



Dear friend,

A very happy new year to you from all of us at Prajnya!

Every new year, indeed every festival, becomes a time to both look back and look ahead, to see how far we've come, and to imagine the journey we want to undertake. When I look back, it's hard to believe where we've come in the four years since our launch. Someone once gave me a paperweight that said ideas only work when you do; it would be hard to say the Prajnya team has not worked extremely hard!

[\*The Prajnya 16 Days Campaign against Gender Violence. Oral history interviews. Women's History Roundtable Series. Short research projects. A directory of Chennai women's organizations. The Prajnya Archives and Rainmakers.\*](#)

Every one of these felt like a leap in the dark when we started, and now... now, we stand at the beginning of this calendar year with a realistic sense of what we want to do and what we can do. In 2012, the Prajnya team hopes to consolidate and build upon its current projects, adding new dimensions to each of these. And I am now writing to ask you to join us in making our work possible.

For the projects that belong to the [Prajnya Resource Centre on Women in Politics and Policy](#), this means systematically organizing the oral history recordings and transcripts we do have. Backing up, transcribing and editing the recordings for use have been beyond our reach but as the number of recordings mounts, we are worried about not having this done. Building on the success of the Rainmakers call and exhibition, we would like to reach out further to enrich the collection of the [Prajnya Archives](#). To this end, we dream about putting out a call for photos, going out to different sites and setting up 'collection camps'. We would like to set aside a small amount of money to cover such costs and the costs of the Archives site, of course.

You probably knew us first through our gender violence awareness work. Our [Gender Violence Research and Information Taskforce](#) (GRIT@Prajnya) is ready to scale up. The three main components of GRIT's work are awareness workshops and events; the [16 Days Campaign](#), and the [Gender Violence Report](#). Most recently, we launched [Hollaback! Chennai](#), the local chapter of a global campaign against street sexual harassment.

As you know, our team consists entirely of volunteers except for one position during the campaign season. Therefore, our costs for the [GRIT workshops](#) and the [Prajnya 16 Days Campaign](#) are mostly related to venue, materials and communications. Similarly, our research and information projects on gender violence are researched and written by

volunteers, but we would like to make them widely available. We post everything online, but even today, there are some people for whom Internet access is unreliable and we would like to be able to send them hard copies for their use. Our 'ask' in this appeal for support includes such costs as well.

Prajnya's [Education for Peace Initiative](#) received [pre-launch research funding](#) but since then, fundraising for our school projects has been a challenge. Nevertheless, we have worked hard to keep this flame burning—writing papers and articles as requested, participating in local conferences and seminars and organizing [small events](#). In 2011, this led to Prajnya team members contributing [three essays on peace and peace education](#) to a special issue on peace-building compiled by the journal, Agenda. We are also working with partners on putting together a book on peace stories that we hope will be the first of a series.

Finally, we do want to raise a small percentage of our budget towards administration. It is extremely important to us that we keep good records; particularly financial; get good advice on accounting and legal matters; communicate effectively and make all our documents publicly accessible. How can we ask for change in the world if we don't try our best to match the standards we would advocate for others? We work out of donated space and volunteer our time; but even so, we do have some administrative costs that have risen as a corollary of our growth. We would like to enter 2012-13 assured of having them covered.

We stand at the threshold of a new phase in Prajnya's growth and are approaching resource mobilization in a different way from usual. We anticipate that the costs of doing all the work we want to do in 2012-13 will amount to just under ₹ 800,000/-. We hope that you will help us raise this amount before March 31, 2012, so that we can hit the ground running in the new financial year.

We know you support our work; that is why we are writing to you. We are hoping that all our friends and supporters will chip in a little bit to express their ownership of our vision and values. Every contribution—from ₹ 101/- to ₹ 100,001/- —is important to us, because it tells us you are in our corner. If you would like to support us with a donation, the information that you require is online.

We also invite you to speak for us and about us to others; this is also an opportunity to reach out to new friends and to add to the support base for our work.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this, and for your support!

Our best wishes to you for the coming year!

On behalf of the Prajnya team,

*Swarna Rajagopalan*  
Managing Trustee