

Sanchal Foundation

Annual Report 2017-2018

This is the second year running that Sanchal Foundation has been facing tightening financial constraints but a profusion of assistance from well-wishers and donors, both directly and indirectly, has enabled it to continue with many of the diverse activities that it has been engaged in over the last few years. The various activities undertaken in 2017-18 are briefly outlined in this annual report.

Community Support

Support to the two regional nodes at Ahmadabad and Vishakhapatnam had to cease this year because of the financial difficulties, and the outreach of the Foundation's Delhi central node (at Hazards Centre) was curtailed somewhat because three valuable and senior members left the Centre. However, some of the activities in assisting community groups that the researchers were able to continue with, as well as some new ones, are as follows:

- Collecting details of traffic accidents from the New Friends Colony police station in the neighbourhood of Sarita Vihar and National Highway Authority of India to analyse the pattern of accidents in order to give recommendations to the Delhi Transport Corporation Workers Unity Centre on how to avoid accidents at the entrance and exit of the bus depot there.



- Developing a format with the Bawana Sangharsh Samiti for assessment of damage to about 200 hutments at Bawana resettlement colony because of fire (this is the third fire in the last ten years and every time it appears the fire spreads because of the materials used for construction) enabling most of the affected families to avail enhanced compensation (Rs 25,000 per family) from the government.
- Conducting a survey with waste-pickers associated with the Wastepickers Welfare Foundation at Ghazipur landfill to determine the prevalence of plastics discards in the landfill. This was undertaken in order to collectively decide how much value was accruing to the waste-pickers and what could be their claims to the municipality for their services based on the value of the labour put in for transport and segregation and then sending for recycling.

- Contributing to workshops on health and sanitation with community groups and field workers at Anand Vihar, Seemapuri, and Jhilmil, and a collective seminar at the Nehru Yuvak Kendra in collaboration with Centre for Advocacy and Research.

- Holding workshops on the public distribution system, education, housing, gender, water supply and drainage, livelihoods, skill development, data analysis and documentation with community groups from Bhalaswa, Rohini, and Bhati Mines, with a collective experience sharing at the end at the Gandhi Peace Foundation.



- Making presentations on Solid Waste Management in Motilal Nehru College; the Role of the United Nations in Governance at Step-by-step School in NOIDA; measuring Electricity Consumption and testing Water Quality with Nagrik Mandal at Nagpur; Participatory Research methodologies with interns of Hyderabad Urban Lab; and Environmental Management for Cities with policy makers and scientists at Hyderabad.



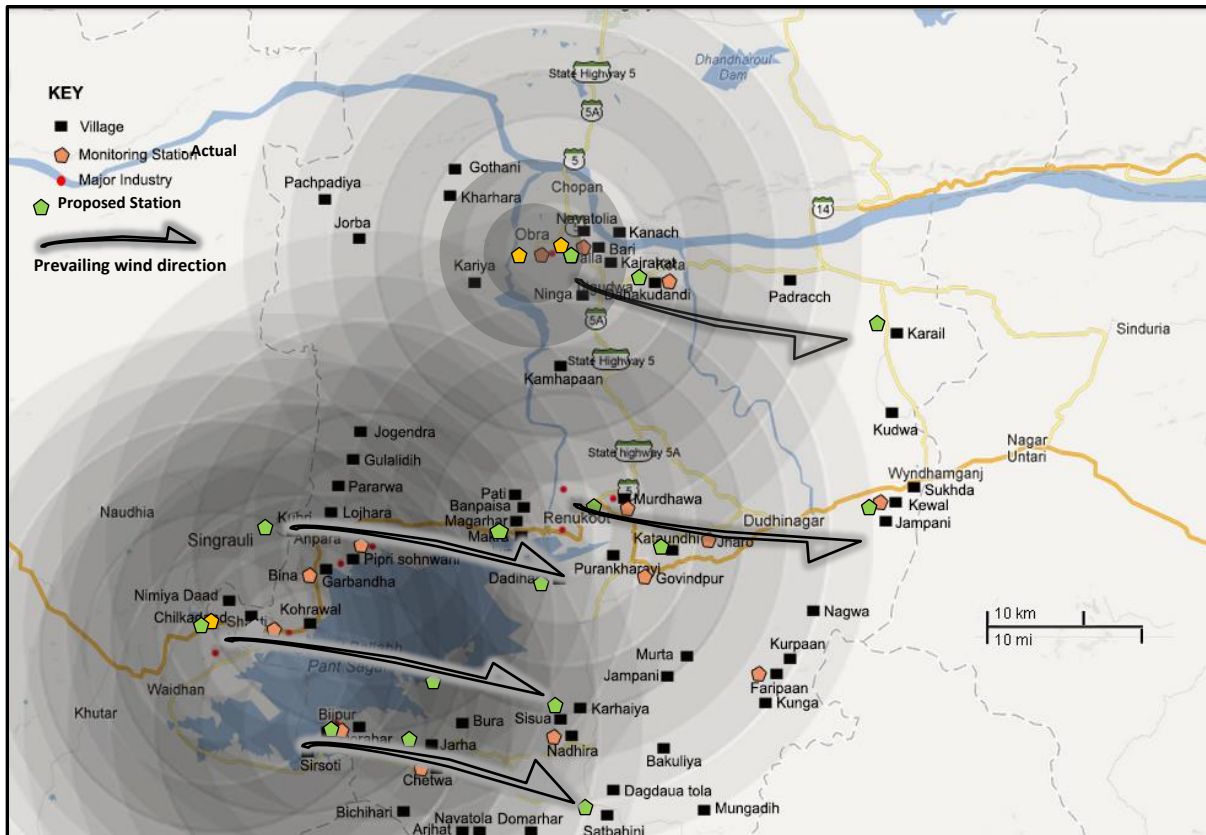
- Participating in several workshops and meetings with members of Bhule Bisre Kalakar Industrial Production Cooperative Society and residents of Kathputli Colony, following the demolition of the settlement in November 2017, to help analyse the redevelopment plan, the different petitions in the High Court, and the conditions in the transit camp. The purpose was to understand the possible ways of getting adequate resettlement as well as challenging the redevelopment process.

