REPORT OF THE CHILD MARRIAGE PREVENTION PROGRAMME

HAQ: Centre for Child Rights in partnership with Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti

2015 TO 2019

2019

FOREWORD

 In 2012, HAQ: Centre for Child Rights ventured into a child marriage prevention initiative which was a cross over between our Children and Governance and Child Protection programmes because it combined strengthening governance systems while protecting children and adolescents from child marriages.

We decided to adopt this approach because HAQ's strength lies in working on children and governance and child protection. The focus and strength of this initiative lay in its systems approach to preventing a social evil. The key strategy was to focus on the governance system and work towards the strengthening of the existing state mechanisms, structures and institutions through training and monitoring of their functions, holding them accountable in implementation of the law on child marriage. Simultaneously, the project focused on, sensitizing, supporting and mobilizing the communities, through women's self-help groups, religious leaders and youth groups to take action to prevent child marriages. Creating and empowering adolescent girls' groups was yet another important thrust of the project.

This approach enabled communities to not just mobilise support from the concerned officials, but also hold them accountable for their inaction. The purpose was to bring together duty bearers and community to form a mechanism that responded to and prevented child marriage. At the same time, because of our work on child protection, we found that it was important to not just position child marriage as a bad social and cultural phenomenon, but also as a violation of right to protection of children, especially girls, making them even more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, as studies have shown. Hence it was important to stress on the fact that child marriage was an offence- liable to criminal action and thus the need for effective implementation of the law.

In the first phase HAQ partnered with MV Foundation in Telangana and Jabala Action Research Organisation (Jabala) in West Bengal. Without their presence and direct intervention in the communities this would not have been possible. MVF and Jabala teams in the districts were the back bone of this initiative. We have to also acknowledge Krinna Shah's deep involvement in the project in this phase. It was supported jointly by The Ford Foundation and MacArthur Foundation. HAQ is very grateful to Vanita Nayak Mukherjee and Dipa Nag Choudhury for their support and guidance.

Renu Khanna, who has undertaken the present evaluation, had also evaluated it in 2014 and represented the project in the form of a model, which was very helpful. She also helped to identify some gaps and thrust areas which enabled us to design the second phase of the project. This included addressing the other issues that impact on child marriage, without which there could be no change.

The second phase began in 2015. While the interventions in West Bengal in partnership with Jabala continued to be supported by The Ford Foundation and MacArthur Foundation, a new partnership with Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti was initiated in Ajmer District of Rajasthan with support from the American Jewish World Services (AJWS). Indira Pancholi joined in for coordinating the project. The learnings from phase 1 were included in the designing of this phase.

While phase 1 laid the foundation, phase 2 enabled us to deepen our engagement and also identify new challenges.

Because we wanted to be sure that our interventions in stopping child marriages should not have had a negative impact on the lives of the girls, in 2016, we published a follow up study on the girls whose marriages had been intervened in, successfully or unsuccessfully. It was a relief to find that the project interventions had not made the girls more vulnerable. In fact, the lives of those whose weddings could not be stopped despite all efforts, had suffered greatly. Very few had been able to negotiate a safe and happy life.

While law is an enabler, law can also create its own problems, as we saw. This is when we designed the Triple S Model for addressing child marriage, shared and evaluated by Renu Khanna in this report. This model is a result of multiple experiments and discussions between us and the partners. The final naming of the model is Indira's.

In this phase the concentration has not been so much on the number of child marriages that could be stopped, instead on creating an ecosystem in which child marriages and other such violations can be addressed. These have been described in the report.

What has been amazing is the cross learning across three teams (HAQ, MVF and Jabala in Phase 1 and HAQ, Jabala and MJAS in Phase 2). While MVF after three years was able to carry forward and take to scale the interventions on the ground on its own, Jabala is doing so now. In this too, HAQ's role as technical support and enabler has enriched HAQ in many ways.

In the last few years of implementing the project we have learnt that if child marriage is to be tackled, a holistic approach is required. It cannot be the only issue with which we can enter the community. It has to be located within the larger issues concerning patriarchy, social structures and norms, rights of children and the need for protecting children from abuse and exploitation.

Simultaneously, just as communities have to be convinced that child marriage cannot be a measure to protect girls from abuse, safe spaces have to be created for them in schools and in communities. For this we must work to amend the right to education law to include children beyond 14 years of age, as it currently stands. At the same time, it must be ensured that girls are not just enrolled, but also retained in school, and schools are free from abuse. It is equally important to work on implementing the law against sex selective abortion, dowry and trafficking. Simultaneously, health concerns have to be addressed.

In sharing our model of addressing child marriage and our learnings and challenges through this evaluation report, we hope we can contribute to the ongoing debates and discussions on this issue.

We fully recognise that the work HAQ and its partners have been doing is but one in thousand other efforts across the country on this issue. We also recognise that we have to be prepared that change will be slow - after all, we are dealing with a centuries old practice and while we need to be hopeful, we must also be realistic that it will take time. There are also new challenges that changing times throw up.

But we are optimists. So we must keep pushing with our fingers and digging with our nails- slowly chipping away to bring change

Enakshi Ganguly

Co-Founder and Former Director

Content

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document is a report of a participatory review of a child marriage and adolescent empowerment project being implemented by HAQ:Centre for Child Rights (HAQ) and its two partners Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti (MJAS) in Rajasthan, and Jabala Action Research Organisation (Jabala) in West Bengal.

I had the privilege of studying the earlier phase of this work in West Bengal and Telengana and was gratified at how seriously the earlier recommendations had been considered and implemented by HAQ and the Jabala teams. It was exciting to see how the work - and the team - had matured in West Bengal and how the work had evolved at the field level with the new partner MJAS. And the special quality and passion that MJAS brings to the partnership.

I would like to thank the HAQ team for the opportunity to go back to the field areas and see the maturing of the efforts. My thanks are also for the Jabala and MJAS teams for the privilege of studying their efforts closely and learning from their different contexts and their approaches. And thanks also to the community groups that I met in the course of the review – the football teams, girls and boys groups, mothers' groups, religious leaders and the officers and functionaries of the child protection machinery in the districts and blocks.

This report has an introductory section which includes details about the project and the methodology of this review.The findings section uses content from the two organisational reports, to summarise the major findings and offers some recommendations. Each organisation is urged to use its own report for the findings and recommendations along with the introductory section.

My best wishes for the three partner teams for their ongoing struggles for gender justice and children's rights.

Renu Khanna

July 3 2019

THE CONTEXT
RAJASTHAN

Rajasthan has been identified as a high prevalence state for child marriage in India, with a higher than national average prevalence. In fact, Rajasthan ranks number one in the country with the highest prevalence of child marriage, based on the data from the Annual Health Survey, 2011-2012. According to the Census 2011, Rajasthan has 32 percent of girls married under the age of 18 years in comparison to the national average of 17 percent. The percentage has decreased in the last decade from 52% in Census 2001 to 32 % in Census 2011.

Stringent patriarchal customs and norms in the state are a key determinant of child marriage. Other contributing factors are: low levels of literacy and education, silent acceptance of child marriage by caste panchayats and political and social leaders, the social practices of Nata and Aatta Satta, belief that suitable life partners will not be available at an adult age and parents preferring to marry children early due to uncertainty of their own future. Aatta Satta is a system in which one set of brother and sister are married to another set of brother and sister. In the event of irreconcilable differences between one couple, the other couple has to perforce break their marriage as well. Nata is a form of remarriage that involves no religious ceremony. Husband-to-be of the woman pays a certain amount of money to her former husband and a contract paper is executed by the families of two men detailing the money and ownership of the jewellery of the woman

Child marriages are part of the societal fabric. It is common practice to get children married on auspicious days such as Ram Navami, Akshay Tritiya/AakhaTeej and Peepal Poornima, and even during mrityubhoj/mausar (death feast organized when a family member dies) as a cost saving measure. Some castes also perform mass marriages(Bavni) as a part of their religious practices.

> **Box 1: Performing mass child marriages in the name of religion**
>
> Bavni is a custom that has existed amongst the Gurjar community since ancient times. Bavni was earlier prevalent among many other communities but is today practiced only among the Gurjar. In this custom 7-8 brothers and their larger kinship network invite people belonging to 52 villages to perform mass marriages. The custom is performed under the cover of religion. The process of Bavni is performed in three phases. In the first phase the village in which Bavni is to be performed is identified and a pair of male and female calf i.e. Keda and Kedi is selected. In the second phase, the wedding cards are printed and distributed in all 52 villages. The children of parents who are keen to perform child marriages register themselves with the organisers of Bavni. In the third phase the marriage of the male and female calf is performed in a public place and in the presence of the majority of community members. The actual marriage of the children however, takes place in several other secret places. The reason behind this is to distract the authorities i.e. police from taking action. Since the weddings are performed in the name of religion generally the police do not take any action. Bavni also has the implicit acceptance of the caste panchayat.
>
> Source: Socio-Cultural determinants of Child Marriage in Ajmer district: A KAP Study, 2017

In 2007 the Rajasthan government notified state rules for the implementation of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 (PCMA). This Act has a provision for Child Marriage Prohibition Officer at various levels, with a clear role for creating mass awareness on the issue and for taking preventive measures and legal action in case of violation of the PCMA. However, CMPOs are there in namesake only and the law enforcement mechanism is weak due to non-convergence of departments like police, education and other local authorities.

Similarly, despite the state government adopting the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) by signing a memorandum of understanding with the Central Government in January 2010, the structures and institutional mechanisms to achieve the objectives and guidelines of ICPS, are only now being set up in the state. While the Juvenile Justice Boards (JJB) and the Child Welfare Committees (CWC) have been sanctioned and constituted in all 33 districts, most of the CWCs are not equipped to function to ensure rights of children in need of care and protection, including the trap of child marriage. Structures like the Village Child Protection Committees and Block Child Protection Committees are non existent leaving a huge gap in ensuring child protection at the village and community levels.

Most of the designated officials at the district, block and panchayat levels are not aware of their roles and relevance of Integrated Child Protection Scheme. Due to socio-cultural acceptance of child marriage, the police turns a blind eye on child marriages happening in the community. Recently, the state government has initiated special awareness drives during Akshay Tritya and other high occurrence seasons of child marriage, but these drives are limited to urban and peri urban areas where information flow and road connectivity is better. There is need to establish coordination between relevant department, police, panchayats, religious/caste groups and community to address the problem of child marriage at psycho-social level and for law enforcement and prosecution of defaulters. Social security schemes for girls' education and minimizing gender discrimination need to be strengthened for delaying child marriage.

