Glimpse of various pedagogies of social change and transformation

COMPILATION OF INTERVIEWS WITH FUND GRANTEES.

THE FUND FOR GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Popular Education Programme

Popular Education Programme (PEP) is an initiative of Yakshi for the youth from diverse Adivasi, Dalit, and marginal farming communities to develop their capacities to work with their communities. Yakshi believes that, through this initiative, youth will assert for decolonising cultures and build critical perspectives on the forces that challenge their societies. Through PEP, youth are reconnecting to their knowledge systems through inter-generational learning and developing a diverse basket of skills such as growing food, using legislations, participatory video, art, poetry, media, theatre and music production. The popular education workshops have 7 modules (for each Adivasi and Bahujan youth) and a total duration of 150 days spread across the year. Between each workshop, the youth were involved in actions at their village level which strengthens their leadership to organise their communities.

Yakshi – Resource and Creativity Centre for Rural Children was established in 1992. Yakshi works with Adivasi and Bahujan communities in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh towards the vision of Social Justice, *Buen Vivir* and Food Sovereignty. Yakshi supports, trains, and mentor's community organizations from twenty-two tribes in in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states. With Yakshi's support, these groups work to protect the rights and welfare of Adivasi populations, which are among the communities most affected by poverty in India. Yakshi aims to strengthen social change movements within Adivasi communities and to pass on cultural knowledge of biodiversity and food sovereignty practices that have sustained tribes for hundreds of years.

The following interview was conducted with Madhoo and Sagari – one of the founding members of Yakshi and PEP, Kamala and Murugamma – community leader and facilitators at PEP, Peddi- coordinates Adivasi training programmes at PEP and Anil – coordinates Bahujan training programme at PEP.

MISSION

In this section we will broadly look at

- The context and how the Popular Education Programme idea was conceptualised.

- Theory of change and the articulated long-term outcomes of Popular Education Programme

- Underlying assumptions of this process in terms of its quality and reach of the initiative

- Process of addressing inequities of caste, ethnicity, gender, and regional identities in the planning of Popular Education Programme
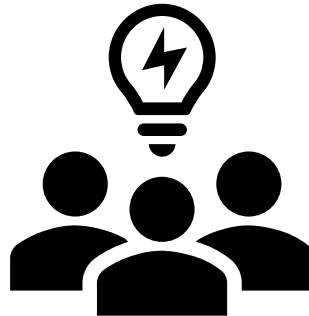
The context

Madhoo: Yakshi's action when it began has always been in terms of education and change. This was the main focus of mine when I started work in the East Godavari district, particularly looking at how people can reflect upon their issues, and how they can come together for their transformation. This process of transformation is called a reflect approach. From early 1993 till 2000, we worked particularly with a primary focus on adult literacy and how it could make a transformation in society.

Madhoo: In 1989-90 we were exposed to a lot of literacy manuals. I was doing research on how the pedagogy of the oppressed was implemented in India in terms of conscientization, particularly in the land rights movement. While we were working on the literacy mission, we realized that it is important to look at how people identify their issues, how they work collectively to address those issues, and how they learn from that.

So, to understand this process, we went with the philosophy of "read the word to read the world", which was the original idea of Paulo Freire and the one who I considered as my guru. I started my work as an adult educator using theatre. Both Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal used the same concept of pedagogy of the oppressed and the theatre of the oppressed. These both were landmark figures particularly in the Latin American world and their ideas were adopted and implemented by various social movements across India post-emergency period. It was a time when a lot of discussions used to take place around how to conscientize and educate people. it was also a time when a lot of civil society organisations were trying to use different approaches to work with people by using tools such as media, films, books, etc. Bringing consciousness amongst people was the only aim of ours and this process kept evolving from time to time. NGOs across India made a tremendous contribution during this time.

Post liberalization in the early 90s, the participatory approach became the way of working with the community after the human rights discourse was introduced in India. In any conscientization process, how people participate becomes very important particularly to deal with the power relation develops between communities

What sort of impacts did you anticipate while planning this initiative and what were your indicators to measure these impacts?
Madhoo: Since the beginning, we have been working with different Adivasi (tribal) and Bahujan communities *(literally means "people in the majority" –which includes Schedule Caste, Other Backward Class, and Religious Minorities)* across Andhra Pradesh. In 2014-15, Yakshi decided to consolidate its experiences of how we are developing the capacities of people from the communities. Until then, people have been working on their community issues and were engaged in advocacy at the local level. However, when you are

looking at holistic change and the socio-economic-political changes that are happening in the society, that is where popular education comes into the picture where you're trying to transform a person into an active citizen in order to question the forces and collectively transform them. This is exactly what Yakshi has been doing over the last 29 years with communities.

