

Nazariya

2012-2013

Activities

Creating awareness about the issues they face

Focus groups and community meetings

Fighting educational challenges

Emphasizing the rights of women and children

Accessing government welfare scheme

Nazariya works specifically with Muslim women. SANGRAM works with Muslim women particularly as a result of communal violence. Previously, SANGRAM had faced opposition in Muslim communities for distributing information on health access and rights, in part because many of these women faced problems coming outside of their homes. After the communal riots in Miraj and Sangli, though, SANGRAM knew it had to break the barrier and reach this population at any cost.

The strategy toward Muslim women combines creating awareness about women's issues in their community, and using that awareness to empower and strengthen these women on issues pertinent to them. Because of the strong marginalization of Muslim women, SANGRAM, through the District Campaign, wanted to build up a strong collective of women.

This past year, the District Campaign has facilitated sessions where Muslim women could share what they wanted to do and the challenges they faced. Ten Muslim women officially joined SANGRAM, and now provide outreach towards more Muslim women in their communities. While it initially started with dealing with health issues, over the past two years they have expanded to other issues like education of children as well. The group also focuses on reaching Muslim families (including husbands), and providing them a platform to talk about any of their issues—family, health, or anything else. The District Campaign has started collecting family backgrounds of Muslim women, such as information on their education, their skills and is doing a needs assessment. While there is still some tension between Muslim and Hindu communities in this region, SANGRAM works to reduce the tensions

In focus group meetings, Nazariya focuses on a number of issues that put Muslim women, specially, at a disadvantage. They discussed how many Muslim men, as the breadwinners, don't spend much time with their families as they are constantly working in long-hour/low-paying jobs. And these jobs often don't cover the costs of the family, which are often times large, and thus the women don't get much of a chance to go outside the home. And, even when they do get a chance, their husbands often become suspicious. Many families send their children to Urdu schools, which focus on religious education, but as soon as they complete this, they don't have a chance to get into other mainstream schools and colleges. Thus, their economic conditions deteriorate, and they often follow the work of their fathers or remain unemployed. So, Nazariya is trying to change this pattern, and focus on getting their children more mainstreamed. Nazariya is also ensuring that children are receiving scholarships and access to government schemes.

Nazariya is also focusing more on the well-being of girls and handicapped children. They are pushing to educate girls more, as they are traditionally less educated, and they are focusing on preventing discrimination against physically and mentally handicapped village children. They are doing so by making the government accountable for these children, and getting better facilities for handicapped kids. Furthermore, they have focused on making sure that all children are getting their midday meal, and ensuring that the food is clean. And, Nazariya ensures that children are applying for and receiving government schemes meant for all but are excluded from because of their marginalization as Muslims.