

voices of change

AZAD FOUNDATION
annual report
2016-17



voices of change



Azād Foundation

annual report

2016-17

Dear Friends

Writing of an annual report is a frenzied activity in Azad, as we try to summarise a whole year of hectic activity, hard work and sometimes chaos into a few pages that will hold the attention of all those with whom we want to share our work and learnings. I hope this report communicates to you our excitement and hope, as much as the challenges we face and learnings we harvest.



The year 2016 has been a rather tumultuous year for a lot of us around the world. From Brexit that shocked many of us to the US elections, the horrific images of migrants from Syria and countries in conflict seeking shelter. We have all witnessed increased intolerance towards minorities, the have-nots, hate inspired crimes and attempts to limit democratic spaces. In India, the year also saw an unprecedented clampdown on civil society by arbitrary use of FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act); student unrest has been responded to by use of disproportionate state force; movements for rights of people – tribals, dalits, minorities, campaigns against mining, nuclear power plants have all had to counter the might of State. There has been a liberal labelling as anti-national of any sentiment that the ‘powers-that-be’ do not agree with. Demonetization saw a majority of us and members of communities we work with spending a lot of time queuing up to access our own hard earned money. At the same time, out-breaks of dengue, chikungunya and other viral infections affected almost one in every two households in large parts of North India, incapacitating people for considerable periods of time.

Yet, all has not been bleak. There have also been very inspiring and hopeful voices of resistance – across the world. We have seen thousands march for democratic rights, for pro-poor state policy, for peace and justice, across continents. As I write

this, we just witnessed a great expression of people protest in India – NOT IN MY NAME – a citizen protest against violence, mob violence specifically against minorities – across more than 18 cities in the country. The expressions of protest have moved out from being confined locally to taking on a larger and more organic form of citizens coming together to express their anguish and pain.

We at Azad, locate our work, in the crevices of all of these changes in the society – nationally and globally - that threaten human rights, and the protest and resistance to the same. We understand, that as one organisation, we are a tiny drop in the ocean of social change, but as part of a larger collective of voices that struggle for equality and justice, we are a mighty life force. We work with communities across Delhi, Jaipur and Kolkata and reach out to others in Indore, Ahmedabad and Bangalore through partnerships, to make non traditional livelihoods accessible to resource poor women. It is important to note that this effort is embedded within an aspiration to facilitate a building of critical thought and reflection, not just amongst the communities we work with, but also within the team at Azad and its partners. We engage with young men to question dominant norms and understanding of masculinity, we work with young women to help them become feminist leaders and resources in the communities they

live in, apart from provoking an understanding of work that goes beyond traditional roles of men and women – both in public spaces and at homes. We work with women who choose to become drivers to question patriarchy and re-shape the discourse on women and safety.

Our work, limited as it is in numbers, does offer a ray of hope, of what is possible if things were to change. As per the National Family Health Survey 2005-06,

- Only half the women in India are allowed to go to the market by themselves, just 15% have their own bank accounts.
- About 54% of women in India agree that a man is justified in beating his wife if he has any reason for it, such as wife showing disrespect for her in-laws or leaving home without telling him.

We are very proud to state that, once the women have been through the Women on Wheels training in Azad and gone on to employ themselves as chauffeurs:

- 100% of them learn to exercise their right to mobility and in fact majority of them are able to travel alone at all times of day or night in their respective cities – Delhi, Jaipur and Kolkata. Some of them have traveled outside their cities; all of them have not only their own bank accounts but are able to also exercise their rights to control them.
- A 100% of the women will also not tolerate any kind of violence either at home or in public spaces.

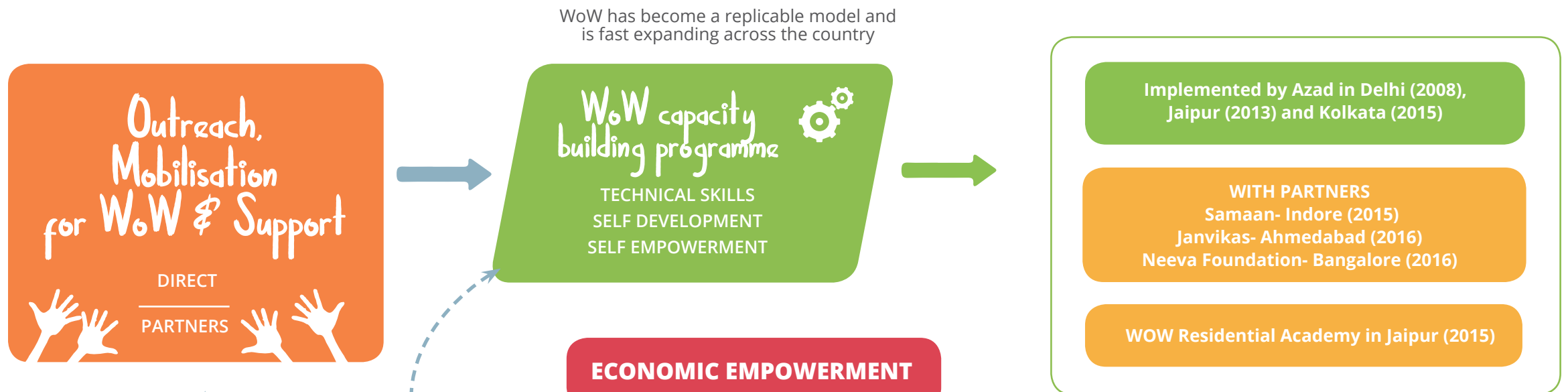
Our experience has led to a deeper understanding of the world of livelihoods and young women, public transport and women, and over the year we have made use of several strategic opportunities to ensure that these insights from the ground can be further researched, written about and shared in policy spaces. Our book “Lady Driver” published by Zubaan (in English) and Yatra (in Hindi) was a step in that direction. We have engaged with the process on monitoring of Social development Goals - SDGs (especially SDG 4 and 8) and also participated in the Commission for Status of Women - CSW 61 in New York. The women drivers, as well as the Azad team, have spoken at several fora and communicated the

layered nuances of processes of empowerment and social change. We have continued to strengthen the larger collective of women’s movement and draw inspiration through our involvement in campaigns such as One Billion Rising, 16 days of activism against violence on women, “I will go out” - a spontaneous protest of women to reclaim their right to public spaces in day and night, etc.

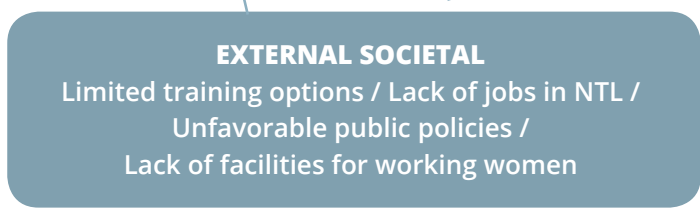
You will read in these pages more about how we translate our vision into reality. Needless to say that none of this could have been possible without the support of all our strategic funding partners – Human Dignity Foundation, Oak Foundation, American Jewish World Service, EMpower, iPartner, Mahindra Finance, Mahindra Insurance Brokers Ltd, COMO Foundation and C&A Foundation – all of whom have been with us for two years or more. We are glad at having been able to build mutually respectful and energizing partnerships with all our donors. Last year we also established new partnerships with The Cartier Foundation, Sapient, DMI Finance, HT Parekh Foundation and One Footstep UK. Also last year, for the first time, we undertook a fundraiser in the form of a musical – Mamma Mia! Again, directed by Ritu Chandra – a dynamic, enterprising and well known director. Mamma Mia! Again helped us build many new partnerships and extend our circle of support even wider. Our partners on the ground – SAMAAN, JAN VIKAS and NEEVA – have come in over the years at different points in time and added to the enriching experience of the collective of Women on Wheels.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to all of you. We look ahead to 2017, wiser through our learnings, determined to address all our gaps, building further on our strengths, as we continue with our efforts to learn as we do and do as we learn....

