Aangan Impact 2014

A model to prevent and respond to trafficking and serious harm:

- Parent Groups
- Girl Safety Groups
- Boy Safety Groups
- Responsive Government Officials

Reaching the most vulnerable children:

**Across 11700 Families Associated with Trafficking, Child Marriage, Hazardous Work and Violence and Abuse**

- 9230 children are from schedule caste groups
- 3050 children from schedule tribe groups
- 12300 children from other backward classes
- 2772 children from minority religions
- 2348 children from migrant parents

**Across 57 Rescue Homes in 6 States**

- 2934 girls rescued from trafficking and other serious harm were reached

*Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes comprise historically disadvantaged groups of people and are recognized by the Constitution of India for affirmative action

Aangan does prevention and response work in 6 states to promote safe communities for children. Across 300 households each in 39 communities, Aangan works with children who are vulnerable to hazardous or exploitative work, trafficking, early marriage, violence and abuse. They live in migrant communities, by garbage dumping grounds, railway tracks, and have little or no access to services like education and health. In 57 government shelter homes, Aangan works with children who have been rescued from serious harm.

Children Reached: 57116
**Vulnerability type**

- Inter-locality & Inter-state Trafficking for Hazardous Work
- Child Marriage
- Sex Trafficking
- Hazardous Work
- Violence and Abuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children at risk in communities</th>
<th>5400</th>
<th>6000</th>
<th>6900</th>
<th>7500</th>
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<td>Children at acute risk who are a part of safety networks</td>
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<td>2376</td>
<td>2326</td>
<td>3606</td>
<td>4881</td>
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<td>Serious harm cases identified and responded to</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>88</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Outcomes:**

- **Alert, Informed and Engaged Communities**
- **Empowered, Resilient and Supported Children**
- **Proactive and Responsive Government Officials**
- **Coordination: Linking Communities to Government Systems & Welfare Services**

**Children reached**

- 57,116
  - Attended Shakti safety networks: 12,868
    - Prevention work: 9,934
    - Response work: 2,934
  - Family work though PACT: 40,541
  - Attended Chauraha safety networks: 3,707
    - Prevention work: 2,744
    - Response work: 963

Accessed schemes and services: 40,333
Serious harm cases identified and responded to: 208
ALERT, INFORMED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

309 child protection workers trained

Aangan’s PACT program trains barefoot community child protection workers to recognize, prevent and respond to harm. In each of the 39 hotspots, groups of 6 child protection workers are trained and empowered to be alert to child protection issues such as early marriage, trafficking, violence and abuse; and hazardous work, to share information and mobilize support for action; and to activate government systems and services to promote children’s safety and protection.

Baseline – End-line Survey with PACT Workers

- Have you ever got together with others in the community to take up child protection related issues?
  - Before: 32% Yes, 68% No
  - After: 97% Yes, 3% No

- Do you believe you can do anything to make the community safer for children?
  - Before: 26% Yes, 74% No
  - After: 100% Yes, 0% No

- Do you know of any government efforts like laws, government schemes or appointed officials meant to ensure your child is safe?
  - Before: 18% Yes, 82% No
  - After: 5% Yes, 95% No

- Can you approach government officials?
  - Before: 17% Yes, 83% No
  - After: 1% Yes, 99% No
PACT workers across 39 hotspots are trained to work with 50 families each, identify risks, proactively respond to child harm cases, link communities to child protection officers and ensure access to key government schemes and services. Shakti activators are trained to independently mobilize vulnerable girls, facilitate and sustain girl safety networks.

Through 636 Parent Circles and Community Help Desks, PACT workers have shared information with 23631 adults who are now alert and aware about risks and protection issues faced by children in their communities.

Identified and ensured response/support to 208 children in situations of serious harm or risk like sexual violence, abuse, trafficking, abandonment and neglect.

Children with no identification proof now have birth certificates and can access any welfare scheme, get enrolled into school and most importantly, have an identity.

Children have benefitted from accessing and registering for government welfare and child protection schemes and services.

Out-of-school or dropout children are now enrolled and attending school regularly.

Juhi, 15, ran away from home in Arrah in Bhojpur district, Bihar, ending up at the Patna railway station. A rickshaw puller, on the pretext of getting her work, was attempting to take her to his house at night. An alert Shakti girl in Kaushal Nagar, Patna noticed the girl with the man and notified the PACT workers.

Knowing several residents here are traffickers, and the buying and selling of children is a traditional practice in the community, they were worried for Juhi’s safety. PACT workers then reached out, stood up against the auto driver and took her to one of their houses and contacted the police. In the absence of a woman police officer, they decided not to go to the police station till morning. Next, they contacted Childline and Juhi’s mother. Worried about her daughter, she travelled to the city to take her home.

