

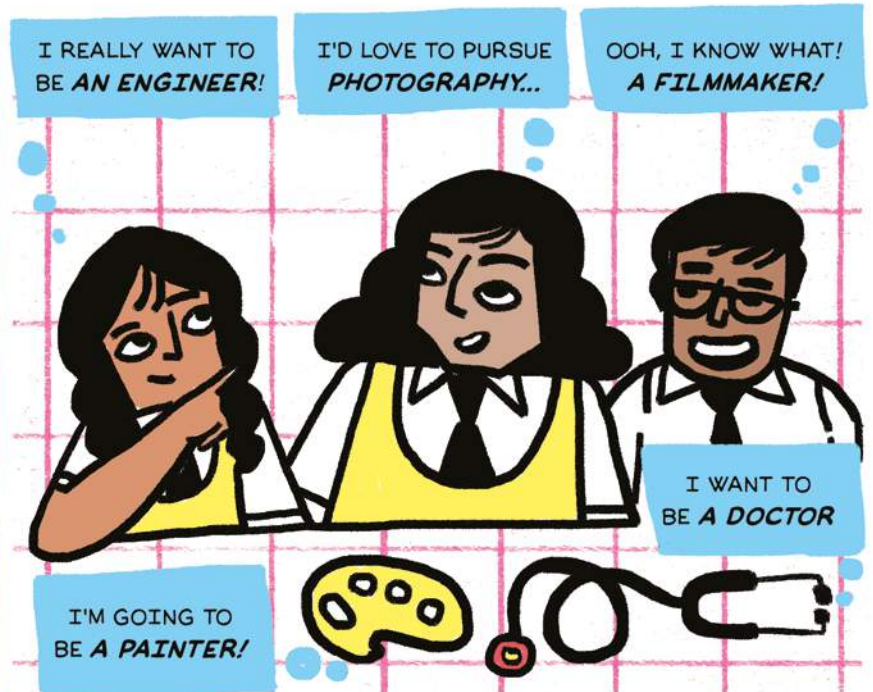
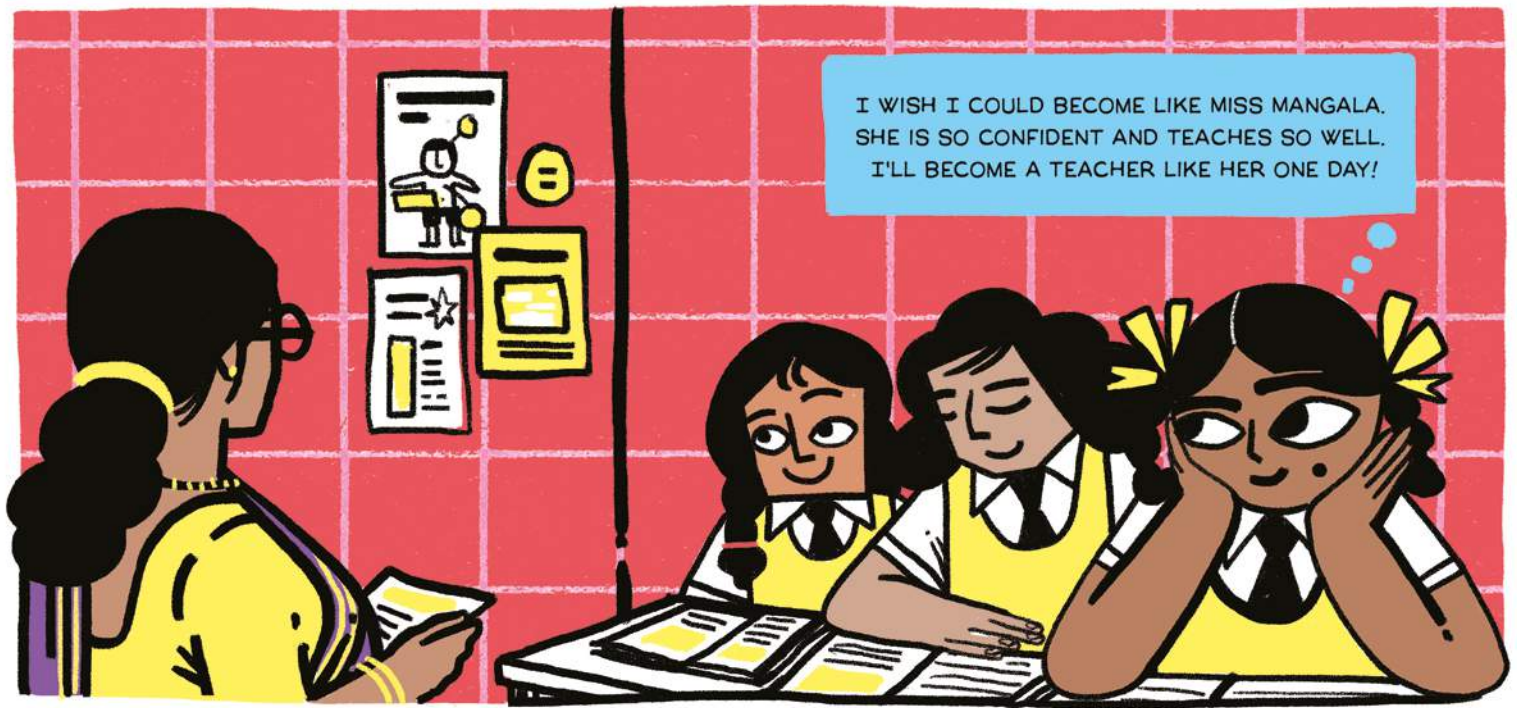