In Solidarity,
Meenu Vadera



Resource-poor women face numerous challenges at different levels in gaining skills and employment in transport sector, such as:



These programmes create a buzz for social change in the communities from which WOW trainees come, increasing and sustaining the mobilisation efforts for WOW & challenging the patriarchal mindset that limits women's choices.



Azad Foundation works with urban resource-poor women to enable them access to remunerative and dignified non-traditional livelihoods. Professional driving is one such domain, through which we also create safe transport options for women in selected cities. Women on Wheels (WoW) is a holistic capacity building programme, which prepares women to become empowered drivers. Enabling resource-poor women to pursue non-stereotypical careers undeterred by violence and resistance, also requires initiatives creating a conducive environment within the communities. Building of market linkages, visibility and knowledge, and favorable public policies are key to sustaining these efforts.



who are the women on wheels?

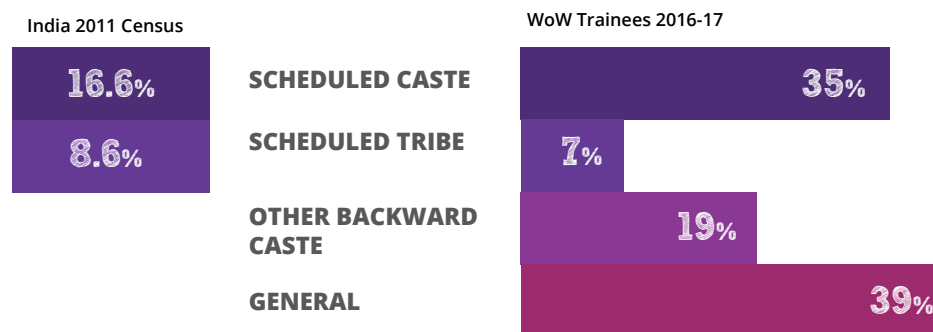
In 2016 -17, **422 resource-poor women enrolled for Women on Wheels** across Delhi, Jaipur and Kolkata to set on the journey of transformation. Here is a glimpse into their background and lives and how their profile compares with the profile of the population in India.



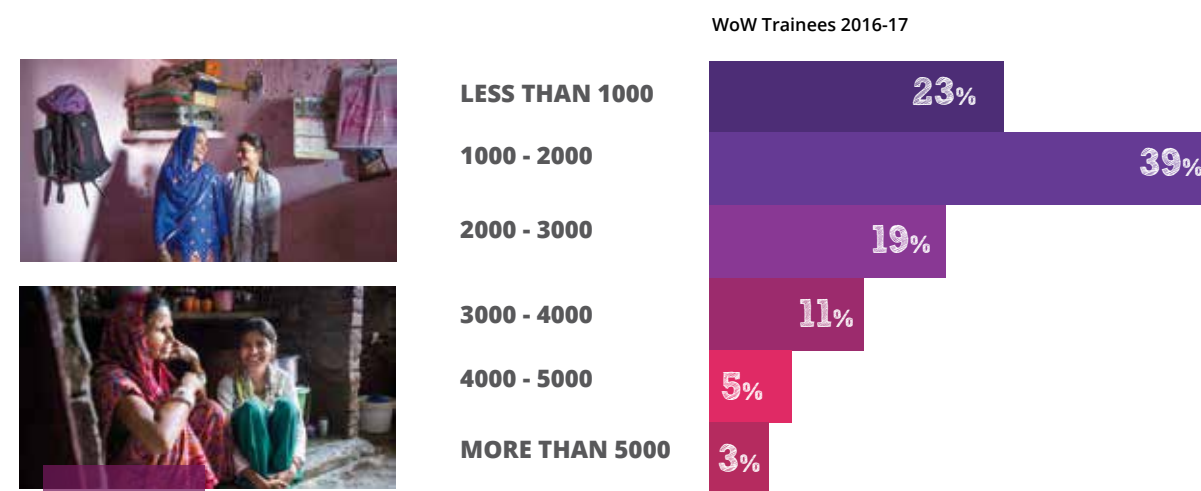
community



caste category



income per capita

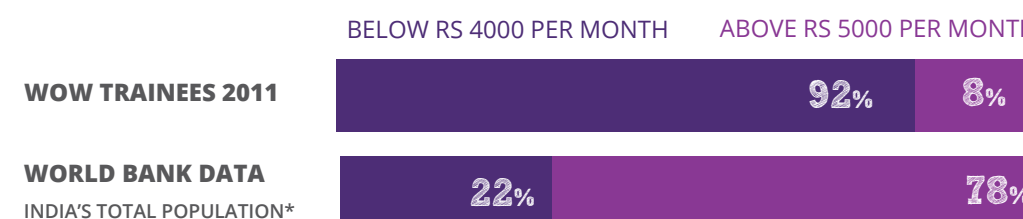


WoW Trainees 2016-17

PER CAPITA INCOME STATUS

If we compare the per capita income status of Azad trainees to the World Bank standard, then the picture is as follows:

WORLD BANK POVERTY LINE = LIVING ON LESS THAN \$1.90 / APPROX. RS 130 PER DAY



*Source: World Bank (2017), Poverty and Equity Data: <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/country/IND>



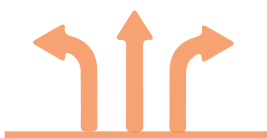
mobilisation & outreach for women on wheels

SPOT MOBILISATION EVENT BY OUR PARTNER
THOUGHTSHOP FOUNDATION IN KOLKATA

Our mobilisation and outreach work creates an enabling environment in the urban resettlement colonies for the resource-poor women to come into non-traditional livelihoods with dignity. It aims to break gender stereotypes in the communities, raise awareness on women's rights and encourage women to join WoW.

mobilisation 2016-17

CENTER	TOTAL ENROLMENT	TOTAL DIRECT OUTREACH	TOTAL INDIRECT OUTREACH
DELHI	299	11890	36718
JAIPUR	52	5586	27930
KOLKATA	71	9228	45915
AZAD TOTAL	422	26704	110563



- NO. OF WOMEN SUPPORTED TO GET CITIZENSHIP AND IDENTITY DOCUMENTS **58**
- NO. OF WOMEN PROVIDED LEGAL AND COUNSELLING SUPPORT TO DEAL WITH CASES OF VIOLENCE **25**
- NO. OF WOMEN SUPPORTED FOR OTHER ISSUES THROUGH HOME VISITS **115**

voices of change



I grew up in a family that had too many mouths to feed and too few earning hands. My parents got me married early. But poverty continued to dog my footsteps. Thankfully my husband was good to me but my mother-in-law was abusive and we could not move away because of money problems.

One day, I came across people from Azad Foundation in my community. I gave them my details. Soon one of the mobilizers visited my house and saw that I lived without electricity. I did not even have a door in my house! She told me about Women on Wheels and how becoming a driver can change my life. I got really inspired. I had no money to travel to the training centre as my husband earned barely enough to survive. The team assured me that if I train well for 3 months, they will provide me money for conveyance.

I love the training. Whenever I drive, I feel tension free! The entire team at Azad has helped me in countless ways. Some time ago, my husband's elder brother beat him up brutally. My friends at Azad and the mobilisation team helped me get support to lodge and fight a case against my brother-in-law. I don't feel alone now. I know I have so many people on my side who I can rely on.

