

Geeta Menon
PhD

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PROFILE

- International development and humanitarian relief professional. More than fifteen years of experience at Senior Management Level .
- Worked as a Senior Consultant with wide-ranging national and international agencies, successfully completed a number of research , training and strategy development assignments.
- Areas of expertise, Education and Gender. Specific areas: Education in Emergencies and Conflict, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Girls' Education, Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Early Grade Learning.
- Specific Competencies: Curriculum Development , Teacher Training and Module Development, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation. Additional competencies Strategy and Program Development Program Management, Fund Raising and Advocacy
- Proven track record of initiating and managing high-level partnerships with government agencies, corporations, bilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations and civil society .
- Both national and international experience. Have managed and worked in diverse teams.

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Summary of Experience

I have worked as a Development Professional for more than 20 years with a significant experience both at the senior management level and as a senior consultant. I have a good understanding of issues of development, in education I have worked for children and women in the margins, in particular for girls, tribal children and children affected by conflict.

During the year 2016 I worked at UNICEF ROSA (Regional Office of South Asia) as Education Specialist for Education in Emergencies/ Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Conflict. My responsibilities included work on school safety, social cohesion, peace building and conflict sensitive education. I worked closely with the country office teams in the region.

As a freelance Senior Consultant and Advisor I have successfully undertaken a number of national and international consultancy assignments with institutions like UNICEF, Save the Children Fund-Norway, UK Open University, AIR, CARE USA, CARE India, CARE Bangladesh , ACEV – Turkey and

Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. This has also given me a tremendous insight into the approach and working of different development organizations.

Earlier, I worked with CARE USA as their Senior Technical Specialist for Education in Emergencies and Conflict . During the tenure I provided technical support to conflict affected and post conflict countries like Somalia, South Sudan, Afghanistan . I conducted a number of INEE Minimum Standard trainings, I was also a member of the INEE Working Group.

At CARE USA I also held a concomitant position as the Program Coordinator for their Global Signature Program on Girls' Leadership. I made significant contribution in the design and roll out of the program. I worked for CARE India for around nine years and was instrumental in conceptualizing and developing CARE India's Girls' Education Program. CARE's education sector developed exponentially under my leadership and guidance. I managed a multi-donor portfolio of around ten million USD, at a given point I had around 40 members, State Program Managers, Technical Coordinators and Monitoring personnel reporting to me.

Additionally, I have been part of multi-disciplinary teams that have developed multi-sector programs on community development, livelihood, women empowerment, education, and post disaster relief and development. My skills and competencies include both technical as well as managerial areas.

I am known for my impeccable leadership skills, team building and integrity.

Employment History:

Senior Consultant (Free Lance): January 2017 onwards

Current Assignments:

Tata Education and Development Trust : Impact Assessment of the grant towards “Empowering 1000 youth and children through education and life skills in Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh”

UNICEF ROSA : Technical support to advancing work on Comprehensive School Safety and Social Cohesion/ Peacebuilding in Education in the South Asia Region. Supported the UNICEF in Bangladesh in developing a curricular approach for education of displaced children from Myanmar now in camps of Bangladesh. As also helped UNICEF Nepal, in re-strategizing Schools as Zones of Peace.

Save the Children (UK): Conducted a meta-analysis of three approaches, Schools as Zones of Peace, Violence Free Schools and Comprehensive School Safety. Based on the analysis developed a programming guiding note for the country level teams .

Education Specialist (TA) UNICEF ROSA January 2016 to January 2017

During the year I worked closely with colleagues in the Section and UNICEF country office teams in the region. Some of the key tasks accomplished were: one, consolidation of the four year Peace

Building Education and Advocacy (PBEA) program report for the region. Two, I played a key role in conceptualizing and coordinating the South Asia Regional Symposium on Education and Sustainable Peace, a first of its kind in the region. I supported the regional training on Conflict Sensitive Approach as worked closely with the Emergency Section in the regional office to advance DRR and School Safety in the region. I provided technical support to UNICEF Bangladesh in its strategy development on Education in Emergencies with the national government and to UNICEF Nepal in its work on Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP).