# CHASING A DREAM

*STORIES OF CHANGE BY THE AKSHARA TEAM*









SO THIS IS YOUR HOMEWORK FOR TODAY-  
WRITE AN ESSAY ON WHAT YOU WANT TO  
BECOME IN THE FUTURE, AND WHY.



HAHA! A  
PHOTOGRAPHER?  
HOW I WISH!



STUDYING TO BE  
AN ENGINEER  
COSTS A LOT!  
DOESN'T IT?

ACTUALLY, I'D  
REALLY LOVE TO  
BE A SINGER, HAHA

THESE ARE OUR DREAMS.  
DO YOU THINK THEY  
CAN COME TRUE?



WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BECOME ROSHAN?  
YOU DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING IN CLASS TOO.



UMM

...A TEACHER

MAYBE.

I'M REALLY  
NOT SURE.



HOW MANY ROTIS DO YOU MAKE  
IN A DAY AAI? CAN I HELP TOO?

NA, YOU HAVE YOUR LUNCH AND  
TAKE SOME REST. YOU NEED TO  
STUDY IN THE EVENING.





EVERYDAY, IT WAS THE SAME STORY. ROSHAN WOULD WANT TO HELP OUT BUT HER MOTHER WOULD ASK HER TO CONCENTRATE ON HER STUDIES.

IT WAS ALMOST AS IF SHE DID NOT WANT ROSHAN TO GET INVOLVED.

ONE DAY AAI, ONE DAY **I** **WILL** HELP YOU AND THEN YOU CAN TAKE SOME TIME OFF TO REST!



### 5 YEARS LATER...

AS A TEENAGER, ROSHAN'S LIFE IS A LOT DIFFERENT FROM HER CHILDHOOD. SHE IS COMPLETING THE LAST YEAR OF SCHOOL, HELPING IN THE HOUSE AND STUDYING HARD.

SHE IS NOT SO SHY ANYMORE AND INTERACTS WITH FRIENDS. SHE HAS FORGOTTEN HER DREAM OF BEING A TEACHER AND IS STRUGGLING TO COMPLETE HER EDUCATION.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO! THEY WANT ME TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL AFTER GRADUATION, AND THEN EITHER GET A JOB OR GET MARRIED!

THAT'S UNFAIR! TELL THEM THAT YOU ARE DOING REALLY WELL IN SCHOOL!



