PRIA 39th Annual Report
2020-21

Knowledge. Voice. Democracy.

PRIA

Learning

in

Pandemic

Times

PRIA 39th Annual Report

2020-21

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From the President's Desk

When nation-wide lockdown was declared in third week of March 2020, no one could predict the trajectory of corona virus. The Financial Year 2020-21 began on April 1 under lockdown, and pretty much remained so. When mobility and socio-economic activity began to gain some momentum in January-February 2021, dangerous 'second wave' hit India.

So, the 39th year of PRIA's journey (April 2020 to March 2021) has been spent under the 'shadow' of an unprecedented pandemic, marred by disease and death, loss of livelihood & studies, stress and uncertainty; not just in India, but around the world.

As you read this Annual Report, you would notice ways in which PRIA tried to maintain its roots in its foundational values, while learning to innovate, redesign and recalibrate its programming. We had to fall back on our capacity to 'live with ambiguity and uncertainty' to remain resilient in what we were able to accomplish.

PRIA's abiding commitment to supporting **participation, agency and voice** of the invisible and inaudible segments of society became most clearly manifest when the pandemic and its attendant lockdowns began to demonstrate severe impacts on informal workers. PRIA's previous investment in strengthening the Citizens' Forums in some cities became the vehicle to provide immediate relief to families of urban informals. Mobilising widespread ground-level research, co-convening consultations with other stake-holders and policy advocacy on issues being faced by migrant workers is one such story-line. The second is making visible – through participatory research, coalition building and dialogues – the sudden loss of livelihood of domestic workers and attendant increase in gender-based violence within such families.

Remaining steadfast on its commitment to **empower civil society**, PRIA practiced its strategic partnership methodology to co-convene several conversations to support grass-roots activists facing sudden impacts of the pandemic. Innovative technologies were deployed to build regular communications with and amongst them, and support key partners to do likewise in their regions. Undertaking studies about the roles of civil society during the pandemic provided key insights about their needs for support as well as impacts and outreach in communities. Despite further restrictions on regulatory space for civil society, such public conversations informed policy-makers, general public, researchers and practitioners about the mosaic of civil society actions. International conversations began to situate India's civil society experiences within a broader perspective. Working in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs (Government of India), under the Forum for India's Development Cooperation (FIDC), PRIA supported the first ever national level 'Development Cooperation Dialogue' showcasing Indian civil society working in other countries of the global south.

The complete stop to face-to-face teaching/learning process triggered unlearning old practices and relearning new tech-driven ones. Many new **digital formats for learning** were designed to support ongoing and new training efforts. Online courses of PRIA International Academy (PIA) had to be quickly adapted in this context. Even virtual 'field visits' as learning spaces were created for the first time. PRIA was the first to design and facilitate zoom-based conversations, nationally and

internationally, from first week of April 2020 itself; it supported many other networks to undertake such webinars with its hardware and software, before it became common practice.

While all educational institutions remained mostly closed during the year, several new policies provided new opportunities for promotion of **community-engaged teaching and research**. India's New Education Policy (NEP) was launched in July 2020 with much stronger and clearer emphasis on social responsibility of higher education, focus on SDGs and climate change, community engaged learning methodology, etc. UNESCO's new 'Open Science' policy deliberations created new spaces and dialogues on 'science for, with society' in India and globally. The expanding networks of these related themes, and opportunities for PRIA's contributions therein, bode well for the future.

Finally, the year saw us all, and PRIA too, 'refresh' its relationships, friendships and partnerships with many previous and several new people, organisations and platforms. Despite setbacks and severe constraints on its resources, PRIA is well-poised to undertake **dialogues and conversations** around its core programme areas, as it prepares to 're-tool' itself on PRIA@40.

Thank you all for 'hanging-in-there' with each other, us and PRIA in this difficult period.

Rajesh Tandon
Founder-President
August 2021

Our work in the previous year was carried out in the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic. Safety of communities, stakeholders and staff was paramount. When PRIA's office re-opened after the lockdown, and in field visits, survey, training, sharing workshops, interviews and consultations conducted offline/face-to-face mode, due adherence to COVID-19 protocols as per World Health Organisation and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India guidelines are followed.

Participation, Agency and Voice

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In the past year, face-to-face efforts to promote participation, agency and voice for the marginalised were quickly replaced by online meetings and digital newsletters. In the continuing fragile public health situation, PRIA has carried out varied, deep and democratic contributions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this phase of great uncertainty, we have pushed ourselves beyond our comfort zones to work in a fully digital mode and carry on our work as a knowledge institution by using technology-enabled platforms for enabling participation, facilitating the learning of agency, and raising voice for all.

Relief Support

Distribution of relief materials to domestic workers was coordinated with service providers in NCR and communities in Panipat. A Delhi level coalition with more than 20 organisations (CSOs, trade unions, CBOs) was formed to advocate for the rights and dignity of domestic workers. The coalition made representations to MPs with questions raised by domestic workers. Online and off line protests to raise visibility on the issues of domestic workers was also planned.

Having worked with the communities in Ajmer, Muzaffarpur, and Jhansi, under the *Engaged Citizens, Responsive Cities* project, PRIA chose to aid the most marginalised families in these cities to meet their basic needs by providing food ration and hygiene products. We distributed hygiene kits containing masks, sanitisers, sanitary napkins, soap, mosquito repellant, and bleaching powder to 600 most vulnerable families across the three cities. The ration packs contained dal, rice, atta, milk powder, oil, salt and spices, sugar, and tea, and were distributed to 468 families.