Senior Consultant: January 2009 to November 2015

UNICEF India, Sr. Consultant, Education in Conflict and Disaster Risk Reduction (February 2012 to November 2015)

National Consultation and Advocacy: During the consultancy I supported UNICEF's work on school safety and education in areas of civil strife. This included coordinating with the Emergency and Child Protection sections within the organization as bringing together external governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. I helped UNICEF set up a multi-stakeholder National Steering Committee on 'Right to Education in Areas Affected by Civil Strife and Natural Disasters'. In coordination with the committee I worked on the conceptualization and coordination a National Consultation on Right to Education in Areas Affected by Civil Strife. I developed an overarching, research based concept note on 'Education of Children in areas affected by Natural Disasters and Civil Strife: Context and Challenges for the national consultation. Coordination with the participants, government counter parts and the experts as the documentation of the consultation were part of my responsibility.

Program Development : I undertook a Situation Analysis of the education scenario in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, the note became the basis for government negotiation and program design for the state. (The proposal got funded by IKEA). As a Senior Consultant I continued to liaison and work with the state government and partner NGO Save the Children.

I also conceptualized and coordinated the development of the PBEA (Peace Building, Education and Advocacy)proposal for the Left Wing Affected states of Chattisgarh, Odisha and Jharkhand (and the state of Assam. I was responsible for coordinating with the state teams and for the donor reports and communications. I facilitated Conflict Sensitive Education Workshop in Chattisgarh and Child-Centred Conflict Analysis workshop in Delhi for the PBEA state teams of Assam, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha.

Quality Improvement and Teacher Training: In coordination with the government counterparts I conceptualized the teacher training strategy for J&K. I and another UNICEF consultant developed the Teacher Module 'Child First - Early Grade Teaching' based on the module a series of teacher training workshops were conducted in the state. I supported these workshops as a key trainer. I also helped UNICEF develop a monitoring tool for the Model Child Friendly Schools . I represented UNICEF on a Teacher Education Joint Review Mission to Jammu and Kashmir and was part of the

team that drafted the Mission Report. I was responsible for all the reports and documentation for the J&K programme

(Note : Spread over four years the exact contract period with UNICEF India was : June 2014 to March 2015, April 2013 to March 2014, February 2012 - December 2012.)

CARE India, (May 2013 to June 2013) Provided technical guidance and support to the Education team in developing their Long Range Strategy Plan . This included working on their Theory of Change and corresponding goal and strategies with a focus on tribal and dalit women and girls.

Mother –Child Education Foundation ACEV, Istanbul, Turkey: (August, 2012). Conducted a Training Program on 'Developing Community Based ECD Programs' for the ACEV project team. This included an analysis of Turkey's policies and programs as their efforts towards decentralization in a framework of a centralized governance structure.

American Institute of Research (AIR) December 2011 to March 2012. Completed a Research project 'A Case Study of Bihar on Adoption of Learning Standards'. The Case Study was based on review of Bihar Curriculum Framework, Syllabus of different subjects and corresponding text books. The Case Study was part of World Bank Commissioned documentation of global examples on Learning Standards.

Bernard Van Leer Foundation (through IGNUS) Developed a Pre-School Curriculum Framework for tribal children in Orissa.

Kusuma Trust, UK, August 2011, Completed a Research Report Secondary Research, on the Status of Secondary Education in India, with a focus on Hardoi (Uttar Pradesh) and Sambalpur (Orissa).

CARE Bangladesh September 2011, Helped CARE Bangladesh develop their Education Strategy in context of Women Empowerment Program. The work involved review of CARE Bangladesh's Vision document, project reports and evaluations, interactions with Government and Non-Government stakeholders and facilitation of two internal workshops. The intent was to enable CARE Bangladesh arrive at their Education Strategy and Theory of Change in a participative way.

American Institute of Research (AIR), May 2011 , Research Report on “ Status of Teacher Education in Bihar”.

Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, November 2010 to June 2010, Strategy Development for their Learning and Teacher Development Program.

UK Open University July 2010 to November 2010 “ India 1 Million: Feasibility Study”. The study was a comprehensive situation analysis of teacher education scenario in India, particularly in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

CfBT participated in the Mid Term Evaluation of DFID funded program in Andhra Pradesh “Supporting the Development of New Partnerships for Education Services for Self Help Groups in Southern India”

CARE India, Advisor (November 2009- October 2010) Work entailed providing support on strategy development, development of monitoring systems and program development.

Save The Children, Finland (Sept – 2009 to December 2009) Conceptualized and coordinated a National Consultation on Equal Education Opportunities and Inclusion in Education. Coordinated four desk Research Papers and the Final Consultation Report.

