

Newsletter Winter Edition'2022

Towards Collective Reflection and Empathy

Curriculum on Women & Work: Making It Count

BY DEEPA, BENU AND ASHMEET

Even the most powerful wave begins as a ripple. Yet once a wave meets its crest, nothing can slow its force. Witnessing the tremendous efforts and interest by participants and the team at Women and Work: Making it count 2.0 to indulge in depths of feminist rebuilding of the world of work was very much emblematic of a wave; while there is still far to go to unwrap the universe of work and labour through intersectional lenses and bring to fore-front the many forms of invisibilised gendered work, the enthusiasm shared during the nine days of the residential course had such momentum, that it left us all reeling with optimism and hope.

The course, which had several years in the making, was transacted in the physical mode for its second iteration in November 2022. It was alive with positive energy, excited chatter and people from all corners of the country coming together to share knowledge, skills, and stories from their lived realities. The team and the cohort successfully created a safe space for deliberating, challenging, and advancing the evidence, and scope for critical reflection on who we were as individual researchers, practitioners, and policymakers and how we are engaging with our own work vis a vis the exposure at hand. Amidst many dilemmas, agreements and disagreements, all of which tangentially led to learning and more

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importantly unlearning, there was also time for celebration; celebration of successes, no matter how small; of the incredible and beautiful diversity in knowledge, experiences, and cultures represented; and a celebration of what we are trying to collectively achieve.

Through the first and second iterations, this curriculum's attempt was 'to deconstruct the idea of women's labour - which is premised naturally on love, affection, care and nurturing roles and therefore, show the constant preoccupation of state and families with women's reproductive labour which makes questioning systemic inequality difficult.' (ISST 2022: 26).



Picture 1: The Cohort at the Residential Course, Women& Work: making It Count 2.0

Course sessions covered topics of tremendous breadth like - Identity and work, history and trajectory of women's work, caste and patriarchy, embodiment of work, care work, data and invisibilisation, state and market nexus and the socio-economic habitus of women as workers - condensed into day long sessions each while ensuring that our participants could get enough space to share their work and experiences. Each session was designed in a way that conceptual language and vocabulary was tied up with the experiential learnings of our participants, therefore developing layered contextual understanding of these concepts. While the first iteration focused centrally on women and work, in the second iteration there was a conscious effort to bring in identity and the spectrum of gender to the forefront.

While we deep dived into individual and collective experiences of patriarchy through the course, it was deemed important to bring out the nuances of caste and sexuality which impacts women's productive labour and creates the idea of respectability and dignity. A particular effort was made by all the facilitators to lay down some historical evidence of gendered understanding of labour and its invisibilisation while connecting forward to current realities- highlighting the positive and negative shifts in the discourse. Women's engagement in care labour and economy was explored through the personal journeys of the facilitator and participants as embodied workers, particularly highlighting the important dimensions of embodied labour and the relationship of women's sexuality and caste to their paid and unpaid jobs.

The hand-in-glove partnerships of institutions such as patriarchy, state and market were thoroughly examined through the course. Since economic dimension is not an absolute given, the course looked through social and political movements and explored economic trends which discerned how women's work is continuously dispositioned to the secondary status, looked as supplementary, informal and invisible. Building connections through policy shifts the course also delved into the linkages between women's work and the markets. (ISST 2022:13) The coming in of globalization and therefore the creations of new forms of working marked with digitization, casualization which benefited the global market without hindering gendered roles and the oozing patriarchal familialism in state and capitalism.'



Ashmeet Bilkhu (Research Associate), Deepa (Project Consultant) and Benu Verma (Research Consultant)

Creating a space collectively to reflect on work from a gendered lens and anchoring learning journeys of the participants to gain new perspectives on their own work was central to the course. Therefore, multiple formal and non-formal forums of reflection were built into the course. We setup a reflection wall to encourage collective reflections on the themes. Each of the participants were given personal journals which they could use for personally documenting their emotions, thoughts and confusions through the nine days. Each day a group of participants were encouraged to present their reflection/feedback of the day through any medium of their choice. The cohort came up with creative ways to reflect on their day's learning through media like poems, role plays, spoofs, personal narratives and even a mini time use survey among the participants.

As participants continued to weave together their own journeys of de-centering and re-centering themselves as gendered individuals in different forms of visibilised and invisibilised work, being reflexive and considering others' positionality vis-a-vis their own was paramount to the course. It served as a reminder that no one individual, one organisation, nor one discipline or sector can create change alone. We are in this important pursuit together, and only through deep and meaningful collaborations, community-led efforts, and collective support, can we achieve it. With these undertones running throughout the whole process of the curriculum development and course iteration, the team, the participants and the organisation have truly lived an experience of feminist praxis.

As a team we hope, and indeed expect, that the critical reflections exchanged at the course will serve not merely as a moment, but as a platform from which to turn discourse into action.