The work was carried out with active leadership from the Settlement Improvement Committees and their city level Forums, to identify the families in need and to ensure the distribution process was managed efficiently and while ensuring physical distancing.

Advocacy for Migrant Workers

During the first lockdown imposed between March and June 2020, an atmosphere of chaos ensued. With no safety net for informal workers, migrants left the cities in droves to return to their native states. Some vowed never to come back to the city, even if their contractor, owner or employer at the workplace took care of their living and food expenses post lockdown.

But their problems did not ease even after returning home. Despite the Inter State Migration Act, 1979 in India, the workers faced mismanagement and chaos due to Covid19. With limited work under MGNREGA in their home state, several could only wait for the lockdown to ease so that they could return to the city – and face a more uncertain future. Through an online survey, details of the [state of MGNREGA, and how it is being accessed by migrant workers was reported](#). The survey was conducted across 64 Panchayats across the 5 states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat. It was administered by PRIA and its partner organizations—Samarthan, Unnati, Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) and Sahabhagi Shikshan Kendra (SSK)—and some other civil society organizations (CSOs) within their networks.

As the migrant crisis unfolded in early May 2020, a group of academics and rights activists issued a statement disapproving of measures not to allowing migrants to return home. Dr Rajesh Tandon was a signatory to the appeal, which was widely circulated in the [media](#).

In such a situation, there was a need to initiate a dialogue between the states about the inter-state law. In May 2020, PRIA along with its partners (Samarthan, Bhopal; Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD), Bhubaneshwar; Unnati, Ahmedabad; Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra (SSK), Lucknow and Martha Farrell Foundation, New Delhi) co-convened multi-stakeholder dialogues among policy makers, academic institutions, and several international, national and local voluntary organisations to deliberate and advocate for a policy framework that can enable interstate migration of workers with dignity, support and as per the mandates of the 1979 Act. The dialogues brought forward the reasons behind continued distress being faced by migrant workers around the country, and highlighted the absence of any coordinated and evidence-based response by government agencies.

As a result of the dialogues, an '[Interstate migration policy framework](#)' was prepared and shared with the state governments in Odisha, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. This document was the basis for the State Migration Policy adopted by the Government of Chhattisgarh on 19 July 2021.

Advocacy for inclusive resilience of migrant workers is being taken forward with VV Giri National Labour Institute and the UN International Organisation of Migration (IOM). Initial conversations have been initiated at the South-South Migration, Inequality and Development Hub located in the University of Ghana, Accra.

The issue of the various kinds of exclusions faced by migrant workers, and measures which must be undertaken by source and destination States, was raised at the National Workshop on Labour Migration: Issues and Way Forward organised by the VV Giri National Labour Institute on September 15, 2020.

Raising Voice of Women Domestic Workers

Recognising the gaps in COVID relief for domestic workers and aimed at understanding their challenges and facilitate solutions. PRIA partnered with Martha Farrell Foundation to facilitate discussions and data collection among domestic workers' communities, connecting with community leaders to identify and fill the gaps in relief access. To understand the gaps and collect information on the situation of domestic workers, telephonic conversations and listening circles with domestic workers were held.

The information collected via these channels of communication was then verified, compiled and disseminated through domestic workers, who became community agents. Participatory research was conducted through a survey, which was enabled by a domestic workers network that has been built by PRIA and MFF over the past three years. In absence of access to Google forms among digitally less literate domestic workers, the team utilised WhatsApp efficiently to collect reliable information. A WhatsApp support group, called 'Sahyog', was started.

Closely interacting with the domestic workers on a daily basis, and accurately recording first-person narratives, was a challenge without having physical access to the domestic workers. This was because there were many hidden nuances, layers and barriers to communication, all of which could not be holistically interpreted over the phone. WhatsApp facilitated communication with the domestic workers network but it restricted access as workers who did not have smartphones were left out of this circle of connectivity. To extend outreach, community leaders were encouraged to speak with neighbours and other informal women workers who did not have phones to collect information and share findings. This helped expand the outreach to over 1300 informal workers.

A manifesto of demands prepared by the domestic workers themselves was shared widely on social media.

[Manifesto of demands by domestic workers](#)

An anthology and survey report is now available as a body of research on the struggles of informal migrant women workers in the pandemic.

[My Life as an Informal Migrant Worker during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

A Learning Circle, "Dignity of My Labour", was organised on March 12, 2021 to learn from the experiences of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, in south-west Florida who have initiated the Fair Food Program (FFP) in the food industry. The Worker-driven Social Responsibility (WSR) model demonstrated the protection of worker's rights and how these approaches can be adopted to an Indian context.

Taking Learning and Education Online

It was the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. The country was under lockdown; all offices were closed.

"A constraint is an opportunity to learn", says Dr Rajesh Tandon.

With PRIA staff working from home, we found an opportunity to learn how to transfer our knowledge of participatory training onto the online environment. In doing so, certain challenges have arisen, some of which were addressed while we were learning by doing and some which still need us to further innovate solutions. Participatory research, the core of which lies in communication with the community, has been challenging in this time, as the access to digital platforms is not equal across communities. Keeping this digital divide in mind, PRIA has adapted its training-learning methods and efforts towards knowledge generation and communication using a multiplicity of technology-enabled platforms.

