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Evaluation from inside out

The experience of using local knowledge and practices to evaluate a program for adolescent girls in India through the lens of gender and equity

This article describes an interesting approach where the evaluators recognised the value of using local community knowledge and experience in evaluating a Government of India program for the development and empowerment of adolescent girls. The evaluators tried to integrate participatory and appreciative approaches and looked at the evaluation process through a gender and equity lens.

The evaluators went beyond the mandate of evaluation and focused on building evaluation capacity by fostering ownership of the program among stakeholders and encouraging the community to be the active agents of change. Instead of traditional evaluation where evaluators are outsiders, we engaged the stakeholders in the evaluation. All the stakeholders, including the funding agency, NGO, the adolescent girls and the larger community were engaged in varying degrees—from defining the objectives, designing questions, data collection and data analysis in the context of their aspirations and expectations, so that it could be an occasion for recognition and celebration of their strengths. The local project implementers and the adolescent girls themselves re-evaluated their own responses and used them in a particular context to further empower themselves. We used principles of the strength-based approach and framed appreciative questions, which recognised the strengths of the community and NGO staff. This created a non-threatening environment, which stimulated open sharing of experiences. Further, this resulted in reinforcing the evaluation process by improving the quality and richness of data that the community produced itself, which would not have been the case in a traditional evaluation.

Additionally, a gender and equity lens was used to conduct the evaluation in six multi-ethnic districts, populated with religious and linguistic minorities, and an indigenous population. The gender and equity lens allows recognising the systematic discrimination based on gender, caste and class. The evaluation was able to probe whether the program assessed time, mobility, poverty and accessibility constraints of girls, and accounted for intersectional discrimination.

Introduction

This article discusses the evaluation of a Government of India program for empowerment of adolescent girls in the age group of 11 to 18 years. The Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), a research institute based in India that works on gender and development research, conducted an evaluation of the program in sample ‘blocks’ (local-level administrative divisions comprising a group of villages) spread over six districts of West Bengal. Evaluation was conducted to: (a) assess the outcome and accessibility by adolescent girls to the scheme; (b) understand the change and process; and (c) build



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capacity of the adolescent girls to evaluate their own program. The article aims to reflect on the processes of the evaluation and to locate the implications for program implementation from a gender and equity lens. The evaluation used a participatory approach with elements of the strength-based approach.

Background

Recently, well-established development agencies stated that empowering girls through education, political representation, and sexual and reproductive health and rights, and other avenues ‘would transform the world’ (Kallstrom 2014). When girls lack access to education, not only are we not allowing them to reach their full potential, but we are also depriving the country of an irreplaceable source of intelligence and innovation. It is a massive loss to society, but the good news is that it is a loss we can reverse through one concrete step: empowering girls. However, most reports do not highlight the complete picture for women and girls. For example, not all of the data is disaggregated by gender, so we are not sure if eradicating poverty by half means that women have had an equal share in this progress.

The program ‘SABLA’, or the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls, is a centrally sponsored program of the Government of India to address the multidimensional problems and challenges faced by adolescent girls in the age group of 11 to 18 years. The specific objectives of the scheme are to improve the nutritional and health status of adolescent girls in this age group and empower them by providing education

in life skills, health, adolescent reproductive and sexual health and nutrition.

An integrated package of services is provided to adolescent girls under this scheme that includes: nutrition, iron and folic acid supplementation; health check-up and Referral services; nutrition and health education; counselling/guidance on family welfare; adolescent reproductive and sexual health education; guidance on child care practices and home management; life-skills education and information on accessing public services; and vocational training for girls aged 16 and above under the National Skill Development Program (NSDP).

The scheme focuses on all out-of-school adolescent girls who assemble at the local Anganwadi centre¹, according to the timetable and frequency decided by the respective state governments. Other girls in this age group, that is, the girls attending school, meet at the Anganwadi centre at least twice a month and more frequently during vacations/holidays, where they receive life-skills education and nutrition and health education, and gain awareness about socio-legal issues. This provides the opportunity for mixed-group interaction between in-school and out-of-school girls, motivating the latter to attend school.