Reference

ISST Team (2022) Reflection, Processes, Collaborations Women + Work: Making it Count by Institute of Social Studies Trust



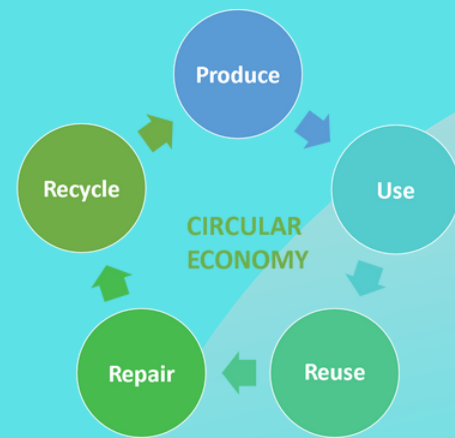
[Know more about the group's journey at the course](#)
['Women& Work: Making It Count 2.0 on our](#)
[Instagram page](#)
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Unpacking the Circular Economy: Bringing Informal Livelihoods at the Forefront

BY DR. SREERUPA

Circular economy[1], an alternative to the “take–make–use–dispose” linear economy, has become a powerful new buzzword within political, academic and policy debates about environmental sustainability and climate change. Yet, informal reuse and repair workers who are vital to circular production, particularly in the global south, have been overlooked and are largely absent from research, policy discourse, and engagement in the circular economy. Given this context, ISST undertook a scoping study (commissioned by WIEGO – Focal City Program) with the aim to build evidence from the ground that the informal workers contribute significantly to the circular city economy in Delhi, through promoting repair, reuse and upcycling of waste. By documenting the valuable contribution of informal workers such as waste pickers, home-based workers and street vendors, the study aimed to place informal livelihoods at the centre of the discourse on promoting a circular economy. One of the key objectives of the research was to explore the role of informal livelihoods in the urban circular economy. However, the methodological challenge facing us was how to capture the circularity of material flow in the context of a large metropolitan city like Delhi in a modest scoping study?[2] There was an interest in improving our understanding of the waste value chain to build evidence on the informal circular livelihoods. However, we knew that many of these waste materials have long complex lifecycles moving through elaborate value chains at times with global linkages. While the study remained focused on the informal livelihoods and informal workers, to address circularity we designed the study to look at waste in a dynamic way by following the flow of waste material moving to and from the informal worker to its next destination.



Picture 2: A pictorial representation of the circular economy

This required us to capture the flow of waste material one node backwards and one node forward in the value chain, in an attempt to collect data on how the material is sourced by the informal workers and where it travels next.

For instance, in the case of processing of food waste, the waste material processed by the informal workers was sourced from the registered wholesale shops of Naya Bazaar and Khari Baoli markets, was sorted and processed by the informal workers in the local slums and was resold in the street markets on Sundays. By examining the forward and backward linkages of the informal circular livelihoods, the study was not only able to document the existence and role of informal workers but also revealed the close economic ties that existed between the informal reuse, repair and recycling economy and the formal sector. Following the value chain of waste materials processed or sold by the informal workers allowed us to also explore the interlinkages between the informal and formal systems.

Since the objective of the study was to explore and understand the processes in their complexity rather than to generalize and prove causal relationships,



Picture 3: A pictorial representation of the circular economy

a qualitative exploratory case study approach was employed. Through this approach, the scoping study aimed to explore and gather more evidence on diverse informal livelihoods engaged in urban reuse, repair and recycling economy before developing a more in-depth research study. Delhi was selected as the field site due to the prevalence of a vibrant informal circular economy. The selection of the case studies was based on a literature review and a mapping exercise of the various informal reuse, repair and recycling livelihoods in Delhi. A set of six unique livelihoods were identified in consultation with the WIEGO team to capture the diversity of the informal circular economy. These are (i) sorting and resale of food grain and spice waste; (ii) repair and resale of used shoes; (iii) e-waste dismantling; (iv) resale of used household electronic goods; (v) knife and scissor sharpeners; (vi) recycle used clothes to make new products. Primary data was gathered through qualitative interviews and interactions with informal workers and observation in several locations, including slums, resettlement colonies, street markets, shops, workshops and households. Observing the activities of informal workers was recognized as a means for a richer exploration of informal circular practices involved in redirecting waste back into use. The study participants were informal workers, waste collectors, home-based workers, and street vendors engaged in repair, reuse and recycling work. The selection of the study participants was exploratory and guided by our local partner community-based organisations. The decision to be guided by our local partners was based on the challenges in accessing informal workers whose work was often located on the streets and with an eye on exploring future possibilities for building cross-sectoral solidarities between informal stakeholders in the circular economy. Key stakeholders who provided waste material to the workers and who purchased or used the products and services provided by the workers were interviewed to capture the circularity of material flow. Further, KIIs were conducted to bridge the gaps in our understanding of the flow of material and the afterlife of waste. Additionally, literature and policy reviews were conducted to understand the impact of policies on the livelihood of informal workers in the circular economy.