Since, the online session was a new learning environment for both the facilitators and the learners, some potential issues had to be kept in mind and tested. For conducting sessions, PRIA facilitators had to learn to host a meeting on Zoom, while learning themselves the various technical aspects of organizing online meetings, including how to create breakout rooms.

Safe Spaces Online for Conversations with Adolescents

In collaboration with Martha Farrell Foundation, the adolescent girls and boys under the Kadam Badhate Chalo (KBC) and Go-Girls-Go (GGG) programs in Haryana, Delhi, Jharkhand and Odisha were engaged during the lockdown through an online youth leadership program on gender justice and social action. Rooftop poetry sessions were an innovative way for adolescents to come out of their houses, for a breath of fresh air and learning, during the lockdown.

A short audio-visual on Gender and Sex, which the adolescents can watch to continue their learning, was prepared.

Learning Active Citizenship

Since 2017, in line with the organisation's long-term strategy, PRIA Youth has engaged deliberately, actively and inclusively with young people across India as part of its Youth-n-Democracy (YnD) program. The PRIA Youth team of energetic young professionals was specifically created in-house to lead and design the program. The vision was to support and foster our democracy and its democratic institutions, in which aware, active and engaged young citizens make democracy function in their lives, every day.

The Youth and Democracy Fellowship, started in July 2019, has been instrumental in building confidence and resilience among the young Fellows, to be able to tackle their anxieties resulting from the pandemic and uncertain futures.

The second Youth-n-Democracy Fellowship cohort was offered in full online mode from August 2020. The 20 fellows who have committed to this journey represent a wide variety of backgrounds, originating from Uttarakhand, Delhi, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and other states across India. The fellows also come from different academic streams such as Journalism, Psychology, Social Work, Geography, Architecture and more.

Fellows from the first cohort presented their social action projects in an online event organized on International Youth Day (12th August). The event was attended by representatives from UNESCO India, Hanns Seidel Foundation and APPI, who learned how the Fellowship promotes the learning of active citizenship by India's youth.

The PRIA Youth team held 3 rounds of deliberations with various youth groups on local solutions for climate adaptation. These deliberations resulted in a Youth Manifesto based which was presented at the Gobeshona Conference organised by ICCAD, Bangladesh, on January 20, 2021.

Online Courses and Training: PRIA International Academy

PRIA International Academy (PIA) has taken the lead in delivering online education through short-duration courses and a blended mode of training. A virtual classroom has been set up in PRIA head office. A customized training on "Working with PRIs" was delivered for civil society organization, SRIJAN, India between July 27 and August 22, 2020 . A total of 101 participants were trained in three phases over one month, for their staff, CBO members and gram panchayat representatives in their field locations in Rajasthan, to build common understanding on institutional structures of Panchayat Raj Institutions, and their roles in the implementation of various schemes and programs. Panchayat Presidents (Sarpanches) were invited as resource persons to share their experiences on Mahila Sabha, GPDP and MGNREGA. The combination of knowledge and hands on experience sharing related to PRIs, the ways of presentation, expression and relating theory with examples and stories, and the learning material shared was appreciated by the participants. The training tested and built our skills in using participatory training methods like group work, art based methods, role play, in an online environment. Group assignments were given at the end of the day, and Google Forms were used to collect expectations and evaluation of the training program.

The training for Tata Trusts state teams, begun in mid 2019, was completed with the last trainings for their teams in the North East and Rajasthan conducted online on September 14 and 15, 2020. The training was focused on understanding Participatory Planning through Gram Panchayat Development Plan and role of PRIs in localizing SDGs. Participants found the vision building and link between PRIs, GPDP and SDGs in the local context the most useful. A short, three-hour audio-visual module is being prepared based on the experiences and content of these trainings.

In August 2020, PRIA launched its online Facilitate to Change learning program. The purpose of the Facilitate to Change learning program is to stimulate the curiosity of the young adult educators and knowledge workers to learn how to become more effective in empowering the marginalized with knowledge and skills for individual and collective action. The program has been conceptualised by Dr Rajesh Tandon, based on this five decades of experience in facilitating the learning of marginalised communities. The first offering of the program saw nearly 150 field level facilitators from civil society organisations participate.

In partnership with Martha Farrell Foundation, online training over 4 weeks in November 2020 built capacities of field animators, community leaders, and project officers of long-standing partners Samarthan and SSK, on gender, gender-based violence and gender mainstreaming.

Facilitating Online Trainings: Reflections of a Young Participatory Trainer

1. *Access to technology*: While taking a virtual learning session, it is important for the facilitator to test all the tools and get well acquainted with the platform that he/she is planning to use. We used Zoom for the PRIA Learning Circle. There are many features of Zoom which were new to me as well. So I took support from our IT team and did some research, to be able conduct the session properly.

2. *Connectivity*: Participants, somehow, can get away with bad Internet connectivity but a facilitator does not have this option. The session will not stop if one or more participant is not able to attend due to poor network, but it will come to a complete halt if the facilitator's connectivity is interrupted. Therefore, the most important thing when taking a virtual session is to ensure that a facilitator has access to a high-speed Internet connection.

3. *Information/reading material sharing with participants*: To ensure maximum attendance and preparedness among the participants, it is important to share schedule, reading material and other logistical information well in advance so that they can plan their weekly schedule accordingly. This is no different from preparing for a face to face session. All participants in PRIA Learning Circle were staff who have other work commitments. The information was sent in advance so that they build in reading in preparation for the learning session into their weekly work plans.

