



REPORT



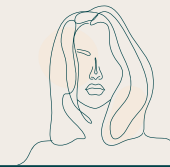
WOMEN & SDGs

17 CHANGEMAKERS



THE GLOBAL GOALS





WOMEN
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INTRODUCTION

In 2015, the United Nations adopted The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Also known as the Global Goals, the SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all enjoy peace and prosperity. The 17 interlinked Goals adopted by countries are designed to be a “blueprint” to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. If we look at the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, women are rightly at its center. Gender Equality (SDG5) is not only a goal in itself but also a prerequisite for achieving all of the 17 SDGs. Therefore, unless we invest in women and girls, we cannot get closer to the global agenda.

“Every one of the #GlobalGoals impact women and girls. If women don’t have equal access to education or health care or jobs, for example, then we will never come close to achieving the Goals,” says Melissa Fleming, Chief Of UN Global Communications.

According to the ‘The Progress on The Sustainable Development Goals, The Gender Snapshot 2021’ by UN Women, one of the hindrances in achieving the Global Goals is the disparity that women and girls face. For example, in 2020 alone, women experienced 10% higher level of food insecurity, affecting Goal 2 (Zero Hunger). During the pandemic, women suffered greater job losses than men affecting Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

India is one of the 193 countries that formally adopted the SDGs, and has been driving a host of related initiatives in the last five years. The governments, at the national and sub-national level, have adopted the SDGs as a guiding framework to steer development action. Programs such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Make in India have been implemented to support sustainable development.

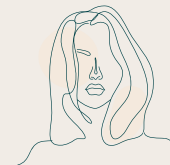
The country has seen exemplary performance with regards to Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy). However, when it comes to gender, there is room for improvement for India on international indices. The World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index 2021 lists India at number 140 out of 156 countries. The 2021 Georgetown Women, Peace and Security Index¹ ranks India at 148 out of 170 countries.

Gender gap and efforts at reducing hunger are indices that have led to lowered rankings for India in UN’s SDGs. It went from 115th in 2019 to 117th in 2020. This demonstrates the need for India to invest in women and to work on establishing gender equality for the country to achieve the SDGs. The barriers that women face in all aspects of their lives need to be addressed.

1. <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/>



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It is obvious that Indian women play a vital role in the sustainable development of the country and in achieving all SDGs. As a sizable constituent of India's population, women's efforts and work directly contributes to the betterment of the country. When empowered, they can bring important opinions to the decision-making table, which will enable the creation of SDG-focused policies. In fact, the UN believes that the COVID pandemic could have been handled far better, had women been a part of the decision-making process. Women can also contribute significantly to the workforce and the Indian economy as a whole, not only through unskilled work but also through specialized work.

In 2020, over 3.6 billion² users were using social media worldwide. Over the years, social media has become a powerful tool not only to raise awareness but also for accountability purposes. It's being used to monitor performance of public institutions, advocate for change and hold governments accountable.

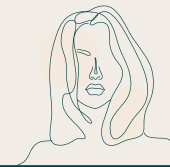
Twitter has emerged as a popular and essential service used by millions around the world to engage, debate, network and share information. Twitter is a powerful tool for women to express themselves and make connections. Activists, politicians, journalists, and bloggers use it everyday to make their voices heard.

"Twitter has been serving public conversation for over 15 years, and we believe conversations get better when as many people as possible participate. The positive power of Twitter is what connects us and allows us to impact the world. It is the driving force that propels our mission to be a purpose-driven company. Earning trust is one of our core operating principles, and it begins with how we act. We believe in growing our audience and our business in socially-responsible ways," says Shagufta Kamran, Director - Public Policy, Twitter India.

2. Statista.com



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ABOUT THIS REPORT

Sayfty Trust and Twitter India joined hands to recognize exemplary changemakers and how they're leveraging Twitter to advocate for the #GlobalGoals and make a difference. The partnership aimed to drive greater participation of women in conversations relating to SDGs, with inclusion & safety as paramount.

Building on the occasion of International Women's Day (IWD), we celebrate 17 Indian activists and changemakers among us, working on the SDGs. Through Twitter, they are changing the world one SDG at a time.

Exemplary women changemakers from remote parts of India were identified who were working on SDGs and efforts were made to understand how Twitter has enhanced their work/business/advocacy and furthered their participation by creating safe online spaces and #BuildBackSustainable.

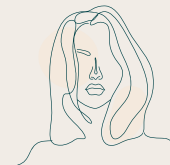
In this endeavor to feature women changemakers working on the SDGs, Sayfty Trust came across diverse efforts that these women have taken upon themselves. The zeal, passion and motivation with which these women have progressed the SDGs through their work is inspirational.

From focusing on something as essential and often overlooked as post-partum, to holding baby-showers for an endangered species through community-led action, — they are doing it all. Pioneering the Indian #MeToo movement or providing millions of meals to the hungry during the lockdown - each woman featured brings with her a story of sustained efforts. These women lead the way in advancing the SDGs while using social media for social good.

We hope the works of these 17 changemakers will not only inspire girls and women everywhere to pursue their dreams, but also advance women's equality and leadership in meaningful ways.



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BRINDA ADIGE

 @brindaadige



SDG 5



SDG 10



Brinda Adige is a human rights activist, working with children and women, especially those from the Dalit community. She has pioneered India's first child protection helpline, and spearheaded India's first people-friendly, gender-sensitive police training in Karnataka.

Brinda addresses violence against women and issues confronting vulnerable people in rural-urban areas. She also works with State agencies and civil society organisations to demand people-friendly mechanisms for speedy rights-based responses. Her work involves all aspects of gender, social justice, and climate.

Since she joined Twitter in 2009, Brinda has been using the service to demand responsible action. She continues to challenge lop-sided policies and laws, along with patriarchal and caste-based mindsets through her Tweets.

Brinda quips that the Indian middle class can be a complacent community and this has helped Twitter become a service that can mobilize mindsets. The reason is Twitter lets people "think" and engage in discussions using their phones.

