

# RAJIV GANDHI FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2018 – 2019

## सुदभावना से सर्वोदय



# Rajiv Gandhi Foundation



The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF) was established in 1991, to realize the vision of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. He dreamt of a modern India, secular, independent and progressive; a country that enshrines the constitutional values of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, and blends progress with rich cultural traditions. He imagined a country with an educated people free of prejudice; where women participate as equals; a nation with the space and will to empower all citizens, and especially the underprivileged.

This vision is the Foundation's mandate: to help create a peaceful modern nation with a just society, in which every Indian has the opportunity to fulfil his or her potential.

Since its inception, the RGF has worked on many wide-ranging issues, from literacy, health, disability, and empowerment of the underprivileged, to creating livelihoods, to natural resource management.

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# Chairperson's Message

I am happy to present the Annual Report of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation for its activities in the year 2018-19. The Foundation continued to realise the vision of our beloved leader, Shri Rajiv Gandhi through its activities. Recalling his vision of a secular India, a country that enshrines the values of Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, we felt the need to counter the rising intolerance in the nation by developing Sadbhavana, a sincere fellow feeling amongst all citizens. The Foundation initiated and conducted a series of activities during the year to achieve this mission of spreading tolerance, compassion and harmony.

We initiated a new program called Heritage, Outreach and Public Engagement (HOPE). The Heritage constitutes Archives of Rajiv ji's life and work, which has now been made available for access online for authoritative referencing. The Idea of India as enshrined in the Constitution is the conceptual heritage we uphold.

During the year, we organised many events commemorating the lives of great leaders of the nation. We also collaborated with other progressive organizations to reach out to a wider audience through events like film screenings, performances, discussions, consultations and seminars by public intellectuals, social activists, cultural and literary persons amongst all. We convened Sadbhavana Sangams, meetings of all like-minded social workers, NGO leaders, activists, professionals and intellectuals who focused on how Sadbhavana can be strengthened through dialogue or action. These meetings were conducted in over 25 locations across the nation, reaching out to nearly 7600 people.

Sadbhavana, being an over-arching theme has also been incorporated in our existing programs. We continued our support to 300 children, affected by violence, to continue their education by providing them scholarships under our INTERACT program. While we continued our support to two PhD scholars under Rajiv Gandhi Cambridge Scholarships, we also provided scholarships to three meritorious students to pursue their post-graduation at Cambridge University. Wonderoom program is expanding its reach with many more inquisitive children who thoroughly enjoy learning with fun and interactive sessions. In addition, we inculcated the concept of fellowship in the minds of young children through various interesting events.

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The Foundation also carried out its livelihood programs with the objective of empowering people by restoring their livelihoods. During the year, we provided specially designed vehicles, *Sadbhavana Vahan*, to 125 people with disabilities to help them regain their independence and provide ease of mobility. Our work on restoring livelihoods through regenerating water resources in Rajasthan has been gaining pace every year. With over 500 water and soil conservation structures, we have been able to create a difference in the lives of many villages of the state. Our journey of livelihood restoration continues from Rajasthan to Jammu & Kashmir, where we supported 181 flood affected families by providing assistance with livestock rearing, agricultural practices, and capacity building.

The Foundation's policy think tank, RGICS reconstituted its work into five themes: Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions; Growth with Employment; Governance and Development; Environment, Natural Resources and Sustainability; and India's Place in the World. RGICS continued to produce quality policy analysis, research reports and working papers on these themes. The team engaged with different discourse partners ranging from policy makers to the common people to influence and shape public policy.

The Foundation shall continue its endeavours to spread the message of *Sadbhavana* through various interventions and contribute towards building an inclusive, resilient and peaceful nation.

I would like to express my warm gratitude to the entire team who worked under the leadership of Shri Vijay Mahajan, with an unwavering commitment to serve the people and for keeping alive the ideals of Rajiv ji. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to all the partners and donors whose support has been indispensable in achieving our goals.



Sonia Gandhi (Mrs.)  
Chairperson, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation



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# Introduction

As mentioned by the Chairperson in her foreword, our programs and activities in the year the 2018-19 have focused on building Sadbhavana, to encourage tolerance and appreciate the diversity of our country. We reconstituted our existing programs to incorporate the message of Sadbhavana and also introduced Heritage, Outreach and Public Engagement (HOPE), a new program to accomplish our objective.

Through HOPE, we reached out to a large audience of like-minded people who are enthused with positive energy to build fellowship in society. Our education programs involve engaging with children and through these we endeavoured to inspire and ignite young minds by encouraging them to uphold the values of the Constitution in their lives.

Our efforts for restoring livelihoods by providing mobility support to persons with disabilities, regenerating water resources in Karauli, Rajasthan and providing livelihood support to flood affected families in Jammu & Kashmir continue to empower many families.

At RGICS, the team produced periodic products as well as more in-depth research based papers for strategic use by policy makers. The team members also participated in the discourse related to their themes.

This was an eventful year for the entire team and the team is full of zeal to carry forward this journey of building and spreading Sadbhavana. The report details out the activities in each of our programs and how we have been able to contribute towards building harmony and compassion among fellow beings.



# Heritage, Outreach and Public Engagement (HOPE)

## Heritage

The key asset of the Foundation is the Archives on Shri Rajiv Gandhi's life and work. The collection includes around 31,000 photographs, 2,300 audio tapes, 500 video tapes, 1,475 spool tapes, the full collection of his speeches and other material.

Over the last few years, the primary focus of the Archives has been to preserve this valuable collection which included digitization of the collection to the maximum possible extent. The digitization of audio-video material was carried out with the help of Film Heritage Foundation last







year. The documentation of around 20,000 loose photographs, listing of books and condolence books has been completed this year.

The other key focus after preservation of the material is to provide access of the archival material for use or reference by scholars, researchers or anyone inquisitive about the ideals and persona of the beloved leader. The advancement in technology and digitization of the material facilitated this whole process. The dedicated team of the Foundation reached a milestone this year by uploading the digitized speeches, audio and video tapes and photographs on the internet. The five volumes of Rajiv ji's speeches, several thousand photographs and several hundred audio and video recordings of his speeches at various public events were made available on the internet in a searchable and downloadable format, enabling scholars and others interested to use these for authoritative referencing.

Another heritage activity this year was a series of memorial events organized to mark important days during the year.

- The Foundation celebrated the birth anniversary of Shri Rajiv Gandhi with a 'Sadbhavana Saptah' from 14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> August, 2018, where a series of events were organised at the Jawahar Bhawan throughout the week.
- RGF organised several events related to



Gandhi ji's life and contributions to India to commemorate his 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary year.

- Memorial events were also organised on the birth anniversaries of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Smt Indira Gandhi with a five day set of events titled '*Shanti se Shakti tak*' (from peace to strength), between 14<sup>th</sup> November and 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2018. Some of the events were for children while others were for adults.

## Outreach

This year, we initiated collaborations with other progressive organizations to organize events, children's plays and performances, talks by well-known speakers, film and documentary screenings, cultural programs by individual artists as well in collaboration with organisations such as SPIC-MACAY and SAHMAT, meetings, consultations and workshops.

Some of these activities in 2018-19 included talks co-organised with other progressive organisations

and well-known speakers like Prof Amartya Sen, Smt Ela Bhatt, Swami Pramod Krishnan, Dr Syeda Hameed, and Prof Ganesh Devy.

Feature films like *Garam Hawa* by MS Sathyu; *Village Rockstar*, an Oscar Awards finalist by Rima Das; *Making of the Mahatma* by Shyam Benegal; *Manjunath* by Sandeep Pande, and *Sadho* by Danish Iqbal were screened. Several documentaries like *Hamein Udne Do* and *No Problems* by Yasmin Kidwai; *Jang aur Aman* and *Reason* by Anand Patwardhan were also screened.







## Public Engagement

We have always made an effort to follow Rajiv ji's vision and incorporate his ideals in our programs and activities. He upheld the values of secularism and believed that it is the bedrock of our nationhood. He was an ardent believer of using the remarkable diversity of our nation in strengthening its unity and fighting against the evil of communalism and fundamentalism.

Over the last few years, the nation has witnessed unprecedented incidents of conflicts and intolerance, based on caste and religious practices. This has overshadowed the feelings of fellowship and humaneness amongst the people with 'durbhavana'. The Foundation realized the need to counter this by carrying out a message of Sadbhavana (sincere fellow feeling) across the







nation. After many deliberations, we understood that the conventional method of conducting seminars and conferences will not cater to the need. There is a need to bring together all those who would like to protect and promote the spirit of mutuality and humaneness in society, which underlines the Constitution of India. This led to the idea of organizing ‘Sadbhavana Sangams’, where the feelings of Sadbhavana converge.

During the year 2018-19, the Foundation organised a series of Sadbhavana Sangams, to help create a common platform for varied sections of people. The Foundation identified local social workers and activists as Sadbhavana Fellows and Associates in over 25 locations all over India – from Srinagar to Madurai and Ahmedabad to Imphal. They convened Sadbhavana Sangams – meetings of social workers, NGO leaders, activists, professionals, intellectuals and literary and cultural persons, who are working with people’s group of various communities. The focus was on how Sadbhavana – the spirit of mutuality



and humaneness – which is the foundation of our constitutional values like justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, could be strengthened through dialogue and action. We were successful in reaching out to nearly 7,600 people through Sadbhavana Sangams, organised in the places mentioned in Table 1.