4. *Learning environment*: A virtual classroom is very different from a physical one, and participants tend to lose attention easily if the session is not engaging enough. Only lectures and presentations tend to wear participants out. Hence, it is recommended to keep the lectures short, informative and interesting, i.e., maximum 1.5 to 2 hrs. The best way to tackle a participant's limited attention span, is to grab their attention with an interesting hook. A hook can be an interesting video (we used PRIA's Dhai Akhar) or activity (we developed a new simulation game: Atmanirbhar Kisan).

5. *Keeping videos on*: Encouraging participants to keep their videos on helps the facilitator to establish eye contact with participants and makes sure that they remain attentive during the session. It also helps the facilitator to gauge participants' reaction during the session.

6. *Limited number of participants*: It is advisable to limit the number of participants in virtual sessions. It creates a more intimate learning environment and helps the facilitator to interact with each and every participant.

In relation to special learning opportunities offered by PIA for international students, a virtual field school was conducted for the students of the University of Glasgow, Scotland, UK. Between February 1, 20201 and March 2, 2021, 30 students from the university learnt the relevance and practice of Participatory Research in building community participation. The program was offered in a blended mode with asynchronous material provided for self-study before sessions and synchronous online

Zoom sessions once a week. The interactive lectures were supported by adequate audio-visual teaching/training aids for learners to grasp the contexts.

In February 2021, we reopened our doors for face to face trainings with a two-day capacity building workshop (February 17 to 19, 2021) on "Writing and Reporting Effectively" for field facilitators, field managers and program managers of the Accelerate Program being implemented by YRGCare. The goal of the workshop was for participants to learn skills for effective report writing, map different reports of an organisation and their characteristics and collectively find ways to improve reporting

As face-to-face in-person training at a large scale might not be possible because of the restricted mobility across the country, PIA proposes to organise a series of short duration (6-8) hours online and blended mode workshops, covering a few sub-topics, such as Participatory Strategies for Accelerating Behaviour Change, Going Digital with Research, Learning, and Advocacy; Leadership through Self Development; Effective and Accountable Governing Boards in CSOs, etc.

The PRIA International Academy App is now live on Google Play Store.

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PRIA conducted an online survey and analysis for understanding CSOs responsiveness to COVID 19, which entailed reaching out to various organisations based in blocks, districts and smaller cities across India. The data collection methods included online surveys through Google forms as well as telephonic interviews. A total of 160 responses were collected, of which 70 responded through Google forms and the rest were interviewed over the phone. Active follow up by our partners was found to be critical in collecting reliable and authentic data. Analysing the data posed certain difficulties as the respondents received data in different formats and many responses did not fit preconceived categories for analysis. This increased the complexity of analysing the data. Additionally, validation of the research findings became difficult as it depended mostly on online sharing and collecting qualitative data on the telephone posed major challenges. As one PRIA researcher put it: "Nothing can replace face-to-face interviews in qualitative research." However, the online format enabled PRIA to reach out to as many as 160 CSOs, which would have been time consuming and expensive if done in the face-to-face mode. Further, it allowed for the entire process, from data collection to report generation, to be completed in just over a month. Access the survey report here: "Capacities that can make a difference: An assessment of capacity needs of CSOs for providing effective support pandemic affected communities"

In the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, civil society response has been immediate and from across the length and breadth of the country, not stepping back from working with government, especially at the district level. Distributing cooked food and dry rations, getting the messages of hand washing and wearing masks, self-help groups stitching masks – that is the overwhelming picture of civil society response to COVID. But the role of civil society goes far beyond the immediate relief measures. PRIA collaborated with VANI to publish a report that systematises the various actions by civil society at national, state and local level in response to COVID. The report highlights the wide spectrum of interventions under varying contexts by civil society, defined as "sum total of all individual and collective initiatives for public good" (Tandon, 1999). Data for the report was collected through secondary sources available online, like newspapers, newsletters, blogs, CSO website, etc. With secondary data being collected only through online, Internet-based search, there is an increased need to fact check the data and find multiple sources of information. In primary data collection, there are ways to verify the data which are not possible in online based research. Web-based research is an efficient way to conduct secondary research when field work and face-to-face interactions is not possible. Access the CSO research report here.

The study on Impact of Pandemic on Capacity Building Support for Civil Society and Non-Profit Organisations in India was part of a larger research initiative of INTRAC for Civil Society, Oxford, UK and was supported by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, USA. The study tries to understand the changing nature of capacity building support to civil society and non-profit organisations during the time of pandemic in India.

Learning to read and write is both stressful and empowering for first generation of learners. During the pandemic, functional use of literacy skills were inadequate without digital literacy. On International Literacy Day (8 September), stories of learning and literacy in local contexts during the pandemic was the focus of PRIA's online celebrations. With the help of various partner organisations, the session witnessed the participation of individuals from different parts of the country, eager to share what literacy meant to them and how they have witnessed change within

themselves. Through the stories shared by Sarita (a young domestic help), Biswapriya (an adolescent associated with the Kadam Badhate Chalo programme), Kiran (from Azad Foundation), and Adarsh (a Youth-n-Democracy Fellow) we learnt a different aspect and meaning of literacy – one which goes beyond formal education to a much broader understanding of where knowledge, including lived experiences, acquired in various ways can be empowering for the hitherto 'invisible'.

