

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Rural & Urban Development Project
(A Field Action Project of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Social Work, Dhule)

ANNUAL REPORT

July 2021 - June 2022

Overview

“We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.” *Mother Teresa*

During the last year, we tried to contribute our bit and tried to make a difference in the lives of communities and individuals. The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it unprecedented crises on social, economic, and humanitarian levels. We focused on awareness generation and advocacy programmes with our target communities and local government bodies, advocating for the access and availability of services to the communities and children. It is heartening to note that even in the face of daunting effects of COVID-19, the project stood firmly and delivered its humanitarian and developmental imperative

During, 2021-22, our primary focus has been on enabling and supporting children and their families to take effective steps to overcome the unprecedented humanitarian crises posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our response has been centered on ensuring vulnerable families have access to food and nutrition promoting awareness on COVID appropriate behaviour and vaccination and assisting children in coping with educational gaps. Special attention was paid to the elderly.

Many people living in poverty and vulnerable situations are unaware of their rights and entitlements that are provided for their benefit by the government programmes and schemes. Organisations like ours are consistently working with key stakeholders to build this awareness and bridge the gaps.

We are indeed grateful to our Management- Prof. Usha Wagh, President of Samata Shikshan Sanstha and the Principal and Honorary Director of the Project Dr. Jalindar Adsule, who have dedicated their lives for working with the deprived and marginalized. Dr. Adsule has guided the project, mentored the team and helped strategize the interventions. We would also like to thank our donors and partners for their support.

This report summarizes key interventions and accomplishments of the project in the period July 2020 – June 2021.

Introduction

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Social work was started in the year 1995 at Morane Nakane) in the Dhule Taluka and District, which is one of the most backward and under-developed districts of Maharashtra. This College was established by the Samata Shikshan Sanstha, Pune. It is an outcome of a strong social commitment towards the marginalized sections of society. This is the only social work college in Dhule district. Since its inception, the College has been striving hard to work towards its mission that is to impart quality social work education and training to the students for equipping them with the required skills and abilities to accept the social challenges and professional social work tasks in society. Our College is affiliated to North Maharashtra University, Jalgoan.

The College initiated a project in 2017 firstly to help the rural tribal poor to procure basic amenities and empower them deal with their problems.

The objectives of the project are as follows:

1. To empower the people for their educational, health and livelihood rights
2. To conduct various training programs to develop leadership among youth, women and children
3. To conduct research studies on problems related to rural and tribal population and publish literature related to it
4. To network with organizations working on similar issues to strengthen and consolidate various initiatives

The Project has an Honorary Project Director & Project Coordinator and has appointed two part – time staff members. The College had placed 8 students for field work in the Project. The following is a summary of the work carried out by this team.

In this period, the project mainly worked in Kundane and Morane villages. In these villages, the focus was on the tribal and Dalit communities.

Community Interventions

Kundane Village:

Kundane village is located in Dhule district and Dhule taluka. It is just 10 km away from Dhule city. This village is close to Nagpur Surat Highway. The village Panchayat came into existence in 1959. This village is located on the bank of a small river – Panjra which is dry most of the time.

The total population of the village is 3100, of which 1900 are males and 1200 are females. The children below age of 06 are 533. There are 511 houses in the village, of which 261 families are below poverty line. The literacy rate of the village is 68.13%, the male literacy rate being 75% and female literacy rate being 60%.

❖ Free Health Check-up and Medical Camp

The Health Camp conducted by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Rural Development Project is an initiative to integrate awareness of community health with curative health, including on COVID 19. Health is influenced by factors such as community attitudes, the community environment (physical, social, political, and economic), and history. Health is more than physical well-being, or the mere absence of disease, illness, or injury. It is a range of factors – economic, social, political, ecological, and physical – that add up to healthy, high-quality lives for individuals and communities.

Rural community fails on the first premise of health - the absence of disease. The community needs support to understand and imbibe the advanced tenets of wellbeing. As a part of our health camp, we brought together all stakeholders who have concern over improving community health.

The nearest Primary Health centre is 10 kms away and the District Hospital in Dhule is 25 kms away from the Kundane Village. Additionally, lack of any Government dispensary deprives people from accessing even the minimum healthcare requirements.

The Camp was held at Kundane Zilla Parishad Primary School and the The health check – up was conducted by a team of 23 doctors and para – medical staff from Annasaheb Chudaman Patil Memorial (ACPM) Medical College, Jawahar Medical Foundation. Free Tuberculosis check – up was conducted by the State Health Department

Pre-operational Activities

A series of following activities was carried out before conducting the health camp:

Community Mobilization: Door to door campaigning was carried out to make the community aware about the date and timings of the camp.