In addition, 96 *Mohan Se Mahatma* puppet shows, 20 *Mahila Sadbhavana* activities, 10 *Sadbhavana Yatras*, 20 other *Sadbhavana activities* (Holi Milan, Meetings, Mela, etc) were organised in Uttar Pradesh in which around 39,000 people participated. A Sadbhavana Sampark team was set up to be in telephonic touch with the participants in various activities and to also take their feedback.



## Sadbhavana Sangams

State	Places	Approx No. of participants
Chhattisgarh	Tilda Neora, Raipur(4), Bastar, Kanker, Dantewada, Konta, Sukma, Sarguja, Korba, Bilaspur, Raigarh and Jagdalpur	790
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal, Indore, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Alirajpur, Damoh, Satna, Rewa and Mandla	675
Rajasthan	Jaipur, Kota, Bhilwara, Pali and Alwar	460
Uttar Pradesh	Varanasi (6), Allahabad (4), Banda, Hapur, Chandauli, Meerut, Barabanki, Raebareli, Lucknow (5), Muzaffarnagar, Kumbh (5), Jaunpur, Mirzapur and Shahjahanpur	850
Haryana	Kaithal, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Narnaul, Rohtak, Gurgaon and Yamuna Nagar	370
Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar (4), Budgam and Jammu	30
Gujarat	Ahmedabad, Patan and Himmatnagar	115
Maharashtra	Thane, Mumbai (6), Mumbai suburbs (4), Kalyan, Raigad, Kausa Mumbra and Malad	145
Assam	Guwahati (4), Chhaygaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Mangaldai (5) and Darrang	210
West Bengal	Ulluberia (Howrah), Salar (Murshidabad)	80
Odisha	Bhubaneswar, Berhampur (2), Koraput, Jeypore, Malkangiri and Kamrup	110
Karnataka	Chintamani, Gudibanda, Bagepalli, Magadi, Chikballapur, Siddlagatta and Davangere	1,350
Tamil Nadu and Puducherry	Madurai, Chennai, Salem, Kanniyakumari, Tirunelveli, Dindigul, Puducherry	1,565
Kerala	Kochi (4), Trivandrum	150
Delhi	Jawahar Bhawan	700
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7,600</b>

### Bastar Cycle Yatra

A **Bastar Cycle Yatra** covering 350 kms from Jagdalpur to Raipur was organised by activists of the CGNet Foundation, Raipur led by Shubranshu Chowdhry, a noted peace activist of the area. The event saw a participation of over 300 IDPs – internally displaced persons – mainly tribals from the undivided Bastar district, who have been displaced from the homes as a result of conflict between Maoist and security forces. Many of them have been living in Andhra Pradesh as internally displaced persons for years. A seven day cycle yatra from Bhanpuri, Lanjoda, Keskai, Kanker, Rajaraw Patthar and New Raipur was conducted. Every day the yatra covered an average of 45-50 km.

Through this cycle yatra, two appeals were made to the newly-formed government in Chhattisgarh: (i) Fast-track cases of Adivasis in jails. (ii) Rehabilitation of internally displaced people.

The leaders of the yatra met the concerned authorities and requested them to work towards their rehabilitation. Our team is providing policy support for rebuilding Sadbhavna and creating livelihoods for tribals in Bastar.



STORIES  
THAT  
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# Interact

Initiative to Educate, Rehabilitate and Assist Child Victims of Terrorism (INTERACT) program focuses to rehabilitate children who have been victims of terrorism. The program has covered children in the insurgency-hit North Eastern states; naxalism affected Chhattisgarh; Telangana and Maharashtra; terrorism plagued Jammu & Kashmir and other states. In view of the rising incidents of communal violence; the program has been extended to assist victims of such incidents. We carry out this program with the support of partner organizations in these states. Their role is crucial in identifying the new scholars and maintaining connect with the current scholars.

The psychosocial behavior of the children is mostly affected after having witnessed brutal acts, hatred, and violence all around and losing their loved ones. Such traumatic situations leave a deep impact on the minds of these children. With the Foundation's initiative to support these

children through education, we aim to bring them back from trauma and grief to a resilient well being. So far we have been successful in providing support to 2190 students in 11 states and 2 union territories.

This year, we continued our support to the existing 241 scholars in 9 states namely: Jammu & Kashmir, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Puducherry.

For the year 2018-19, 44 new scholars were included from Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Assam and Chhattisgarh. In addition, scholarships were also granted to 15 children whose families have been victims of lynching and mob attacks (which were on the sharp rise during the year), in the states of Jharkhand, Haryana Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The details of the scholars supported this year are given in Table 1.





Table 1: State wise distribution: INTERACT scholars supported in 2018-19

S. No.	State	Class	Class	Total
		UKG to 7th	8th to 12th	
1	Telangana	1	16	17
2	Assam	21	10	31
3	Chhattisgarh	6	3	9
4	Gujarat	0	1	1
5	Jammu & Kashmir	38	65	103
6	Manipur	23	87	110
7	Mumbai	1	4	5
8	Nagaland	0	2	2
9	Pondicherry	0	7	7
10	Jharkhand	3	1	4
11	Karnataka	0	2	2
12	Haryana	6	0	6
13	Rajasthan	1	0	1
14	Uttar Pradesh	2	0	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>300</b>



As a part of the review, alumni meets were organized in these states and possibilities for new interventions with the existing and past scholars were explored. Around 180 past and existing scholars attended the meetings in 6 states. The team members also met potential partner NGOs to identify opportunities for future collaborations.

## Revisiting INTERACT

During the year, the INTERACT program was reviewed with the help of an external consultant Dr Prakash Andrews, a social scientist with experience of working with children and NGOs. He, along with the staff, visited Jammu & Kashmir, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Telangana and Chhattisgarh, and met the scholars, their parents/guardians, and also met the past scholars, who are now INTERACT Alumni.

The review culminated in a two day meeting in Delhi of all staff, state facilitators, and selected alumni from each state. They interacted with the Chairperson Smt Sonia Gandhi and the CEO, Mr Vijay Mahajan and gave valuable feedback and suggestions. The most heartening was that the alumni in these states decided to support the current INTERACT scholars in various ways, in particular by mentoring them.



## INTERACT-PLUS: Providing Resilient Well-being

This year we initiated our efforts to supplement the scholarships with a support for resilient wellbeing. Based on the need and the findings of the review, we introduced counselling – both psycho-social as well as for careers as our first step. In Kashmir, where the need for psycho-social counselling was acutely felt, a local counsellor was appointed, whereas in the other states, it

was organised through a Delhi based counsellor interacting with them over audio-video conference once a month. Likewise, career counselling was offered by another Delhi based counsellor interacting with them over audio-video conference once a month. For this, the scholars gather in facilities which are called Sadbhavana Kendras – one each in Guwahati, Assam, Warangal, Telangana and Srinagar (Budgam Kashmir). Feedback from the scholars and parents indicates that these sessions were well-received.



### Anjali Vinod Sharma, Maharashtra

Anjali Vinod Sharma lost her father to a stray bullet by the terrorists in the attack on 26 November 2008 at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Railway Station, Mumbai.

Vinod, a garage worker, was seeing off his mother, when a bullet hit him in the head, causing instant death. Anjali was just 7, while her sister Nikita had just joined kindergarten, when mayhem struck the family.

Anjali's mother Savitri, though shell shocked and despite the all impediments, displayed exemplary courage. She took to a night school to complete her high school education. Subsequently, she also managed to get a job in the Indian Railways, where she gets a monthly remuneration of Rs. 16,000. Though the amount was barely enough to run house, it was not enough for the education of two girls.

Today, with the assistance from RGF under its flagship INTERACT program, Anjali has completed her class XII in science stream and is aspiring to be an Engineer. She is also preparing for the NEET exam. Anjali has received many awards for her talent in Art, Rangoli and Bhojpuri singing.

She is thankful to the Foundation for timely assistance which has helped her move ahead and build a better future for her family.

STORIES  
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## Kshetrimayum Goldie, Manipur

Kshetrimayum Goldie's father, Kshetrimayum Romeo Singh, was one of the 18 people who lost their lives in the Great June Uprising of Manipur in 2001. A ceasefire agreement "without territorial limits" signed between the Government of India and NSCN (IM), Naga militants on June 14, 2001 created mayhem in Manipur capital that turned into a violent agitation. During the unrest, 18 people lost their lives when security forces tried to control the agitating crowd. Goldie was a toddler when her father, the sole bread earner of the family, died. The incident had pushed her family into poverty, compelling her mother and grandmother to sell fritters to make ends meet. Her mother Shanti Devi even tried to end her life by consuming poison but was saved by a doctor residing in her neighbourhood.

Goldie finally found refuge under RGF's INTERACT program which facilitated her to complete her schooling from Sanatombi Vidyala, Imphal, Manipur. She moved to Bangalore to pursue higher secondary. After her studies; she joined Frankfinn Institute of Air Hostess Training, Bangalore for Aviation Course. She intends to join her dream job after this course.

She said that her family is indebted to RGF for reshaping her life. Goldie has transformed into a confident young girl who has worked hard to fulfill her dreams.