What is Popular Education Programme's articulated long-term outcomes and outputs.

Madhoo: For all this long, our vision has always been achieving social justice / Buen Vivir (**a way of doing things that is community-centric, ecologically balanced, and culturally sensitive)** with food sovereignty being the central theme. For the last 29 years, our work has been towards how people can hold on to their right to resources by asserting their own cultural and indigenous knowledge and developing harmonious relationships with nature. How they would decide what they want to grow and what they want to eat and in order to set this as a long-term mission, a deeper popular education was required where we engage with youth and children for a longer period and vis-a-vis using participatory action research to inform the popular education pedagogy.

Our idea was to create people's narratives to counter the established narratives and all these experiences were placed into one basket to develop our pedagogy.

Madhoo: The concept, popular education, has been used by several civil society groups and people's movements across the world. In certain parts it is also called political education but in India, we prefer to call this popular education. In the Latin American world, this popular education has a very political meaning to it. However, for us here in Yakshi, the primary objective is to create a pedagogy by using methods of popular education where people are at the center and decide how to move forward.

What were your underlying assumptions of this process in terms of its quality and reach of your organization, roles of each stakeholder, the link between process and results?

Madhoo: Sagari and I have been in this process for the last thirty years now. Kamala and Murugamma have been part of Popular Education from its inception and have been involved in the conceptualization of it. At present their main role is to identify potential young leaders from their community and bring them into the flow of the popular education process.

The need to have such a programme came from our own community processes, where we felt that there is a need for a center in India where community leaders are nurtured, and this center will respond to the emerging needs of the social movements. That's where we created the Kudali Learning Center. This place has been set up for sharing and reflecting as well as to initiate critical dialogues. The whole purpose of setting up this center was to go beyond just intervening with the communities and develop pedagogy where it

can reach out to people who are working for social justice & food sovereignty. Through this process, we have developed community activists and community leaders.

There is a long collective history of struggle that all of us share and drawing from that we have recognised that it's the next generation who must carry the beacon in the conscientization process.
The political consciousness, the experience of our generation (which also includes Murugamma, Pandu, and Kamala), and their emotional connection with the issues they have been working on for years now, have set the framework of designing our ongoing Popular Education Programme and Pedagogy.

Sagari: our approach or pedagogy is about; where we investigate our roots of oppression and through that process of investigation, we identify forces that are oppressing us. In this process, we are able to then Design and come up with collective ideas and action, to transform this reality to the next step of liberation which leads us further in the cycle of praxis. This praxis is the combination of reflection and action. Every new action takes us to the next level of reflection and action, and this keeps continuing. This *WE* is everyone starting from participants, community, and facilitator. –

Did you address inequities of caste, ethnicity, gender, and regional identities in the planning of this programme? If yes, how, and what

kind of change did you expect in deepening the understanding on these issues.
In 2017 when we were formulating our very first batch PEP, at the same time we were also investigating ourselves as popular educators. This batch of 2017 was a mixed batch of Adivasi and Bahujan youth coming from both urban and rural settings. It was also a year when the senior community leadership which includes Kamala and Murugamma were going through our own parallel process of pedagogical reflection to sharpen our own Community actions.
From our 2017 experience, it became very clear that you can't really derive impactful and sustained change and transformation by immediately mixing a Bahujan and Adivasi group.

It has too many complex intersectionalities, which you can't deal with when both groups are trained together. This is where we organised exclusive learning processes for the Bahujan youth group and completed the pedagogical process of the senior leadership as well. A similar process took place with the Adivasi group. We also decided on the principle that we will ensure at least 50 percent of participation from women and girls in all the PEP workshops.

The second principle which we all agreed upon was that amongst the Adivasi group we will ensure to also have participation of "particularly vulnerable tribal groups".

