



TRANSFORMING DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

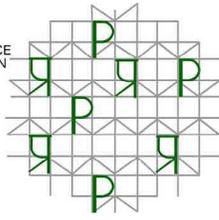
KEY THEMES AND CONCEPTS FOR
DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS

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PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE
FOR DEVELOPMENT ACTION



PRADAN (Professional Assistance for Development Action) is a non-government, non-profit organization that works with India's rural poor. Comprised of university-educated professionals, motivated to use their knowledge and skills to address rural poverty by working with women at the grassroots across seven of the poorest states in the country, PRADAN promotes Self-Help Groups; develops locally suitable economic activities; mobilizes finances; and introduces systems to improve the lives of the rural poor. PRADAN also collaborates extensively with government agencies, banks, market institutions, panchayats, voluntary organizations and research bodies.



Jagori is committed to helping build a just society through feminist values by working to deepen feminist consciousness with diverse partners at local and national levels. Jagori achieves these objectives through feminist research and knowledge. It supports women's leadership and agency, perspective and capacity development based on feminist principles and strategies, provides support services to women survivors of violence and partners to strengthen feminist movement.



UN Women launched the Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) in 2009 to support and advance women's economic and political rights at local, national and regional levels through grant making to government agencies and civil society organizations. FGE grants aim to support initiatives that fast-track international human rights commitments to gender equality articulated in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), the UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

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About the Document

This note identifies central lessons on how to catalyze gender perspectives in existing development programs. It also compiles good practices to sustain and extend gender equality approaches to livelihood and development that may be instructive for development practitioners. These lessons were identified by independent researchers Shikha Silliman Bhattacharjee, Esq. and Dr. Jael Silliman based upon extensive field-based research conducted across GEP sites between August 2014 and January 2015.

Acknowledgements

This report was written by Shikha Silliman Bhattacharjee, Esq. and Dr. Jael Silliman, consultants for PRADAN between June 2014 and March 2015. It has been reviewed by Madhu Khetan, PRADAN Programme Coordinator in charge of Madhya Pradesh and GEP Project Anchor; Anirban Ghose, PRADAN Programme Director in charge of Operations; Nandini Narula, GEP coordinator; and Suneeta Dhar, Director of Jagori.

The research for this report was conducted between July 2014 and January 2015 by a team of four independent researchers, Adil Ali, Shikha Silliman Bhattacharjee, Jui Gupta and Jael Silliman. Special thanks to Anubha Singh, Senior Project Associate with Jagori for the insights and materials she provided to make this report possible.

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Introducing the Gender Equality Program (GEP)



Our goal was to “make a dent in social and cultural gender discrimination” - to engage on fundamental issues of injustice, not just their symptoms.

~PRADAN Programme Director, October 2014

In July 2010, the UN Fund for Gender Equality awarded an implementation grant for “Facilitating Women in Four Endemic Poverty States of India to Access, Actualize and Sustain Provisions of Women Empowerment.” With this support, PRADAN and Jagori, two leading national civil society organizations in their respective fields of rural development and deepening feminist consciousness through leadership development and training, initiated the Gender Equality Program (GEP).

Objectives

The GEP outlined four target outcomes: increasing women's awareness and participation in local self-governance structures and processes (Panchayati Raj Institutions); enabling Self Help Groups (SHGs) to address issues of gender based inequality within the home and outside; enhancing women's sense of equality as economic actors in the household; and enhancing responsiveness of duty bearers and Panchayati Raj Institutions to issues raised by the community. These objectives required PRADAN and Jagori to catalyze changes in the ways in which rural women engaged in decision making in their homes, communities and local governance structures.

These goals aimed to fast-track implementation of India's domestic and international human rights commitments to gender equality, including those articulated in India's National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001; the 11th Five Year Plan of the Government of India, Beijing Platform for Action (BPA); and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Welding PRADAN expertise on rural livelihood development and building women's institutions with Jagori skills in feminist leadership development, training and identifying and responding to gender-based violence, the GEP set a groundbreaking goal: over a period of four years, PRADAN professionals would work with 75,000 rural women from endemic poverty areas to raise their voices, challenge gender-based violence and access their social, political and economic rights. Over 2/3 of these women would be from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and all women would come from families that earned below two dollars a day. The GEP would unfold in some of India's most backward districts, within PRADAN sites in the four states of Jharkand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal.

