A Profile

BACKGROUND

ERU Consultants, earlier known as ERU Consultants Pvt. Ltd. and Educational Resource Unit is a research and consulting group established in 1996 with the objective of working in an interdisciplinary manner on women’s empowerment, elementary and adult education and child development. ERU is the first virtual (electronically networked) research group. We have the capability to work in several states and in different language zones of India, South Asia and Africa.

Qualitative research, strategic planning and programme development, process documentation – with a feminist perspective – have been a running theme in our work. We have worked with government and donors to move from macro policies to concrete programmes and projects.

One of the running themes of all our work is the intersectionality of gender and social equity. ERU has done extensive qualitative research, documentation and training on women’s empowerment programmes and projects in government and the non-governmental sector. The ERU team is passionate about women’s empowerment and girls’ education.

ERU TEAM

Unlike conventional research institutes, the ERU research team comprises a core team of professionals and a wider pool of independent researchers who come on board for specific assignments / projects. The team is handpicked to suit the specific requirement of every assignment. We bring in people from research institutions when required. We are networked via the Internet and are able to work with researchers across the country and in different languages. Our core panel of researchers include the following persons:

**Nishi Mehrotra, Managing Director** has worked on elementary and secondary education, sustainable agriculture, watershed development, rural development and women’s empowerment issues. She is the first State Programme Director of Mahila Samakhya Programme in Uttar Pradesh. She is a highly skilled qualitative researcher and has extensive fieldwork experience. She is based in Lucknow and has significant ground level experience in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Jharkhand. Nishi is based in Lucknow. She now leads the ERU team.

**Vimala Ramachandran.** She was among the founders and was the first National Project Director of Mahila Samakhya (1988-1993) – a
Government of India programme on women’s education based in the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD). She was founder and Managing Trustee of HealthWatch – a women’s health network, from 1994 to 2004. She was a National Fellow and Professor in National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi from 2011 to 2015. She has published extensively on education, health, gender issues and women’s empowerment. She has been engaged in advocacy for universal quality education and girls’ education.


She is currently on the Research Council of Azim Premji University, Bangalore. She is the President India Education Collective, New Delhi. She is the Vice-President of Etasha, an NGO that works on livelihood related issues with young urban men and women in New Delhi. She is a member of the governing board of ANANDI, Gujarat.

**Kameshwari Jandhyala** has worked on women’s education, empowerment and livelihood issues for over 20 years. She is the first Director of Mahila Samakhya Andhra Pradesh and Consultant to the National Office of Mahila Samakhya in Department of Education, GOI. She is a keen researcher and has significant experience in qualitative research and programme development in education (women’s education), women’s studies and gender and development issues. Kameshwari is based in Hyderabad.

She has led multi-state studies on women’s empowerment, adolescent boys/girls and has special expertise in longitudinal qualitative studies.

**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION:**

**2019-20**  
**Azim Premji University** supported research on the status of contract school teachers in India.

**2018-22**  
**ERU: Impact assessment (longitudinal 5-years) of Rainbow Homes on the lives of street and working children residents.**

**2018-19**  
**AJWS, collaborative research with CBPS Bangalore:** Quality and systemic functioning of secondary educational institutions in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Project</th>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td><strong>Collaborative project with CBPS Bangalore</strong>: Impact of Mahila Samakhya programme on women’s livelihood, education and greater participation in local governance.</td>
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<td>2017-18</td>
<td><strong>Central Tibetan Administration and Tibet Fund</strong>: Assessment of Educational Strategies and Programmes in India and Nepal.</td>
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<td>2015-16</td>
<td><strong>UNICEF, ICO, New Delhi</strong>: Formative study to enhance the understanding about smooth transition among boys and girls to secondary education. National Synthesis Report Vol 1 and II. UNICEF.</td>
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<td>2015-16</td>
<td><strong>The World Bank, New Delhi</strong>: Teacher Recruitment and Teacher Transfer &amp; Recruitment Policy and Practice in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Work done jointly with Jyotsna Jha of CBPS Bangalore.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td><strong>Mac Arthur Foundation, Chicago and New Delhi</strong>: A study of women teachers and achievement of gender ad equity goals in secondary education in Rajasthan, India.</td>
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<td>2012-2014</td>
<td><strong>East Meets West (EMW) Foundation, Oakland, CA USA</strong>: Support in operationalisation of the SPELL India project.</td>
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<td>2011-12</td>
<td><strong>Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai</strong>: Impact assessment and ongoing concurrent review of education projects supported in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.</td>
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<td>2011-12</td>
<td><strong>Room to Read, Asia Regional Office, New Delhi</strong>: Capacity building and training for process documentation for their Literacy Programme in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.</td>
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<td>2010-11</td>
<td><strong>Save the children, Bal Raksha Bharat, New Delhi</strong>: Documentation of best practices in school management with special emphasis on quality inclusive governance and decentralised management.</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td><strong>Save the children, Bal Raksha Bharat, New Delhi</strong>: Convergence to improve child survival in India – a research study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td><strong>Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai</strong>: Assessing the coverage and effectiveness of national efforts to provide quality maternity protection for all. A qualitative study in Uttar Pradesh, India.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td><strong>Mac Arthur Foundation, New Delhi</strong>: Secondary Education of girls in India – a status report and existing opportunities.</td>
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2009  
UNESCO, Asia Pacific Programme for Education for All, Bangkok: Advocacy brief on Gender issues in higher education.