Networking: To ensure community support and build rapport a series of meetings were done with the Police Patil and local authorities, Sarpanch, Zilla Parishad School and Gram Panchayat representatives. They too made announcements from their public announcement systems to inform the community about the Health Camp.

Local Volunteers: For the smooth functioning of the health camp 2 peoples were selected from Kundane to strengthen the mobilization and manage the crowd.

The Camp

The Director of the Project and Principal of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Social Work, Dr. Jalindar Adsule inaugurated the free health check-up camp. In his introduction, Dr. Adsule said that the camp was organized to enable the citizens of Kundane village to lead a healthy and strong life and to create awareness among the people about health. The thrust was on providing medical care to the vulnerable communities. He further said that health should be viewed holistically, where not just the curative aspect but preventive and promotive aspects were equally important.

The health check up programme started at around 10:30 at health camp site in Kundane wherein specialist doctors were made available from medicine, skin, gynecology, dental and eye to the villagers. Free medicines were dispensed. The camp benefited 120 people from the village. Dr. Jalindar Adsule (Project Director), Pravin Khare (Jawahar Medical Foundation, Public Relations Officer), Dadaji More (Sarpanch), Aaba Kamble (Former Sarpanch), Avinash Shelar (Social Worker), Zilla Parishad Primary School Headmistress Smt. Chaudhary Madam was present. Also the participation of senior citizens of the village was remarkable. The camp benefited 120 people from the village.



❖ Work on Public Distribution System

Data obtained through the survey revealed that several Tribal families of Vishwas Nagar, Kundane did not possess a ration card despite staying there for three generations. As they did not have ration cards, they were deprived of the benefits of food grains extended by the government through the PDS.

Mr. Vivek Pandit of Vidhayak Sansad, Palghar had filed a petition in the High Court on Tribals not having Ration Cards and the High Court had issued an order that all the Tribals not having ration cards should be issued temporary ration cards under the Antodaya Scheme. The Project obtained this order so that the benefit could be extended to the families in Vishwas Nagar

We then partnered with Rationing Kruti Samiti, Mumbai and we jointly approached the Collector and the rationing authorities and are pressurized the Local Administration to distribute rations to these families who are extremely poor but do not possess ration cards. With aq lot of effort and working for three months, the Project was successful in obtaining Ration Cards for 14 families. On 11th March 2022, the Ration card were distributed at a program held at Kalyan Bhavan, Dhule . Shri. Dr. Avinash Patil, Executive President ANIS Maharashtra was the chief guest on this occasion, and the programme was presided over by Dr. Jalindar Adsule, Principal of the College and Director of the Project. Project Coordinator Prof. Rachna Adsule, Mrs. Sunita Patil and Shri Ganesh Ufade organized the event. The event was attended by various NGOs from Dhule, college professors and students.



❖ Non- formal Education Class

The children in the Tribal settlement of Kundane had totally lost touch with education as the schools were shut for more than one year due to the pandemic. The children were no longer in the habit of attending school and studying regularly. Hence the Project started non-formal education class in July 2021 for the children firstly to develop an interest in learning and secondly to help bridge the gaps due to their long break in education. There are 18 members in the group between the age group of 07 – 14 years.

The class is conducted every Saturday for three hours where various concepts are taught through games and activities and personal difficulties related to academics of the group members are addressed. Various activities like picnics, various competitions and cultural activities. The students were also provided with educational materials, uniforms and warm clothes



Morane

Morane village is situated 5 km away from sub-district headquarter Dhule (tehsildar office) and 5km away from district headquarter Dhule. As per 2009 stats, Morane village was also a Gram Panchayat. But now this village has been converted to urban and comes under the jurisdiction of Dhule Municipal Corporation.

The total geographical area of Morane is 859 hectares. Morane has a total population of 7,472, out of which male population is 4,033 while female population is 3,439. Literacy rate of Morane is 72.60% out of which 77.58% males and 66.76% females are literate. There are about 1,470 houses in Morane. As per the 2011 census, most of the village population is from Schedule Tribe (ST). Schedule Tribe (ST) constitutes 39.37 % while Schedule Caste (SC) were 4.17 % of total population in Morane.