- Managing the volunteer program with five interns who added to the body of documentation on the Juvenile Justice system, waterlogging in Delhi, emissions from waste to energy units, research on agency of the child, Smart Cities, cheap food from community kitchens, air pollution in Delhi, and participatory surveys.

Community Knowledge

The process of generating people-led research at Sonbhadra, the “energy capital” of India, in association with the Banwasi Sewa Ashram, continued this year with the installation by UrbanSciences of 14 ATMOS sensor-based devices, to measure PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ within four industrial clusters and their impacted areas. The data, measured through the four winter months from October 2017 to January 2018, indicated that there was a background pollution level at almost all locations well above the permissible levels and increasing occasionally to 5 to 6 times

the safe standards. In addition there was a diurnal variation with peak concentrations in the morning and evening reaching up to 10 times the standards, and particulates were seen to be carried by the plume to over 30 km away from the source stacks.

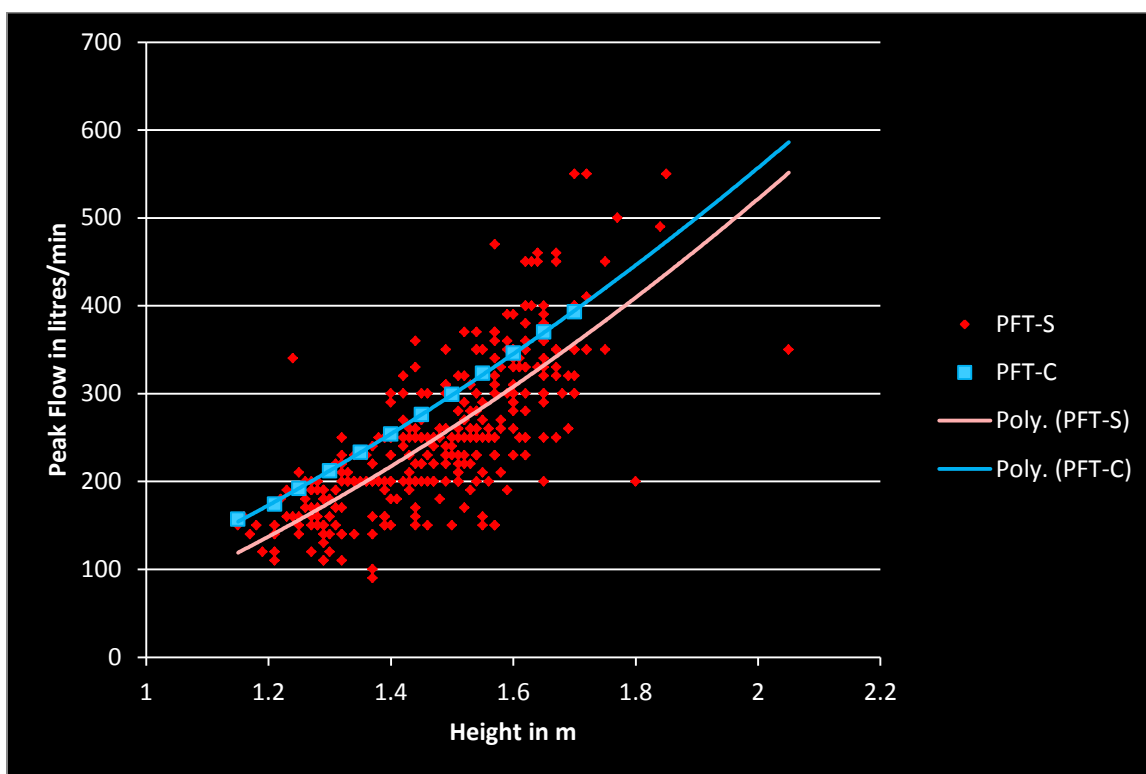


When the pollution data was compared to the results of a health survey conducted in 52 villages in the region in 2016-17, it was seen that there were correlations between abortion rates, lung function, and yellowing teeth to the levels of particulate matter. It was planned to present all the findings before the Singrauli Pradushan Mukti Vahini later in 2018 to strengthen their demands before the National Green Tribunal and the Uttar Pradesh Government for strong measures to check the existing pollution from the industries as also to cease all future expansion. In the meantime a workshop on mining, mineral-based industries, and air pollution monitoring was held at the Banwasi Sewa Ashram campus in Govindpur with several other civil society groups from different parts of India to share the Sonbhadra experience with them.

In Delhi, in continuation of the preparatory work last year, and in association with the People's Science Institute, Dehradun, 15 Airveda sensor-based devices (continuously monitoring PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ levels) were installed at as many locations around the city in, or as near as possible to, schools where children could be contacted and involved. The original design was to conduct the study in collaboration with Delhi Government schools but the attempt fell through because the Delhi Environment Department declined to cooperate. The data from October 2017 through to January 2018 revealed that there was base pollution load all over Delhi that is about 3 times the permissible levels for particulate matter. And this could spike up to over 10 times on specific

days, including Diwali night. In addition, there was a diurnal variation with two peaks in morning and evening hours and a significant drop in the afternoons.

