, a state level meeting was organized in Bhubaneswar on 18th March 2019. The Water Volunteer Programme was launched for Odisha and Chhattisgarh in the meeting and 50 people were felicitated and people present felt encouraged to work collectively for Mahanadi river and protection of other water commons.

A report on Mahanadi River, 'Community voice on interstate river water' was released.

Representatives from CSO and groups working on forest and water issue were present in the meeting.

Apart from Odisha, World Water Day was celebrated in Karnataka, UP, Bihar, Rajasthan and Delhi.

State level consultation on Forest, Land and Water

A one-day consultation on the issues of natural resource like forest, land and water along with its governance and management by the community was organized **in Bhopal** by Land Rights Resource Centre (LRRC) in collaboration with Bundelkhand Mazdoor Kisan Sangathan.

Participant from 14 districts shared their experience of working on land rights and bottle necks faced by them at various levels. A collective strategy to advocate at the state level with State Tribal Commission, relevant departments and the questions to be raised at the state assembly was developed during the consultation.

Local initiatives

Improving biodiversity in Doddakalsandra Lake, Bangalore

Involving students and volunteers, a survey was of **Doddakalsandra lake in Bangalore** was conducted and it was found that ***the lake hosts 367 different trees, 43 different species of birds and 26 species of butterflies. About 150 saplings of various varieties were planted involving volunteers that have grown successfully. We have been able to educate more than 300 students and volunteers on importance and need to protect, conserve and sustain water commons and biodiversity in an urban environment.*** We have been successfully in involving local elected representative and bureaucrats in the process. Our persuasion with the residents has started yielding results, soon they would be on board for further developments in the lake area. We will focus on improving water quality and advocate with concerned departments on diverting the pollutants entering lake apart from planting new plants.

Nine water filtration units were installed around Loktak lake, Manipur and water committees were formed involving women for the effective management and maintenance. About 70-80 families are benefiting from each unit. Through various consultations and community discussions, people engaged with the Public Health Engineering Department officials and Local MLA and demanded installation of more such units to provide clean and safe drinking water in the villages. Local MLA agreed for installation of 10 such units, asking for 40% contribution from the people.

Drought Risk Reduction Committees were formed in 13 villages of Jalna district, Maharashtra. They took up the de-siltation work of 7 waterbodies and increased the storage capacity.

Low cost Polythene tanks (LDEP) having capacity of 1300-1500 litres, constructed for rainwater harvesting in 6 villages of Uttarakhand. The water is being used for irrigation purpose and each tank has benefited 2-3 families.

LAND AND FOREST RIGHTS, AGRICULTURE FOR SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

In 2018, ActionAid focussed its efforts on asserting rights over commons by tribals, women and Dalits through local level movements and collective cultivation on Gairan lands. Intense follow-up has been done on pending individual and community forest rights claims which yielded positive results in states like Maharashtra. We were also able to successfully address some of the long pending land issues of displaced people, conversion of forest land to revenue land. Single women land rights and land rights for DNTs was given impetus during this period. We have also promoted women collective farming, climate resilient agriculture, preservation of local seeds through seedbanks. We have registered farmer cooperatives, producer cooperatives and explored various options of improving the livelihoods of marginalized communities.

Impact in numbers:

Type of Land Right	Applications Filed	Rights Received ²
Agricultural land	1285	1035
Recognition of individual forest rights (IFR)	3495	1011
Recognition of community forest rights	232	113
Homestead land	3715	2941

Number of people trained on land rights	684
Number of farmers trained on ecological agriculture and on cooperatives	2023
Number of farmers practicing ecological farming	2407

National level meeting of Bhumi Adhikar Andolan: ActionAid and its allies participated in Bhumi Adhikar Andolan's national core committee meeting and unanimously resolved to strengthen the unity process in forest rights movement and to build up a collective and vibrant movement.

Public Consultation to mobilize opinions on the draft National Forest Policy:

In the new forest policy unveiled by environment ministry, there is a shift in the approach from a local community and an ecology-centric approach of the previous policy to focusing on promoting timber and forest-based industries. The new forest policy focusses on 'Production

² (includes old application follow-up)

Forestry’ to ‘Increase the productivity of forest plantations’ and ‘Facilitate forest industry interface’. A public consultation was organized by ‘Environment Support Group (ESG)’ and ActionAid with active participation of various stakeholders to compile a comprehensive critique of the draft forest policy and on the practice of public private partnership model of forest management. The chairperson of the standing committee on environment at the central government has responded to the group’s petition rejecting the draft forest policy by promising that the policy of such importance will only be taken up after a comprehensive public consultation.

Boka Saul or ‘Mud Rice’ is a paddy variety grown in parts of lower Assam and has been bestowed the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Government of India’s Intellectual Property India (IPI) body. This recognition has been the result of concerted efforts of our partner, Lotus Progressive Centre (LPC), along with Centre for Environment Education (CEE), NorthEast. Boka Saul, also popularly known as the ‘Magic Rice’, needs no fuel to cook.

Van Evam Bhumi Adhikar Abhiyan has been organized in 11 districts of Uttar Pradesh during October to December 2018. This was facilitated by Vikalp with support from ActionAid, its allies and other network members. The campaign aimed at strengthening and establishing the power of the Gram Sabha, self-governance in forest areas, developing local leadership, ending exploitation and violence against forest dwellers and to demand withdrawal of false cases against forest dwellers. The campaign covered Saharanpur, Lakhimpur, Baharaich, Gona, Gorakhpur, Mahrajganj, Lalitpur, Chitrakoot, Sonbhadra, Chandauli and Mirzapur districts in Uttar Pradesh. This campaign gave lot of impetus to the forest rights struggles of the tribal and Dalit community.

State level campaign on land rights:

A *Public Hearing* was organized during the end of the campaign in which 600 people participated. The compiled cases and issues with evidences were presented during the public hearing.

A state level consultation on forest, land and water was organized at Bhopal, **Madhya Pradesh** in collaboration with Bundelkhand Mazdoor Kisan Sangathan to share their experiences and discuss the bottlenecks faced at various levels. Community leaders from 14 districts have participated in this consultation.

Another state-level consultation on PESA & FRA was organized by Adivasi Janjati Adhikar Manch (AJAM) & Athakoshia Adivasi Ekata Manch in Bhubaneswar, **Odisha**. More than 65 tribal leaders from 7 districts of Odisha have participated and shared their experiences and views pertaining to the self-assertion of Gram Sabha under PESA & FRA.

In **Himachal Pradesh and Punjab**, a State level consultation was organized on issues related to land rights of landless farmers and non-agriculturists in the District Council in collaboration with National Alliance for Dalit Land Rights Movement by Landless Land Rights Campaign.

In **Maharashtra**, Vanpanchayat members and our ally Lokpanchayat met Commissioner, Tribal Development and Commissioner, Revenue and submitted the detail study report on the status of implementation of the Forest Rights Act, lacunas in its implementation and violation of the provisions. The commissioners assured that they will put the issue in their meetings and will direct to the responsible government officials to do re-scrutiny of the rejected individual forest rights claims for approval and not to delay the approval of IFR

claims.

In Mansa district of **Punjab**, a march by landless rural workers was organised in which nearly 800 people participated in a meeting of landless rural agriculture workers from 57 villages. The meeting was organized to raise the issue of suicide by landless agricultural workers and short comings of MNREGA and issues of women in agriculture in the district.

Successful advocacy efforts

Questions raised in Assembly: With the help of members of the Madhya Pradesh state legislative assembly questions raised on illegal sand mining in Alirajpur district without the consultation of gram sabha and on availability of Nistar patrak (village map/record) in every panchayat. Questions were also raised on the irregularities in the distribution of compensation to 300 displaced families from the Nauradehi Sanctuary at Damoh. As a result of this the District Collector of Alirajpur cancelled the sand mining license and the government has assured the Nistar Patrak of every village in their panchayat office.

As a follow-up of the PIL in Jabalpur High Court regarding the gaps and flaws in the implementation of Bhopal Declaration, 100 RTIs were filed by AA in Bhopal to district administration for getting information on the status of land distribution under Bhopal Declaration.

Allahabad High Court permits to refile FRA claims

The Allahabad High Court bench gave an order in October 2018 on the 90% FRA claims rejection in the districts of Sonbhadra, Mirzapur and Chanduli of Uttar Pradesh. The High Court said that all the un- settled and rejected claims can be refiled and the concerned officer will give their report within 12 weeks. The court also refrained forest department to take any action on the community in this duration. This public interest litigation (PIL) was filed by Adiwasi Vanwasi Mahasabha in 2017. After this order, the community has started to file their claims those were rejected or not received or pending.

Silent dissent for land rights

In Jawa block, Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh, 2800 people from 45 villages came together in a silent dissent under the banner of 'Aapna manch' and 'Land Rights campaign' against the reluctant attitude of the block administration for restoring their pending claim over land. The five days silent dissent ended with the Block Development Officer finally ensuring action on the 800 cases submitted by the people.

Gairan Land cultivation: In Maharashtra's Osmanabad district there was lot of pressure from forest department to free the gairans from the control of Dalits. The Dalit community stood together and cultivated the gairan land and ensured to put it on record to nullify the pressure from forest department. A total of 653 families from 14 villages have cultivated 980 acres of gairan land and submitted application to district magistrate for the Pik (crop) Panchanama and land status report. Simultaneously gairan holders' issue with forest department was taken up with concerned officials in six blocks of the Osmanabad district. Fresh orders for Pik (crop) Panchanama were issued by the officials and all cultivators names were entered by the officials. This document of land cultivation prevented the forest department to take possession of the gairan.

Conversion of forest villages into revenue

Displacement due to Bargi Dam has led to many un-surveyed habitations and settlements

which are not yet recorded as revenue villages. Because of this the families have no proof of domicile or existence. Our ally MSJP facilitated the process of settlement of the revenue land and succeeded in making 17 un-surveyed habitations including 1 forest village as revenue village. About 5500 people living in these villages have a domicile now and entitled for various welfare schemes.