PRIA partnered with Pradan and CYSD as a knowledge partner in Samagam 2020, in which civil society leaders, government officials, and the men and women of India's biggest businesses were in attendance. Collaboration between samaj (civil society), sarkar (government) and bazaar (business) to address development challenges and achieve the SDGs was the focus of discussion for the 2-day conclave (27 and 28 November 2020), marked with optimism, trust and some skepticism. In his keynote address, Dr Tandon emphasized the need to overcome the alarming deficit of trust and for mutual respect among collaborators if India is to achieve its developmental goals.

Dr Rajesh Tandon was appointed as Chair of the Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC) in the past year. On March 20 and 21, 2021, the First Annual FIDC Symposium called 'Development Cooperation Dialogue (DCD)' was held. It brought together civil society, academia, PhD and M.Phil. students engaged in research across Indian universities, and policymakers to deliberate, share and disseminate experiences of India's development cooperation internationally. The main objective was to provide space for highlighting innovative programmes of India's development cooperation carried out by the government, business and civil society, and highlight modalities, perspectives and trends in India's development cooperation.

At the Livelihoods India Virtual Summit 2020, on January 29, 2021 Dr. Rajesh Tandon shared his insights from the field and strategies for sustaining the work that the development sector has undertaken at the plenary session on "Social Stock Exchange – A Way Forward for NGOs".

As part of the series of One World, One Fight: Civil Society's Response to COVID-19, Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) and One World Foundation India conducts interviews of eminent leaders of the development sector to share their experiences about the pandemic and recommendations for the way forward. On September 18, 2020, the seventh episode of the series featured an interview with Dr. Rajesh Tandon, on the challenges faced by civil society organisations in the face of the pandemic.

Community-Engaged Teaching and Research

Under the aegis of the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, PRIA has actively promoted and advocated for socially engaged, responsible research.

Community-University Engagement

In collaboration with Association of Indian Universities, an online Community-University Engagement course was launched. The first offering of the course in May 2020 saw an enrollment of 1500+ learners.

The one-week online course provides an initial exposure to the teachers and staff on the topic of Community-University Engagement and develops appropriate knowledge and capacity of the learners to undertake engaged teaching, research and service in the future. The course covers topics including the need for universities to engage with the community and the importance of fostering social responsibility.

Open Science Going Beyond Open Access

PRIA has helped increase coherence and convergence via a bottom-up approach in developing and forming the RRING community in India, facilitating a glocal workshop on the theme of *Socially Responsible Research & Innovation* on June 17, 2020 and a virtual workshop on the Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers (in collaboration with UNESCO) on July 9, 2020. The workshops aimed at increasing awareness about the Recommendation and on the need for mechanisms for public authorities to monitor the operation of science systems under certain value systems in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On November 17, 20201, PRIA, in collaboration with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education and the UNESCO Delhi Cluster Officer, brought together scientists and social actors to facilitate citizens' feedback from the South Asia region to UNESCO's Open Science Declaration.

In January 2021, Dr Tandon was invited by the Office of the Principal Scientific Advisor to give expert feedback on the draft Science, Technology, Innovation Policy of the Government of India. The new policy aims to bring about profound changes through short-term, medium-term, and long-term mission mode projects by building a nurtured ecosystem that promotes research and innovation on the part of both individuals and organizations.

Knowledge for Change

The fifth cohort of the mentor training program (MTP) of the UNESCO Chair's Knowledge for Change (K4C) initiative began in early August 2020. From the fifth cohort, the K4C program is being offered in full online mode.

Advocacy for Socially Responsible Higher Education and Sustainable Development Goals

As UNESCO Co-Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, Dr. Tandon's commitment to exploring new ways of learning and producing knowledge that benefits communities is well-known. In the past year, he has participated in nearly 50 webinars to promote

the teaching, learning and knowledge on socially responsible higher education, with special focus on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As member of the Subject Expert Group constituted by University Grants Commission (UGC) under Unnat Bharat Abhiyaan 2.0, the Chair has been instrumental in guiding and developing a policy in the UGC for Social Engagement of Universities. A training program for teachers in higher education institutions to learn Community Based Participatory Research is being developed and will be launched in the second half of 2021.

On February 25, 2021 Dr Tandon shared his vision about "Education in 2030" at the FICCI Higher Education Summit. Earlier, Dr Tandon has served as Jury Member for the FICCI Higher Education Excellence Awards.

At the "SDG Focus: Higher Education in South Asia" webinar on February 18, 2021, hosted by South Asian University and The Bridge Project, Dr. Rajesh Tandon made a presentation titled "Mainstreaming SDGs in Teaching & Research in Higher Education". This webinar is part of the organisers' outreach to institutions that are at the forefront of shaping dialogues and discussions on SDGs and higher education.

On January 29, 2021 at the 3rd National Conference on "Innovative Mechanisms and Standards for Assuring Quality in Higher Education Institutions", Dr Tandon shared his views on how moving education online, in itself, sharpens the digital divide in India.

On January 22, 2021 at the webinar on "Inclusive Urbanization Amid The COVID-19 Pandemic: Participatory Research Can Make A Difference" hosted by Center for Habitat, Urban and Regional Studies (CHURS), and Impact and Policy Research Institute (IMPRI), Dr Tandon spoke on the difference participatory research can make in capturing the dynamics of urbanization with granular data involving intensive micro-local engagement and participation.