Ajmer is one of Rajasthan's districts with a high prevalence of early marriage. The literacy rate in Ajmer district in 2011 Census was 90.25 percent for males and 76.50 for females, up from 55.68 percent in 2001 Census. The rural female literacy rate however was 41.29 percent in 2011 Census. While the sex ratio for Ajmer district improved from 931 in 2001 to 951 in 2011, the Child Sex Ratio decreased from 922 girls per 1000 boys in 2001 to 901 girls in 2011. The urban CSR in 2011 was 936 and the rural was 890.

Many factors contribute to the persistence of child marriage in Ajmer district including factors like socially defined gender norms and expectations, concerns around girls' safety and family honour, traditional practices around marriage, limited education and livelihood opportunities, poverty and weak implementation of the law. Patriarchal values, in particular, play a significant role in child marriage. Girls are considered as a 'property' moving from the father's to the groom's household. Their role as housewives is the only future conceived for girls by their families. Aatta Satta form of exchange marriage is common in Ajmer district as a whole. Caste Panchayats play a vital role and have a dominant voice. In cases of disputes related to marriage, decisions are taken by the caste panchayats and not the law enforcement mechanisms. And the decisions taken by the caste panchayats are accepted by the communities.

On these projects, MJAS works in two blocks of Ajmer District, Kekri and Srinagar. In Kekri panchyat samiti block, the villages are in remote locations. MJAS is working with SC and ST communities who are mainly farm labourers. In all the communities - SC,

ST and OBC - child marriages are prevalent. But the prevalence is more amongst OBCs. Meena community in STs, Lodha in OBCs and among Gujjar community as well, child marriage is prevalent. Girls generally study upto class 8 because the village schools are only upto class 8.

Similarly in Srinagar Block, there are total 41 gram panchayat. The major population in the region is of Gujjar, Cheeta-Mehrat, Rawat and Jaat who belong to OBC. There are some families of Meghwal, Regar and Kalbelia who are from SC group. The main occupation of the community is farming and animal husbandry. In the region the OBC are economically well off as they have landholdings whereas SCs have very less land holdings. The cases of child marriage in Gujjar and Cheeta-Mehrat community is higher. The Cheeta-Mehrat community is unique in its fluid religious identities – within a family one member can be a Hindu and another Muslim. 'The father's name is Jawahar, the son's name is Salahuddin, the husband's name is Mohan, and the wife's name is Rubina' (https://www.livehindustan.com/lok-sabha-election/story-read-about-the-cheetah-mehrat-community-of-rajasthan-and-their-issues-2508019. html). Cheeta Mehrat's have traditionally been an example of syncretic cultures and religions. But this community is now being torn apart by the vote bank politics, the reign of polarised religious sentiments. Among other disturbing trends, girls and boys are being asked to choose a religion as against the earlier options of being fluid

MJAS PROJECT VILLAGES, ACTIVITIES AND INPUTS

Table 1 shows the villages in which this project was implemented and the specific activities that formed the package of interventions to achieve the objectives of this project. The point to be noted is that MJAS is working in around 20 villages in a comprehensive manner towards the goal of citizenship building among children, youth and women based on a feminist perspective. While the interventions address the entire community, there is an equity perspective with a focus on particularly marginalised communities like the Cheeta-Mehrat, and others belonging to different SC and ST groups. Cheeta-Mehrat is a unique community that follows both Hindu and Muslim practices, have small or no landholdings and have low education levels. Similarly, SC and ST communities have small landholdings if at all and have low levels of education.

Table 1 *List of Activities in the 8 Project Villages*

Activity List	Ajaysar	Kharekhdi	Padampura	Hasiyawas	Meeno Ka nayaGaav	Sakariya	Beerwada	Mevda Colony	Other Exposed Village
Children Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11
Girl Adolescents and Youth Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11
Boy Adolescents and Youth Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Pear Leaders	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	ü	3

Activity List	Ajaysar	Kharekhdi	Padampura	Hasiyawas	Meeno Ka nayaGaav	Sakariya	Beerwada	Mevda Colony	Other Exposed Village
Education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11
Campaign against child marriage: Child Marriage No Never-, Without my consent never ever	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	25
Protection from Child Sexual Abuse Session	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	10
Football	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0	0	1
Tech centre	✓	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0	0	8
Jagruk Nagrik Committee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11
Constitution And Rights		✓	0	✓	✓	✓	0	0	1
Wenlido	✓	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0	0	6
Livelihood Options	✓	✓	0	✓	0	✓	0	0	2
Theatre in Education	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	ü	9
Gender/ Leadership Training	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	ü	2
Health and Nutrition Sessions	0	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	ü	6
Case Intervention	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	ü	6

The core of the work is around collectivisation around the idea of 'citizenship' – creating Children's, Adolescent Girls' and Boys' groups, and Aware Citizens' Committees, promoting education and preventing early marriages through different activities like gender sensitisation, theatre, football, WenLido, feminist technology training centres and public campaigns. Case interventions and follow-up until resolution, are integral to all the work. The interventions in these eight villages are intensive and rigorous and lead to a spill over effect in other villages.

Developing this table of project villages and the activities conducted therein, in relation to MJAS entire work provided many insights to the team members – especially the junior and recent recruits – in the evaluation workshop. They were able to relate

the successes and challenges in different villages to the intensity and concentration of activities as well as the characteristics of the different communities and the location of the villages. They were also able to get a holistic perspective on the work of MJAS and the contribution and meaning of the different activities to the overall goal and vision.

The discussions during the inception workshop indicated that the following strategies were used to implement the model described above.

- Perspective building of organisational staff and team building, in order to create the facilitators of social transformation towards gender justice and enhanced citizenship.

- Creating peer leaders of young girls and boys.

- Creating sanghathans or collectives - of young girls and boys, of women. Using these collectives to create awareness about issues like child marriage in the community.

- Creating a perspective about citizenship – through a training module on citizenship based on participative perspective and ideology.

- Working with different stakeholders to create an enabling environment for prevention of child marriage – meetings with caste leaders, panchayat members, mothers, fathers and others.

- Creating networks and alliances with other organizations working on the same issues

Moving from Samooh to Sangathan

Right of children (and adolescents) to participate in matters that concern them in an age appropriate manner and their right to be heard has been recognised in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12 of the UNCRC). Although this finds mention in the National Policy for Children and the National Plan of Action 2016, not much has moved in this direction. Both HAQ and MJAS believe that children who are citizens from the moment they are born, can only assert their citizenship rights and be responsible if they are capacitated to do so from an early age. That is why forming collectives of children is an important aspect of MJAS's work.

The MJAS team interestingly drew a distinction between a 'samooh' and a 'sangathan'. They emphasised that a samooh or a group was an initial stage of collectivisation and that a samooh became a sangathan - an organisation – when it developed a collective vision and a desire to act together towards a common goal. This distinction was being used as a process indicator in their work – they aspire to see all the samoohs as strong sangathans.

The field visits and the documentation review revealed many other strategies that will be discussed in further sections.

DISCUSSION OF ACTIVITIES AND INPUTS ACCORDING TO THE TRIPLE S MODEL

1. Capacity Building and Skilling

Capacity building activities have largely happened with MJAS team members, adolescent girls and boys groups, the peer leaders and the Jagruk Nagrik Manch members, who are mainly community women.

The Table 2 below shows that a wide range of topics have been covered including perspective building on gender, child rights (including child sexual abuse), citizenship and constitutional rights, skill building on Case management, leadership, photography and so on. The table also shows serious investment in terms of number of days spent on building capacities as well as in using external resources and expertise. The second year of the project was spent on training of trainers of various kinds. The last column attempts to capture the spin off effects of all the investment. Table 3 shows the training of trainers programmes organised for MJAS staff.

The reports to the donors also indicate that school teachers and panchayat leaders in the project villages have been sensitized to changing gender relations through meetings and sessions on child sexual abuse.

Table 2 *Details of Capacity Building Activities 2015-2019 (compiled from Data Sheets received from MJAS)*

Year	Topics	Days	Resource persons	Participants	Outcomes
2015	Livelihoods, Gender, Reproductive Health, TOC/Vison/Mission, Photography	31 – 17 days for livelihoods including rural tourism exposure tours	Mainly external individuals and organizations– eg Azad Foundation Aajeevika Bureau, Nidhi Agarwal & Jaya Bharti, Rohit Jain, Subhadra	120 – only 2 training workshops only for staff, others mixed	5 Women driver, 8 trained staff members, 5 young girl photographers.
2016	Training of Trainers: Saath-Saath (3 phases), First Aid, Child Sexual Abuse, Feminist Technology	28	AVEHI, MJAS, HAQ, Red Cross, FAT, Rahi Foundation	Saath-Saath 14 MJAS trainers, First Aid 14 MJAS trainers, Feminist Technology 6 MJAS trainers, Rahi Foundation- 13 trained staff	SaathSaath integrated in all AGG/ABG capacity building (appx 1000 adolescents) First aid -95 football girls, Feminist technology – 200 girls in 4 batches till 2019, Rahi Foundation- 13 trained staff

Year	Topics	Days	Resource persons	Participants	Outcomes
2017	Laws for Child Rights, Peer Leaders Module Development, SRHR,	9	MJAS, Subhadra	Laws 55 participants, PL Module 5 MJAS staff, SRHR –14 staff and 7 Peer Leaders	Laws input used in public campaigns reaching around 6000 people. Peer leaders module used for 12 3-day workshops reaching 650 adolescent girls and boys and 60 football girls
2018	Photography, CSA Healing, Youth leadership and team building (2 batches), New Case Management for VAW, social media, Organisation Development, WenLido	36	RAHI, HAQ, WenLido, Individual experts Rohit Jain (Photography) Vishaka Mahila Salah Evam Suraksha Kendra–Jaipur	Photography 12 girls, Exposure 63 including community women and peer leaders, Healing 3 MJAS staff, Youth Leadership 68, Case Mgt 18, Social Media 6, OD 20,	3 WenLido trainers trained 142 girls in 8 workshops MJAS staff of 20 for VAW case work
2019	Grass roots football coach – 2 batches	6	MJAS and resource person	41 girls	19 girls now coaches in their own villages
2015–17	TOT for child sexual abuse in 4 phases	11	RAHI	MJAS 13 facilitators	1350 girls, boys and 55 women are trained through workshops
2017–19	Social Change (in 4 phases)	40	SHRUTI	5 youth	

The Tech Centre was established in 2017 through a one-time grant from AJWS. Another centre in Kekri was set up in 2018 with support from CRY, Delhi. This initiative proved very important for the over all initiative of empowering girls and addressing child marriage.