Sagari: We started our first batch with 30 Bahujan youth of which 19 were women and the remaining 11 were men. Since this is a year-long process, there would be times when we would have some absentees. I remember there was a Muslim boy in our workshop who dropped out from the workshop for feeling very isolated being the only Muslim young person. Therefore, from the next batch onward, young leaders from the community took the responsibility to mobilise more Muslim youth in order to make this place accessible and secure to all identities.

Sagari: so, all the actions we do in these workshops is to deal with the materiality of discrimination and untouchability, and power relations we see every day in our society. At the end of every day, we as the Design and Facilitating team sit together in order to review each day, take stock, and make necessary changes, based on the outcomes of that day's process, whilst keeping in mind the overall workshop design, and objectives.

Sagari: In addition to having anti-caste being the central theme of our engagement with Bahujan communities, it is also centrally linked and intertwined with the issues of control over resources. There are close linkages between caste, gender, land, and work.
Resources continue to be very central both to Adivasi & Bahujan communities and this comes out very clearly from the social investigation we conduct with communities. In the context of Adivasi, while identity and ethnicity are at the center, the discourse

of control over resources is something that can't be ignored. In both contexts, apart from control over resources, gender intersectionality is very much part of our common understanding which informs our design of pedagogy.

The kind of experience and learnings we all had over the years, and having gone through that conscientization process, we realized that oppression hasn't disappeared and therefore to ensure that there is the next generation of young people who are equally then into the conscientizing process, we started brainstorming around this idea on how to engage with the younger generation in order for them to get involved with the anti-caste and resource rights struggles.

CONSTITUENCY

In this section we will broadly look at

- Social background of the participants

- Current outreach of Popular Education Programme

- Gender balance in Popular Education Programme

- Who are the facilitators?
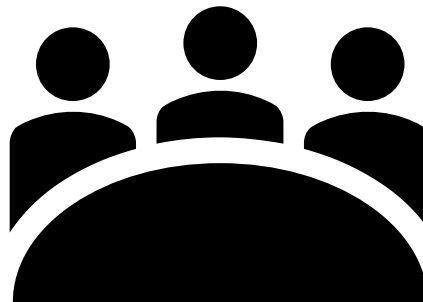
What is your constituency and the current outreach of the initiative?

Madhoo: Most of our participants in the popular education programme belong to Adivasi, Bahujan and religious minorities between the age group of 18 – 35 years. At present we work in four districts each in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Most of them come from rural and tribal parts of these 8 districts.

How do people get to know about such initiatives and what is the selection process of participants?

Madhoo: Participants get to know about this initiative through our community organisers and the CBO's we support.

Madhoo: The selection of the potential community organisers participating in the PEP is done by CBOs. The CBO leaders identify potential leaders and proposes their names for the series of workshops.

Murugamma: In Savitribai Phule Dalit Mahila Sangam, every village has a leadership committee that takes the major decision in terms of who will be participating in the PEP. In our case, every year we propose names of potential participants for the PEP to the leadership committee.

KAMALA: In our Gond community in the Komaram Bheem District it is the *Panch (traditional customary system of governance)* to whom names of the potential community organisers are proposed for their final approval. After the year-long training, these trained community leaders would then organise the community to address the community issues such as illegal sand mining, access to better road, the revival of crops, etc. I as a community organizer and leader, have to continuously follow up with these new leaders and provide them guidance from time to time.

Sagari: In my pedagogical understanding, the most oppressed are the ones who are most advanced in the transformation and new leadership process. In the Bahujan context, it is the Dalit women who are the most oppressed, and who will be the most advanced in taking that leadership. So, finally, after consultation with the leadership of committee, we finalize the list of young girls participating in PEP.

Sagari: The Popular Education Programme strengthens the leadership capacities of young people and have enhanced strong organising efforts of the Sangam (community-based organisation). In Kamala's district, now they have these two separate formations, one is the Jai Jangubai women's collective, and the other is Gondwana youth collective which essentially strengthens the organizational and leadership processes of youth and women to take up leadership roles in the village because traditionally Panch system hasn't been

democratic to women and youth. However, meanwhile strategically Kamala is using the Panch system but in the coming years once there are strong youth and women formations, they will be in a position to influence the decision processes in the Panch in the villages.

Who are the facilitators of this initiative and what is the selection process of the facilitator?