SHILPI
DELHI

mobilisation partners- kolkata

In Kolkata, to mobilise resource-poor women for WoW we work in partnership with three organisations: Thoughtshop Foundation, Talash - Society For Inner Strength, Peace and Equality and Lutheran World Service India Trust, and also collaborate on ad hoc basis with Centre for Advocacy and Research, Pratyay Gender Trust and Justice and Care. These partnerships aim to combine existing efforts of the partner organizations and Azad's Women on Wheels to break patriarchal norms and create a gender-sensitive social, economic and political environment.

In collaboration with all our partners in Kolkata we reached nearly **46,000 women** and enrolled **71 women** for Women on Wheels. Thanks to Pratyay Gender Trust, we were able to reach new marginalized community of transgender people.



MOBILISATION BY OUR PARTNER LWSIT IN KOLKATA



MOBILISATION IN JAIPUR



parvaz fellowship programme

Parvaz programme creates a cadre of young women community leaders who provide information and support to enable women to claim their rights in all spheres of lives. Their focus is to enhance women's access to and control over income and available resources. Through a year-long fellowship consisting of four residential workshops and on-ground inter-phase work, the fellows strengthen their analytical and soft skills, learn how to support women to claim their rights, and encourage women to choose career options in non-traditional livelihoods. **20 bright and energetic young women leaders** have completed the programme in Delhi in 2016-17. They have already taken a lead on various right-based projects in their communities.



SHIKHA



MEENAKSHI



NEERAJ



PRIYANKA

voices of change

CRECHÉ- JAHANGIRPURI

Nupur runs a creché for children in her community. She engages the children according to their needs and helps them study. She hopes that she will be able to sustain the project through the income earned through crèche.



I did a survey in my area to see what stops women from going to work. Majority of them said that they have small children so they are unable to go. I also saw many children whose parents had gone out to work, roaming around on the streets where people were hitting them or troubling them as they wished, with no one to stop them. It is then that I thought of doing this so that the parents would have a place where they could safely leave their kids for the day. The group of women associated with me helped me reach out to the families.

NUPUR
PARVAZ FELLOW

leading change

18,000

RESOURCE-POOR WOMEN REACHED DIRECTLY WITH INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

105

WOMEN ENROLLED FOR WOW TRAINING

490

WOMEN SUPPORTED IN ACCESSING CITIZENSHIP DOCUMENTS SUCH AS IDENTITY CARDS THAT ENABLE THEM TO PURSUE TRAINING, FORMAL EMPLOYMENT AND CLAIM BENEFITS

350

WOMEN/ FAMILIES ASSISTED IN ACCESSING BENEFITS THROUGH GOVERNMENT'S SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES



PREETI



SHABANA



KARUNA



JYOTI



TARA



ARTI



RINKU



RENULATA



AANCHAL



MIRA



RITU



SHAHEEN



HEMLATA



SONI



YASHODA



JYOTI

OPENING BANK ACCOUNTS IN JAHANGIRPURI

Underprivileged women often do not have a bank account of their own because of lack of necessary documents or lack of money for the minimum balance. Realizing the importance of a bank account not only for saving but also for accessing government schemes, Shaheen took proactive steps in convincing a nationalized bank to open zero balance accounts for resource-poor women in her community. As a result of her efforts, 105 women have acquired personal bank accounts.



I conducted a survey in my area to see how many women had bank accounts. I then went to the Bank of Baroda to ask them to open bank accounts for these women. At first, the bank refused saying that they can open accounts only if the women have three identity proofs, whereas most women in my community had managed to acquire only one. Given the fact that poor people in the city often find it difficult to get so many documents together, I argued with them and asked them to give me in writing the reasons for their refusal. Eventually, they suggested I go to a different branch, where after much discussion I was able to convince them! Two people from the bank came to the community and opened the bank accounts of 105 women. I feel so happy because now some old women will be able to get their widow pension. Also, three children whose names were taken off the school register due to not having bank accounts will now be able to continue their education. This will last them the lifetime.

SHAHEEN
PARVAZ FELLOW



voices
of change



Through regular discussions held with groups of men we discovered that a young woman, Priyanka, who had finished WoW training at Azad, was being stopped from working as a driver by her brother, Atar. Eight other group members and I went to their house to talk to Atar. Atar told us that he did not think driving was an appropriate job for women, as bad things and accidents can happen. He said: 'If she does a 10 - hour job, who will handle the household?' We pointed out that even when cooking there is a risk of fire and getting burnt, and that



women work 9-10 hours whatever job they do. As a driver, Priyanka would get salary increment every year and could also become a commercial driver and bus driver, earning more. At first, Atar and some other family members argued with us. But we went again a day later and talked to them. Finally they agreed. Priyanka now has a job through Sakha and is earning as a driver. Everyone respects her and wants to be like her.

RAKESH ASWAAL
MGJ MEMBER IN JHALANA, JAIPUR

In 2016-17, Men for Gender Justice programme expanded its reach across Delhi and Jaipur with 22 active groups of 140 active members. Through a series of training sessions and a range of activities in the communities, the programme increases knowledge and capacity of young men to act against violence on women and enhances their understanding on gender, patriarchy and masculinities. They are able to practice gender equality in their own lives and

influence others to do so. Thereby men participating in the programme co-create spaces in their communities that support women to work in non-traditional livelihoods – strengthening the support system for women drivers and WoW trainees and aiding recruitment for WoW. Some of the groups have started transforming into Community Action Youth Clubs to gain a stronger identity and expand their reach.

MANY OF THE MEN HAVE GONE THROUGH STRONG PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION, WHEREBY THEY HAVE:

STOPPED HARASSING
YOUNG WOMEN IN
THEIR COMMUNITY

STARTED SHARING
DOMESTIC WORK
AT HOME

REDEFINED FOR
THEMSELVES
WHAT THEY
MEAN BY BEING
A 'REAL MAN'

SUPPORTED
WOMEN FROM THEIR
NEIGHBOURHOODS
WHO ENROLLED IN
WOMEN ON WHEELS



RESIDENTIAL TRAINING IN HIMACHAL PRADESH



Women have rights and deserve to be at a respectable position in the society. Patriarchy is not good at all for women, men and society as a whole. I stopped being part of the groups that harass girls, as no one has the right to do this to girls. I started helping with domestic work and also started discussing these issues with my friends, relatives and neighbours. Some of them are teasing me about doing 'women's work' but I have answered them back, with the support of



other boys in the group. The idea that men can't control their anger is not true. A real man doesn't hurt anyone for the sake of getting what he wants. I want to be that kind of man. I want to work together with other men and women towards creating a better, violence free environment in my community, especially for girls.

NARESH KUMAR
MGJ MEMBER IN MADANPUR KHADAR, DELHI



MEMBERS OF THE PROGRAMME IN DELHI PARTICIPATING IN ONE BILLION RISING EVENTS AT BUS STOPS



● AZAD KISHORI SESSION IN KOLKATA BY OUR PARTNER TALASH



I understand that because of the social norms, women focus on household work and boys go out. I would like to make my family understand and talk to them to allow me to learn skills for earning.

PRIYA*
KISHORI PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT, KOLKATA



I shared about reproductive health training, especially about myths during the menstruation time with my mother and my elder sister. My mother didn't agree and said this is against our religion but my sister totally agreed to break these myths.

KHUSHBU
KISHORI PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT, JAIPUR



I told my mother and father about the concept of gender and my father promised to help mother out in household work.