2009  
Save the Children, Bal Raksha Bharat, New Delhi: Nutrition Policy Brief. A research based advocacy brief for SC BRP, India.

2009  
Effective Intervention & London School of Economics (UK): Qualitative and quantitative study of situation of elementary education in Guinea Bissau.

2009  
UNICEF (ROSA), Kathmandu: Water, sanitation and education: exploring inclusion and exclusion – a qualitative study in two districts of Uttar Pradesh.

2008-09  

2008  
Plan International, India, Baseline survey of elementary schools in Bihar & Uttar Pradesh

2008  
Save the Children (UK), Scoping study on nutritional status of children and opportunities for improving the nutritional levels of children in India.

2007-08  
Plan International, India, Baseline survey of primary schools in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Uttarakhand,

2007-08  
Azim Premji Foundation, Teacher development in India – mapping the terrain. (Contemporary history of teacher development in India)

2007  
UNICEF ROSA, Kathmandu, Girls health and education in South Asia – a research based study on the situation in 8 countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Maldives and Sri Lanka).

2007  
Oxfam, India: Basic Education in India – the situation on the ground and exploring possibilities for intervention.

2006-07  
NUEPA, UNESCO and Department of Education, MHRD, GOI, Mid-term Assessment of MDG goals and EFA – three chapters (a) Progress made in Uttar Pradesh by Nishi Mehrotra, (b) Progress made in Andhra Pradesh by Kameshwari Jandhyala and (c) Thematic review of Education and Equity by Vimala Ramachandran.

2006-07  
Plan International India, New Delhi, Research study on the Hidden Cost of Education in 4 states – Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan.

2005-2007  
International Labour Organisation, New Delhi and Government of India, Department of School Education and Literacy, New Delhi: Improving the quality of education in government schools – caste
studies of programmes with potential for replication covering Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Nagaland, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Assam, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh etc.

2005-2006  

2004-05  
**Oxfam N(O)VIB**: Systemic issues and strategies to promote equity and quality in elementary education – a qualitative research study in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.

2004-05  
**Knowledge and Skills for Development and IDS Sussex**: the India study in Rajasthan, part of a multi-country study on Teacher Motivation (Elementary Education).

2004  
**World Bank**, Study on Positive deviance in ICDS – exploring the factors that contribute towards better performance of the programme in select development blocks of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

2003  
**DFID, India**: An evaluation of Balika Shikshan Shivir (residential educational programme for out of school girls), Lok Jumbish Project, Rajasthan.

2002-03  
**World Bank**, Qualitative research study: Factors that facilitate / impede successful primary school completion - children in diverse poverty situations in Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

2000-01  
**DFID**, on approval of DPEP Bureau, GOI, Backward and forward linkages – ten case studies in primary education.

2000  
**NEIPA and European Commission**, Community Participation in Primary Education with special focus on innovations in Rajasthan.

1999-2000  
**Department of Education, GOI and NEIPA** (as a part of the EFA 2000), Assessment Education and the status of women, exploring linkages and identifying constraints.

1998  
**Engendering Development**: Lessons from Social Sector Programmes (with special focus on primary education) in India – independent ERU research, with concrete examples from the two fields, that has fed into gender sensitisation training of a wide range of development agencies and organisations. Adapted for the education and health sector.

1996 - 1997  
**ASPBAE, New Delhi, and UNESCO PROAP, Bangkok**: Four-Country study on the status of women’s and girl’s education in South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal). Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education. This project involved identifying teams from researchers from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal and working with them over a period of eighteen months.
1996

**UNDP, New Delhi**, Redefining Safety Net: Inter-linkages between education, credit, women’s collective and empowerment as the safety net.

1996

**UNICEF and Government of Andhra Pradesh**, Critical Consciousness, credit and productive assets - key to sustainable livelihood.

1996

Integrating a gender concerns in mainstream programmes and institutions, UNICEF and Department of Women and Child Development, GOI. This research paper was followed by training of specific state office and area specific teams in **UNICEF**.

**REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

2011

**Sir Dorabji Tata Trust**, evaluation of select NGO programmes in Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand.

2010-11

**IKEA Social Initiative, Sweden**: Evaluation of the Phase I project on the elimination of girls child labour in the cotton seed sector in Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh.

