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One of the buzzwords in the non-profit world is ‘scale’. Many donors and policy makers believe that in order to have impact you need to be large. This is not necessarily true. There are many organizations across the country that are small, but which have large impact on the communities they serve. These organizations are lean, rely on a lot of frugal innovation and come up with innovative solutions to tackle the problems they face today. CORO is one of them.

CORO is 29 years old, but we are small when compared to many other organizations. We are not large, both in terms of number of employees and in terms of annual budget. But when we look at the impact we have had over this period we see a very different picture. The community leaders of our Women Empowerment program work against violence and discrimination in 8,000 households and have registered over 600 civil cases. Our Gender Sensitization program has reached 400,000 students in Maharashtra government schools. And our fellowship program has trained over 1,100 grassroots leaders over the past 10 years.

Of these Leaders, 70% are women, 69% come from marginalized communities and 41% haven’t finished high school. We recently sat down to analyse the impact that these leaders have had in their communities and the stories that emerged are amazing.

There is Ramu Hidami, a grassroots leader from the 2016 batch, who worked with his community in Lavhari village to get an income of over Rs. 1 crore for his village by selling bamboo plants.

There is Ashalata Pande, a single mother who faced many restrictions. She fought and got her husband’s property in her name. She is now actively leading CORO’s Single Women’s Organisation which has over 5,000 members.
There is Mangal Kamble, who worked on ensuring that women are registered as joint owners of houses in her village. Her work then spread to 40 villages in Kolhapur, benefitting 9,000 women who are now registered joint owners of their homes.

There is Anuya Kulkarni, who mobilised 2,500 villagers from 3 villages and they together made the government rethink and change the proposed site of a dam.

There is Vishal Pawar, who is a key activist of organisations that are leading the fight against atrocities on victims in Ahmednagar district.

There is Ganga Javarkar, a tribal girl who struggled to complete school. In 2014 she was elected Village Sarpanch of Ranamalur gram panchayat. She focused on local infrastructure, agriculture livelihoods and gender biases. In 2018 Ganga won the Best Sarpanch Award from the State Government.

There is Dwarka Pawar, who worked on entitlements and the development of the Pardhi Community near Ahmednagar, focussing on education, health and identity. Today she is leading the campaign on Pardhi development in Northern Maharashtra.

These are just some of the examples of the work our Leaders have gone on to do after their Leadership training with CORO. Additionally, our Right to Pee, Work to address Water Scarcity, and Single Women campaigns are all designed and led by Leaders who have come up through the program. These stories highlight the fact that impact is not necessarily about you becoming bigger, but that the satellites that you help create draw strength from each other and grow in their own orbits. By working with like-minded organisations (CORO has worked with around 300 organisations) we create networks of networks and, thereby, build capacities mutually. This can be a more cost-effective way to create impact. And by influencing policy through this process, the impact of the collective action can be even larger.

This would not have been possible without the support of our communities, our partner organisations, our donors and the CORO team. Thank you for your support.

Luis Miranda
President, Board of Trustees
We are immensely happy to share this annual report.

We will be soon completing 30 years since our inception. What CORO does today is in many ways personification of who we are and how we evolved over the last 25-30 years. Almost obsessed with shifting the prevalent paradigms of the ‘grassroots’, the CORO team has been striving hard for recognition, respect and active hope of grassroots change-makers and change-leaders.

We strive for facilitating initiative for change ‘from within’—from within individuals and within communities.

Our trust in expanding the ‘power within’ for individual and collective transformations is at the core of all our interventions, programs and processes.

The communities that we worked with have consistently pushed us and shaped us to be where and how we are. This stimulus-response-stimulus interaction has been instrumental in CORO being relevant to the communities. The mutual trust generated thus has enabled CORO and communities (together) to challenge their limitations and push their boundaries. The learning from this process is that ‘community ownership of the solutions to their issues is the key to real and sustainable change’.

Sujata Khandekar, Founder-Director, CORO
Anwari Khan our friend and colleague from the Baiganwadi informal resettlement, had approached CORO 10 years ago for redressal of her daughter’s marital violence. After a year of being with CORO, because of a serious altercation in her community, somebody asked her to bring CORO team members for discussions on the matter. She said, “To merese baat karo na. Main hi hoon CORO se” (Then talk to me, I am from CORO)... We have been working with this ethos consistently.

We are very thankful to our many funders for supporting us in our explorations. Facilitating deep social change can never be a project, it’s a process and the process is nonlinear, non-traditional, informal, relational, evolving and iterative and high levels of trust are crucial for such explorations. Without trusted support of our funder-cum-partners we could not have been where we are.

We feel very privileged to have a passionate, committed and vigilant board of directors. The board has always made us realize that governance is all about health and growth of the organization.

We are working on our next phase plans. Collaborations with other organizations working on similar issues with different capacities to explore each other’s strengths for higher impact is on our mind.

We look forward to continuous and evolving support from all of you in future.

Sujata Khandekar
Founder-Director
Dear Friends,

The popular saying goes: a leopard can’t change its spots. In our case, we may have officially changed our name from ‘Committee of Resource Organisations’ to ‘CORO India,’ but we remain committed to our identity as a resource organization. These resources are our team’s intangible knowledge and skills and their tangible outputs that enable us to facilitate social change. In this past year, we have been pursuing three essential strategies: the creation of new, more sophisticated resources, the enhanced transfer of resources to the grassroots, and the expansion of our network of like-minded resource partners.

Throughout our work, our team collaborates extensively to write proposals, plan interventions and provide mutual support. A prime example of how we leverage collaboration for resource creation was the crafting of a new set of training modules for our whole-village sensitization program on gender issues and protection of child rights. The entire CORO team, including our facilitators from the field, along with our partners all lent their varied and unique knowledge from years of experience to create a fantastic training program.

Our mandate as facilitators of social change is to pass on our collected resources to the grassroots.

Our team keeps growing our collective knowledge resources by pursuing further education, technical certification and educational experiences like the Right To Pee campaign’s filing of Environmental Interest Litigation for the first time, which has brought us into a new realm of advocacy.