She adds, "Even if people spend 10 seconds on any matter every day, there is hope. Twitter is so powerful that it has elected representatives, and made governments sit up and notice."

Brinda had a similar experience when she tagged a minister of her state, along with the police authorities, in one of her Tweets related to violence against women. Through her Tweet she got a call from the local police immediately and was granted an audience at an appropriate hour.

Brinda believes it is the responsibility of Twitter users to not use it indiscriminately. She says it took her years to build the reputation where a person being tagged understands the situation and need, and responds to her accordingly. She reiterates that the idea is to mobilize and not antagonize.

Since 2012, through her organisation Global Concerns India, Brinda has worked with vulnerable women facing violence at home and outside. These include women in slums, pavement dwellers, domestic workers and unorganized workers.

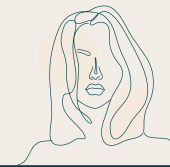
Brinda also works closely with women who are elected representatives and leaders in village panchayats. Through various training programs, her organisation addresses intersectionality in gender.

It's common to find women belonging to lower castes in village panchayats, even with certain responsibilities, fear accepting positions of power. They refuse to sit on designated chairs and refrain from asking questions or taking the reins in their hand. Brinda's organisation trains such women for various roles and assists them in driving change in their communities.

Education forms the crux of all the programs run by her organisation. Brinda shares, "We start by saying that you are actually the managers of your homes. So why not become managers of your communities? Why not become leaders of your communities? If you belong to a different caste, but are an elected representative, you are a powerful woman".




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Dr. MAHIMA BAKSHI

 @bakshimahima



SDG 2



SDG 3



SDG 5



Dr. Mahima Bakshi is a maternal child wellness coach, a woman activist, and the author of the book *Birthing Naturally*. She is also the founder of Birthing Naturally, a virtual clinic focused on parenthood and has been a fashion model in the past.

Dr. Bakshi believes when you empower a woman to take care of her health and her child, it helps in creating a better future for the country. Her book 'BirthingNaturally' talks about how a woman should prepare her body for pregnancy for the optimum well-being of herself and her child. Her second book, due for release in 2022, is on postpartum wellbeing, promoting breastfeeding and equal parenting.

Dr. Bakshi joined Twitter in 2010 to raise awareness of mother-child health and rights. During the pandemic, she has used Twitter to connect with expectant mothers. During the first wave of COVID in India, she launched an online helpline for pregnant women, specifically for those who tested positive and had to self-isolate at home.

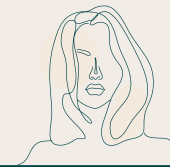
These women lacked the emotional support and physical proximity of their loved ones to comfort them. Through Twitter, Dr. Bakshi supported these women while also connecting with organisations like National Commission of Women (NCW), Delhi Commission for Women (DCW), Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) and National Commission for Protection for Child Rights (NCPCR).

To normalize changes in a woman's body during and after pregnancy, Dr. Bakshi also held an online beauty pageant for pregnant women and new mothers. The mothers could participate from the comfort of their homes. It was India's first pageant dedicated solely to pregnant women and young mothers.

When Dr. Bakshi started her advocacy almost ten years ago, topics like breastfeeding were not openly discussed. She says, "It used to be very challenging as people were not receptive to the idea of openly talking about maternal challenges. It took a lot of work to make people understand the importance of a healthy mother and child in society."




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ANUSHA BHARADWAJ

 @anushabharadwaj & @voice4girls



SDG 4



SDG 5



SDG 8



Anusha Bharadwaj is the Founder-Director of SoCh for Social Change and also the Executive Director of VOICE 4 Girls, its sister organisation. Her work involves training young girls to take charge of their lives and become future leaders of society.

Anusha believes in the power of youth leadership to transform communities and nations. Her contribution has been recognised and she has been the recipient of several awards including Great Indian Women of the Year 2021 by Golden Signatures #GIWA 2021, WEF 2019 Award of “Exceptional Women of Excellence”, Balika Bandhu Award in 2017, and Leader in Volunteer Engagement in 2017.

Her organisation, SoCh, aims to provide college students and working women with opportunities to upskill themselves. The efforts are in conjunction with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and empowering women. SoCh runs various programs that strive to enable women to take up leadership positions in the development sector.

The other organisation, VOICE 4 Girls, works to provide marginalized adolescent girls with support to be leaders. These efforts include engaging with girls and also boys from marginalized communities - to train them to make informed decisions and support the women in their lives.

While VOICE works with adolescents, SoCh intervenes at the college and professional level to equip girls and women with the necessary knowledge, skills and support. Since its inception, VOICE has impacted more than 100,000 adolescents across the country. Since 2017, SoCh has reached out to over 6,000 adolescents and 1,000 young women.

Anusha joined Twitter in February 2010. As a service, it has helped her build a community of like-minded people and amplify the voices of VOICE 4 Girls in meaningful ways. Twitter has helped these organisations engage with the community and leverage its huge user-base to efficiently connect with stakeholders, potential funders and organisations that are doing similar work.

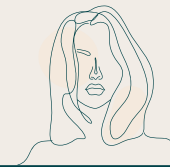
In December 2020, VOICE 4 Girls conducted a Twitter-based campaign to advocate against child marriage in India. Through Twitter, VOICE shared videos providing information on the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act. It also discussed how early marriage impacts girls and boys and the steps that can be taken in order to prevent such marriages in society.

Organisations such as Save the Children India, Kshamata Trust, TribesforGOOD, Bridge Institute, Humans of Safe Places, and Tharuni, among others, all joined the campaign. They also conducted two webinars, where VOICE beneficiaries were invited to speak against child marriage. The whole campaign focused on sharing informational videos aimed at children.

Anusha likes the fact that Twitter gives the option to add one-time sensitive content warnings to photos and videos they Tweet out, if it contains sensitive content.