Denial of forest rights in Reserve Forest: 500 tribal people whose forest rights were denied in Nagarahole Reserve Forests under Karnataka Aranya Moola Budakattugala Okkuta (KAMBO) have continuously led the struggle for 11 days and met elected representatives, the district Collector, Director ITDP and urged them to visit the spot and listen to the problems faced by communities who have been facing denial of their rights for more than five decades. Finally the District Collector has agreed to provide both community and individual rights to these people under the Forest Right Act of 2006.

Reclaiming the burial ground: The Dalit community in Chaudadevanahalli of Chintamani Block of Chickballapura district of Karnataka have got 75 cents of burial ground after so much struggle earlier. During the last decade many upper caste people have been encroaching it. The community filed many petitions and when nothing worked they all sat in the burial ground demanding to evict all the illegal encroachers.

Assertion of rights through self-declaration In Odisha, Jharkhand the gram sabhas have asserted their rights over forest resources and put up stone slabs in front of the villages. The community of Jurajam and Kakerjora villages in Sundargarh district took steps to demarcate their traditional boundary and took over for control and management. Accordingly, resolutions were passed in the respective gramsabhas. Self-declaration board claiming the rights of the gramsabha over the identified traditional boundary installed in these villages. MLA Sri Prafulla Majhi also participated in the process.

Assertion of rights through self-declaration In Odisha, Jharkhand the gram sabhas have asserted their rights over forest resources and put up stone slabs in front of the villages. The community of Jurajam and Kakerjora villages in Sundargarh district took steps to demarcate their traditional boundary and took over for control and management. Accordingly, resolutions were passed in the respective gramsabhas. Self-declaration board claiming the rights of the gramsabha over the identified traditional boundary installed in these villages. MLA Sri Prafulla Majhi also participated in the process.

Transcript of board I: “According to the section 40 of Indian constitution and PESA Act 1997, we are the villagers of Jharenmal village declaring our village as self governed village. For any developmental work it is required to take permission of Gram sabha. According to Forest right Act 2006, ownership on use and collection of minor forest produce.

Transcript of the board II: we the gramsabha of Naranpur village have put this board for conservation, management and use of the community forest resources. Hence no government officials should enter this territory without the permission of the gramsabha

Protecting fruit orchard and Collective Struggle of Tribal Women against Sand Mining in Birbhum

With our support through CSRA, 20 Santhali tribal women from Tulsibona village of Md Bazar Block under Birbhum district took 7 acres of barren land on lease in 2014 and started collective fruit orchard farming. They have planted mango, guava, jackfruit, lemon etc along with vegetable cultivation. During the end of 2017 the women noticed sand mining close to the fruit orchard and damaging their orchard. When the women objected this, they were

threatened. The women collective continued their struggle in 2018 with the support from ActionAid and CSRA, approached block development officer (BDO), then sub divisional officer and finally district magistrate. They were succeeded in getting orders for an on- spot inspection from the district magistrate. After the submission of this report by BDO, the illegal sand mining was stopped in April, 2018. Niyati Hembram, the women collective leader says “Initially we were really nervous as the mafias threatening us. However, this struggle empowered all of us for to face stronger challenges in future.”

Training on Land Rights and forest rights

A workshop on land rights has been organized for 72 women landless farmers from 20 villages of Mahoba district. Another training programme on ‘Revenue Code 2006’ of Uttar Pradesh has been organized in Mahoba. About 136 members across 40 villages from the Land Management Committee, Village Revenue Committee and members of Nav Kranti Manch including 27 gram pradhans attended this training. During the Van Evam Bhumi Adhikar Abhiyan campaign period 190 community members were trained on FRA across 11 districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Training community leaders on land rights

In Madhya Pradesh, 35 community leaders were trained on the laws related to land like FRA, Land Acquisition Act, PESA, CAMPA, Dalit land, women’s right over property, Tribal Customary Laws, and homestead land. At present 157 trained community leaders in Madhya Pradesh are playing an active role in taking forward the land rights struggles.

251 FRC members and youth from different villages in Koraput and Kandhamal districts were trained on forest rights claims and follow-up their claims with their concern Sub-Divisional Level Committee (SDLC).

Filing agricultural Land claims for women landless farmers:

Women’s Kisan Abhiyan Yatra was organized for demanding land for women in 40 villages of Mahoba district. During this process, 127 applications of landless women farmers have been submitted to village Land Management Committee with the support of Nav Kranti Manch and Gram Pradhan.

In Maharajgunj district the Musahar Manch representing 750 rehabilitated families approached district magistrate against the eviction notice issued by the forest department. These families were rehabilitated on forest land when the flood devastated their belongings in 1962. In Kandhamal, 56 applications for agricultural land have been submitted in different blocks by Antaranga with an area of 480 acres. During the year, 20 applications have been granted with an area of 23 acres. Rest of the 192 applications are still pending in the different Tahsils.

In Gujarat, Ekal Nari Shakti Manch (ENSM) participated in land convention held at Bhuj under the leadership of local MLA Jignesh Mewani. The convention was attended by more than 2000 people and identified 12 single women leaders to lead the group/ network of the single women. The leaders demanded land for 467 single women. Due to our efforts the Dalit community from 8 villages could got 174 acres of land. Around 130 single women in Gujarat were able to access land rights and nearly 240 single women received housing rights.

In Madhya Pradesh, 635 families applied for demarcation and possession of their land distributed under the Bhopal declaration. Out of these 460 families received possession of their land and another 435 single women have received land ownership.

Forest Rights claims:

In Odisha, 2565 individual forest rights (IFR) claims were filed across Sundergarh, Koraput, Kandhamal and Naupada districts. Out of these 184 claims were approved. 92 claims under community forest rights (CFR) have been filed across Kandhamal and Sundergarh and out of these 62 claims were recommended to DLC. In Maharashtra after regular follow-up 43 IFR claims and 15 CFR claims have been approved by DLC in Akole block, Ahmednagar district. This is the first time that the Gramsabhas have got rights under CFR to all NTFP's, rights to traditional pathways, roads to sacred places, rights of forest management in Ahmednagar district. The Gramsabhas have got community forest rights over 3236 acres of forest land.

Adivasi Ekata Manch members submitting Memorandum to Honourable Minister Juel Oram, Odisha on recognition of Community Forest Rights. Minister directed the District Collector to call for an immediate meeting for a fact finding on status of CFR

In Madhya Pradesh, 900 forest dwelling families filed their individual claims and 784 have received the joint land deed. In various forest villages, community has claimed 140 community rights over forest for its specific use and 98 claims have been sanctioned.

In Assam, our ally provided handholding support in organizing cluster level 'Village Land Development Committees (VLDCs)' meetings and filed applications for titles over 152.076 acres of agricultural and homestead land.

In **Manipur** last year government announced another notification for conversion of 103.10 hectares of areas of Thinungei village near Loktak Lake in Bishnupur district into first Bird Sanctuary of the state for international significance. As this would restrict people's access into the Lake and threaten their livelihood and survival options, we have organised several meetings with community members and discussions with authorities also have taken place in order to bring about comprehensive solution in consultation with the fisher folk communities.

Homestead Land:

During 2018, 430 fishing families have applied for homestead land titles in North 24 Pargana District of West Bengal. About 98 tribal families received homestead land titles.

Antaranga in Kandhamal has submitted the claim applications of homestead land for 297 persons in 9 blocks out of which 173 claims are of women beneficiaries. Out of the applications submitted so far only 81 homestead land titles have been received by the applicants with an area of 1.30 hectares. In Naupada, 42 families received homestead land titles and 10 families received agriculture land.

In Madhya Pradesh, out of 2988 families who applied for homestead land, 2656 received homestead land ownership.

In Tamil Nadu, after continuous follow-up with revenue department and district collector, 20 Arundhatiyar families in Viruthunagar district have got homestead land pattas. 54 Dalit women from Nemili village in Thiruvallur district received housing plots of 2.5 cents each.

Users' Rights for fish landing centres:

Users' rights for 48 fish landing centres have been submitted to irrigation department in South and North 24 Pargana, East Medinipur districts. Users' rights for one fish landing centre was sanctioned.

In **Assam's** Lakhimpur district, 110 community members from 10 fish farmers collectives

were trained on scientific rearing of fishes in backyard ponds and management of fishes.

Reviving Bargi Fisher cooperatives federation:

In Madhya Pradesh, there are 54 dormant Bargi Fisher Cooperative societies and its umbrella marketing body, Bargi Bandh Visthapit Matsya Utpadan Evam Vipanan Sahakari Sangh. Our ally MSJP has started organising the dormant cooperatives and strengthening the federation by advocating through direct dialogues with the fisheries department, state ministries and highlighting the issue in media. As a result of continuous advocacy by MSJP, the Bargi Fisher Federation conducted its election after a gap of 16 years. The new elected team is making the federation functional and advocating for the ownership and managing the reservoir.

Drought Mitigation:

A situation analysis of drought affect was done in 50 villages of Mahoba district, in Uttar Pradesh. An interface meeting with government officials was organized on drought mitigation. About 103 community members participated in this workshop and demanded installation of new hand pumps. In this workshop the village Pradhans have been given the responsibility of filling and cleaning the Charahi (land for fodder for animals). The deputy commissioner of NREGS shared that the community can apply for work and promised immediate work allocation.

In Marathwada region of Maharashtra, ActionAid has formed drought risk reduction committees and these committees have ensured de-siltation in 5 villages and got 5 checkdams (bandharas) repaired due to which the water storage capacities have increased multifold.