## SHANU DEVI, Jammu & Kashmir

Shanu Devi, an INTERACT scholar from village Tahwa, district Doda in Jammu & Kashmir, is a victim of terrorist violence in her state. In April, 2006, her father, two uncles and grandfather were killed brutally along with 30 other men of the village. Shanu's mother, Rita Devi narrated their ordeal and how she and her children were hiding inside their houses when they heard the gunshots. She lost everything in the massacre including any hope to revive normalcy in their lives. She is thankful to the officials who visited their village and selected her daughter, Shanu to receive scholarship for her education under RGF's INTERACT program.

Shanu has made her mother proud by being the only girl from her village who went out of the village for schooling. She finished her school in 2018 and has enrolled herself in a Paramedical course. She is keen on working for the people of her village especially for women's health. She is confident that like the INTERACT scholarship, this course will help her overcome the odds and turn her dreams into reality.



## Pappula Shilpa, Telangana

Pappula Shilpa from an impoverished SC family in NALGONDA district in Telangana is one of the children affected by Naxalism in the region. Her father, Sri P. Mallesha, a farmer, was killed by Naxals in March, 2004 in Bonghir district.

Her father was the only bread winner and her family was thrown into disarray, after the tragic incident. The continuous support of INTERACT scholarship for Pappula, that began in Class 1, provided a ray of hope to the family. She finished her school in 2018 and passed with flying colors. She aspires to pursue B.Tech and wishes to get support for it from RGF. She feels that education has helped her overcome the trauma and look forward in life. She is thankful to the Foundation whose support has ameliorated the lives of many children affected in her region.





# Rajiv Gandhi Cambridge Scholarship

Our association with Cambridge Commonwealth Trust began in 1995 with the Rajiv Gandhi Travelling Scholarships. From 1995 to 2012, we supported around 319 Rajiv Gandhi Travelling Scholars from different nationalities. In 2013-14, we reviewed this program and focused on Indian students keen to study at the Cambridge University. Initiated in 2014-15, the Rajiv Gandhi Cambridge Scholarships are provided to the outstanding Indian students who aspire to pursue their post-graduation at Cambridge University. Our panel selects the applicants each year, based on the shortlist provided by the University.

The scholarship covers the University tuition fee, a sufficient annual stipend which shall be no less than the minimum level for postgraduate students prescribed by the University of Cambridge. The total cost is shared by RGF and Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust (CCEIT) in equal proportion

During the year 2018, the Cambridge Trust had recommended a list of 14 candidates for consideration. The selection panel selected three students who would be pursuing M.Phil and LLM at the Cambridge University. The details of scholars supported during the years are tabulated below.

During the year we invited the RGCS scholars to the Foundation to interact with the Director and Fellows of the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies. Three of them, Devarchan Banerjee, Akankshita Dey and Rishi Rajpopat

visited the RGF. Rishi Rajapopat also gave a talk on his Ph.D work on the topic of how rule conflict was sought to be resolved in Panini's Grammar.



## Details of scholars supported

Year of Selection	Name of Scholar	Course	Subject
2014 -15	Ms Meghana Nag Chowdhuri	MPhil	Education
2015-16	Ms Prita Kalyansundaram	MPhil	Education
2016-17	Ms Garima Sahai	PhD	Sociology
2016-17	Ms Mrinalini Venkateswaran	PhD	History
2017-18	Ms Shuvatri Dasgupta	PhD	History
2017-18	Mr Rishi Rajpopat	PhD	Asian Studies
2018-19	Ms Shraddha Chaudhary	LLM	Law
2018-19	Mr Devarchan Banerjee	M.Phil	Development Studies
2018-19	Ms Akankshita Dey	M.Phil	Development Studies

## Life at Cambridge: Devarchan Banerjee

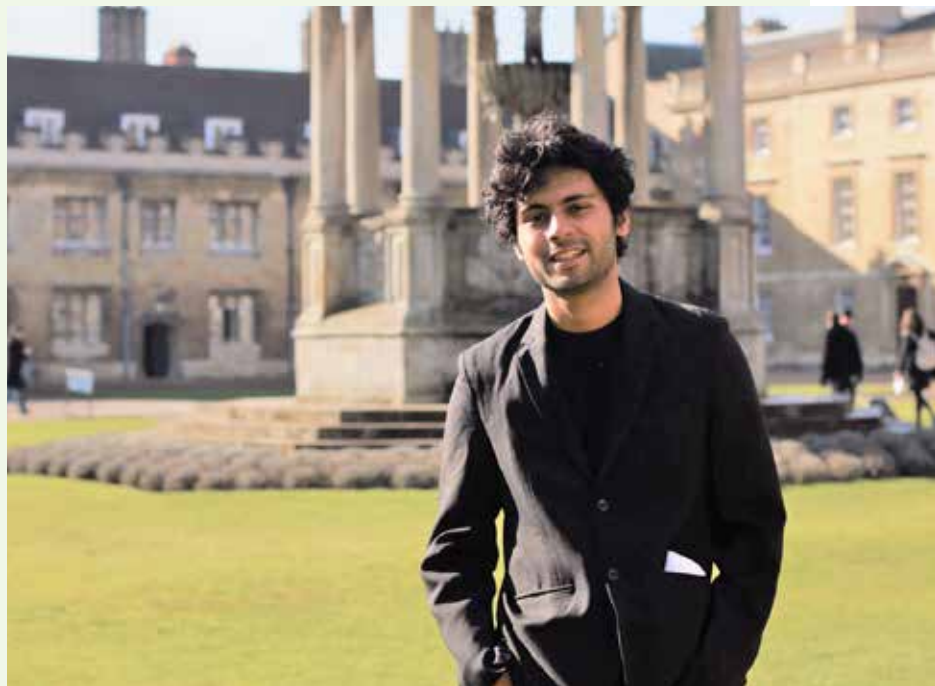


I am currently in the third term of the MPhil in Development Studies Program at the University of Cambridge. I came here after a master's degree in Public Policy from National Law School of India University, prior to which I have worked in policy analysis and regulation and had founded a small social enterprise which worked to increase livelihood opportunities for tribal women in the Sunderbans region. My undergraduate training was in Computer Science.

Development Studies at Cambridge has complemented my training in public policy, by providing me theoretical depth in my understanding of developmental issues, like institutional evolution and change and the role of the state in economic development. It has also allowed me to compare my experiences in India with developmental experiences in other parts of the world. The understanding of institutional diversity caused by political, historical, sociological and geographical context is a great foundational framework and complements my previous experiences of policy engagement at various levels of the policy process.

I have also been able to develop skills in writing concisely and persuasively; and reading efficiently. I believe that as I move towards a career in development/policy research and advocacy. The practice of effective written communication shall prove to be very useful.

I have also been able to explore exciting extracurricular opportunities at Cambridge; I have had the chance to row for Hughes Hall in some races. The sport has tremendous grit building potential and braving the cold and darkness in the early mornings has built reserves of strength that I have utilized for my academic endeavours. Cambridge has



exposed me to the Anning Club (fossil hunting/ paleontology). One of my most prized possessions in my room is a 40 million year old shark tooth I found while on an expedition with them.

Cambridge has also been supportive of me in my difficulties. As a student facing challenges stemming from Attention Deficit Disorder; the university has provided the mentoring and accommodation that I need to adjust with my abilities in the program.

The greatest benefit I believe I have received from my time at Cambridge, is through the association with very inspirational individuals like my teachers, mentors, and fellow students. One individual I must single out for his impact on me, is Professor Peter Nolan. His rigorous and uncompromising commitment to an honest and non-ideological exposition of the contradictions of globalization will stay with me for as long as I live, and his personal integrity and commitment to students is something I shall try to emulate in my life.

I am truly fortunate that the Cambridge Trust and the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation gave me this opportunity that has contributed to my academic, professional and personal growth. I hope that I shall be able to put to use the education that I received here, to the best possible use; for the benefit of the poor and marginalized communities in India and in developing societies worldwide.





Wonderoom was setup as a children's library under the Education program in the year 2011. It has gradually evolved to an interactive, fun-filled learning center where different types of activities are offered to children, in the age group of 8-15 years. Every afternoon, despite the bright sun or rain, we can see children walking through the main gate of Jawahar Bhawan with other friends for their Wonderoom sessions. This space has become so popular now that nearly 30 children come on their own from nearby areas, almost every day and others who live far off are brought by our Wonderoom Bus. During the weekends and other special days, we have a footfall of as many as 100-300 children.

In this digital age, where children of this age group tend to get hooked to mobile phones and gadgets, Wonderoom provides solace for concerned parents. The activities in the Wonderoom have helped the children tap their creative instincts and hidden potentials. We offer three main activities spread across different sessions: Fun Science, Art & Craft and Theatre. These activities are conducted by our dedicated team members who work closely with children and help them explore various avenues that interest them.

Over the last few years, we have seen many children who have shed their hesitation, developed or regained confidence, explored their creativity and potential, developed or improved their reading habits, enhanced their knowledge, and developed the art of public speaking by reducing their stage fear.

### Activities in 2018-19

**SUMMER WORKSHOPS** were organized for 4 weeks during May-June 2018 which is the summer vacation time in Delhi schools. A total of 132 sessions on theatre, art & craft, fun science and creative writing were organized in two shifts. This year, around 250 children participated in these workshops which culminated in performances and exhibitions.