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Dr. PURNIMA DEVI BARMAN

 @storksister



SDG 15



Dr. Purnima Devi Barman is a globally-acclaimed wildlife conservationist, who is internationally recognized as “Stork sister” for her tireless work on the endangered Greater Adjutant Stork, locally known as Hargila, in Assam. She is also the founder of an all-rural army team of 10,000 women called Hargila Army (voice of women for peace and nature). Currently, there are 400 volunteers who are active forefront leaders - mobilized from being housewives to - now also conservationists. Purnima has empowered 10,000 rural women until now, with livelihood, capacity building and environment education.

Dr. Barman joined Twitter in 2013, primarily to raise awareness about the Hargila bird and engage with policy makers and the international community to save it from extinction.

With a global population of just 1800, the Hargila bird is an endangered species. Most people lacked awareness, and there was limited support for it. In most Assamese communities, the Stork was treated as a bad omen.

Dr. Barman was sensitized to the issue after she became a mother and decided to advocate for the cause. When she started, only 400-500 birds were left.

Initially, Dr. Barman faced various challenges including changing people’s perception about the bird, lack of visibility for her work. But she was persistent in working with women in her community. She empowered them through folk songs, prayers, and to avoid cutting down of trees during the breeding season for the bird. Dr. Barman started inviting women to “Hargila baby showers” as they do for expectant mothers in Assamese culture.

Women were emotionally sensitized and soon, they started raising their voice and did not allow the men to cut down the trees. The campaigns soon extended to schools.

Her crusading efforts have increased the stork’s nest numbers by ten-fold in the last 15 years, and not a single tree cut down since 2010 in the village. A conservation campaigner and also an entrepreneur, Purnima has changed the fate of the species from a bad omen to a sacred bird in the communities, along with social and economic changes in those villages in Assam.

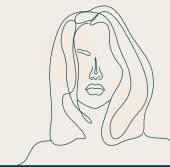
Today, Dr. Barman and her team have rescued more than 400 birds; and Twitter as a tool helps her work get international recognition. She is able to connect with journalists, policy makers and have a global audience to raise awareness about the endangered species. Twitter also allows Dr. Barman to market and sell merchandise made by the community women in support of their conservation efforts.

Because of her excellent work, Dr. Barman was the recipient of both the Whitley Award, also known as the Green Oscars for her conservation efforts and the Nari Shakti Puraskar, the highest civilian award for women, presented by the President of India, in 2017.

She hopes that more people on Twitter support their work, help them raise awareness and funds to protect the Hargila species. Through social media, she wants to increase awareness so that they are able to rescue more birds.




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RITUPARNA CHATTERJEE

 @masalabai



SDG 16



Rituparna Chatterjee is an award-winning editor and columnist, with over twenty years of experience reporting from the Indian subcontinent on gender and civil rights, feminist movements, politics, and culture. She is a safe workplace and sexual harassment prevention campaigner, specialising in sexual harassment laws. Being one of the founding editors of HuffPost in India, Rituparna now works as the Deputy Asia Editor for The Independent, and is the current India representative at Reporters Without Borders.

Rituparna joined Twitter back in 2001. “I work in the field of communication and it forms the molecules that hold up the universe of mass media and the many ways they are used for public good,” she says. She joined Twitter because it is an equitable service for those who wish to drive conversations that align human potential with empowerment, philanthropy, information, and power to bring about societal change.

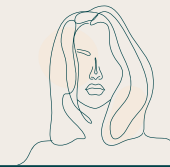
Rituparna uses Twitter for a multitude of reasons. It could be to amplify conversations of the oppressed communities, or reach for philanthropic causes, empower and educate, inform, create employment opportunities. She also uses it to volunteer for important social causes, hold safe spaces for survivors of sexual violence, connect with people and mentor young people. The service also helps her start conversations about gender, politics, equality, justice, civil rights and free press.

With such extensive experience in her field, Rituparna stands out with her efforts. She single-handedly runs the verified handle @indiametoo, created in 2018 in the wake of the Indian MeToo movement. Her work is evident through the handle, as she has come across survivors of sexual violence, offered advice, connected many of them to lawyers, NGOs, shelter homes, mental health counselors, and other pro bono services. She provided a safe space to actively listen to the stories of the survivors. Rituparna has connected survivors to the press when they needed to tell their stories to a wider audience.

Her personal Twitter handle @masalabai runs a thread called "sisterhood" for three years now, standing at over 600 Tweets — one of India's longest — on work vacancies. Rituparna's position as a senior editor and the global representative of a media watchdog helps her highlight social discrimination. She helps translate and draft statements on behalf of survivors, amplifies their work, and actively lends her name to ongoing social justice campaigns. The idea of equality and to ensure that no one is left behind in a post-COVID world means sharing information freely with those in vulnerable intersections of the society. Rituparna continues to do this, either by sharing their stories or connecting them to agencies that can help them, including starting fundraisers.




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NEETI GOEL

 @neetigoel2, @khaanachahiye



SDG 2



Neeti Goel is a prominent restaurateur based in Mumbai, with restaurants such as 'Keiba,' 'Ostaad,' 'Madras Diaries,' 'Madras Express,' and the Alibaug-based brand Villa Amore to her credit. In 2019, she was named Restaurateur of the Year at the Eiffel Tower in Paris, while her restaurant was voted second among the top 50 restaurants in the world.

Neeti joined Twitter in 2017. During the pandemic, she started delivering food to those in need. She was also involved in coordinating transportation to assist migrant workers in returning to their homeland during the lockdown in India.

Twitter helped cut down barriers to accessibility for her team and they were available for support with a single Tweet. During the pandemic, Neeti co-founded 'Ghar Bhejo,' an initiative with actor Sonu Sood, where they transported 1.5 lakh migrant workers back home. They also distributed 40,000 ration kits and over 80 lakh meals to fight hunger during the pandemic.

When chaos spread before the lockdowns in India, she started *Khaana Chahiye* (Food is Needed), and used her experience as a restaurateur to help scale operations to astonishing heights. She leveraged Twitter as the mobiliser for this initiative.