Promoting ecological agriculture and strengthening women farmer collectives:

In Uttarakhand, our ally ARPAN has been promoting ecological agriculture in 15 remote villages of Pittoragargh covering 750 women farmers. The women collective members collectively constructed Low cost Polythene tanks (LDEP) in 6 villages. The capacity of each LDEP tank is 1300 to 1500 litres. 51 women farmers from 8 women farmers group were trained on leadership, accessing various agriculture related schemes, crop insurance etc. Another 2-day residential training was organized on collective marketing and 39 women farmers from 16 village collectives learnt various strategies of collective marketing. Women Farmers collectives from 10 villages set up Stall in International Trade Fair, Pithoragarh/Uttarakhand and received many orders for their organic produce and millets. The finance minister Mr. Prakash Pant and many other international delegates visited the stall during the fair.

Low cost Polythene tanks (LDEP) were constructed in drought prone Bundelkhand districts of Uttar Pradesh. The capacity of tanks is 1300 to 1500 litres; rain water is collected and used for harvesting

In Tamil Nadu, our ally Society for Rural Education and Development (SRED) has conducted 60 trainings to women farmers on Natural farming techniques, water conservation, preparation of vermicomposting, kitchen gardening, marketing of farm products, livestock management and entrepreneurship development. 1789 women farmers were trained in Vellore, Tiruvallur and Kanchipuram districts. An exposure visit to the organic farm in Tirumalpur was arranged for women collectives. 80 women benefitted through this visit and were oriented on the traditional seed varieties of paddy, vermiculture,

preparation and usage of organic pesticide and manure. The lands for organic farming were identified in all the four districts for collective farming and through this initiative so far 200 Dalit women have directly benefitted.

In Gujarat's **Navasari district** 530 women farmers have been continuing cultivation organic farming. In **Nagaland**, 12 women received training and exposure on weaving cooperative, and they were provided with seven looms to venture into their entrepreneurship. 64 women received training on pig rearing and started pig rearing through our support.

In **Telangana**, 601 farmers in Nalgonda district have been practising climate resilient sustainable agriculture like using alleyways, bird perches, yellow and white plates, pheromone traps.

In Chamba of **Himachal Pradesh**, Pragati Swayam Sahayata Samuh (A collective of milk producers), wrote to the District Collector with the support of Gujar Welfare Board of Chamba, requesting for allocation of space for a shop for the Pragati Samuh in the district market at Chamba. Due to their advocacy efforts they finally managed to create a space in the market to sell milk and other dairy products.

Traditional seed collection Campaign: To preserve the traditional seeds a campaign has been organized by our ally SRED and Dalit women collected varieties of vegetable and millet seeds from 22 farmers across three districts. The collected seeds are saved in the seed bank at Pallur and Marakkanam, Tamil Nadu. The Seeds are named, categorized and preserved in pots. The agreement is that the beneficiaries would return two-fold of seeds received from the harvest. In Pittoragarh, Uttarakhand, 52 women are actively managing the 10 seed banks.

To help conserve and promote indigenous and climate resilient seed varieties, farmers across **Odisha**- organised by *Desi Bihan Surakshya Mancha* (DBSM). During the meeting, the farmers discussed the progress they have made and the future plans of the DBSM, which include bringing together over 800 farmers who have been conserving seeds across the state; promoting the 80 varieties of traditional seeds they have conserved so far; strengthening seed banks in their communities; and providing support to farmers.

Establishing spice unit for processing and packaging: A spice processing and packaging unit has been set up at Baluakot in Pittoragarh. 32 women have been collectively pooling in products like Ginger, Coriander, Turmeric and Red chillies. After lot of negotiations the agriculture department has agreed and gave the women collective a room in the Saras market (government rooms for community marketing). The collective has procured processing machine and raw material and is operational.

Women Collective Farming and registration of tribal women Producer Cooperative:

Along with the above example of Tulsibona, 44 tribal women of 6 collectives from 3 villages started collective farming for the first time in 2014 in Birbhum. Since then the tribal women collective farming moved on from 44 women in 2014 to 326 women in Birbhum in 2018 over 45.83 acres of land. The women have been doing fruit and vegetable cultivation. After analysing the farm and non- farm livelihood activities an exposure visit was organized for the women producers. Later an interface meeting with 400 women producers with the State Agriculture Minister of Government of West Bengal along with other senior officers. In August 2018, the first tribal women producers' cooperative of West Bengal got registration with 300 initial membership.

THE WORLD OF WORK - WITH A FOCUS ON WOMEN

ActionAid has been engaged on labour issues in rural and urban areas, with informal sector labour- including construction workers, domestic workers, home-based women workers, street vendors, fisher folks, bidi workers, bonded labour, artisans, blacksmiths, weavers, tea-gardens and coffee estates workers etc. who have multiple disadvantages of being landless and are in vulnerable situations towards ensuring social security, decent wages, decent work, abolition of forced labour and caste-based menial occupations, and addressing exclusions in the labour market with focus on women workers.

ActionAid recognizes women's work as a continuum of paid work – underpaid work – unpaid work – unpaid care work, and hence seeks to ensure that all of women's work along this continuum is recognised, reduced, and redistributed.

It is well-documented that women continue to face various forms of discrimination and sexual and other gender-based harassment at workplaces and are often excluded from decision-making processes, be it in formal or informal employment. In 2018 ActionAid worked towards ensuring that women have access to decent work, equal wages, and social security in dignified and safe working conditions.

ActionAid Association worked with Informal Sector Labour, supported by the European Commission (EC) as 'Securing rights and sustainable livelihoods through collective action and education for people dependent on the informal economy in India' (PIE). It ran for four years- from March 2015 to February 2019. The overall objective of the action was to build the capacity of People dependent on the Informal Economy (PIEs) to advocate for and secure social security and better working conditions whilst strengthening their livelihoods through skills building and vocational training.

During the project we worked in 32 cities/towns and 18 districts (rural/semi-urban areas) in 16 states of India with primarily urban, but also rural, PIEs. The action specifically benefitted the most vulnerable workers in exploitative and under-regulated industries from 10 different forms of informal sectors including domestic workers, construction workers, agricultural laborers, garment workers, bidi workers, women fish workers, street vendors, hawkers, carpet weavers, home based women workers and inter- state migrant labourers. A sub-set of youth and women identified as especially vulnerable, received need-based skill building and vocational trainings.

Major achievements under this project in the 4-year period

- Covered 32 cities/towns and 18 districts (rural/semi-urban areas) in 16 states
- Formed 896 collectives in 16 states with a membership of 43,910 persons.
- 16,545 have access to some scheme of the Central Government; of these, females are 10,528 and males are 6017.
- 16713 members are enrolled in worker welfare boards with 10120 of females and 6593 of males.
- 23,000 received basic skills and vocational training. Among these 4409 of females and 2484 of males are currently employed.

Major achievements under Urban Action School

- Four 21-day flagship courses on relevant and critical issues of URBAN.

- Seven 1-week courses – region and theme specific
- Eight 3-day roundtables conferences
- Over 80 participants in flagship courses
- 200 participants in other courses from diverse backgrounds – activists and practitioners
- Indirect outreach – 1000 applications received in the last 4 years for participation.
- UAS YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/uc-eufz1bf9sh0f8eilai6yq/videos>
- 60 modules uploaded

Working People's Charter

Working People's Charter (WPC) evolved as an alliance of 18 trade unions, 130 civil society organizations working with informal labour, lawyers, academicians, activists and researchers from more than 15 states of India with focused on the demands of the unorganized workers and building wider solidarity with working class struggle irrespective of the sector they belong to.

Major demands of WPC are: Social Security for Unorganised Workers- amend the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act 2008; Minimum Wages; Labour Administration; Housing for Workers; Enforcement of Labour Standards.

A solidarity group titled Workers Solidarity Network (WSN) was formed in a meeting held in the National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bangalore.

Urban Action School (UAS)

UAS is designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice around critical ideas with a primary focus on people-oriented policymaking and helping to nurture perspectives towards alternatives and solutions.

Advocacy Efforts

Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand Regional Office organized a state-level convention of construction workers, domestic workers and other informal sector workers in Lucknow to advocate for decent wages, social security and improved working conditions for the workers, particular demands were:

- Identification of Labour Posts and provision of basic services;
- Declaring minimum wages at the rate of Rs 600 per day;
- Pension for workers at the rate of Rs 5000 per month;
- Formulation of an Act declaring domestic workers as labourers;
- Formation of unorganized sector workers' board in the State.

In Delhi registration of construction workers was stopped by the BOCWWB (Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board) in May 2018. It was a huge blow for construction workers. Series of advocacy initiatives were carried out with labour department and minister. Delegation meetings, demonstration and letters were written to concerned authorities. Finally, BOCWWB started registration from end August 2018 in the state.

ActionAid supported Democratic **Women Workers'** Federation (fish workers and salt pan workers) to facilitate National Level Consultation on Livelihood Issues of Inland Fish

workers at Delhi. Fish workers' representatives from Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra participated and raised their issues. The meeting also focused on the position of this platform on National Policy on Inland Fisheries. This platform has been playing critical advocacy role on Draft National Policy.

In West Bengal with support of our ally, Disha, we engaged with the advancement of work on policy front on National Policy on Inland Fisheries and draft Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification 2018 and the main points of objections were drafted during the discussion. Around 3,000 letters pointing out the objections were sent to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

On issues faced by fish workers, especially women fishers, ActionAid conducted Study for marine fisheries cooperatives in Hyderabad– The study revealed the main problems of Cooperatives and possible ways and means to address those and submitted recommendations on National Policy on Inland Fisheries.

A 3-day seminar on Women and Work, hosted by TISS and supported by Urban Action School on Paid and Unpaid Work of Urban and Rural Women. Sessions were held on Women in Formal Sector Informality, Gender and Cities. It deliberated about the informal women workers in the cities and the struggles faced by urban informal workforce. It also talked about the housing conditions of these female workers and it's direct impact on the livelihood and income generated.

Roundtable on Informal workers and the labour movement.