Till April 2018, 21 girls were working as computer operators in Malls, Electricity Board, E-Mitra centers – this seems to be a good beginning to help them access livelihood opportunities.

Apart from the capacity building training activities described above, MJAS team and adolescent girls and boys have also actively participated in networking with other organisations in Rajasthan between 2015 and 2019. Some of the issues have been: Friendship, Relationships and Early Marriage; Forced Marriage, Early Marriage; BetiBachao, BetiPadhao; Public Hearing on violence against children; Dialogues and Melas with Adolescent Girls; Discussion on VAW and so on. Girls and boys have participated in television programmes.

Table 3 *Training of Trainers within MJAS*

No.	Name of Modules & Training	Number of trained members	About the trainings
1	Saath-Saath	13	A module based on gender equality with 12 sessions for boys and girls
2	Wenlido	4	A self-defense module based on feminist methods & techniques
3	Child Sexual Abuse	18	Building deep understanding on the issue and develop skills to identify cases, raising voices, case work and counselling
4	Digital education & soft skills for girls: under Young Women Leadership Development Program	5 (three are certified as faculty for NIIT certificate course	Digital Kishori Bane Saksham 6 months curriculum for computer education and self-development Intel basic course 1 month NIIT 3 month's course
5	Citizenship and rights: training for Peer Leaders	6	Udaan module for three days based on perspective &skill building
6	A course on social transformation	4	40 days in a year spread over 4 workshops
7	Theatre in education TIE & puppetry	15	8 days curriculum in two phases based on TIE tools story making, scripting, preparations of material using during play & practicing
8	Gender training based on young leadership development program	6	6 day curriculum – compulsory for all the team members at MJAS & invite other organisations also.

During the evaluation we administered a questionnaire amongst the team members to get an idea of their further learning needs. Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4 *MJAS teams perceptions of the results of capacity building efforts*
(Marked on a scale of 0 to 5 where 0 denotes Not at all and 5 denotes To the fullest extent)

S. No.		0	1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 To the fullest extent
1	To what extent has your perspective on social accountability deepened?	–	–	2	9	3	1
2	To what extent has your perspective on Rights developed?	–	1	3	5	5	1

S. No.		0	1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 To the fullest extent
3	To what extent has your perspective on strategic planning developed?	–	1	2	10	2	0
4	To what extent are you able to make action plans based on the strategic analysis?	2	2	3	7	1	0
5	To what extent are you able to make indicators for your work?	4	1	5	3	2	0
6	To what extent have you improved your documentation skills?	0	0	3	9	3	0
7	To what extent have you improved your analytical skills?	2	2	4	6	1	0
8	To what extent have you improved your facilitation skills?	1	1	1	9	2	1
9	To what extent have you improved your networking skills?	0	1	5	5	4	0
10	To what extent have you improved your presentation skills?	0	0	5	6	3	1

Table 4 shows that team members feel that they have improved along:

- Social accountability perspective
- Strategic planning
- Documentation
- Facilitation skills
- Rights perspective.

The table also shows that the team members feel that they are weak in:

- Setting indicators for the work that they do and assessing their work according to these indicators
- Making action plans based on the strategic directions
- Analytical skills

Recommendation: This table and the team members' responses should be discussed in the next team meeting for greater clarity and a training plan developed based on the discussions.

2. Safe Spaces

MJAS team members have stressed the creation of 'safe spaces' for adolescents especially the girls. Safe spaces are spaces where girls can talk freely and do not feel

guarded or threatened. Adolescent Girls' Groups are conceived to be 'safe spaces' as is the Tech Centre where girls come for feminist training in use of technology.

In the Adolescent Girls Groups separate meetings are held with girls. Sessions on issues like menstruation, hygiene, safe sexual relationships etc are held in girls' homes turn by turn. Mothers are happy that the MJAS team is talking about the issues that they themselves find difficult to discuss with their daughters. Girls who are thus educated then advise their mothers, sisters-in-law about sexual health. Some girls found out that their mothers had got their uterus removed to avoid menstruation and could discuss the harms of this with them.

The 'safe space activities' have resulted in good relationships between daughters and mothers. Girls and women also talk about the care girls need to take after marriage. Some girls' cases of love relationships, abortions etc. are discussed in the safe spaces with project team members. Tech Centre and workshops are also spaces where such matters come up and are discussed. The small library in the tech-centres make available books and internet facilities for the girls to learn more about these issues.

3. Social and Legal Interventions

The MJAS team members are closely involved in managing cases of different kinds including prevention of child marriage, suicides amongst girls, sexual abuse in schools. MJAS also handles the Childline. Thus the cases that come to their notice are not only from the villages in which they are working but also 'out of project' areas. Many of these cases are extremely difficult – in addition to the family and community pressure to solemnise mass child marriages, or to suppress incidents of unnatural deaths of adolescent girls, there is interference from political leaders which results in the district and block administration from back tracking and not doing their duty.

The point being made here is that in the face of such strong social and political pressure, it is extremely difficult for the MJAS team members to do the social and legal interventions that are so urgently required for the realisation of children's and adolescent rights.

4. Documentation and Knowledge Generation

This was identified as a key area of focus in the HAQ-AJWS grant. Some attempts were made to install systems for monitoring and documentation including working on a set of indicators "Qualitative progress marker" with TISS. Although reflexivity is evident in the organisation, systematic documentation through a MIS does not seem to have worked out.

The path breaking work that seems to be done by the organisation, while being somewhat documented, is not able to yield as much as it is capable of.

RESULTS

The Results are presented here in line with the Expected Outcomes as stated in the Triple S Model.

OUTCOME 1: REALISATION OF RIGHTS BY GIRLS AND BOYS

As stated in the earlier sections, the two proposals mentioned the following indicators for this Outcome.

- Increased number of girls continuing in education, able to access their entitlements and participation in public action (Ford Foundation)
- Girls and young women are educated and capacitated to strengthen their agency to make life decisions, stop violence and assert their autonomy over their bodies and life. (AJWS)
- Young women and men take leadership of bringing about change in gender norms in the community (AJWS)

Girls' education

Regular tracking of children by the girls' groups in the project villages, has helped to identify the ones who have been irregular or have dropped out. The tables below show how drop outs are reducing. Collectives of girls take action to prevent their peers from dropping out. They also enable admission of girls into Kasturba Vidhalayas. Some girls have continued their education after child marriage and insisted on delaying their gaunas.

> *The tracking this year resulted in identification of 40 girls who were irregular and 42 girls who had dropped out of school. 15 of the dropped-out girls were reinstated into schools by holding meetings with their parents and the school teachers. For those who were irregular, meetings were held with families. Some girls were irregular in school because they were doing household chores. In some cases, the elders suspected that the girls would elope if they went to school. Both types of causes for irregular attendance were resolved by holding meetings with the families. Four girls agreed to give exams privately. 12 girls whose family problems could not be resolved were admitted to KGBV (Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya) residential schools.*

> *Source:*
> *AJWS Narrative Report 2017*

Tables 5, 6 and 7 below show that the enrolment rates have been increasing and the drop outs have been decreasing over three years of the project period.

While the enrolment rates of 0 to 6 year children (Table 5) are nearly 100 percent, as is to be expected, Table 6 shows that the enrolment rates for girls 11 to 14 years have increased from 92 percent to 97 per cent and drop outs have decreased from 32 girls to 13 girls. Table 6 (15 to 18 years children) is the most impressive. The percent of enrolled girls has increased from 46 percent to 86 per cent over the three year project period and the drop outs amongst this higher age girls' group have decreased from 103 to 34 or from 54 percent to 11per cent.

Table 5 *Educational Data for Children 6 to 10 years for 3 years*

Year	Total Children 6-10 years		6-10 Years 1– 5th Standard								Dropouts re-enrolled	
	Boy	Girls	Enrolment		% Enrolment		Dropout		Never Enrolled			
			Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
2015–2016 July 15 to June 16	713	600	710	592	99.57%	98.66%	3	8	0	0	0	3
2016–2017 July 16 to June 17	820	756	818	746	99.75%	98.67%	2	10	0	0	1	5
2017–2018 July 17 to June 18	974	890	968	878	99.38%	98.65%	6	12	0	0	4	8
2018–2019 July 18 to February 19	1030	925	1018	911	98.83%	98.48%	1	1	0	0	9	10
Total	3537	3171	3514	3127			12	31	0	0	14	26

Table 6 *Educational Data for Children 11 to 14 years for 3 years*

Year	Total Children 11-14 years		11-14 Years 6-8th Standard								Dropouts re-enrolled	
	Boys	Girls	Enrolment		% Enrolment		Dropout		Never Enrolled			
			Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
2015–2016 July 15 to June 16	410	399	390	366	95.12%	91.72%	19 4.6 %	32 8.0%	1	1	7	13
2016–2017 July 16 to June 17	450	430	438	410	97.33%	95.34%	12 2.6%	20 4.7%	0	0	6	9
2017–2018 July 17 to June 18	478	456	469	441	98.11%	96.71%	9 1.9 %	15 3.1%	0	0	5	6
2018–2019 July 18 to February 19	501	497	497	482	99.20%	96.98%	3 0.6%	13 2.6%	1	2	9	12
Total	1839	1782	1794	1699	43	80	43	80	2	3	27	40

Table 7 *Educational Data for Children 15 to 18 years for 3 years*

Year	Total Children 15-18 years		15-18 Years 9-12th Standard									
	Boys	Girls	Enrolment		% Enrolment		Dropout		Never Been Enrolled		Dropouts re-enrolled	
			Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
2015-2016 July 15 to June 16	195	190	124	87	63.58%	45.78%	52 26.7%	103 54.2%	19	36	0	6
2016-2017 July 16 to June 17	296	240	234	129	79.05%	53.75%	47 15.9%	86 35.8%	15	25	0	11
2017-2018 July 17 to June 18	315	313	280	226	88.60%	72.20%	24 7.6%	67 21.4%	12	20	1	19
2018-2019 July 18 to February 19	336	306	317	263	94.34%	85.94%	17 5.0%	34 11.1%	2	9	5	15
Total	1143	1049	955	705			140	290	48	90	6	51

Table 8 *Status of Adolescent Boys' and Adolescent Girls' Groups over 3 years*

Data Year	11-18 Year AGG-AGB Active Members					
	Total Adolescents		Active Members (Regular)		in %	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
2015-16	605	589	162	205	26.77%	34.80%
2016-17	746	670	192	248	25.73%	37.01%
2017-18	794	769	258	331	32.50%	43.04%

Note: Apart from the active members of the age group of 11-18 yrs other youth also participate in the village level events like girls' day, campaign against child marriage and Youth festivals, etc.