MUSKAAN
KISHORI PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT, JAIPUR

*names have been changed



● KISHORI MELA IN JAIPUR

kishori mela

The Azad Kishori Mela (Fair), held on 27-28 January in Jaipur, was a grand event bringing together more than 1000 adolescent girls, 200 women from local basties and several organizations and individuals working on girl's and women's right issues. Various stalls talked about gender equality, non-traditional trades for women, education and legal knowledge. There were workshops of self-defense techniques, plays, games, dance and puppet shows. One of the highlights was demonstration of fire fighting by Sita, a woman firefighter in Jaipur. The adolescent girls also had an opportunity to hear an inspiring speech from the Chief guest, Ms Anita Bhadel, Women and Child Development Minister for Rajasthan.

The Azad Kishori programme provides sessions to school girls in grades 9-12 to develop their awareness on issues related to gender and work and help open up their aspirations for future life. The sessions focus on life skills, self-awareness and sexual and reproductive health and non-traditional livelihoods for women. In Jaipur, the Azad team directly engages with Government and private schools to conduct training sessions with adolescent girls. In Kolkata, the programme works through a partner organization, Talash - Society for Inner Strength, Peace and Equality, which has been active in this field for a long time.

voices of change



I told my parents that I also want to work in an NGO when I grow up. They initially told me that if I want to work, I should be a teacher. But when I put forward my thoughts in front of them, they agreed and said that I should do whatever I want to and that they are with me in this.

POOJA
KISHORI PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT, JAIPUR



● SELF-DEFENCE TRAINING IN JAIPUR



I can now identify the discriminations that girls and women face in their lives. Through the game I have realized that to pursue one's dreams, one has to push hard. I wish to be a working woman, and for that I will have to deal with all the barriers of family and my community.

SEEMA*
KISHORI PROGRAMME PARTICIPANT, KOLKATA

reach of azad kishori

CENTRE	NO. OF SCHOOLS	TOTAL PARTICIPANTS
JAIPUR	8	675
KOLKATA	3	531





ONE BILLION RISING EVENT IN JAIPUR

women's rights campaigns

voices of change



During the OBR campaign, we decorated our cars with kites, which carried slogans to stop violence against women. We went all around the city in these cars. People were taking videos and pictures of us. When we reached Bishop Cotton School, people welcomed us with applause. It was very exciting... when it all ended I didn't want to go home, I wanted to stay out and celebrate with everyone!

RITA SARDAR
WOW TRAINEE, KOLKATA

As an organization working on women's empowerment and livelihoods, Azad understands the importance of speaking out on various issues, especially Gender Based Violence. This year, like every other year, we engaged in various campaigns in collaboration with other NGOs, CBOs and individuals to raise our voice collectively. Across all Azad centres, Women on Wheels trainees, members of Men for Gender Justice programme and

Parwaz Fellows took part. They joined rallies, demonstrations, street corner meetings, performed plays, dance and music programmes, and even organized events in their communities. These engagements are a critical component of their association with Azad, giving them an exposure to the wider women's movements and connecting their own experiences of violence and discrimination to the collective struggles.



women on wheels training

TECHNICAL TRAINING



SELF DEFENSE TRAINING



LEARNER'S LICENSE TRAINING

Women on Wheels (WoW) prepares urban resource-poor women to become professional drivers. In a patriarchal society with systemic discrimination against women, a programme focused on women's skills and employability in non-traditional livelihoods such as driving, has to take a holistic approach to capacity building. WoW has demonstrated how a model

encompassing technical skills, self-development and self-empowerment enables trainees to become not only efficient professionals but also empowered individuals. They gain in both skills and confidence, questioning the multiple deprivations and violence in their lives.



OUR PROGRAMME WITH THOUGHTSHOP FOUNDATION AT AUTO STAND IN KOLKATA AS PART OF 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AND ONE BILLION RISING CAMPAIGN



AZAD TRAINEES AND PARVAZ FELLOWS TAKING PART IN THE 'I WILL GO OUT! GO OUT!' CAMPAIGN IN DELHI



AZAD TRAINEES PERFORMING AT THE GENDER FAIR AT SHIVAJI COLLEGE AS PART OF ONE BILLION RISING, DELHI

data snapshot of wow

	ENROLMENT 2016-17	PERMANENT LICENSE 2016-17	EMPLOYABILITY TEST 2016-17
DELHI	299	163	99
JAIPUR	52	43	30
KOLKATA	71	28	11
WOW PARTNERS	160	88	37
AZAD AS A WHOLE	582	322	177
	33% MORE THAN IN 2015-16	41% MORE THAN IN 2015-16	45% MORE THAN IN 2015-16

MANJU DEVI
WOW TRAINEE IN JAIPUR



I have changed a lot since coming to Azad. Every course at Azad has taught me something. It has been really wonderful being here. Earlier I could not even think of going out alone. I was even afraid of speaking to people. Now I am so confident that I can drive on my own to places, I can travel by bus and auto anywhere. I do not feel afraid anymore.

LATA RATHORE
WOW TRAINEE IN DELHI



Before coming to Azad I used to do stitching at home to earn some income. There was not much else I could do as I only studied till class 10. My eldest daughter heard about Azad's Women on Wheels and inspired me to join.

I already acquired permanent license and will be appearing for the employability test soon. After coming here, I feel like life has begun again. From someone naïve who always blamed her destiny for everything, I have become someone who understands the ways of the world.



Voices of change

The biggest realization is that society has always treated women badly. But women can do anything. We are all equals. It is after I realized this that my fear disappeared. Even today when I come for my training, people of my community say different things. They pass nasty comments. But I have learnt to ignore these. My family supports me.

I always had a desire to wear salwar suits. But a married woman is supposed to wear only sarees! Now I have started wearing suits to the training. I don't care what others say. I feel confident and I know I am doing nothing wrong.

JYOTSNA SARDAR
WOW GRADUATE IN KOLKATA



I come from a very economically poor family. Especially after my father's death we somehow just managed to survive with my mother's income of a part time domestic worker. My mother supported my decision to join Azad Foundation. Though I was initially afraid since I had never left my immediate neighbourhood, once I started training, I never looked back. Now I can drive around everywhere, catch the local transport and travel to different parts of the city at all times of night and day. I don't fear the roads anymore.

One of the biggest things I have learnt in Azad is about respecting myself. Coming from a poor tribal family with no father, my mother and I have faced a lot of insults and disrespect. The influential people in my area had never even

spoken to us. All of that has changed. Once my photograph and story got published in a leading newspaper, people started talking to us. They would point at me and say – 'she is the one who has become a driver!' After I got my job at the Medica Superspecialty Hospital as a valet, I have become quite famous in my area. Now my dream is to build a house for my mother and take care of her. She has gone through a lot in life and deserves some rest and care. I will not marry unless the man is willing to respect my job and my mother. Azad has not only helped me get trained for a job and double our income—it has taught me to walk with my head held high.

After the gender class, I realized that it's not me - it's the society and patriarchy that is responsible for all the damage in my life. My husband and in laws abused me constantly. I remember the day I learnt that my body is my right. I asked the teacher what one should do if one's husband forced himself on her. I felt so angry because I realized that I have been accepting violence all my life. That night I told my husband 'NO'. He tried to beat me up but my children stood by me. Now he does not dare to touch me.

My children are my biggest strength. I will complete the training, get a job and make them proud. Right now, I am doing a class on self-defense. I share all that I learn with my two daughters. I will never let them go through what I have experienced in my life. I also tell my son that he should never become like his father. He is a good boy and respects my values and ideas.



ENGLISH LESSON BY OUR PARTNER NEEVA FOUNDATION, BANGALORE

We have been joining forces with like-minded organisations to realize our goal of opening up the transport sector to women and enabling thousands of resource-poor women to access non-traditional livelihoods with dignity. In 2016-17, we collaborated with three partners in India and NEWIG in Ghana to bring Women on Wheels programme to more cities and women. We also started exploring incubation of WoW in Kerala in partnership with Archana Women's Centre.