CERD, December 2009 – January 2010. Participated in the evaluation of Learning Centre run by an NGO Prayas.

CARE USA, August 2009 – September 2009. Conducted a retrospective analysis of CARE India's Education Program for policy implications, submitted a report entitled, Praxis to Policy Setting Agenda for Power Within A Case Study of CARE India's Girls' Education Program.

Lead Consultant, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan – Technical Cooperation Fund. Technical Support Agency. NCERT, National Council of Education, Research and Training, January 2009 .

Planning and Coordination:

- Developed Annual Plan and Annual Report .
- Coordinated capacity building events for academic faculty.

CARE USA : August 2006 to December 2008

Signature Program Coordinator, (January 2008- December 2008)

As the Signature Program Coordinator I worked closely with the colleagues in the Education Unit, Country Offices and Senior Management in designing the Signature Program and its Theory of Change. I also supported the fund raising and communication strategy as development of standards, training modules and common framework of indicators. Work involved working closely with Country Office Teams in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Strategic Planning

- Strategic & technical global leadership in development of CARE's Signature Program on Girls' Education and Leadership.
- Mapping and Coordination with 60 country offices for program development.

Technical oversight, program and grant management

- Development of program Strategies and Standards.

Capacity Building

- Training of Country Office education teams on Strategy Planning.

Knowledge management

- Development of communication strategy for Signature Program.
- Profiling and analysis of country office programs

Partnerships and Advocacy

- Development of Advocacy and Partnership Strategy

Fund Raising

- Support to development of USAID- GDA proposal.

Senior Technical Advisor, Education in Emergencies, August 2006 to December 2008(concomitant)

Strategic Planning

- Developed strategy for Education in Emergencies, through literature review, mapping of successful practices and stakeholder engagement.

Technical oversight, program and grant management

- Technical support to countries in emergency, post conflict and fragility the list included countries like Somalia, South Sudan, Afghanistan, DRC Congo, Haiti, Pakistan.
- Coordination and management relations for USAID's Educational Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP)

Knowledge management

- Three research papers on Pedagogies for Child Soldiers, Issues of Teacher compensation in Emergencies and Post Conflict and Active learning Pedagogies in two Post Conflict Contexts – Afghanistan and Somaliland

Partnerships and Advocacy

- Member of INEE Inter Agency Network for Education in Emergency, Early Reconstruction and Conflict (INEE Working Group).
- Presented theme paper on Teacher Compensation
- Member of Task Force on Teacher Compensation in Emergencies and Fragility

Fund Raising

- Supported all institutional fund raising efforts for education in emergencies, fragility and conflict.

CARE India : December 1997 to August 2006

Director, Girls' Education Program

I was responsible for developing and advancing education program of CARE in India. I was in charge of a diverse portfolio that worked to address the education needs of the marginalized groups at different age levels. The programs took a comprehensive look at the issue of education and worked both with the communities and the system, keeping the issues of access, quality and equity central to the work. I was instrumental in establishing some innovative strategies for girls' education, like accelerated learning camps, community schools and preschools, implementing life skill curriculum in formal schools and in developing strategies for better school and community linkages. I did significant work for re-establishing education (including pre-school education) process in post earthquake rehabilitation process in Kutch, Gujarat and post Tsunami in Andamans

and Nicobar Islands. As the sector director was responsible for raising and managing funds, the sector had funds at the tune of 5 million USD. I was instrumental in expanding the donor base exponentially.

Strategic Planning

- Developed sector strategy for Education Programs in India.
- Supported two institutional Long Range Strategy Planning exercises for CARE India.
- Enabled partner NGOs develop their Strategy Plans

Technical oversight, program and grant management

- Developed all the program designs for girl's education, quality improvement, early childhood development and post emergency education programs.
- Supported integrated community development and poverty reduction programs.
- Defined and coordinated strategies for community mobilization, pedagogic reforms and quality improvement, alternative schooling and accelerated learning and early child hood development.
- Conceptualized and conducted training for teachers in alternative schools and formal schools.
- Successfully managed for a number of projects and large and small grants from bilateral donors like DFID, USAID, Royal Netherlands Embassy, foundations and corporate donors.