*Dr. Sreerupa
(Research Consultant)*

The data collection for the study was completed between May 2022 and June 2022. Although the study was initially planned as a small scoping study to be completed in three months, in order to capture circularity, more visits and deeper engagement with the workers and stakeholders were required. This in turn allowed for documentation and evidence building far beyond the remit of a ‘scoping study.’

[1] According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, a circular economy is based on three main pillars, two of which are eliminating waste and pollution and keeping products and materials in circulation by reusing and recycling.

[2] The team benefited from discussions with Prof Barbara Harriss-White and the global WIEGO team during the conceptualisation of the study.

Glimpse in the World of Solidarity of ASHA Workers

BY SNEHA MAKKAD

The heart of ISST's work consists of empirical research studies that delve deeper into the experiences of women workers. ISST undertook scoping study to understand the impact of digitization on frontline women healthcare workers. In the process we started interacting with ASHA workers in Sonipat District of Haryana. The initial stage of the fieldwork study started with a lot of enthusiasm. We were instantly welcomed into the ASHA workers' milieu and included in their processes for mobilizing for the protests.



Picture 4: Mobilization and Discussion of Agenda about the strike by ASHA union leader with ASHAs

The ASHA worker's union and ASHAs from various villages of Sonipat district come together to discuss agenda and goals of protests at the block level. It was bright winter afternoon, and we met ASHAs in the garden of Kharkhoda block area of Sonipat District, Haryana. As soon as Sunita (the ASHA union leader) and us arrived there, we overheard amazing 30-35 ASHAs laughing and chatting. The gathering was bubbling with vitality, rage, laughter, and a variety of emotions. Their aura brought us to their world of jokes and laughter where they were talking about their lives, husbands, families, the expectations, and aggression they felt against the policies made by the government, and their dedication to one another. One ASHA exclaimed loudly when Sunita asked ASHAs to set up time and date with us for meetings.

**यह इतना फिक्स टाइम तोह हम अपने घर वालेको को भी ना बता सके हैं।
इधर उधर पता नहीं कब घूम जावु.... हांहां... हां.....**

Once more, everyone began making fun of one another as they all laughed at it. They began discussing the various visits they needed to make in villages to see pregnant women. One ASHA worker giggled and remarked,

हमे अपने पेट के साथ दूसरे के पेट पर भी ध्यान रखना पड़ता है.....



*Sneha Makkad
(Research Consultant)*

Through laughter and humor, they exposed us to their hardships, work overload, emotional hardships, and workplace vulnerabilities. One of the ASHAs was discussing how much stress they experience on a regular basis at work,

**प्रेशर इतना हैं की हम प्रेशर कुकर नहीं बनना चाहते थे पर सरकार ने हमे प्रेशर कुकर बना ही दिया.... हां
.....हां... हां.....**

During the conversation, we overheard various ASHAs speaking up and expressing serious issues related to their professional and personal life. The discussed issues were concerns about longer working hours, lack of honorarium, lack of time to eat food, lack of formal education among large number of ASHAs.

जी पैसे तोह कतई कोई ना, घना काम हैं बस...रोटी खाने की भी फुर्सत नहीं मिलती...बस मोटे-मोटे रजिस्टर भरने पड़ते हैं

एक की बात नहीं है ऐसी आशाये हैं जोह ज्यादा पढ़ी लिखी नहीं हैं तोह कैसे ऑनलाइन काम करेंगी तो हम तो मना ही करते हैं, सिर्फ अपना नहीं सोच सकते ”

The act of organizing a meeting was not limited to discussing the strike's schedule. It was more focused on fostering a sense of sisterhood and belonging. The meeting seemed to be a place where they could be acknowledged as ASHA workers and treated with respect and dignity. It gives voice to their needs, wants, and true selves.

After some light-hearted banter, the topic of serious issues came up, and their leader methodically began talking with them about the issue of working online. The need for people from many communities to come together for a strike and the rising load of documentation work—both online and offline—were emphasized. We were made to feel a part of the group by the group's leader and each ASHA. During each



Picture 5: Understanding Work of Documentation from ASHAs: Online and Offline.

visit to a different ASHA, they showered us with hugs, handshakes and affection, which we still recall. During the fieldwork, we could feel their sisterhood and how they foster a happy environment to allow for challenging conversations. There was a lot to discover, understand, and go through with them. When they took the initiative, we started talking to the group. The group showed significant interest in taking part in the discussion, carefully listened to what was said, and reacted in the most positive way possible.