Sagari: There are community leaders in all the five districts who work with Adivasi youth, and they take responsibility for mobilizing young people to participate in the PEP. These community leaders now form the core team of PEP after having gone through similar educational processes in the previous years. Today they are part of the core PEP team, that collectively designs and facilitates workshops of the Popular Education Programme.

Madhoo: This demand to develop community leaders and facilitators emerged from the community organisations, with whom Yakshi has been working for years now. Based on this need, Yakshi team and community organisers, also recognized and identified the need to design workshops space for us to sharpen and enhance our own participatory pedagogy. The idea was that before we start facilitating certain processes with the youth, we as facilitators need to build our own capacity in order to have meaningful engagement with them.

For this, potential facilitators understood how the pedagogical process involves multiple aspects including designing the content for the workshop, coordination of the workshop, documenting the learnings of each workshop, actual facilitation of the workshops.

Sagari: The role of the facilitator is not to provide information but rather facilitate participation of the youth in their investigation / exploration of the issue/ theme at hand. As a facilitator, we have to be conscious about what method we will use to enhance participation. Workshops are designed collectively by the team who takes responsibility for that workshop. The workshop design is then broken down into sessions and, detailed planning for each session. The specific objectives of a session inform the method to be used and the form (whether it is individual, groups, plenaries). We use a lot of visualization methods (writing on cards and art,), as also theatre and other creative ways of expression- which support participants to organize their thoughts, analyse, and investigate, articulate their feelings and ideas, and synthesize learnings. Inputs by experts are also incorporated, based on the design flow. Reflections on these inputs in very specific ways, are an integral part of advancing the learning.

Sagari: We have to be clear about where we start, where we want to reach, and what methods we use to facilitate participants to inquire and learn through the process of enquiry. Design (in the case of this particular youth popular education programme), began with

clarifying the overall objectives of the programme, and brainstorming and outlining the broad curriculum or contours of the content. The overall broad content is organically split over specific workshops. Then we design each workshop. Each new batch of young people who start the program are introduced to the overall objective of the workshop series, as also the specific objectives of that particular workshop. Participants also share their expectations (or where they see themselves reaching / arriving) at the end of the overall series of workshops, as also against the specific workshop in question.

Praxis is a key component of our pedagogy. Learning to work together, organsing tasks, teamwork, leadership, breaking caste and gender work hierarchies and biases entrenched in these structures of inequality, are learnt / unlearnt and new ways of respectful and reciprocal ways of living, are learnt through a component which we have built into our Pedagogy which we term 'Yodha work' or Militant work. Here everyone including organisers, coordinators and facilitators are members of a 'Yodha group'. Each group is responsible for one of the daily tasks at the Learning centre: these include cleaning, bathroom cleaning, agriculture work, kitchen work, washing clothes, and so on.

In this way through doing, one can break the stigmas and myths about certain jobs being meant for certain caste / tribes/ genders. The Yodha group also has the responsibility to resolve group dynamics that arises during workshops.

Towards the end of our last batch, we wanted to do a reflection process amongst ourselves as an organization, but due to COVID we couldn't do it. It's practically impossible to do such processes online. At the end of each workshop, we have an evaluation and community cooking. However due to the COVID pandemic, we have been unable to do this stock taking of the PEP of youth in 2019 up to March 2020.

What is the gender and caste balance of the facilitators?
Madhoo: The facilitators in the Popular Education Programme are a combination of persons within the community and outside the community. However, the number of facilitators coming from the community is higher than outside the community. Anil belongs to Bahujan community, and he coordinates sessions for the Bahujan group. Similarly, Peddi and Durga both belong to Adivasi community and coordinates sessions for the Adivasi group. Sagari and Madhoo who are one of the core team members belong to Backward Class community. In addition to this, there are two co-facilitators for the Bahujan group belonging with the Muslim and Bahujan communities. Charanya is the only facilitator who belongs to dominant caste, but she considers herself a castless individual.
The gender balance of the facilitator is 50-50 and most of them belong to community

TERMS & PROCESS OF ENGAGEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

In this section we will broadly look at

- Specific expectations from the participants after joining the initiative

- Primary location of change

- Participant's engagement in the field post training

- Support provided to participants post training

- Behavioral changes in participant (pre-training and post-training)

- Process of assessment on the progress of participants

- Feedback process

- Opportunities for peer evaluation

What are the specific expectations from the participants after joining the initiative?