2010

**Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai**: Impact assessment of Naandi Foundation primary education project in Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh, India.

2009

**The Children’s Education Fund Foundation, UK**: Qualitative concurrent review of the Aid India programme in Tamil Nadu, India.

2008

**Room to Read, New Delhi**. Impact assessment of Room to Grow scholarships for adolescent girls in Delhi and Uttarakhand.

2006 & 2007

**Department of Elementary Education, MHRD, and Government of India**: National evaluation (in 2 parts covering 24 states in India) of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhyalaya and National Programme for Girls Education in the Elementary Sector. Vimala Ramachandran was the Team Leader and Kameshwari Jandhyala and Nishi Mehrotra were members of the evaluation team.

2007

**Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands** – Core Programme Evaluation for India – focus on education and health.

2007


2006-08


2006-07

**Save the Children, UK**: Review of capacity building of NGO partners in Tamil Nadu.
2006 Sir Dorabji Tara Trust, Mumbai: Facilitating consultations to explore the creation of a national level institute for education in India.

2006 Sardar Patel Vidhyalaya, New Delhi: Education Audit

2005 Save the Children, UK: Reviewing institutional mechanisms for integrated child development and education in the tsunami affected areas of India.

2004 Oxfam Lucknow: Analysis of the education policy of Uttar Pradesh and budget analysis.

2003 UNICEF - Community participation in UNICEF supported programmes in Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra.

2003 SIDA, New Delhi - Appraisal of Tamil Nadu Primary School Improvement Campaign, for

2002 European Commission and GoI - Gender and social equity in DPEP – an overall impact assessment.


2000 Group of donors including Dorabji Tata Trust, Mumbai – Ten year review of Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan, Bhuj:

1999-2000 SIDA, New Delhi – Appraisal of Shiksha Karmi Project of Rajasthan

1999 HIVOS, Bangalore – Grant review of Navsarjan Trust, Ahmedabad:

1996 Ford Foundation, New Delhi – Review of Multiple Action Research Group, New Delhi:

1996 and 2000 HIVOS, Bangalore – Ten and then fifteen year review Agragamee, Kashipur, Orissa.

POLICY / PROGRAMME REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT:

2007 Oxfam N(o)vib, Reformulating and training Urmul Trust, Bikaner to enable them to develop their proposal from rights based perspective.

2005-07 World Bank, New Delhi, Documentation and concurrent review of a pilot project in Madhya Pradesh for integrated child development.

2006 Department of Education, MHRD, GoI - Chairing and drafting of the report of the Sub-group on girls’ education for the formulation of the XI Plan.
2004 | **Department of Education, MHRD, GoI** - ERU led the teams in Gujarat and Bihar doing the national evaluation of Mahila Samakhya Programme.

2004 | **Sesame Street, India**: Background paper on status of elementary education in India.

2004 | **Ace Global Private Limited and Delegation of the European Commission, New Delhi**: Technical assistance for the identification phase of EC state partnership programme with Chhattisgarh.

2004 | **Department of Education, GoI and UNICEF**: Facilitating regional and state level planning workshops on National Programme for Girls Education at the Elementary Level (NPEGEL) for state and district level administrators.

2004 | **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Vientiane, Lao PDR**: Gender Audit Study of Demand Driven Approach to basic Education for All in Lao PDR.


2003 | **The World Bank**: (a) Case study of Lok Jumbish (Education for All) Project of Rajasthan as an input into the MDG report; (b) Case study of Learning Guarantee Scheme of Government of Karnataka and Azim Premji Foundation as an input into the MDG report; (c) Case study of Madhya Pradesh Education Guarantee Scheme – a Social Inclusion and Empowerment Case Studies for: Shanghai Conference on Scaling up Poverty Reduction being planned by the World Bank.

2003-2005 | **Naandi Foundation, Hyderabad and Government of Andhra Pradesh**: ▪ Strategic planning and hands on support to the elementary education quality improvement project in Paderu area of Vishakhapatnam District ▪ Strategic planning and resource support to the Hyderabad City elementary education quality improvement project.

2002 | **European Commission (New Delhi)**: Planning support and preparation of approach paper to appraisal and pre-appraisal of European Commission support to Government of India’s Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

2002 | **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), New Delhi**: Country Strategy Paper on Social Sector Reform.

2001 | **UNICEF, India Country Office, New Delhi**: Strategic planning exercises in primary education – as member of Think Tank.
2001  
**UNFPA, New Delhi:** Facilitate 6th Country Programme Cycle strategic planning exercise.

2001  
**Care, India:** Basic Education in India advocacy strategy paper commissioned. This document is an input into their strategy planning exercise in India.