Impact

The GEP has been extremely successful. According to an end line survey of more than 1500 Self Help Group member households engaged in the GEP conducted by the Institute for Human Development in 2015, 69% of the women surveyed recognized themselves as equal actors in contributing to the

economic well being of the family and 75% of women surveyed agreed that girls and boys should be given equal employment opportunities outside the home.

The end line survey also found that the GEP was successful in enhancing knowledge of local governance structures and political engagement: 97% of women surveyed reporting voting in local elections, 50% of women respondents attended gram sabha meetings and of those who attended, 31% raised issues in these meetings. Women also reported enhanced knowledge of government schemes and an ability to access these schemes, with almost 99% reporting knowledge of the Public Distribution System (PDS) and 40% of respondents reported benefiting from social security schemes.

Registering social empowerment, women also reported increased mobility with 62% of respondents indicating that they do not take permission before leaving their homes and villages to go to work, market, their parental home or to engage in civic or democratic processes. Freedom of movement and freedom to study, though improving incrementally, has also been accompanied by increases in age at marriage along with girls having an increasing say in decisions relating to their marriage.

GEP enabled PRADAN to transform its development interventions to make women, who were their primary constituency, to become the principal actors in determining the direction of development, strengthening their individual and collective organizing efforts to address their key concerns and needs.



Realizing & Implementing Women-Centered Development Approaches

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Meeting the needs of rural women

Since 1983, PRADAN has worked with marginalized communities in districts across India to help people overcome poverty through sustainable livelihood generation. While PRADAN worked closely with poor rural women for most of its history, their work was in many places

circumscribed by a focus on livelihood that measured program achievement by increase in household income. However, since PRADAN encourages teams to base their interventions on local realities, for some teams, perspectives that foregrounded gender equality and women's rights were integral to the team culture.

PRADAN teams selected for the initial phase of the GEP program were primarily those teams that

were already taking a gender equality approach in their work with rural women. They expressed interest in piloting new ways to make women's needs and issues central to PRADAN's rural development work. The UN Fund for Gender Equality grant presented an opportunity for sustained collaboration with Jagori to systematically build upon existing gender equality work within PRADAN with dedicated resources to support this effort. Accordingly, the GEP represents an important phase in the on-going process within PRADAN of evolving strategies to address the needs of rural women by strengthening their capacity to envision and act on their own behalf.

The PRADAN-Jagori partnership

PRADAN is a large rural development organization working with over 270,000 families in more than 5,000 villages. Jagori is a comparatively small feminist organization dedicated to feminist research and knowledge building that supports women's leadership and agency through one-on-one guided reflection, dialogue, and training. Together they set out to support rural women to develop a heightened sense of identity, personhood and self worth that could transform their lives and communities.

The GEP partnership required PRADAN and Jagori to develop a common understanding of patriarchy capable of catalyzing grassroots change among rural women and their collectives. Together, they aimed to unleash women's leadership potential, enhance awareness and ability to access their rights, increase political participation and develop women's role as economic actors and decision-makers within their households and in the community.

Strategic planning

To launch the GEP, Jagori undertook an intensive six-month assessment of gender needs with PRADAN team members and at the PRADAN field sites. The initial Jagori assessment highlighted a need to deepen understanding of how patriarchy undermines women's agency; approach women's needs as distinct from the needs of their families; expand concepts of income generation to encompass building women's control over resources and

identities as farmers, producers and workers; and address the needs of single and other particularly vulnerable women.

Capacity building

PRADAN and Jagori had to find ways to systematically build conceptual clarity on gender and patriarchy among PRADAN professionals and rural women. Jagori worked intensively with PRADAN professionals engaged in the GEP at the individual, team and institutional levels; and within the communities where PRADAN works through training and ongoing support. This process required PRADAN teams and rural women to confront structural gender-based discrimination in their lives and work. Learning to see through gender sensitive lenses had a profound impact on PRADAN professionals, leading to shifts in relationships with their partners, families and team members and the communities where they worked.

Through training and ongoing support, the GEP also worked with rural women to transform gender relations as an integral element of poverty reduction and supporting sustainable livelihoods. The GEP also sought to enhance the capacity of 300 women's collectives at village and sub-block levels—some of which had been built with the support of PRADAN teams over the course of more than twenty years—to address inequality, discrimination and violence within and outside their homes.