Given the background of the SABLA scheme, Ford Foundation and an NGO called Child in Need Institute (CINI) found that there are many opportunities to strengthen SABLA and its implementation in the six districts of West Bengal where the project is being run: Purulia, Jalpaiguri, Coachbehar, Malda, Nadia and Kolkata. The NGO selected 12 underprivileged blocks from the six districts (with 40 Anganwadi centres in each block), to develop as model centres. These centres had a



number of value-added components including: a focus on gender equality issues; a rights-based approach; an emphasis on reproductive and sexual health; bringing key stakeholders within a common platform together; capacity building and sensitisation of service providers; a community-based strategy for the prevention of early marriage; strengthening Anganwadi centres and adolescent resource centres; and, finally, linking SABLA to other government programs and schemes designed for adolescent girls that are located in the same geographic area. The selected areas largely come under disadvantaged regions of the state. The regions are characterised as being primarily backward, populated by religious minorities, and having a minority tribal population as well as linguistic minorities. Four of the districts share a border with Bangladesh, with local people facing border management problems, including international drug trafficking and illegal migration.

Methodology and process

The evaluation design was a joint collaboration between the NGO and the evaluation team. The idea arose during an evaluation capacity-building workshop on the strength-based approach in evaluation. The NGO and the evaluation team presented the plan as part of their group work and received feedback from other workshop participants, primarily composed of Monitoring and Evaluation officers and program officers. Thus, the conclusion was that the evaluation process would be participatory and empowering, and would foster ownership of the project by the adolescent girls, with the following objectives:

- 1 What the program is providing—outcome and access to the scheme/program.
- 2 To understand the change and process.
- 3 To build capacity of the adolescent girls to evaluate their own program.

Proposed evaluation plan

The evaluation team and the NGO, in consultation with the donor, decided to conduct qualitative, gender- and equity-focused evaluation with analysis of management information system data and a desk review of reports and documents related to the project. The steps in the evaluation process were:

- 1 A participatory workshop with community representatives and the NGO to conduct a collaborative analysis of the program at the local level and draft the evaluation questions jointly.
- 2 Data collection through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews.

- 3 Data analysis with community representatives and the NGO.
- 4 Report writing by the evaluation team.
- 5 Dissemination of report findings by the NGO to the community at large.

Evaluation with gender and equity lens: Why is this important, particularly in the Indian context?

Achieving gender equity is critical to any development. In India gender-based disparities disadvantage women; this impedes their development and hence that of the whole society. Therefore, a gender-responsive analysis is a key to getting information on the different conditions that women and men face, and the different effects that policies and programs may have on them because of their situations. This information can inform and improve policies and programs, and is essential in ensuring that the different needs of both women and men are met. Despite decades of effort, overall progress in improving women's lives has been inconsistent. Moreover, social and cultural burdens affecting human capabilities are inequitably distributed. Women are still under-represented in all levels of government and in other decision-making arenas, whether at work or, for many, at home (IISD 2013). A gender-equity-focused program does not mean making the same programs and facilities available to both males and females. Gender equity requires that girls and women be provided with a full range of activity and program choices that meet their needs, interests and experiences.

Gender-sensitive evaluation, as a concept, is defined as a key tool for exploring the structural causes of gender inequalities and for determining the differential implications of development activities for women and men (De Waal 2006). Feminist evaluation 'has a central focus on inequities, recognises that inequities are structural, recognises that evaluation is political, recognises and values different ways of knowing, proposes to add value to those who are marginalised and to those implementing programmes'. (Hay 2012, p. 326)

Over the past decade, a number of development practitioners have made gender-responsive program evaluation a crucial part of programming approaches, reflecting a better designed project that demonstrates significant change. There is, on the other hand, a greater awareness of the need to focus more explicitly on gender as a key factor in a wide range of development-related issues. The larger evaluation community has been slow to appreciate the fundamental role that gender may play in shaping the results of their program evaluations. In particular, they do not pay enough attention to understanding how gender inequities may shape program participation and response to specific interventions, or how gender relations may influence even the basic



processes of data collection. Therefore, too often we see that gender-responsive analyses are confined to the presentation of gender-disaggregated data without raising the larger political questions of equity.