The primary expectation from the participants is that they would become a transformed person first. become a community organizer to work with their CBOs and use all the knowledge and learnings of Popular Education Programme to work with their own community to address the issues of injustice.

What is the attrition rate of participants during the time of training? Do you have a sense of reasons for these attritions?

Madhoo: Many participants attending popular education are college-going students and although the responsibility of identifying participants is of community leaders, there are instances where participants don't attend workshops on a regular basis. We need to have a complete commitment of the participants and many times our community leaders don't take this into consideration and thus we have attrition in the programme. The actual process of pedagogy and critical dialogue needs commitment from both facilitator and participant's side.

The role of community organisers is much more important to ensure the sustained participation and commitment of each participant.

Sagari: However, some of our participants had so much commitment that they would bunk the college to attend our workshops. Another reason for the attrition mainly amongst girls is the pressure of marriage and that is where the role of community leaders becomes significant. Last year roughly 20% of the youth did not complete the program.

Murugamma: Some married young girls left the course in the middle because their husbands didn't allow them to go for these workshops. There is also an increased fear amongst families since they have been hearing a lot of incidences of sexual abuse and therefore, they are hesitating to send their daughters too far from their homes for these workshops. However, Sangam (CBOs) have taken the responsibility to ensure maximum participation of young people for the workshop, and for that they would ensure they get committed a lot of interested people.

Kamala: Village level committees of each sangams are supposed to take more responsibility to identify committed participants for these workshops. popular education modules only work if the community is committed to the same ideology we share.

Sagari: Early marriage is a common phenomenon in Bahujan communities, and we need to engage with their families

What is the primary location of the change of your initiative? (Change at the individual level, at the community level, or at the society level)
Individual first and then community.

Are these trainings free or do you charge training fees from the participants? Is there any stipend or honorarium paid to participants?
Madhoo: Yes, our trainings in the Popular Education Programme are free and we do pay stipends to our participants, which are equivalent to the daily wages they lose by participating in the workshops.

What is the expected duration of the programme? (One year, six months, three months, one-time)
Madhoo: The entire Popular Education Programme is a 7-module programme (which is approximately 40-45 days of engagement throughout the year). Usually, workshops with Adivasi and Bahujan groups are organised separately considering the different contexts in which these two groups come in, but for certain workshops such as theatre we bring both the groups together.

What is the method of your initiative (individual, classroom, or group)
Madhoo – Group

Do participants engage in practical work during and after the training? If yes, please explain.
Kamala: The workshops of the Popular Education Programme provide a perspective and critical thinking to investigate into their own reality.

Post the workshop, these participants go back to their communities and mobilise the community for the collective investigation on their current situation where they investigate how and why they have been dispossessed from their own resources. This collective investigation leads them to critical thinking on their condition and that leads them to formulate action to address their present issues. So, in simple terms, the investigation leads to a reflection leads to planning and planning leads to action.

Are there opportunities for participants to undertake exposure visits in order to apply their theoretical learning in practice?
Madhoo: Yes.

What is the kind of support provided to participants during training? (One to one training or group mentoring)
Madhoo: One to one support is provided to participants on the regular basis.

What changes do you see in your participants during and after training and does this translate to any change at the community and society level?

Murugamma: I have many examples to share about the changes I have seen in the young girls who have been through the process of PEP. One of the successful stories of our programme is when one of our young girls who after participating in PEP have been able to bring other young girls together against forced child marriages. Besides, these young girls are spreading awareness about laws to protect women from domestic violence.

How do you assess the progress of the participants and what are the indicators of their progress?

Murugamma: The assessment for each of our participants is based on their ability to facilitate the dialogue and investigation process as well as how they build collective critical thinking amongst their community members after completion of one year of training at Popular Education Programme. Another way of assessing the progress of our participants is based on the intervention initiated by the young leaders which lead to changes within their communities.

Please share some of the barriers and challenges faced by the participants as per your assessment.

Sagari: For us, it is very important that after a year-long engagement we expect participants to go beyond the stage of transformed awareness, where he /she starts community action based on the learning of PEP, but if they are not able to get into any action that means something is blocking their imagination of action.