Deepening Gender Equality Perspectives

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The GEP catalyzed a partnership between a highly skilled group of feminist trainers and front line development workers with decades of experience working with a broad base of women on livelihoods and to develop strong women's collectives. At its core, this required skilled development professionals to shift their focus from family livelihood enhancement as the primary barometer of change to consider women as independent agents of change capable of transforming patriarchal

structures, claiming gender equality while increasing family livelihoods and claiming rights and entitlements.

Employing training materials developed by expert trainers designed for PRADAN teams in 8 sites in 4 states, Jagori trainers and resource people systematically engaged PRADAN professionals—a majority of whom are men from technical backgrounds—to consider positions of power and

build a nuanced perspective on gender to apply in their development practice. They also worked with rural women's collectives, some mature and others just starting out, to build feminist consciousness, develop strategies to address discrimination and violence in their communities and access their rights.

Jagori training was site specific and ongoing. Based on an initial assessment by Jagori across GEP sites, the program aimed to deepen understanding of how patriarchy undermines women's agency; approach women's needs as distinct from the needs of their families; expand concepts of income generation to encompass building women's control over resources; and address the needs of single and other particularly vulnerable women. Jagori resource people worked with each team in their strategic planning efforts to refine, design and implement gender equality approaches in their rights-based rural livelihood and development programs.

This process required a significant investment among PRADAN professionals and the rural women they work with in deepening their understanding of how gender-based discrimination structures the society where they live and work and impedes both economic and social advancements. The variation in individual responses to trainings and trainers testifies to the deeply personal nature of the process of interrogating gender and patriarchy. The GEP was experienced differently by each PRADAN professional who took part in this effort.

GEP also required Jagori trainers to develop new training materials and methodologies and provide anchoring and hand holding support to each PRADAN team in eight remote sites. These highly skilled technical resource people challenged PRADAN professionals and local women leaders at each site to probe gender discrimination, build a common vision of gender equality and design and implement gender equality approaches in their rights-based rural livelihood and development programs.

A key PRADAN strategy has been to train CSPs, women from the community who played a leadership role, to provide community support. Traditionally CSPs focused on agriculture and other technical areas. The GEP, however, trained CSPs to be key actors in building perspectives on gender, patriarchy, rights and entitlements by training SHGs in their local areas on these issues. Jagori

resource people worked directly with CSPs to build understanding and training capacity. PRADAN team members who were deeply familiar with the cultural context in each location worked alongside Jagori trainers who modeled how feminist training is practiced.

Training for rural women under the GEP followed a cascade model. Rural women leaders trained as Community Support Providers (CSPs) were the key agents of change in transforming women's Self Help Groups (SHGs) from resource mobilizing and capital aggregating institutions to community solidarity formations working towards women's empowerment and citizens rights. Through this process, PRADAN teams and Jagori worked to build a common vision of gender equality among 75,000 rural women. Besides the CSPs, the members of the Federations nurtured by PRADAN teams for decades played a key role in the GEP. In addition to engaging with the ongoing Federation activities, these women leaders served as role models—a source of support and strength for other women as they came to know and demand their rights and entitlements.

The process of engendering development approaches was not linear, neat, static or finite. PRADAN professionals and rural women interviewed for this study reported that learning to see through lenses that recognize gender-based violence and inequality is transforming their perspectives—not only on their work, but also on themselves, their relationships, their families, communities and the social and cultural fabric of contemporary India. Many PRADAN professionals described the transformative impact of recognizing previously unexamined structures of privilege. It not only wrought profound change in their personal lives, but changed the way in which they approached their work. This process of understanding, while catalyzed as part of a collective process, unfolded distinctly for each individual. PRADAN professionals and rural women consistently described moments of joy and achievement, but also feelings of self-doubt, pain and frustration as they worked to understand gender-based violence and discrimination and confront these forces head on.

This work at the field level was made possible by PRADAN's commitment at the institutional level to lead and support the GEP process. This required putting in place a Core Committee from PRADAN to lead the process and serve as an intermediary

body between PRADAN field teams and Jagori leadership. It required PRADAN as an institution to reconsider longstanding development practices in light of the new dimensions of work charted in the GEP process.

