Build awareness on rigid gender norms and promote more equitable behaviours and increase their sense of ownership which promotes gender equality and women's empowerment.

Summary

Gender discrimination and violence against women and girls continue to be an enormous problem in Indian society despite high rates of economic growth. While India has been progressing on the economic and technological front, on the social front it finds no change in social norms which result in women's secondary status within the household and at workplaces compared to men. The patriarchal mindsets which put restrictions on women's agency and burden them with social boundaries have not changed. Socially constructed gender discriminatory norms have remained intact even in the COVID -19 pandemic times – they prescribe those girls should not use mobile phones, they should avoid going out at night, they need to take care of the home and siblings, men must control their wives, brothers have to be protectors etc.

Challenge

Several steps have been taken towards gender equality, but the progress is slow, and probably will not lead to full success till men and boys are also involved in this entire exercise. It is time to shift the onus of change from those who are facing discrimination to those who create and uphold gender discriminatory social norms. There have been several programmes for improving women's situation which is significant for securing and promoting their rights and providing them with the safe spaces necessary for their empowerment, such programmatic interventions are neither enough nor sufficient to do so. The deeply ingrained secondary social status of women also needs to be addressed and social norms related to gender roles and relationships at the level of the community and within families also need to change substantially. This requires a carefully thought-out strategy that involves men and boys as brothers, fathers and partners. They too are victims of patriarchy and masculinity thereby women and girls are undergoing discrimination and subordination. In most of the initiatives, men and boys have been intact. Today most of the efforts to address gender inequality are addressed towards women and girls. While it is true that women face violence, this happens within a framework of social acceptance of discrimination and the secondary status of women.

Solution

Using creative, playful storytelling methods Centre for Health and Social Justice, India will educate 500 men and boys to identify, prevent and face gender-based violence deconstructing sexist imaginary of men and women and accessing gender equality perspectives to rebuild their self-perception and develop new ways of relating to their peers, family, and community free of gender-based violence, sexist perceptions, and gender inequity.

Long-Term Impact

The project's ultimate goal is to empower 500 women and girls by helping to create new social norms that will reduce discrimination and violence in every sphere of their life. The project aims to achieve the full equality of women and girls. Schools will also benefit as the audio stories that will help educate students on body literacy and sexuality, issues which the authorities find discomfort in teaching. The setting up of new gender social norms at the individual and community level and removing the silence around reproductive and sexual health rights issues will benefit the entire community. The community will recognize themselves as subjects of rights with dignity, autonomy, and citizenship regardless of their gender; have better criteria and knowledge to face situations involving gendered violence within their families, community and else; pursue relationships free of gender-based violence; advocate for their

rights and equal opportunities wherever they are; understand and embrace that they can pursue any career/occupation/interest regardless of their gender.

Donation Amount to be raised on following activities

1. Public Education and awareness event for identified leaders in the community to effectuate peer education approach for learning and sharing	$15
2. Creating a promotional package for 200 Teachers/100 facilitator guide and resource book, posters and flashcards, and SMS based promos.	$25
3. Promotion with teachers, ANM, ASHA, Parents, and local stakeholders so that they also become engaged in the process and some supporters of the change process emerge from among these stakeholders	$50
4. Promotion of audio stories in an urban context for the local community.	$75
5. Development of Kishore Chitra Katha- Education and Workbook- school-based curriculum following prescribed adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health curriculum developed internationally and adapted for the local region.	$100