To assess whether the sensor was reliable, the data was cross-checked against the nearest high volume sampler data available from official sources and there was a slight variation in levels but the patterns were almost identical. With this reassuring finding, workshops were held at 11 locations and peak expiratory flow rate of 343 children below 19 years of age measured at these locations. 80% were seen to have a flow rate lower than the normal values for a paediatric sample of children in the European Union. Children's lungs were in somewhat better shape in the southern and northern peripheries of the city where traffic densities were lower. This study points towards the value of large crowd-sourced pollution impact studies and also the necessity for developing low-cost methods to do source-apportionment studies – this is something that Sanchal will take up in the coming year.



The Hazards Centre has also received requests from Aajeevika Bureau, the Kotda Adivasi Sansthan, and the Pathar Gadhai Mazdoor Suraksha Sangh for conducting low-cost health and safety audits in the stone-carving industry at Pindwara and the stone-crushing industry at Beawar, where silicosis is reported to be rampant and little work has been done to reduce the exposure to fine particulates by redesigning work processes and tools. Some preparatory work done by the Centre's researchers has indicated that efforts to reduce energy use and redesign of power tools at Pindwara and some improvements in housekeeping and retrofitting safety measures in the equipment at Beawar could substantially reduce exposure levels for workers. Collaborative efforts to carry out time and motion studies and particulate measurement at both locations have begun and the Rajasthan Government Labour Department has expressed its strong support.



It is expected that these efforts to link up pollution and its generalised impacts to the safety and health of workers will bear greater fruit in the coming year as the attempt to develop an energy measurement meter in collaboration with scientists at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi come to fruition.

Collective Efforts

Larger social change requires many organisations to come together for larger collective efforts. The Foundation has been attempting to help set up, as well as participate in, platforms where this united action can be promoted. In this context, the Foundation's researchers participated in the following activities through the year:

- Analysis and recommendations for proposed changes in several labour-related legislations (Wages, Industrial Relations, Labour Exchanges, Mathadi & Hamal, Domestic Workers, Social Security) as part of the Working Peoples' Charter process initiated by a joint platform of unorganised workers, trade unions, people's movements, and voluntary organisations.
- Consultation in Trivandrum on zero waste management initiated by the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, which resulted in an exploration of how Waste to Energy projects compared with Informal Methods of Waste Management with respect to impacts on climate change, livelihoods, health, and land, and the publication of a monograph on *Waste to Energy* along with a set of three related posters.
- Writing an essay on Industry and Workers based on the work of the Foundation in a collective effort to produce a set of papers on what are the possibilities for development, published by Authors Upfront as *Alternative Futures: India Unshackled*, edited by Ashish Kothari and K J Joy.