The GEP process—a collection of distinct yet linked personal and professional transformations at the field level—has informed shifts in PRADAN’s institutional mission and vision, organizational culture, program priorities and day-to-day policies and practices. It has brought PRADAN in touch with new development partners and new donors. As a result, in a continued partnership with Jagori, PRADAN is working to extend gender equality approaches across all sites. Building on the foundation laid in the eight GEP sites—including GEP training materials, approaches, and rich lessons from the field—PRADAN is devoting significant financial and human resources for this next phase of work. Consistent with PRADAN’s commitment to building programs that are responsive to the needs of particular communities, the extension of gender equality approaches across PRADAN sites is expected to evolve on parallel tracks and at different paces in order to accommodate the vision of various PRADAN teams.



4

Transforming Development Practice

The GEP models how feminist perspective building within a well established development organization can mobilize rural women to address their concerns in a holistic manner, going beyond changing the material status of the family to transforming the status of women. During this four year program, PRADAN professionals and Jagori resource people worked side by side with rural women to unleash women's leadership potential, enhance awareness and ability to access their rights, increase

political participation and develop women's role as economic actors and decision-makers within their households and in the community.

Working with rural women's federations and organizations at very varied stages of maturity and across contexts and geographies, PRADAN teams and Jagori trainers had an opportunity to pilot and refine various approaches. Designed across four states and eight districts, each with unique contexts,

the GEP unfolded distinctly and at a pace informed by the situation in each location. To address the particular needs of each site on an ongoing basis, Jagori created a pool of experts capable of providing targeted, site-specific guidance to complement foundational orientation workshops on gender and patriarchy. PRADAN and Jagori also activated a cyclical process of needs assessment, site-specific training and ongoing mentoring and evaluation to provide intensive training and support to a network of PRADAN professionals and grassroots women leaders.

The GEP sought to prepare women's leadership bodies, SHGs and collectives, to move beyond functioning as savings and credit institutions and emerge with the confidence and skills to identify and address gender based discrimination and violence. Across the GEP sites, Federations have met this challenge, taking on issues as diverse as alcoholism, dowry related violence, early marriage, food scarcity, gender bias in health and education, trafficking and anti-women cultural practices such as witch-hunting.

The GEP aimed to work with women to enhance their sense of equality as economic actors and decision-makers within their households. For instance, teams worked to enhance women's sense of equality as economic actors by encouraging women to identify as farmers rather than as labourers on family fields. Prior to this innovation, PRADAN tended to engage men on agricultural methods and other technical livelihood skills due to men's receptivity to participating in training programs. Through the GEP process, however, teams came to recognize that failing to actively include women in these skill and capacity building initiatives reduced their chance of becoming informed economic decision-makers, undermined the roles women play as farmers and cut women off from markets. GEP teams thus made concerted efforts to ensure that women were trained in farming techniques and saw themselves as both farmers and economic actors. Recognizing that women perform some of the most labor intensive farming work, teams also introduced tools to minimize drudgery.

While these initiatives made inroads into transforming women's identities as producers, economic actors and decision makers, it did not, in and of itself, give women control of productive assets. The teams thus employed a variety of strategies to recognize women's identity

as productive members of their households. Women took part in Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) Planning, identified planned assets in women's names and submitted Below Poverty Line (BPL) lists identifying women as heads of households. Women have also opened bank accounts in their names at many GEP sites. Women were encouraged to apply for agricultural subsidies in their names even though land was held in the names of male family members, to claim the forest land they were cultivating, and to gain access to information on available schemes to develop waste land.

The GEP also sought to support women to effectively engage and participate in governance — a new area of work for PRADAN. In particular, PRADAN teams sought to equip women with information about panchayat processes and procedures; and increase claim-making ability under various government schemes. Teams worked with rural women to access the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Right to Education (RTE), Public Distribution System (PDS) and access to pensions.

Approaches included training resource people to conduct systematic outreach at the grassroots level; discussions during group, cluster and federation meetings; and street plays and information dissemination during Adhiveshans and Mahadiveshans. As an integral part of this mission, PRADAN teams also sought to involve women in local decision making processes and increase engagement between women's collectives and Panchayati Raj representatives and other duty bearers. As a result of these initiatives, women's collectives secured work on farm ponds through the MGNREGS and work as MGNREGA worksite mates. They also demanded better functioning Public Distribution Systems (PDS) and opening of new Aanganwadi and Public Health Centers (PHCs). Women reported that their standing within their households and communities was enhanced when they demonstrated they had the capacity to influence duty bearers and access rights and entitlements.