An incident that she remembers distinctly is when a group of local Rajasthani artisans from a remote border area reached out to *Khaana Chahiye* through Twitter as they ran out of resources to feed themselves and their families.

Through a government channel, *Khaana Chahiye* also adopted *shramik trains* (trains for migrants) and provided food and water to the passengers for 48 hours.

Neeti undertook a sanitary pad distribution drive that distributed 50,000 sanitary napkins to sex workers, women in migrant camps, women prisoners in Thane and Byculla jails, 32 orphanages and other needy women.

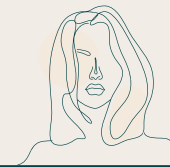
Next on their agenda is a new initiative on "hunger mapping," targeted at homeless people and those without ration cards. They are tagged with the nearest lamp post, and then added to the list of 15,000 people identified under the criteria.

Neeti's team, along with BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation), has distributed 1000 ration cards from the curated list as a pilot project. For a year, volunteers will track if the cards are being utilized in the manner that they were envisioned or not.

In preparing meals, the biggest challenge Neeti and her team faced was in sourcing the ingredients - in a cost-effective and timely way. They decided to reach out to farmers in Maharashtra who were unable to sell their crop. Twitter helped immensely as one contact led to another.



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ANITA GUPTA

 bhojpurmahila, @mahilakala



SDG 8



Anita Gupta runs the Bhojpur Mahila Kala Kendra in Arrah, Bihar, a social organisation consisting of 500 self-help groups (SHGs) that train and employ women. The organisation teaches different skills such as basket weaving, sewing, embroidery and jewelry-making to women. Anita's endeavour started with two girls and today, provides free training to 50,000 women.

Born and brought up in Arrah, Anita is one of six siblings. She was in 10th grade when her father passed away and her uncle insisted on marrying her off early. Early in life, Anita noticed how the uneducated women in her house were dependent on men for all their decisions. They were subjected to patriarchal and misogynistic beliefs and had no way out. She understood the importance of education and being self-sufficient as a woman. This realization sparked her interest in learning new skills like using a sewing machine.

She started creating handicrafts in 1992 and eventually, started training other women in her community. In 2000, she registered her NGO Bhojpur Mahila Kala Kendra. Through the NGO, she has created self-help groups like bank financing, handicrafts etc. that teach women various life skills. Anita has trained more than 60,000 women free of cost, until now.

She joined Twitter in 2018 as she found it easy to use with a broad reach. Through her organisation's handle, she amplifies stories of women she works with, to raise awareness and also gain new work opportunities for them. "We have more training options for tribal women, in artificial jewelry-making and kashidakari (embroidery art) and silai/kadhai (sewing), stuff-toy making. A lot of these training opportunities come through collaborators on Twitter. We also get orders for our products through Twitter," she says.

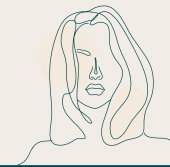
"Because of our Tweets, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development's (NABARD) District Development Manager (DDM) reached out to us requesting me to train tribal women in skill development in Giridih district, Jharkhand," Anita adds.

But there are issues post-training when women don't want to pursue work. They don't want to step out of their homes as there is a negative stigma attached to women who earn and run their households. Anita strives to change such mindsets through her work on Twitter.

"During COVID, we pivoted and started making masks. We got a lot of orders through Twitter," Anita remarks. For women like her, who are educating and empowering thousands of other women, digital training on how to leverage social media platforms like Twitter more efficiently would be invaluable.



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Dr. NEELAM GUPTA

 @arohfoundation



ALL 17 SDGS



Dr Neelam Gupta is the president and CEO of AROH Foundation – a not-for-profit organisation that works towards empowering poor and marginalized communities. AROH conducts well-designed programs in the area of education, skill development, sustainable livelihood, health and sanitation, in more than 18 states in India.

Dr. Neelam is a gold medallist from Delhi University, and holds a PhD in Agricultural Sciences, with more than 20 years of extensive experience in social work.

Her Foundation started as a research-based organisation focusing on areas like agriculture and gender, but soon felt the need to diversify into community action projects. In 2008-09, it expanded its outreach to WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene), education, skill development, renewable energy, and environmental development.

Dr. Neelam joined Twitter in 2011. She found Twitter easy to use and since then, has been using it to promote, liaison, and showcase AROH's work, while searching for resources.

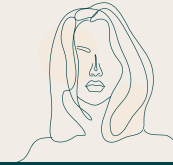
In the United Nations Global Compact Network, India, Dr. Neelam was able to showcase “best innovative practices” on all 17 SDGs. Her organisation has been able to generate food resources through Twitter, to create further impact, and garner support.

During the second wave of COVID, AROH was able to leverage Twitter to help more than 15,000 families with dry rations, freshly-cooked food, menstrual hygiene products, books for children, among other things.

For non-profits like AROH, who do not have sufficient funds to promote and showcase their work and innovation, Twitter serves a greater purpose. “We have found many volunteers, instant support, funders and resources through Twitter. Twitter itself is an aid in attending to SDGs, as it is instant, easy, and free,” Dr. Neelam says.




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YUMAN HUSSAIN

 @yumanhussain



SDG 4



SDG 5



Yuman Hussain, an alumni of Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University, and Jawaharlal Nehru University, is the Executive Director of Azad India Foundation (AIF) that helps impart quality education to underprivileged children in Kishanganj and Purnia, Bihar.

She is the “education champion” from India, supported by the Malala Fund, and a prolific leader in the social development sector. She works on women and adolescents-based initiatives that provide literacy, life skills, vocational training and livelihood options in rural areas to empower women and girls.

Yuman joined Twitter in 2014. For her, the service helps her connect to people with similar interests and realize common goals. “Twitter has proven to be most successful in amplifying voices not covered by the conventional media,” she says.