In the past half a decade, much has been written both on the theoretical aspects of gender-sensitive, gender-responsive and/or feminist evaluations, and the experiences of conducting equity-focused gender-responsive program evaluations in the developing world including India (Espinosa 2013; Hay 2012; Patton 2002; Podems 2010;). Two authors (Hay 2012; Sielbeck-Bowen et al. 2002) identified five key feminist evaluation principles, primarily focusing on the inequities that are structural. Hay further reconfirms that evaluation is political and it also values different ways of knowing, that is, different forms of knowledge. In other words, Hay argues for inclusion of the marginalised in the process of development by not only acknowledging their knowledge, but also including it in program implementation and evaluation. In essence, we argue that by including and giving voice to the marginalised through recognition of their knowledge, stakeholders are empowered and their stake in the program is also consolidated. Espinosa (2013) argues that the bringing of a feminist lens to an evaluation study makes one understand that evaluation itself is an important tool for accountability and learning in relation to gender equality. Hay (2012, p. 337) examines:

how feminist principles are being used to inform understandings of programme theory, shape evaluation design and methods, negotiate judgments of success, guide practice, and guide choices and opportunities for influence. A deeper understanding of this work is not an academic exercise; for feminist evaluation practitioners, it can provide language and frameworks to inform their work.

Participatory approach—inclusion of local knowledge in program evaluation

It is often thought that evaluation is an activity of the external experts. However, one should not forget that local communities have the maximum knowledge of their culture and traditions based on their experiences. A participatory evaluation model could be instrumental in bringing out community knowledge and perception and promote a critical reflection process focused on their own activities. This could be done through identifying gender-based differences, women's role in decision-making, restrictions on physical mobility, general social norms and values, societal challenges, and cause-and-effect expectations; and then after creating new assumptions, change practices and validate or invalidate the findings. The model assumes a democratic participatory process along with autonomy on the part of educators and learners at the local level (Brunner & Guzman 1989; Greene 1988). This is a form of what is usually called

'participatory action research'. The Institute of Development Studies (IDS 1998) argues that:

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is not just a matter of using participatory techniques within a conventional monitoring and evaluation setting. It is about radically rethinking who initiates and undertakes the process, and who learns or benefits from the findings.

It is therefore important for evaluators to understand peoples' knowledge and perception about development and empowerment. On the other hand, internal, self-initiated and subjectively oriented evaluations can also be rigorous and valuable. For an evaluation project, there is a real challenge to address this indigenous knowledge and use it in evaluating a program for the community. This evaluation attempted to engage the NGO and the community as much as possible in the process.

Strength-based approach

To enhance community and NGO participation, elements of strength-based approaches like the Community Life Competence Process² and Appreciative Inquiry were blended in the participatory evaluation process.

In the development sector, top-down models are usually used where outside experts decide what the community needs and try to provide solutions. This reinforces a view of 'not having' and solutions are in the hands of outsiders. A strength-based approach begins with what the community has; solutions are in the hands of the community. When community members realise that individuals in the community have particular strengths, it gives them confidence to act and respond to their issues. This strengthens community bonds, which further promotes collectivism. Communities learn to improvise and figure out new ways of doing things that are best suited in their context. When we begin with the belief that communities have the potential to deal with their issues, we also find that communities can track their own progress.

Research has shown that deficit-based, professionally driven initiatives are not as effective at creating sustainable change as strengths-based, community-driven initiatives. Deficit-based approaches have traditionally been used by the helping professions as they look for ways to help address the needs and problems within a family or community. This emphasis communicates that there is failure, helplessness and low expectations for the families and communities. It also creates a dependency on outside resources and solutions (Centre for Child Well-being 2011). Ojha (2010, p. 15) comments:

There has been a growing trend in the demand of participatory and user-focused evaluation over the years. This means that the evaluation process requires the involvement of a greater number of stakeholders, designing evaluation to boost use, focusing on



performance improvement, building evaluation capacity and completing the evaluation quickly and cheaply without compromising the quality. The appreciative inquiry approach to evaluation meets many of these criteria.

Preskill & Catsambas (2006) describe how engaging in an Appreciative Inquiry process that is evaluation focused increases participants' understanding of, and commitment to, evaluation. It also enriches the evaluation experience through a holistic overview of the system, increases the cultural competence of the evaluation and deepens participants' learning experience through evaluation (Preskill & Catsambas 2006).

Execution of the evaluation

Evaluation was initiated with a workshop and included NGO staff and the community members, namely two adolescent girls for each of the six districts. The workshop aimed to: engage the participants in drafting the evaluation issues and questions; foster ownership of the project; encourage them to actively contribute to the project; arrive at a common understanding of evaluation; and build evaluation capacity. The evaluation team played the role of facilitators and tried to engage participants as co-evaluators.