Addressing and ending all forms of violence against women was not a stated objective of the GEP, but nearly all PRADAN GEP sites were drawn to work in this area. The strength and engagement of women's SHGs and Federations with VAW has a

profound impact on women’s ability to effectively confront violence in their homes and communities. With support from PRADAN, SHGs and Federations from GEP program sites intervened in cases of violence to ensure that charges were filed. Teams also addressed inadequate police responses to cases of violence against women by organizing meetings with local police. GEP teams have also reached out to legal organizations to develop the capacity of PRADAN professionals and women leaders to effectively handle violence against women cases. Teams with greater experience in addressing violence against women have established formal processes to address violence through Nari Adalats or women’s courts.

At its core, the PRADAN teams were engaged in a process of leadership transition that has challenged PRADAN professionals to transform their roles in the communities where they work. Vision-building meetings, strengthening governing boards and conducting leadership training to build second and third-line leadership were used to strengthen women’s collectives. Equipped with awareness on gender, patriarchy, rights and entitlements, in some areas women leaders began to bring their understanding and perspectives to the Federations. A profound transition in leadership, where PRADAN teams will step back and support women leaders to become the principle force in identifying issues and initiating action to transform their lives and communities, is underway. As this process unfolds, PRADAN will need to continue to understand what input and support federations will need from PRADAN in order to emerge as completely self-standing institutions.

The learning and strategies that emerged from the GEP have significant implications for feminist action in contemporary rural India. Deep investments (both financial and human resource based) in learning, material development and training are essential to taking women-centered interventions to scale. The PRADAN experience presents a snapshot of the pressing issues that women in some of the most backward regions of India confront and highlights interventions aimed at addressing these challenges.

The GEP also underlines the role that committed men can play in supporting rural women in holistic development processes. PRADAN’s has an outstanding record of developing gender equality perspectives among professionals and teams. While

men and women across the organization are leaders in challenging discrimination and injustice—on gender, caste, class and other lines—PRADAN’s work on masculinities is at a nascent stage. Many professionals in PRADAN are keen to start work on masculinities-initiatives with men to address issues of gender justice. PRADAN professionals from GEP sites, a majority of whom are men with skills and commitment to addressing issues of gender justice, have the capacity to make critical contributions to this burgeoning field.

The PRADAN experience, where a cadre of highly skilled development professionals and feminists committed themselves to advancing gender equality, is instructive for organizations, donors and other stakeholders seeking to understand the resources needed to bring feminist interventions to scale, transform development practice and support vulnerable women to be agents of change in their families and communities. They also point to the role that men can play in the struggle to advance gender justice.

While there is much to learn from PRADAN teams engaging women as citizens and integrating gender perspectives and approaches in rural development work, there is no blueprint to take this work forward. In fact, perhaps the most significant lesson from the GEP is that transforming development practices requires the institutional flexibility to allow community engagement and empowerment processes to unfold at different paces simultaneously, tailored to the site-specific needs of rural women.



Key Learnings for Development Practitioners

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The GEP has many key lessons for development practitioners seeking to build leadership among rural women, challenge patriarchy, engage men in gender justice efforts and improve rural development outcomes.

Key learning from the GEP

- Introducing and implementing gender sensitive development practice requires a strong commitment by a development organization to embrace organizational transformation. This commitment must be manifest at the leadership and management level and requires a partner with significant expertise on gender equality to work with the development organization

through the entire process of capacity building and program development.