**SPECIAL DAY CELEBRATIONS:** While we read about so many great authors, personalities and issues in our school, we may not remember them all. The Wonderoom has initiated birth anniversary celebrations of William Shakespeare, Rabindranath Tagore, Munshi Premchand, Ruskin Bond, Rajiv Gandhi, among others, thereby introducing these great personalities to the children in a unique manner. The activities



# Wonderoom



included performing plays (*Mid-Summer Night's Dream*, Parsi and Sanskrit Theatre), film screenings (*Kabuliwala*, a film on Tagore), storytelling by Shri Rajnikant Shukl on Shri Gijubhai Badheka; song and dance show, poetry recitation, talks and others.

**SADBHAVANA PROGRAMS:** With Sadbhavana being the over-arching theme of the Foundation this year, we made an attempt to introduce this concept and inculcate the values of fellowship in the young minds. The Wonderoom team worked to achieve this through events like:

- **Sadbhavana Saptah** began from 14-20<sup>th</sup> August, 2018 with Bal Sadbhavana Mela

centred around our three main Wonderoom activities. Dastangoi on Gandhi, screenings of films by Yasmin Kidwai: *Udney Do* (A film on how young girls from Delhi slum used cricket to empower themselves), *No Problem*, a film related to growth with employment, *Filmistan* on Indian pluralism; Wonderoom production, *Par Hame Khelna Hai*, were exhibited. Storytelling sessions were held by professionals and children.

- **Shiksha aur Sadbhavana:** This event was organized on Teachers' Day to acknowledge the contribution of the teachers and educators in shaping young minds. We invited teachers from different institutions in Delhi to share their experiences and also talk about how Sadbhavana can be inculcated in the minds of young children especially in schools.
- **Bapu ki Virasat Sadbhavana** was celebrated from 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> October, 2018. The events were based on Gandhi ji's life. The main events included screening of the movie, *The Making of Mahatma* by Shyam Benegal and a storytelling session of Gandhi ji's life by Smt Usha Chhabra, one of our key resource persons.



- **Shanti se Shakti Tak** celebrating birth anniversaries of our great leaders, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Smt Indira Gandhi. This included interesting and informative events like:

- *Bharat Ek Khoj*: A play based on Shyam Benegal's historical drama on Nehru's *Discovery of India*.



- Storytelling on Science by Devendra Mewari
- Rajasthani Lok Geet-Sangeet by SPIC MACAY
- Book reading *Ek fut ke mujnu mia* by Sadhna Vaid
- Story of Indira Priyadarshini's life by Usha Chhabra





## MULTIPLYING WONDEROOMS

This year, the team has reached a milestone by taking the Wonderoom out of our office premises. We were able to establish extension centres of Wonderoom in the following 10 NGOs/schools in the Delhi NCR region and in remote areas of other states as well. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of our partners who established these centres in their premises.

Our team has provided training to the designated persons from centres listed below.

	NGO/School Name	Location	No. of Children
1	FXB India Suraksha, U.P.	Noida, Delhi	40
2	Sharifan Society, Delhi	Jasola, Delhi	200
3	Saksham, Delhi	Shahbad, Delhi	100
4	Comb/ined Action For Progress India (CAFP)	Munirka, Delhi	100
5	Salam Balak Trust, Delhi	Gole Market and Wood Market in Delhi	80
6	Gram Gaurav Sansthan (2) Karauli, Rajasthan	Sukkapura Bamuda	75
7	Saral School, Distt. Jamui Bihar	Darima	80
8	Kasturba Balika Vidyalayas Dist. Nalanda, Bihar (20)	Nalanda	100 each
9	Saathi Gurukul School	Kondagaon, Bastar	200
10	Himalayan English School	Ghansali, Uttarakhand	20

## Neeru Kashyap: A Team Leader

Neeru, a 15 year old young girl has been coming to Wonderoom from 2013, with her elder sister and younger brother. She used to live in a nearby slum (jhuggi-basti) but her family shifted to Baprola Vihar when they were allotted a house under Rajiv Ratan Aawas Scheme. Her parents have always encouraged her and her siblings to be a part of Wonderoom activities. They are confident that the Wonderoom sessions provide a positive exposure to their children which will further help them in their development.

Neeru is very shy unlike her siblings who are more expressive and creative. Her strength lies in motivating other children, mobilizing them to come to Wonderoom and participate in different activities. She helps her group members in I-wonder, storytelling, celebration of special days.

Neeru's involvement in the mobile library initiated by Wonderoom for children in Baprola is appreciated by all team members. She participates as the team leader and ensures that children in her area know about our events and activities. She is one example of the fact that Wonderoom facilitates personality development and enhances leadership qualities and team building through its activities.



## Ram and Magic of Fun Science

Ram, a 13 year old boy is the Wonderoom star kid in Fun Science Sessions. At a tender age, he lost both his parents and since suffered a major setback in his life. His Aunt looked after him and his two sisters. However, being from a lower income family, it was difficult for his aunt to make both ends meet. He lost all hope in his family, became very weak and even lost his interest in school. Life again hit him hard when he was diagnosed with tuberculosis. He somehow managed to recover and is thankful to his friends for taking him to Wonderoom one fine day. That visit turned his life towards a brighter side.

As we believe that Wonderoom is a space where children tap their creative instincts, Ram also proved to be the one. He became a regular with RGF's Fun Science sessions and even rejoined his school. He has special interest in electronics and loves working with tools. He started by making simple circuits and graduated to making multi circuit working models and using soldering iron. He comes up with creative ideas and is very good at providing solutions to technical problems.

The Fun Science sessions are not just about working models, the children also learn a lot about physics laws, environment, heavenly bodies, nature, animals, birds, insects, current affairs and great personalities. Ram has developed his inquisitiveness and knowledge on these subjects. He displays his science skills and knowledge to his classmates and teachers, with great confidence pride.



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## Tanisha Jha: A performer

Tanisha is a 15 years old young girl who is a part of the Wonderoom sessions since 2013. She joined the Ados-Pados drama club and participated in many acts and plays. Her performances in Premchand's stories were worth noticing. Her performance as "Ladli" in the story, "Budi Kaki" has been appreciated by all. There was a year-long break due to her parents' transfer out of Delhi. She joined us again in 2018 despite the long distance she had to cover from her home to Jawahar Bhawan. Her parents are thankful to the Wonderoom Bus by which they send Tanisha here and are assured of her safety. She has also developed her interest in creative writing and has presented her creation, "Kiraye ka Makan" in the poetry recitation organized by Wonderoom. Her parents feel that she has transformed into a confident and smart girl by participating in different activities of the Wonderoom. They feel that her participation in school activities has also enhanced.



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# विश्लेषक

3 November





# Schools Outreach Program

Rajiv ji, in one of his speeches on “Uphold Secular Values” in the year 1986, said that to bring about a feeling, a mood and an atmosphere in the country that does not allow communalism to develop, a beginning must be in the school. It is very important that the right values are imbibed in our younger generations. In our attempt to seed the ideas of Sadbhavana and the Constitutional Values of Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, RGF tried various new methods to reach out to a number of schools. The first was the I-Parliament, in which over 200 children from 20 schools attended a four day event where they learned about how the Parliament works by acting as members of parliament and interacting with resource persons.

Several Gandhian organisations and progressive NGOs that run schools were contacted and their collaboration was sought to introduce a Sadbhavana period and a Sadbhavana curriculum. Most have agreed to try this on an experimental basis in the coming year. This would be preceded with an effort by the RGF to develop curriculum and learning material on Sadbhavana and the Constitutional Values of Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Thereafter, teachers from schools who volunteer to try the curriculum out will be invited for a training program.















As part of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, a puppet show – *Mohan Se Mahatma* was performed in 150 schools, mostly all over Uttar Pradesh.

An active engagement has been developed with the Bharat Navodaya Abhiyan, which is the alumni association of over 12 lakh students who have studied at the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas over the years. With their involvement,

Sadbhavana Yuva Sangams were organised in several colleges and University campuses including BHU and IIT Mumbai.

Another initiative was a three day program titled Samvidhan say Samadhan Tak, about the Constitution, the law making process and the implementation of the constitutional intent and legal rights and provisions. This was attended by about 30 students from schools and colleges.





# Rajiv Gandhi Access to Opportunities Program

## Persons with Disability (ATO-PwDs)

This is another flagship program of the Foundation that has been carried out since its inception. We provide specially designed vehicles to the persons with lower limb disabilities to enable them to regain their independence, explore different avenues with freedom of mobility and to fulfill their goals. Our selection committee selects the applicants based on set criteria every year. So far, we have supported more than 2700 persons across 25 states and five UTs.

This year, the Foundation received nearly 19,000 applications for specially designed mobility vehicles. Due to resource constraints, only 125 applicants were selected to receive the specialised vehicles.

During the Sadbhavana Saptah in August, 2018, a **Sadbhavna Vahan Pradan Karyakaram** was organised on 17th August, 2018 where 120 beneficiaries received the specialised vehicles.

Our selection committee member, Ms Madhur Bhandari of Akshaya Pratishthan along with other guests present handed over the keys to the beneficiaries. The five beneficiaries who could not attend the main event were given the vehicles on 19th November 2018 by Mr. Arman Ali, Executive Director, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People.