Using the 'are we human' exercise from the Community Life Competence Process, we asked participants what they were proud of as a human being, and as a man or woman. Asking appreciative questions set the tone of the workshop and created an appreciative and non-judgemental environment. Preskill and Catsambas (2006, p. 14) note that 'when people ask affirmative questions, reflect on and share past successful experiences, and use strength-based language, they will have more energy, hope and excitement about creating their desired future'. This was an empowering process as participants realised their strengths and achievements. '*No one had ever asked me what I am proud of*', commented one adolescent girl.

Rather than telling the participants what the course of the project should take in the next phase, participants created a common dream for the program in the year 2020 (see Figure 1). The dream revealed deep issues in the community, such as the safe mobility of the girls, even within the village, and the need for engagement of men and boys. It helped evaluators go deeper into these issues during data collection. The above exercises changed the tone of the sharing and energised both the NGO and the communities. Preskill and Catsambas (2006, p. 10) reaffirm the need for a dream-building exercise: 'That is, our image of the future is what will guide us in determining how we will achieve the future. The more positive and hopeful the image of the future, the more positive the present-day action'. Preskill and

Catamas (2006, p. 11) further assert:

People perform better and are more committed when they have the freedom to choose how and what they contribute. Free choice stimulates organizational excellence and positive change and liberates both personal and organizational power.

Often the criticism of a strength-based approach is that it ignores problems and issues; however, we experienced the opposite (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom 2010). According to Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010, p. 18), 'We do not dismiss accounts of conflict, problems, or stress. We simply do not use them as the basis of analysis or action'. Preskill and Catsambas (2006, p. 27) suggest that 'Appreciative Inquiry solves problems by focusing on what to do more of based on what has worked, which translates into knowing what to do less of that has not worked'. The participants, including the community, shared openly and without fear.

The crucial point in the workshop was to engage the participants in the evaluation process and identify key issues in the program. An entire session was allocated to arriving at a common understanding of evaluation and building the evaluation capacity of the participants. Through group discussions, participants came up with their idea of evaluation, and their experience of, and feelings around, evaluation. Participants identified themes they wanted to evaluate in order to strengthen the program.

Participants shared that they did not have a positive perception of evaluation based on their past experience where evaluation had been fault-finding, threatening and a fearful exercise. Thus, the positive climate created during the workshop and by asking the participants what they would like to evaluate led to greater participation and investment in the evaluation process. Preskill and Catsambas (2006) mention a case study where the Appreciative Inquiry process aided in their understanding of how evaluation could be a positive learning experience that would add value to their work.

During the workshop, the participants expressed their feelings about evaluation. '*We were scared that we would be judged, criticised. We had started preparing for the evaluation for the last two months but we were surprised at the workshop. We liked the participatory process where the views of girls were also included*', stated Subhasis, a district resource person of CINI from Cooch Behar. A block motivator of CINI from Jalpaiguri district said, '*We understood now what evaluation is, we had no idea*'. Arpita, a community member from Nadia district states clearly what evaluation has come to mean to her: '*We understood what evaluation is, how the project can move forward with us, the community as one of the participants*'.

Thus, by bringing together the NGO and a broad spectrum of community members from diverse cultures, religions, indigenous communities and language groups.



FIGURE 1: A COMMON DREAM FOR THE SABLA SCHEME CREATED BY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS IN 2000





the workshop provided different perspectives. This made the process empowering, but it also ensured that gender dimensions were captured during the evaluation process because girls had a greater voice and participation and their particular ways of knowing.

The workshop was followed by data collection through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. Focus group discussions were 1–2 hours in length and were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Further, the focus groups were conducted in Bengali or Hindi and were translated, transcribed and analysed in English. In three districts the evaluation team used a translator to facilitate group discussions. The discussions were held with adolescent girls who were part of the SABLA scheme, both supported and not supported by the NGO, with parents of girls and boys in the village. In-depth interviews were conducted with government officials and the NGO staff. The questions were open-ended and were formulated through inputs from the workshop and from the donor through email correspondence. Strength-based questions were not part of the formal questionnaire, but the evaluation team began each focus group discussion with a strength-based question. This helped in building a greater rapport and deeper sharing. For instance, in one

group discussion there was a mixed group of girls from two religious groups. We observed some tension between the girls of both the religious groups. The girls from the minority religion had not been active in the project and were criticised. However, asking the question, ‘What was the best thing that everyone had done in the past three years?’ brought out the strengths of girls from both the religious groups. The girls from the minority religion felt valued and, later, they informed the NGO staff that they would attend the project meetings regularly. They also asked if the evaluators could come to these meetings. This example, again, affirmed that if equity issues have to be addressed, the strength-based approach is an effective way.