Empowerment of Girls

There are several accounts of how girls feel more empowered, they are able to express themselves and articulate their opinions. Many girls participate in the theatre activities and write and perform plays on child marriage and other social issues and raise questions and generate discussion among the audience post the performance. They have questioned authorities on many occasions. One example is questioning the police officer during the exposure visit to the police station on why liquor shops continue to exist. The girls in the Tech Centre are reported to talk freely since they feel that 'this is their space'.

There are examples of girls resisting child marriage and delaying their 'gaunas' and asserting their right to choice. Farida is one such example. This 17-year-old stopped her child marriage. She liked someone else and was able to tell her father about him. He agreed to speak to the boy's family. They were eventually engaged, to be married when she turned 18.

There are some amazing and inspiring examples of girls who have fought against many odds to get out of their child marriages. Annu Kumari and Sita are two such girls who have subsequently joined the MJAS team and continue to lead by their example. Annu's powerful TedTalk can be seen at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPrV6vOdKzk

Other stories of empowerment of girls narrated in the evaluation workshop were:

> *One 12-year-old girl negotiated and went to her in-laws house to assess the living conditions before accepting the proposal. She then agreed to the engagement on the condition that she would continue her studies and playing football.*

> *Another girl, Sumitra, 17 years old from Hasiyavaas was married at the age of 10 years when she was in class 4. When her elder brother-in-law came to take her during gauna, she put the fear of POCSO in him. He went back without her.*

> *Rekha drives a motorcycle. She was married in childhood and wants to get out of this marriage. Her parents are supporting her.*

Reports to the donors mention other cases that indicate empowerment

> *Two Bal Mitras raised the issue of child sexual abuse which then the organization pursued further;*

> *Bal Mitras also campaigned in favour of prohibition of liquor along with mobilizing women's group.*

Empowerment through Livelihoods

Another concrete outcome is that the MJAS team has been able to facilitate livelihoods for a few young people.

Five boys joined D Mart after the NIEPA training, five girls became car drivers after the Azad Foundation training. One boy Feroze started a professional wedding photography studio after the photography training. From the Tech Centre 22 girls have got jobs in gas agencies, malls etc. The team realises that much more has to be done and has been exploring rural tourism ideas to enable the youth to show case the local culture.

Collectives have been created

In the eight project villages, 11 groups of boys and girls 11-18 years have been formed with around 596 girls and 367 boys. The MJAS team estimates that almost half the girls are regular and active members and around one third of the boys may be considered regular and active. Table 8 shows that number of active boys and girls have increased over the three years of the project period. MJAS team members mentioned that strong adolescents' groups and football teams have emerged in villages where there were strong Bal Samoohs (Children's Groups). This is indeed a good insight and can help future work.

Several different types of inputs are provided to the strengthen the groups including capacity building workshops (on reproductive and sexual health, theatre in education, photography, gender and patriarchy, leadership, laws, social change, counselling, organisation development and so on), regular meetings around different issues (like girls' education, child marriage, child sexual abuse, child rights, POCSO, health, entertainment, career choices and so on), exposure visits (to Delhi Doordarshan,

district offices like the police, social justice, women and child development departments and so on). These groups have participated in campaigns like 'I will go out', 16 days of activism and so on.

As mentioned earlier, the MJAS team is very aware that Kishori Samoohs are not necessarily Kishori Sangathans. And their efforts are to create strong sangathans through various inputs.

Seven Theatre in Education groups have been formed. They work together to write the scripts and perform plays on social issues. There are several other examples of collective action by adolescent girls and boys. There are reports of how they decide on campaigns to be organised in their villages, make detailed plans of who to invite and how to mobilise resources. Youth organised melas have been successful.

In a few villages, the young people were able to collect funds from the panchayat for these activities. The collectives have also been raising extremely sensitive social issues, like confronting caste discrimination, addressing the issue of child sexual abuse in a village school, confronting the issue of an unnatural death of an adolescent girl (no one knows whether this was a suicide or an honour killing) that the community wanted to keep under wraps, stopping child marriages and so on.

> *15 girls who were married earlier refused to go to in-laws house during the reporting period as a result of strengthened mobilisation and training of Adolescent Girls Groups (AGG).*

> *Source*
> *AJWS Narrative Report 2017*

In village Ajaysar more than 40 girls from different villages took out a rally on 31 December 2016 and held a public meeting at the house of a girl who had committed suicide because her parents refused to allow her to marry the boy of her choice. The entire village wanted to hush up the incident. The public meeting held by girls brought forth several people of the village including women, young men and elders. The meeting resulted in a powerful dialogue around freedom for girls, freedom to choose a life partner, girls' education etc. The meeting organized by girls has become a milestone in social mobilization in the surrounding villages.

Delaying Marriages and Gaunas

Table 9 *Details of Child Marriages and Gaunas Delayed(Source: Reports to AJWS)*

2015–16		2016–17		2017–18		2018–19	
Gauna delayed	*Marriage postponed*	*Gauna delayed*	*Marriage postponed*	*Gauna delayed*	*Marriage postponed*	*Gauna delayed*	*Marriage postponed*
3 girls and 4 boys	*2 girls register for annulment*	*16 girls and 8 boys*	*14 girls and 9 boys*	*20 girls and 7 boys*	*13 girls and 6 Boys*	*0*	*0*

Table 10 *Details of Child Marriages*

Data Year	Total Children 0–10 years		0–10 Years				Total Children 11–18 years		11–18 Years				11–18 Years	11–18 Years
			Married		Engaged				Married		Engaged		Stop Marriage	Stop Gauna
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Girl	Girl
2015–2016 July 15 to June 16	1030	980	32	42	6	11	605	589	124	226	21	19	23	9
2016–2017 July 16 to June 17	1069	1005	13	9	27	44	746	670	13	9	27	44	18	15
2017–2018 July 17 to June 18	1180	1086	8	12	7	15	794	769	10	12	11	7	20	13
2018–2019 July 18 to February 2019	1246	1129	17	12	8	9	837	803	17	12	8	9	0	0
Total	4525	4200	70	75	48	79	2982	2831	164	259	67	79	61	37

Table 10 shows that over the three years of the project period AGGs had prevented 61 marriages and delayed 37 gaunas.

Hasina, 15, from Ajaisar village was pressured by the entire village community to go to her in-laws house (undergo the 'gauna' practice). Her in-laws had arrived at her parents' home with all the jewellery etc. and sat in front of her house for four days. Hasina was not moved by these actions as she had good support from her AGG and the young activists of the project team. Hasina's grand mother finally took a stand that Hasina would not go to her in-laws until she herself was willing, after turning 18 or later. She threatened the in-laws with severing the marriage agreement. The in-laws demanded that Hasina's family pay double the amount of money spent on jewellery. But with Hasina and her grandmother standing their ground and the village community taken a neutral stand, the in-laws had to retract. Following Hasina's bold step, other girls have been motivated to do the same. Farida, 14, also refused to go to in-laws with the support of Hasina, who immediately called 'Child Line' for intervention. In front of Child Line team her parents gave an undertaking that they would not send Farida to her in-laws until she herself desired even after she turned 18.

Source
AJWS Narrative Report 2017

In village Hasiyawas as part of strengthened project efforts via different activities against child marriage, six girls refused to participate in Gangoj – Bavnee feasts being held in their village. Community members from 52 villages were participating in the feast. In this program of mass marriages, some are child marriages. The news of girls boycotting the feast, spread among the people. Parents and elders from village went to the girls' homes to convince them but the girls refused to participate in. The parents were unhappy. But this had a great impact - two boys in this village refused their marriages during the bhoj – feast program and resolved to continue their studies.

Source
AJWS Narrative Report 2017

Lists have been prepared of 'Girls at risk' in the project villages. Twenty-five types of vulnerabilities and risks have been identified and three lists have been prepared:

1. girls whose marriages have not yet been held but they may be forced into marriage soon;

2. girls engaged or married and who may be sent to in-laws soon;

3. girls who went to in-laws and lived there for some time and are back in parents' house and also those girls who are married to boys of the village.

These girls are provided appropriate support by the adolescent girls' groups and the MJAS team. Their education is encouraged. The lists are continuously reviewed and updated and girls are removed from the list if they are not at risk anymore.

Changing social norms through leadership of adolescent girls and boys

The work with the boys – gender sensitisation, constitutional rights, citizenship building – has led to changes in perceptions of masculinity and boys taking responsibility of different kinds. There are reports of boys sharing the household chores, boys who used to forbid their sisters from going for training, now encouraging their sisters to go out. There is a story of the young people who organised a village function and all the women came and sat on the mats on the floor. The boys insisted and made their mothers move onto the chairs, thereby establishing that women deserve a higher place in society.

Several social norms related to how girls should live and conduct themselves are beginning to change.

> *16 girls from Hasiyawas village got themselves registered with a higher school outside their village making history for the village. This was the first-time girls went out of their own village for education.*

Source
AJWS Narrative Report 2016-17 & meeting with them

The football teams in three project villages and one outside-have created a revolution of sorts. Started in 2016, with a small grant from the Australian High Commission and a lot of opposition from the community, including the schools teachers, the 'Football for Freedom, Unity and Solidarity' project, in its very first 'football mela' brought together more than 358 girls.

Since then, every year, girls have attended six to ten-day residential coaching camps and between 50 and 85 girls attended four camps. Around 170 girls have emerged as players out of which 77 are regular. Out of these players 38 are married, and 17 are engaged. This activity has been continued despite dedicated funding for it. Over the years, MJAS has been able to gather local support from the city, which has been very encouraging.

These activities have impacted not just the lives of girls who directly participated but also the community in terms of their gender perspectives and perspectives on sports. Several parents keenly wanted their daughters to play and their resolve impacted their communities at large. The football events were widely covered by the local media thereby sending a strong message to the larger society that sports is not an exclusive male club. The government and local administration too participated, helped and rewarded the girls playing football.

The greatest impact was that sports also helped girls break caste and gender barriers and build solidarity among themselves. Their participation in football has led to girls demanding nutritious food – milk and ghee – like their brothers are fed.

Difficult issues like child sexual abuse are beginning to be discussed and the girls are establishing a zero tolerance to sexual abuse.