Therefore, it is crucial for popular educators, to understand what is stopping the participants from taking any action. In order to understand this, we use different strategies. One such strategies is to accompany participants in the village and then together we try and come up with the solution on how to unblock the block.

How do you collect the feedback from the participants?

Sagari: Post every session we take feedback from our participants.

**Did the programme change depend upon the feedback? If yes, please explain**

Sagari: The Programme keeps evolving as per the situation and need.

Are there opportunities for peer evaluation? If yes, please explain and has the organisation made any efforts for the internal or external evaluation of the initiative? if yes, could you please share the findings of it?

Sagari: At the end of each workshop, we have an evaluation of the session/workshop. Besides, when participants come for next workshop, they would have to share their field learning with the group.

Last year we wanted to do a deep evaluation of our overall programme but due to the pandemic we couldn't carry out that.

CONTENT
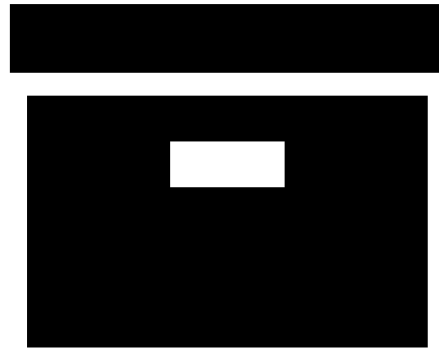
Who creates the content and what the process of the developing this content?

Madhoo: The content is created internally by the facilitators.

Madhoo: We have process documentation of every workshop. We have some of the workshops recorded in video format which we could use for conducting the next workshops.

Sagari: As educators, we can never just be content with a preexisting format, and therefore as educators in the pedagogy of the oppressed we always treat every process as a fresh process and never copy-paste the content. However, one can always take references to those past processes when you design new workshops. Copy pasting the same process would be undermining the very principles of your inquiry. In actual content development, each situation has to be treated fresh because as an educator we're also equally going to be reflecting on what we did last time. You're also going to be treating the new set of circumstances.

The reality of today informs the design of our workshop. We can't repeat the same workshop we did in the past since it had its own context. The new batch must have to go through a new process altogether because their reality is different from the previous cohort.

What is the form of your content? (Curriculum based / module based/ framework based / multimedia based)

Sagari: Combination of framework and multimedia based.

What is the language used for creating content and for the training?

Sagari: Telegu

Is your course content available in written format? If yes and available in Hindi/English, could you please share that with us after this interview? Also, do you have an online repository of your course content/ modules or framework?

The course content is available in written format, mixed with Telegu & English. Yes, we do have an online repository of the same.

How often does your content gets changed?

Sagari: We never use same content again but for every session we do take reference of past content and based on that we develop course content for every new session depending on the need and requirement.

Do you share your content with other organisations?

Madhoo: Not shared as of now.

Does it involve practical work experience for the participants?

Sagari: Yes.
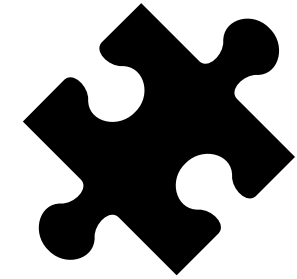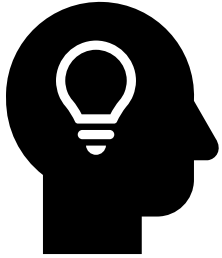
LEARNING AND CHALLENGES

In this section we will broadly look at

- The purpose, process and methodology of documenting learning of Popular Education Programme

- Impact of Popular Education Programme

- challenges faced in the implementation of Popular Education Programme

- Risks and mitigation strategies

How do you document the learning of your pedagogy model and what is the process of it?

Madhoo: We have a dedicated person for documenting all the workshops and our learnings. This person is responsible for collecting videos, notes, and other materials created during sessions for the purpose of documentation. Documentation of our learnings helps us to reflect on ourselves at three level, who am I? where am I today? And where am I going to be tomorrow? Our modules are based on three levels, first is self, then community and finally connecting to global issues. Documenting these processes helps us to progress further.

How do you assess the implementation and impact of your initiative? could you please share what has worked and what has not?