Each partner comes with different strengths and needs for support. Last year, we established Women on Wheels Institute to build capacity of the partners, set up a partnership team to provide tailored hands-on mentorship and translated the programme curriculum from Hindi to English. All the partnerships have also been very enriching for Azad, enabling us to explore new ideas for mobilisation, training and employability.

what do partners say? ▼



Samaan (meaning equal) is committed to working with people facing inequality, began its journey with helping women suffering violence to get legal justice. Through the partnership with Azad, Samaan has been able to also start working on women's livelihoods, empowerment and access to social justice. We got connected with a large network of institutions and individuals in the social sector. The partnership has enabled us to expand our vision and learn how to improve organizational processes and develop the organisation. We have been able to expand from five localities in Indore with limited resources into more than 100 localities and strengthen our work in providing access to justice and equality for women suffering violence.



SAMAAN TEAM

OUR PARTNERS IN INDIA	WOMEN ENROLLED	NO. OF WOMEN WHO BECAME EMPLOYABLE	NO. OF WOMEN OFFERED EMPLOYMENT
SAMAAN SOCIETY INDORE	76	53	18
JANVIKAS AHMEDABAD	59	10	7
NEEVA FOUNDATION BANGALORE	25	25	12



Partnership is such a small word but has a wide meaning. By partnership we mean learning new ideas from Azad - from taking suggestions in implementing new strategies to celebrating achievements together. We believe that we can always discuss with Azad any challenges we have and find a clear path to achieve goals of the DriverBen. In this partnership, we got a platform to put our views forward to the Azad team. Their encouragement helped us boost our motivation. We are thankful for all the support right from start-up, through to training and placement generation.

JANVIKAS TEAM



At Taxshe, when it came to new strategies such as teaching subjects other than driving skills, e.g. English, it was always done with the aim to enhance the image and benefits of Taxshe Roos (women drivers) and thereby Taxshe. Azad taught us the humane side of this field - we were taken aback when we saw the lengths and the details that Azad went to - to make a quality shift in the lives of the Roos. Much to our surprise, as we followed Azad guidelines at Neeva - we've become much more forgiving, understanding and enjoyed the joy we were able to create in the lives of the Roos. Azad brought about the shift in us - it gave us the opportunity, the skills, the backing to bring about social change in the lives of women, and in the society as a whole.

NEEVA FOUNDATION TEAM

Voices of change



Through Women on Wheels, I learnt how to drive and now I train other women on wheels! My father used to work as laborer, getting work occasionally. He used to drink and take money from my mother, hurling abuses and beating her when she protested. Then, he got diagnosed with HIV. We were surviving only on my mother's income of Rs 6000 per month from her job as a sweeper at a hospital. In 2012, my mum also got critically ill and stopped working. We had no support, people stopped talking to us. Eventually my mother recovered and that's when I decided to join WOW. It took me some time to learn but I am confident that now I can drive as well as men do. My first job was with a lady running cosmetics business and I earned Rs 7000, which improved our economic condition and I was able to assure better medical care for my parents. In August 2016, I got selected as a trainer for Maruti Driving School. Now, I earn Rs 8500 along with a Provident Fund.

JAYSHREE TAYDE

WOW GRADUATE IN INDORE



“

A year earlier, I got a driving license as it was my dream to drive a car, but we could not afford one and I ultimately gave up on my dream. So, I was thrilled when I learnt about Neeva's Driving Training and Employment Scheme and joined. I was driving well enough to be employed as driver in a couple of months and started earning around Rs.8000 - 8500 as Driver on Call with TaxShe. My joy had no bounds as I had come to be known as 'Roo Gayatri'. With each day, I excelled at work and with it earned more respect and appreciation from clients - something much more than money. Now, I drive a cab for Taxshe, making around 18,000-20,000 per month. I have enlisted for Own Your Cab scheme of TaxShe which enabled me to get my own cab and have fixed drives for the entire year. From a house maid, today I'm a business owner - I decide which work to take, what is better for me and my family. All my relatives and friends are in awe of me, people notice and respect me, people see me as an example.

GAYATRI

WOW GRADUATE IN BANGALORE

“

My life had been full of hardship. I was not allowed to go to college, just because it was 25-30 kms away from home and travelling this far wasn't considered appropriate for girls. I was forced to wear burkha instead of clothes that I liked. Due to my upbringing, I felt uncomfortable even sitting next to a man in a bus, and couldn't gather the courage to talk to anyone outside my home. A glimmer of hope entered my life when a friend of mine told me about DriverBen. My family has been surviving on only Rs 6500 per month. This motivated me to come to the programme so that I could start earning too. I have now completed three months of DriverBen training and am determined to change how my community thinks about women. I will secure a job and prove to them that a woman's world is not just limited to the kitchen.

GULABSA KHALIFA

DRIVER BEN TRAINEE IN AHMEDABAD



We also worked with five NGO partners that sent nine women in total to train at our residential Women on Wheels Academy in Jaipur. Thanks to these collaborations there are now women professional drivers steering the way across many locations, all the way from Pune to Assam.

▼ **WOMEN ON WHEELS
PARTNERS 2016-17**

Rastriya Ekta Avam Manav Vikas Sansthan
Bikaner, Rajasthan

Muskaan
Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

Action NorthEast Trust (ANT)
Assam

Ekal Nari Shakti Sangthan (ENSS)
Kota, Rajasthan

Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP)
Pune, Maharashtra

“

It has always been a dream at the ANT to employ women as accountants and drivers - as these are male bastions even in women's organisations. Hence, we jumped at the opportunity when we heard about the driving training for women at Azad Foundation. We will always be on the lookout to send to Azad many more women to enable them to become drivers. Thank you!

JENNIFER LIANG
ANT, ASSAM



“

At the age of 17, I was forced to get married. But after five years, my husband died of cancer. Our son was only two years then. I struggled a lot through the years to make ends meet. I wanted to stand on my own feet and do something interesting, so when I heard about the opportunity to become a professional driver, I decided to join Azad's Women on Wheels Academy at Jaipur. After completing the training, I got employed by ANT in Assam. Sometimes I feel shy when men stare at me, seeing me drive, but it also makes me feel proud. Recently I took the office car to the village and several men looked at me and commented 'sa sa maiki manu hoi gaari jolai ase' (look, a woman is driving car). Why should only men drive a vehicle? Women can do it as well. I now earn an income from driving and am able to take care of myself and my 12 years old studying in class VII.

ULUPI MANDAL

WOW ACADEMY GRADUATE FROM ASSAM



“ We are lucky to have you gone through the ups and downs so that we can take only ups, we don't need to make the same mistakes.

MAWUSI NUDEKOR AWITY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NETWORK OF WOMEN IN GROWTH

In July 2017, Network of Women in Growth (NEWIG) from Ghana visited Azad for participating in the Women on Wheels Institute to learn from our experience of bringing resource-poor women into traditionally male-dominated professional driving. NEWIG started a similar programme in Ghana and as a result of the learning institute, they planned to introduce various teaching and monitoring approaches. Over the last year, NEWIG enrolled 35 women for the programme and 10 women are already employed in diverse jobs such as driving academy, automobile servicing centre as well as private chauffeurs with organisations and families. Inspired by the Learning Institute exchange, NEWIG also plans to start cab services with commercial drivers.



where are our trainees driving the wheels of change?

In 2016-17, 111 trained women were employed in numerous types of jobs. From working as valets to driving waste collection vans to transporting school children to teaching other women in driving schools, the range of jobs open to women drivers is slowly but surely expanding.