Workers Solidarity Network is a collective of practitioners, academicians and activists. Through this platform ActionAid's focus has been to work with the informal sector and develop a united agenda for the informal workers in the country. Most of the workforce remains within the informal sector and the rights and security of workers in the formal sector are rapidly shrinking. To discuss the implications of this situation for the labour movement in India, a three-day roundtable was organised in Delhi by ActionAid India, in collaboration with European Commission and Workers Solidarity Network. In the meeting, representatives of organisations working with the informal sector shared experiences of the on-going struggles of workers. More than 150 people, including leaders of workers movements, civil society activists, academicians, lawyers, journalists and students, participated and shared their experiences, insights and ideas at the event and a report of the event providing an insightful snapshot of the contemporary state of workers' issues and demands in India was shared.

Ground Level Efforts

Domestic Workers: ActionAid has been working with domestic workers across 8 states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Panjab, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana and West Bengal.

- **Paschim Bango Griho Paricharika Samity** (state-level domestic workers' collective), in West Bengal, received their recognition as a Trade Union in 2018 in West Bengal.
- In **Madhya Pradesh** around 16000 women domestic workers have been mobilized and linked with small collectives.
- In **Delhi** 5 domestic worker collectives have been formed with an outreach to 95 members.

- After a long struggle, Domestic workers in **Mandya, Chamrajnagar** got registered as a worker union “Mysuru Domestic Workers’ Trade Union.

Paschim Bango Griho Paricharika Samity (state-level domestic workers’ collective), in West Bengal, received their recognition as a Trade Union in 2018 with strong conviction of the women workers and systemic advocacy of Kolkata Regional Office along with Sristy NGO and PGPS - a community based organisation. To celebrate their success, and to commemorate *International Domestic Workers’ Day* (June 16), nearly 2,600 domestic workers from across West Bengal gathered in Kolkata on June 22 for a walkathon.

PGPS also initiated towards deepening the engagement between domestic workers and their employers and 2,000 employers have been recognized by domestic workers as ‘Fair Employers’ in the state who are ensuring decent wages and working conditions for them, including weekly offs and bonuses.

In **Madhya Pradesh** around 16000 women domestic workers have been mobilized through collectivization process in Bhopal, Indore and Gwalior. Various leadership building programs were organized with these and they are in the process of registering their collective as Trade union of domestic workers in Madhya Pradesh.

In **UP** Domestic workers with Asangathit Kamgar Adhikar Manch organized a Campaign to demand for separate board of Domestic Workers in the state. The group met with Labour Minister and Chief Secretary Labour with the same demand. Postcard campaign, community meeting, district level meetings were organized with the demand of separate board.

in **Visakhapatnam**, 426 members joined Visakha Jilla Gruha Karmeeekula Union (Visakhapatnam District Domestic Workers’ Union.) and went to New Delhi to demand decent work environment and a welfare board for the domestic workers in the state.

In **Hyderabad**, about 250 women domestic workers emerged as vibrant leaders and they are aware of minimum wages and can negotiate with their employers as well as with the officials for their needs and rights. A total of 180 workers received skill training on maintenance of modern home appliances, while 208 persons received skill training on other skills such as tailoring to earn subsidiary income.

In **Tamil Nadu** along with the National Domestic Workers’ Movement organized a collective meeting of 300 domestic workers in Chennai to advocate for minimum wages and better working conditions for domestic workers.

Various Training and awareness programs on ‘Labour Laws and Social Security etc, were conducted in many states like Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Kolkata Bangalore where no of workers attended. As a result of these training, no of domestic workers have registered themselves in the domestic workers welfare board/others

Fish Workers

In **Lakhimpur district of Assam** 10 fish farmers’ collectives with both men and women have been formed. 110 fish workers were trained on scientific rearing of fishes in backyard ponds and management of fishes. This initiative has brought a change in practice of the families with their small-scale fisheries and converting them into additional earning source.

In **Tamil Nadu**- an awareness campaign was organized for women fish workers on social security schemes, labour law provision at Nanjilingampettai of Cuddalore district. Nearly 100 women fish workers participated in the campaign.

In **West Bengal**, in Kulpi and Sagar of South 24 Parganas district, 2 women cooperative of around 68 women fish workers has been registered with fisheries department.

An Unorganized Workers' Social Security Board has been set up in UP to ensure social security benefits reach all labourers working in the unorganized sector.

Mazdoor Jagrookta Sadasyata Abhiyan was organized in Lucknow at 24 Labour Posts asking for their living wages, pensions and separate board for domestic worker and at the point of culmination Labour Minister declared that separate Labour Welfare Board will be formed for Domestic workers and other unorganized workers.

In Delhi, ActionAid is supporting a federation /umbrella organisation of 45 Trade Unions under the banner of NAMMA for Construction workers in Delhi. During 2018, the federation voiced issues of lack of utilization of cess collected under the BOCW Act.

On the issues of construction Workers: we are engaged across 12 states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Panjab, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana and West Bengal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

- 8160 construction workers got registered in welfare board and 3004 construction workers got ID cards
- 1855 construction workers got benefitted through Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board

Garment Workers

A baseline survey was carried out to study the situation of garment workers in **Madurai** district. Around 252 women garment workers participated in the focus group discussions and topics covered by the study included minimum wages, equal pay for equal work, sexual harassment and exploitation of women in their workplaces. During this year through our initiative, various forms of legal aid has been provided to women such as filing FIR in police station, claiming PF money and benefits from labour welfare board, filing complaints to concerned authorities, applying for legal heir certificate, old age pensions, widow pensions, etc

Legal trainings were organized on labour rights and social security schemes in **Delhi** and Madurai with around 72 garment workers.

About 325 garment workers have been grouped in 13 group. Okhla Garment Workers Union have been created, federating 13 groups.

Tea garden workers

In **Assam** PAD has organized consultation on understanding politics and policies in the tea gardens of Assam where different stakeholders and Adivasi leaderships, academic, Activists, student body members taken up the wage campaign advocacy with the state government which has resulted into negotiation on wage during the Consultative Committee on Plantations Act (CCPA) meet. The state government has finally framed a committee to submit a report on wage issue of tea garden worker.

In Karnataka 176 families from Coffee plantation estates in Kodagu district struggled hard to come out from the bondage situation in the estates and submitted their applications to the Integrated Tribal Development Department demanding land, new houses and other infrastructural facilities. The district administration identified 8 acres of land in Kadamullur village in Virajpet Block of Kodagu district to rehabilitate these families. The families have

already begun putting up temporary houses there.

Migrant workers

In Delhi ActionAid organized a 10-day campaign with the street vendors for election of town vending committee in 36 markets of Delhi and reached out to more than 3000 vendors. About 957 street vendors have been supported to finalize their eligibility for voting in the election of Town Vending Committee as result, nearly 70 members of our collectives have been selected as to be part of Town Vending Committee. The TVCs are mandated under the Street Vendor Legislation 2014 which mandates setting up of TVC through election process and this body further advocates for rights of Street Vendors.

Street Vendors

- 70 Street Vendors have been selected to be part of 'Town Vending Committee' in Delhi.
- In Delhi, 575 street vendors got social security benefits, 1045 hawkers have been helped to resettle after eviction by municipal corporation Delhi.
- In Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, five -Street Vendors Unions were registered with 2650 members from 20 slums
- 2 street vendors unions formed in Hyderabad.
- 902 members received Mudra loans from Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC)
- 1494 street vendors accessed ID cards from GVMC (582 men and 912 women)
- 150 street vendors got skilled development training.

Collectivization of women carpet weavers

In Gwalior, MP, around 2000 carpet weavers (women) were mobilized to form collectives. Series of meetings and programs were organized to strengthen their capacity. In the conclave organized with the officials of Labour and Handicraft department, a detailed plan of action was prepared. They have shared the charter of demand with local political leaders and district administration. The District Collector accepted the memorandum and passed an order to provide benefits to all the people having unorganized labour registration I-card under any scheme.

The women also received training and exposure about weaving cooperative society, and they were provided with seven looms to venture into their entrepreneurship.

Other Skill building

In **Tamil Nadu** A training program on 'artificial jewellery making' organised by SFRAWD with 10 women with disability has boosted the confidence among the participants and they have started making jewellery and selling them.

In **Jaipur**, 64 women from informal sector were given training on tailoring and they are now able to earn through making dresses for women, bags and selling these in the local market and supplying bag in civil society capacity building programme.

In **Jaipur** with support of DXC technology motor driving training was provided to 30 women. Among them, 2 women have been placed as driver cum office assistance in an organization, 15 women have qualified for permanent driving license and remaining are on process to make it. These women also have been provided training on self-defence, Sexual

harassment at work place-2013, domestic violence act- 2005, SC/ST Atrocity etc. to build their confidence.

In **Punjab** a campaign was organized on MNREGA related issues, where 316 community members have demanded for the work under the MNREGA. In the state, we were able to reach 100 days of employment in villages of Mansa district. In **Haryana**, we initiated a campaign on seeking work under MNREGA by Dalit women workers, as they are the most marginalized and discriminated. Around 1000 women applied for job cards in the campaign from 25 villages of Kaithal and Sonapat district.

In **Madhya Pradesh**, AA been working with bidi workers in Sagar and Jabalpur region and have mobilized around 4000 bidi workers in these two regions. A series of meetings were organized with women bidi workers and a state level consultation was organized to design detailed advocacy plan and a charter of demand has been given to State Labour Commissioner.

Other initiatives on Labour and Livelihood, with focus on Women:

About 2060 youths have been given vocational training on different streams like sewing, computer operator etc across states.

In **Tamil Nadu**, Women Entrepreneurship Training Programme was organized for Arundhathiyar Women (considered Dalits among Dalits). A total of 40 women participated and got knowledge about the alternative work/job apart from the regular scavenging work of whom 18 are now self-employed.

