



**SAHER**

Society  
for Awareness,  
Harmony  
& Equal Rights

# ANNUAL REPORT

2014 - 2015

SAHER aims to transcend community boundaries in order to promote peace and responsible citizenship through mobilization of youth by means of leadership, creative expressions, and employability programs. Youth are entrusted with the future of society, and this opportunity to make a change must not be allowed to waste away due to lack of means. SAHER works to enable such youths to bring about a shift from social conflict to economic productiveness and to cultivate leadership and responsibility for social action.

Operating from one of the densest populations in Mumbai, SAHER began its work in 1997 in response to the growing sense of insecurity among the population due to communal violence. This led to cross migration among various communities, resulting in completely ghettoized settlements. Many lives were lost, leaving behind emotional scars and unexplained memories. The lives of teenagers and children in these areas were heavily impacted, having been shaped around the idea that their background dictates how they must be treated. Growing up in segregated settlements with constant hostilities, these youths have not had the opportunity to develop competencies required to operate in our diverse world.

Over the years, we have realized the significance of the ability of youngsters to bring about positive changes not only in their community but in society as a whole. Thus, SAHER works to develop a sense of ownership, responsibility, and sensitivity in such youths by encouraging them to express, reflect, analyze, and act on their thoughts, comprehend their strengths and limitations, and use those to impact their immediate society in a positive way.

We hope to offer children and adolescents the knowledge to recognize and respect the differences between various communities, to equip themselves for addressing contextual situations and multiple realities, to interpret history, society, politics, and themselves with a critical eye.

#### OBJECTIVES:

For the fiscal year of 2014-15, SAHER has been committed to the following:

- To inspire 200 youths to bring about meaningful change in society by guiding them to achieve economic productivity and leadership skills.
- To integrate youths from diverse social backgrounds through sports, and to help them understand the values of mutual respect, acceptance, and recognition of fundamental human rights.
- To create and sustain spaces reserved for youths to facilitate the sharing of ideas and knowledge.
- To start two supplementary coaching centers to guide 200 children from neighboring schools in Jogeshwari East and equip them with IT skills, with an emphasis on children from minority and Dalit backgrounds. Four teachers appointed for these coaching centers, along with four madrasa teachers, will undergo Training of Trainers with inputs from SDTT personnel.
- To work with teachers and children from neighboring schools and madrasas to integrate secular and technological education through supplementary coaching. This also involves initiating an IT education approach in the theological curriculum in two madrasas in Jogeshwari East, easily targeting a hundred children.

SAHER addresses social issues, especially the lack of social peace, and works to resolve them through five core programs:

# INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION (ITE)

In recent decades, India has made significant strides in primary education access and enrollment, but dropout rates and low learning levels remain challenges. Urdu medium municipal schools are particularly affected, often suffering from a lack of resources and support. For instance, a recent oversight by a BMC education officer deprived 12 Urdu schools of a much-needed computer lab facility, despite funds being allocated.

Recognizing these challenges, SAHER has intensified its efforts to promote inclusion and diversity in education. By integrating secular and technological education, SAHER aims to enhance learning outcomes for adolescents in Jogeshwari. Supplementary coaching and IT classes are offered at the Sunflower Learning Hub and Al Falah School Computer Center. To expand its reach, SAHER collaborates with community leaders, school authorities, nonprofits, and CBOs, ensuring a broad and inclusive approach to education improvement.

These meetings revealed that parents are aware of the limited learning at schools and their inability to afford better education for their children. With ITE centers nearby, parents are eager to improve their children's education.