Thank you to all the individuals and organisations who have made this happen, namely:

Sakha Consulting Wings - Delhi, Jaipur, Kolkata, Indore
TaxShe - Bangalore
Delhi Commission for Women's 181 Helpline
Tea2 Taxi - Ahmedabad
Medica Superspecialty Hospital - Kolkata

Renault Showroom - Jaipur
Municipal Corporation - Indore
Maruti Driving School - various cities
Navshree Motor Driving School - Jaipur
IILM - Delhi

Some of the women drivers trained in previous years have been able to find employment independently in various other places, such as Uber, Meru, The Leela Palace and ITC Maurya.

Since 2008, we and our partners empowered over 1000 women to become employable as drivers. Sakha, our key partner for employment absorbed 365 of the trained drivers over the years.



REKHA KAHAR WORKING AS PRIVATE CHAUFFEUR IN AHMEDABAD



TAXSHE'S ROOS DOING SCHOOL PICK UPS



BEENA & KANTA AT RENAULT, JAIPUR



influencing policy changes nationally and internationally

CSW 61'S UN SIDE EVENT SPONSORED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF COLUMBIA, ZAMBIA AND NEPAL

LEFT TO RIGHT:

- MR. B. LAMSAL, MINISTRY OF WOMEN, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL WELFARE, REPUBLIC OF NEPAL
- HER EXCELLENCY MRS. E. LUNGU, FIRST LADY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
- MS. N. GUMBONZVANDA, AFRICAN UNION GOODWILL AMBASSADOR FOR ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE
- MS. M. OGUTTU, KISUMU MEDICAL AND EDUCATIONAL TRUST, KENYA
- MS. M. VADERA, AZAD FOUNDATION, INDIA

DOLON GANGULY AT THE CSW BREAKTHROUGH PANEL

A PARALLEL EVENT AT COMMISSION FOR STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW) 61, NEW YORK

As part of the CSW 61 NGO Forum, on 15 March 2017, Azad organized a panel discussion on Non-Traditional Livelihoods in India: Women Ride the Wheels of Change. We were honoured to have Bipasha Baruah (Canada Research Chair in Global Women's Issues, Western University, Canada), Joanne Sandler (Senior Associate for Gender at Work, Ex-Deputy Executive Director of UNIFEM (2001- 2010), and Marilia Bezerra (Managing Partner of CARE Enterprises Inc.) joining our Executive Director, Meenu Vadera on the panel.

On the same day, Dolon Ganguly from Azad spoke at a panel hosted by Breakthrough on interlinkages between livelihoods and violence against women.

On 20 March 2017, Meenu Vadera presented Azad's experience at a UN Side Event of the CSW 61



sponsored by the Governments of Columbia, Zambia and Nepal. Altogether, CSW 61 was a great moment of networking, visibility and dialogue globally with grassroots organizations, activists, researchers and policymakers



NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON NTL

We organised the first ever national workshop of organizations and individuals working on Non-Traditional Livelihoods (NTL) for women in India. On 6-8 April 2016 at Delhi, 13 organisations and 21 individuals met to share grassroots experiences of training and livelihoods in NTL, challenges of mobilisation and marketing and the need for appropriate support systems and policy.

DRAFT NATIONAL POLICY FOR WOMEN BY THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Azad, together with other NTL organisations, proposed the inclusion of NTL as an emerging sector and the integration of a holistic model of training in the skill development courses run by the Government for women from marginalized communities. We also suggested creating a PPP model for training and income generation in NTL activities.

AZAD PARINDE

Three issues of the newsletter carrying the voices of participants in Azad programmes were published in 2016-17. We also introduced a Bengali version of Azad Parinde for our Kolkata trainees. Trainees and participants of other Azad programmes wrote about their experiences and opinions on:

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5

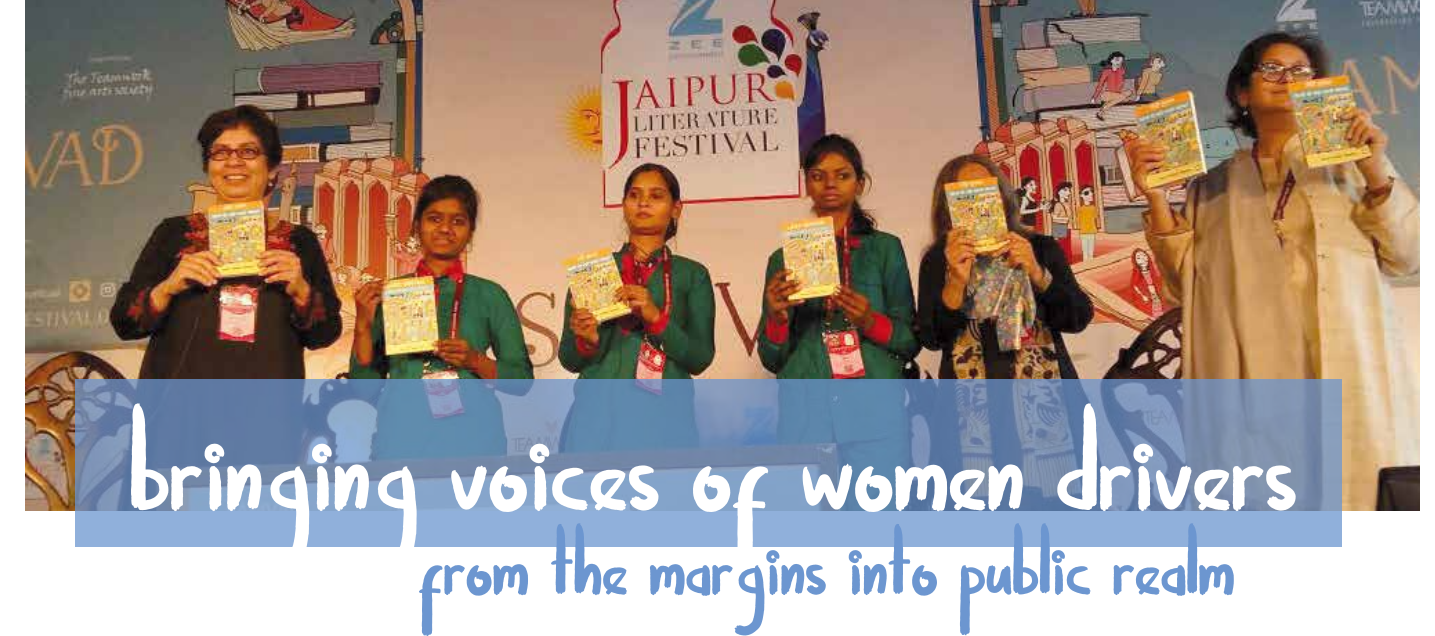
In the consultations on SDG 5 held by the UN Women in Delhi, we were able to foreground the inclusion of NTL as an important livelihoods sector for women that will help contest gender stereotypes at home and workplaces.

PARTICIPATION AT CONFERENCES:

- We highlighted the need for a skill plus plus approach to livelihoods training for women in the non-traditional sector at **58th Annual Conference of the Indian Association for Labour Economics** (24 - 26 November, Guwahati, India)
- Together with other researchers involved in NTLs for women, we discussed concerns of NTL livelihoods in India and the need for an integration and promotion the skill plus plus model of training within the public, private and non-governmental training programmes at the **XV National Conference of the Indian Association for Women's Studies** (22 - 25 January, Chennai, India).

- "Participation in Campaigns such as One Billion Rising Against Violence on Women"
- "Dreams and Aspirations"
- "I Will Go Out: Experiences of Accessing Public Spaces".

Feedback on the newsletters shows that trainees consider this a platform for expression, connection and awareness. For some, the newsletter also



The Lady Driver book is a collection of different voices of women who have been part of the training at Azad Foundation and are working as professional drivers in the cities of Delhi and Jaipur. Edited by Jayawati Srivastava, the book was published in December 2016 by Zubaan books in English and Yatra in Hindi.