In Chennai city, 83 women have been placed at DLF, Bolini apartments as housekeeper after getting housekeeping training

In an enrolment drive of unorganised labourers, 1260 members were registered for Labour card in Khanapur Taluk, Belgavi District in **Karnataka**.

After two years struggle and several follow ups, 58days wages under NREGS of Shankrevva Karaguppi, Bidi village has been paid in **Odisha**.

ACTING WITH WOMEN

ActionAid India in this year saw stronger intervention with women. We understand that as women from the marginalised communities face multiple vulnerabilities- as caste, class, disability, religion and gender intersect. In the reporting period, we concentrated our efforts to reach out to the women in marginalised community. ActionAid continued to mobilise women's groups, building their capacities as well as highlight the issues that affect their wellbeing and dignity.

In 2018, we focused on the issues of single women- who account for more than 12% of women's population in India. We reached out to more than 25000 Single women, across the states of Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Advocacy Efforts

In Madhya Pradesh, ActionAid along with its allies has been working on dignity and rights of Single women. A state level forum of single women has been formed to recognize and establish their agency and collectivize them to raise their voice against patriarchal structure and system. A policy on Single Women was drafted based on concerns and issues raised by Single women. The policy has been shared with State Women Commission as well as with the State Women and Child Development Minister for their perusal. Few components of the policy were adopted by state in some schemes like enhancement of pension for widows in Madhya Pradesh. Some of the issues were accepted by political parties and incorporated in their State legislative election manifesto in Madhya Pradesh.

Single women from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh themselves initiated a post card campaign to the Prime Minister's Office to increase their pension to Rs 3,000 PM nationally. We have also been working towards ensuring land rights for women across the states we are working on the issues of land rights (Reported in the sections under land rights).

In 2018, we took up the issues of single women and took up various issues ranging from draft formulation of single women policy to ensuring land rights and seeking pension

In Maharashtra, we have been ensuring land rights for single women. A total of 50 single women were given housing from Zilla Parishad and land was made available in the name of single women by gram panchayat. A sum of 19 lacs has been budgeted for women's rights in Zilla Parishad's budget which happened for the first time in Osmanabad district.

While we engage on the issues of single women of India, we realise many single women particularly in the remote tribal belts are branded as witches and face unspeakable torture and abuse. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 2,097 murders were committed between 2000 and 2012, where the motive was "witch hunting".

Advocacy for Protection and rehabilitation of Women branded as witches

In Madhya Pradesh, ActionAid along with its direct initiative Women Rights Resource Network have been advocating for formulation of separate Act for prohibition, protection and rehabilitation of women survivors of witch branding. Although, a central bill on witch Branding is pending in Parliament. A draft Act has been shared with State women commission and regular follow ups are being taken from the commission.

In 2018, we took up the issues on witch-branding in the two states of Madhya Pradesh and Odisha. In MP, we engaged with the state women's commission and in Odisha with the

National Commission of women to raise the issues of Witch Hunting being faced by the women there.

In Bhubaneswar- a consultation on “The Odisha Prevention of Witch Hunting Act, 2013” was organised by Ideal Development Agency supported by Action Aid.

The Chairperson, Special Development Council, stated that this practice is not only found in tribal families but also practiced in other non-tribal families. As a result of the interaction and highlighting the issues, the Chairperson of SDC declared that the council will mobilise the youth and reached out to the most vulnerable areas to create awareness on the law and support the victims of witch branding. The council during the annual budget will allocate funds to address this issue.

In Rajasthan there is a law banning witching hunting since 2015. Despite this, witch hunting is a phenomenon which are reported from villages across the state. Rajasmand where this is a known practice, AA has been intervening to address this issue in collaboration with Rajasmand Jan Vikas Sansthan have been able to ensure that 5 survivors have got justice and compensation. They have also benefitted after they were linked to MGNREGA work. Post interface with the police department and districts administration on witch branding, conducted orientation for the police officials about the Act and its implementation in the true spirit. As a result, police officials started registration of the cases as per the existing norms under Act on Witch branding.

ActionAid has been **fighting against the issue of sex selective abortion and son preference** since the past one decade.

ActionAid with support from UNFPA are implementing the project called *Yeh Kahani Badalni Hai* in the two states of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. We began the initiative in 2018 and plan to build the capacity of 400 young change agents to work intensively and continuously on identified harmful practices such as son preference and gender rights issues. We are investing in capacity building of the communities to use ICT to address gender discrimination and to reach out to local and community-based institutions such as panchayats and block and district government functionaries to drive change through their own administrative systems to respond to gender concerns.

Anti-Trafficking

To address the issues of trafficking in **in Madhya Pradesh**, a memorandum was given to state for strengthening of institutional response to trafficking in Betul district and in MP state. Women’s Right Resource Centre, Mahakaushal Sajha Jan Pahal and Parivartan Campaign along with Child Rights Resource Centre have identified 196 trafficked girls in Mandla and Betul district in this year.

Series of capacity building programs were organised with Special Task Force, police and Anti Human trafficking cells. In Betul, the District collector requested our ally, Pradeepan Sansthan to help in designing a campaign to address trafficking.

Initiatives are being taken up to address Trafficking in Rajasthan too. AHTU in the districts of South Rajasthan such as Udaipur, Banswara, Dungarpur, Pratapgarh were not functioning active and there was hardly discussion on issues of trafficking. During last assembly election post our intervention in raising awareness, political parties raise the issue of large migration from these districts. At panchayat level also people started discussing the issue of human trafficking. Banswara district sitting CWC member and ex CWC chairperson

accepted that there is human trafficking in the region. They felt there is need for more intervention in the area on human trafficking.

We continued to work on the issues of addressing VAW by the One Stop Crisis Centres, in the states of **Madhya Pradesh** as well as in **Uttar Pradesh**. Cases of violence against women are being addressed by these centres called Asha Jyoti Kendras. Capacity building of 210 staff members of AJKs, police personnel were done to address cases of VAW.

Jivhala Gats’ in Maharashtra at all 20 villages organized their meetings regularly. They had delivered a very crucial role by taking initiative in prohibition of domestic violence and providing support needed to single women such as legal aid, temporary shelter and health service.

In 2018, we have filed 3414 cases against DV and other forms of VAW in our intervention area across the country. We were able to rescue 268 girls and women who were trafficked.

Skill Building program with Women Survivors of Violence

Rehabilitation has a significant and vital role in reestablishment and reintegration of women survivor of violence in the society. It begins with the moment women enter in Gauravi. It continues during the process of counselling, medical treatment, police and court proceeding or even after problem solution. Initially, safety assessment plan is prepared for all the women those who want to go back to their homes. Her safety plan includes gathering police’s help and protection, protection from physical violence, informed complaint redressal, therapeutic exercises, curative measures of wounds etc. Post counselling after receiving her consent, a rehabilitation plan is prepared based on her qualification, interest, present situation and limitations. Gauravi works in liaison with many government departments such as Department of Women and Child Development, Education Department and other agencies to build and enhance women’s skills through vocational courses and training programs. A three months long skill development program was organized for 60 women survivors of violence on computer, makeup artist, auto driving and tailoring. These vocational courses would help women by providing training, certification and placement for income generation.

Capacity building of the women on various issues – including leadership and on legal provisions to fight Gender Based Violence was also conducted during this period. As a result of our intervention we are happy to report that in many states women are in the forefront of leading the fight for survival and dignity.

In West Bengal, the women leaders of the Chai Bagan Bachao Committtee have been meeting the District Magistrate and the local Member of Legislative Assembly for garnering support for tea workers cooperative.

The widows of men who have been killed by tigers and women fishers from Sundarban, have been meeting to the local administration and ministers to bring special policies for women fish worker and tiger widows.

Our engagement with **Young Urban Women** was extended to 3 new cities of Kolkata, Bhubaneswar and Delhi in addition to existing cities of Hyderabad, Mumbai and Chennai. In October, Bhubaneswar Young Urban Women Forum along with others worked out a people’s manifesto. The members of Slum level YUW groups discussed the problems in group and presented their views and suggestions. Responding to these demands the representatives of different political parties assured to include these in their respective party manifesto.

Highlighting women's rights issues during fortnight campaign ActionAid and Aashna Women Rights Resource Network along with its allies organized stop violence against women fortnight campaign was organized in 15 districts in 7 regions of Madhya Pradesh. This year, theme was women and property rights, addressing violence against women at both domestic and public spaces, rights of women workers, protection of women from sexual harassment at workplace and protection of children from sexual assaults. Concerned departments and its local units and panchyati raj institutions were also mobilized to participate in campaign to stop violence against women and children. Community groups including men were sensitized on domestic violence, sexual assault and their role in addressing violence.

Training government departments across Punjab on tackling sexual harassment of women at the workplace

A total of 105 community meetings were organized in different districts during VAW campaign to sensitize people on rights of women and children and by demystifying concepts of gender, patriarchy and masculinity for people to understand and start contributing to stop gender-based violence and discrimination. A total of 25 Gram sabhas were also organized on VAW and implementation of Protection of women from Sexual harassment at work place.

Muslim women were sensitized on their right to property. An IEC material on Muslim women and property rights was developed based on Shariyat law to demystify the information and inform women about their rights. Total 2500 Muslim women were sensitized on their property rights.

A memorandum was given to 51 District Collectors across MP to eliminate gaps in implementation of Protection of women from sexual harassment at work place.

CHILD RIGHTS WITH A FOCUS ON PUBLIC EDUCATION

The all India literacy rates are at 74.04%, which is a key socio-economic indicator of the nation and shows progress over the last census.³ Yet we are witness to incidences of children facing increasing levels of deprivation and multiple forms of violence, especially those from marginalized communities. Hence, we prioritized children's basic right to survival, good quality health care, nutritious food, and a clean, healthy, and safe environment. ActionAid Association consider it extremely important to build programmes to strengthen the public education system, as well as challenge the dominant discourse which favours privatisation and commercialisation of education by bringing these discussions into the wider public debate. We have been working towards bringing in more accountability into the public education system with reference hiring and infrastructure maintenance, and grievance redressal mechanisms. We also worked with communities to ensure protection of children from atrocities and discrimination in both schools and colleges.