OUTCOME 2: INCREASED SUPPORT IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

The indicators of success mentioned in the two proposals that correspond to societal level changes are:

- Increased community action led by VLCPC for reporting and prevention of child marriages. (Ford Foundation)
- Traditional community leadership sensitized to respect young leadership. (AJWS)

Community action to support girls

The main intervention by MJAS to achieve these indicators are the Jagruk Nagrik Samitis (JNS- Citizens' Awareness Committee). These committees have been educated on the dangers of getting girls and boys married early. Some villages outside the project area were also included in the campaigns led by JNS on education and child rights. A campaign on 'Child Marriage – No Never, Without My Consent Never Ever' was carried out in 40 villages, under the leadership of JNS and Bal Samuh / AGG in April-May 2017. The campaign reached out to more than 15,000 persons and attracted the participation and appreciation of the district and block administration as well. Similarly, 16 days activism was held through 10 different activities in the project villages. More than 8000 persons were reached through these activities, creating an awareness about child marriage, safety, education and protection of children.

Intergenerational dialogues between mothers and daughters have also helped in increasing understanding and trust between the generations. Girls and mothers discuss a range of issues including use of mobile phones, clothes, TV programmes.

With all these activities, the community is now becoming aware of the need for education and protection of children and is beginning to give emphasis on these issues.

In Hasiyawas village School Management Committee of elderly people, dominated by men was trying hard that girls go to school for higher education also. Girls also fought that all the teacher staff vacancies are filled.

Source
AJWS Narrative Report 2016

Parents are raising demand if teachers are not appointed in schools. The parents in Hasiyavas locked the school for 6 days in protest. As a result eight teachers were appointed in that school. The parents gave a memoranda to the district collector, the education department and the chief minister to upgrade the school. The Collector asked them to collect a personal contribution of Rs. 3 lakh and then he would arrange for Rs. 7 lakh. The villagers collected the Rs. 3 lakh and got the promised Rs. 7 lakh from the department......... Toilets were assessed in all the

schools 19 villages. The report was sent to the Directorate of Education. SSA sent a team to assess the situation and eventually Rs. 1.8 lakhs was sanctioned to make modern toilets for girls. .... Five more rooms were made after mobilising resources. Now the school has 10 classes.

Citizens Forums have been able to establish dialogues with the schools for continued education of girls. The Forums have been highly effective in Hasiywas, Mewda, Beerwada and Sankariya

Awareness around girls' right to play football was also an important initiative. Meetings were held with community members and Panchayat leaders on girls playing football in all project villages. Communities not only supported girls playing football but also worked to clear village play grounds for girls to play. A panchayat contributed Rs. 11,000 towards shoes for girls.

One great strategy cited by the team members is 'Balika Samman Samaroh' or felicitation of girls who are role models. Daughters-in-law and daughters of the village who are being supported to study further after marriage, or being sent out of the village for higher studies are honoured in public functions along with their parents-in-law and parents respectively. The 'bahus' were invited on the stage and asked to deliver their message to the public at large. The parents -in-law were similarly invited on stage and asked to speak. The idea is to recognise those who are taking risks and breaking social norms, in the hope of creating a new norm, to create community aspirations.

Increased community action led by VLCPCs

Despite the efforts made, Village Level Child Protection Committees (VLCPCs) unfortunately have not been made functional in the 14 villages where MJAS has been working and actively advocating for VLCPCs to be made functional. Our visit to Gulganv Gram Panchayat to interact with the VLCPC members, indicated that the committee is not really functional. We were told that the committee meets every month, but no minutes are kept. It appears that a desultory and tokenistic meeting of a few front line functionaries is held in the name of VLCPC. This visit confirmed what was evident also from the contextual analysis – that the ICPS is not really functional in Rajasthan. MJAS team members point out a design flaw in the VLCPC establishment. They are supposed to be set up at the Panchayat level and there may be five or more villages in a Panchayat, how then can we expect village level meetings to be held? The community in Ajaisar actually rejected the idea of a VLCPC saying 'we protect our children – then why would we need a committee?'

OUTCOME 3: RESPONSIVE SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR INTERVENTIONS

The indicators of success mentioned under the two proposals that correspond to this outcome are as follows:

- Responsive and institutionalised action from functionaries (Ford Foundation)
- Increased birth and marriage registration; identity proofs to connect to existing schemes and entitlements (Ford Foundation)

- Systematic process of child marriage annulment in place for those seeking it (Ford Foundation)
- Government and administration sensitized to respect the rights of citizens, particularly of girls and young women. (AJWS)
- Girls and women have full access to education, health services and entitlements. (AJWS)

As mentioned in the sections above, the main input to sensitise the administration has been through the public campaigns that the MJAS has facilitated with the leadership of adolescent girls and boys. MJAS has also supported the youth leaders and collectives to dialogue with the administration and raise questions that concern them. Meetings and sessions with front line providers like the teachers and also with panchayat members have been used to sensitise them to issues like child sexual abuse, child marriage and so on.

> *All the campaign rallies of 'Child Marriage – No Never, Without My Consent Never Ever' were supported and participated by different government departments like education, health, legal services authority, women and child development. The departments issued orders to frontline workers of their department for support the campaign. PRI members join everywhere.*

Source
Report to AJWS 2018

Girls of different AGGs are approaching their respective panchayats with demands related to schools, education, entitlements etc. In Hasiyawas girls got the panchayat to approve provision of sport shoes and other sports gear for their football game. The panchayat gave the money from their own funds. Girls went to Ajmer market to buy the material themselves. This was an empowering process. The same panchayat has also approved funds for leveling of the ground for playing football. Following the example of Hasiyawas girls in other villages are also approaching their panchayats for support to their AGGs.

In Chachiyawas the football ground is still under illegal occupation of a local person. The local AGG has demanded the land to be vacated and it made available for football. Presently the girls have requested a private owner to let them use his for football and they are playing there.

In Sakaria village a public traditional meeting (chaupal) was organized in collaboration with the panchayat where data about children was presented in the meeting and discussed. More than 200 persons participated. Health and education of girls and boys were discussed extensively. A heated debate took place on child marriage. The community was divided between those who favoured the practice and those against it. "Bayan ree Hoonk" a film that shows girls and women talking about the impact of child marriage on their lives, was screened. The film was appreciated a lot by the village community.

> *In other 20 villages "village level child protection committees" have disseminated information on child protection by pasting posters on village walls.*

Source
Report to AJWS 2018

As described above, the struggles of the adolescent girls' groups and the parents have resulted in improvements in at least one school through the response of the district officers.

MJAS has not yet systematically engaged with the health system for adolescent health rights. The initial work of sensitising the girls and boys and mothers to sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents is a good start that needs to be systematically built upon. MJAS is on good terms with the Child Welfare Committee and the police in the district. As mentioned above, while they can be mobilised to address violations of child rights, these systems come under severe pressure from political and panchayat leaders. The child protection structure is weak in the state and although MJAS has been attempting to activate the VLCPCs it has not really succeeded.

One objective that was in the Ford Foundation proposal - 'Systematic process of child marriage annulment in place for those seeking it' -has not been achieved.

Between the social customs and disinterest of the state to implement the PCMA, it has not been possible to implement the system of injunction order to prevent child marriages or annulment of these should the girl wish to do so. Instead of the injunction order which has legal binding, the documented case studies show that a 'paabandi letter' is given by the police. This is not legally binding and families go ahead with the child marriage on the sly. On the other hand, the 'samaaj panchayat' solution is preferred – 'let us settle this amongst ourselves'. In both the informal mediation in the police stations as well as the social village level solutions, money exchanges hands. And girls' rights are violated. The MJAS team has been asking for injunction orders and annulment data from the District Judge, but it is not yet forthcoming. According to the MJAS- HAQ team, the judges need to be sensitised to how the girls' rights are violated.

'Increased birth and marriage registration; identity proofs to connect to existing schemes and entitlements' is another aspect of the Ford foundation proposal is difficult to comment upon because this has not come up either in the evaluation workshops with the team, or in the reports that have been submitted to the evaluator.

Experiences with other agencies like the Childline, Nehru Yuvak Kendra, and the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao are also mixed. MJAS runs the Childline in three blocks of Ajmer. The problem is that Childline does not do adequate follow-up of cases. They are concerned only with rescue of children. MJAS's core commitment is to follow up of each case. According to MJAS, Childline's work is marked by casework but campaign for child rights is lacking.

The relationship with NYKS is also uncertain, because it is person dependent. The current Officer is promising and wants MJAS's help in recruiting girls into their Youth Clubs. This is considered as an opportunity by MJAS. Earlier MJAS has been on the District Youth Advisory Committee.

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao would also like MJAS to be on their Task Force, but as with other government organisations, this too seems tokenistic. And MJAS is rightly quite wary of getting into tokenistic relationships.

MJAS has high credibility at the district level because of their sincere and committed work on women's and children's rights. They also need to build their capacities to engage with higher levels in the government.

OTHER OUTCOMES – SKILLED FACILITATION, WIDER IMPACT, LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

Some of the other outcomes of the project have been the capacity enhancement of MJAS team as a whole (HAQ-MJAS and MJAS) in terms of skills and learnings. It has developed different modules, tools and techniques, campaign material etc. Training of Trainers have been held in which the team members have been trained as trainers. The organisation is now recognised as a resource in the area of child marriage prevention.

The team was invited by UNICEF Gujarat to train 800 peer leaders from 80 villages for their initiative on prevention of child marriage "UDAAN".

This recognition has also resulted in the girls from the project areas being invited to speak in many fora. Delhi Doordarshan (national TV) invited girls from the project area for TV shows on child marriage and the "BetiBachao, BetiPadhao" programmes (https://www.facebook.com/end.childmarriage. India/photos/pcb.1778158942196 590/1778158888863262/? type=3&theater). Around 12 testimonies were discussed in the TV program. When the programme was aired the community members were happy that the girls and boys are on national TV. They were proud to see their children speaking against child marriage on national TV although they themselves for long had argued in favour of child marriage.

MJAS has a functional and energetic theatre-in-education team. Programmatic initiatives like 'tech-centre' and 'football for freedom, unity and solidarity' have become very popular in the project operational area not only for girls but their parents.

CHALLENGES FACED AND STRATEGIES THAT WORKED

CHALLENGES

The challenges that the HAQ- MJAS team faces seem to come from the conflict between the nature of society, the social and cultural mores and the rights discourse that the project is trying to promote. Government officials, despite being duty bearers to protect children's rights are guided by social norms and are not willing to take action according to legal provisions and the constitutional rights framework. There are several examples cited by the MJAS team. School teachers opposed the idea of adolescent groups, empowerment of girls, and the right to freedom and choice.