Our mandate as facilitators of social change is to pass on our collected resources to the grassroots. Initially, our team facilitated the process of challenging social discrimination with grassroots change-makers. These individuals have now become Leaders in their own right, taking the reins of facilitation themselves. Our Leaders work according to CORO’s philosophy of inclusive, grassroots-led change —
whether as saheli in the Single Women’s Organisation, members running Case Registration Centres in our Women Empowerment Program, or mentors in the Grassroots Leadership Development cohort. Remarkably, our grassroots activists now cross-pollinate, as seen in Satara district. There, the youth groups formed by the Gender Sensitisation Program have joined forces with our Water Scarcity initiative. Their involvement has brought great energy as well as an enhanced focus on women’s and child rights.

To be a resource hub, we must build our network of like-minded partners and friends. This year, CORO hosted the “Politicizing the Personal” conference and the “Collaborative Knowledge Creation” workshop in collaboration with the Research Centre for Women Studies at SNDT College and Tata Institute of Social Sciences, respectively. These two events greatly expanded our network of fellow organizations and individuals working on gender-based violence, grassroots knowledge, and social justice among other topics. We are eager to strengthen these promising relationships and explore future collaborations.

Finally, we remain deeply thankful for the invaluable support of our well-wishers, partners and friends. Together with you, we remain committed to striving for equality and justice for all.

In Solidarity,
The CORO India Team
Since 1989, CORO India (formerly, Committee of Resource Organisations), has become one of the country’s foremost organisations in grassroots leadership and activism. CORO has grown from local implementers working on adult literacy in Mumbai’s slums to a resource organisation with expertise on gender and grassroots leadership development. We now focuses on integrated community development, in particular, addressing issues identified by the community itself. Today, CORO has developed a model programme on grassroots leadership development programme. We run a program on domestic violence specifically focused on changing social norms that perpetuate and justify violence against women and also work on child rights within school and community settings.

We believe in trusting in people’s innate leadership abilities to collaboratively create solutions to address the issues faced by their own communities. CORO facilitates this process of change, working and learning together with the communities we work in. Our extensive experience is grounded in empowering women, nurturing leadership from within marginalised communities, and sensitising young people on gender issues. Additionally, through our flagship Quest Grassroots Leadership Development Program (QGLDP), we have added several regional campaigns under our umbrella, including Single Women’s rights, Right to Pee for sanitation and public amenities, and groundwater management in drought-stricken areas. Our total outreach population is over 2.5 million, including a network of 1100+ grassroots leaders, 183 active women’s groups (including Mahila Mandal and Self Help Groups) and 23,000 public schools.

MISSION
We work towards an equal and just world by facilitating leadership from within the most marginalized communities to steer entitlement-based collective actions for social change.
WHERE & WHO

CORO is headquartered in Mumbai with field interventions throughout all districts of Maharashtra and 14 districts of Rajasthan. We have 70 full-time team members, 51% of whom are women.

70 Team members 51% Women

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Founding Director & Secretary

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Trustee

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BUDGET OVERVIEW

YEARLY EXPENDITURE

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<td>2016-17</td>
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<td>2017-18</td>
<td>₹4.90 Cr</td>
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TOTAL REVENUE 17-18: ₹3,97,79,190.22 INR
TOTAL EXPENSES 17-18: ₹4,89,84,704.42 INR
WE STAND FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE, WITH PROGRAMS THAT ADDRESS ISSUES SUCH AS WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, DEFENDING THE RIGHTS OF THE MARGINALIZED, IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS, ACCESSING NATURAL RESOURCES AND HOLDING THE SYSTEM TO ACCOUNT.
In India, marginalised communities such as Dalits, Muslims and tribals face debilitating poverty and social discrimination. Gender, sexuality, disability and other factors also intersect with marginalisation. India’s constitution and laws guarantee certain rights to citizens, but often the communities that could benefit most are unaware of or unable to avail these entitlements. Marginalised communities therefore remain excluded from mainstream development.
WHAT WE DO

The 18-month Quest Grassroots Leadership Development Program (QGLDP) is designed to scale the capabilities of grassroots leaders to steer change in their communities. First, we identify motivated individuals with the potential to challenge inequalities and transform societies. During the 9-month training period, we facilitate modules that cover understanding oneself, advocacy, and project management. These are followed by practical assignments to crystallize the learnings in the leaders’ own communities. Meanwhile, we develop these leaders’ community-based organizations in parallel to foster opportunity and inclusive growth. In the later 9-months of the training program, each leader is given the support to design and implement their own project for social change.

OUR LOCAL TEAM

Highly motivated and experienced in social development

MENTORS

Seniors from the fellow’s organisation

LEADERS

Team member at a grassroots organisation selected for the program

WORKSHOPS

Intensive residential training & peer learning for fellows, mentors & CBO heads

PROJECT

On the ground implementation of learned skills

MENTORING

Regular, 1-on-1 support on the project’s progress

OUR UNIQUE STRATEGY

Although the program is technically of a fixed duration, our leaders keep striving for change long after the eighteenth month. In our 10 years of operation, we have facilitated the development of 1100+ grassroots leaders from over 280 organizations in Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Delhi. Many of our leaders return as mentors for future cohorts, and many more become involved long-term in our ongoing regional campaigns. Therefore, the program is strengthened as a whole by the deep-rooted expertise of a broad support network of grassroots leaders.
The recruitment of the 9th QGLDP cohort was an extensive process. Applicants were shortlisted, then their communities were visited to gauge the potential and perspective of each candidate in their workplace. Finally, group discussions and one-on-one interviews were conducted. For CORO, formal education, experience, and age are not factors in recruitment. Rather, candidates are selected on the strength of their motivation for working in their communities.

Our Organizational Development (OD) process fortifies our leaders' human resources by including the mentors and heads of their grassroots organizations. The core values of the OD processes are equality (in gender, caste, and other social dimensions), transparency, and a non-judgemental and non-threatening approach. Through capacity-building sessions, workshops, and conferences, CORO facilitates the leaders of grassroots organizations to enact inclusive, participatory and impactful interventions in their communities.