A MAJORITY OF GIRLS IN INDIA, LIKE ROSHAN AND HER FRIEND, TEND TO DROP OUT AFTER THE 8TH OR AT THE MOST, 10TH GRADE.

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, EDUCATION HAS BECOME ACCESSIBLE TO MORE PEOPLE AND THE ENROLMENT RATE AT PRIMARY, SECONDARY EDUCATION LEVELS HAVE GONE UP.

BUT THE DROPOUT RATES IN THE COUNTRY ARE STILL HIGH. ACCORDING TO A REPORT BY THE UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR STATISTICS AND GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING IN 2016, 47 MILLION GIRLS AND BOYS IN INDIA DROP OUT OF SCHOOL AFTER 10TH GRADE.



OUT OF THE 12 MILLION YOUNG WOMEN WHO ARE STUDYING AT THE UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL, ONLY ABOUT 600,000 PURSUE PROFESSIONAL COURSES. SOME OF THE PRIMARY REASONS WHY WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN EDUCATION IS LOW IN INDIA ARE:



#### **DOMESTICITY AND PRESSURE OF MARRYING EARLY**

WOMEN IN INDIA ARE OFTEN EXPECTED TO TAKE CARE OF THE HOUSEHOLD CHORES. ONCE THEY HAVE ATTAINED MINIMUM EDUCATION, THEY'RE ENCOURAGED TO MARRY EARLY.



#### **INFRASTRUCTURAL ISSUES**

MOST SCHOOLS IN INDIA LACK THE PROPER INFRASTRUCTURE. MENSTRUATING GIRLS TEND TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL DUE TO THE LACK OF PROPER TOILETS.



#### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

AS PER THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION LAW, SCHOOLS ARE TO MAINTAIN A SET STUDENT AND TEACHER RATIO--THE NEGLIGENCE TO FOLLOW THIS THROUGH ALSO BECOMES A DETERMINING FACTOR FOR MANY STUDENTS TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL.



#### **CONCERN FOR SAFETY**

GUARDIANS OF A GIRL OFTEN REFRAIN FROM SENDING HER OUT OF THE HOUSE ALONE, IN CASES WHERE A GIRL EXPERIENCES EYE TEASING, SHE OFTEN HESITATES SHARING SUCH INCIDENTS WITH THE FAMILY MEMBERS FOR THE FEAR THAT THEY MAY STOP HER FROM GOING TO SCHOOL ALTOGETHER.



#### **EDUCATION MEANS INDEPENDENCE**

EDUCATION PROMOTES INDEPENDENT THINKING AND MANY HOUSEHOLDS IN INDIA TEND TO DISAPPROVE SUCH INDEPENDENCE AMONGST WOMEN.

ROSHAN'S FAMILY COULD NOT AFFORD SENDING HER TO COLLEGE.

AKSHARA GAVE HER A SCHOLARSHIP AND ORGANISED WORKSHOPS ON LIVELIHOOD AND LIFE SKILLS LIKE **CONFIDENCE DEVELOPMENT, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER AWARENESS**. THE WORKSHOP ON SETTING GOALS MOTIVATED HER TO BECOME MORE OUTSPOKEN AND UNDERSTAND THEM











I WANTED TO BE A TEACHER BUT I'VE CHANGED MY MIND. LOOK AT MY PLAN. THIS IS HOW I SEE MYSELF GROW.

MY BROTHER AND I WILL TURN MY MOTHER'S SMALL, HOME-BASED BUSINESS OF MAKING ROTIS INTO AN ENTERPRISE. ONE DAY, I'LL BE ABLE TO AFFORD A BIG HOUSE FOR MY FAMILY AND I'LL BUY MY FAVOURITE CAR!



THAT SOUNDS GREAT, ROSHAN! HOWEVER, I HOPE YOU'RE AWARE THAT REALISING ONE'S DREAMS CAN BE FULL OF OBSTACLES. YOU'LL NEED TO LEARN MANY NEW THINGS TO SET UP A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS.