In addition to providing vehicles to the selected applicants, RGF engaged an organization, Haqdarshak especially for the rest 18,789 applicants. Haqdarshak uses a digital platform to enable all citizens to access their entitlements including various government and private welfare schemes for persons with disability. All the applicants were contacted through SMS and those who expressed interest in accessing such information were provided support and guidance by the Haqdarshak team.



## Ashmita Patel, Gujarat

Ashmita is a young girl from Gujarat who was affected by Polio in her childhood. She feels lucky to have a supportive family who never let her feel disabled. It is this support that has given her the strength to finish school. She is now in the first year of her college and aspires to become a teacher.

She is thankful to a WhatsApp group that she was a part of, through which she got to know about the Foundation's Access to Opportunities program. She still remembers how excited she was when she visited Delhi to receive the specialised vehicle which has given her wings to fly. She is not hesitant anymore and feels empowered in gaining her independence. She is now able to travel to college, covering a distance of 10 km daily without the help of an attendant and loves to attend social gatherings, unlike before.

Ashmita is thankful to the Foundation for giving her the ease of mobility that transformed her life.



## Shivam Kumar, Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh

Shivam's disability is a case of negligence by the medical professional who injected him for high fever when he was 8-9 months old. At that age, the village doctor could not notice an abnormality in his feet and later it was found that Shivam had been affected by Polio. The family tried their best to get treatment but it was too late. His condition became a concern for his family but as he grew up, they accepted his disability as his fate. It was very difficult for Shivam to deal with his situation. His focus on his studies helped him develop confidence to start planning about his future.

He was on top of the world when he got to know that he is one of the selected applicants for the specialised vehicle in 2018. He believes that the vehicle will transform his life with the ease in mobility and will give him the independence he had been longing for. He is currently pursuing a degree in Classical Music and is excited that he will no longer have to worry about attending music programs or going around places.





# Restoring Rural Livelihoods by Regenerating Water Resources

The Foundation carries out this project with the Gram Gaurav Sansthan in the Dang region of Rajasthan. The team has been working on water and soil conservation since 2001, with the objective of creating sustainable livelihoods. They believe that consistent engagement with the community will lead to sustainable social change.

Under this project, over 500 water conserving traditional structures for agriculture have been built. These are called Pokhar, Pagara and Taal. The team is also very active in mobilizing the community to spread awareness about maintenance of water, soil harvesting structures and other concerning issues. This year, the team held 40 Padyatra, 80 Nukkad Sabhas, meetings of villagers and Gram Vikas Samiti for the same.

**Support from NABARD:** NABARD has selected GGS for the implementation of “Integrated Water Management Scheme” (IWMP) in five villages in Karauli District. Further, several NABARD professionals conducted field visits to assess

another proposal on watershed development in the area, and it is being processed for funding in the coming year.

## Some new initiatives by Gram Gaurav Sansthan:

While awaiting funding to continue work on further water resource development projects, GGS has added new activities for women and children in rural areas, this year.

**Goat Rearing Program:** GGS team believes animal husbandry is another important source of rural livelihoods. They launched the Goat Rearing program for women in collaboration with the Goat Trust. A group of women visited an NGO, PRADAN in the neighbouring Dholpur district to see how hundreds of women there had become “lakh-patis” by rearing goats. A team of villagers also went to the Goat Trust, Lucknow for veterinary training on goat rearing and breed improvement using artificial insemination.











- Wonderoom Rural Outreach Kendras:**  
 For children in the area, two Wonderoom Rural Outreach Kendras (WROKs) were established, one each at the GGS centre near Karauli town and another at a remote village, Bamuda. Exchange visits were conducted with children from Karauli by bringing them to the RGF Wonderoom in Jawahar Bhawan, Delhi, and children from Delhi going to Karauli for “Sadbhavana with Nature” tours. Children from Karauli schools also participated in I-Parliament program at Delhi. A group of German school students also visited the centre at Karauli.





## Rajpur Village-Dang, Rajasthan: Reviving Agriculture by Rainwater Harvesting

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Rajpur village is located in the rugged valleys of Chamba in the Dang region of Rajasthan. Being deprived of the basic amenities like road connectivity, health, school and electricity, it is one of the enormously backward villages of the Dang region.

Like other villages in the Dang region, Rajpur village also faced a major challenge of conserving water and practicing agriculture due to rough topography. The village lacked know-how on any water conservation methods. Their lands were barren until they were shown a ray of hope by Gram Gaurav Sansthan. The Sansthan in partnership with the Foundation has been actively engaged in creating awareness about rain water harvesting and waste land development by building traditional structures like Pokar, Taal and Pagara in the villages with the community participation using its rural participatory approach. Rajpur village had seen how these structures have transformed the lives in neighboring villages. This inspired the villagers in Rajpur to strengthen their community participation and Gram Samiti to associate with the Sansthan. The Sansthan team supported the village community to construct two structures called Pokhar for water conservation. A Pokhar is a conventional water harvesting structure built by constructing earthen bunds upstream in the nallas, which act as waterways during monsoons. This structure provides water primarily for irrigation and livestock. The Sansthan provided technical and financial support to build these structures in the village (details in Table 1 below).



This was the beginning of joy in the lives of Rajpur villagers. The structures led to accumulation of water which was used for irrigation. The farmers began with sowing of Kharif crop on their once barren lands which became arable due to availability of enough water. Their lands ushered in a bountiful harvest of wheat (details in Table 2) resulting in enough produce for satiating the needs of their families. They had enough fodder for their cattle and easy access to fresh water even in summers. The village even gained recognition in the region and even managed to help a neighboring village by providing adequate water. The elderly villagers in Rajpur believe that water is to be meant to be shared with everyone and they encourage efficient utilization of this precious resource.



This phenomenal transformation was achieved because of the concerted efforts of the community and transparency in the entire exercise. Such stories keep up our teams' spirits and we continue our work to benefit as many villages as possible.

Table 1: Details of Water Conservation Structures

S. No.	Name of Structure	Type	Village	GGs Contribution	Community Contribution	Total amount
01	Patar wali pokhar	Pokhar	Rajpur	71,270	65,666	106,936
02	Bahar wali pokhar	Pokhar	Rajpur	191,827	95,654	287,491
			<b>Total</b>	<b>263,097</b>	<b>161,320</b>	<b>394,427</b>



Table 2: Change in Crop Yield after building structures

		Yield before building structures	Yield after building structures
S. No.	Farmers Name	Wheat (In quintal)	Wheat (In quintal)
1	Safedi Devi	4	60
2	Halke	3	20
3	Raghuva	3	20
4	Razia	3	18
5	Rajveer	3	20
6	Sanju	3	18
7	Vishal	3	22
8	Virender	3	22
9	Khilari	3	18
10	Pappu	3	20
11	Dilli Singh	3	22
12	Bhagwana Singh	4	40
13	Brijmohan	3	40
14	Puran	4	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>360</b>

# Post-Flood Relief and Livelihood Restoration, Jammu & Kashmir

The Foundation carried out relief work during the 2014 floods in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. About 5,000 relief packets (consisting of immediate basic needs) were packed at the office venue and were delivered at the door steps of the affected families. It was later realized that this immediate relief will have to be supplemented with long term restoration activities to enable the affected families in rebuilding their sources of livelihood.



We collaborated with the Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS), an implementing partner organization in J&K to carry out this work in 7 flood affected villages in the districts of Bandipora and Baramulla.

This project is a part of Actions for Sustainable Livelihoods project run by IGSSS in the area.

The project focuses on providing hand holding support to regenerate livelihood of the selected marginalized families by enabling them to have a sustainable income and food security. This includes providing inputs for agriculture, livestock animals, raw materials for artisans and capacity building training.



A detailed baseline survey of 527 families was conducted to select the most affected and deprived families. After supporting 125 families last year, we extended our support to 181 families in 2018-19. The details of key interventions are in the table below:





SUPPORT/TRAINING	BENEFICIARIES	IMPACT/RESULT
<b>Livelihood Support</b>	181 families (details below)	Lead to sustainable livelihood and income generation
Farmers: Provided vegetable seeds, poly-nurseries, vermin-compost	33 families	Increase in yield and food security. Sold their produce and earned an average income of Rs 6837 per family.
Livestock Farmers: Each family was provided with two sheep	102 families	Earned sufficient income by selling wool and sheep rearing.
Artisans: Each family was supported with raw materials worth approximately Rs 15,000.	46 artisan families	40 families have made 79 pieces of carpet (2230 Sq feet) with different sizes and earned an average income of 60,963 INR per family. The average time taken to complete each carpet was found to be less than three months.
<b>Capacity Building &amp; Skill Advancement Trainings</b>		
12 trainings organized for farmers, artisans and other groups	400 participants	Learned new skills and methods. Also, improved their conventional methods.
Training of trainers on livestock management, agriculture and craftsmanship	21 Farmers 21 Artisans 21 Livestock Farmers	Participants disseminated the information to other group members and community members, encouraging them to adopt improved practices.
<b>Other Interventions</b>		
Promoting best agricultural practices through community managed demonstration sites for cultivation of organic vegetables	4 new demonstration sites were added to 3 existing ones.	Techniques of mixed cropping, system rice intensification method of paddy cultivation have helped farmers in improving their crop yield.  Total Production of vegetables worth Rs. 1,25,362/- was reported in this year.
Promoting Backyard Poultry	20 families were identified for this pilot project which was initiated with 50% community contribution. Each family was provided with 10 birds	Improved income generation by selling eggs.