Our trainings cover various types of advocacy, including the power of legislative advocacy to create sustainable change in society. This year, our team organized a mock parliament assembly to practically demonstrate legislative proceedings and how to bring people’s issues to their elected representatives. The cohort of leaders each took on roles like MLAs, Ministers, Speaker, and the general public. The session had an outstanding impact — a few leaders approached their local MLAs advocate for issues they were working on. The lobbying technique they learned in the training proved its effectiveness and some of the leaders were even invited to the July assembly session.
Every morning, Ganga Javarkar gets up, gets on her Bullet motorbike, and visits the villages under her care in Melghat of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. As the sarpanch (village head), she discusses with the locals their concerns, and earns their trust through her hard work to find resolutions.

Ganga was born in the Koraku tribal community. From a young age, Ganga worked as a daily-wage labourer to help her widowed mother. She could not afford to continue her education after 12th grade, but took up work as a coordinator in social organizations on issues like primary education, child labour and single mothers. She thrived in this people-centric, social work but could not make a living from it. So, leaving this job, she started farming her own land. Since Ganga was a natural leader, she was always on the forefront to resolve any problem in her village.

Ganga applied for CORO’S QGLDP in 2010, on ‘Livelihoods under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme’. Ganga started her work during the training program in 15 villages, conducting meetings and asking questions like: What are the sources of livelihood? How many of them own farmland? How many of them work in others’ fields? How many are unemployed? She compiled all the information and presented it to the local tehsildar (revenue officer) to advocate for employment benefits. Through QGLDP, she enhanced her ability to coordinate with people and navigate the government system. By the end of her fellowship, Ganga’s working area had scaled up from 15 to over 50 villages.

“If I want to create lasting change, it must be through the political process.”

“If I want to create larger change, it must be done through political participation.” This belief spurred Ganga stand for local election, winning the position of sarpanch in 2013. As sarpanch, Ganga prepared a priority list of the concerns of her four villages about water, electricity, roads, and so on. With the remaining funds, installed solar panels in public places. Soon after, a local group awarded Ganga the title "Melghat chi Vaghin" (Tigress of Melghat). Melghat is a local forest famous for its tigers. In 2018, Ganga was awarded the state-wide Lokmat Sarpanch Award for her work on women’s security.

Ganga has a big vision for her hometown. Along with basic amenities, she wants to build toilets in each and every house. She always involves women in participatory discussions around her ideas for improvement. Ganga knows that she alone cannot bring change, so she has created a task force to help anyone in need, day or night. Today, Ganga has taken on even more responsibility. In addition to her position as sarpanch, she is Director of the Melghat Agricultural Produce Market Committee and Vice President of the Tribal Cooperative Society.
A Leader's Journey

Ganga is re-elected sarpanch of Ranamalur.

2017

Ganga is elected sarpanch & is also awarded the title "Melghat chi Vaghin" (Tigress of Melghat) by a local group.

2013

Ganga receives the state-level Lokmat Sarpanch Award for her work on women's security.

2018

FROM TOP LEFT TO BOTTOM RIGHT:
Ganga is elected sarpanch in 2013 • Recipient of the "Tigress of Melghat" award by the Marathwada Literature Association • On her trusty Bullet motorcycle • Leading a march in 2017 for water for farmers' livelihoods • Holding a village meeting on water issues • Receiving the 2018 Maharashtra Lokmat Sarpanch Award • Marching for women's security
TESTIMONIAL

"CORO has engaged in a transformation process with community organisations through its development by empowering the teams and organisation heads to think strategically, have a long-term vision and also fulfil the statutory requirements."

— Gazala Paul, Consultant, Paul Hamlyn Foundation

CHANGE BY THE NUMBERS

30% PROGRAM APPLICATION ACCEPTANCE RATE

150 LEADERS IN 17-18 COHORT

120 TOTAL HOURS OF RESIDENTIAL TRAINING

64% WOMEN LEADERS IN 17-18 COHORT

70% SC/OBC/TRIBAL LEADERS IN 17-18 COHORT

300,000 POPULATION IMPACT OF 17-18 COHORT PROJECTS
Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread human rights violations in the world. It takes many forms, including sexual, psychological, and economic. The most common is physical violence inflicted by an intimate partner, i.e. domestic violence. Due to entrenched social norms that rigidly enforce gender roles of male dominance and violence versus female subordination and silence, most incidences of VAWG are never reported. India’s patriarchal society restricts women’s sexual rights through ideas of shame and honor which contributes to the acceptance of violence as a means of control.
WHAT WE DO

CORO’s anti-VAWG intervention program is being intensively implemented in urban Mumbai (6,000 households), peri-urban Nashik (1,000 households) and rural Ahmednagar (1,000 households) in Maharashtra. Given the responsibility of 250 households in their locality, CORO’s women leaders work through the Case Registration Centres (CRCs) to facilitate dialogue between family and community, mediate conflicts, and take legal action if required. Each of our 32 leaders responsible for her CRC is supported by a local Self Help Group, *Mahila Mandal*, and a community taskforce. The program’s objective is to challenge the harmful social norms embedded in the family, community, and system (police, administration, and judiciary) through simple behavioral strategies.

OUR UNIQUE STRATEGY

Our greatest strength and source of sustainability is that the program is totally led and implemented by the local women leaders. CORO facilitates their skill and capacity-building, but their success is due to their integration into the community. Another core strength of the initiative is the focus on engaging men throughout, as men are vital stakeholders in the mission to eradicate VAWG. Religious leaders in the community are also brought on as key resources in anti-VAWG efforts.
CORO and Majlis Legal Centre organized a curriculum, “Main Bhi Hoon Advocate” (I Am Also An Advocate), for our community leadership team working with domestic violence. In these sessions, our leaders learned how to follow-up on these cases themselves through the process and timeline of filing cases under the Domestic Violence Act. 25 women leaders attended all 10 sessions and were provided with certificates.

Our women leaders were trained on the use of a smartphone app for conducting an endline survey of 735 community households. The survey measured socioeconomic factors alongside the prevalence of various forms of domestic violence. In addition to training the Women Empowerment leaders on how to collect data and use a smartphone app, this experience built their confidence as capable individuals who can navigate technology and typing.

