Convergent Action for Girls and Women: Partnerships and Programs

The 3D Program for Girls and Women advances gender equality and girls’ and women’s empowerment by helping local governments work more efficiently across departments, and with civil society and the private sector to increase economic opportunities for girls and women and address their health, education and safety needs. We call it good governance through convergent action.

Convergent action requires coordinated, evidence-based planning by local government to maximize resources and impact across stakeholders. It addresses the persistent limitations of development programs caused by working in siloes, with limited data and evidence and without the active engagement of the people they serve. We believe that girls and women are best served when traditional boundaries are crossed and the barriers of siloes are broken so that stakeholders – including girls and women themselves – can come together to get things done.

The 3D Program is currently working in Pune City and rural Pune District in Maharashtra, India to demonstrate a convergent approach to programming to meet the multiple, intersecting needs of girls and women. In a second phase, the 3D Program will implement its methodology in Kenya. Drawing from lessons learned in India and Kenya, we will develop tools for global application for a scaled-up convergent response for gender equality.

Programs in Pune City

The 3D Program is working in partnership with the Pune Municipal Corporation, the Pune Smart City Development Corporation Limited, the waste pickers union Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP) and their cooperative Solid Waste Collection and Handling (SWaCH), the Centre for Environment Education and a private sector philanthropist to:

- **Secure a sustainable livelihood for women waste pickers** by implementing a zero-waste model across Pune City that will safeguard their continued, collective involvement in solid waste management as valued workers and experts. Over 10,000 members of the waste pickers union KKPKP working across Pune City will benefit from the model.

- **Increase access by women waste pickers and their families to social welfare benefits, programs and entitlements across sectors** by implementing the decentralized Kashtakari Helpdesk hub-and-spoke social service delivery model in 10 Pune City slum communities as a model to be scaled up for informal workers across the city. In 2019, 1,461 waste pickers and their family members accessed benefits and services in multiple sectors, including health, education, housing and legal aid through the Kashtakari model.

- **Improve the occupational and public safety of women waste pickers** by leveraging local philanthropic and government funds and pro-bono architecture and construction services to repair and build well-ventilated, attractive and safe storage and sorting sheds, with on-site toilets and drinking water. The shelters enable waste pickers to separate and store recyclables and reduce their exposure to violence, injury and the elements. Over 820 waste pickers will benefit from the shelters across Pune City.

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The 3D Program is working in partnership with the Pune Zilla Parishad (district government), ICRW Asia, Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsh Mandal (MASUM), Chaitanya, the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics and other partners in government, academia, civil society and the private sector to:

- Establish a three-tier accountability structure across three levels of local government, comprised of convergence planning committees at the Village, Block and District levels to inform, strengthen, plan and monitor government programs. Village Convergent Planning Committees (VCPGs) are being formed in 15 villages in two blocks in Pune District, engaging and amplifying the voices of approximately 1,500 women and girls.

- Create a user-friendly, efficient system for sharing data across sectors and levels of government to improve data processes and systems, inform district planning and enable joint monitoring by relevant departments and partners.

- Build capacity in M&E and gender analysis to enable district and block officials, and other partners to plan, implement and monitor programs for girls and women.

- Pilot innovative convergent solutions for priority issues identified by girls and women to:
  
  ◇ Increase job skills training and placement opportunities for rural young women through an innovative program based in Pune City, piloted with 45 young women, in partnership with SNDT Women’s University, Pune, Tech Mahindra Foundation and MASUM to address the barriers that prevent them from participating in urban-based programs.
  
  ◇ Increase options for menstrual hygiene management by testing the acceptability of reusable sanitary napkins among rural women to inform district and state government planning and programs. The acceptability study will engage 100 women in 10 villages in two blocks to document their experiences, their willingness to use the reusable pads, and their willingness to pay a higher cost up-front for reduced expenditure in the long-term.
  
  ◇ Increase safe transportation options for girls and women by working with the Maharashtra State Transportation Corporation to review and revise bus schedules to better serve girls and young women attending secondary school and college and women accessing economic opportunities in Pune District. Gender training will be provided to bus drivers and conductors to strengthen accountability for girls’ and women’s safety on public transportation.
  
  ◇ Develop a quality of service index to assess the quality of public services in diverse sectors, including health, finance and education, from girls’ and women’s perspectives, to enable providers to better meet the needs of their clients. The framework is being adapted and used by 3D Program partners.