## Other support:

- Farmers and farmer groups were linked and registered with Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Bandipora for technical inputs and precautionary measures in case of emergencies & for crop advisories. They receive regular weekly updates on weather and other crop advisories through SMS service registered by KVK Bandipora with Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST Shalimar).
- **Interface with Government Institutions and Awareness of Govt Schemes:** The project team organized a number of workshops and meetings with Govt departments to link the targeted groups and enhance their awareness about the various government schemes available.
- Awareness program was organized for 35 community members on Public Services Guarantee Act, Right to Information Act and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act to ensure better access and utilization of the government schemes and services.
- So far 20 landless families (daily labours) have been registered & linked with Jammu & Kashmir Board of Construction Workers (JKBOCW) Bandipora for financial assistance and insurance coverage of the families.
- NABARD is now supporting two farmers' groups in Kawpora and Ankhulla villages. The support includes financial assistance of Rs 36,000 to each group for a period of three years. This assistance is being given for developing awareness and also giving them exposure by interaction with experts.

## Raja Begum: A better life with Livestock Rearing

Raja Begum, 52 hails from Zadi Mohallah, a remote village in Barmulla, 25 kilometers away from Srinagar. She lost her husband in 2006 and had been living in a miserable condition with her four children.

The devastating floods of 2014 wiped out Raja Begum's meager sources of livelihood, leaving her completely helpless and shattered.

In 2015, the IGSSS project team visited the village Zadi-Mohallah where they came to know about Raja through the village committee. The project team upon visiting Raja's makeshift home, found her in complete denial, alienated & distressed. Owning a small piece of leased land which was also rain-fed, Raja could not do much on the land and had nothing to depend upon. The project team after making several visits to her home motivated Raja towards life & provided her three sheep as a means to generate income. Days passed as Raja attended several training programs & interactive sessions on livestock management team where she gained knowledge and developed confidence & courage to meet her basic family needs through livestock rearing. Raja, who had lost all her faith, began taking positive strides in life. While narrating her hardships and how life has changed for good with the support of IGSSS, she could not control her tears rolling down her face. Apart from marrying her two children (Showkat Ahmad and Ameena Bano), she sent one daughter (Sakeena) to an artisan center to learn Pashmina weaving and the youngest one (Botola) to school. She earns a good income from livestock rearing and her daughter also gets Rs 5000 per month from her artisan work. She has been able to achieve her dreams including a concrete house for herself and is full of gratitude to the almighty for giving her a chance to improve her life.



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## Mohd Yaseen: Farming with a difference

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Yaseen, 29, from Baramullah is very hard working man and is supporting his large family with his earning. He has three brothers and three sisters besides his aged parents.

Yaseen used to be a daily wage worker in Srinagar to support his family. After the ravaging floods of 2014, his family was supported by IGSSS, he joined a farmers' group and since then has participated in meetings, trainings & thrift management of the group. His continued efforts towards recovery were inspirational to all other farmers in the village.

Yaseen says that the confidence he gained from training program enabled him to turn agriculture from a nourishment activity to an income generating livelihood. Yaseen was supported with seeds in 2018, and has earned Rs 12,000 from the sale of vegetables in the first season. He is now transforming his land of 4 kanals into full time vegetable cultivation plots. He uses organic fertilizer for all his produce and hopes that the sale of his vegetables will fetch more profits given the fact that they are completely organic. He now also develops nurseries for growing vegetable seedlings for commercial purposes.



## Mohd Akbar Pathan: Debt free by Carpet Weaving

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Mohd Akbar Pathan, 52, of Nowgam village of Bandipora is a carpet weaver. He doesn't own any land. He has been living on rent since 2009. His daughter Gulshana is pursuing Nursing at Srinagar while his two sons, Lateef & Mushtaq are studying in the local college and school respectively.

Akbar's wife has been bed ridden for the last five years due to chronic health issues. Akbar has taken a loan of 175,000 rupees in three years from the contractor to meet his daily household expense and to fund his children's education. Akbar states, "I have faced hardships since my childhood and after 2014 floods nothing was left for me to take care of my family. My loom and raw materials were completely damaged by the water and it was very difficult for me to recover after the devastating flood."



Akbar like many others in the village worked for a local contractor and later fell into the debt cycle. With the help of the Foundation, he was supported with carpet making raw materials and capacity building trainings on product development.

Since May 2018, he has earned Rs 73,200 from sale of carpets and is slowly repaying his debts. Over the past two years, he has repaid his debt of Rs 110,000 to the contractors. The support from the project has stabilized his income and has enabled him to live a debt free life.

"I am now able to pay back the debts and it feels that the happiness I had lost some years back is returning to me and my family", says Akbar.

# Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies

**Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies** (RGICS) is the Foundation's policy think tank working on contemporary issues in India. In the year 2018-19, the activities of RGICS were reviewed and reconstituted into five main themes: (i) Equity, Social Justice and Communal Harmony (ii) Growth with Employment (iii) Governance and Development (iv) Environment, Natural Resources and Sustainability and (v) India's Place in the World. The RGICS staffing was strengthened and participation in the discourse with various stakeholders in each theme was significantly enhanced.

## Our Discourse Partners

In RGICS, we engage with a variety of discourse partners. This is born out of our conviction that public policy should be inspired and shaped by what is happening on the ground. Our discourse partners are:

- Members of Parliament
- Policy makers – civil servants, technocrats, regulators
- Policy takers – users, providers
- Narrative opinion leaders- media, academia, civil society
- The common public – citizens groups

## Activities in 2018-19

The activities and work outputs in 2018-19 under five main themes are as detailed below:

### Equity, Social Justice and Communal Harmony

The focus areas of this theme are gender, caste and marginalized sections of society within the larger ambit of social justice and equity. The team produced four Policy Watch issues which covered a range of topics including Reimagining an Inclusive Society for transgenders, Adultery Law, Vulnerable Tribes in India – Examining the Sentilenese Issue, Dilution of SC/ST act, Access to Justice for Disabled Women and Girls.

The team also produced a series of Gender Watch issues to focus on gender equality in India. This series discusses subjects such as the burden of family planning which falls primarily on the women of the family, how contraceptive methods affect women, and the historic Irish vote on abortion. We also discussed the impact of the Maternity Benefits Amendment Act on working women, especially with the decreasing number of women in the Indian work force. Another issue proposed amendments to the Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act 1986 and also discussed the quantum rise of self help groups and the urgent need for stronger political representation of women in India.



A policy consultation event was organized to discuss and highlight the miserable condition of Denotified and Nomadic Tribes and how they are often wrongly accused of criminal cases and continue to suffer from socio-economic and political discrimination. The event saw participation of social activists like Dr Ganesh Devy, Mr Dakshin Charra among others who have been working for the welfare of such tribal communities. They shared their experience and challenges faced in their journey to improve the state of affairs for such disadvantaged communities. They suggested that one of the immediate steps towards building a safe environment is to develop special policies for such people and allocate special funds that can be used for their welfare.



## Growth with Employment

The economic reforms of 1985 and 1991 placed India on a high-growth trajectory. However, India is still one of the poorest countries on earth. To ensure better lives for our citizens, we need to sustain a consistently high growth rate and equity in resource allocation. In our country, social inequalities have always been salient, but with higher growth, economic inequalities are also increasing. Thus, growth has to be accompanied by the generation of high-quality employment. In this theme, the focus is on how public policy can enable widespread growth, especially in those sectors that can create employment at scale.

Some of our observations and research on this theme during the year 2018-19 are highlighted below:

**Jobful Growth in India:** India has been experiencing a situation of “jobless growth”: while the economy is growing at a fair pace, there is a lack of significant job creation to sustain the growing population of youth eligible to enter the work force. Increased unemployment in the country has been widening the gap of socio-economic inequality which has led to widespread frustration among the youth. We used historical data regarding labour elasticity to estimate what sectors and what type of investments can accelerate employment creation. We have also studied multiple possible interventions from the point of view of their efficiency at creating productive jobs, and came out with recommendations about how more jobs can be created while keeping the fiscal deficit under control.

**Structural issues in Employment in India:** Wages and productivity have been diverging. Wage growth has been slower than the growth in productivity. Compounding the high unemployment is the low participation in the labour force. At the same time, India is passing through a “demographic dividend”: a one-time peak in the fraction of the population who are of working age. Thus, India is in the middle of a series of transformational processes: economic, technological, and demographic. Unless these factors are harnessed carefully, our growth may slow down significantly while inequality rises. The government will need to take a more active role in encouraging job creation.

**Jobful Growth for Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh:** We prepared a series of studies on states such as Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan. Initially, we prepared short notes on understanding the growth and employment situations in each of these states. Later, we developed detailed studies of Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, focusing on their economic structure, their unique endowments or opportunities, the past trends in growth, and future opportunities for creating jobful growth.

**All-India Rural Financial Inclusion Survey:** We analysed the new information in the NABARD’s All-India Rural Financial Inclusion Survey, 2016-17. We wrote an op-ed on it which was published in *Business Standard* on the 26 September 2018.