Voter Awareness and Registration Campaign

The vote is precious. It is the most powerful non-violent tool we have in a democratic society, and we must use it. While the right to vote is widely recognized as a fundamental human right, this right is not fully exercised by millions of individuals around the world. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Rural & Urban Development project organized a Voter Awareness and Registration Campaign from 19th September, 2021 to 30th 2021.

The Campaign began on 19th September, 2021 wherein 11 youth volunteers and staff participated. It began with orientation of the volunteers and staff about the issue by Dr. Jalindar Adsule, the Director of the Project. The volunteers educated people about the importance of voting through a Street play. Street plays were performed on voter awareness at 6 places in Morane.

With the help of this event, we were able to create awareness and explain why voting is important for democracy and why every youth should register himself/herself as a voter. The eligibility for registering as a voter, the process of registration and the documents required was explained in detail.

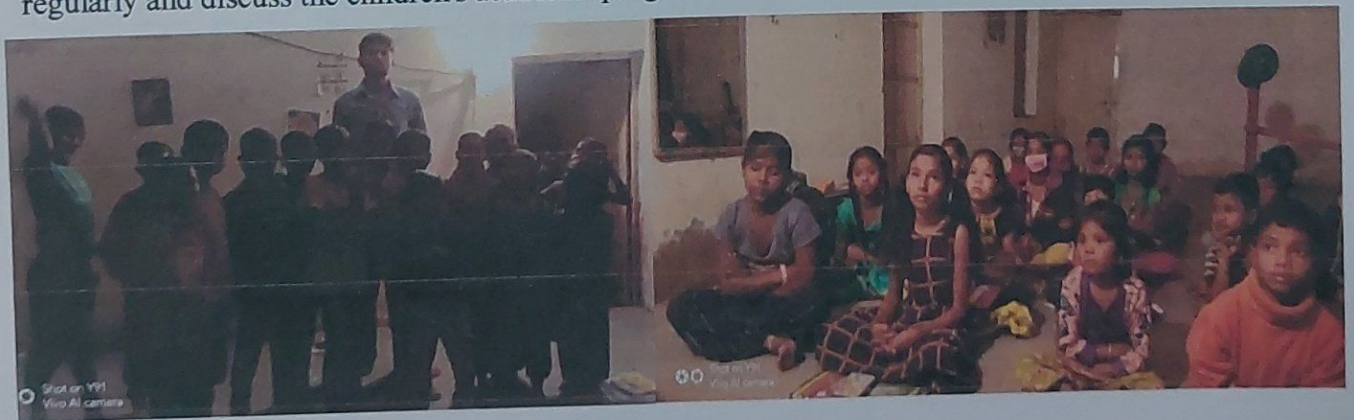
Through the Campaign the Project was successful in creating public awareness on Voter Registration and in awakening the youth above 18 years about their voting rights. The Project registered 224 eligible voters online and was able to complete 100% voter registration in Morane area.



Children's Group

As the children's school was closed, the children from the tribal area were playing in and out of the slums, not studying at home; the Project formed a group of these children ranging from Class VI to Class X. Various sessions were conducted with this group comprising of 29 boys and girls from 1st to 15th January, 2022. Classes were held at the local Samaj Mandir where the children were taught Marathi reading, English reading and various educational games were conducted.

Children who did not like going to school were counselled. Now all these children go to Zilla Parishad and Ashram schools. Their academic progress has improved. We meet their parents regularly and discuss the children's academic progress.



The project for the elderly was initiated in November 2019 with the support of Jeevan Anand Organization, Mumbai. This project works in Kundane and Morane villages with people who are 60 years of age or above.

This Project focuses on creating health awareness and ensuring access to health care for the elderly. The Project collaborated with Sharda Netraya for eye care and Annasaheb Chudaman Patil Memorial (ACPM) Dental & Medical College, Jawahar Medical Foundation for dental care and general health care. The facilities at these hospitals are provided free of cost to the members of Aadhar Project. It further works on Awareness and implementation of government schemes for the elderly like Senior Citizens' Card and Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana. Most importantly, it provides a platform for recreational activities and mental support, to the elderly.

Currently, there are two groups of Elderly in Kundane and one in Morane, each group consisting of around 15 members.

Interventions

❖ Anand Mela

A full day, Anand Mela was organized in Vishwas Nagar of Kundane village for the elderly on 09th October 2021. The objective of the programme was to provide a platform to the elderly members of the group to share about their lives and to provide an opportunity for social and recreational activities to the members. A total of 21 elderly people participated in this gathering.