*ROSHAN RELATES HER PROBLEMS. HER NEIGHBOURS AND BUSYBODIES ARE ALWAYS MAKING FUN OF HER.*



LOOK AT HER! WHY IS SHE WASTING HER TIME OVER MAKING ROTIS-WE DO THAT EVERYDAY, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?



EH...MAYBE SHE IS JUST WHILING AWAY HER TIME TILL HER BROTHER GETS HER MARRIED OFF



SHE IS GOING TO FAIL BADLY! JUST YOU WAIT

I DON'T CARE WHAT PEOPLE SAY. ROTI MAKING IS SEEN AS SOME LOWLY WORK. WHAT IF YOU EXPAND IT AND MAKE IT A PROFITABLE BUSINESS? IF YOU HAVE A DREAM, THEN YOU MUST HAVE THE COURAGE TO GO AFTER IT.



MY MOTHER MADE ROTIS FOR THE NEARBY HOUSES.

I HAVE EXPANDED IT TO SUPPLY SOME EATERIES & ORDERS ARE POURING IN.





I KNOW IN ORDER TO GROW I'LL NEED TO STUDY, LEARN THE SKILLS TO RAISE CAPITAL,...



SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

RENT A SPACE AND HIRE PEOPLE, AND I HAVE TO ALSO BE PHYSICALLY FIT TO HANDLE EVERYTHING.



IT IS NOT EASY. TODAY I HAVE ENROLLED IN A MANAGEMENT COURSE. I WOULD LIKE TO TELL MY NEIGHBOUR AUNTIES-- YES, EVERYONE MAKES ROTIS BUT NOT EVERYONE TURNS IT INTO A BUSINESS!

YOU TOO CAN DREAM, TAKE A SMALL STEP AND THEN A LARGER ONE AND MOVE TOWARDS IT.

HAVING A DREAM IS ONE THING & REALISING IT QUITE ANOTHER!

GO CHASE IT AND YOU WILL SURELY CATCH YOUR DREAM!!

BECAUSE GIRLS FORGET THEIR DREAMS, TODAY THERE IS A DEARTH OF WOMEN WORKERS AND ESPECIALLY OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS...



13.6%

ACCORDING TO THE SIXTH ECONOMIC CENSUS (NSSO), WOMEN MAKE UP FOR ONLY 13.76% OF THE TOTAL ENTREPRENEURS IN INDIA, WHICH MEANS THAT OUT OF 58.5 MILLION ENTREPRENEURS, ONLY 8.05 MILLION BUSINESSES ARE BEING RUN BY WOMEN

THE STUDY ALSO REVEALED THAT MOST OF THESE BUSINESSES ARE SELF-FINANCED & EMPLOYMENT TO 13.45 MILLION PEOPLE.



OUT OF THESE, 2.76 MILLION WOMEN ARE ENGAGED IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR, AND 5.29 MILLION IN THE NON-AGRICULTURE SECTOR.



IN INDIA, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AMONG WOMEN CAN TAKE UP DIFFERENT FORMS. IN THE ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED AREAS, THE ADVENT OF MICROFINANCE SOLUTIONS HAVE ENCOURAGED THE WOMEN TO ORGANISE THEMSELVES INTO SELF-HELP GROUPS (SHGs) WHEREIN THEY SAVE SMALL AMOUNTS TO CONDUCT BUSINESSES LIKE PAPAD-MAKING, STITCHING CLOTHES, MAKING AND SUPPLYING MEALS, ETC.

LIJJAT PAPAD IS ONE OF THE LEADING EXAMPLES OF ENTREPRENEURIAL WOMEN LEADING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS.

IN THE RECENT YEARS, THE WOMEN HAVE ALSO CREATED THEIR PLACE IN MORE MAINSTREAM BUSINESS FIELDS LIKE MEDIA, BANKING, TECHNOLOGY, ETC.

SOME OF THE NOTABLE WOMEN LEADERS FROM INDIA ARE--ARUNDHATI BHATTACHARYA, WHO IS THE CHAIRPERSON OF STATE BANK OF INDIA, SCHAUNA CHAUHAN SALUJA, CEO OF PARLE AGRO, CHANDA KOCCHER, CEO AND MD OF ICICI BANK--THE LIST IS LONG.