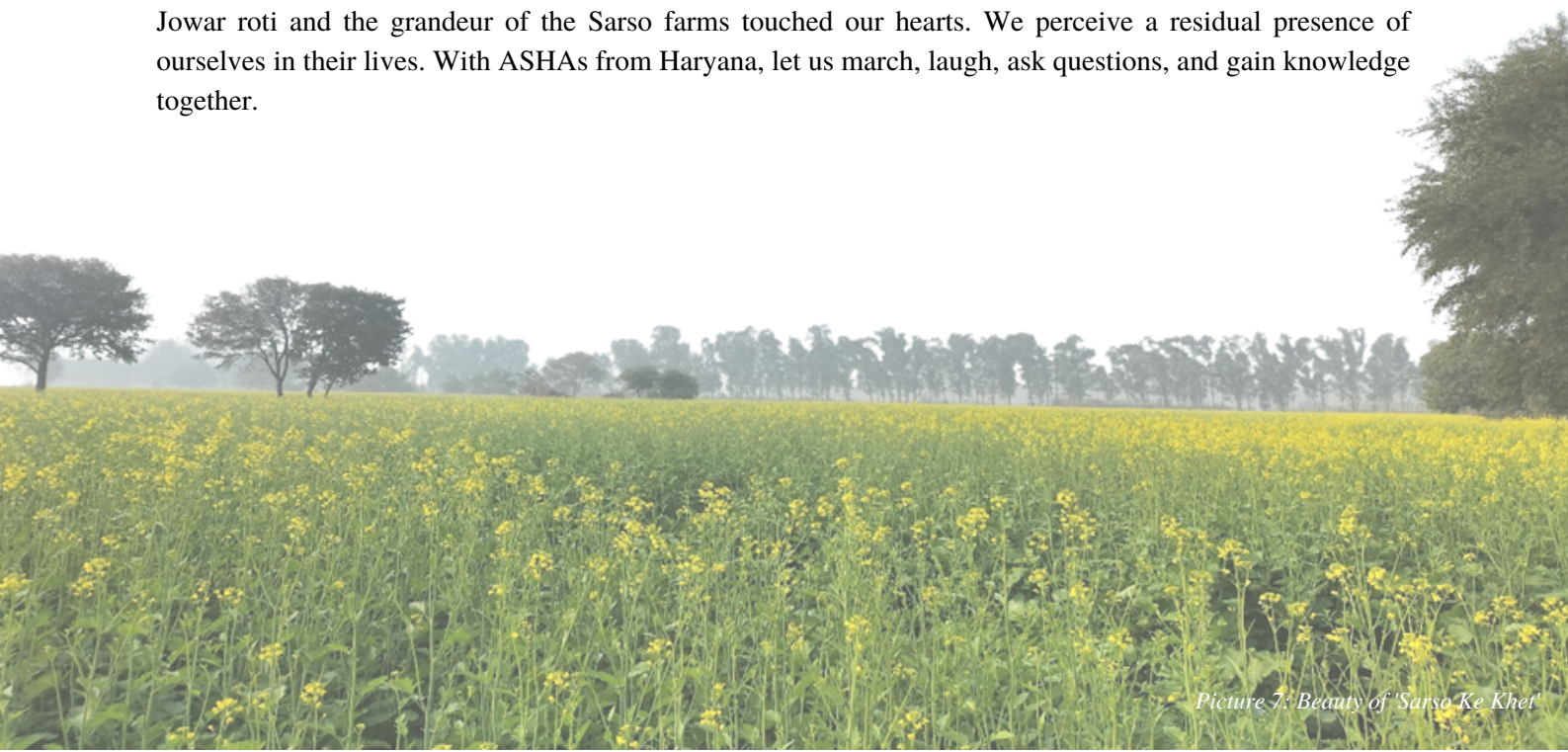
After taking part in the ASHA workers' mobilization meeting, we visited and interacted with several ASHAs in various Sonipat villages for a few days in the field. Most of the villagers

were *Jats*, with a small number of Dalits and migrant communities from neighboring states. Each ASHA has an important tale to talk about how she came to learn the use of smart phones, how she hesitates, how she views digital work and skills, burden of documentation and most importantly, how, she feels about the identity of ASHA workers working in her community and with health system. Working in the community and health systems add layers of context to their lives. Without the recognition of the worker, it becomes a very complex place for them to be in. It is a constant battle to maintain harmony between community norms, backgrounds, and health system expectations. It was not like the usual method of gathering data, where the researcher asks a question and the participant replies. The ASHAs were taking the lead in the conversation and felt compelled to draw attention to their issues through questions. Amazing things that happen when women come together. It is important to feel motivated to unite, fight for, and march in support of a certain cause. Through their collective solidarity, ASHAs are questioning the hierarchy and system in the male-dominated health sector.



Picture 6: Going along with warmth and kindness of ASHAs for each other.