On October 7, 2020, he gave the Inaugural Address at the New Student Induction, at the Amrita Master of Social Work, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham.

At the webinar on [Role of National Education Policy in Achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) organized by IIHMR, Jaipur on October 5, 2020, Dr. Tandon discussed ways in which higher education can contribute to SDGs within the Indian and global context. He addressed specifically, ways of fostering social responsibility and community engagement in HEIs in India and emerging global approaches for the same.

International Relations Professional Learning Community (IR-PLC), Canadian Bureau for International Education hosted a virtual interactive panel discussion on "Internationalization And The Sustainable Development Goals" on September 29, 2020. Dr Tandon moderated the theme 'Strategies in Internationalizing the SDGs in Higher Education Institutions'.

Dr Tandon gave the keynote address at the 26th [Annual Conference of Muwatin Institute for Democracy and Human Rights at Birzeit University](#), Palestine held on September 25-27, 2020. The conference titled "When Will the Smile Return to Our World?" explored the crisis in the current world order and how its impact will be balanced on global and Arab scales.

Multi-stakeholder Networking and Partnerships

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We have always considered ourselves as educators and facilitators, supporting individuals, organisations and grassroots initiatives to learn, change, grow, sustain themselves. Such support is not, and has never been, about financial support. It is support in form of information sharing, in the form of ideas, in the form of linkage and network building, support through mediation expertise, and even emotional support. Support to and with multiple stakeholders by sharing information, and 'sense-making' of the impacts of the virus, was an immediate and integral part of our work from the beginning of the pandemic.

Support Groups for Information Sharing

PRIA utilised varied technology platforms (WhatsApp Groups, GroupTalk, Zoom sessions) to continue sharing information, for advocacy and support.

A key platform for networking and information was the 'COVID19 Migration Support' group on WhatsApp. The aim of the group was to share resources, best practices, and practical solutions on how migrant labourers and their families can safely reach their villages, how they can prepare for the journey and be safely quarantined at destination. The group was able to garner widespread support with 91 members (38 organisations and 14 active citizens) spread across 18 states. More than 1500 links, photos, and documents have been shared on the group by members, proving it is an efficient platform for information dissemination. The group is serving multiple purposes including demystification of information, knowledge building, providing immediate support for stranded migrants, tracking government action, and advocacy. However, while WhatsApp is a useful medium to initiate group interaction, follow up through emails, phone calls, and virtual meetings was very necessary for more detailed conversations and understanding of the ground realities. WhatsApp features that allow making sub-groups based on region, language, and theme are now being explored.

The COVID-19 WhatsApp group became a window of information for the COVID-19 Response newsletter published by PRIA. The newsletter contained best practices, learnings from the grassroots, highlights of work done by CSOs across the country, and COVID19 related knowledge resources. The newsletter, disseminated via email and on social media including WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, has been instrumental in garnering visibility to civil society efforts across the country, and internationally.

RESPONSE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
TOWARDS COVID19

Using a mobile audio conferencing app which does not require Internet connection at the receiver's end, PRIA sustained conversations with partners and community-based organisations in the remotest districts. Nearly a dozen 'Zameeni Batein' (Grassroots Dialogues) were held over 6 months. A simple group phone call connected all participants, who shared their daily experiences of coping with Covid in their communities and finding support from others' experiences. The group phone call allowed free-flowing conversations and COVID updates from different parts of the country. A challenge in using this technology was call dropping on the participant's end, especially if they get other calls at the same time. Further, due to lack of a video feature, forming a close visual connection with the participants is not possible. However, this platform serves its purpose in providing access to remote areas and connecting with people who cannot access Zoom or other meeting softwares that need high bandwidth.

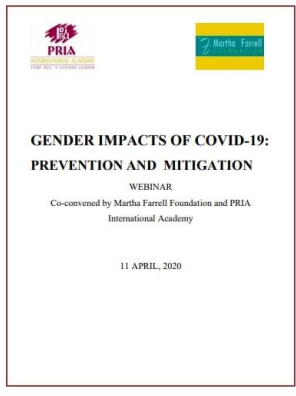### Webinars on Dealing With Covid-19

A series of 13 webinars were held between April 2020 and August 2020 to share lived experiences during the first wave of the pandemic. These webinars were held on a variety of topics ranging from impact of Covid-19 on education, gender impacts of the pandemic, reverse migration, city planning, urban informals, sustainable community-governed health and disaster preparedness, making quarantine centres a "home away from home", role of civil society, and the mental health stress among adolescents and youth. In keeping with PRIA's erstwhile traditions, the discussions were co-organised with partners and were bi-lingual to cater to all regional audiences.
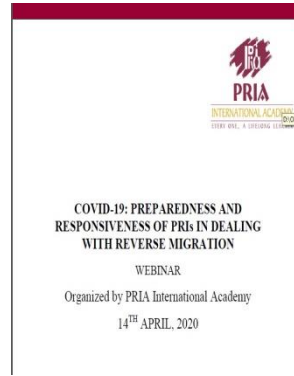
3 April 2020
Webinar on
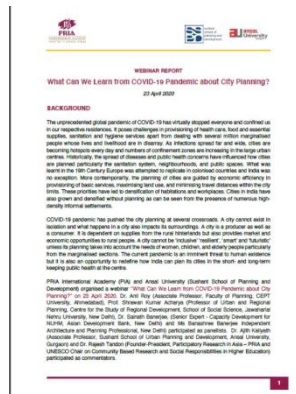Impact of Covid-19
Lockdown on Urban
Informals in India
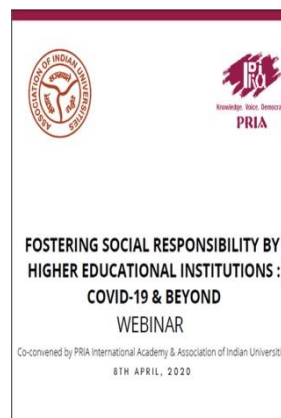
8 April 2020
Webinar on
Fostering Social
Responsibility by
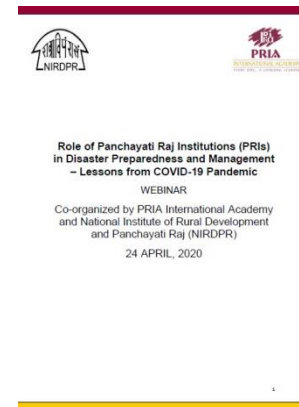Higher Educational
Institutions: COVID-19
& Beyond