Triple *talaaq* - also known as “irrevocable divorce” - is a controversial practice of some Muslims in India, and has been recently criminalized. In response to the court ruling and widespread misinformation, CORO organised a community awareness meeting to engage men on the issue. The *Malauna*, a local Muslim religious leader, who is associated with CORO led the discussion, which included Muslims, Dalits, men and women. In a riveting and broad ranging discussion, he explained *talaaq* in relation to the Quran and Indian Constitution, tackled the stereotypes about Muslims, and noted that triple *talaaq* went against women’s rights and dignity.
TOP:
Anti-VAWG training with hospital staff.

MID LEFT & RIGHT:
Inter-community meeting on triple *talaq* & ~200 girls created posters protesting VAWG

ABOVE:
~400 community people marched in the women's security rally

RIGHT TOP & BOTTOM:
Maulana Mohammed Hussain speaks on engaging men & CRCs leaders receive certificates of paralegal training with Majlis
"Majlis conducted a Para Legal Understanding for Social Workers Course to empower the women leaders of CORO to negotiate for legal rights of women and children. The 25 women who attended the certificate course were strong, passionate with a zest to help women facing violence.

— Adv. Audrey D'mello, Director, Majlis Legal Centre
SPECIAL CAMPAIGN: LEARNING COMMUNITY

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<th>START YEAR</th>
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<tr>
<td>REGION</td>
<td>Mumbai (Chembur/Trombay)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FUNDER(S) IN 2017-18</td>
<td>EMpower - The Emerging Markets Foundation</td>
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HER SPACE TO PLAY

The Adolescent Girls Learning Community program in Mumbai is supported by our partners at EMpower (The Emerging Markets Foundation) and involves 8 organisations across the city, including CORO. The program aims to amplify girls voices and increase their visibility and safety in their communities. Along with enabling interventions led by girls, the program also invests in networking and capacity-building of the involved organisations.

"Convincing our parents was hard, but now I am so happy playing cricket and football with my friends. Here's my challenge to every girl - come outside and play with us!"

MONICA
Learning Community Youth Leader & Cricket Star
CORO’s Learning Community girls are drawn from our Women Empowerment Program’s areas of intervention. Uniquely, CORO also includes boys in Learning Community initiatives, while ensuring that girls are centered throughout. We believe that ending gender discrimination requires engaging young people across all genders for sustainable change.

HIGHLIGHTS (2017-18)

Girls’ Cricket Matches

For the first time, eight girls’ teams were included in a local cricket tournament. Initially, the girls were hesitant because they considered cricket a “boy” sport. But they overcame their self-doubt and soon were winning medals. Their parents, who had been skeptical, were very proud and started to take them seriously. According to one girl, “Change is slow and needs constant follow-ups, but now we have confidence and a place to play.” Bit by bit, they are steadily claiming their own space.

Make My Space

Girls movements are restricted in many public places, like playgrounds, schools, the neighborhood, and police stations. To counter this, our girls identified spaces where they risked violence and eve teasing. They went to police stations to demand street lights in the dark spaces and painted the walls of these areas with positive messages. Parents and boys from the community also joined the girls in this activity. The success of the campaign was celebrated by a flash mob at a train station. The girls expressed their joy and right to claim public spaces through dances and music in the heavy rains.
GENDER SENSITIZATION & CHILD RIGHTS

START YEAR: 2008
REGION: Satara, Beed and Nunderbar districts of Maharashtra
FUNDER(S) IN 2017-18: Educo

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Our new initiative takes a whole village approach to equipping adolescents, young adults, and duty bearers with gender sensitive child rights awareness.

CORO’s several decades of experience facilitating gender sensitisation sessions has revealed the young age at which gendered norms that perpetuate inequity and violence are internalized. That’s why it is necessary to work with children to examine and challenge gendered attitudes when they are still forming. But in order to fully engage young boys and girls in a gender transformative approach, a supportive, conducive environment is required at school, at home, and in the broader community.
WHAT WE DO

In a new initiative, we are implementing a whole-village approach to gender sensitisation and the protection of children's rights. Our team is working in 50 villages in three districts across Maharashtra, facilitating sessions on gender, sexuality, violence, and children's rights for the adolescents, young men, and young women of the village. Additionally, we are assuring that the duty bearers such as Village Child Protection Committees (VCPC) are tasked with the well-being and safety of youth are also being sensitized and held to account.

OUR UNIQUE STRATEGY

By simultaneously facilitating group-wise sessions with adolescents, young men, and young women, we concertedly work on planting a deep understanding of the interconnections between gender roles, sexuality, violence, and human rights. The sessions are supplemented by calls to action for the youth to work together to create a change that is specific to their community, such as bringing their issues to local government councils, spearheading campaigns to end open defecation, preventing child marriages, and much more.
TAILOR-MADE MODULES

The new whole-village model required a revamp of our resources on the gender sensitisation of young people in the low-income settlements of Mumbai to be made applicable to a rural context and include the focus on child rights. CORO convened a series of collaborative workshops that included our team in Mumbai, session facilitators in the field in rural Maharashtra, partners at Educo, and key resource persons to write new training modules for the new initiative. The modules were created through a rigorous three-step process: workshop drafting, expert review, and pre-testing in the field. The finished modules were deeply enriched by the extensive preparation.

CHILD PROTECTION

A new, explicit focus on child rights has led us to create a Child Protection Policy for our work with children. In this policy, we explicitly lay out our commitment to preventing violence and mistreatment by fostering a safeguarding culture that promotes the dignity of children, their comprehensive development and wellbeing. We also set procedures in place for preventing and responding to cases of violence or mistreatment.

ACTIVATED YOUTH

Across the intervention, 438 young women and 501 young men are now involved through active youth groups. The youth groups take up the topics such as gender roles, the division of labour, violence, etc., in the sessions and practically apply them to situations in their communities. Youth groups have the freedom to choose whichever issues are the most pressing and meaningful to them. Their campaigns have included taking on child marriage, alcohol addiction, and open defecation. These groups are vital to enerating our population of rural youth to take part in social and political activism.
Lakkadkot is a village in Nandurbar, straddling the border between Gujarat and Maharashtra. CORO has conducted the Meena Raju Manch program for the gender sensitisation of school children for two years in this region. We are now launching our new whole-village child rights protection model there, and our team has established close ties to the local people. When an underground sewage channel from Gujarat was scheduled to be built through Lakkadkot, the villagers who would lose their land to the project brought their grievance to CORO.