Yuman’s organisation, Azad India Foundation, is based out of Kishanganj. Currently, they work with 5,000 children directly through learning centers in more than 118 villages, in Kishanganj and Purnia.

They focus on education of girls and a child’s right to foundational literacy and numeracy up to secondary level. They also help families connect with social protection schemes like the “Jeevika Program” (Bihar Rural Livelihood Mission) run by the state government.

They also run a program for out-of-school and dropout children to bring them back into the fold of education through learning centers.

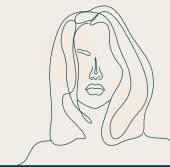
Her organisation helps women create self-help groups and assist them towards financial independence. They teach them how to open a bank account, and connect them to various beneficiary schemes of the government. The beneficiaries get credit facilities and training on different livelihood support programs.

Through her organisation, Yuman ran a massive campaign on advocacy for education on Twitter. The aim was to make the government take notice and raise public expenditure on education to 6% of the GDP. Through Twitter, they were able to gather almost 27,05,000 signatures within a span of three months.

She also adds that political leaders can be a catalyst to educate and empower women, and help bring marginalized voices on social media platforms like Twitter.



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MANJU KALANIDHI

 @mkalanidhi



SDG 2



An incorrigible optimist and a solution seeker, Manju Latha Kalanidhi is a senior journalist in Hyderabad and a community worker who believes in being the change she wants to see.

Her two-word mantra in life is to 'be useful'. Whether it is her social initiative, Rice Bucket Challenge, her profile as a journalist or her Whatsapp status, she likes using the online space to make a difference in the world.

Manju's efforts towards furthering the goals of SDG 2 (No Hunger) - have been unprecedented. Curator of the Rice Bucket Challenge, her journey with Twitter began in 2010-2011, initially as a journalist. In her opinion, Twitter is reliable and easy to use, especially for reaching out to people.

Manju started the Rice Bucket Challenge on Twitter, inspired by the famous 2014 ALS Ice Bucket Challenge. She was able to leverage the power of Twitter to reach people when one of her Tweets was Retweeted 10,000 times in August, 2015.

Her fan moment came when film director SS Rajamouli Retweeted her Tweet, helping her initiative garner traction. Between April 2020 and 2021, her initiative was able to raise Rs. 21 lakhs in funds. She managed to make groceries and 27,000 kg rice accessible to the needy in 78 points across Hyderabad. They even shared some of the resources with the Mumbai dabbawalas.

Connecting the world with one tag, one Tweet at a time, Kalanidhi says Twitter has really been a boon for her. It helps her connect with people anywhere in the world and she has been able to build a community and network of like-minded people for her initiative through Twitter.

Busting fake news, fact-checking, fighting misinformation has become easier, safer and reliable. Manju adds that Twitter makes it possible for her to Tweet freely about taboo social issues such as menstruation.

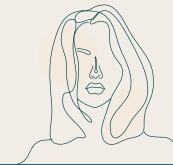
Although her work revolves around hunger mitigation, she recently shared a post on behalf of a friend asking for school fee sponsorship of four orphans. They needed Rs. 24,000 to be able to continue their school and Twitter users helped in achieving that goal.

To encourage more women to join Twitter, she feels that experienced Twitter users must share their personal stories of success; and how they have been using it to advocate for causes they believe in.

Manju and her resilience exemplify the words, "good begets good and evil begets evil."




THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
& SDGs

17 CHANGEMAKERS

SAHAR MANSOOR

 @bare_zerowaste



SDG 5



SDG 12



Sahar Mansoor is the founder and CEO of Bare Necessities, a zero-waste social enterprise. She has also co-authored the book 'Bare Necessities - How to lead a zero-waste life,' published by Penguin Random House.

Sahar has obtained accredited degrees on environmental topics in India, the USA and the UK, being a University of Cambridge alumni. Her business, Bare Necessities, offers zero-waste personal care, lifestyle, home care and educational products and services, including online sustainability courses.

Her time working at the World Health Organisation in Geneva and SELCO Foundation, on implementing decentralized renewable energy projects in rural Karnataka, enabled her to build Bare Necessities from the ground up.

Sahar joined Twitter in 2018. Her goal was to help make information more accessible around zero waste and sustainable living. She uses Twitter to garner meaningful collaborations and spark ideas on aligning personal values to small businesses.

She also creates awareness about small businesses and local manufacturing, especially by women, through Twitter.

Bare Necessities is attempting to change the narrative around waste by making zero-waste living the norm and not an exception. It leverages Twitter to spread information about zero-waste solutions and reimagine a cleaner, greener, more just and sustainable world.

Bare Learning, its learning platform, strives to research, create and share educational content on sustainability and responsible consumption. It is accessible to a wider audience looking for ways to transition to a sustainable lifestyle. By 2023, the aim is to reach 250,000+ people through the Initiative.

Bare Learning launched a course, 'Zero Waste in 30' in January 2020. More than 40,000 students worldwide have taken courses in sustainability, circular economy and zero waste living since then.

Sahar mentions that Twitter is one of the top referrals for these courses. The initiative provides students with well-researched content, allowing them to introspect and reflect on their daily lives and habits.

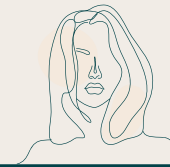
Additionally, these courses help people understand the implications of their own actions and provide real-time solutions to tackle waste footprint.

In 2018, through a crowdfunding platform, people joined the campaign and raised around Rs. 15 lakh. The money was spent towards capacity building and work related to the SDGs.

Further, Sahar was able to collaborate with journalist Geeta Mohan who reached out to her through Twitter. She ended up attending a "safai giri" (cleaning drive) conference in Delhi, as one of the three panelists for a waste-specific panel.



THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
& SDGs

17 CHANGEMAKERS

VANDITA MORARKA

 @vanditamorarka, @onefuture_india



SDG 3



SDG 5



Vandita Morarka is a social entrepreneur, human rights activist and policy-strategy consultant. She is the founder of One Future Collective, a social enterprise working towards social justice.