- As mentioned earlier, the Sajha Manch – a collective of groups working in different fields on a range of issues in Delhi – was revived last year; and this year workshops on accounting procedures, Right to Information, education, housing, ration shops, livelihoods, and education were held at Holambi Kalan, Seemapuri, Wazirpur, Bhalaswa, and Rohini.



- Four community researchers supported by the Sajha Manch held over 180 workshops and meetings at different locations including Jahangirpuri, Jaipur Golden, Rohini sector-3, Holambikalan, Nehru Camp, Baljeet Nagar, Gopalpur, Samaipur Badli, Haiderpur, Shalimaar gaon, Kalandar Colony etc, on housing policies, relocation, sanitation, education, and governance; the report on oral histories was compiled; a film was produced on '*Hard Work Pays?*'; and a study completed on cheap kitchens in the city.
- Members of the International Council for Traffic Safety International (ICoRSI), set up by the Foundation, participated in training programmes for data recording of traffic accidents by the police, in a workshop on Traffic Safety in Vietnam, and an International Symposium on Road Safety Around the World; sponsored courses in Injury Control and Traffic Safety in Johannesburg, Transportation Planning and Road Safety in Delhi, Traffic Safety Principles for Engineers in Mumbai; and published a status report on *Road Safety in India*, and discussion papers on *Global Road safety Issues*, while maintaining a website and a Youtube channel.



Children and Agency

The first report of this project on examining the Agency of Railway Children, in association with All India Working Group: Rights of Children in Contact with Railways and Praajak, based on schedules administered to over 2000 children at 127 stations by field workers of 40 organisations working with children, was completed early this year. The findings strongly supported the observation that the majority of children were *not* runaways but either lived with or remained in contact with their families. Hence, the mainstream paradigm of 'rescue and return' would not be applicable to three-fourth of the sample for the study. In addition, the children were expressing agency in terms of making choices within the available options for coming to station, livelihood, shelter, visiting home, finding support groups, and dealing with harassment. A presentation made before 30 Deputy Superintendents of Police posted as District Level Nodal Officers of Special Juvenile Police Units in the Gujarat State Child Protection Society was well received.



This phase of quantitative data collection was followed by a set of 62 interviews at five stations in different zones by carefully selected and oriented teams composed of a Core Researcher and an Academic Researcher each. 48 case studies from these interviews – the remaining could not be used because consent had not been given by the child concerned – were then structured around the five themes of agency that had emerged from the quantitative phase: how the children left home for the station, what they did at the

station, how they were harassed, what factors enabled them to survive, and what glimpses of the future do they have. The draft report of both phases is ready and is being circulated widely for comments before it is disseminated and finalised for a National Consultation with policy-makers next year. It is hoped that it will make a rich contribution to child-related policy recognising the agency of the child.

Administration & Finance

It is fitting to mention that much of this year's work was done with a drastically reduced team of 7 researchers, 4 part-time consultants, 4 community researchers, and 1 administrator through most of the year. The Foundation is proud of having such a team of dedicated and hard-working professionals. The functional office also had to be shifted out of our familiar territory of Munirka to a farmhouse in Chattarpur because of financial exigencies and some time was lost in effecting this shift along with over 20 years of documentation, records, and publications. The unfortunate demise of the Foundation's trusted and dependable Auditor of many years, Sudhir

Varma, during this period further complicated the transition. Several informal internal workshops were organised to improve the understanding and effectiveness of the team in these changed circumstances and they have responded in full measure. During the closing months of this year it was also decided to begin compiling the many stories of community empowerment and knowledge generation that are contained in our records and the first such story is currently being collected by the first of what we hope will be many volunteer researchers.

For the year 2017-2018 the Foundation received Rs.39.5 lakhs, all of which was received from Indian institutions and individuals who responded with great sympathy and concern for the work that the Foundation has been doing over the years. The Foundation is deeply grateful to the Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives, Guru Ganga trust, Tata Trusts, AmerIndia, Gansagar Ratandhan Trust, Chawla Techno Construct, and numerous individuals who provided small grants and donations (in cash and kind) to keep the Foundation active. Of the total receipts, 96% could be spent in this financial year. And just under 84% was spent on programme expenses. The year began with an opening balance of Rs.55.3 lakhs and closed with a balance of Rs.61.1 lakhs. Of this about Rs.33.5 lakhs remain unusable in the foreign account; an outstanding balance of Rs.4.8 lakhs has to be reimbursed by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung.

**HOW MANY PRODUCE SIMPLY,
SO THAT WE CAN REDUCE SIMPLY?**

**OUR CHOICES:
REDUCE?**



BURN?



**RECYCLE?
DUMP?**



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