Principal of the college and Project Director Dr. Jalindar Adsule presided over the programme. Sandeep Parab (CEO) and Kisan Chaure (staff) both from Jeevan Anand Sanstha, Mumbai were present on the occasion of the program. Prof. Rachna Adsule, Project Coordinator and Project Officers – Ms. Sunita Patil and Ganesh Ufade organized and facilitated the event.

The dignitaries played various recreational games with the elderly. Initially they were hesitant but later they opened up and expressed that they had a lot of fun. The guests also facilitated discussions with group and many of the elderly members shared about their lives. Everyone had lunch together and blankets were distributed to the group.

All of them enjoyed themselves and expressed that they had never had such an opportunity to spend a day for themselves. The happiness on the faces of the elderly was indeed memorable.



❖ Corona Vaccination Campaign

It was observed that several people in Vishwas Nagar had not taken the Covid vaccination. There was a lot of fear and apprehension in their minds about the vaccine. The project initiated a one week awareness campaign to make the community aware of the importance of the vaccine from 10th – 15th October 2021. Door to door visits, corner meetings and meetings of elderly group were held.

This culminated in a Vaccination Drive on 16th October 2021. The Project had contacted the Primary Health Center in Kheda, under which Vishwas Nagar falls and organized vaccination administration in the village. 60 people got themselves vaccinated, of which 10 were members of the Elderly Group.



❖ Trip to Swaminarayan Temple

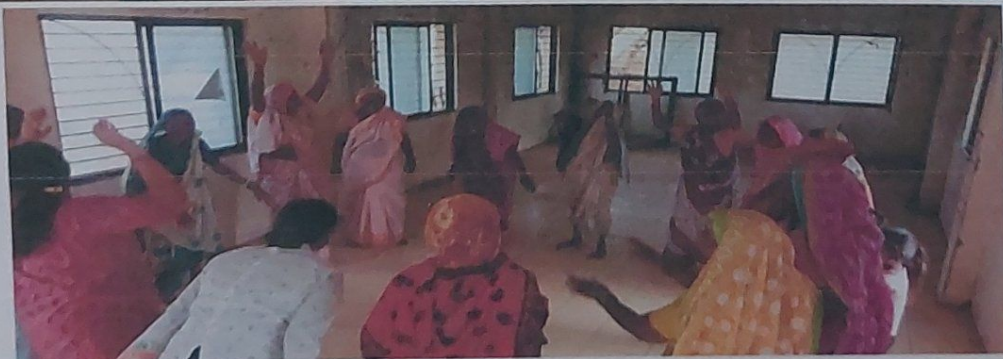
The group in Vishwas Nagar expressed that they had never visited Dhule city and would like to visit the Swaminarayan Temple in the city which is very famous. A visit to the Temple was organized for the group on 10th December, 2021. Travel arrangements were made by the staff. The group was

thrilled to see the beautifully lit temple and enjoyed spending some time in the garden in the Temple as well. The Project provided snacks to them. The group expressed that they were able to go out of the village and witness a beautiful place due to the Project.



❖ **Chai- Masti**

The Project realized that the elderly needed some platform to come together, relax and spend some time for themselves. Keeping this in mind, the Chai Masti programme is organized every month with all the three groups, both in Kundane and Morane. Here all of the members come together, have tea and some snacks (of their liking) are organized by the Project and just interact with others.



for the senior to keep their minds sharp, their bodies strong and their spirits high such as spending time outdoors, playing games with family and friends, or working on a hobby, interesting activities can benefit the overall health of seniors.

❖ **Distribution of warm clothes**

The winters in Dhule are very harsh with temperatures going up to 07 degree Celsius. In order to protect the elderly from cold blankets were distributed to all 14 members of Morane group. The program was organized on 26/02/2022.



❖ **Cataract surgeries**

The Project in collaboration with Sharda Netralaya was successful in getting cataract surgeries of four group members done. All the pre – tests required for the surgery as well as the surgery was done free of cost. A staff member accompanied each of them for all the visits and for the surgery to the Hospital.



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As a part of this, resource persons were invited on few occasions. On 24/03/2022, Dr. Prashant Athawale from Annasaheb Chudaman Patil Memorial Medical College, Dhule was invited to speak on "Health Problems and Treatment of Elderly"

Dr. Athawale discussed many issues related to health. The elderly were asked questions about their daily routine and hygiene. He informed about wearing clean clothes, eating fresh food, government schemes related to health. He also gave information about Mahatma Phule Jan Arogya Yojana and explained the benefits of the scheme. Dr. Athawale also examined the elderly's eyes, nose, throat, hands and feet. The group from Morane participated in the program.