Advocacy against school closure and ensuring reopening of closed schools

ActionAid has worked on the issues of closures and mergers of government schools across various states.

Government of Odisha issued an order of closing the schools having enrolment 10 or less. Due to our continuous advocacy efforts, backed with fact finding reports which stated that closure of schools will drastically affect children's learning levels negatively, the Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights issued an order for reopening of the closed schools in Odisha. The order was very timely and crucial against the closure of thousands of government schools in the name of lack of students or viability of running those schools.

In Madhya Pradesh a state level strategy meeting was organized against merging of 1.08 lakh schools out of total 1.20 lakh schools and decided to work collectively against school mergers and privatization of government schools.

In **Karnataka** children submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Karnataka, through District commissioner against the closure and demanding continuation of the Government School. In the memorandum they also raised the issues of poor quality of infrastructure and basic amenities in their schools such as broken tables and benches, lack of drinking water facilities, lack of separate toilets for girls, use of school premises as alcoholic zones by miscreants etc. The District commissioner assured of forwarding it to the Chief Minister.

State level public hearing:

In **Uttar Pradesh**, a state level public hearing was organized with State Elementary Education Department authorities such as SSA, including the SCPCR and CSOs. This hearing was to ensure proper implementation of RTE Act. The Gram Pradhan, members of SMCs and community members shared the best practices and planned to address issues pertaining to schools.

Promoting upgradation of the Government school at Panchayat level

Over the years the education campaign has demanded to upgrade all the government schools to the level of Kendriya Vidyalayas in **Karnataka**. Due to our continuous effort along with

³ Census 2011

movements, civil society groups, academicians, School Development and Management committees and Teachers' Associations pressurized the government on the above demand. The government showed interest to open integrated government schools and has planned to start new Karnataka Public schools in 100 panchayat areas and promoting 1000 English medium schools in the state and released additional funds.

Child protection initiatives:

Drafting safe school policy in West Bengal

In **West Bengal**, along with different CSOs drafted a State level Safe School Policy under the auspices of West Bengal State Commission for Protection of Child Rights. The printed policy document was shared at a press conference by SCPCR with the Minister of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare (Dr. Shashi Panja), Richa Mishra (IFS, Director, Dept of Child Rights and Trafficking) and other officials of the state Education Dept. The efforts are directed for policy in the state for all the schools in Bengal. Now our efforts are directed at getting the policy notified so that it might be operationalized among all the schools of Bengal.

Setting a committee to review The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act In Odisha, as a result of our continuous efforts, the State Government has agreed to constitute a committee to review the PCMA (The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act), 2006 and Rules, 2009 to investigate the implementation of the strategy for Prohibition of Child Marriage. Since last four years we have taken up the issue of Child Marriage in Odisha and have developed situation analysis report, status report on implementation of PCMA and communication strategy report. Many people's platforms like forum of the tribal and caste leaders, knowledge platform, media forum and Balya Bibaha Pratirodh Manch (CBO of adolescent Girls & Boys) have been developed and strengthened in these years and have been playing vital role in policy advocacy.

Campaigns and Research Enrolment campaigns

Through sustained campaigning with the community and authorities a total of 72471 children got enrolled during the last session in the government schools.

ActionAid Association launched drives to ensure maximum enrolment, attendance and retention of children all out of children in our operational areas. The District Elementary Education Department, our local grass-root partners, volunteers, members of SMCs and local community participated in enrolment drives.

School without Fear

We have launched the 'School without Fear' campaign drive in **15 states of India** under Beti Zindabad, to fight adverse sex ratio and make gender equality a reality. In this context, we have done survey in the respective states. The primary objectives of the survey were to identify gaps in the implementation of Ministry of Human Resource Development guidelines on safety and security of children in schools, especially in three main areas of concern - child sexual abuse, corporal punishment, and discrimination.

The survey covered 350 schools across 57 districts. The total number of participants is 2790, with 2034 students and 704 school authorities.

One of the major findings of the survey was, irrespective of the healthy number of School Management Committees and Internal Grievance Committees, an unfortunate number of

school authorities report that their schools have no mechanisms to address sexual harassment/abuse. From 704 school authorities, 79% (n=556) report having no mechanisms to address sexual harassment/abuse in their schools. Only 21% (n=148) have mechanisms to address sexual harassment/abuse in their schools.

ActionAid Association in **Madhya Pradesh** ran a campaign named as “Safe School and Safe Home for children” with Education Department with the objective of creating awareness among children on safe and unsafe touch, child sexual assault, legal provisions on child sexual assault and gender-based violence while interacting with around 5000 children. We mobilised teachers, students, and parents, government officials on the problem faced by children at home and at the school. We worked on making government school functional by activating the school management committees through trainings and capacity building, ensuring teachers availabilities, separate toilets for boys and girls. We have strengthened school management committees in approx. 200 schools.

Join the dots

Child sexual abuse is very prevalent in India, the NCRB 2016 report reveals that with 36,022 crimes recorded under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, every 15 minutes a child is sexually abused in India. With the aim of preventing the incidence of abuse and encourages adults to address such violence with a call to action to *See, Listen and Act* an online campaign #JoinTheDots was launched by ActionAid with *WATConsult*. The campaign developed a conversation starter tool on a website¹ which enabled an interestingly active conversation with children. www.jointhedotsnow.com

Ground interventions

Nai Pahel Project in Uttar Pradesh:

As result of our engagement 39,728 out of school children between the age group of 6-14 years have been identified by the Uttar Pradesh Through household survey whereas in the previously done survey only 7200 OOSC were identified in same 20 districts.

Nai Pahel intervention is a joint collaboration of UNICEF and ActionAid Association. With an objective towards identifying and mainstreaming out-of-school children including children affected by seasonal migration the joint intervention has been launched in selected twenty districts of Uttar Pradesh. The selection of the districts has been done on the basis of various socio-economic indicators. Through the first phase of intervention of the project we succeeded in making local communities functional and active for establishing grievance redressal mechanism at Panchayat/local level. Local communities (SMCs, PRI and duty bearers) became more accountable to redress their grievances at local level. It was recorded that in the first phase of intervention 80 applications were filed and 50% applications were resolved at village and Panchayat level. Also, a strong network of 5225 influencers on seasonal migration & PRA exercise have been formed and strengthened in these 20 districts. Also, we have capacitated 5000 teachers, NPRCs (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights) and BEOs (Block Education Officers) on identification of Out of School Children in 20 districts of U.P.

In **Madhya Pradesh**, we have established community-based rehabilitation to address malnutrition and we have brought together and built the capacity of 324 families from 39 villages to monitor children nutrition level and growth in Panna, Satna and Rewa districts of the states. The families work together to make nutrition-based food items (*laddoo*) for 102

children who were identified as malnourished.

In **Himachal Pradesh** we advocated on the issue of discrimination in school MDM with District Commissioner. The DC immediately took notice and sent a delegation with SP to the village High School, Chesta of Distt. Kullu and assured action against those found violating the Act.

In Baddi area of **Himachal Pradesh** we have initiated a project on computer and English education. The project aims to provide English and Computer literacy skills to children especially girls from Dalit and OBC children. In 2018, more than 350 children got benefited through the Project. This has helped in stemming the dropouts, as the girls from this area tend to drop out, at class VIII. The leadership training has ensured that the girls feel inspired to continue with their education. Given that the schools are run in the government school premises, the initiative is well recognised and appreciated by the government.

In **Delhi** seeing the increased number of sexual violence on children we have organised a Human Chain to raise awareness and demanding justice in cases of reported sexual violence on children. The event was organised simultaneously in 9 areas including slums and resettlement colonies of Delhi where women, men, youth and children participated. It brought together more than 1000 people and 500 children coming forth strongly against violence on children. We also partnered with ChildLine and brought their attention to the cases of missing children, rape, sexual assault, child labour in communities we work with.

In **Nagaland**, 4 learning centres for children known as Meraki were started in 2018 to support and impart knowledge outside of school. The cultural norms and values, the art of planting seeds, working in the field are taught by the village elders itself. With the introduction of Meraki, 528 children are now developing a sense of better expression and an improvement in social interaction.

ActionAid in Assam set up 27 Joyful Learning Children Centres (JLCCs) in remote villages where there are no schools covering 1672 children. At JLCCs, children who have never been to school or who dropped out of school get the opportunity to learn basic education skills and are being prepared to go to school.

In Baska and Nalbari districts of **Assam**, we could mobilize 805 children into children assemblies. These children assemblies create an amicable environment for the children to learn, play, perform and encourage one-another to build their confidence and collectivization. The International Girl Child Day was celebrated by children assemblies in collaboration with women forums in Tamulpur cluster by organising soccer competition matches. More than 100 adolescent girls participated in these matches.

As migration is high in the area, we in Lakhimpur district of Assam periodically organize cluster level review meeting with Village Child Protection Collectives (VCPCs) on status of tracking of children in their localities. More than 1000 children from different clubs have participated in the consultation meets till now. We also developed plans for holistic development of children through the children's clubs.

Enabling children in conflict areas in the Kashmir valley enjoy their childhood and realize their potential

In **Kashmir**, in 2018 we opened 100 community-based child friendly spaces (CFS) in four districts of Anantnag, Srinagar, Budgam and Pulwama of the state with collaboration with Unicef. These centres provide a safe environment & psychosocial care to children where they

participate in a variety of activities including sports, craft, drawing, painting, debates and other capacity development programmes. It also supported us in highlighting new and innovative elements of campaigning for child protection, in program approach and activities with children, promotion of youth volunteering and, peace volunteers. Mothers have been impacted positively and have enthusiastically engaged with children since inception of this work.