This scoping study only provides a brief window into their collectivization, togetherness, and everyday lives. ASHA workers' historical evolution, as well as their dynamics, problems, and strengths within the context of their Haryanvi culture, are all important topics worth exploring and learning more about. While the research was in its exploration stage, we had our first meetings with several ASHAs, union officials, and other health professionals. We were completely taken in by the sights, noises, and crowd, which made us feel accountable. We got the idea that it needed to be more than just a report in order to make room for dissemination among its intended audience. Beyond this, ASHA's kindness in providing us with warm Jowar roti and the grandeur of the Sarso farms touched our hearts. We perceive a residual presence of ourselves in their lives. With ASHAs from Haryana, let us march, laugh, ask questions, and gain knowledge together.



Picture 7: Beauty of 'Sarso Ke Khet'

Reaching Out: Initiatives for the Community

BY SARITA & KAVITA

The Saathi and Yuva Saathi Centres of ISST have been diligently working with young children and adolescents for many years. While the focus has been on children, the centres have also been engaging with the larger community through various mediums; whether by going into the community for mobilization or by inviting them at the various events organized by the centre. In last few years, our collaboration with the Atelier theatre group has been reaping effects by engaging with multiple stakeholders in the community. Mr. Kuljeet Singh, founder of Atelier Theatre group, is a renowned actor who has featured in multiple films as well as theatre acts. He has been contributing to our initiative of reaching out to the community by taking theatre workshops with the women at the Saathi Centre and with adolescents at the Yuva Saathi Centre.

Women's Theatre Group

Although we are overjoyed that we have been able to successfully engage women from the neighbourhood and bring them to our centre for theatre, the initiative has faced numerous challenges. The women in the group belong to an economic class where they are usually employed as informal workers and have no one to look after their children in their absence. Asking them to spare any time to come to the centre for these workshops was the initial challenge. To overcome this, the team not only encouraged the women but also interacted with their families to help create an enabling environment. All this helped and we had a group of around 30 women in the initial workshops. However, owing to health issues, childcare responsibilities and paid work, some women had to leave and the current group of around 12 women has been practicing with Mr. Kuljeet.



Picture 8: Women enacting a play at the 'Balutsav 2022'

Over the last few months, the women in the group have learnt to manage their time and come to the workshop regularly. In fact, they feel much more confident in expressing their views and taking decisions about their time. For those who do not know how to read and write, they take their children's help in understanding and learning their script. The workshop, over time has become a space where these women are able to share their feelings, thoughts and laughter. The women's theatre group recently enacted a play at the Balutsav'22 in presence of the whole community.



Sarita Kandari (Assistant Program Coordinator, Saathi Centre) and Kavita (Animator, Youth Resource Centre)

'Safar Nama', Adolescent Theatre Group

At the Yuva Saathi Centre, Mr. Kuljeet has been taking theatre sessions with the adolescents for over two

years now. With adolescents, theatre is used as a tool to encourage them to understand the complex realities of Kalyanpuri. Furthermore, it can become a way to challenge patriarchal supremacy by critically looking at their surroundings, being empathetic towards vulnerable groups, and understanding the power dynamics of society through various characters and stories. The Sessions also aim to enhance their skills of articulating thoughts and communication through activities. In the Balutsav 2022, the group presented a play on the theme depicting climate crises through their street play called 'Say No to Plastic'. Later this performance was presented in the community of Kalyanpuri to create awareness regarding the disadvantages associated with the use of plastic. The diversity of the group in terms of their schools and jobs acted as a challenge in coordinating one time for them to gather and hold the session. As a result, a large number of adolescents started remaining absent. It is only the out-of-school adolescents that are a part of this theatre group now. Another huge challenge for the adolescents was to separate their own identity to get into the character for the play. Many in the group found it difficult as a lot of societal conditioning has already been done by this age.

Despite these challenges, the group that continued to attend the sessions greatly benefited, not only in terms of understanding and creating awareness about social issues but also in their personal development. The adolescents while learning the script became quite good in reading, writing, grasping. They also learnt how to correctly present their thoughts and views across different audiences.

While theatre has always been a tool to begin conversations and create awareness about socially sensitive topics at ISST, by enabling community's participation in theatre we are trying to develop an special relation with the community by which they themselves become the bearer of change they want to see in their community.



Picture 9: Adolescents enacting play at the Balutsav'22 and in the neighbouring community of Kalyanpuri.



Here's a glimpse into the activities of
BALUTSAV'2022

Voices from the Network

From the Gender and Evaluation Community

BY MONIKA SHARMA

ISST has been hosting the Gender and Evaluation Community on the Ning platform for a decade now. All these years, Rituu B Nanda, our facilitator, has acted as an anchor for the community by sharing knowledge, engaging in discussions and events and creating active connections amongst evaluators across the globe. Here are some excerpts from a feedback discussion initiated over the platform:

so far its been great to be part of this network of gender practitioners. Questions solved, job opportunities offered, meeting other professionals in the sector.

This is a very important community. In the last few months I did not have much time to participate to discussions and events. But even the prompt received from you are important! The occasional email about events are a reminder to keep the concerns you (we!) advocate for always in my mind. :-)
Thanks also for the great facilitation, this is really a lively community. And thanks to the ISST to support such an important resources. It is really great to see institutions working for the common good, and in the long term.