> *In Sankaria village teachers rejected the idea claiming this will encourage them to elope with boys; they also rejected our proposal to hold gender sensitization meeting with them*

> *Another big challenge came from Srinagar block. Some of teachers brought an order from the Block Education Officer (BEO) that schools will not allow any civil society organization to enter their premises without written permission or order of the DEO or the state government. We had to stop activities in the schools as a result of this order and it continues to be unresolved despite school management committees (SMC) is along with our team.*

Similarly, the conservative nature of law enforcement agencies become a huge obstacle for what this project is trying to achieve. We have already discussed how the

annulment clause of the PCMA is not implemented. There was a case of an unnatural death of a woman who wanted to break her child marriage but could not – she was selected for post of constable in the state police. She approached the district administration and the state women's commission. There was no help forthcoming. When she died the entire caste community mobilised support for her brothers who were suspected to have killed her, an honour killing. The law enforcement agencies turned a blind eye.

Patriarchal notions that stigmatise widowhood have adverse consequences for daughters of widows. As soon as a woman is widowed, the village community forces her to marry her daughters and sons. Usually these marriages are held in the same ceremony where the deceased man's death ceremony is observed. The widows are compelled to marry their children out of a sense of shame.

Patriarchy is deeply entrenched as can be seen from the fact that parents continue to remove their daughters from the schools if they suspect that they have boyfriends. They also tell the teachers to 'control their daughters'. Parents may say no to child marriage in public, but continue to marry off their children in hiding. In Jati panchayats although young people are present, they have no voice.

Another challenge appears to be the balance between freedom and right to choose friends and how this will be perceived in the community. Because of the training provided by the project, girls who choose to befriend boys are perceived to be doing wrong. If they are married in childhood they are forcibly sent off to the in laws' home. In 2015-16, three girls tried to elope with their boyfriend; the parents complained to the Childline and once the girls were recovered, they were immediately sent to the in-laws' homes. Despite MJAS team members intervening and trying to persuade families not to send the girls to the in-laws before 18 years of age, they did not succeed.

Another dimension of the right to choose is that some below age couples are in love and want to live together despite disputes between their parents. They use the law against their parents. The project team has to constantly handle these sorts of challenges, negotiating between the young people's choices and maintaining relationship in the community.

Mental health of the girls is a new challenge that the team has to address. Many girls face mental – emotional trauma due to reasons like family pressures for marriage or Gauna, not being allowed to study further or get a job or 'love' matters etc. They develop psychological problems and this is interpreted by the families and the community as effect of 'bad spirits' (devta ke bhav aanaa, jhad funk etc.) In 2016-17, 18 girls were sent to the traditional healers or to temples. It was difficult for team members to go there, to counsel them and rescue them. In 2017-18, there were two suicides in the project area, one, where marriage had already taken place and the girl was sent to her in-law's place to live with her husband. She returned to her natal home the next day and committed suicide. In another case the girl was refusing to get married but her family members insisted and the girl committed suicide before marriage. The MJAS team reflected that they need to find effective interventions to prevent and identify such incidents.

There are challenges related to the team's capacities. The project team is mostly comprised of persons from the local area and do not have exposure to the outside world. Some face language barriers too – they can only speak the local dialect. Though MJAS has invested a lot in staff training and their understanding of social issues has increased, their skills of articulation need further development. The girls' aspirations

for further education and training for new skills and livelihood opportunities also put tremendous pressure on the team to keep pace with the girls' demands.

STRATEGIES THAT WORKED

The Citizenship Module that the MJAS team developed and have institutionalised within all their training has increased the participation and voice of the young people. It has also increased their awareness of their constitutional rights and the schemes and programmes for them. Similarly, other tools like the SaathSaath module, the theatre in education and the participatory learning materials developed for Health and Child Marriage, are considered to be significant.

Football for Freedom, Unity & Solidarity

The Football for Freedom, Unity & Solidarity is another activity that the team feels has been very strategic. The objectives of the Football activity are:

- To break gender norms and the 'glass ceiling' created by patriarchal norms.
- To promote girls' participation in sports;
- To break the routine in their lives that keep them engaged in household chores;
- To foster team spirit and train them to assert themselves;
- To help build solidarity among themselves and help them address social problems they face.

It is also designed as a measure for girls already married to be able to come out of their traditional roles and be able to negotiate better.

According to a team member:

> *It was not an easy task for us to encourage girls into sports due to strict control over them, their bodies, and minds by gender norms. We organised several dialogues, meetings, and activities for girls and their families to convince them to join football. Everyone asked us, why football? 'Soft' or indoor games are considered to be more suitable for girls' bodies, and hence OK. According to the men and women in the community, girls playing football -running and jumping in an open field, will 'attract' people, especially boys or men. We were shocked to hear similar things from teachers, especially teachers of physical education.*
>
> *Parents and their girls breaking stereotypes of what girls can do has been a great challenge. During the process, we were amazed at how sports can enable girls to enjoy freedom, feel empowered, and develop greater confidence about their bodies. Everyone could see their cheerful, smiling faces full of confidence*

Football for girls was started in 4 Villages of Ajmer District in Rajasthan- Meenon Ka Naya Gaon, Sakariya, Hasiyawas and Chachiyawas. In these villages,

- The community is divided by caste
- Patriarchy is entrenched - girls are expected to wear a veil, do all the household chores, and get married young- sometimes as young as 7 or 8 years

This initiative opened up tremendous possibilities for the girls and their communities. It also demonstrated the need for mobilising teachers, principals and the entire school system. It has shown that facilitating girls into the game has transformed families and communities. In addition to gender norms it has also broken down deeply entrenched caste barriers.

Over 300 girls attended the big opening - Kishori Khel Utsav (Girls Sports Festival), and 167 of these girls continued to play regularly despite of all obstacles. Of these, 38 girls were already married (8 of whom less than 12 years of age!) and 17 more were engaged. Most were still continuing school despite being married and some who had dropped out, were re-enrolled as they played. While 167 girls play regularly as part of the project, the football fever has caught on in the villages, and girls are found playing on the streets and in open spaces. Simply kicking the ball seems to be an empowering experience for them.

Panchayats and communities have supported this initiative in many ways. The woman Sarpanch in Sankariya Village Panchayat got the panchayat to level the village playground. The girls of Chachiyawas started playing football on someone's private farm land. They then went to the Chief of the Zilla Parishad (District Elected Council) demanding a playground for the village. The Chief allocated Rs. 25000 from the district council fund and deployed his engineer for this purpose.

There are amazing stories of how the girls shed their dupattas and salwars to don shorts and jerseys. After having been allowed to play football by their reluctant families, they began playing in salwars. They then began wearing shorts over their churidaars or tights.... And then folding up their salwars or churidaars. Soon they were running around the fields in their football kits.

> *It was the first time ever in our lives that we had to wear shorts..what a joy it was for us to shed their veils and don shorts and jerseys and run around with abandon, kicking the ball.*
>
> **Smita, Class 8 student**

It was the residential camps that broke the caste boundaries. To begin with the girls would not mix with those from the other castes-especially the dalits. By the end of the camp, they were friends and were eating and sleeping together.

The girls were also trained in self defence. And leadership and assertiveness.

> **What the girls said after the residential football camp**
>
> *Staying out of our homes was a different experience for us. We never felt such freedom before. When we ran on the field, throwing away our chunnies, it felt like we did not want to stop running.*

> **Football has broken many barriers for these girls ...** *when a group of upper caste boys claimed the field on which the girls played, a dalit girl stood her ground and asked them to leave. What was even more heartening was to see the non-dalit girls who stood behind her in support – the same girls who would not eat with her when they had begun playing together...*

Changing perceptions of families. Convincing the families to let their girls play football was the first step. The next hurdle was agreeing to send their daughters for residential camps. Girls formed groups to go to each one's house to talk to parents and get family approval. And finally, many parents came a long way! Parents of some girls participated in the closing event of coaching camps. Local resources were mobilized by families of Meeno ka Naya gaon to feed 400 people of the village. The residents of the Hasiyavas supplied milk for 60 camp participants for three days.

Football has thus become a powerful medium of engagement with all stakeholders and despite many obstacle sit has shown a way of achieving all the objectives stated above.

Tech Centre

The Tech Centre is an important HAQ-MJAS intervention, which is now fully taken over by MJAS team. It combines livelihood opportunities for girls, breaking social norms of making technology accessible to girls, providing them a 'safe space', and providing them opportunities to empower themselves through WenLido, sessions on gender, constitutional rights, their entitlements and so on. See Table 11 for details.

Course Details

Course Name	Duration	Course Covers
Feminist Approach to Technology Learning Digital Technology with Self-Development & Social Awareness	6 Month	Basic IT Course with self development (self reflection activities, self – defense, gender, PTRK, Health & sexuality, Negotiation & responsibility, Constitution rights and entitlements
Digital Literacy	1 Month	Basic IT Course as per Job requirement
NIIT Active Basic Course	3 Month	Advance Basic IT with Complete Technical Knowledge.
Village Level Digital Literacy	1 Month	For Panchayat Members, ICDS Members, girls and women
Mobile literacy (Future Plan)	As per learning status	Functions of phone and how to operate it, app knowledge, Social media etc.

The two Tech Centres in Ajmer and Kekri have trained 200 girls so far (106 girls in the 6 month course, and 94 girls in the 1 month course) (See Table 12). There are several stories of change in the girls and livelihood options as narrated in an earlier section. The story was told of Tamanna who when she first came to the Tech Centre appeared traumatised, she would not talk to anyone and would start crying. She is now working successfully as an E Mitra after completing her course in the Tech Centre. She loves her job. She expressed that in the Tech Centre she found the freedom and space to find herself.

TOTAL ENROLLMENT NUMBER OF GIRLS(Six Month Course) AJMER + KEKRI = 106							
	Category wise Number						
Six Month Course Number	OBC	SC	ST	SBC	GEN	Minority	Humanity
AJMER(74)	33	13	–	13	11	03	01
KEKRI(32)	16	13	–	–	–	03	–
TOTAL ENROLLMENT NUMBER OF Students(One Month Course) AJMER + KEKRI = 94							
AJMER(36)	24	04	–	02	06	–	–
KEKRI(58)	24	13	08	–	07	06	–

MJAS TEAM'S PERCEPTION OF THE PARTNERSHIP WITH HAQ

The three teams were asked to reflect on the partnership. MJAS members' feedback was highly positive. Some glimpses are as follows:

How has this project with HAQ contributed to MJAS's vision and mission?