CORO organised a village-wide meeting to discuss the planned construction. Many of the villagers had only learned that their land was to be taken away when the government issued a notice claiming ownership of their land. No one had been informed that this channel would carry hazardous substances including sewage, and that leakages could cause severe damage to people’s health and the environment. Both the gram panchayat and local government had been grossly negligent in their duty to provide this vital information to the residents of Lakkadkot.

In response, the CORO team facilitated the community to demand answers from the government, or they would obstruct the work. The Lakkadkot youth cohort was engaged to launch a movement to gather evidence against the sewage channel’s construction. The gram panchayat was also sensitised about their duty to inform the villagers that their land was to be seized for the project. With CORO’s support, the entire village has revolted against the construction of the channel until the possible outcomes are made clear.

Rajesh, GSP’s regional coordinator in Nandurbar, noted, “Before CORO’s intervention, Lakkadkot was a fragmented village where people were unwilling to offer aid to their neighbours. CORO began the necessary work to empower the villagers to band together to help each other in solidarity.”
TOP LEFT:
In Lakkadkot, gram panchayat and VCPC members are trained on child rights.

TOP RIGHT:
Session activities include village mapping of areas where children feel safe.

ABOVE:
This boys & girls group in Satara help build check dams to replenish village groundwater.

RIGHT:
Village schools like this one are a vital center for our gender sensitization interventions.
"CORO's work touches the emotional part of the person, which is so unique as they blend the professional aspect of work so beautifully with personal human emotions. The work they do becomes etched in the minds of the people they work with and the people they interact with.

— Deepali Bhattacharya, Program Manager, Educo

### CHANGE BY THE NUMBERS

- **31** Young Women's Groups
- **28** Young Men's Groups
- **255** Local Governing Officials Trained
- **72%** of Village Child Protection Committees Formed
- **100%** of School Management Committees Sensitized
Many public and community toilets throughout the city are poorly maintained, unhygienic and in harassment-prone areas.

In Mumbai, women not only have fewer toilets to begin with, but must also pay more than men for the same usage. On top of this, public toilets have poor hygiene and are often unsafe. The system stakeholders responsible for urban sanitation are largely insensitive, even dismissive, in the face of these basic violations of equal rights to dignity, health, and access to public space.
The Right To Pee (RTP) campaign was formed to advocate for free, clean, safe public urinals for women in Mumbai. RTP frequently collaborates with a variety of agencies, from urban design firms to the municipal corporation of Mumbai itself. We also work towards sensitizing system stakeholders through gender mainstreaming training of municipal sanitation officials. This is complemented by grassroots awareness-generation that increases people’s participation in accessing, monitoring and maintaining sanitation infrastructure and supporting local committees in managing these amenities for a safe, inclusive, competitive city.

OUR UNIQUE STRATEGY

Evidence-based advocacy forms the core of the RTP movement. By gathering solid data of the ground reality of communities’ sanitation conditions through mapping and surveys, we can demonstrate to government and system stakeholders the need for improved sanitation and gender sensitivity.
HIGHLIGHTS (2017-18)

TOILET MAPPING

Mumbai’s A-ward, or “heritage ward,” is the site of many famous landmarks such as the Gateway of India and the financial district. It was a perfect area for assessing the status of public sanitation, due to its prominence and high tourist traffic. With support from the Ward Officer and our partners at The Urban Project, we conducted a thorough toilet mapping and presented the findings to the municipal corporation for required action.

NATION-WIDE LITIGATION

RTP has joined in the filing of an Environmental Public Interest Litigation against sanitary pad manufacturers for breaching Solid Waste Management rules. National Green Tribunal justices have given notice to the concerned state and city authorities along with manufacturers to submit their reply to the litigation. The Maharashtra Pollution Control Board has committed to act on this matter.

COMMUNITY PRESS CONFERENCE

In response to the state government’s unfounded claims that Maharashtra was now “Open Defecation Free,” the RTP team decided to take the occasion of World Toilet Day to make a statement. We organized a completely new event — a community women’s press conference. The community RTP team prepared photo evidence and a statement to share the results of the ground reality of community toilets and show that open defecation is still a rampant problem in Mumbai.

RTP ON STAGE

Theatre has a long been a platform for political statements. We eagerly took up this tradition with artists who are longtime partners to Right To Pee. This Marathi play, “Why Not for Women?”, depicts the struggles and social dilemmas underlying gender and sanitation in the city. By equal turns comical and poignant, the play continues to be performed across the city and is well-reviewed in the media.
The moment Sangita Hasnale, Assistant Commissioner of P-North ward in Mumbai, stepped foot into the low-income settlement of Ambujwadi, the community women all gathered around her eagerly. Smiling, she said, “These women said we want toilets and we will pay for a monthly pass. They give me confidence. They are the changemakers.”

“I could not sleep that night, knowing the horrible situation. Toilets became my first priority.”

The Right To Pee (RTP) team was meeting Ms. Hasnale for the inauguration of new public toilets in Ambujwadi, a severely underserved low-income settlement in her jurisdiction. The RTP team joined Ms. Hasnale in her office, where she was multitasking on several issues at once, fielding calls and meetings. Ms. Hasnale, who was a gynaecologist before becoming a Ward Officer, has spent over 28 years working in public service.

In 2017, RTP activists gathered photographic evidence of the alarming prevalence of open defecation in Ambujwadi. Without any available sanitation or running water, women had to venture into mangrove forests and risk their lives out of necessity. RTP shared their findings with Ms. Hasnale and kept following up. On the way to the toilet inauguration, she told our team, “It was my first month in charge of P-North ward. I could not sleep that night, knowing the horrible situation. Toilets became my first priority.”

She uses photo evidence herself, sending images of blocked sewers and garbage to the concerned sanitation officer. But when it came to constructing toilets in Ambujwadi, it was not such an easy task. The soil was marshy and there were no community organisations willing to take up the work of daily operation. So, on the same day that construction began, so did community meetings to raise awareness and form a group to manage the toilets.

Right To Pee has worked with many ward officers, but few leave as deep of an impression as the dynamic and sensitive Sangita Hasnale. She sets a remarkable example of a genuine and passionate duty-bearer, and a true supporter of women's rights to safe, free, clean sanitation.
TOP LEFT:
The Toilet Location Map of A Ward was done by RTP, The Urban Project, and the BMC.