In the article, we pointed out that India is urbanising fast, that only half of rural Indians were farmers, and even those farmers derived a large part of their income from non-agricultural livelihoods.

## Governance and Development

The Governance and Development theme is concerned with the institutions of governance in the country that embody constitutional values and norms such as democracy, republicanism, equality, fraternity, citizenship and human rights. The holistic development of the country is contingent upon steadfast allegiance of the institutions to these values. In more specific terms, this theme is concerned with creating ways in which the institutions can best serve the purpose of holistic development of the citizens. There are three sub themes: 1) Empowering District local self government; 2) Creating efficient federal and legal system; and 3) Rights based mechanisms of citizen empowerment and related programs.

This year, the team under this theme held a consultation on urban issues, made various field visits, such as to Madurai for case study on participatory development at panchayat level; to Ganjam, Odisha for scoping new research project on integrated district planning and development; to Jalandhar, Punjab for pilot study of Samarth Zilla framework development project. We have also worked on a thematic Policy Watch issue on judicial delays concerning National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) as a case; a concept note on Samarth Zilla Study; and an assessment of

financial inclusion efforts in the country, among others.

## Consultation on 'Understanding Urbanisation'

The consultation on 'Understanding Urbanisation' held at Jawahar Bhawan, New Delhi in October 2018 saw participation from people engaged in urban research, practice, leadership and execution from both governmental and non-governmental domains. The participants included former Lok Sabha MP Kumari Selja; Director of JAGORI Suneeta Dhar; prominent writer on minority rights Dr. Ghazala Jamil; former Commissioner of Planning at Delhi Development Authority Ashok Kumar Jain; Professor Kajri Misra of Xavier University Bhubaneswar; Senior Fellow at Centre for Policy Research Partha Mukhopadhyay; Director of RGICS Vijay Mahajan; Director of Ross Centre for Sustainable Cities Madhav Pai, and others.

The consultation yielded deep insights into challenges in contemporary urban governance with multiple perspectives being voiced on a common platform. The solutions to the issues identified were also put forward and debated at the event, which were categorised into four domains, viz. Devolution, Representation and Civic Engagement; Financing; Capacity for Planning and Management; and Employment and Social Aspects.

The details of the consultation have been compiled into a report 'Understanding Urbanisation: A Consultation at RGICS', available at our website, <http://www.rgics.org/consultations/>.

## Environment, Natural Resources and Sustainability

This theme focuses on contemporary issues related to climate change, sustainability and natural resources especially water, forest and land. Our work on these issues attempts to analyze policies and their implementation from people's perspective, their experiences and learning. Under this thematic area, we focus especially on following three sub themes.

- Water, Forests and Land (Jal, Jangal, Jameen)
- The Trade-off between economic growth and sustainability

- Climate change and India's response

Our activities under this theme for the year 2018-19 are as follows:

### Green Watch:

We produced three issues of the theme based policy watch titled Green Watch. We attempted to provide quick, short and analytical updates on policy issues related to environment, natural resources and climate change. We extensively covered issues related to pollution in Ganga, development at the cost of environment in Uttarakhand, depleting ground water resources and river basins.

## Seminar, Consultations and Networking

### Making Environmental Issues more Salient in India's Politics:

We organized a dialogue 'Making Environmental Issues more Salient in India's Politics: Lessons from the European Green Movement' on January 09, 2019 at Jawahar Bhawan, New Delhi. Over 45 people participated from different backgrounds including politicians, academicians, activists and professionals. Participants deliberated on reasons behind non-politicization of environmental issues in mainstream politics of India and strategies to politicize them.

**Re-Greening India-Water for All:** RGICS in collaboration with Indian Association of Club of Rome organized a one day seminar on the issues of water resources and its crisis on February 23, 2019.

The following issues were discussed during the course of the seminar:







- Prospect for ensuring water for all when demand of utilizable water is increasing and supply is declining in addition to adverse affects of climate change.
- Knowledge gap and practical difficulty in designing and implementing policies to ensure water for all.
- Required policy reform and institutional restructuring to ensure water for all by 2025.

Apart from these two formal consultations, we reached out to a wide number of groups and organizations working on issues of natural resource and environment. These groups include Ganga Avhan, Matri Sadan, Jal Biradari, Tarun Bharat Sangh, People Science Institute and other groups of Ganga Activists and professionals on water resources in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Delhi, Gujarat and Haryana. We also made proactive efforts to engage with organizations working on forest and forest rights issues in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

### Aviral and Nirmal Ganga

We believe that the formation of public policy should be inspired and shaped by what is happening on the ground. Therefore, we proactively attempt to engage with our discourse partners to strengthen policy research and debate. In 2018-19 we undertook the issue of the river Ganga. We strongly feel that rivers should flow uninterrupted (Aviral) and Clean (Nirmal). We engaged with many activists and organizations

and provided them with platforms to interact and discuss their issues with other discourse partners such as media, policy makers, people dependent on the river Ganga and the general populace.

RGICS also provided research inputs to various organizations and activists working on issues related to the Ganga. We also created system to highlight issues of Ganga through mainstream and social media. Apart from this, we documented two videos; titled Major Challenges before Dying Rivers in India and Uniqueness of National River the Ganga and Policy Proposals.

### India's Place in the World

In an increasingly connected world, the nation-state is less sovereign today that it was ever before. Some of the most consequential issues today – climate change, terrorism, international trade, or global violations of human rights – cannot be dealt by any country in isolation. Under this theme, we work on how India can engage deeply with the rest of the world to protect its interests and to promote global peace and security.

We focus especially on these three sub-themes:

- China, particularly on trade and investment
- International organisations – the United Nations & its organs, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change & Green Climate Fund.
- Indian diaspora and soft-power



The key activities in this year include the following:

- A study to develop a strategy for “Chinese Goods-Make in India and Create Jobs” has commenced. India has a serious problem on its hand in the face of a trade deficit with China of almost USD 65 billion. The policy makers will have to find ways to manage this deficit given that India can neither afford to limit its economic engagement with China nor continue with such huge bilateral trade symmetry for a long period of time. A strong manufacturing sector and localization of hitherto imported Chinese goods is very critical for the creation of jobs considering the increasing number of employable workforce in the country.
- A consultation with Chinese entrepreneurs and industry associations was organized to discuss the problems faced by them. Another consultation was focused on attracting investments and industry from China in the states of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- We invited Mr Bambawale, former Indian Ambassador to China to discuss the relations and future prospects between India and China.
- The team also prepared a study proposal to carry out a comparative study of the Rise of Right Wing in Germany and India.

### Ganga Sadbhavana Yatra

Various activists and organizations working on the Ganga river basin have been demanding for Aviral (uninterrupted flow) and Nirmal (Clean) Ganga. They have been arguing that damming of different tributaries of Ganga has adversely affected biodiversity and aquatic life. It has therefore badly affected the livelihood of poor and marginalized communities who were dependent on the river. To mobilize people around these issues the RGICS pushed forth the idea of a Yatra (Ganga Sadbhavana Yatra) from Gangotari to Gangasagar.



While RGICS played an instrumental role in conceptualizing, designing, research input and mobilization through social media, Mr. Rajendra Singh (Also known as Waterman of India) led this Yatra. It started on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 from Gangotri and culminated on January 12, 2019 at Gangasagar in West Bengal. The yatra also witnessed the sad demise of Ganga activist Swami Sanand (Prof GD Agrawal) who fasted unto death to realize the promise on an Aviral and Nirmal (flowing and clean) Ganga.



## Exercising Democracy: Lessons from Kambur, Tamil Nadu



In December 2018, a team from RGICS visited Kambur Gram Panchayat of Madurai District in Tamil Nadu, wherein, driven by a group of local youngsters and forced by distress in livelihoods, people of this Gram Panchayat have begun to organise themselves into something like a movement. A team of youngsters has mobilised people to raise their issues at Gram Sabha and utilised the Right to Information Act 2005 and Panchayati Raj Information Accounting software (PRIASoft) to make process of questioning government officials and passing resolutions a purposeful one.

Kambur village panchayat is located in Melur block of Madurai district of Tamil Nadu. It comprises of 7 small habitations or villages.

Agriculture is the major occupation of the residents. As per the residents, two habitations have faced acute shortage of water in recent past. A considerable number of youngsters have migrated to gulf countries and also to other districts for want of meaningful livelihoods. The elections of PRIs have not been held by the state government since 2016. The functions of the Kambur panchayat are executed by the Panchayat Secretary on directions of the Block Development Officer (BDO) of Melur block.

Addressing the concern as to making the panchayat processes inclusive, people from Kambur have deployed strictly issue based dialogue as a method to include traditionally marginalised groups such as women, so called lower caste persons, and economically weaker sections or poor. Women, emboldened by the experience of self-help groups, often lead these dialogues. All the activities pertaining to Gram Sabha are circulated among the population using WhatsApp, Facebook and other platforms.

As to holding government accountable, residents have used MoPR's PRIASoft (Panchayati Raj Institutions Accounting Software) and the Right to Information (RTI) Act to audit the expenditures undertaken, question the panchayat officials and mobilise people to attend Gram Sabha meetings.