Vandita joined Twitter in 2009 because she has always seen herself as a political person and Twitter gave her direct access to people, their thoughts and personal musings. For Vandita's organisation, gender justice has been at its center and Twitter has been very useful in furthering its work on social justice, especially in addressing sexual and gender-based violence.

The organisation also runs a Feminist Justice Centre, which provides support to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. It looks at reimagining how the path to seek justice can be transformative for survivors, and what alternative pathways to justice can be.

Vandita has used Twitter to get lawyers, social workers, mental health professionals, pledge their time with the organisation - either pro bono or on a sliding scale. They have managed to amass over 300 professionals who work with them to provide litigation, research support and other services to survivors. The organisation also runs a helpline and Twitter again has been used to help spread the word. Vandita feels Twitter's "clickable format" needs to be credited for driving traffic to the helpline.

Twitter not only gives the organisation visibility but also easy access for people to reach out to them; it has been helpful right from building capacity to providing support.

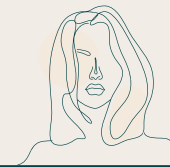
Vandita's organisation has supported over 450 survivors in the last three years. During the second wave of the pandemic in India, Vandita and her team engaged in relief work like sourcing medicines, beds, oxygen cylinders etc. for COVID patients.

She remembers that there was one Tweet for help which received responses from more than 320 therapists, psychologists, clinical psychologists and psychiatrists who signed up within a day via Twitter for a pro-bono project on mental health.

Together, they created a structure and a system for providing mental health support to anyone who couldn't afford it in India. A parallel fundraising (where Twitter was used extensively), helped the organisation reach international audiences, thereby raising funds to support over 1,500 people under the project.




THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
& SDGs

17 CHANGEMAKERS

Mrs. LAKSHMI PURI

 @lakshmiunwomen



SDG 5



SDG 11



Lakshmi Puri is a former UN Women Assistant-Secretary General (ASG). According to her, “The SDGs are one of the biggest and most vital projects of humanity in this century and a global public good that the UN has been able to deliver.”

“For the first time, the international community, in all its diversity of developed and developing countries from all continents, has been able to come together on a set of comprehensive, mutually symbiotic SDGs that encompass all possible dimensions of human development - economic, social and environmental leaving no one behind and reaching the farthest first building peaceful, just and inclusive societies,” she adds.

For Lakshmi, the most far-reaching and transformative SDG is SDG 5 on achieving Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE). It is an indispensable enabler and beneficiary of all other SDGs. It is a means to accomplish the rest and an end in itself. In her seven years as ASG UN and DED UN Women, Ms. Puri worked successfully to ensure that SDG5 was included in the Agenda 2030. There was a need for laws, policies, advocacy, movement building, programs, data and knowledge hubs for the achievement of the SDGs including SDG 5.

Puri joined Twitter in 2017. She began with conducting Twitter chats on gender equality. While at UN Women, Puri used Twitter to spread and amplify the powerful message of GEWE to reach people of all ages and countries. She targeted the young, who are the real enablers, owners and beneficiaries of change in the private sector and civil society outreach. During the pandemic, she started actively writing articles on national and international affairs, including gender equality, and now forms an integral part of a voracious and engaged Twitteratti.

Puri feels Twitter is a great place to discover and exchange diverse opinions and receive news, almost like a real-time summary. She lauds Twitter's updated private information policy that allows individuals to request takedowns of photos and videos that have been uploaded without their consent.

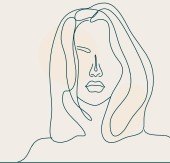
Twitter is very effective for advocacy, activism, mobilizing people, and creating action within a movement. In addition, trends, hashtags etc., raise awareness on issues globally that otherwise don't receive much public or media attention. The biggest examples are #HeForShe, #MeToo, #SDGs.

Lakshmi believes that, "There should be a way to filter or warn accounts when they indulge in mass trolling of women and young girls, and the victim must be allowed to mass report abusive and trolls." She looks forward to collaborating with Twitter in large scale cause based promotions like GEWE, and collectively address abuse.

According to Puri, more women and young girls should be encouraged to use Twitter to voice their opinion; and feel safe and secure in doing so.



THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
& SDGs

17 CHANGEMAKERS

BHARTI SHARMA

 @shaktishalini87



SDG 5



Bharti Sharma has been leading Shakti Shalini - a non-government organisation working on gender-based violence - as Honorary Secretary, since 2014.

Since the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, she has been on internal sexual harassment committees of various organisations – government, non-government and academic institutions.

Bharti received the highest French honour Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur (Knight in the National Order of the Legion of Honour), conferred by the President of the Republic of France in 2017, in recognition of her lifelong commitment to child protection and women empowerment.

Bharti joined Twitter in February 2016 as she felt the need to discuss gender issues and highlight it on a public forum. Her organisation, Shakti Shalini, has worked with survivors of gender/sexual violence since 1987.

With her rich experience, she felt the need to clarify misconceptions around abuse through social media platforms like Twitter. She believed that this will help encourage individuals to come forth and get the assistance that they need.

Bharti has been leveraging Twitter to actively engage with a global audience on issues related to violence against women and girls. She has made collaborative efforts with organisations/individuals on Twitter to host a variety of campaigns and programs.

Her work on Twitter is primarily focused on gender-based violence and domestic abuse, and her organisation holds pan-India campaigns regularly. They also run a PAN India helpline number for survivors of gender/sexual violence and have created vetted lists of other NGOs providing support to such survivors in India. As on date, the helpline has assisted approximately 897 survivors in India.

Bharti uses Twitter extensively to engage with and seek help for survivors of domestic violence, and raises awareness on issues including gender rights, sexual and reproductive health; and mental health.

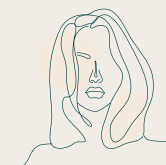
She believes that one of the primary benefits of using Twitter is increased accessibility for survivors. Oftentimes, survivors reach out to her organisation for help via direct messages on Twitter. In sensitive cases, there is hesitancy and that's where Twitter comes handy for people.