I have been a member for many years and have greatly appreciated this space to connect with other evaluators. I have shared resources and consultancy opportunities. I have used resources shared by others. And I have posed evaluation questions that I am struggling with and have been grateful for the generous feedback shared by other members.
I am not as active as I would like to be in this space, but it is my go to whenever I need support or ideas.



*Monika Sharma
(Communications Manager)*

Initiatives like this wither off, over time. But it is to the credit of ISST, Rituu and others in the team that this has survived and thrived for so long. I read most of the posts that appear through this link. I have even attended a few.
Apart from this, care is also taken to ensure that the correct contact details are updated for members in the forum. These things do not happen automatically and require time and resources.

This is one of the most consistent online community of practice that is not only informative but also shares work opportunities. The platform has become even more relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for remote working, organizing, collaborating etc.

BECOME A MEMBER



What's keeping us busy!

ALL ABOUT THE PROJECTS AT ISST

Locating the Processes of Non-state Relief Work during the COVID-19 Lockdown in Delhi

This study centered on the concepts of social reproduction and care, aims to understand the inherent crisis tendencies within social reproduction driven by the interaction of institutions of the care diamond in the neo-liberal capitalist economic model of India. The study draws on the framework of gender responsive 'intersectionality', a concept that delves into the complexities of various factors and processes that shape life experiences. The study uses the qualitative case study methodology for an in-depth empirical inquiry of the phenomenon in question, that is, 'Locating the Processes of Non-state Relief Work during the COVID19 Lockdown in Delhi'. For this, four slum communities were identified in Delhi (Yamuna Khadar, Sanjay Camp, Seelampur and Bawana JJ Colony) as 'cases', these cases were constructed by conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews with key actors during the COVID19 relief work. The key actors included – women, men and youth frontline workers from non-profit organization, community leaders and representatives, beneficiaries of relief work, and other actors such as funders, representatives of political parties, and state agents. In all, 121 semi-structured interviews were conducted across four slum communities with various actors between December 2020 and June 2021. The final report has been published and is available on our website.

Sustaining Power: Women's struggles against contemporary backlash in South Asia (SuPWR)

The researchers for the study, have finished the data collection for case 1 (Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan) and case 2 (Samarthan Mahila Sanghathan's yay samiti). The data collection for case 3 (Domestic workers movement with Community for Social Change and Development) and case 4 (Adivasi Vikas Manch) is ongoing. The team did a reflective workshop through the methods of theatre of the oppressed with case 4. Parallely, the team is slowly moving towards data analysis and discussing the subjects on which writing can be done. The research team, in a collaborative process, is also working on producing AV material for Case 1 and Case 2 to arrive at a common purpose and develop a narrative. The AV for case 1 is in post-production whereas discussions have begun for case 2.



To know more,
Visit SuPWR's website

Unpacking Women Farmers' Strategies for Collectivizing

'Unpacking Women Farmers' Strategies for Collectivizing' study looks at various type collectives such as Farmer Producer Organization, farmer unions, and rights-based organizations from a feminist transformative perspective lens in the states of Punjab, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.

The team completed second round of fieldwork in these four locations in December. This round of fieldwork was done with a more focused analytic outlook based on the data collected in the first round. From the vast data gathered, team is now working towards building a synthesis report and analysis of the collectivizing strategies in each state from a feminist transformative perspective. Through this data, the team is trying to find answers to the key questions of (i) how women farmers make assertions and, (ii) what strategies they use in consolidating their identity as women farmers. The findings of this study aim to present a nuanced analysis of systemic invisibilization and discrimination faced by women farmers of India, and their attempts to counter it with collectivization strategies.

Impact of COVID-19 and School closure on mental health and emotional well-being of Students, Parents and Teachers in Delhi

Government of Delhi wished to assess the impact of COVID-19 on mental health and emotional well-being

of students across schools due to the closure of schools and the shift towards the online education system. Therefore, a large-scale survey covering 9087 students, 1753 parents, and 1770 teachers were surveyed by ISST across 28 education zones of Delhi during April-May 2022. The report, after review, has been completed and submitted to the Government of NCT of Delhi and is available on the Planning Commissions website.

Understanding Pastoral women's work

The final stages of report writing and report designing for the study took place in the months of July and August, after being reviewed by multiple subject experts which included Ms Sushma Iyengar (Social Development Educator) and Dr. Jahnvi Andharia (Director & Research fellow, ISST). The study was launched at the dissemination event on August 29, 2022. The launch event generated ample discussion around the subject of pastoral women and their work in Himachal Pradesh and similar geographical areas. The group, through questions and comments also gave insights on the possible trajectories of taking this subject forward. In the month of November, the study was presented in the session on Politics of Data during the course Women and Work 2.0 by ISST.