The book was **launched on 19 January 2017 at the Jaipur Literature Festival**, one of the biggest festivals in the world. Lady Driver was inaugurated by Namita Gokhale, a well-known author and the Director of the Jaipur Literature Festival, followed by a session with women drivers - Poonam, Sakshi and Chand, who shared their stories.

We also held an event on 23 February 2017 at the Oxford Bookstore in New Delhi, with drivers Sunita and Geeta participating in the panel and sharing their stories. And in **New York**, we also **launched the book internationally** after our CSW61 panel discussion.

This book has been instrumental in bringing the voices of resource poor women and their struggle for change from the invisible margins to the centre. The stories featured in the book and the participation of the drivers at the launches has made this possible. These stories have also served as inspiration to other women and add to the domain of 'formal knowledge' experiences of women's struggles for identity, dignity and wellbeing.



AZAD TEAM & DRIVERS WHO SPOKE AT THE LAUNCH EVENT AT THE JAIPUR LITERATURE FESTIVAL

helps in negotiating the doubts and problems they have to face in the community with regard to their training. "Reading this (Azad Parinde) I felt so motivated that I want to fly and want to help others fly," said Rajina, WoW trainee in Kolkata.



- **223 trainees and participants of other programmes contributed to Azad Parinde**
- **65 contributions were published**
- **7555 persons were reached through direct distribution to Azad programmes' participants and through indirect sharing (participants shared newsletter with family members, friends and neighbours)**

badlav ka safarnama



This was the year when we introduced the participatory and visual tool of mapping the journey of change of every trainee with Azad. We thank Nisha Dhawan for investing her time in helping us develop this tool. The Badlav ka Safarnama reflects Azad's model of skills for empowering livelihoods. Using the tool, trainees can trace their journey through the various stages of technical know-how, self-development and self-empowerment modules as well as the actual experiences of empowerment flowing from their association with Azad.

voices of change

CAPTURED BY BADLAV KA SAFARNAMA



I was extremely shy and under confident. I could never imagine going on a bus alone to some place. After joining Azad, I slowly started believing in myself. Now I come to the training centre on my own in a bus. Not only that, I go to many other places, like shopping for my clothes, by public transport all by myself.

POOJA BAIRWA
TRAINEE, JAIPUR



My elder brother used to assault me physically, Earlier I did not know how to stop it. The gender and legal rights training at Azad gave me the knowledge and confidence to do it. One day when he beat me up, I went straight to the police station. I knew how to make a complaint and I had knowledge of laws. My friends at Azad support me and my brother now knows that I am not naïve and helpless. This has stopped the abuse.

NAHID PARVEEN
TRAINEE, KOLKATA

The Badlav ka Safarnama tells us that three of the most important empowering experiences of most trainees across Delhi, Kolkata and Jaipur are **increases in mobility, ability to speak up against violence on women and being able to negotiate with Government institutions for getting entitlements and identity cards.**



After coming to Azad, I became both aware and confident. I got information about the widow pension scheme and got it done for my mother. I also visited Government officials and got the names of my children included in the ration card. I have also made my Aadhar card and helped others to get it made.

KAVITA
TRAINEE, DELHI



building internal capacity

STRENGTHENING OUR TEAM

At Azad we believe that being committed to empowering resource-poor women, it is also important to empower our team to grow personally as well as professionally. Before the start of 2016-17, we conducted a learning needs assessment across Azad and identified core areas for learning and development for individuals and teams. Based on this, each member of the Azad team has had numerous development opportunities last year. Here is a snippet of what this meant for some of them.



Self-development training was a good experience for me. It helped me know more about myself and also made me think about improving the way I live - to adopt a positive thinking, a positive approach.

ADITI DE
TRAINING COORDINATOR, KOLKATA
*ABOUT SELF-DEVELOPMENT TRAINING FOR ALL
MID-LEVEL AND JUNIOR STAFF, NOVEMBER 2016*



The leadership academy has given me a platform to explore myself further and see myself as being part of a larger ecosystem which I am constantly influencing and being influenced by.

PADMAKSHI BADONI
PROGRAMME MANAGER, RESEARCH, ADVOCACY
AND COMMUNICATIONS, DELHI
ABOUT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS

In 2016-17, the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) did not receive any case within the purview of Sexual Harassment at Workplace. The committee organized workshops with Azad staff members at all locations where Azad works to orient them about the issue and the related law. A list of all the ICC members with their contact details were put up at all centres on a visible notice board.

Azad also put in place a new Child Protection Policy. Our team developed the policy thanks to valuable insights gathered at a workshops organized by the Human Dignity Foundation and Oak Foundation, and with help from Haq, a child rights organisation based in Delhi.



I visited 'Aastha' during our Annual Retreat at Udaipur. The one thing that moved me the most was the conversation we had with the people there. I realized that they had done so much in life, faced so many obstacles, but always worked to better themselves and to make their work more effective. I would like to do the same.

SHIVJI SHARMA
ACCOUNTANT, JAIPUR
*ABOUT AN EXPOSURE VISIT DURING
ANNUAL RETREAT AT UDAIPUR,
APRIL 2017*



DONNA AND THE DYNAMOS' PERFORMANCE AS PART OF MAMMA MIA! AGAIN

fundraising

Last year saw the first of its kind fundraiser organized by Azad Foundation – Mamma Mia! Again. Together with a dedicated team of actors, singers, dancers, musicians, creatives and technical experts led by the inspirational woman Ms Ritu R Chandra, we hosted the globally acclaimed musical show at Shri Ram Centre in Delhi from 8-10 December 2016. Seven drivers trained by Azad and working with Sakha Cabs for Women by Women took over the stage in the closing scene, dancing - representing the women, which the show was about and for.

Over 1,400 people came to watch and support our cause, enabling us to raise a substantial amount of money and spread the word about Women on Wheels far and wide. A big 'THANK YOU!' goes to the event sponsors, crowd-funding campaign backers, the entire production team and everyone who came along to sing and dance with us!

FLASH MOB PERFORMANCE AT SELECT CITYWALK



MAMMA MIA! AGAIN'S CHORUS

Thank you to all our donors

FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT IN 2016-17 THAT ENABLES RESOURCE-POOR WOMEN TO TRANSFORM THEIR LIVES.