## REFERENCE LINKS:

[HTTPS://THEWIRE.IN/54524/WOMEN-GRADUATION-ENROLMENT-LABOUR-FORCE/](https://thewire.in/54524/women-graduation-enrolment-labour-force/)

[HTTP://WWW.FIRSTPOST.COM/INDIA/UNESCO-47-MILLION-YOUTH-IN-INDIA-DROP-OUT-OF-SCHOOL-BY-10TH-STANDARD-2961334.HTML](http://www.firstpost.com/india/unesco-47-million-youth-in-india-drop-out-of-school-by-10th-standard-2961334.html)

[HTTPS://WWW.INDIANWEB2.COM/2016/05/10/14-PERCENT-INDIAN-BUSINESSES-RUN-WOMEN-ENTREPRENEURS/](https://www.indianweb2.com/2016/05/10/14-percent-indian-businesses-run-women-entrepreneurs/)

[HTTP://WWW.GOVERNANCENOW.COM/NEWS/REGULAR-STORY/FACT-SHEET-WOMEN-ENTREPRENEURS-IN-INDIA](http://www.governancenow.com/news/regular-story/fact-sheet-women-entrepreneurs-in-india)

[HTTPS://THEWIRE.IN/34430/WOMEN-RUN-14-OF-INDIAN-BUSINESSES-MOST-SELF-FINANCED/](https://thewire.in/34430/women-run-14-of-indian-businesses-most-self-financed/)

.....

THIS BOOKLET WAS CONCEPTUALISED AND WRITTEN BY **NANDITA GANDHI** BASED ON THE STORIES OF CHANGE WHICH EMERGED FROM THE INNOVATIVE EVALUATION TOOL USED DURING THE MAPPING CHANGE PROJECT.

SINCERE THANKS TO ALL THE GIRLS OF THE 2016 BATCH WHO SO GENEROUSLY SHARED THEIR LIVES AND STORIES.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO

- **MADHURI KAMAT** FOR SUPERVISING THE PROJECT,
- **SUNITA BAGAL** AND **UJJWALA MHATRE** FOR PROGRAM CO-ORDINATION AND
- THE ADVISORY GROUP OF **DR KALYANI TALVELKAR, DR KETAKI RANADE, SHWETA GHOSH,** AND **SUDIPTA DHRUV** FOR THEIR INVALUABLE SUGGESTIONS.

THE FIRST DRAFT WAS WRITTEN BY **VISHAKHA GUPTA**. SPECIAL THANKS TO **MANJIMA BHATTACHARYA** AND **THE AMERICAN JEWISH WORLD SERVICE, USA** FOR SUPPORTING THE PROJECT.

THE STRIKING COVER AND ILLUSTRATIONS ARE DONE BY **KRUTTIKA SUSARLA FOR THE KADAK COLLECTIVE.**



AKSHARA'S FOCUS IS ON HALF THE POPULATION OF INDIA OR ITS WOMEN AND GIRLS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE SOCIALLY AND ECONOMICALLY UNDERPRIVILEGED AND BEAR THE BRUNT OF VIOLENCE.

AKSHARA, A MUMBAI-BASED, NON-PROFIT WOMEN'S ORGANISATION AND RESOURCE CENTRE, HAS FOR 22 YEARS BEEN WORKING FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS, BUILDING LIVELIHOOD SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDING ONE'S GENDER RIGHTS. IN ORDER TO CURB AND PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SO THAT WOMEN CAN LEAD PRODUCTIVE AND DIGNIFIED LIVES, AKSHARA ENGAGES WITH YOUNG MEN TO INTROSPECT AND WORK TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY AND THE STATE TO IMPLEMENT LAWS AND PROVIDE SERVICES FOR A SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CITY.

[WWW.AKSHARACENTRE.ORG](http://WWW.AKSHARACENTRE.ORG)