



## **The People's Collectives: A Community-Led Project Advancing Anti-Caste Futures and Tribal Identity**

India's current socio-economic status quo is one that dictates identity and stratifies society by birth, thereby legitimising caste-based oppression. We aim to amplify Dalit and Tribal voices through oral histories, caste-awareness education, and grassroots action that drives social equity and decenters caste hegemony.

### ***Participatory Oral Histories (under sub-initiative titled Dalit Diaries):***

- We have engaged 60 members of both Dalit and Tribal communities to record over 350 intergenerational oral histories across Gujrat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.
- These interviews exposed everyday instances of caste-based atrocities and violence.
- 3 of our members are also working on documenting unfiltered voices of Dalit and Adivasi (indigenous peoples who are believed to be the first inhabitants of India) migrant labourers working in India's informal sectors such as brick kilns, construction, and agriculture.

### ***Digital Museum (under sub-initiative titled Dalit Diaries):***

- We are curating a virtual Untouchability Museum to showcase and increase awareness of caste-based violences by focusing on material culture.
- We are achieving this by collaborating with experts, historians, locals, and children to exhibit 56 objects of atrocities such as brooms, shoes, pots, and tin plates.

### *Caste-Conscious Education:*

- In 83 schools across the country, we have been able to establish “Students of Equality” clubs which are equipped with a caste-sensitivity curriculum
- Consulted academics and drafted a rights-based multilingual toolkit for the Dalit community (2,600+) aimed at providing information about legislative provisions, safety, and educational rights

### *Policy Dialogues:*

- Organised 15 policy dialogues to uplift Dalit leaders and engaging local and district government leaders including panchayat leaders in rural areas
- In collaboration with 2 local universities, we are conduct legal aid camps across Rajasthan to fight caste-based atrocities cases: 65 FIRs have been registered under the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act
- Under our sub-initiative, Tribal Vikas, we have helped register 1,000 members of denotified tribes for legal documentation which has helped them access government welfare schemes

### *Grassroots Empowerment:*

- We have seeded 90 Dalit youth via micro-grants to help poverty alleviation; this includes upskilling programs in tailoring, beauty, and computer literacy which has increased financial independence and created models of self-reliance in communities
- \$25,000 secured from accessing government schemes and CSR funding - Agarwal Metalworks and Krishna Charitable Trust

### *Caste Census Advocacy (2023-24):*

- The existing government was reluctant to undertake a caste census (the last one having been done in 2011).
- I worked under Dr. Chandrabhan, President of the State Congress Committee and Ex-Member of Legislative Assembly, to advocate for the census’ implementation.
  - This meant drafting position notes which highlighted its constitutional and socio-economic necessity, and engaged 5 local youth collectives to mobilise grassroots support for data transparency and social equity.