LokLeader Fellowship Program for Grassroot Changemakers

Problem Statement

In many remote and underserved communities, conversations around gender equity, sexuality education, and personal safety have yet to take root. Grassroots organizations operating in these regions face significant barriers, including deep-rooted stigma, cultural taboos, and misinformation. The lack of structured training and educational resources further compounds the challenge, making it difficult for these organizations to introduce and sustain meaningful dialogue on these issues.

Small, community-based organizations often struggle with funding, access to expert guidance, and capacity-building opportunities. Without the necessary resources, many are unable to effectively challenge harmful social norms, advocate for gender rights, or provide safe spaces for discussions on sexuality and personal safety. As a result, silence and misinformation persist, leaving children and marginalized groups particularly vulnerable.

This fellowship aims to bridge these gaps by equipping grassroots organizations with the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to initiate and sustain critical conversations in their communities. By aligning with global frameworks such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 5: Gender Equality and SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, this fellowship seeks to support grassroots leaders to drive systemic change, ensuring that even the most remote and marginalized communities have access to informed and rights-based discourse on gender, sexuality, and safety of children.

Program Vision

To foster a connected, informed, and empowered network of grassroots leaders working collaboratively on gender equity, sexuality education, and personal safety for children and adults to create inclusive, equitable and safe spaces for marginalized and underserved children and communities. Through collaborative learning, practical application, and expert guidance, the program aims to build a network of local leaders driving positive change within their communities.

Program Mission

To enhance the capacity of grassroots leaders to amplify their impact, build robust networks, and engage in collective advocacy for gender, sexuality, and safety-related issues.

- by providing a scientific, intersectional, rights-affirming and culturally relevant course
- by providing self-learning resources to deepen understanding on gender, sexuality and personal safety
- by providing adaptable tools which can be made culturally relevant to the organisation's settings
- by providing feedback on content and facilitation skills of field workers

- by creating a network for organisation to share their learnings and provide support to their peers

Objective

To deepen the knowledge, practical skills, and collaborative engagement of grassroots organisations, supporting them to effectively address the lack of discourse on sexuality, silence and apathy around gender-based violence and child sexual abuse in their communities.

Gender, Sexuality and Personal Safety (GSP) Course Topics

1. Introduction: intersectionalities, rights, restorative practices and restorative justice in the context of gender, sexuality and violence
2. The design and common origins of the sexual and reproductive systems, function of the sexual and reproductive systems
3. Sexual development from birth to adolescence; commonality in pubertal changes, focus on self-esteem and self- image
4. Diversity in gender identities and sexual orientations and relationships
5. Gender bias, stereotypes and violence- and safe responder practice
6. Understanding child sexual abuse, and POCSO Act
7. POSH
8. Disability & Inclusion

Key Activities

1. **Interactive Online Sessions**
    - **Format:** Online interactive sessions including discussions, activities, PPTs and case studies integrated with self-learning.
    - **Outcome:** Enhanced awareness and understanding of gender, sexuality and personal safety of children, supporting participants to lead community conversations and interventions.
2. **Self-Learning**
    - **Resources Provided:** Curated articles, videos, PPT templates, and reading materials tailored to the themes of gender, sexuality and personal safety.
    - **Outcome:** Fellows deepen their knowledge through independent study and develop personalised learning plans to address specific community needs.
3. **Mock Practice Sessions by Fellows**
    - **Activity:** Fellows conduct mock training sessions on the topics most relevant to their communities
    - **Feedback:** Constructive peer and mentor feedback to refine facilitation skills.

- **Outcome:** Fellows build confidence and improve their ability to deliver impactful sessions.

4. **Content Creation/Adaptation for Communities**
    - **Task:** Using existing templates (e.g., Enfold's DS PPTs), fellows design and develop training materials tailored to their communities.
    - **Expert Review:** Materials are vetted by experts to ensure relevance, accuracy, and accessibility.
    - **Outcome:** Locally relevant, community-focused tools for gender and safety education.
5. **Field Practice and Feedback**
    - **Activity:** Fellows conduct at least 2 training sessions and submit voice recordings of the sessions for expert review if in-person feedback is not possible.
    - **Expert Guidance:** Detailed feedback is provided through group discussion **Outcome:** Improved delivery of training sessions, practical experience in the field, and enhanced adaptability to community needs.

Deliverables for Fellows:

- Develop content for their respective communities on different topics using existing templates (shared by Enfold)
- Facilitate at least 2 training sessions and submit voice recordings of the session for expert review.
- Co-create a short content piece/PPT/video/audio/play with community stakeholder/s.

Expected Outcomes:

2. **For Fellows:**
    - Increased capacity to address gender, sexuality, and safety-related issues in their communities.
    - Improved skills in facilitation, content creation, and community engagement.

2. **For Communities:**

    - Increased access to culturally relevant training materials and safe spaces for dialogue.
    - Strengthened awareness of gender equity, sexuality and how to be a safe responder to child sexual abuse.

3. **For the Network:**

- Formation of a collaborative network of fellows for ongoing knowledge-sharing and support.
- Development of a shared repository of resources and tools.

4. Eligibility Criteria:

a. The fellowship is open to NGOs or individuals working on **Gender Equity**, **Sexuality**, and **Child Sexual Abuse**.
b. The NGO or individual must be working with **underserved or marginalized communities in rural, tribal, per-urban and urban areas**
c. The NGO should have an **annual income of less than 50 Lakh INR**.
d. Only **two members** from an organization can participate, with **preference given to senior members** who have strategic decision-making roles or leadership responsibilities. These members should have significant involvement in the organization's work related to gender equity, sexuality, and personal safety.
e. The selected organization/individual must show a **commitment to long-term impact** on the community, indicating that the fellowship will support sustained efforts.
f. The fellowship encourages **diverse representation** and the inclusion of marginalized groups (e.g., LGBTQIA+ individuals, persons with disabilities, indigenous populations, etc.) in the fellowship cohort.
g. **75% attendance** for Interactive Online Sessions and Mock Practice Sessions by Fellows is mandatory.
h. The selected individuals/NGOs will need to attend at least **75% of all required fellowship activities** to get the Certified Sexaulity Educator certification.