The CFS centres in Kashmir have had positive impact on 19000 lives of children in 4 districts (9530 girls), 7430 parents, child spaces in more than 110 schools, and 100 local village communities.

In **Tamil Nadu** we organised Education Awareness campaign; in which 200 parents and children participated. Also seeing low retention in schools among Muslim girls, in Tamil Nadu we opened 8 child centers to help these girls in their study in Pudukottai, Ramnathapuram and Sivaganga districts.

In **Bihar, Jharkhand & Rajasthan**, we have organized inter departmental coordination meetings to address trafficking of children and adults and oriented local administration and gram sabha members on vigilance mechanisms.

In **Karnataka** at Kanakapura Taluk of Ramanagar District 20 toilets were constructed, community groups, school administrations and with the support of local Panchayat representatives. This step prevented students from going to their residence in between school hours and helped them to spend quality time in learning.

ActionAid Association with NLSIU (National Law School of India University) in Karnataka, organized a consultation on Malnourishment and food security issue. The National Law School involved the various stakeholders of the state government and concerned district officials of Health and Family welfare; women & child welfare and Rural & Panchayati Raj department and shared the study report of NLS on the nutrition status of children in the districts of and held responsible the officials to immediately take necessary action to address the issue of malnourishment. Altogether more than 600 members participated in these consultations.

Child marriage:

In Subarnapur district, Odisha nearly 60,000 women from more than 5000 women collectives came out to form a human chain to create awareness against child marriage. These human chains were formed covering 965 villages and 3 urban areas. The drive was a first of its kind in Odisha to fight against a social evil such as child marriage.

Human chains were organized in Patharband and Aurobinda Nagar slums of Bhubaneswar respectively with a message "SAY NO TO CHILD MARRIAGE". 125 women participated and took part in the online campaign of #postyourpledge to #saynotochildmarriage in Facebook.

Trafficking:

On the issue of trafficking ActionAid is currently working in the states of West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar & Rajasthan. In these states we have been involved in rescue, rehabilitation and even repatriation of trafficked persons across borders. We have also been involved in providing inputs to laws on Anti trafficking bill – we sought that only registered placement agencies should be made legal and govt should have data of all these agencies

In Jharkhand state level, meetings were held with the Deputy and Under Secretary of the Department of Panchayati Raj and Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare, including engagement through letters and through video. Furthermore, repeated attempts for appointment with the chairperson of the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights were requested.

In Rajasthan orientation of Vigilance Committee members was done (Banswara and Dungarpur districts). While the main objective was training of the officials on the interrelationship between child trafficking and child labour, the unconfirmed status of the vigilance committee led to the focus on the confirmation of the current status of the committee.

Last year a total of 117 trafficked got rescued across India and some of them got linked with the main stream education.

BUILDING PARTICIPATION, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PUBLIC FINANCE, BUDGETS AND GOVERNANCE

Raipur Declaration: Nearly 300 delegates, representing around 50 organizations from across 10 states, came together at the *Rashtriya Adivasi Adhiveshan* (National Tribal Convention) in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, on March 28-29 to talk about tribal community values and issues. This two-day programme, facilitated by ActionAid Association, saw discussions on tribal existence, identity, dignity and development.

Keeping in mind the current situation and the historical injustices faced by tribal communities, participants at the convention felt that the government should consider a new treaty with tribal communities that builds confidence and hope, respects tribal identity and rights and has a vision for the betterment of tribal communities and all humankind.

Recognizing the potential of the Gram Sabha in protecting natural resources, ensuring land and livelihood rights for tribals, and promoting tribal identity and cultures, the need to empower Gram Sabhas was also strongly articulated. Participants called for effective implementation of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act and the Forest Rights Act. The rights and specific issues affecting Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) and the Nomadic Tribes and De-Notified Tribes (NT-DNTs) were also discussed. The discussions at the convention and the ideas emerging from among tribal communities were subsequently put together in the form of the Raipur Declaration.

In Lucknow, facilitating benefits to Musahar community: The local Member of Parliament called a Chaupal at Kalanahi Khurd village of Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh to address and redress the grievances of Musahar community. During the Chaupal, various schemes of the government was made available to the selected families. Primarily, construction of toilets, housing and pension, making fertiliser through organic methods, Aam Aadmi Bima Yojna, electricity and gas connection facilities were provided to the community. Along with this the M.P. promised that by the end of year 2019 all the Musahar community would have their own pucca houses. The Musahar Manch demanded that the land entitlements must be provided to the community now living under constant fear of eviction by the Forest Department.

Improving public services and ensuring accountable governance from the Gram Sabha and upwards is the core of our interventions. **1479 Village Development Plans were approved** by Gram Sabhas/Govt. across various states. We also facilitated at least **364 women gram sabhas**. The **Mushahar community leaders in UP influenced their local and national leaders to get schemes and entitlements sanctioned**, pension, toilets, organic fertilisers, electricity and gas connections and promise of housing by end of 2019. In Shamli, UP a new set of guidelines will ensure **every block of a minority concentrated District will have a committee** for planning and budgeting at district, Block and State levels. In Rajasthan, for the first time, **villagers made a people's budget**. The **Special Component Plan budget increased** from 50 crores to **500 crores** in Bangalore Mahanagara Palike

In District Shamli of UP, which is one of the minority concentrated districts under Multi-Sectoral Development Plan (MSDP), we influenced the state to ensure the guidelines were changed to focus on minority concentrated areas. The guideline provides that every block should establish a committee for planning and budgeting, district, Block and State level

committee.

Consultation on rights of nomadic and de-notified communities

A national consultation to highlight the plight of NT-DNTs in the country, with Sh. Bal Krishna Renke, former chairperson of the *National Commission for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes* and more than 250 activists and leaders of nomadic and de-notified communities from 18 states in Delhi. During the consultation, resolutions demanding a census of NT-DNTs in all states and union territories, and a special legislation for the protection of these communities were passed. The need to implement recommendations of the Idate Commission with immediate effect was also raised as a major demand for the holistic development of NT-DNT communities.

Meeting President of India by people with disability

An 8-member delegation comprising representatives from *Viklang Adhikar Manch* and our Bihar and Jharkhand Regional Office met the Hon'ble President of India, Sh. Ramnath Kovind, at Rashtrapati Bhawan. The delegation drew the Hon'ble President's attention towards the need for proper implementation of *Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan* (Accessible India Campaign). The President was also apprised of the steps taken by the state government towards the welfare of disabled people.

Ground Interventions

In Rajasthan, for the first time, villagers made a **people's budget**. The **Special Component Plan** budget increased from 50 crores to 500 crores in the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike.

In **Bangalore** we extended support to the marginalized community to take up leadership in making the state responsible to implement programmes and schemes effectively with the objective to ensure the rights of the communities.

Persons with Disabilities. We provided leadership and was instrumental in influencing the state to implement the 3% budget allocated in all Departments for the empowerment of the PWD. Following are some off the highlights of the exemplary interventions:

As a legal recourse, we filed a case against the Zillah Panchayat for non-apportionment of 3% disabled budget for 3 years since 2011. The CEO had to finally reserve 3% for 3 years 2.51crores which has now been spent in full for livelihood loans, surgery and aids and appliances for persons with disabilities.

We were in solidarity with more than 200 people across Bangalore to express anguish in accessing Pension schemes. The continuous interaction with the state government resulted in increase in the old age amount from Rs.600 to Rs.1000/-

We have successfully influenced the Belagavi Corporation in Karnataka to utilise up to 4.8 crore on Basic Amenities. This is Belagavi city work - using RTI effectively we have been able to get the details of the plans ensure each budget allotted is used for the community. Most of the budget in this category are basic amenities like – Cemented roads, drainage construction, few community halls, toilets etc. in Dalit bastis.

Livelihood: Awareness was created among SC community members on livelihood options and 87 members applied loans for 1.15 crore for livelihood from Belagavi City Corporation & Ambedkar Development Corporation. 15 Dalit members have accessed individual self-employment loans – 1,00,000 (saree business, vegetable, cattle, goats etc.) rest followed. 57

Safai karmachari – self- employment loans - 1,00,000 - is due and followed up.

In **Odisha** trainings have been organised for **PRI Members** on FRA, RTE, Volunteerism and three tier Panchayati Raj system and the role of Gram Sabha. 243 PRI Members participated in the training in different blocks.

The Antaranga Youth Club (AYC) members are functioning as “Suchana Bahak” between the Gram Panchayat and people to obtain the PDS (Public distribution System) on a specific day. AYC members are streamlining the system in **79 Gram panchayats** of the district. AYC members attended the **social audit sessions in 97 Gram panchayats** in 10 blocks of the **Kandhamal District**.

In **Tamil Nadu (Madurai and Virudhunagar districts)** 20 persons from the **most marginalized Arunthathiyar** community have availed old age pension, widow pension and disability pension from the government.

In **Hyderabad, access to schemes and entitlements**: 43 women got benefitted by Old age and Widow pensions (scheme wise -women, men, PWDs, Single Women/widows); under PM-15-point programme. Meant for the minority communities. A total of 93 students out of which 53 girls and 40 boys benefitted by scholarships; advancements in tracking of SCSP, TSP; Budget analysis, tracking and monitoring of budgets at different levels- panchayat, block, district, state etc., advocacy done after analysis or tracking.

In Gujarat (Navsari district) PRI elected representatives and community leaders were trained on PESA and common land. Elected representatives and community leaders put forward development of village common land in 4 gram sabhas. In Khanpur, villagers planned budget of about Rs.1.6 lacs and remaining villages for Rs.1.2 lacs each. This is for the first time the villagers have come forward and made a people’s budget. This is the impact of capacity building training of community leaders in the project. Earlier, villagers were also not attending gram sabha and discussing on planning process in gram sabha.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY AND PROMOTING HARMONY AND JUSTICE

During 2018, the major actions under this section included - Celebrating diversity, upholding and promoting Secularism and conducting national consultations, Solidarity with peace campaign, promoting leadership and activism, training of peace volunteers, Muslim women issues.