Take a look at the approach our researchers used for the study's methodology!

Gendered Impact of Tourism on Lives and Livelihoods - Case study of Khajuraho

The research, done in collaboration with Equitable Tourism Options (Equations) aims to study gendered dimension of labour in the tourism sector. The team has used a case study methodology to explore how tourism sites assume the role of a work space which interacts with the socio-economic, cultural and political lives of local communities whose livelihoods are connected to the destination.

For the first round of this research, the team narrowed down on Khajuraho as a tourism-scape to develop its case study. Khajuraho, in the district of Chhatarpur in the state of Madhya Pradesh is best known for its over 1000-year-old temple complex, which has also gained the recognition of being a UNESCO world heritage site. The team visited Khajuraho periodically over a span of 6 months to develop a place-based understanding of the tourism sector that has proliferated in the region. After completed data collection and analysis of the same, the team currently writing the report.

Informal livelihoods in Circular Economy

The study aims to be a first step towards building evidence from the ground on informal livelihoods in the circular city economy in Delhi, undertaken in partnership with WIEGO. By documenting the valuable contribution of informal workers such as waste pickers, home-based workers and street vendors, the study attempts to place informal livelihoods at the centre of the discourse on promoting a circular economy. For this, a set of six unique livelihoods were studied to capture the diversity of the informal reuse, repair and recycle economy. These include, (i) sorting and resale of food grain and spice waste; (ii) e-waste dismantling; (iii) resale of used household electronic goods; (iv) repair and resale of used shoes; (v) knife and scissor sharpeners; (vi) recycling of used clothes to make new products. The team completed qualitative fieldwork in Delhi involving interviews and observation of informal workers and interviews with stakeholders and key informants. An internal presentation was made to the Global Wiego team, following which the first draft of the report was shared with them for review. The project lead presented a paper titled 'the role of informal worker in the circular economy for food and urban food security in Delhi' for the 2nd Annual International Migration Conference on "Food (In)Security and Migrants on the Move"

organized by the Balsillie School of International Affairs and the International Migration Research Centre (IMRC). The study shows that the informal workers are extremely resourceful and contribute significantly to not only managing waste but also to closing material cycles, through promoting repair, reuse and upcycling of waste.

Beyond the Norm: Scope of Non-traditional Livelihood Skilling for Women in Achieving WEE.

The fieldwork for the study was completed by June 2022 followed by coding and analysis via NVIVO. The Synthesis report, comprising of the detailed eight case studies and the overall analysis, was written and finalized after being reviewed by an internal & external reviewers along with the NTL Network. Besides this, a film on non-traditional livelihoods and aspirations, 'Wind Beneath My Wings' and a comic strip, 'Towards Empowerment: Let's talk Skills' were also produced as research outputs for use by the NTL Network for their varied purposes.

For dissemination, ISST organized a regional level event in Bhubaneswar with support from Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD), a research study partner, on December 5, 2022. The Mayor of Bhubaneswar, Ms. Sulochana Das graced the event and shared her own journey in the male dominant careers of media and politics. Post this, a National Dissemination Event was organized in Delhi on December 13, 2022. The event was attended by a large group of researchers and practitioners working on the subject of Non-traditional livelihood. These efforts were complemented with sharing of our research outputs on the social media platforms for larger access by the community.

Short film: Wind Beneath My Wings



Comic Strip: Towards Empowerment

Impact of Digitalization of Work on Frontline Health Workers

Covid-19 has brought to the fore the poor working conditions of ASHA workers, who have been widely acknowledged as the backbone of public rural healthcare in India. With the recent push for digitalization of their work, this scoping study aims to explore how frontline health workers stand to be affected with the adaptation of digital innovation and technologies. In particular, the study attempts to map the digitalization of ASHAs work and explore the ways in which digital technology has been integrated into their work process. Further, the study aims to understand the impact of digitalisation of their work through a feminist intersectional lens, exploring the workers' negotiation of the digitalization processes. In the context of the top-down digital integration in the healthcare sector, the study makes a unique attempt to offer a bottom-up perspective by shifting the focus of the debates on the digitalisation of health in India to the experiences of frontline women workers. The study employs qualitative research methods involving in-depth interviews, FGDs and observation of ASHAs as well as KIIs with NHM district coordinators, technology specialists in the NHM and trade union representatives. The field site for the study is Sonapat district in Haryana. The team has completed first phase of fieldwork involving interviews and FGDs with ASHAs, ASHA facilitators and trade union leaders. The team has commenced the second and final phase of fieldwork which would involve interviews with government health department officials and further interviews and observation of ASHAs.