25/05/22 Ms. Roshni Saindane (Counselor, Special Assistance Room for Women and Children, Dhule) was invited as resource person. She guided the elders on 'Legal Counseling for Senior Citizens'.



On 27/05/22, 2022 Ms. Pratidnya Borse (Field Facilitator, Lupin Foundation Dhule) interacted and played games with the group at Kundane. She said that there are lots of interesting activities

❖ Other Activities

- ✓ The members of all the groups were taught their signature by the staff of the Project. The groups were very pleased that they could sign, they said that it was the first time in their lives that they had held a pen.



- ✓ The Staff provided information about and benefits of Senior Citizens' Card and is helping the members to apply for and obtain Senior Citizens' Card.



21/2/2023

Prof. Dr. Raghunath Mahajan
Acting Principal
Samata Shikshan Sanstha, Pune's
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of
Social Work, Morane, Dhule (M.S.) - 424002.



Rachna J. Adsule

Prof. Rachna Adsule
Honorary Project Coordinator

Samata Shikshan Sanstha, Pune
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Social Work, Morane
(Nakane) Tal. & Dist-Dhule.

New voter registration and public awareness campaign

22nd to 27th November 2021

Report

Voting awareness and registration campaign was conducted from 22nd to 27th November 2022 in collaboration with Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Social Work and State Election Commission. This campaign was implemented in a total of 14 villages in the college area. 14 professors and 198 students participated in this campaign.

Objectives of the campaign:-

- 1) To create public awareness about the right to vote.
- 2) Teach people how to use the voter registration helpline.
- 3) Registering new voters.

Training

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Social Work continuously strives for the holistic development of students. A new voter registration and public awareness campaign was implemented on the initiative of the college principal, Jalindar Adsule. Initially, students and faculty of the college were trained on how to register voters online. Teachers from every village were called for this training. These teachers trained the students on how to do online and offline voter registration.

Voter registration and public awareness work:-

Voting awareness and voter registration were mainly carried out in the villages selected by the college for field work. In this village, students interacted with the people through street plays, house visits, corner meetings. Students appealed to people to register new

voters. After this students visited every house and registered voters through online method

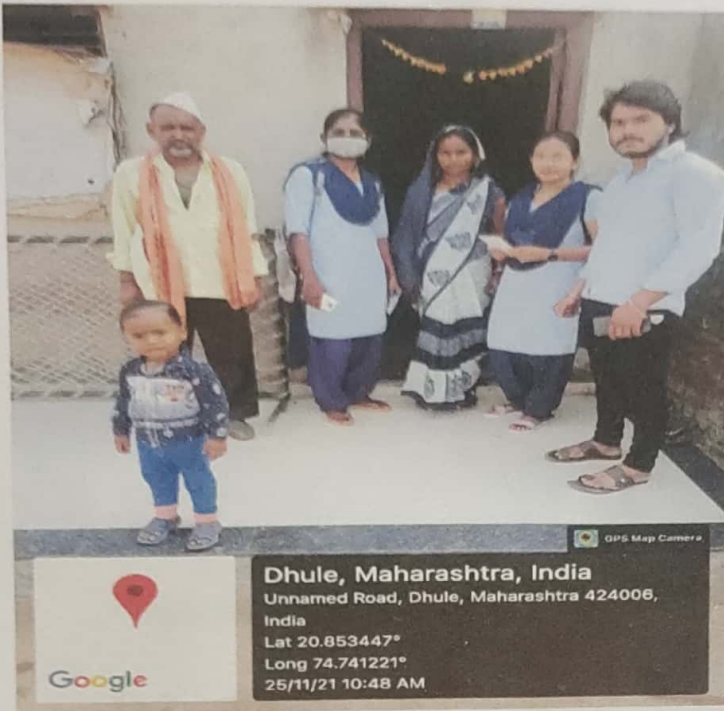
In this campaign, under the guidance of 14 professors of the college, 198 students registered 3,098 new voters in 19 villages. Details of new voters registered by students are as follows.