As part of our mission to cherish and uphold secularism, plurality and communal harmony, we celebrated diversity in Delhi, Lucknow and Mumbai, by reaching out to cross section of communities, especially among the marginalised social groups, in Iftar Parties including a Twitter Campaign *#MyIftarParty*.

Social media posts showed ***#MyIftarParty* events occurring in locations spread across Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.**

A two-day **National consultation on Media, Society and democracy in Secular perspective** was held in Bhopal, culminating in a Resolution to condemn lethal attacks on progressive journalists, writers, artists, human rights defenders and demanding strict action against the criminals from the state. As part of the national peace campaign we also visited four violence hit areas in Madhya Pradesh and met more than 50 such affected families and conducted fact finding on mob lynching and shared its report to DGP, Ministry of Home Affairs and circulated widely to NHRC, Minority Commission, etc. Three press conferences on the issues of secularism were conducted in 2018 and two memorandums on the issue has been submitted the State Chief Minister, **Madhya Pradesh**.

In **Odisha**, a least 450 Antaranga youths in 201 villages had participated in peace and harmony meetings. 99 among them were trained in 10 blocks of Kandhamal district.

11th Antaranga Youth Festival. Youth Festival is an annual event of Antaranga Kandhamal which is being organized on 22nd and 23rd December of every year. More than 700 youth from the Kandhamal, Koraput and Khurda participated. During these two days, the discussions were held around the issues and implementation of Forest Rights Act in the district, the constitutional rights and the role of youth to make aware the rights in community, issues of child marriage in Kandhamal district and legal provisions available to combat child marriage.

The context of the consultation was the increasing monopoly of media in the last decade and people's voices not in its content. Therefore, the need to challenge the role of media. The consultation concluded with a resolution of condemning lethal attacks on progressive journalists, writers, artists, human rights defenders and demanding strict action against the criminals from the state.

BUILDING SOUTH-SOUTH SOLIDARITIES

In 2018, the South Solidarity initiative continued its engagement with the BRICS forum, strengthening partnerships with civil society actors, social movements, and other stakeholders from Brazil and South Africa in the process. We also worked more closely with partners such as **BRICS Feminist Watch** on issues of international finance and women's rights. The hub also launched a comprehensive international research on refugee women and participated in knowledge building and sharing on refugee issues through conferences and knowledge products.

At the Civil BRICS, we contributed substantively to panel discussions on issues such as promoting a **Feminist Agenda at the National Development Bank (NDB)** and recommendations for reinvigorated CIVIL BRICS forum. We were also involved in the **drafting process of the Civil BRICS Policy recommendations**, a document which puts forward policy recommendations raised by South African CSOs with regional and BRICS partners for the consideration of the South African BRICS Sherpa office of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO).

We also launched a comprehensive **international research on refugee women** and participated in knowledge building and sharing on refugee issues through conferences and knowledge products.

To strengthen our relationship with **ActionAid Brazil**, which has evolved during our collective work on the BRICS agenda over the past few years, we also signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**. This MoU builds on our joint interventions such as knowledge products and learning exchanges and aims to bring together our partners and larger civil society networks and social movements to critically engage with the urbanisation process in these two countries and contribute to discourse, learnings, and practice on issues such as housing, engendered public services and spaces, and water security and commons.

We were part of a group of about **15 civil society organisations** that met with the Vice-Presidents, Senior Management, and Staff of the **New Development Bank (NDB)** in continuation of the dialogue that was initiated with the bank last year.

We initiated an **international study on refugee women in the global South** with the aim of bringing their challenges and fortitude to the public through their stories. The objective of the study is to contribute to the discourse on universal right to refuge and highlight the need for a more inclusive and responsive protection framework for women and children refugees.

Over the past few months we have worked with publishers, journalists, development workers, and academics in Bangladesh, India, Algeria, and Democratic Republic of Congo to collect the **narratives of around 40 women who have been displaced by war or due to persecution**. These narratives will further contribute to the report being authored by eminent writers and academics who have been working on refugee issues for long.

OTHER INTERVENTIONS

Issues covered under this section include: Caste-based Discrimination, Untouchability and Atrocities, Leadership building/Training, caste-based discrimination, Human Rights Defenders, Rohingya Refugees, Rights & Entitlements of NT/DNTs, Dalits and Minorities.

We conducted a **study** on the “Implementation of SC & ST PoA Act” in **Madhya Pradesh** in **25 police stations and 30 villages in 10 districts** of the state.

In Odisha, we took up the concept of "untouchability free village" in 50 villages of Kandhamal district. So far, villagers of at least 10 villages have declared their villages as untouchability-free villages. In Haryana we conducted 31 Fact-Finding Missions related to atrocities against women and minorities. We also provided rehabilitation support to at least 17 survivors.

Netritva Vicharashala / Leadership School

Leadership Development School is an idea to promote political understanding among leaders from marginalized and sub-altern groups/ community youths, women, single women, differently-abled. We continue with contents on pluralism and secularism in our Leadership Schools. Similarly, **Dalit Netritva Vicharashala** focus upon initiatives for ideological building of subaltern communities through leadership schools. The objective of leadership school is to orient people about different progressive ideologies and build their skill to analyse those ideologies in the current context. These have been designed in a way that it can help rural youth in understanding poverty, exclusion, oppression, discrimination and violence. Ambedkar Social Justice Centre (ASJC) has conducted various Dalit leadership schools with Dalit youth. It has developed a detailed module on “Dalit Netritva Vicharashala” that can be used as guiding book for many groups such as community groups, youth groups, government departments and academic institutions. Altogether around **120 youths were oriented through leadership schools**.

Human Rights Defenders (HRDs)

- 110 victims of discrimination and atrocities, including 11 Dalit bonded labour received counselling and rehabilitation support.
- 44 cases to the human rights bodies at state and national level.
- 64 cases followed up with the district and state level authorities. 21 victims received compensation.

ActionAid with the support from European Commission initiated intervention in 170 villages from 9 districts in four states (Haryana, Rajasthan, UP, and Bihar) of India to address the vulnerability of Dalits, Muslims, DNTs, specially women amidst them in accessing justice, protecting and promoting their Constitutional rights as well as empowering them to access welfare schemes. We have trained 378 community leaders as a Human Rights Defenders (HRDs). They also supported fact-finding missions in the cases of the heinous crime such as mob lynching, gang-rape and murder, etc. and helped victims to apply for compensation and receive support from law enforcement agencies. 137 HRDs including 68 Dalits, 23 Muslims, 11 DNTs and 35 Women, participated in the fact-finding missions. 75 HRDs have filed petitions or complaints related for compensation provisioned under the SC/ST POA Act. 15 HRDs have also filed complaints to the State Human Rights Commission and Scheduled Caste Commission for speedy justice in the cases of atrocities. 50 HRDs have filed complains

about the discrimination in services to the Dalits, Muslims, and DNTs. 122 HRDs conducted advocacy meetings with authorities at district and state levels.

HRDs have been taking initiatives to monitor public services, organising community meetings, helping people to apply for welfare schemes and ensuring legal process in the incidents of discrimination and atrocities. **3034 people have been supported to apply for the welfare schemes** (Scholarship, MGNREGA, and other schemes meant for them).

EMERGENCIES

Kerala Flood relief

- Reached out the worst affected districts - Idukki, Wayanad, Alappuzha and Pathnamthita.
- Relief support provided to 2547 households
- Repair work of 55 houses and 10 ICDS centres carried out
- 10 water purifiers distributed benefiting 50 families
- 4 water tanks installed
- Transparency boards carrying details of relief material displayed

The unprecedented rains, consequent floods and landslides in Kerala caused massive destructions. 14 districts of Kerala and 1 district of Karnataka have been affected. ActionAid in collaboration with various support agencies and using its own resources reached remote locations in four districts – Idukki, Waynad, Alapuzha and Pathnamthita and supported 2547 households (12000 individuals) in the form of dry ration, NFIs (including mattresses, cots) WASH materials e.g. water purifier, dignity kits, education materials and clothes. The relief has been carried out in partnership with local organizations such as National Fish Workers Forum, Ekta Parishad, Thudi – Tribal Centre. We ensured that flood affected women led the relief process and demonstrated transparency and accountability through the transparency boards being displayed at the relief locations.

In the rehabilitation phase, we supported housing repairing work. Minor repairs of 10 Anganwadi centres was carried out in Pandharam Municipality. Further repairing work of 30 houses in Pandanadu Panchayat (ward no-1, 2, 3 & 4) of Chengannur Block, Alleppey district and 25 houses Pandharam village of Pandharam Municipality panchayat of Pathnamthita district, is being carried out.

10 water purifiers were distributed to 10 households in Pandanadu Panchayat. Each water purifier can contain up to 25 litres of water per day and can provide bacteria free, clean drinking water to over 5 families. 4 water tanks were installed one in school benefitting 150 children and 3 others in different locations, reaching out to around 60 families.

Other Humanitarian Responses

In Rajasthan, 36 victims have received support for rehabilitation. 32 DNT families in Ganeheda village in Pushkar, Ajmer district who were evicted by the Ajmer Development Authority, have received emergency support in terms of essential food items. In other 4 different cases as sum of Rs - 9000/- each for victim was provided in Jalore region. Here 3 women and one man got victim support.

ActionAid provided sweaters to 460 children including 234 girls of DNT communities in Bharatpur, Alwar and Tonk districts during the winter season. Because of lack of sweaters these children had stopped going to schools. Providing sweaters helped them to continue their education.

In another incident, ActionAid facilitated material support (bamboos) for temporary shelter for around 60 families in Jamia Nagar, Delhi. They lost their hutments in the fire which broke out during the night.