Bharti feels that with people having the option to Tweet in more than 11 Indic languages; there is a greater potential for more and more communities to get engaged and join the public conversation on Twitter.

She adds that "It's important for women to understand why they need Twitter and what they get from it. Survivors can share their stories. It can also be a great medium for young women to create content for survivors of gender-based violence, have their say and amplify their voices."



THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
& SDGs

17 CHANGEMAKERS

Dr. FAWZIA TARANNUM

 @fawziate



SDG 5



SDG 6



SDG 7



SDG 12



SDG 13



Dr. Fawzia Tarannum is an interdisciplinary water professional, a Climate Reality Leader and a Gender, Equity and Sustainability advocate. She is presently working as an Assistant Professor at the TERI School of Advanced Studies. She is the recipient of the Fulbright Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship and the University of Nairobi-IDRC Doctoral Research Grant. Fawzia is also the founding member of the Wednesdays for Water communication series instituted by a group of water enthusiasts.

Dr. Tarannum joined Twitter in 2009 as a prerequisite for training. In her opinion, “Twitter is the fastest and most reliable means to access information, share one's views and communicate and connect with like-minded people around the globe.” She transitioned from a corporate job to academia to work on community participation in water management.

Dr. Tarannum's primary work is in the field of water, the SDG6, and how it crosscuts with other SDGs like Gender (SDG5), Energy (SDG7), Sustainable Consumption (SDG 12) and Climate Action (SDG 13).

She uses Twitter to voice her opinions on issues in these fields, and share and gain more information. She also runs Tweet-chats and campaigns to expand her network. Being a faculty member of the Water Department at the TERI School of Advanced Studies (@terischool), and the founder member of Wednesdays for Water (@wednesday4water), she extensively uses Twitter to share information on their webinars, training programs, workshops, etc.

It was through Twitter that she got connected with @minaguli who was running a campaign #WorldWaterRun around the World Water Day in 2021. The objective was to come together and lead by example as a global running community and show the world why valuing water is important. Experts have predicted there will be a shortfall of 40% in usable water supplies within the next 10 years.

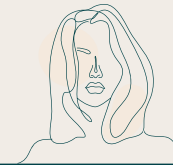
The #WorldWaterRun kicked off on 16 March 2021 and ended on 22 March 2021 (World Water Day). The participants had to commit a distance that they would run during this period in one go or over 7 days. Some of the Twitter posts included signing up for the 30km run, the Day 1 and Day 6 run and the final completion certificate. “Not only did we run around the world, but we ran around the world 8 times! In total, we ran 320,000km in over 132 countries. This was a united effort to achieve a goal that was far bigger than any one of us could have achieved alone. As a global community of runners, hikers and walkers we came together for water,” Dr. Tarannum says.

The Wednesdays for Water is a communication series initiated by the water enthusiasts from Environmental Design Consultants, TERI School of Advanced Studies, TISS, WICCI, Fluxgen, Counterview and youth representatives from India. The objective of the Initiative is to engage in conversation with water experts, grassroots practitioners, policy makers and students to explore the multi-dimensional issues associated with water and find the appropriate solutions.

“The Initiative has a Twitter account @wednesday4water and has been actively engaging with interdisciplinary water experts. Twitter is used extensively to promote all the work under the Initiative including lecture series, weekly quizzes, and other information on water issues and solutions.”



THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
& SDGs

17 CHANGEMAKERS

PRAGYA VATS

 @pragyavats



SDG 4



SDG 5



Pragya Vats has 15 years of campaign and communication experience in the development sector, including national and international NGOs, social movements and networks. She also conducts campaigns for Save the Children, India.

Having led campaigns on a range of issues, Vats believes in the power of story-telling, a compelling narrative that connects to one's heart and one that inspires collective action. She believes in the power of social media for social good.

Pragya joined Twitter in 2009. For her, the primary agenda was to build a narrative on child rights to showcase and forge partnerships with like-minded individuals and organisations working on common goals.

"Twitter allows real time conversation and action and is a great tool to amplify the cause we care for and what we want the public to engage with," she says. She now actively uses Twitter to build conversations and dialogues and advocate for change with political leaders and the public.

As a campaigner for Save the Children, India, Pragya's role is to raise awareness, inspire action and sustain engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Twitter is now part of her DNA and synonymous with work.

She uses it for brand engagement, fundraising, internet campaigns and has found that the engagement has grown over time. Pragya feels reaching out to policy makers for advocacy is easier on Twitter. It reduces red-tapism.

For example, Save the Children, India collaborated with Twitter India and Youth Ki Awaaz for the #VoteForChildren campaign. It was a campaign to have children-led demands to inform political parties' priority areas. Using Twitter helped them build momentum and connect with political leaders.

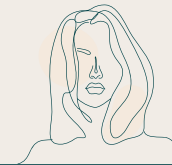
Another successful campaign was #LightUpHerLife, in collaboration with Yuva and 26 partners, including Sayfty. The goal was to build the narrative on girls' safety agenda by bringing together organisations working on women rights.

#AllyUpForHer was built on girls' agenda with various partners to weave in education and safety during the pandemic. There were petitions and voices central to taking action and engaging the public. Over 40+ influencers joined Twitter to build and amplify engagement.

"Twitter has been a great enabler, both as a service and a partner, in building conversations and engagement. For influencers and like-minded people, it is the primary medium to drive public conversation that diminishes the dichotomy between personal and political."



THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
& SDGs

17 CHANGEMAKERS

Dr. MANSEE BAL BHARGAVA

 @manseebal, @wednesday4water



SDG 6



SDG 11



SDG 12



SDG 13



Mansee Bal Bhargava is an entrepreneur, researcher, educator, speaker and mentor. Her interdisciplinary engagement in the build environment for over two decades, through architecture, design, development, planning, management and governance, has focused on sustainability and liveability.