2000  
**Ford Foundation:**
(a) Santiago: Incorporating Women’s Health Concerns in Health Sector Reforms: Key Areas for Strategic Advocacy and Citizen Participation.  
(b) Educational programmes for adolescents – with focus on out-of-school children, New Delhi

2000  
**Nuffic, The Netherlands:** Specialised inputs on gender and social equity issues in the European Commission primary and upper primary education project formulation mission

1999  
Consultant to **SPARC** (a Mumbai-based NGO) in a **World Bank**-sponsored initiative to review the experience of NGO involvement to promote women’s participation and community involvement in World Bank-supported social sector development projects in India.

1999  
**N(O)VIB, The Netherlands:** Education Project (NGO) Identification in India.

1998 – 1999  
**DFID, India:** Development of an education strategy for reaching out to children and young people in the 11 – 17 age group.

1998  
**UNICEF, India Country Office, Government of Rajasthan and UNICEF Jaipur:** Formulation of Government of Rajasthan policy for women

1997  
**Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), New Delhi:** Rights, social justice and governance, exploring opportunities for NGO support in Rajasthan.

1997  
**UNESCO:**
(a) Planning and executing an international training programme for educational administrators to integrate gender issues into monitoring and evaluation system of non-formal education programmes. UNESCO PROAP, Bangkok  
(b) Co-ordinating regional consultative meetings (South and South east Asia) on Education for Survival jointly with Nirantar, New Delhi, as a run-up to CONFEN'TEA V, IIE, Hamburg.

1997-98  
**Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), New Delhi:** Team leader - project formulation for a SIDA-assisted Reproductive and Child Health Project in seven districts of Rajasthan, India.

**TRAINING / MENTORING**
2009  
DoEE&L, GOI and DFID, India: Training and capacity building of Mahila Samakhya programme personnel across India.

2008-12  
Mentoring and advising NEGFIRE, New Delhi

PUBLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF RESEARCH:

PUBLISHED BOOKS, REPORTS AND WORKING PAPERS:
5. (2018), Ramachandran, Vimala. Equity and Quality are two sides of the same coin – essays on school education in India. Social Science Press. New Delhi
12. (2011): ERU Team led by Dr. Rajni Patni. School Management for Quality Inclusive Education and Decentralised School Governance, Save the Children (new Delhi), European Union (New Delhi) and NUEPA, New Delhi
17. (2008), Rashmi Sharma and Vimala Ramachandran: The Elementary Education System in India: A field based investigation into institutional structures, processes and dynamics, Routlege India.

ARTICLES IN JOURNALS
26. (2018) Vimala Ramachandran. From the Womb to Primary School: Challenges, Policies and Prospects for the young Child in India. Mobile Creche Technical Background Paper (https://84d629ab-3c72-4a2c-b038-8bb9fe4f27ff.filesusr.com/ugd/57f05d_70f60dfe5b2e4cdd8a0b8da5b5cbe4e5.pdf
27. (2020) Vimala Ramachandran. Teacher Belief in Children’s Potential is important. Learning Curve, Azim Premji University. Bangalore
33. (2011) Vimala Ramachandran. Reflections on School Leadership; Learning Curve Issue XVI, March 2011 (Published by Azim Premji Foundation, Bangalore)
34. (2010) Vimala Ramachandran. Learning Social Science: What is right and wrong; Learning Curve Special issue on Social Sciences in School, Issue XV, 2010 (Published by Azim Premji Foundation, Bangalore);
41. (2005) Vimala Ramachandran: Why school teachers are de-motivated and disheartened, Economic and Political Weekly, VOL 40 No. 21 May 21 - May 27, 2005
43. (2003) Vimala Ramachandran: Backward and forward linkages that strengthen primary education in Economic and Political Weekly, March 8-14, Volume XXXVIII, No 10
45. (2001) Vimala Ramachandran: Community Participation in Primary Education – Innovations in Rajasthan; Economic and Political Weekly; Vol. XXXVI, June 23
49. (1997) Vimala Ramachandran: Changing face of the development sector in India; VOICES, Volume 1, Number 2
50. (1996) Vimala Ramachandran: NGOs in the times of globalisation: from family planning to reproductive health; Seminar, November.
51. (1996) Vimala Ramachandran: Fertility and women’s autonomy in the Indian Family; India International Centre Journal Special Issue on Women And The Family, Winter

CHAPTERS IN PUBLISHED BOOKS:


64. (2005) Kameshwari Jandhyala: Working within and without, in Mandira Kumar and Padma M Sarangapani (Ed), *Improving Government Schools – What has been tried and what works*, Sutradhar and Books for Change, Bangalore


67. (1998) Vimala Ramachandran: Voluntary organisation, professional agency or sub-contractor - the changing profile of the non-government sector in India, Dr. Pravin Visaria, M L Dantwala and Harsh Sethi (Eds.) *Social Change through voluntary action*, Sage Publications New Delhi, September