Accomplishments in 2014-15:

- Reached 256 children (167 girls and 89 boys) from various schools and a community madrasa in Jogeshwari East.
- Provided weekly ITE sessions for grades 6-8, covering science, geography, history, and civics, involving students from multiple schools and a madrasa.
- Conducted home and school visits to promote the ITE program.
- Initiated ITE classes at Al Falah High School, with 33 sessions conducted.
- Held 121 sessions at the Sunflower Learning Hub, covering diverse topics beyond textbook information.
- Engaged 50% of children from the International Water Day celebration in ITE sessions.
- Conducted a month-and-a-half-long summer camp for 22 children, including music sessions, film academy visits, and substance abuse workshops.
- Organized a Christmas party with 65 ITE students, providing a platform for participation and performance.
- Held five parents' meetings with 100 attendees, offering feedback and guidance on family planning, girls' education, educational trusts, and proper upbringing.

These meetings led to the formation of a women's group for future activities.

SAHER's efforts continue to foster inclusion, diversity, and improved educational outcomes in the community.

# INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION (ITE)

Raina (name changed) was studying in sixth grade in Koliwada Municipal School. She was a quiet and diligent child. She was then barred from attending school because her teenage sister had run away and married a boy.

Therefore Raina helped her mother, who worked as a maid in a two storey household. While her mother worked downstairs, Raina cleaned the upper rooms. It was here that the home owner sexually abused Raina multiple times. Raina did not tell anyone as her family was in need of the money.

A few weeks later, Raina started feeling unwell and nauseous. Her continuous vomiting concerned her mother, and upon consultation with a doctor, it was found that she was pregnant. It was then that her mother discovered that Raina had been a victim of constant sexual assault. They opted for abortion.

Raina's family was shaken and refused to talk about the matter. However, most neighbours knew about the situation and were openly vicious about it. Raina's family was very supportive of her through this rough period.

SAHER's social workers talked with her parents and convinced them to further this support, and also facilitated counseling support by Arpan, another NGO.

The case of Raina's assault is ongoing in court, while Raina has joined ITE and become more expressive and confident with time. She is also joining Sport for Peace, and from June 2015, will be rejoining her school.





# SPORTS FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Initiated in 2013 in partnership with Magic Bus, this program promotes community harmony through football sessions for adolescents. Football brings together teenagers from diverse backgrounds to develop teamwork, leadership, and conflict resolution skills, fostering a healthy interest in social action projects.

## Key Features and Achievements:

- Provides a space for youth to discuss community issues, think critically, and voice opinions, with sessions on life skills, identity, citizenship, and reproductive health interspersed with football.
- Sustained without external financial support.
- Enrollment increased from 30 to 80 adolescents, with an average 70% attendance at weekly sessions.
- Growth driven by the enthusiasm of the initial batch of players, who recruited more participants and volunteered to teach football.
- SAHER covers the cost of the coach due to participants' dedication.
- Sessions include health, life skills, and social issues, making "Sport for Peace" a comprehensive developmental program.

This program effectively combines sports and social development, encouraging inclusion and community engagement among youth.



# NEENV

Since 2008, Neenv has empowered over 1,000 youths by providing career counseling, guidance, and facilitating internships. The program focuses on enhancing employability by equipping adolescents and youths with life skills and competencies, enabling them to make informed career choices and thrive in our resource-rich economy.

Accomplishments in 2014-15:

- Ten youths attended an advanced filmmaking workshop, creating a short film on transgender issues and humanity, gaining skills in script writing, editing, and shooting.
- Thirty children participated in a 10-day photography workshop, exploring alternative career options.
- 200 youths from Patuck Gala College received career orientation to plan their education and career paths.
- 800 youths underwent career orientation through two new SAHER centers.
- Fifteen youths received one-on-one counseling; one transitioned from a high-paying call center job to a more fulfilling banking career.
- A community woman was inspired to pursue Montessori teaching and will be enrolling in a course soon.

Neenv focuses on livelihoods and employment, fostering independence and enhancing career prospects for youths.





# PARWAAZ

## Youth and Citizenship Programme: Parwaaz

Since 2007, Parwaaz has empowered over 700 youths through its comprehensive curriculum on leadership, conflict management, reproductive health, gender issues, and sustainable development. This program enables students and community members to embark on a journey of self-exploration, building competencies through weekly discussion circles, internships, social issue campaigns, and annual rural exposure trips.