TOP RIGHT:
RTP activists protest unsafe urban sanitation conditions at the Chief Minister's residence.

ABOVE:
The community women activists of RTP hold a press conference.

RIGHT:
RTP invited women public toilet owners to discuss gender and sanitation.
"What I found unique about CORO is they believe in and truly practice democratic participation for community engagement which is extremely important in development and progress of any society. CORO doesn’t stop at involving communities only but have gone ahead to work together with the decision makers as well as professionals like us too, and I think this makes a project holistic."
— Vijayshree Pednekar, Co-Founder, The Urban Project

**CHANGE BY THE NUMBERS**

23
MEETINGS WITH SYSTEM STAKEHOLDERS (WARD COMMISSIONERS SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT, CITY PLANNING, CIVIC CORPORATION, RAILWAY AUTHORITIES, ETC)

169
TOILET LOCATIONS ASSESSED

1662
NEW TOILETS BUILT FROM 2012 TO 2017

90%
INCREASE IN MUNICIPAL SANITATION GENDER BUDGET (2015-16 TO 2017-18)

51%
INCREASE IN TOILET SEATS FOR WOMEN FROM 2012 TO 2017

**TESTIMONIAL**

"When grassroots activism, urban planning, and the administrative system work collectively, it is a transformative experience. CORO-RTP has facilitated such a gender inclusive process in A-ward."
— Kiran Dighavkar, A Ward Assistant Commissioner, MCGM
In Western Maharashtra, a lack of sufficient, sustained rainfall has withered the crops. Women have to wake up before sunrise to walk for kilometers to reach a well that still has water. As the wells have dried up, so have village livelihoods, causing seasonal migration into the cities in hopes of finding odd jobs. Meanwhile, government and civil society turns a blind eye to the plight of the parched and desperate rural population. Women and girls bear the brunt of the water shortage as their access to education, health, and nourishment is the first to be curtailed.
WHAT WE DO

The Addressing Water Scarcity through People Initiative (AWSPI) combines CORO's expertise with mobilising people to secure their own rights and adopting a scientific focus to understand and solve the issue (through hydrogeological studies facilitated by partner organisations). Thus, villages are empowered to secure fair and equal water resources for all by advocating for government schemes while keeping women's and children's rights to the fore.

COMMUNITY
OWNERSHIP

All knowledge and skills are passed to the community to ensure sustainability

CENTERING
PEOPLE

Incorporating social issues and ensuring the barriers of gender, caste, religion, etc are broken

SCIENTIFIC
APPROACH

Strategy to adopt a scientific data based approach to understand and solve the water scarcity

OUR UNIQUE STRATEGY

In each village, a unique fund management committee (gramkosh) was initiated with equal numbers of men and women as active participants. The Gramkosh will be responsible for managing the money for the rainwater harvesting initiative, having a dedicated bank account, and also being an inclusive, transparent, collective decision-making platform for the village's endeavours to harvest rainwater.
SURVEYING THE EARTH & THE PEOPLE

With the support of our technical partner, ACWADAM, the land of each village is thoroughly surveyed to design a tailored groundwater management strategy. CORO’s team also conducts socioeconomic surveys to inform our people-centric strategy. In both survey processes, the technical expertise is passed on to the rural community through experiential learning.

COLLECTIVE VILLAGE FUND

In each village, a fund management committee (gramkosh) is initiated with equal numbers of men and women as active participants. This committee will be responsible for managing the money for the rainwater harvesting initiative, having a dedicated bank account, and also being an inclusive, collective decision-making platform for the village’s endeavours to harvest rainwater.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE GROUPS

Men, women and youth in each of the villages have formed support groups to encourage participation in the groundwater management activities. These groups volunteer their labour for one hour every day for the benefit of their whole village. This concept of volunteered labour, or shramdaan, is embedded in Indian culture. The groups dig ditches, construct check dams, and prepare fields for maximum rainwater harvesting.
IMPACT STORY
WATER THAT IS THICKER THAN BLOOD

Nagnath is a middle-class farmer in Partavadi village (Maan block, Satara district). When our team met him, he was concerned about water scarcity in Partavadi, which was linked to consequences such as migration, lack of livelihoods, health and education problems. Nagnath, of the upper-caste Maratha community, was a believer in Hindu ethno-nationalism. Facilitated by CORO, Nagnath took on the responsibility of organising people in the village. Initially, meetings were sparsely attended, and little progress was made because people had a deep distrust in organisations promising to solve the water issue. Nagnath’s determination, many home visits, and sustained dialogue gradually won over his neighbours.

Nagnath tells us, “CORO brought people together who had never came out of their shell or thought about the common good for the village. Before coming in contact with CORO, I was quite an ordinary man and had nothing to do with people’s welfare, but CORO ignited the willpower in me to get my fellow villagers to realise the importance of water. The change in people gave me a new energy to keep striving for the good of the village.”

"CORO ignited the willpower in me to get my fellow villagers to realise the importance of water."

Nagnath is a remarkable example of the potential for people to change their mindsets and change their world. In 2018, he organized a celebration of the birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the iconic Dalit social reformer. As a former believer in Hindu supremacy, this was a remarkable step for Nagnath. On top of this, the celebration was organised in Partavadi’s Hanuman temple, which was until recently was a place where Dalits were not allowed to enter. Nagnath has built great support with the Dalit community in Partavadi, but he does face resulting opposition from the Marathas. Nevertheless, Nagnath believes that one day, Partavadi will be a truly harmonious, inclusive community. He envisions his hometown as a tourist destination where people will come and study their successful model.
**TOP LEFT:**
Mapping the rock layers in each village is key to an effective water management strategy.

**TOP RIGHT:**
Our technical partners train local people on hydrogeology skills.

**ABOVE:**
The whole village joins in to dig water catchment ditches before the rainy season.

**RIGHT:**
These young women form a youth group that supports water sustainability in their village.
"CORO has been engaged in social development processes at the grassroots level through an enthusiastic team of village volunteers, resource persons and field workers. Their work on mainstreaming gender issues especially early marriages of girls, education and health issues is an important aspect of strengthening development in villages."