BRIDAL BUSINESS

When PACT workers in Kazzakpura, Varanasi realized that child marriage was being used as a front for trafficking, they decided to build awareness among community adults, make adolescent girls alert to warning signs, and strategize on approaching religious and government authorities.

Find out more: [http://youtu.be/U1ADQTrWvUc](http://youtu.be/U1ADQTrWvUc)

EMPOWERED, RESILIENT AND SUPPORTED CHILDREN

16575 children reached

Aangan runs Shakti girl safety networks and Chauraha boy safety networks to link isolated and at-risk children to a peer network that aims to build resilience and empower children. Here, they develop educational, vocational and safety plans for themselves, participate in community safety projects, and develop negotiation skills to resist pressures of child marriage or hazardous work. They do this by learning about rights and entitlements, articulating their aspirations and accessing key services. Safety networks run every fortnight through the year and are typically attended by 60 girls and 40 boys per community every month.
Of 12868 girls:

**Baseline survey of 1129 Shakti girls**

- 95% never approached a government official
- 53% they were not able to negotiate with their families
- 48% could not express themselves to their families
- 64% were scared of speaking their minds to their families.

Of 3707 boys:

**Baseline survey of 300 Chauraha boys**

- 65% believed that boys don't get sexually abused
- 96% were not aware of any laws, schemes or protective services related to children.
- 86% believed that a woman's most important job is to look after the children and cook for the family.

Note: End-line survey currently being conducted

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**Of 9934 girls:**

- 95% girls rescued from trafficking, abuse and child marriage across 57 shelter homes are now engaged in safety networks and have a comprehensive development plan taking into account specific needs like their education, training, leisure and emotional needs.

**Of 2934 boys:**

- 9934 adolescent boys are connected to positive peer groups, challenged perceptions of manhood, identified and worked through their individual risks, created and implemented life plans and have strengthened relationships with adults, community and government.

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**Forced to drop out of school to stay at home to look after her younger siblings, Shabana, 15, was isolated and cut off from her peers, her life restricted to the tin walls of her house in Wadala, Mumbai. After joining Shakti, Shabana became aware of girls' rights and entitlements, and the dangers they faced from early marriage, violence, abuse and trafficking. Over a period of three months, she negotiated with her family to go back to afternoon school, and was connected to a girl safety network.**

When she heard that her school friend Ashiana's engagement was being arranged, she decided she couldn't stand by and watch. The wedding proposal was from an older man in Uttar Pradesh, who was offering to bear all the expenses of the wedding. Shabana was concerned that her friend was not only being forced to marry before 18, but was also at risk of being trafficked under the guise of marriage. With nine girls from school and her Shakti circle, and one of the girls' mothers, Shabana persuaded Ashiana's mother to cancel the engagement, and to start sending Ashiana for Shakti group meetings.

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**17 AND OVER: SABEENA'S STORY, MUMBAI**

Married with child and abandoned by her husband, 17-year old Sabeena finds new hope, aspiration and the courage to negotiate with her parents to achieve her goals after joining Shakti girl safety network.

Find out more: http://youtu.be/NtmRogrnUs0

**BREAKING BAD: RAHUL'S STORY, BHOPAL**

By finding a mentor and engaging in conversations to identify risk, 17-year old Rahul develops a sense of self identity, self protection and self respect after joining Chauraha boy safety network.

Find out more: http://youtu.be/_M_BoYgbut0

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**PROACTIVE AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

414 government officials and key service providers, who have interacted with community adults, are accessible to community-based child protection workers and respond to information from the community.
Murshidabad, West Bengal, shares a border with Bangladesh and has been identified as one of three high-risk districts for trafficking in the UN’s District Human Development Report, 2009. It also has the highest incidence of kidnappings and abductions in the state, according to the National Crime Records Bureau - 579 cases in 2012 of which the majority 464 cases were of women and girls.

When PACT workers became aware that the Nazirchawk Primary School in Bhagwangola, Murshidabad, was not giving children the midday meal, they decided to flag the issue with the school. In the absence of the midday meal, they were worried about children dropping out of school, staying at home unsupervised, and at heightened risk of being trafficked. Isolated at home, they would be cut off from any safety network. The midday meal scheme of the Ministry of Human Resource Development was envisioned to ensure retention of children in school, along with seeing to their nutritional needs.

Following PACT meetings on the School Management Committee (SMC) in which its function in ensuring that key services are provided to children was discussed, PACT worker Jyostna Bibi decided to raise the issue with the school principal. With the support of other PACT workers, she met and advocated with the principal to start SMC meetings which were not taking place, and urged him to start providing the midday meal. Despite initial resistance, they maintained pressure through regular follow ups and 195 children attending the school are now staying in school and receiving the midday meal.

In Jehangirpura, Sehore, Madhya Pradesh, through the efforts of PACT workers over six months, a legal aid centre was set up in their village in January 2015. In the absence of this critical service, community members were being forced to travel long distances to the city to pay for even basic legal advice. There was also no recourse for poorer, disadvantaged families who had filed charges of violence and abuse but had no legal representation.