### Accomplishments in 2014-15:

- 107 girls and boys developed critical thinking skills, making informed decisions and emerging as leaders of positive social change in their communities.
- Parwaaz collaborated with other organizations, conducting sessions and workshops, including a two-day camp with youth from the Akanksha Foundation.
- Entered a Memorandum of Understanding with Teach for India to conduct weekly life skills and citizenship sessions for 50 children from a municipal school in Jogeshwari East, starting June 2015.

Parwaaz fosters self-discovery and community engagement, equipping youths with the skills to initiate social action and drive positive change.



# MOHALLA HAMARA

Since 2004, SAHER has impacted over ten thousand lives by promoting responsible citizenship through active peace-building efforts. This program enables people from diverse backgrounds to express and exchange thoughts on governance, citizenship, and careers in a judgment-free zone.

## **Key Aspects:**

- **Activities:** Includes seminars on interfaith cooperation, community development, workshops, and discussion circles, mostly held at our community center.
- **Community Center:** A hub for youth interaction, featuring a well-equipped library, IT classes, and information resources.
- **Annual Peace Week:** Celebrated with sports, street plays, film screenings, and cultural events to foster positive interaction.

SAHER's sustained efforts highlight that sustainable peace-building is achievable through quality education for children, exposure to diverse career options for youth, and increased social and cultural exchanges on health, governance, and citizenship.

## **Peace Week**

**Wall Painting:** Around 60 community members from diverse backgrounds expressed their thoughts on peace and society through painting.

**Kabir Festival Event:** People of all faiths and communities enjoyed a concert featuring the 'Dohas' of Saint Kabir, blending classical and fusion music.

**Interschool Drawing Competition:** 210 students from six schools shared their visions of "My society through my eyes."

**Interschool Football Tournament:** Six teams, including mixed-gender groups, participated, promoting inclusivity in sports.

**Community Cricket Tournament:** 20 teams with 251 youngsters, played in Jogeshwari East, fostering community integration.

## **Additional Initiatives:**

- **School Collaborations:** Partnered with over 15 schools for seven years. Through a tie-up with Federal Bank of India, four schools received water purifiers, benefiting around 2,000 children.
- **Community Outreach:** Engaged with community leaders, school authorities, nonprofits, CBOs, and Maulanas to expand reach.
- **Youth Capacity Building:** Empowering youths in creative communication—films, photography, theatre, media—preparing them for social action.

SAHER's initiatives focus on fostering diversity, inclusion, and community engagement.



# ANNUAL PEACE WEEK



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2014-15:

**Global Recognition:** Rama Shyam, a Governing Board Member, was invited as a Youth Facilitator for the UNAOC Global Summer School in New York.

**International Water Day:** Collaborated with Hamara Bachapan to educate 50 children on the importance of water through film and canvas painting, fostering awareness.

**Child Sexual Abuse Awareness:** Conducted awareness campaigns in response to a community incident. Three meetings in August with SNEHA and FACSE reached 95 members. Another series in February 2015 had over 120 children, providing a platform for girls to share their experiences, leading to immediate interventions in three cases.

**Independence Day Celebration:** Partnered with Young Welfare Association to promote sustainable peace across communities.

**Annual Interfaith Iftar:** Organized with Seeds for Peace, bringing together 150 adults from various communities, nonprofits, and institutions. Guest speakers emphasized interfaith cooperation to address social and civic issues during Ramzaan.

SAHER's efforts focus on diversity, inclusion, and fostering community engagement.



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SAHER (SOCIETY FOR AWARENESS HARMONY AND EQUAL RIGHTS) IS REGISTERED UNDER THE SOCIETIES REGISTRATION ACT, 1860(732/2005 GBBSD) AND BOMBAY PUBLIC TRUST ACT, 1950 (F-28871).

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