NGO staff and community representatives were engaged and supported the evaluators during focus group discussions, as they had been involved in drafting the evaluation questions. One discussion began with adolescent girls from the workshop presenting their dream for the project with the rest of the group (see Figure 2). This motivated the participants to speak freely about the SABLA program and what role they and others could play in the process of implementing the project. Though not part of the original plan, the evaluation team conducted focus group discussions with boys and

FIGURE 2: AN ADOLESCENT GIRL PRESENTING THE DREAM FOR THE SABLA PROJECT DURING A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION IN A VILLAGE IN WEST BENGAL





fathers in the community on the suggestion of the girls during the workshop. These girls noted that most of their issues, such as early marriage, school dropouts and 'Eve-teasing'³, are deeply ingrained in social norms where the males play a dominant role.

Finally, during a workshop held five months after the evaluation, evaluators, NGO staff and donor and community representatives collectively presented the evaluation methodology and findings.

Gender and equity lens with a strength-based approach: what we have achieved

The present evaluation had two key issues in mind: (a) to use the gender and equity lens; and (b) to capture the voice and concerns of the marginalised communities, particularly the religious minorities, the indigenous population and the linguistic minorities.

However, there are other very crucial matters. First, what value the mixed method approach has added to this evaluation, or how the various methods applied to this evaluation have actually allowed for triangulation of data in different forms. Second, determining the effectiveness of the process of assessing the efficacy of the program, including the value-added components of CINI through a gender and equity lens.

This evaluation process took care of creating a space for the marginalised communities, primarily the religious minorities and the linguistic minorities. The participatory workshop in the beginning took special care to include everyone in the discussion. Language was a huge challenge for the facilitators. The evaluators speak Bengali (the official language of the state), English and Hindi. On the other hand, most participants speak Bangla, a few also speak Hindi, but there were participants who speak Santhali. There were participants who could translate the Santhali or Sadri to Bengali and Hindi. To make the Santhal participants and other minorities feel more comfortable, we allowed them to speak and comment in their own language, and also allowed them to draw pictures of their dreams and expectations.

During the field visits, the focus group discussions were conducted in the local language with help from the local NGO volunteers. The adolescent girls who speak Nepali or Sadri (a local tribal language spoken by a group of tribal communities who live in the Jalpaiguri district) were asked to speak in their own language and other girls in the group who speak both languages translated it for the facilitators.

One of the important ways in which the implementation of the program can be gender and equity focused is to be attentive to the needs of adolescent girls from various segments of the society. For example, the SABLA scheme primarily targets out-of-school adolescent girls with the objective of having them return to school.

The SABLA training time and the location of the

training centre are considered carefully, to ensure that girls from the various segments of society can attend. The study assessed whether the SABLA training time is responsive to the needs of the adolescent girls; it was found that in most places where the program is implemented, the NGO schedules the training for a time that is convenient to the adolescent girls in the area. The evaluation found that the training hours were either in the early morning before school starts or after school, or at a time convenient to all. The local volunteers at the NGO encouraged the girls from the remote villages to attend the training sessions and group meetings. At times, the volunteers also accompanied the girls to the training sessions.

The discussions with the adolescent girls highlighted the issue of the mobility of the tribal and Muslim girls in regard to attending the training centres or schools, which on several occasions were located a few kilometres from their village. The evaluation looked into the steps taken by the NGO in those situations, where the cultural restrictions on the girls are very rigid. Places with a large Muslim population saw a lot of resistance to the free movement of girls in relation to attending training centres, apart from resistance to free movement per se. There was a strong resistance to the adolescent reproductive and sexual health component of the program and the centre had to be shut down. The solution to this problem came from the girls themselves. Both during the workshop and the focus group discussions, the girls groups suggested holding discussions with groups of parents at the village level. The suggestion was extremely useful in this situation. The discussions with the groups of parents provided an opportunity to engage the parents and the larger community as a whole to debate and discuss the cultural restrictions on the girls, the safety issues, and the possible actions that could be taken in such circumstances.