Team members agreed that the project was highly congruent with MJAS' values and vision and mission. MJAS is a feminist organisation and HAQ agrees with this perspective. Even though HAQ staff were engaged in direct implementation along with MJAS team members, it has respected and supported MJAS' autonomy. The project has contributed towards MJAS' mission to empower rural girls through activities like the Tech Centre, Football Teams. The project has provided space for reflexivity and capacity enhancement. It has helped MJAS to assess its progress towards its mission through quantitative indicators.

What has been your experience of this partnership with HAQ?

All the team members have appreciated the partnership with HAQ. They have felt supported, and have benefitted from the open dialogue and in-depth discussions and feedback. The network has increased. They have appreciated the additional resources that have come through the partnership, the visits by HAQ team members which have resulted in transformation in team members and in more rigorous work on the ground. A few gave examples of their own transformation. They spoke about the experience of feeling 'equal, respected and their dignity upheld'. Two team members mentioned that the OD process facilitated by HAQ was a significant feature of the partnership. They valued the spirit of creativity and innovation that the partnership fostered.

Have there been any shortcomings or gaps in the partnership with HAQ?

While a number of people responded that there were no shortcomings, some team members expressed that shortage of staff, lower salaries for the HAQ project staff and not enough resources for the adolescent girls' exposure trips, were a few gaps in the partnership. Others felt that perhaps the partnership failed to bridge the gap in MJAS own inadequate planning. A team member from Kekri expressed disappointment that the local HAQ staff did not pay enough visits to the Kekri block, thereby not being able to appreciate the need for more staff in that team. Many echoed that the budgets and resources were not adequate, and there was uncertainty about the subsequent year's funds coming. Others felt that there was not a clear idea of how to take forward the work with boys.

What are your expectations from the partnership for the future?

The team members stated that they should receive the support that they are receiving at present, the partnership should continue to flourish based on the values embodied. More workshops, training and capacity building should be done through this partnership. There should be mutual learning. There should also be an expansion of the work not only in the number of villages but also in the number of activities and programmes – more innovations, increase in football teams to at least four more villages, more exposure visits. Staff should increase as well as salaries, of course. The work with the boys should be strengthened through a carefully thought out approach and programmes. There should be quarterly reflection and learning reviews. There should be opportunities for MJAS to present their work in different fora.

It would be good to review these perceptions along with HAQ's perceptions of the partnership. And to use this formation to clarify the terms of engagement and expectations for the future.

ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter we attempt to answer the evaluation questions framed in the Methodology chapter, and pose some recommendations.

ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

It is clear from the earlier sections that most of the desired outcomes at all the three levels stated in the Triple S Framework –Realisation of Rights by Girls and Boys, Increased Support in Families and Communities, and Responsive Support Systems for Interventions - have been achieved, some to a higher degree of satisfaction than others.

In the three years of the project interventions, educational outcomes of girls have improved. Many more girls of the older age group (15 to 18 years) are enrolling in schools and fewer are dropping out. The percent of enrolled girls has increased from 46 percent to 86 per cent over three years and the drop outs amongst this higher age girls' group have decreased from 54 percent to 11 percent. There is clear evidence of empowerment of girls, increased autonomy, voice and self-determination. Girls are engaged in discussion and analysis of issues that affect them and take collective action on several very sensitive issues like child sexual abuse, suicides of girls, child marriage and so on. Many have delayed their own gaunas, stopped their own and others' marriages, often at great risk to themselves. In the three years, 61 girls' marriages have been prevented and 37 girls have delayed their gaunas. Girls are able to discuss many issues with their mothers, including reproductive health and the mothers are actually welcoming these discussions, claiming that they are learning from their daughters.

Eleven Adolescent Girls' and Boys' Groups have been formed with a membership of around 1000 young people. These groups are progressively becoming stronger. Active members in the groups have increased, more in the girls' groups than in the boys' groups. The groups have demonstrated complex – and courageous - collective actions and fair degree of autonomy. There are seven Theatre in Education groups who write their own scripts, perform relevant and topical plays and generate public discussions on burning issues that concern them. Four villages have girls' football teams that have broken several social taboos like 'girls should not play or be engaged in sports', 'girls cannot stay away from home', 'girls cannot wear shorts', 'girls of different castes cannot mix, eat or sleep together' and so on.

Through the collective and individual actions of the adolescents' groups, many social norms are beginning to change as mentioned above. Transformation of gender norms is beginning to happen in many ways with girls claiming their voice, their mobility, their choice. Boys too are beginning to recognise their privileges and using these for empowerment of their mothers and sisters.

Caste panchayats are being challenged by girls and boys through their refusal to participate in child marriages and 'bavnis' and other religious, cultural and social practices. Annu Kumari's story of how she and her parents decided to take on the caste panchayat by deciding to derecognise her child marriage, are examples of courage and determination. Confronting the unnatural death of a young girl in the face of social pressure to suppress what could be an honour killing, is another example of the girls taking on the caste panchayats and community leaders. There are positive examples also - of the local village leaders and dalit women sarpanches, pursuing the district administration to improve schools for the girls or provide facilities for sports for girls.

Different kinds of community action have resulted in support to girls' and boys' efforts for their struggles for their rights. Mass campaigns against violence against women, and against child and forced marriage have seen the participation of media, of district administration and many others. The cadre of Jagruk Nagrik Samities have been the pillars of the community action.

There were other positive outcomes beyond those expected or aspired for. The MJAS team members as well as the girls and boys who championed the cause of prevention of child marriage, received national and international recognition. Many young people were featured on two national television shows, one young woman featured on a TedTalk. Some young girls and boys have been able to find livelihood opportunities through their training in the Tech Centre.

While all these positive results have occurred, there are a few of the desired outcomes that have not been achieved despite significant efforts by MJAS team members. The first one is the activation of VLCPCs in around 14 villages that the team focused on. Despite formation of the VLCPCs and introducing an active civil society member, and doing several rounds of orientation to roles and responsibilities, the VLCPCs continue to be non functional. This appears to be a reflection of the macro environment. In Rajasthan the ICPS is not implemented well. In the absence of direction from the top, and no commitment to monitoring the implementation, it is very difficult to make village level institutions function. Similarly, the implementation of the PCMA is not happening as it should. The clause of annulment by girls who were married as children and then deciding they do not want the marriage when they attain adulthood, has been impossible to affect. Political interference in the instance of child marriages has paralysed the administration in many cases reported and brought to their notice. Patriarchal mindsets triumph over the knowledge of the law and the constitution.

Although the state along with UNICEF has announced Child Marriage Free Panchayats, there are no guidelines available. Announcements are made by the state around Akha Teej that police control rooms will function 24 hours to prevent child marriages, but marriages continue to take place despite the police sitting on guard. There have been cases of the police being beaten up by Gujjars when they went to stop the child marriage in that community! In short, MJAS has been unable to make a dent on the system to be responsive to the issue of child marriages. **Perhaps state level coalitions and alliances working with increased strength might bring forth better results?**

The work with boys is the second area where there may be scope for some fresh thinking. This evaluation indicated that changes are happening within boys, they are realising how their mothers and sisters are at a disadvantage. Many boys are stating that they are helping mothers with household chores and intervening within families to allow for more freedom for their sisters. Although the programme has incorporated boys into the leadership and citizenship training along with gender sensitisation using the SaathSaath module, it may be worthwhile to conceptualise afresh the work with boys. The SaathSaath module may be gender sensitive from the perspective of girls and women, it may not have content on Masculinities. Gender content from the perspective of boys may be required. **The test is a response of boys – and men – when it comes to property rights for women, control over women's sexuality and violence against women. Do their ideas of gender justice hold up at these levels?**

As mentioned in the earlier sections, although MJAS had set for itself an objective of monitoring and documentation and an MIS, it has achieved mixed results in this area. A consultant was brought in to visualise an MIS. Unfortunately, it has not yielded the required results. Although a lot of documentation exists, and has been put to good use, the system of indicators and analysis of the achievements according to the indicators can be better. **Team members cannot make sense of the data that they gather, are not able to analyse trends, or comparisons with state and/or district data. More training may be required in this area.**

GOOD PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES THAT WORKED

There were several good practices in the HAQ-MJAS initiative combined with MJAS's overall organisational interventions. Firstly, the organisation has done a strategic long term planning exercise based on an organisation development process in 2015-16. And the work being supported by Ford Foundation and AJWS (to HAQ)falls squarely within this long term strategic plans of both HAQ and MJAS. It contributes to the vision and mission laid out. The team members are aware of this and can therefore work in congruence with the long term vision. Secondly, while the project supports work in eight villages, the lessons learnt and the interventions are also taken to other villages. Thirdly, by showcasing the achievements in these eight villages, MJAS has also leveraged support from other donors for the Football teams and Tech Centre. Each of the above are measures for sustainability of the project interventions. Even if this project funding were to stop, MJAS would find ways of continuing towards its mission.

Another strength of MJAS is its commitment to case work and sustained relationship with the communities that it engages with. This characteristic of the organisation could be a major contributor to the achievement of the outcomes that we see in difficult areas like older girls' continuing education, prevention of early marriages and such like. The investment in capacity building of the staff and the community stakeholders is again a noteworthy feature of this project. The integration of the various modules – Constitution and Citizenship, SaathSaath, CSA, WenLido and so on - into every activity strengthens that activity and also mainstreams a common perspective with all the stakeholder groups whether they are the Football teams or

the Tech Centre trainees. MJAS also puts a lot of emphasis on public action and mass campaigns. These are good measures to change the public discourse on tough issues like child marriages, gender justice and other aspects of social transformation.

As mentioned earlier, Football for Freedom, Unity & Solidarity is a great strategy for bringing about the social change that this project aimed at – empowerment of girls, changes in public discourse and social norms related to sports and girls. Similarly, the Tech Centre for girls is another great strategy for providing space for girls to explore themselves and their aspirations, to master technology that is supposed to be the preserve of men, boys, the educated and urban people. WenLido and Theatre in Education are good tools for empowerment of girls.

CHALLENGES

The challenges faced by the team are actually the reason for this project – strong entrenched patriarchal and traditional mindsets that control girls and women, promote early marriages and control over girls' sexuality. These mindsets exist in every constituency, parents, caste panchayats, school teachers, block and district officials, the police and other law enforcement agencies. And therefore there is a clash between the constitutional rights of the young people and the traditions and cultural practices that violate young peoples' rights. MJAS is trying to handle these challenges with patience and persistence. Maybe stronger state level coalitions are required to amplify the voice of the rights' claimants. Another challenge is the capacity of the team members. Many are young, from the local communities. Their strength is the experience of their struggle and the conviction that comes from this. Nurturing of the team members has to continue, through capacity building and training efforts and providing them the support and sense of solidarity that they need.