At one of its earliest Community Help Desks, PACT workers invited the Sehore district law officer to engage with the community. After the Help Desk, community members regularly stayed in touch with her for legal aid. Through meetings with PACT women and community adults, the officer recognized the urgent need for setting up free legal aid services in the community, so that even disadvantaged groups would have access at their doorstep and recommended the higher authorities to set it up in Jehangirpura. PACT worker Shobha Lodhi, has been appointed the first village paralegal worker.

**COORDINATION: LINKING COMMUNITIES TO GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS & WELFARE SERVICES**

By activating government systems and services, community members are supported to hold authorities accountable for ensuring that child protection mechanisms are functioning. This reduces the risk of children being cut off from the community and devoid of any network or support system—factors which exacerbate the risk of running away, trafficking and harm.

**Education**

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Located in one of the most backward regions of the country, Chandauli has very few services (like schools, medical facilities), or employment opportunities. Most families here subsist on surrounding forests for their livelihood. Chandauli’s proximity to the borders of Bihar, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh also make it a transit point for trafficking, with agents luring families to send their children away on the pretext of getting them jobs. Sometimes, the lure is just a mobile phone. Entrenched poverty in conjunction with the absence of government social protection schemes, puts children at heightened risk of being trafficked for labour or sex.

To increase access to government schemes and hold authorities accountable for child protection, PACT workers and Shakti activators raised the issue of erratic service provision at the anganwadi centre. A key service, the anganwadi provides health check ups, immunization and nutritional supplements to vulnerable women and children; so that children receive the critical early childhood care that they are entitled to.

PACT workers believed it was imperative to activate this service for the health and safety of women and children, who are often the most at risk in poor communities. This would ensure that families would not have to consider sending their children away to access this basic service.

PACT workers began advocating with the gram panchayat and the anganwadi supervisor for the anganwadi worker to conduct timely health checkups, and provide nutrition supplements to mothers. Through repeated follow-ups and by mobilizing the community, the anganwadi worker registered 90 children.

An urban basti (slum) by the banks of the river Ganga in Varanasi, Rajghat comprises a largely migrant population from schedule caste groups who work as manual scavengers or as daily wage workers. The community has historically had little or no responsiveness from the police - the first point of contact with the justice system. As a result, incidents of violence and abuse against children have largely gone unreported, with police often refusing to file a First Information Report (FIR).

Recognizing the importance of working with the police, PACT workers have been activating this critical group, inviting them for PACT parent meetings to facilitate dialogue between the police and community and having discussions on rights and laws.

As a result of these interactions, when PACT worker Anita heard that a young girl had been found lying unconscious by a pond, showing signs of physical and sexual abuse, and was not from their community, she turned to the police for help. She contacted the woman police officer she had interacted with through PACT.

When the girl gained consciousness, she told them she was 16 years old, and had run away with a 27-year old man from her community. She had been promised marriage, but was abandoned by him. Anita and the police officer reassured her that she should go home, and that they would speak to her family first. They contacted the girl’s family, who were glad to have news of their daughter. They arrived the next day and took her back home.

Bharlai adjoins the Shivpuri railway station on one side and is located just off the highway to Varanasi. Due to the proximity of the community to highway and station, the majority of children engage in loading and unloading trucks and goods trains. Most children drop out of school after completing their primary education. At the monthly meeting with community adults and through the PACT workers’ weekly meeting, this was identified as a protection issue.

PACT workers approached the District Development Officer, and were introduced to an officer of the Literacy Mission who came to the community for a meeting. A list of 150 children was shared with the officer and 25 children have been given books and study material. The aim of this mission is to provide functional literacy to those in the 15-35 age group.

PACT workers and Shakti activators also approached the Principal of the neighborhood St Joseph’s school, and 50 children who work at the railway station lifting coal and clearing garbage, have been enrolled in school.

In Kazzakpura, Varanasi, children are engaged in the hazardous work of sorting through garbage at one of the biggest dumping grounds in the city. Others drop out of school to start working on power looms from the age of 7 or 8. The nature of work, lack of opportunity and proximity of the community to a national highway and major railway station has resulted in children being coerced to run away in the hope of better employment.

To build a safety net and address the issue of high numbers of missing children PACT workers held a Community Help Desk on Operation Smile- a month-long campaign to trace missing children conducted by the Uttar Pradesh police from January 1-31. PACT workers compiled a list of 69 children from the community - those reported missing, orphans, children living on the street, working as rag pickers, involved in begging - and the details were shared with the police.

By working with the police on this central government initiative, PACT workers hope that missing children who are vulnerable to situations like abuse, exploitation, child labour and trafficking will be traced, rescued and rehabilitated.