

Bio Data

Name	Anuradha Talwar
Date of Birth	2.1.1959
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Educational Qualifications	BA in Economics (Honours) from Lady Shri Ram College for Women, Delhi University from 1975 - 1979; MA in Social Work (with specialisation in Family and Child Welfare) from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay, from 1979-1981.

Work Experience

I began by working for Unnayan, a research cum action group in Kolkata in 1981. From 1985 to 2001, I worked with an NGO called Jana Sanghati Kendra. It focuses on providing support to people's movements in West Bengal and other parts of the country. I continue to be an Executive Committee member

Since 2002, I have been acting as the Advisor for West Bengal to the Commissioners of the Supreme Court in the Right to Food and Work cases. This has given me an in depth experience of the way in which Government employment and food programmes are functioning and their impact on poverty and employment. I have sent reports to the Supreme Court Commissioners regularly on these matters. I have also studied and brought cases of hunger and starvation deaths to the notice of the court in the case of tribals in Midnapore and Purulia and closed tea gardens in North Bengal. Recently, I have also begun a process of advocating for reforms in the Public Distribution System in West Bengal.

In 2001, I was involved in a study on the impact of globalisation on agricultural workers and the opinion of agricultural worker unions on the same. Unemployment and food security emerged as one of the major issues that concerned agricultural workers in this study that covered 10 states.

I have been involved with the Paschim Banga Khet Majoor Samity, a registered union of agricultural workers since its inception in 1988. I was the President of this union from 2004 to 2010, and continue to be a member of its State Committee. The union, which is independent of political parties, represents agricultural workers from 7 districts of West Bengal. It campaigned from its inception for the passage of the MGNREGA and focuses now on implementation issues in MGNREGA. The Right to Food, wages, social security etc are also important central demands of the union.

I have also been involved with the Shramajibee Mahila Samity since its inception in 1990 as an elected State Committee member. The Samity is a mass organisation of rural working women in West Bengal. It has been struggling and campaigning on the need for employment and equal wages for women, as well as for the proper implementation of poverty alleviation programmes. It also works on issues of domestic violence and has a strong anti alcohol campaign. This has given me an experience of the impact of gender of food security.

I have also worked actively in the past with Maitree, a network of over 50 autonomous women's groups and NGOs in West Bengal. The focus was on violence against women and we also work on other gender based issues. I was active in this forum from 1995 to 2006.

I have also been part of a cross-site study on the use of community dispute resolution mechanisms in dealing with cases of domestic violence. The study in 2000-01 was a collaborative one between the International Centre for Research on Women and Shramajibee Mahila Samity. It focused on the use of *shalishi*. It has brought out very clearly the links between domestic violence and livelihood security of women. My involvement in anti trafficking work in the last few years has also shown that a break down in the family's economy, as well as disasters are one of the chief causes of trafficking.

I have been involved in evaluation work off and on over the years. Amongst some of the evaluations I have done are an evaluation of gender impact of three organisations for NOVIB in 1994, evaluation of Prodipan, an NGO in Bangladesh for Freres des Hommes in 1996, evaluation of over 40 projects of different NGOs for CAPART from 1999 to 2001 and evaluation of Ahimsa Trust for AusAid and UNDP in 2004. In 2006, I also did an evaluation for the Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust of 6 organisations working on the Right to Food in Madhya Pradesh. I also did a study for Fair Trade (FLO) of labour practises in a Darjeeling tea estate in 2010. I was also involved in evolving policy on gender for NOVIB from 1993 to 1995.

I work regularly as a trainer for Sangat, an organisation for South Asian women, training NGO workers in Bangladesh and India on issues like globalisation, resistance and the women's movement.

I am presently a National Secretary of the New Trade Union Initiative (NTUI) , a national federation formed in 2006 of independent trade unions. I have also been a member of the global Board of the Agricultural Workers Trade Group of the IUF (International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations) and of their Asia Pacific Regional Women's Committee from 2006 to 2010.

Languages Known

I can read write and speak English, Hindi and Bengali.