— Dr. Himanshu Kulkarni, Founder Trustee and Executive Director, ACWADAM

**CHANGE BY THE NUMBERS**

- **55** Villagers trained in groundwater management
- **20%** Of total village land converted into water retention structures
- **257** People employed through NREGA livelihoods scheme
- **₹1.21 CR** Government funds secured for 7 villages
- **28.6 CR** Litres of water capacity created
- **65%** Reduction in water tanker usage
Women who have been widowed, abandoned, separated from their husbands, or never married face immense and varied social stigma. They are restricted from participating in any public activity or festivals, do not have access to education, employment or the option to lead an independent life. Single women (SW) are denied basic information about government support schemes meant to assist them in accessing identity documents, employment guarantees and bank accounts. They are often not allowed to leave the house, where their powerless status exposes them to exploitation. If they attempt to enter the outside world, they must constantly fight to lead a life of dignity and self-reliance.
WHAT WE DO

We empower single women to become leaders rather than victims of exploitation so that they can act as agents of social change in their own communities across the Beed, Latur, Osmanabad and Nanded districts of Marathwada. Through the Single Women Organisation, the women have formed *Mahila Mandal* and Self Help Groups that conduct trainings on rights and opportunities to secure property ownership, documents, and government support. They also conduct surveys to assess the needs, issues, and environment faced by all single women in their communities.

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**OUR UNIQUE STRATEGY**

By fighting for the rights and dignity of Single Women from inside the community, the campaign is radically changing the mindsets and behaviour of community members towards single women and of single women towards themselves. During the designing of the baseline survey, which was administered by single women leaders, a new term had to be created for women who had chosen to leave their husbands: MNT, or “*Mi Navryala Takale,*” which translates literally to “Dumped My Husband.” Now, women who had previously identified themselves in another category wanted to switch to MNT once they discovered what it stood for, actually redefining their own identity through the questionnaire.
**HIGHLIGHTS (2017-18)**

**SINGLE WOMEN FESTIVAL**

600 women representatives from 215 villages gathered for a day of activities, sharing, learning and celebrating. The event explicitly aimed to break social norms that constrain single women, strengthen organization building and connect single women across the region. The event was planned, organized and run entirely by the women. They wore flowers in their hair and danced together with joy - things forbidden in their daily life.

**SISTERS ACROSS BORDERS**

A team of key members from the Single Women team participated in an exposure visit to Association of Strong Women Alone (ASWA) Rajasthan. Joining hands with their sisters, they shared learnings and discussed on how to advance the empowerment of single women across India. This visit was an important first step for creating a national-level network of single women activists and planning to advocate for state-level policy.

**CLAIMING EXISTENCE**

A variety of government schemes (such as NREGA, pensions and property rights) that single women can avail of are inaccessible because of a lack of awareness, incomplete pre-requisites or missing documents. Our team has connected women to identity documents and bank accounts, filed all their forms, and followed up with the concerned authorities. With income and livelihoods secured, the women are freed from the burden of day-to-day survival to live a dignified life.

**FINDING POWER TOGETHER**

Due to the Single Women’s Organisation, our women have experienced dramatic shifts in their lives — through change in financial and social status, but most importantly through increased self-confidence. These women are now making decisions in their own homes and community. They participate in village assemblies and sit on local governance committees. Membership is now spreading from just single women to other disenfranchised women in the community.
URMILA
“My education stopped after the 9th standard, when I got married. A few years ago, the Single Women’s Organization started in my village. At that time, I really wanted to become Anganwadi Sevika (rural child rights caretaker). However, I did not have enough education to get the job. After the initial disappointment, I was motivated to pursue further education and enrolled in the 10th standard. Initially, I did not believe in myself, but with the support of my family and the organization, I gathered up my courage. I passed my final exams with 60%. Then, I got admission into junior college. This year, I passed my 12th standard board exam with 67%! I give credit to the single women’s organization for my success. I am still eager to keep learning!”

SHIVKANYA
“I was so angry when my alcoholic husband told me he was going to sell our house. I found support in the single women’s organization, who helped me meet with the village official and eventually supported me in getting joint ownership of the house. Without the organization I would still be living with my parents. Instead, the house is in my name!”

SWATI
“I was married at 17 and became a widow the next year. For a long time, there was no work in my village. Then, the single women’s organization created our self-help group. Since I knew sewing, we decided to take a loan of 25,000 rupees and invest in sewing machines. This summer, we are making a profit from sewing work!”

NOOR JAHAN
“Working with the single women’s organisation, I helped resolve women’s property cases. I always wanted property for my own as well. I collected money through my tailoring business and from some donations. Our organization started an initiative to buy and plant tamarind trees in the village. We sold the harvested fruit and saved some more money. With all of these savings, I was able to invest 2 lakh rupees in a plot of land and in my future!”
TOP LEFT:
The Indian constitution is a key component of our strategy to assert the rights of SW.

TOP RIGHT:
Our remarkable team of leaders are each single women themselves.

ABOVE:
At our festival, single women put flowers in their hair as is otherwise taboo.

RIGHT:
Noor Jahan, one of our members, climbs the tamarind trees that are her new livelihood.
"Working with CORO team has been a most self-educating, sharing, collective learning and rewarding experience for us. We would highly recommend CORO as partner for association to bringing about transformational change and as a true partner of communities and other stakeholders, including donors."

— Ahmad Bari, Consultant, The Edelgive Foundation

**CHANGE BY THE NUMBERS**

- **351** Active Women's Groups
- **5602** SW Reached
- **427** SW Leaders Trained
- **112** Domestic Violence Cases Registered
- **56** SW Went Back to School
- **2754** SW Linked to Government Benefits
- **96** SW in Local Governance Committees
- **79%** Increase in Reach to SW in 2017
- **127%** Increase in Organization Membership
The events we coordinate and participate in expanding our network of like-minded partners and friends working in similar social spaces. Creating this network of connections is vital to building Coro’s identity as a resource hub.
The conference brought together over 280 participants and representatives from 64 different organizations for a full day of speeches, panel discussion, and an open forum covering the background, challenges, and solutions for changing the social norms that perpetuate violence. Throughout the day, we also encouraged exciting, free form dialogue through stalls themed by gender sensitization, single women's issues, women's right to sanitation, and CORO's model. An entertaining and moving performance by CORO's grassroots leaders wrapped up the day.