Compendium on Full-day Childcare Services in India for the Marginal Communities

The focus of this compendium is to look at existing full-day childcare and after school care services for the children of marginal communities in India. Through this document we aim to bring information on the positive impact of a full day childcare and after school care on the well-being of both, child and the mother. Secondly, the compendium will also help in building the evidence to show that child care provisioning provides an essential support to women and enhances their ability to access income opportunity. For this, the team has engaged, though remotely, with 30 organizations across India including government bodies such as ICDS which are running a full-day childcare/after school care programmes for the children. The team, in the past few months has been engaged with developing the profiles of these 30 organizations which will be disseminated for larger access in the next stage.

Curriculum on Women and Work: Making it Count

Continuing their efforts for the 2nd Iteration of the course, the curriculum team held an all faculty (external resource persons) meeting to brainstorm and finalize the sessions for the second iteration of the project. It was decided that this one will be a nine-day long, residential workshop in Delhi in the month of November. The following months of August, September and October were devoted to extensive discussions about the sessions among the team which entailed a lot of back and forth with the external faculties as well. The application was rolled out in the month of September and by October mid, we had a tentative list of participants for the course. Finally, in the course took place in Zorba the Budhha, from November 12th to 20th with 23 participants. The course was a success as the objectives of perspective shift and detailed discussions on the issues of women and work were achieved with the cohort. The team also engaged Drishti, an organization which makes films on development issues, for process documentation of the course. The month of December was dedicated in coordinating with the film team and starting to put together the first draft of the documentation report of the course.



Picture 10: Some exciting moments from the course, Women & Work: Making It Count 2.0

An Enabling Environment for Realising the Aspirations of Adolescent Girls in Slum Settlements in Delhi

This project aims to understand the aspirations of adolescent girls and further study the various forms of violence and how they influence the capabilities and functioning of girls and, in turn, their freedom to live up to their aspirations or freedom to achieve well-being. Here, by violence, we mean all acts – physical, sexual, or psychological—that would count as intentional gender-based discrimination against her. The research is being conducted in Yuva Saathi Centre of ISST. This study in employing a qualitative case study methodology to understand the lives of 5 adolescent girls. The team is conducting in-depth interviews with girls and semi-structured interviews with significant members of the family, as well as other important members that have influenced her life (peers, intimate partner, teachers, NGO and so forth). Data collection for two case studies has been completed and currently, the team is working on the third case study and are in the process of writing the literature review and conceptual framework of the project.



Publications

REPORTS, PAPERS AND JOURNALS

- Locating the Processes of Non-state Relief Work during the COVID-19 Lockdown in Delhi (Report)
- Understanding Pastoral Women's Work: An Exploratory Study (Report)
- Reflections, Processes, Collaborations Women & Work Making it Count: A Process Document (Process Document)
- Study to Assess the Impact on Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being of Students Across Schools in Delhi Due to Closure of Schools on Account of Covid-19 and Shift to Online Education System (Report)
- Beyond the Norm: Scope of Non-Traditional Livelihood Skilling for Women in Achieving Women's Economic Empowerment: A Synthesis Report. (Policy Brief)
- "COVID-19 – a crisis of care and what we can learn from the SEWA experience in India", Monika Banerjee & Prama Mukhopadhyay. (Journal)
- "Locating women workers in the platform economy in India – old wine in a new bottle?", Anweshaa Ghosh, Mubashira Zaidi and Risha Ramachandran (Journal)
- "Transnational migration, local specificities and reconfiguring eldercare through 'market transfer' in Kerala, India", Sreerupa (Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies)



MediaScope

IN PRINT, PODCASTS AND INTERVIEWS

- 'Care Work Support is Essential to Bring Women into Paid Work', Debate, The Wire, Monika Banerjee (Article)
- "What Explains the Rise in Women's Workforce Participation during Covid-19?", Hindustan Times, Shiney Chakraborty & Mitali Nikore (Article)
- "Pandemic Worsened the lot of Indian Women", The Statesman, Shiney Chakraborty & Priyanka Chatterjee (Article)



Book Review

A Pioneering Feminist Ethnography of Struggles and Sisterhood
Mobile Girls Koottam: Working Women Speak by Madhumita Dutta, 2022

-Benu Verma



Events & Workshops

ORGANIZED/PARTENERED BY ISST

- "Beyond the Norm: Scope of Non-traditional Livelihood Skilling for Women in Achieving Women's Economic Empowerment", National Dissemination Event, New Delhi. (December 13, 2022)
- "Beyond the Norm: Scope of Non-traditional Livelihood Skilling for Women in Achieving Women's Economic Empowerment", Regional Dissemination Event, Bhubaneshwar (December 5, 2022)
- "Women & Work: Making It Count", Residential Course, New Delhi (November 12-20, 2022)
- "Locating Pastoral Women's Work: Understanding Work, Reimagining Future", Launch Event, New Delhi (August 16, 2022)
- Gender Workshop for Adolescent Girls, In collaboration with Sambhavnaa Institute of Public Policy and Politics, Himachal Pradesh. (July-August, 2022)
- Gender Workshop for Team and Build Process Workshop, Gurugram. (July, 2022)

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communications@isstindia.org