The discussions with the girls and parents offered some insight into the issues of domestic responsibilities of the girls, the dropping-out of girls from school and from SABLA training, and the importance of health, hygiene and nutritious food. Another important issue that was raised by the girls themselves was the issue of boys dropping out of school. Separate discussions with adolescent boys were important to understand their need.

A severe problem identified by the adolescent girls in these districts was the issue of early marriage. Not only is early marriage rampant, but the findings show that girls who are below 18 years and married are left out of the program, even though the program is for adolescent girls up to the age of 18 years.

The evaluation assessed: the accessibility of girls to institutions, resources and services; the girls' participation in political and decision-making bodies; the increase in awareness and confidence levels; improvements in communication skills; and access to health and sanitation facilities. The study found differences in the girls' ability



to access public institutions and services, such as the post office, bank and police station, among groups of adolescent girls.

Challenges

A limited budget was a major challenge in the execution of the evaluation plan. The post-data collection workshop for analysing the data jointly with community representatives and staff did not occur due to financial and time constraints. The districts where the program is being implemented have multiple linguistic minorities. The local languages spoken vary from place to place. Consequently, in the absence of an expert language translator there was some loss of data during the data collection process at a few places. If more time had been available the workshop would have been conducted for an extra day where the participants could have been trained in data collection. This would have made it possible for them to undertake data collection.

Concluding remarks

The article provides an opportunity for readers to learn from the experience of designing a participatory evaluation, and adopting a gender and equity lens with elements of a strength-based approach.

The essence of evaluation discourse has been to emphasise participatory and user-focused evaluation over the years. This means that the evaluation process requires involving larger number of stakeholders, designing an evaluation to boost use, focusing on improvement, and building evaluation capacity. We made a modest attempt to develop an evaluation process for helping primary intended users select the most appropriate content, model, methods and uses for their situation. In a community-based project, we wanted to involve those most at stake in the entire evaluation process. We also wanted to see if a strength-based approach could help in stimulating dialogue and interaction among the diverse stakeholders. We wanted to move away from a hierarchical environment by revealing the strengths of all participants and the value they could bring to evaluation. The evaluation also assessed what made the program gender and equity sensitive, which is reflected in the findings on: mobility of the adolescent girls and their accessibility to the training centre, institutions and resources; their self-development and empowerment; their level of awareness and confidence, improvements in their communication skills; and their access to health and sanitation facilities.

Thus, the quality of the data we collected was richer, and the resulting findings and recommendations were much more useful. Participatory evaluation may cause conflicts, which we addressed by using a strength-based approach. Months later, a participant shared how much

the workshop had encouraged her to contribute to the project. We learnt through this exercise that the use of a strength-based approach can make the evaluation not only more participatory and transformative for the participants, but it also helps in bringing out the gender and equity perspective more strongly.

The article reveals how the evaluators encouraged end users to share their ideas about evaluation, their primary concerns, and the changes they would like to see after five to 10 years in their community in the context of equality and development. The evaluation encouraged the stakeholders of the project to voice their ideas through oral presentation, drawing, singing and poetry. The evaluation also used a gender and equity lens in a complex environment where community members belong to diverse groups, comprising religious and linguistic minorities, indigenous communities, and socially and economically disadvantaged communities mixed with people from 'forward caste' communities⁴. This article is a modest attempt to share the experiences of using these approaches in evaluating a government-run program in India and the challenges we encountered in the process.

Notes

- 1 The word 'Anganwadi' means 'courtyard shelter' in Indian languages. They were started by the Government of India in 1975 as part of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program to combat child hunger and malnutrition. A typical Anganwadi centre also provides basic health care in Indian villages. It is a part of the Indian public health care system.
- 2 The Community Life Competence Process is an approach that aims at promoting community self-reliance by encouraging participants to appreciate their strengths in managing their lives. It starts with people's strengths rather than weaknesses.
- 3 'Eve-teasing' is a euphemism used in India for public sexual harassment of women by men, where 'Eve' refers to the very first woman according to the Bible.
- 4 In India, socially and economically backward communities are sometimes referred to as 'backward classes', whereas 'forward caste' communities are people who belong to upper-caste groups. In West Bengal, they are commonly known as 'bhadralok people'.

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