

# ROLE OF PEER EDUCATORS IN PROJECT INTERVENTIONS



Peer Educators

## About the Project

Trafficking is inhuman. This is against the principles of human rights and degenerates the existence of a trafficked person to the extent of being a slave. Despite this, trafficking is rampant. Moreover, it affects the disadvantaged, marginalized and people at the periphery of development in worst manner. One such geography is Ranpur Gram Panchayat in Ranpur block of Nayagarh district of Odisha state in India, which is about 80 kilometers from Bhubneshvar, the capital of Odisha. This Gram Panchayat includes 3 villages Ranpur, Raghunathpur and Mangrajpur. Ranpur is an erstwhile princely state ensconced between beautiful mountains. Trafficking of women and girls is rampant in this area and this is primarily due to lack of education and livelihood opportunities at the grassroots level. People are lured by outsiders by working opportunities or marriage proposals and these innocent people fall prey to the evil designs of these traffickers which results into a large number of girls being trafficked from the area.

In order to combat human trafficking at the community level, a multi-pronged approach was designed and implemented as a pilot project in the area. The project was a bouquet of community based interventions that included awareness generation, community monitoring through vigilance committees, developing and promoting local livelihood options and engaging young girls in information dissemination. In order to facilitate the implementation and seek community support, six young girls and boys were enrolled as Peer Educators who belonged to the same community.

This paper provides the details about the Peer Educators who acted as Change Agents in this project.

## Context

In order to achieve the desired impact of the project, it was important to have certain full time individuals based at the Gram Panchayat level for a certain period of time so that they can regularly coordinate the activities and work with local level stakeholders to create a sustainable environment. Therefore, the project used a rather different methodology of engaging peer educators from the community. Six peer educators were recruited from the community, three girls and 3 boys of age between 18-24 years. As this project has three villages, two peer educators were used for each village.

## Selection of Peer Educators

Six Peer educators have been recruited from the community, between the age group of 18-24 years and a minimum qualification of matriculation. Some of them are pursuing higher studies. Names of the Peer Educators are:

1. *Naresh Kumar Senapaty*
2. *Kunibala Biswala*
3. *Rajesh Pandit*
4. *Parimita Rath*
5. *Deepak*
6. *Urmila*

Two peer educators namely Urmila and Deepak left the project few months back because of certain reasons. These peer educators were replaced by two new peer educators.

## First Round of Training of Peer Educators

All the Peer Educators were provided with four day training at the project office in Ranpur block. Facilitators from IMPACT, supported by the team from Madhyam Foundation delivered this training. The basic purpose of the trainings was to train the Peer Educators about the project activities and their roles and responsibilities. Training contents included community management, communication skills, gender issues and monitoring and reporting of the project related activities. Besides the project related orientation and skills they were also given trainings on life skills.



Training of Peer Educators

### Content of First Round of Training

Introduction to Trafficking, Migration and Safe Migration.
Introduction to Project, Objectives, Target Groups and Outcomes
Role and Responsibilities of Peer Educators
Orientation of Various Groups to be formed in the Community
Soft Skills—Team Work and Cooperation, Effective Communication and Thinking Out of the Box
Introduction to Livelihood Research
How to conduct an Interviews and Focus Group Discussions
How to conduct an Interviews

## Second Round of Training of Peer Educators

As the first quarter of work of the project was completed there was a need to give another round of training to Peer Educators so that they can effectively deliver in the next quarter. This was a three day training conducted with the following objectives:

- To improve the capacities of Peer Educators to effectively deliver the interventions in next quarter
- To take the stock of what has been achieved by the Peer Educators in the project so far.
- To make the Peer Educators realize what they have been able to achieve so far both in terms of project as well as improvement in their capacities.
- To motivate the Peer Educators to effectively make interventions in next quarter.

### **Important Areas Covered in three Days**

- Life skills to the Peer Educators
- Soft skills to Peer Educators
- Sessions on Human Trafficking
- Financial Management of SHGs
- Sharing the findings of Livelihood Research
- Taking stock of the activities conducted in last three months with respect to all the group



A Training Session in Progress

### **Exposure Visit to Peer Educators**

A one day exposure visit was organized for Peer Educators. The organizations that were visited were NAWO - National Alliance for Women and AAINA. Both of these organizations are working on women rights and trafficking. The idea behind the visit was to give Peer Educators a sense that there are other organizations that have also been doing the kind of work that they have been doing.