Madhoo: One significant thing which didn't work well in this programme is the selection of participants for the PEP. The aim of having these young people in the Popular Education Programme is to create community organisers, who will work with their communities post their full-term training. However, sometime CBOs don't assess the commitments of participants before they select them for the Popular Education Programme, thus there are times when these participants after completion of the programme do not commit their time for CBOs. Therefore, it is important that CBOs must select committed participants who are willing to give them

time for the community and perform the role of community organisers. I guess in the future, we will have to involve more people from the community in the selection process of potential community organisers but the good thing for us that at least 50 percent of the total participants who are trained in the Popular Education Programme are committed to work for their communities and the remaining participants who can't give commit as full time community organisers are willing to work as volunteers.

Sagari: Sangam (collective – CBOs) needs to be stronger in their selection process. The stronger the Sangam is, the more committed community organisers are!

Anil: Although I have joined popular education as a coordinator for organising workshops with Bahujan youth, in every workshop I also find myself as a participant. I come from the Bahujan community and therefore everything participants are sharing; I could easily connect to it. So, every workshop that way provides me an opportunity to investigate my own situation.
This process of investigation helped me understand who our friends are and who are the enemies of our movement. I go to the field on a regular basis to meet our participants and the kind of work they are doing with their respective CBOs. In the last two years, I have seen enormous leadership transformation within these young leaders.

The various methods or practice we carry out in these workshops are not just tools, but it actually helps you to be aware of yourself. The method of social investigation helped me to go deeper into the caste-class analysis. Similarly, the discussions around gender and caste provided me with a totally new perspective. Lastly, the participatory action research method of the workshop is something very interesting, where we as a subject or as a community do our own research rather than having someone external person doing it for us.

Art is part of our culture. It is a part of our expression and therefore every training and workshop we do has to be artistically designed in order to have maximum participation of the group in the process. Cultural expression is the center of our pedagogy here at Kudali center.

Sagari: All our processes in the workshop are based on the principle of SI-CA (Social Investigation and Class- Caste Analysis). In SI-CA, the most deprived / oppressed are the most advanced in bringing change in society. In our case, it is landless Dalit women, women from OBC communities, Adivasi women and religious minorities who will be taking the lead in calling for action. Besides, we use a lot of theatre in the process since we believe that theatre has the ability to trigger a dialogue and break the silence.

Do you engage with participants post the training? if yes, how?
Sagari: It is crucial for popular educators to understand what is stopping the participants from taking any action. In order to understand this, we use different strategies. one of such strategies is to accompany participants in the village and then together we try and come up with the solution on how to unblock the block.

How do participants involve in the community, post these trainings?
Sagari: Towards the end of each workshop, we formulate certain questions to encourage the participants to come up with some sort of doable actions which they would like to carry out based on what they have learned in the particular workshop. These questions could be - after returning from the workshop what would you like to do in your village or on which new aspect you would research after returning to your village? Etc.

During our workshops, there are certain fundamental pedagogical principles that we introduce to the participant, the first one is called social investigation where we do caste, class analysis. In this process, commitment emerges from the participants, that they would go back and transfer learnings to their community.

This process of setting up action plans then translates into clear commitments and based on this commitment community leaders like Kamala, Peddi and Murugamma do the follow-up with the participants.

These indicators are set by participants themselves and we as facilitators, just facilitate this process by setting up those questions for them. Upon their return to the next workshop, they share how did they work on the commitments they made in the previous workshop.

The second principle, which is the foundation of our work is based on the theory of Pedagogy of Oppressed, where you as a subject or oppressed, identify your crisis. Consider this crisis as an opportunity to recognise your problem. When you do so, this forces you to inquire into the roots of the crisis and deepen your analysis towards the crisis or the problem you as a community is facing. This process of social investigation happens through community meetings, village mapping, theatre, etc.

This whole process subsequently allows for the expression of realisation and that guides you to look at your issues critically and finally leads you towards the collective action. The frequent process of reflection and action then translates into democratic decision-making and community mobilizing.

Do you see any changes in the assumptions made in the "Theory of Change" since the implementation of this initiative?