11 April 2020
Webinar on
Gender Impacts of
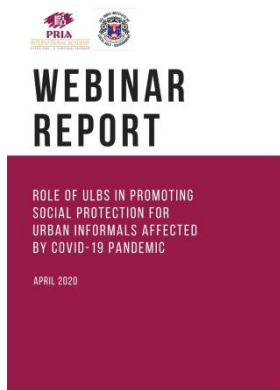COVID-19: Prevention
and Mitigation

14 April 2020
Webinar on
COVID-19
Preparedness and
Responsiveness of
PRIs in Dealing with
Reverse Migration

23 April 2020
Webinar on
What Can We Learn
from COVID-19
Pandemic about City
Planning?

24 April 2020
Webinar on
Role of Panchayati
Raj Institutions
(PRIs) in Disaster
Preparedness and
Management

27 April 2020
Webinar on
Role of ULBs in
Promoting Social
Protection for Urban
Informals Affected by
COVID-19 Pandemic
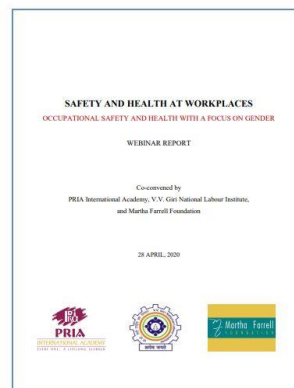
28 April 2020
Webinar on
Safety and Health at
Workplaces:
Occupational Safety
and Health with a
Focus on Gender
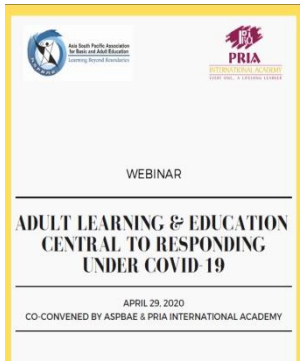
29 April 2020
Webinar on
Adult Learning and
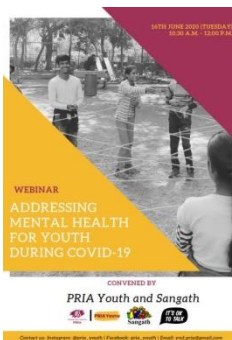Education Central to
Responding Under
Covid-19
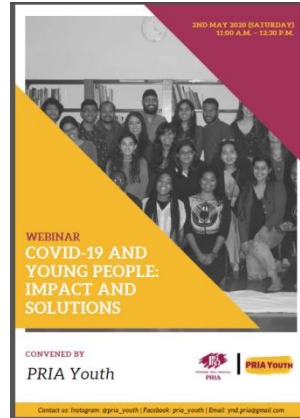
2 May 2020
Webinar on
COVID-19 and Young
People: Impact and
Solutions

22 May 2020
Webinar on
The Role of South
Asian Civil Society in
the Times of COVID-
19 Pandemic

29 May 2020
Webinar on
Impact of COVID-19 on
Sport for
Development:
Challenges and
Opportunities

16 June 2020
Webinar on
Addressing Mental Health
for Youth in Times of
COVID-19

27 June 2020
Stakeholder
consultation on
Interstate Migration
Policy

Governance and Accounts

The membership of the Governing Board for 2020-21 is[1]:

Chairperson: Ms. Rita Sarin, Country Director, The Hunger Project, New Delhi.

Treasurer: Shri Ravi Seth, Chartered Accountant from ICAI.

President: Dr. Rajesh Tandon, Founder of PRIA, New Delhi.

Members:

Ms. Lalita Ramdas, Renowned Educator, based in Alibaug, Maharashtra.

Shri. Satinder Singh Sahni, retired IAS Officer, based in Gurgaon.

Ms. Sheela Patel, Founder Director, The Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC), Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Shri Ashok Kumar Singh, Founder Director, Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra (SSK), Lucknow

Meetings of Governing Board members were held in the past year – 111th Governing Board and Annual General Body meeting on September 18, 2020; the 112th Governing Board Meeting on October 27, 2020 and the 113th Governing Board Meeting on January 16, 2021.

A Senior Management Team at PRIA provides collective leadership, developing next line of leadership, programme strategy, resource mobilisation, annual and bi-annual reviews, project planning, staff allocation, performance review and capacity building programmes for staff.