The participation in Gram Sabha meetings of Kambur panchayat has been steadily on the rise from middle of 2017. Since then, no Gram Sabha meeting has concluded without adopting at least one resolution, which articulate felt needs of the community. As opposed to seemingly national trend of meagre attendance in Gram Sabha meetings, meetings of Kambur panchayats echo far with questions from women and men gathered without consideration to caste or class. As we were told, this was not the case almost a couple of years ago.



# Audited Financials 2018-2019

## RAJIV GANDHI FOUNDATION BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31, 2019

Particulars	Schedule	As at March 31, 2019 ₹	As at March 31, 2018 ₹
<b>SOURCES OF FUNDS</b>			
Corpus fund	1	1,008,818,584	1,007,881,835
Restricted fund (Unutilised grant balance)	2	3,692,999	4,982,275
Unrestricted Fund	3	122,973,586	126,039,059
		<b>1,135,485,169</b>	<b>1,138,903,169</b>
<b>APPLICATION OF FUNDS</b>			
Fixed assets	4		
Gross block		19,174,331	21,508,876
Less: Depreciation and amortisation		17,164,507	19,024,641
Net block		<b>2,009,824</b>	<b>2,484,235</b>
Investments (at cost)	5	1,076,915,057	1,075,955,057
Current Assets, Loans and Advances	6	70,290,232	70,881,398
Less: Current liabilities and Provisions	7		
Current liabilities		4,442,326	1,407,202
Provisions		9,287,618	9,010,319
		<b>13,729,944</b>	<b>10,417,521</b>
Net current assets		<b>56,560,288</b>	<b>60,463,877</b>
		<b>1,135,485,169</b>	<b>1,138,903,169</b>

Summary of significant accounting policies and notes to accounts 12  
The schedules referred to above form an integral part of the Balance Sheet

As per our report of even date attached  
For Haribhakti & Co. LLP  
Chartered Accountants  
ICAI Firm Registration No: 103523W/W100048

  
Mayur Gupta  
Partner  
Membership No. 505629

Place : New Delhi  
Date : June 28, 2019



For and on behalf of  
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation

  
Vijay Mahajan  
Secretary & CEO

  
P Chidambaram  
Trustee

  
Sonia Gandhi  
Chairperson

  
Sandeep Anand  
Director-Finance



**RAJIV GANDHI FOUNDATION**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019**

Particulars	Schedule	For the year ended March 31, 2019 ₹	For the year ended March 31, 2018 ₹
<b>INCOME</b>			
Income from investments	8	80,992,778	89,408,171
Grants and donations		9,591,266	5,768,000
Other income		314,054	1,949,724
		<b>90,898,098</b>	<b>97,125,895</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Program implementation expenses	9	74,649,549	72,685,316
Administrative expenses	10	17,718,878	17,937,800
Non cash expenditure	11	1,595,144	1,782,573
		<b>93,963,571</b>	<b>92,405,689</b>
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus for the year</b>		<b>(3,065,473)</b>	<b>4,720,206</b>

Summary of significant accounting policies and notes to accounts 12  
The schedules referred to above form an integral part of Income and Expenditure Account

As per our report of even date attached  
For Haribhakti & Co. LLP  
Chartered Accountants  
ICAI Firm Registration No: 103523W/W100048

  
Mayur Gupta  
Partner  
Membership No. 505629

Place : New Delhi  
Date : June 28, 2019



For and on behalf of  
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation

  
Vijay Mahajan  
Secretary & CEO

  
P Chidambaram  
Trustee

  
Sonia Gandhi  
Chairperson

  
Sandeep Anand  
Director-Finance

# Donors

Bharat Forge Limited  
Bharti Foundation  
Christy Friedgram Industry  
DCM Shriram Ltd.  
Jindal Steel & Power Ltd.  
Max India Foundation  
Patton International Ltd.  
Pirojsha Godrej Foundation  
Rajiv Gandhi National Relief and Welfare Trust  
Tata Steel Limited  
Torrent Power Limited  
TVS Motor Company Limited  
Dr. B S Somara

# Partners

## **RGF partners having outgoing grants for the Financial Year 2018–19**

Bhasha Sanshodhan Prakashan Kendra  
Crayons of Hope Foundation  
Gram Gaurav Sansthan  
Indo Global Social Service Society (IGSSS)  
Institute of Livelihood Research and Training  
Khwai Social Development Organisation  
Mullai Vattara Kalanjiam  
Sir Syed Trust (SST)  
Society for Action Research for Accelerated Livelihood Services (Saral Services)

## **RGF INTERACT Work partners for the Financial Year 2018-19**

Aman Biradari Trust  
IRDC - Baby Saraha's Home  
Khwai Social Development Organisation  
Ratna Nidhi Charitable Trust



# RGF Team Members 2018-19

## Secretary & CEO

Mr Vijay Mahajan

## Staff Leadership

Mr Sandeep Anand  
Mr Ajay Sharma  
Mr Dhiraj Srivastava

## Program & Support Teams

### Heritage, Outreach & Public Engagement

Mr Saurendra Krishna Gupta  
Mr Pankaj Kumar  
Ms Ankita Shukla  
Ms Akansha Kumari  
Ms Pratibha Gautam  
Mr Deepak Mathur  
Mr Rajneesh Bisht

## Education

### INTERACT

Ms Sujatha K P  
Mr Rajesh Kumar Verma  
Ms Anam Hassan  
Ms Vibhuti Sheopuri

### Rajiv Gandhi Cambridge Scholarships

Ms Sujatha K P

### Wonderoom

Mr Raju Paswan  
Mr Rajneesh Bisht  
Mr Ashwani A. Masih  
Mr Namik Sherpa  
Ms Neelam Awashti  
Mr Pratul Vasistha  
Ms Anju Sharma  
Ms Geeta  
Mr Sushil Kumar  
Mr Kalicharan

## Livelihoods

### Rajiv Gandhi Access to Opportunities Program

Mr Parmanand Bhatt  
Mr Vinod Sharma  
Mr Narender Singh

### Restoring Rural Livelihoods by Regenerating Water Resources

Mr Mohd Uzair Khan  
Mr Deepak Mathur

### Post-Flood Relief and Livelihood Restoration, Jammu & Kashmir

Mr Mohd Uzair Khan

## Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies

### Director

Mr Vijay Mahajan

### Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions

Dr BL Munekar  
Dr Ms Sushree Panigrahi  
Mr Piyush Kumar  
Ms Subhrali Kachari  
Mr Somprabhu

### Growth with Employment

Mr Vijay Mahajan  
Mr Prasanth Regy  
Mr Jagmeet Singh

### Governance and Development

Mr Prasanth Regy  
Mr Yuvraj Kalia  
Ms. Neha Panchpal

### India's Place in the World

Mr Vijay Mahajan  
Ms Mona Dikshit

### Environment, Natural Resources and Sustainability

Mr Vijay Pratap  
Mr Jeet Singh  
Mr Sanjay Shrivastava  
Ms Jasleen Kaur

### Communications & Fund Raising

Mr Vaibhav Walia  
Mr Gopi  
Ms Surabhi Parekh  
Ms Cicily Francis

### Knowledge Management

Ms Vinita A. Masih

### Finance & Accounts

Mr Sandeep Anand  
Mr Mohd Uzair Khan  
Mr Mohd Wahid  
Ms Anupama Rawat  
Mr Basant Kumar

### HR, IT & Administration

Mr Ajay Sharma  
Ms Rini Banga Nag  
Mr Parmanand Bhatt  
Mr Madhaw  
Mr Suresh Pal  
Mr Bachitter Singh  
Mr Vinod Kumar Verma  
Mr Kasim Raza  
Mr Anoj Kumar  
Mr Suresh Prakash



The map above shows the Foundation's all India network of social activists built for its Sadbhavana Program:

**Jammu & Kashmir:** Mr Raja Muzaffar Bhatt, Mr Aijaz Ahmed Sofi, Ms Kaneez Zehra;  
**Haryana:** Mr Vinod Sharma; **Delhi:** Mr Rajneesh Bisht, Ms Vibhuti Sheopuri; **Rajasthan:** Mr Rajanikant Kad,  
 Mr Jagdish Gurjar, Mr Radha Krishna Singh, Mr Samay Singh; **Uttar Pradesh:** Mr Deepak Mathur,  
 Mr Anshu Malviya, Ms Jagriti Rahi, Mr Anoop Shramik, Mr Anoop Maurya; **Bihar:** Mr Shahid Kamal;  
**Assam:** Ms Diana Raj Kumari, Mr Dilip Sarma; **Manipur:** Ms Diana Raj Kumari; **Gujarat:** Mr Rajanikant Kad;  
**Madhya Pradesh:** Mr Lakshman Senanee, Mr Safi Sheikh; **West Bengal:** Mr Sudip Mitra;  
**Chhattisgarh:** Mr Manoj Mishra, Mr Gautam Bandopadhyaya; **Odisha:** Mr Manoj Mishra;  
**Maharashtra:** Mr Syed Zahid Ahmed; **Telangana:** Mr Mohd Iqbal; **Karnataka:** Mr Ashok Maridas;  
**Kerala:** Ms Cicily Francis; **Tamil Nadu:** Dr Ms Nirmala S



## RAJIV GANDHI FOUNDATION

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