She has received global scholarships with several fellowship support. She is deeply concerned about the state of water management in India and aspires to dedicate herself to water conservation and management. She believes science, with conscience and common sense, is crucial for humanity.

Mansee joined Twitter in 2009. Her focus is on architecture and water, but 'urban lakes' is a topic close to her heart. Most cities in the country have urban lakes and that has been her passion right from her Bachelors degree up until her PhD.

As a consultant in the field of architecture, Mansee along with her husband, worked on large ecological projects of afforestation of institutional, industrial, recreational and residential premises. Now she engages more on research, teaching, public speaking and mentoring.

She prefers Twitter for the kind of people she is able to connect with. It is precise, to the point and doubles up as a news portal for information. She has been able to build a strong community on Twitter, 'Wednesdays for Water' being one. Throughout the campaign, Mansee and her colleagues have been advocating using Twitter, calling it a citizens collective.

Not only did Mansee conceptualize the idea, she also leads the Forum. They meet every Wednesday to discuss water and have had speakers from all across the country, including Kiran Bedi and Medha Patkar. They use Twitter as a medium to promote such panel discussions and engage with other water activists.

When Mansee began working in the field, it wasn't lucrative and she struggled to look for work that could be of interest. There was no mention of water in the mainstream public discourse. Mansee attributes some of her success to the power of social media including Twitter. "In two years time, I can't believe I have given 100 lectures while also teaching, doing consultancy and community engagement," she says.

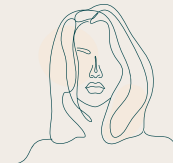
Her extensive years of research tell her that the environmental sector has more women practitioners. "But if they're not using Twitter, then there is an urgent need to bring them into it," she adds.

"One way to encourage women to join Twitter is by showcasing the case studies of women who have been able to break this glass ceiling on Twitter to an extent." Under-representation of women across sectors and even on social media is an issue that deeply concerns Mansee.

Sharing her fieldwork experience with women in farming and water management, Mansee says, "Women are very, very smart. They know what is going on around them. Either they hear on TV, from men or from the little phone they have. I will say intellectually active, they are still not engaging in the conversation. They are just waiting for a situation to arrive where somebody comes and encourages them."



THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
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CONCLUSION

With 2030 drawing closer, women are taking on greater roles to make the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals a reality. The Global Goals are important for all women and those in power can influence others to be trailblazers in bringing change.

While social media platforms give women and girls a space to speak up and be heard, there's still more that needs to be done to tackle challenges of abuse.

To protect public conversation, Twitter continues to work at scale and pace to build a healthier Twitter by stepping up the level of proactive enforcement across the service and investing in technological solutions to tackle abuse and malicious online behaviour. Shagufta Kamran says "Keeping people safe and secure on Twitter is one of our top priorities, and we're committed to helping people understand the security tools we offer and how to use them. We've rolled out features and settings that may help people feel more comfortable and in control of their experience, and we want to do more to reduce the burden on people dealing with unwelcome interactions. Our dedicated teams of specialists who provide 24/7 global coverage in multiple different languages enforce our Rules judiciously and impartially for accounts that engage in behaviors that violate the [Twitter Rules](#). Today, more than 65% of abusive content that's enforced on our service is surfaced proactively for human review."

In striving to achieve the Global Goals by 2030, a collective group effort is needed. It is important that all of us, including the governments, businesses, civil society and the people, work together to build a better future for all. It is our hope that the work being done by these 17 Indian women changemakers will inspire everyone to work for change and leave no one behind.

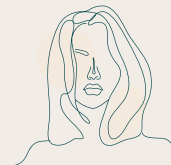
Countries have done commendable work in the area of gender parity, but there is a lot more that needs to be done to allow safer spaces to women.

"Every sector, every industry, every organisation must make it a priority to boost gender equality and ensure the equal participation of women," Fleming said. "The UN has achieved gender parity in its senior ranks. That sends a strong message and an inspiration to be replicated."

In the words of Lakshmi Puri, "Don't be a bystander. Join the movement. Men and boys must champion the gender-responsive implementation of the Global Goals. Women and girls must claim subjecthood and agency so that their voice, participation and leadership is visible and effective in each SDG activity."



THE GLOBAL GOALS



WOMEN
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17 CHANGEMAKERS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to sincerely thank the women who shared their stories with us. I would also like to thank Shagufta Kamran from Twitter India for working with us on this project, Ayushi Mehta for providing excellent research assistance and transcription of the interviews, Aanchal Kapoor for the initial research on the potential changemakers, Aadya Garg for the illustrations, Anushka Bhartiya for assisting me in editing the stories and Payal Joshi for designing the final report.

Dr. Shruti Kapoor
Founder & CEO,
Sayfty Trust

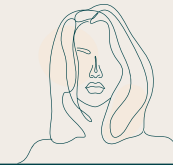
About Sayfty

Sayfty Trust is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to educate and empower women and girls against Gender-Based Violence (GBV). We engage local and global voices to raise awareness on GBV and to promote Sustainable Development goal 5 or SDG5 (gender equality). *Featured in BBC | Al Jazeera | More*

Learn more about Sayfty's work on www.sayfty.com
Twitter: [@sayftycom](https://twitter.com/sayftycom) | Facebook: [@sayfty](https://www.facebook.com/sayfty) | Instagram: [@sayfty](https://www.instagram.com/sayfty)



THE GLOBAL GOALS



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ANNEXURE

17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- SDG 1: Poverty
- SDG 2: Hunger
- SDG 3: Good Health & Well-being
- SDG 4: Education
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 6: Clean Water & Sanitation
- SDG 7: Clean Energy
- SDG 8: Economic Growth
- SDG 9: Industry Innovation & Infrastructure
- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities & Communities
- SDG 12: Sustainable Consumption
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 14: Life Below Water
- SDG 15: Life On Land
- SDG 16: Peace Justice & Strong Institutions
- SDG 17: Partnerships For The Goals



THE GLOBAL GOALS