#### **Objectives of visit**

- To build up knowledge and conceptual clarity on human trafficking and its adverse impact on victims.
- To provide the peer educators with an idea of different forms of trafficking
- To make them aware about how trafficking leads to violation of Women Rights
- Rights based approach to address trafficking.
- Helping the Peer Educators in finding relevance to their work.

### **Third Round of Training of Peer Educators**

Third round of training for Peer Educators was provided in the month of October 2013. By this time peer educators were comfortable with the work that they had been doing. They had also developed a basic understanding of the problem of trafficking and how it affects the community. By this time peer educators had also formed the Peer groups, Vigilance committees as well as Self Help Groups. The basic aim of this round of training was to understand the problems that they have been facing in working with all the structures that have been established in the community. Peer educators were provided training in basic counselling so that they can help the members of peer groups in sharing and solving their interpersonal problems.

#### **Important Areas Covered in training**

- Making Peer Educators understand the importance for peer group members of sharing their problems with their parents
- Importance of making peer group members confident so that they can express and share their problems.
- Basic counselling skills
- Importance of establishing rapport with the peer group members.
- Importance of principles of Non-Judgmental attitude, self-determination and confidentiality in conducting meetings of peer groups.
- They were also given inputs about how to develop leadership in the peer group members.
- They were also given inputs about how they should reduce the dependence of SHGs, Peer groups as well as Vigilance Committee on them and should enable them to function independently.

### **Contribution of Peer Educators**

Peer Educators have played an invaluable role in the implementation of this project. Some of the ways in which their involvement has proved to be an important one are expressed below:

- It would have been many more times difficult to mobilize the young girls for participating into the peer group activities without peer educators taking charge of mobilizing them. The fact that peer educators were from the community, proved really helpful.

- Engagement of peer educators proved beneficial in winning the trust of influential people and especially Panchayat officials in the community.
- Existence of peer educators was very helpful in awareness generation efforts as they played pivotal role in the formation and functioning of peer groups.
- Peer educators played an important role in revival of dormant SHGs. Role of peer educators in making the livelihood models functional is commendable as they provided both logistical as well as technical help to SHGs.
- Peer Educators acted as Peer Researchers for the livelihood research. They collected, sorted and completed data analysis for livelihood research.
- Establishment and functioning of Vigilance committees in all the three villages was facilitated by the peer educators.
- As each village was assigned to a pair of peer educators and in this pair one would be male and other one female movement of pair of peer educators of opposite sex first time provided exposure to the community that young people of opposite sex can have healthy professional relationships.
- Movement of these peer educators and especially female peer educators in the community has given the confidence to the girls as well as community in the sense that girls should be allowed to move freely in the community. This exposure has really worked in improving the mobility of girls in the community.
- Peer educators have become an asset for the community and they have emerged as role models for the young people in the community.
- Existence of peer educators is one of the prime actors that will ensure the sustainability of efforts that have been instituted by the project.
- As peer educators are based in the community only they will remain in touch with all the formal and informal structures that have been established by the project in the community.



### IMPACT Partners in Social Development

IMPACT was established in 2008. It has an exclusive mandate to work with the non-profit sector through meaningful partnerships with NGOs and funding organizations. IMPACT has competencies in Program Design, Implementation, MIS and M&E Systems Development, Capacity Building, Quantitative & Qualitative Research, Data Analysis & Interpretation, Documentation and Reporting for social development projects.



### CBATN (Cross Border Anti Trafficking Network)

CBATN is a coalition of NGOs coming together from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal to fight the menace of cross border trafficking between these countries. CBATN is registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860. The mission of CBATN is ***“To eliminate all forms of violence against women and children, particularly human trafficking”***. As its long term goal, CBATN will ensure that ***“Permanent systems and institutions are established to ensure significant reduction in cross-border human trafficking, adequately supported by quality care to survivors and deserving punishment to the perpetrators”***



### Madhyam Foundation

Madhyam Foundation is registered under Societies Act 1860. It works with more than 23,000 poor and marginalized families in 8 districts of Odisha including project district Nayagarh. Madhyam mainly undertakes capacity building and core expertise in formation of Self-Help Groups. Madhyam is also working on raising awareness on the issues of migration and human trafficking. It works on improving the access of migrants to different social security schemes.

#### For Further Details Contact:

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