Eleven young professionals in the organisation were trained through the Learning to Learn online training program. Delivered through Zoom meetings, this was a new learning environment for the facilitators and the learners. The program was 8 sessions, once weekly. Each session was usually for 90 mins. The primary methods used were lecture method and small group discussion. Case studies to stimulate group analysis and reflection were also used. Learners were encouraged to self-reflect through structured materials (written documents and audio-visuals) shared after each session.

PRIA's storehouse of knowledge continue to be harvested and systematised, to make it available for a new generation audience. This work is undertaken through the paid internship program started the previous year, which is continuing.

Digital storage will be upgraded with the knowledge management system (Greenstone) moving to cloud based application.

Books to share our approach and learnings more widely is a specific focus. *Socially Responsible Higher Education: International Perspectives on Knowledge Democracy*, an edited volume by Dr Budd Hall and Dr Rajesh Tandon, the UNESCO Co-Chairs, was accepted for publication, to be published in mid 2021.

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[1] Shri Ashok Kumar Singh was made a life member of the PRIA Governing Board in the 113th Governing Board meeting held on 16 January 2021.

Financial Summary

The audited accounts of the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), together with the report of the Statutory Auditors, has been circulated. A summary of the Income and Expenditure Account is provided below.

The Society continues to follow the guidelines suggested by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India for Not-for-Profit Organizations in preparation of financial statements wherever feasible.

The liability for the grants remaining unutilized at the year-end has been accounted for as Grants in Advance.

A proportion of funds received in the previous year amounting to ₹ 39.69 lakhs have been utilized in the current financial year.

The Management Audit Report for the year has been discussed with the Governing Board.

Yours sincerely

Ravi Seth
Treasurer, PRIA

Statutory Auditors: Manohar Chowdhry & Associates, Gurgaon

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

(Year ended March 31, 2021)

(In INR '000)

Year ended 31.03.2020	Particulars	Year ended 31.03.2021
	Income	
31,532	Education, Research and Training Income	15,244
16,329	Other Income	17,329
47,861	**Total**	**32,573**
	Expenditure	
34,029	Direct Project Expenses	14,353
8,110	Indirect Expenses	5,536
1,207	Depreciation	1,010
43,346	**Total**	**20,899**
4,515	**Excess of Income Over Expenditure**	**11,674**

Note: Extracted from Audited Statement of Accounts 2020-21

FCRA ACCOUNTS: INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

(year ending 31 March 2021)

Particulars	Amount (₹)
INCOME	
Education, Research and Training Income	1,52,43,812
Other Income	1,68,093
TOTAL	**1,54,11,905**
EXPENDITURE	
Project Expenses	1,15,45,764
Administrative Expenses	17,23,513
Depreciation	7,23,670
TOTAL	1,39,92,947
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	**14,18,958**
TOTAL	**1,54,11,905**

Resource Providers

Resource Provider	Foreign Contribution Account (₹)	Local Fund Account (₹)	TOTAL (as on 31.03.2021) (₹)
EDUCATION RESEARCH AND TRAINING INCOME			
Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands	23,52,096		23,52,096
European Union	1,02,04,178		1,02,04,178
Laureus Sport for Good Foundation	6,49,376		6,49,376
Pragati INC	6,85,857		6,85,857
University College Cork	8,13,135		8,13,135
University of Glasgow	5,39,170		5,39,170
Total	**1,52,43,812**	**0**	**1,52,43,812**

Team@PRIA

Accounts and Finance
Senior Accounts Officer – Soja Saramma Mathew
Manager-Finance & Accounts – Praveen PV

Administration, Facilities and HR
Hostel In-charge – Shanta
Administrative Officer – Dhan Singh
Assistant General Manager – Bindu Baby
Administrative Manager - Chandra Shekhar Joshi
Executive Assistant & HR Executive – Jyoti Nagpal, Surjeet Singh

President's Office
Executive Assistant to the President – Jyoti Nagpal, Surjeet Singh

Programs
Assistant Program Officer – Samiksha Jha, Areeba Khalid
Program Officers – Rajasvi Gandhi, Nikita Rakhyani, Merin Alias, Sonia
Program Officer–UNESCO Chair – Jigme Garwang and Niharika Kaul
Senior Program Officers – Debasish Biswas, Shashi Shikha, Yashvi Sharma
Program Manager – Amit Bhatt
Senior Program Managers – Anshuman Karol, Nandita Bhatt
Directors – Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay, V. P. Gupta

Research
Research Associate – S. Ram Aravind

IT, Knowledge Management and Communications
IT Officer – Sonu Kumar
Web Developer / Officer-Knowledge Management & Learning – Sujit Kumar Sourav
Assistant Program Officer–Communications – Nayanika Guha

Interns
Saamiksha Tangri, University of Delhi, New Delhi

Saket Purohat, University of Pittsgurgh, USA

Stuti Gopal, Macquarie University, Australia

Shubhangi Singh, University of Delhi, New Delhi

Kaajal Joshi, George Washington University, USA

Kaushal Khemka, O. P. Jindal Global University, Haryana

Malaika Aggarwal, O. P. Jindal Global University, Haryana

Satyaraj Veerabathini, O. P. Jindal Global University, Haryana

Joy Bhattacharyya, O. P. Jindal Global University, Haryana

Arijit Menon, O. P. Jindal Global University, Haryana

Muskan Chawla, University of Warwick, U.K.

Tess Westbrook, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

Knowledge. Voice. Democracy.

PRIA

PRIA ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21