Knowledge management

- Consolidated a number of process documentation and training modules.
- Conducted three National Level events in Education where papers and studies were presented on Managing Change in Education, Girls' Education and Empowerment and Perspectives in Indian Education.
- Established a well functioning monitoring and action research system for the Girl's Education Project.

Partnerships and Advocacy

- Member of Planning Commission Working Group on Basic Education and Literacy for the formulation of Eleventh Five Year Plan 2007-2012.
- Developed Partnership with 4 State (Regional) Governments for Quality Education, especially for girls.
- Developed Strategic Partnerships with local NGOs, Government Departments and Academic Institutions and Funding Agencies.

Fund Raising

- Successfully raised funds from bilateral donors like CIDA, RNE, foundations, Corporate Sector and Individual donors.
- Key contribution in developing and sustaining the newly found education sector in CARE India.

School Health Action and Training, SeHAT Project : 1993 to 1997

Deputy Director, 1995 to 1997:

SeHAT was a School Health project intervening in primary schools of urban metropolis (Delhi and Bombay). The project worked on a unique concept of creating health promoting schools. The effort was towards bringing health services to school as also towards bringing about better health practices amongst the children through child-centered, activity-based approach. I was responsible for managing this program. The job required me to work closely with the formal system of local government schools for adopting and sustaining the model. . It was a multi-sector project and I worked closely with the Health and the Education Departments to develop an effective interface for the all-round development of marginalized children. I had a large team of about 50 people that I worked with . My responsibilities included:

Strategic Planning

- Developed Long Term Project Plan.
- Facilitated Long Term School Health Plans of Mumbai and Delhi Municipal Schools.

Technical oversight, program and grant management

- Responsible for planning, implementation, reporting and partnerships.

Knowledge management

- Coordinated production of activity based health modules for primary school children of urban municipal schools.

Partnerships and Advocacy

- Worked with the National Council of Education, Research and Training, (NCERT) a national governmental institution for national curriculum development for integrating health perspective in national curriculum.
- Worked with Mumbai Municipal Teachers Union for adoption school health principles.
- Worked with Mumbai and Delhi Municipals schools for developing health promoting schools in urban slums.

Development Officer, (1993 to 1994)

Strategic Planning

- Responsible for annual operating plans.

Technical oversight, program and grant management

- Developed activity based health promoting modules for Classes four and five.
- Developed teacher training modules and plans.
- Facilitated trainings of master trainers, head teachers and teachers.
- Development of monitoring tools and reporting system.

Knowledge management

- Process documentation and annual reports.

Centre of Human Resource Development, Enrichment and Welfare, and Centre for Research in Education, Model Institute of Education and Research : 1991 -1992

Program Coordinator:

Responsibilities included conceptualizing and conducting short term courses for teachers and parents. I had developed and conducted a course for training pre-school teachers. The profile also included developing and expanding the centre.

South Delhi Women's Polytechnic, Delhi: 1989 -1991

Lecturer:

As a member of the teaching faculty I taught a range of courses in Early Child Development and Pre-School Education to student teachers training to be early childhood educators. The subject ranged from, educational planning and management, teaching methods and child development.

Centre of Advanced Study in Education, The M. S. University of Baroda: 1983 to 1990.

Research Scholar: Pursued research for my doctoral dissertation.

EDUCATION

- Certificate Course in ' Change Leadership' University of Cornell, (E-Cornell) USA, August 2008.
- *PhD (Education) 1990: The M.S. University of Baroda. Title: "A Study of the relationship among certain Environmental Factors, personality characteristics and School performance of First Standard Studies"*
- Master of Education (MEd) 1981: The M.S. University of Baroda. Major: Educational Administration. Collateral: Guidance and Counseling
- Bachelor of Education (BEd) 1980: The M. S. University of Baroda.
- Bachelor of Science (BSc) 1977: The M. S. University of Baroda. Major : Child Development

Academic Honours :

- Qualified in the University Grants Commission National Educational Test for the award of Junior Research Fellowship in Education, 1986.
- University Grants Commission Senior Research Fellowship 1983-85.
- University Grants Commission Junior Research Fellowship 1981-83.
- University Grants Commission National Scholarship 1980-81.

PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

- Member, Advisory Group on Teacher Compensation Initiative Resource Experts, co – organized by International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNCR, Women's Commission for Refugee Women and children on behalf of the Inter Agency Network for Education in Emergencies.
- Member of Planning Commission Working Group on Basic Education and Literacy for the formulation of Eleventh Five Year Plan 2007-2012.
- Member of INEE's Working Group on Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction, 2005-2007.