Voter Registration Table

Sr. No.	Name of the teacher	Number of Student	New registered Voter
1	Dr. Raghunath Mahajan	16	160
2	Dr. Sanjiv Pagare	15	114
3	Prof. Shamsing Valvi	15	160
4	Dr. Gopal Nimbalkar	15	230
5	Dr. Priti wahane	15	80
6	Dr. Farida Khan	15	690
7	Dr. Rahul Aher	15	245
8	Dr. Dilip Ghongade	16	248
9	Dr. Rajendra Baisane	15	82
10	Prof. Meghavi Meshram	16	80
11	Dr. Pramod Bhumbe	15	244
12	Dr. Sudam Rathod	15	600
13	Dr. Suvarna Barade	15	165
14	Total	198	3098



Voter awareness Rally



(Students registered voters by going door to door Photo 1&2)



21/11/2021
 Prof. Dr. Raghunath Mahajan
 Acting Principal
 Samata Shikshan Sanstha, Pune's
 Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of
 Social Work, Morane, Dhule (M.S.) - 424002.

Local Change Makers Course On Freedom of Religion and Belief

10th May 2022 to 13th May 2022

Held at: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Social Work, Morane, Dhule

About the Course

The Local Changemakers Course is based on a module prepared by Katherine Cash of Stefan us Alliance International, with the help of a reference group from all continents. The Module consists of nine sessions. While the first five sessions focus on understanding and mapping forb and its violations including the sites of violations. The activities include soup of life, through which the participants identify the relevance of human rights as outlined in the UDHR with their lives. The activities and games help the participants to connect with their multiple identities. They help participants identify how some identities and status privilege a few while others may prove to be a disadvantage. Through role-play based on discussions within their groups, the participants portray varied situations where forb is denied. The web of life activity helps the participant understand how our lives are interconnected and that we are responsible for each other. The rest of the sessions focus on tactics and strategies to promote forb. The participants through various exercises identified homes, educational institutions, places of worship, and public spaces like roads where the forb is being violated. The participants also mapped the strategies to respond to different issues related to forb like attacks on places of worship, hate speeches, religious conversions, and gender discrimination related to religion.

Participants

This course was offered to post graduate students of Social Work, pursuing their MSW course in the College and participation was voluntary. A total of 33 participants had registered for the course. Of these 31 participants attended 05 modules of the course and 27 attended all the 09 modules.

Majority of the students in the College (almost 95 percent) are from the SC, ST and OBC categories, coming from rural areas and belonging to socially and economically marginalized sections. They come with very limited exposure to the outside world. Many of them have to work as agricultural and daily wage laborers to support their education.

Trainers

Dr. Jalindar Adsule, Principal of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of Social work, Prof. Rachna Adsule, Social Activist and Assistant Professor, and Neha Dabhade, Deputy Director of Centre, for Study of Society and Secularism facilitated the course.

Experience of the Course

The Local Change makers Course is an interactive course – including group exercises, games, stories, discussions and role plays as well as presentations. The course was an enriching experience for both the participants as well as the facilitators. In this region there is a strong influence of religion and there is a lot of rigidity as far as religion is concerned. The Corona pandemic had limited the interaction with and amongst the students with classes in online mode for the last two years.

Initially, the students were not very open to discussing religion and related issues. However, gradually after participating in various activities and conducting discussions with the help of illustrations and true stories the students became vocal and were able to express their opinions on freedom of religion. The course was highly interactive.

The Course focused on the area of freedom of religion and belief (forb). There was a positive transformation in the participants. It helped them reflect on the importance of forb in a democracy, and how violations of the forb are linked with privileges and hierarchies in the society that a minority of elite enjoys. They were able to gain a fair understanding about how there has been injustice on minority communities – whether it was in the name of religion, caste or gender. They were also able to understand how there was discrimination and exploitation by own religion.

The journey provided an opportunity for the students to explore their own beliefs, and to express their thoughts in a safe space.

Thank You!

We are thankful to CSSS for providing this opportunity and exposure to students of a small College located in a remote and under-developed area of Morane which was a village up to 2019, and is now a part of the city. Nonetheless, it still has all the rural characteristics and faces problems of basic amenities and lack of electricity due to power cuts every day.



Session one- An introduction to human rights highlighting key agreements, the duties of states and the role ordinary people can play in making rights a reality.

(Trainer – Prof. Rachna Adsule)

Students participating in the Local Change Makers course expressing their views.
(Student- Netal Jadhav)



Session three – one step forward exercise helped participants to think about who is affected by discrimination and other rights violations in their context

(Trainer – Principal Dr. J.B. Adsule)

Rachna J. Adsule .
Program Coordinator



Raghu Mahajan

Prof. Dr. Raghunath Mahajan
Acting Principal
Samata Shikshan Sanstha, Pune's
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College of
Social Work, Morane, Dhule (M.S.) - 424002