As the first women's university in India and a leading institution of women's studies, we were honoured to partner with SNDT Women's University and hold the conference on their campus. The conference was also generously supported by Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI), EdelGive Foundation, Cigna and the Canadian Consulate.

“Dialogue is the way forward, conflict is not,”
Vidya Bal, pioneering feminist

“The sisters in my chawl never leave. Even in a golden cage, the bird is still trapped” Shakila Siddiqui, CORO-MMF Team Leader

“When we encourage their creativity, dreams, and inner strength, women’s voices can inspire the world.” Anuradha Kapoor, Swayam

“Men must be engaged with the women’s movement, in a manner that does not reinforce power dynamics.” Dr Ravi Verma, ICRW
As a leading resource organisation in empowering grassroots leaders through collaborative knowledge creation, CORO organised a workshop to bring together other experts in this approach across the academic, cultural and corporate fields. In partnership with Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and with support from the EdelGive Foundation, CORO held the workshop at the TISS, Mumbai campus on February 26th and 27th, 2018. A transformative and participatory experience itself, the workshop represented the first step to create an ecosystem of allies and grassroots agents across India who are pioneering people's right to collective knowledge building.

The two days featured 82 participants, 18 presentations across 5 sessions and representation from 12 states across India. The workshop also included participatory activities and a performance by CORO’s women leaders. The workshop was enriched by key resource persons: Prof. Lakshmi Lingam (TISS), Sujata Khandekar (CORO), Prof. Alexander Schieffer (Trans4m) and Prof. Rama Mani (Theatre of Transformation). The sessions covered the dynamic between community versus university knowledge-building, hierarchy in research and education institutes, alternative mediums and indigenous cultural forms of knowledge, as well as intersections with gender and rights.

Mumtaz Shaikh and Supriya Jan of CORO talked about the collective nature of the Right to Pee campaign in their presentation "To Pee or Not to Pee." They used evidence-based advocacy, collaboration, and confrontational strategies to achieve their goals.

Sujata Khandekar, Pallavi Palav and Anwari Khan of CORO presented on "Flipping the Hierarchy of Researcher and Researched," an innovative new method of feminist cooperative inquiry for mutually conceptualization, implementation and analysis.
KEY EVENTS ATTENDED

TEDx SALON
Sujata Khandekar, CORO Co-founder, shared powerful stories of transformation from victims to changemaker at TEDxGateway Salon.

STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD IWD PANEL
Women’s Empowerment Program Coordinator, Sujata Lawhande spoke about the need to rally against sexual harassment at a women’s day event for the Maharashtra Electricity Board.

VAWG ROUNDTABLE
Sujata Khandekar represented CORO in a roundtable discussion on violence against women with Ms. Sophie Gregoire Trudeau, First Lady of Canada, at an event hosted by Dasra.

GIRLS COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Rohini Kadam, Learning Community Program Coordinator and our youth leader Nikita did an amazing job representing CORO in Delhi at the Girls Council Workshop organised by EMpower.
How to work with boys to reduce violence against women

Making gender equitable boys is core to addressing 15 of 18, which is about empowering women and girls. Called from the experience of supporting a variety of nonprofits to work with boys, here are lessons on how and where to begin.

By Rujuta Terealsei

There are approximately 229 million males under the age of 18 in India, growing up in a culture that normalizes violence and discrimination against women and girls. These boys and men can easily become a barrier, a pretext for gender inequality or become a massive force of allies in the fight. Today, when initiatives to ensure gender equality primarily focus on working with women and girls, these boys get the blame but typically remain absent from systemic solutions.

India Development Review, 13/12/2017

NGO’s postcard campaign stirs Time’s Up in slums

Two months after distributing 4000 blank postcards requesting women to write in, NGO receives 461 accounts of abuse and violence

Continued from page 1

MANY men continue to believe in these myths. “My husband was already previously married, he married me for the money and then abandoned me. When we are cooking in the kitchen, if I use the bigger spoon and I need your help,” one postcard read. “I want to study, but since I am a girl, my parents won’t allow me to.” wrote another young girl.

CORO, which has been working with underprivileged girls, decided to launch the initiative, “The postcards. Women from the NGO at work in the community-based centres

Mid-Day, 2/2/2018

Now, Rs 500 fine for open defecation in urban areas

By Akke Dnyan, Mumbai Mirror | Updated: Jan 26, 2018, 03:39 IST

The Maharashtra government has finalised the ‘spot fine’ rates for open defecation, littering, spitting and urinating in public places. According to

Mumbai Mirror, 3/1/2018

TRENDING

Indian Theatre Puts CORO's 'Right To Pee' Campaign Centre Stage

by The Daily Eye Team - September 11, 2017, 6:03 pm / Estimated Reading Time: 2 mins, 24 secs /

The Daily Eye, 11/9/2017

कौटुबिक हिंसेचया रूपाला मेंदीचा रंग!

या आमच्यावेळी मेंदी स्वतः १९ मुली तर एका मुलाचे सहभाग घेतला होताच!

Loksatta, 19/10/2017

लोकसत्ता, 24/4/2017

Lokmat, 24/4/2017

CORO ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18
AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Devi Awards 2017
Mumtaz Shaikh
WEP Manager

Sandvik India Gender Awards 2018
Supriya Jan
RTP Manager
[Finalist]

Union Udaan Awards 2018
Mumtaz Shaikh
WEP Manager
DONORS

ASHISH PARTHASARTHY • SANJAY SHAH • FIONA & LUIS MIRANDA • JM TRIVEDI

• WE THANK ALL OUR SUPPORTERS FOR THEIR INVALUABLE SUPPORT •
## Balance Sheet as of 31/03/2018

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<th>ASSETS</th>
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**Audited By:**
Vinayak S. Gokhale  
Partner  
MRN: 031155

V S Gokhale And Associates  
Chartered Accountants  
FRN: 136791W
# Statement of Income and Expenditure as of 31/03/2018

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**Audited By:**

Vinayak S. Gokhale  
Partner  
MRN: 031155

V S Gokhale And Associates  
Chartered Accountants  
FRN: 136791W