

MY LIFE



मेरे फैसले



TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEYS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO ADDRESS EARLY AND CHILD MARRIAGE

CONTEXT

Target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals aims to end child marriage by 2030. India has the highest absolute number of child marriages (15.5 million,) in the world.

Though several studies agree on the declining trend of child marriage globally, in India, the pace of decline is slow and there is still a high proportion of child marriages happening. The contemporary practice of child marriage in India receives social, religious and economic sanctions. It is rooted in rigid societal norms and serves to perpetuate long-standing social inequalities and power structures. Marriage at a young age prevents young people from exercising agency, making important life decisions and securing basic freedom, including having aspirations, pursuing opportunities for education, earning and sustainable livelihood and accessing sexual health and rights among others. It also reinforces existing inequalities between men and women and among different economic class, castes and religious and ethnic groups.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Each year, adolescents and youth are engaged in the journey directly and enabled to take decisions regarding their lives and bodies. These participants go through the 50-hour curriculum that enables them to talk about sensitive issues including SRHR. The core idea of the curriculum is around 'Decision making and Taking charge of one's life'. The curriculum focuses on building knowledge on the issue, change in attitude and behaviours and cultivating capacities of empathy, negotiation, communication, decision making and system thinking.

Among the cohort of young people, each year 10-12 participants from each location are developed as Youth Facilitators (YFs) and Peer Ambassadors (PAs), to be advocates against issues of social discrimination, and living the values of 5th space; playing an active role in exercising their agency and speaking up against child marriage. These PAs/YFs further go through an intensive journey through exposure and internships to provide them additional inputs on the issue.

SOLUTION AND APPROACH

Since 1993, Pravah's work has been focused on creating psycho-social change as a means to sustainably impact all other elements of change and creating a mindset shift in the society on various social issues through youth-led citizenship and action. A recent survey (conducted by ComMutiny-The Youth Collective) with more than 26,000 people across India revealed that 'psycho-social change' emerged as the highest rated solution (29%), followed by legal change (25%), systemic change (24%), and infrastructural change (23%) for solving critical social issues such as gender, sanitation, employment, education and communalism.

My Life, Mere Faisle is one such intervention undertaken by Pravah since 2015 which looked at the issue of Early and Child Marriage through the psycho-social approach-enabling young people to take charge of one's lives and decisions.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

According to the self-reported data in the impact assessment,

70% ADOLESCENTS

shared that they learnt about the ill-effects of early and child marriage on their health and potential to dream and aspire.

80% RESPONDENTS

understood the importance of aspiring, taking responsibility and making efforts to transform their dreams into reality

80% ADOLESCENTS **70%** YOUTH

shared that they have improved their negotiation skills leading to higher engagement and self-confidence.

OUTREACH



35,000+

ADOLESCENTS & YOUTH

ABOUT PRAVAH

Pravah has been working since 1993 in India, on developing leadership capacities of young people to unleash their ability to bring about transformational social change. Pravah's core mission is to build future looking, wholesome adolescents and youth leaders through psycho-social interventions leading to economic, political and social inclusion. We therefore work with young people from diverse backgrounds to build their agency and enable them to take action, such that they become self-aware, deeply empathetic, understand systems and are socially responsible leaders. We also work with organizations and young leaders to co-create empowering spaces where local youth take leadership and action on the issues affecting them and others in their communities.



WHAT NEXT?

Along with maintaining the existing partnerships and creating deep and meaningful journeys for adolescents and young people, we aim at scaling up and expanding this program to other parts of the country where the issue of Early and Child Marriages is still prevalent such as West Bengal, more parts of South India and the Northeast.

We would also like to showcase the change that these young people, after undergoing the curriculum, have been creating in their communities through more effective and wide spread media. We also believe that it would be of immense value to connect young people from across the country to create a space for exchange and expanding their horizons in the coming years.

PARTNERSHIPS



SUPPORTED BY



STORIES OF IMPACT

"MLMF program really made me aware of myself and my rights. It supported me in taking one of the biggest decisions of my life. I am really thankful to the program and also to my brother who supported me in this. I will never support any early and child marriage in my village and will take a stand against it and also make others aware of it."

REENA KUMARI AHARI, ALFA EDUCATION SOCIETY, RAJASTHAN

"MLMF program has given me strength and confidence to express myself and break my internal fears. Now I can decide on things that matter to me and also have the courage to make my family believe on that which otherwise I would never have thought of doing."

SARA BEGUM, RUBAROO, TELANGANA

"MLMF program has helped me to reflect on my own behaviour and broaden my worldview. Learning ESCA showed me my behavioural patterns and how that pushed me into conflict situations so many times, especially with my mother. I started to keep a check on my communication style and practiced empathy in my conversations by trying to understand other person's perspective."

GOVIND MEHRA, PRAVAH JAIPUR INITIATIVE, RAJASTHAN

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