organisations



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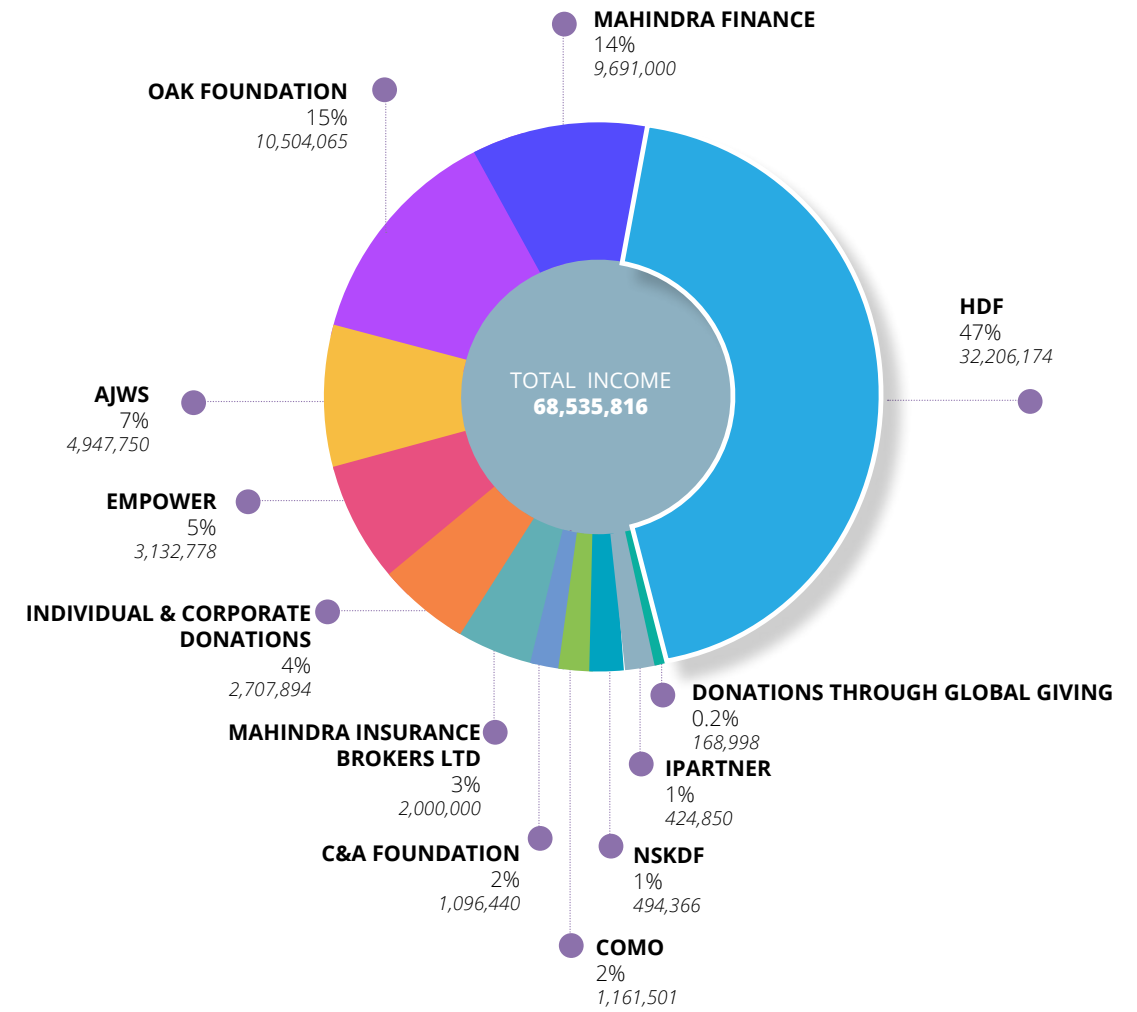
individuals

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 Sankalita Vikas jadhav Bobby Singh
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Deepa Mardolkar Sameer Bandal Hitsugaya
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 Tarini Bahadur **Ap van der Mark** Jaspal Khaneja
 Rishma Khurana **Rupa** Fatma **Silvina** Sophie Kalinke
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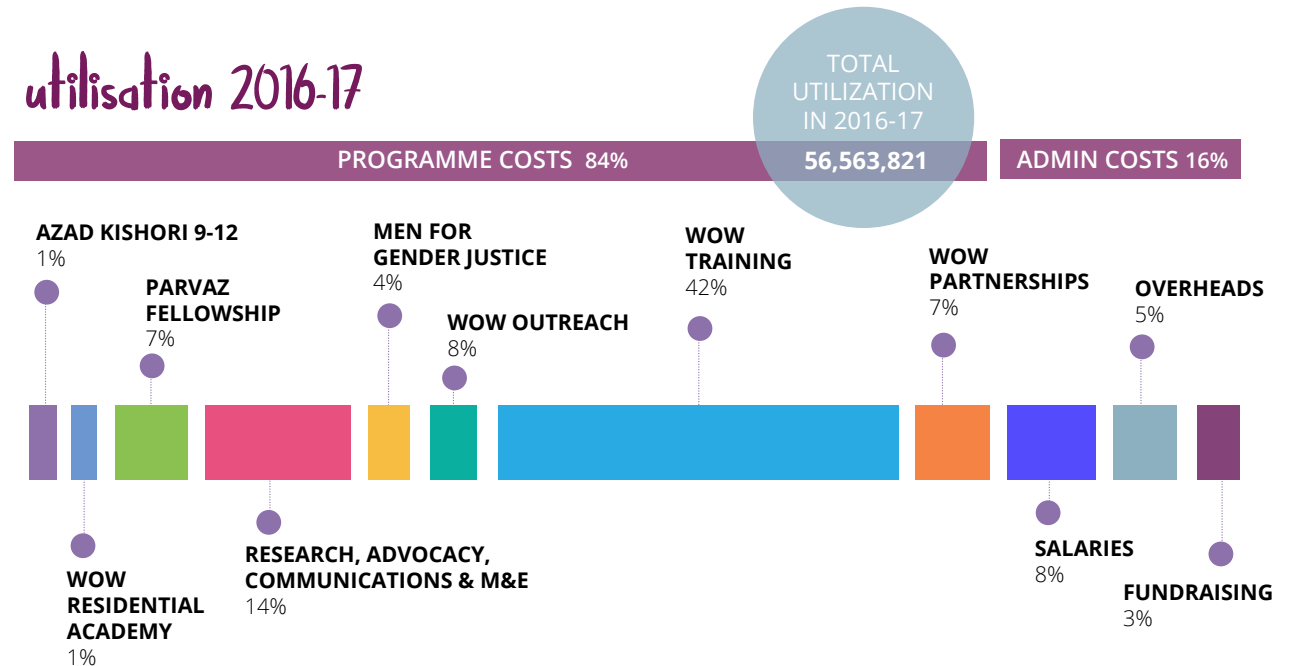


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income 2016-17



utilisation 2016-17



Less than one in three women in India do paid work ¹

For resource-poor women specifically, if they work, they predominantly engage in professions traditionally assigned to women such as domestic help, tailoring or beautician work.

Only 15% have their own checking or savings account. Only half of women in India are allowed to go to a market by themselves. And about 54% of women in India agree that a man is justified in beating his wife if he has any reason for it. ²

Our vision is a world where all women (in particular, women from underprivileged contexts) enjoy full citizenship, earn with dignity and generate wealth and value for all.



As a professional feminist organization, we work across social and religious divides to enable resource-poor women to empower themselves by engaging in viable non-traditional livelihoods. We are committed to breaking patriarchal boundaries and structures so that the women can exercise control over their lives and live with dignity. We do this through transformative capacity building programmes around the self and the skills needed for non-traditional livelihoods, based on adult learning principles. We engage with men and women in their communities so that both construct a safe and supportive space for their development.

We aim to enable thousands of women in India and else where to become financially independent and empowered to transform their lives and lives of those around them. But to achieve this, we need many people to come forward to join us.

Learn more about our work and how to get involved at

www.azadfoundation.com

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¹ World Bank 2017

² International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) and Macro International. (2007). National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), 2005-06: India: Volume II. Mumbai.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Veronika Miskech Fricova, Nilanjana Sengupta and Padmakshi Badoni

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LADY DRIVERS WORKING WITH SAKHA CABS
FOR WOMEN BY WOMEN IN DELHI

www.azadfoundation.com

SOUTH DELHI
FLAT NO. 7, R-10 &
1ST FLR, F-26, KALKAJI,
NEW DELHI 110019

NORTH DELHI
B-52,
MODEL TOWN - I,
DELHI 110009

EAST DELHI
A-6, BLOCK A RED
LIGHT, JAGATPURI,
DELHI 110051

WEST DELHI
B-1/432,
JANAKPURI WEST,
NEW DELHI 110058

JAIPUR
E-27,
NULITE COLONY
JAIPUR 302018

KOLKATA
11A/3, NORTH ROAD
JADAVPUR
KOLKATA 700032

SUPPORT@AZADFOUNDATION.COM