Peddi: In the various workshops we organise as part of PEP, we just don't talk about our rights, but the idea is how do we investigate into the roots of our deprivation. Prior to workshops, we had made certain commitments to ourselves such as, to learn how to question and how to challenge the violation of our rights. The assumption we have prior to the workshop is that trained young people will raise their voice against the oppression they on daily basis. Today I witness that those assumptions are reality where communities have been addressing their issues collectively.

Kamala: In the process of the last five years whatever we have learned through PEP, we are trying to transfer those learnings to our community to strengthen our community organisations. This process has united different tribe groups in my district. The trained young groups are not willing to conduct similar conscientization process within their village based on their learnings at PEP.

Murugamma: In popular education, we have to keep reinventing our learnings. There are regular changes happening in different policies at the state level and we need to keep a close eye on those changes in order to ensure those aren't affecting us. Today I am working in 10 villages of Chittoor district, but the way in which society is changing, we need to spread in more villages in order to address and stop the oppression. Young people need to be given leadership and I am committed to doing that.

What are the challenges you faced in the implementation of this initiative?

Sagari: There is increased pressure on the girls within the community since they have been questioning certain patriarchal practices that they witness every day. There is constant pressure on them from the caste panchayat and have been told by these 'caste panchayats' not to attend such workshops. They have been threatened by the men leaders of the caste panchayat, but the girls aren't scared of this kind of threats anymore since they know how to use the law. For women and girls, the threats are both internal and external.

**What risks are involved in such initiatives and how What are your mitigation strategies?**

Sagari: Caste is one of the biggest risks and challenges community encounters every day.

Murugamma: We are committed to the cause of protecting our women's rights and we will keep doing this work, no matter what opposition we face. We know what we want and that motivates us every day.

Kamala: Besides the internal threat, we have continued threats from external elements such as big corporation who wants to take over our land and the state who is in supporting them. There are certain NGOs in our area who promote the market-driven agenda of corporates and they are one of the biggest threats to our existence.

Madhoo: We as Yakshi have decided to invest in this process of PEP since we have seen the sort of value it brings in the daily actions as a community. We have committed ourselves to carry out this process and that itself is a huge challenge for us as an initiative.

Another challenge is to find committed individuals in this process. As earlier said if there is no commitment from the participants then this process won't have any logic. Finally, a challenge is to break the notion of caste practices within the Bahujan community.
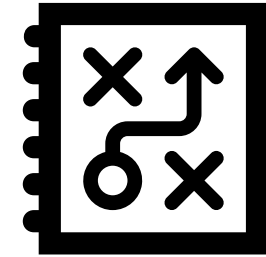
MANAGEMENT OF THE INITIATIVE

What is the process of knowledge and perspective building of the core team?

Madhoo: Reading is something I do a lot. We need to transfer our knowledge to the next generation in order to inculcate critical thinking in them. Even after forty years of my engagement in the movement, I believe that I'm still in the process to learn. I have visited various community organisations across the world, particularly indigenous people, peasant, and landless worker's movements. I have friends in different parts of the world who have been theorising about and using participation theories in their work. However, our education system doesn't teach you emancipatory education. In Kudali, we have lots of materials and resources which we have collected over the last 20 years which continuously helps us build our knowledge.

Sagari: We have come together as popular educators because we have shared vision and politics. As a team of educators, we keep ourselves updated with everything happening around us. The knowledge we gain, we ensure that it becomes a shared knowledge for everyone. We push ourselves into unknown territories and take part in those dialogues. While we may not agree with certain positions, we try to listen to them.

Anil: In my community, I have initiated a community library where we all come together and discuss various positions and ideologies. In my free time, I write songs and poems. I also play dappu (traditional drums) which is a symbol of our struggle and resistance.

Peddi: I have multiple responsibilities starting from being a father to organising workshops for tribal youth. As a father, I have to ensure that I transfer my knowledge to my child in order to make her an informed citizen. As a community leader, I need to practice certain values which would encourage other young potential leaders from my community. I am continuously investigating into my Adivasiness.

Songs and music is an integral part of our society. Recently we have started a cultural center in our village where children can learn about their own music and songs.

Have the participants ever become part of core team or took part in designing and implementation of the initiative?
Yes

Have you considered the financial sustainability of this initiative? if yes, how?
We can't expect communities to pay the fees to participate in this workshop however we are planning to ask our friends to contribute to this initiative and also would approach other donor organisations' support for this initiative.