- Member on appraisal teams of a multi donor (World Bank, DFID, EU) government project called District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). DPEP was then the largest educational reform program undertaken by Government of India (GOI) for reaching the goal of Education for All. It was comprehensive in its approach to address the issue of access and quality. It was jointly funded by GOI and other donors like World Bank, DFID, European Commission and Government of the Netherlands.
- Conducted a Gender Perspective Study for two DPEP States: Karnataka and Maharashtra for the Government of India
- DFID representative in Joint Review Mission to appraise the progress of State of Maharashtra in DPEP.
- Conceptualized and Coordinated a National Workshop on School Health in India, organized jointly by the British Council and the SeHAT, in New Delhi in February 1995.
- Contributed instructional modules for Indira Gandhi National Open University, Units entitled 'Profile of Elementary School child' and 'Cognitive and Language Development'
- Provided technical expertise in script writing for television programmes on Child Development and Health education to the Central Institute of Educational Technology, NCERT, New Delhi.
- Resource Person in the National Resource Group of the National Open School.
- Participated as an expert on Child Development in Nationwide Tele-Conference conducted by Indira Gandhi National Open University
- Conceptualized and conducted a National Colloquium on "Gender and Education: Experiences and Challenges of Programming for Girls' Education", New Delhi
- Conceptualized and coordinated a National Seminar on "Strategies and Dynamics of Change in Indian Education"

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

- Presented the theme paper ' Education of Children in Areas Affected by Civil Strife: Context and Challenges' at the National Consultation on Education in Areas Affected by Civil Strife , December 2012.
- CESI Conference, Jammu, India (2012) Made a presentation on Education of the Child Soldiers: An Emerging Issue in India
- Active-Learning Pedagogies: Policy, Professional Development, and Classroom Practice. *A Case Study of two post conflict contexts – Afghanistan and Somaliland*. EQUIP 1. 2007.
- Role of Education and the Demobilization of Child Soldiers. Geeta Menon and Abby Arganese, . EQUIP1, 2007.
- Programming Adult Education in Post Earth Quake Area- Experience with Adolescent Girls in Kutch, India. Godbole, P and Menon, G. The International Journal of the Humanities, Vol5, Issue, 9 pp 64-76
- Paper presented on "Analysis from an Equity Perspective of Select Initiatives in Elementary Education" to be presented at National Seminar on "*Strategies and Dynamics of Change in Indian Education*"
- Paper entitled "*Mobilising Community for Girls' Education: An Experience of CARE India*", for NCERT, New Delhi
- Programming Adult Education in a Post Earthquake Area - Paper accepted for an International Workshop on Adult Education and Poverty Reduction: a Global Priority, University of Botswana, Botswana, June 14 – 16 2004

- Conceptualized and coordinated a study “Schooling Processes in Post Earthquake in three blocks of Kutch District, Gujarat
- Profile of Elementary School Child’ A Unit in the Instructional Modules for the Certificate Programme in Guidance, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, 1992.
- ‘Cognitive and Language Development’ A Unit in the Instructional Modules for the Certificate programme in Guidance, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, 1992.
- ‘Education of Tribal women: A Socio-Ecological Perspective’, The Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol. XLVII, No.4, 1987, pp. 417-422.
- ‘Research on Women’s Education in India: A Review’ Perspectives in Education, Vol.2, 1986, pp 77-98.

PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

- Attended a conference on “Girls’ Education: Mobilizing Leaders Worldwide” held in Washington D.C. in May 1998
- Participated in Asia GPE Regional workshop held at Dhaka, May 1998
- Attended a conference on the Basic and Girls’ Education Lessons Learned held at Cairo, Egypt in April 1999
- Participated in Basic and Girls’ Education Sector strategy workshop held at Atlanta in May 1999
- Participated in Asia Educational Regional Advisory Committee(ERAC) workshop held in Egypt in November 2005
- Participated in INEE Training of Trainers Workshop held in Frankfurt in May 2005 and Lahore in February 2006.
- Conducted a training workshop on Minimum Standards Education in Emergencies for NGO and Government staff of Afghanistan. May 2007.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

First Name: Geeta
 Surname: Menon
 Nationality: Indian
 Date of Birth: February 1, 1957

REFERENCES

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