- The GEP demonstrated that partnership with a feminist organization capable of contributing highly skilled committed trainers on gender equality approaches can be a successful strategy for transforming development practice. Such partnerships are mutually beneficial, facilitating cross learning. To be successful, these partnerships require openness to new perspectives and alternatives strategies for understanding development.
- Engaging partners with diverse expertise and experience, while extremely productive and in this case, transformative, is a challenge. It requires sustained commitment and management for a real partnership to emerge. Within PRADAN, the GEP was supported through the initiation of a six-member Core Group—a consultative group and a platform for mobilizing knowledge and ideas relating to gender equality within PRADAN. The Core Group served as a bridge between Jagori and the GEP teams. They worked with Jagori resource people to develop modules that met the needs of PRADAN teams and assigned an internal PRADAN anchor to guide and support each team.
- Activating gender equality approaches in more traditional development practice requires intensive financial, time and personnel investment. The knowledge and perspective building required to initiate gender equality approaches takes time. Moreover, to succeed, these approaches must reach all levels of the organization—including its mission, management, programmes, organizational culture and monitoring and evaluation structures. It is important to institute ongoing feedback structures, including regular on site reviews, to track the impact of training and capacity building across the organization.
- There is no blue-print for engendering development practice. Every intervention is particular to the site, to the understanding of the professional implementing the initiative and the organizational strength and capacity of rural women to determine the direction in which they seek to enhance their status and livelihoods
- Gender equality approaches to development require investment in innovation so that programmes can be locally tailored and directed by rural women leaders. The GEP experience has shown that a three to five year investment window is integral to building programmes that foreground women’s leadership and promote gender equality.
- Quantitative measures are often inadequate to grasp the impact of gender equality approaches to development practice. First, initiating gender equality approaches requires personal and professional transformation among development professionals. PRADAN professionals engaged in the GEP described how building an understanding of gender inequality and patriarchy was at times profoundly unsettling. It requires them to challenge their own attitudes and interrogate their social context. While challenging, this process of personal transformation was fundamental to activating gender equality approaches in PRADAN sites. These stories of transformation are often important measures of change, which cannot be captured, by quantitative measures
- Development organizations should invest time and set aside resources to develop evaluation tools that capture the personal and professional transformation that is essential to meet project goals. These measures should be designed to capture shifts in culture, staffing, program and project conceptualization and delivery, and changes in monitoring and evaluation.
- Ongoing mentorship from team leaders and peers, exposure visits to other organizations working on gender issues, and independent research and reading are all integral, informal components of transforming development practices. PRADAN professionals underlined the profound growth that took place while reflecting upon and grappling with ideas from trainings and workshops with their team members.
- PRADAN teams that were able to foster a culture committed to gender equality approaches were better able to integrate gender equality approaches in all facets of their work. Many PRADAN professionals spoke about the importance of analyzing gender-based practices with their teammates. Others spoke about taking conscious, proactive steps to ensure that gender dynamics within the team did not limit the voices of women in the teams.
- Use of personal narratives and games can be particularly useful in helping rural women to realize that they are part of a patriarchal social structure. Working alongside Jagori resource people, PRADAN professionals used a range of

creative approaches including raising questions, games, songs and theatre performances to build awareness and expose gender based discrimination.

- For rural women engaged in the GEP, understanding patriarchy and gender discrimination is a process. Many rural women engaged in the GEP process described going through the process of accepting how gender-based discrimination impacts their lives, overcoming initial resistance and then building the confidence of raising these issues at home with their families. Despite reporting initial hesitation in challenging themselves, women reported finding new ways to effect change within themselves, their families and their communities.
- Challenging deeply entrenched gender norms—especially those that authorize violence against women—has the potential to trigger backlash against women in the community as well as development professionals. Development organizations should establish a clear safety planning procedures following instances of backlash. Development professionals should also work with women to establish clear, context-specific safety plans prior to initiating interventions with the potential to trigger backlash.
- Men from technical backgrounds engaged in rural development practice, if engaged and mentored in building gender equality approaches can be powerful agents of change.
- Partnerships between development and gender-focused organizations have the potential to open up new and unanticipated networks and lines of work. GEP collaborations included local, state, national and even international partners, including Action Aid, Anandi, Center for Social Justice, Human Rights Law Network (HRLN), Multiple Action Resource Group (MARG), the National Alliance of Women's Organizations (NAWO) and One Billion Rising. Many of the partners identified by Jagori resource people for training exchanges were new actors to PRADAN. PRADAN teams also identified partners within their states. PRADAN teams and Jagori trainers also arranged exposure visits for rural women. For example, 60 rural women leaders from PRADAN GEP sites visited Anandi to see how other women's collectives operate. PRADAN professionals expressed how engagement with a wide range of partners opened up fresh lines of

thinking and ongoing future collaboration.

- The GEP has also sparked engagement among PRADAN professionals on issues of masculinities.
- Activating gender equality approaches in rural development work may present opportunities for development organizations to engage new funding partners and networks.

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