SUSTAINABILITY

As mentioned above the fact that the project is located within the vision and mission and the long term strategic plan of MJAS is what makes it sustainable. The organisation has found ways of complementing and leveraging the different programmes so that the long term objectives are achieved. **The strategy of peer leaders and other change agents at the community level – Bal Mitras and Jagruk Nagarik Samities – is a strategy for sustainability – these community cadres will carry on the work because their consciousness has changed. Football for girls is a strategic activity. This needs to be expanded and continued.** Peer Leaders and Adolescent Girls' and Boys' Groups are also a critical activity that needs to be supported and continued. And MJAS should continue to provide thought leadership for public campaigns on different social issues.

BALANCE BETWEEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT WITH PUBLIC SYSTEMS

The MJAS team had a special question about whether they were able to balance their community engagement and work with the public systems. MJAS' work with the communities is very strong indeed. Rigorous case work and close and persistent follow up of issues in the community, contribute to close relationship with the community. While MJAS is supportive, the team also challenges patriarchal and social practices. There have been instances where the community groups have rejected MJAS presence and discouraged team members from even entering the villages. Even in these instances the team has held fast, recognising that their mission is tough and they are not going to be able to change the attitudes and mindsets in a hurry. And while

they are on appropriate committees at the district level, and have been engaging with different departments, the results may not have been as desired. And this is more a factor of the nature of public systems than their own efforts.

Maybe the team can collectively reflect of what they want their strategy of engagement with public systems to be. To what extent are they willing to go while 'engaging'? What are the non -negotiables? How can they guard against co-optation? Can the strategy of building leadership and putting pressure from below be the answer? Or maybe the Sandwich Strategy as shown below is the answer?

MJAS can forge links, or foster larger coalitions and alliances at the state – and the national – levels to effect policy interventions and commitments from the top, identify interlocutors who have an entry into higher policy and administrative spaces, skilfully use media to highlight both the positive deviations, as well as the violations of rights. And use pressure of collective action from below. The HAQ-MJAS partnership is a step in this direction.

The Sandwich Strategy
Openning From Above Meets Mobilization from Below
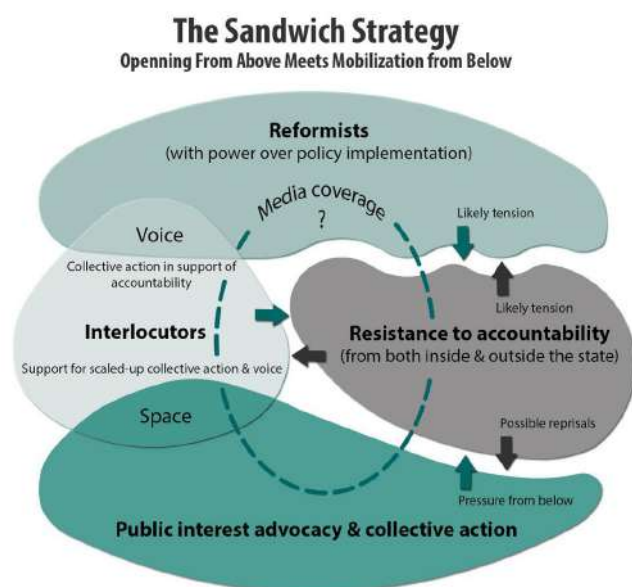
Source: Revised version of diagrams in Fox (1992: 220).

Source: Fox, Jonathan. SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY: WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE REALLY SAY? GPSA Working Paper No. 1 September 2014

TEAM'S CAPACITIES

As mentioned above, training and capacity building efforts within HAQ-MJAS and MJAS have been phenomenal. Resources have been built within the organisation, cadres of trainers on sensitive subjects like CSA, Gender through the SaathSaath training modules, WenLido and so on. While many of the older staff have developed a feminist and rights perspective and a rare maturity to intervene effectively at the community level, many of the younger and more recent recruits would benefit by MJAS; emphasis on capacity building. A small survey on capacity building efforts carried out during this evaluation showed that team members feel that they have deepened their rights and social accountability perspectives, and improved their strategic planning, documentation, and facilitation skills.

As mentioned earlier, the results of the survey should be discussed in a team meeting and plans made to strengthen the team's skills in setting indicators and using these to analyse their work. A second point of discussion can also be: what are the mechanisms for transmitting the organisation's vision and mission to new members and how can perspective building be institutionalised within the organisation.

PARTNERSHIPS – WITH HAQ, JABALA AND OTHERS

MJAS team members value the partnership with HAQ because of many reasons – a good match between the perspectives and values of the two organisations, the technical support and field mentoring received from HAQ, the opportunities to showcase the work in fora which may have otherwise been inaccessible to MJAS. Team members also valued the open and in depth discussions and dialogue, the opportunities and emphasis on creativity and innovation in the partnership, the resources that the partnership brought in through collaborative projects. They were also able to open express their dissatisfaction and expectations from future partnerships: better salaries, more resources for things like girls' exposure trips, football teams, continued capacity building of the team. They would like guidance for developing a sound and well-conceived programme with boys. They had several expectations that need to be discussed and clarified – some may be realistic and some may be aspirational.

HAQ's relationship with MJAS has been one of mutual learning in the true spirit of Co-Learning and Co-Creating. What HAQ lacks in field presence, has been provided by MJAS and HAQ has been able to bring in the more legal and technical aspects to the initiative. It has enabled the micro-macro connection.

From the observations in the inception workshop and reports of collaborative training workshops, it appears that the partnership between MJAS and JABALA also was fruitful. Although the two organisations work on the issue of child marriage and adolescent rights in very different contexts, they share experiences of their strategies and challenges and the lessons learnt. The report of the gender training that was done for the staff of the two organisations shows an open sharing of reflections and experiences. JABALA team has also appreciated the exposure tours to the MJAS field areas and the opportunity of widening their perspectives.

The sustained way that HAQ- MJAS have brought in resource persons from like-minded organisations – both from within Rajasthan as well as from other parts of India – shows that the organisation values partnerships and collaborations. This should be built upon to create a strong coalition for adolescent rights and prevention of child marriage, at the state level.

A CONTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

Contribution Analysis answers some of the kinds of questions given below:

> *Has the Programme influenced the observed result? Has the programme made an important contribution to the observed result? Why has the result occurred? What role did the intervention play? and for management questions: Is it reasonable to conclude that the programme has made a difference? What does the preponderance of evidence say about how well the program is making a difference? What conditions are needed to make this type of programme succeed?*

Source

https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/contribution_analysis

The Theory of Change stated below envisaged that conscientisation of girls and boys, educating them about their constitutional and human rights, organising them into sangathans through different means like the football teams, the Tech Centre, regular sessions on issues of their interest, would result in them dialoguing with their elders and engaging in collective action to stop their own child marriages, prevent others'

child marriages or gaunas, motivate their friends to continue education. It was also envisaged that the interventions mentioned above would also lead to empowerment of individuals and enhance their ability to speak their minds, exercise their right to choice. The assumption was that the project interventions – actions of the young people, and the engagement of the project staff with officials and other duty bearers would somehow result in institutionalisation of changes within public systems.

These linkages were not quite spelt out in the Theory of Change or in the programme logic and therefore failed to lead to the kinds of changes that were envisaged.

Theory of Change

Child marriage is a violation of rights and children must be protected. Patriarchy and social norms remain the key drivers of child marriage. The 3S model is based on interventions at three levels in order to address and impact child marriage, namely: Self, Society and System. When the individual is empowered, at the societal level communities are mobilised, and mandated structures are activated and held accountable. Thus, through a harmonious coherence between these three levels, child marriages can be prevented. This requires skilful facilitation as well as certain processes and forums to ensure proper institutionalization and sustainability.

The Results section above and the improvements in outcome indicators like number of child marriages and gaunas prevented and delayed respectively, number of girls re enrolled in schools bear witness to the fact that by and large the programme interventions were highly effective at the levels of the individual boys and girls and adolescents groups and contributed to the positive results.

They were somewhat effective at the level of bringing about a different consciousness at the level of community stakeholders.

And perhaps they were not so very effective at increasing the responsive of duty bearers, or of institutionalising the changes within public systems, like the child protection system, the judiciary, the education and the health systems. The assumption that patriarchy can be dismantled to make way for implementation of laws like the PCMA, or implementation of the ICPS, could not be nullified or countered through the programme interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are embedded in the sections above. The main recommendation is to use this report in a debriefing workshop with the team and to use the discussion for achieving greater clarity on the perspectives and values and vision and mission of MJAS. Having said this, some of the key recommendations are:

1. Enhance documentation and analysis skills of the team so that they are able to assess the progress towards the outcome indicators that they set for themselves.

2. Revisit the work with the boys and conceptualise it with the perspective of masculinities, in addition to citizenship and social justice.

3. Develop advance gender training modules for peer leaders and adolescents' groups who have gone through the basic SaathSaath module.

4. Examine whether there is possibility of developing alliances and coalitions at the state level to exert influence at the highest levels of policy and programme formulation for adolescents' rights and prevention of child marriage.

5. Examine what can be done to bring about judicial reforms related to PCMA along with collaborators.Discuss the issues related to annulment of child marriage by girls when they attain adulthood, in larger fora to develop a strategy for effective implementation of the PCMA and the ICPS.

HAQ: Centre for Child Rights was founded in 1998. It was registered under the Societies Registration Act, in June 1999. The recognition, protection and promotion of three rights form the cornerstone of HAQ's work. They are: Right to Survival, Right to Childhood and Right to Equal Opportunity.

HAQ's strength lies in its capacity to straddle micro and macro issues impacting children, undertake research and documentation to generate new knowledge and evidence, bring hands on experience into policy advocacy nationally as well as internationally, and strengthen governance for children by holding the duty bearers accountable.

For HAQ, ensuring accountability is not only about monitoring performance but also about strengthening the existing systems through building capacity of key stakeholders to generate a timely and effective response and empowering the rights holders (children) to understand and seek their citizenship rights.

Recognising the seriousness of the implications of child marriage on children as also the country's development and progress, HAQ: Centre for Child Rights is currently implementing a project on prevention of child marriage through the strengthening of existing systems in West Bengal and Rajasthan. HAQ works in partnership with Jabala in West Bengal and Mahila Jan Adhikar Samiti (MJAS) in Rajasthan.

PUBLICATIONS.

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मिला जन अधिकार समिति
MAHILA JAN ADHIKAR SAMITI