



Apne Aap Women's Collective

the right to a better life for women and children in red light areas



INDUCTION FOR PERSONALITY TRAINING
WITH WOMEN BENEFICIARIES

NEWSLETTER

January-March 2022

Highlights

- In the last quarter, seventeen beneficiaries have completely left the profession and the red-light area, owing to AAWC's counselling, income generation initiatives, skill training and job placements.
- Provision of ration was made available to 2400 women in the community in Kamathipura and Falkland Road Center.
- Annual programme was conducted for Umeed beneficiaries in which the post office general manager Swati Madhukar was the chief guest.
- Sanitary pad vending machine has been installed in the post office the inaugural of the same was done by our Umeed beneficiaries
- Introduction of personality development sessions for 15 Umeed beneficiaries
- Hospitality training of a week conducted with 10 Umeed beneficiaries
- 37 ration cards were made of women beneficiaries
- 14 voter Id cards were made of women beneficiaries
- 49 post office savings account opened for women beneficiaries
- 25 Aadhar cards were made of women beneficiaries
- 11 bank accounts of the women beneficiaries are opened
- 900 beneficiaries were referred to BMC hospital
- Enrolments for the Umeed program and especially the numbers for adult literacy reflect consistent increase.
- A paradigm shift is noticed among the women in regards to their behaviour as they are more interested in skill training classes and focused on other job opportunities available.



RATION DISTRIBUTION

Ways to engage



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UMEED (WOMEN) PROGRAMME

OUTREACH:

Outreach during this quarter was conducted regularly to identify beneficiaries, assess need, disseminate information about our services, conduct adult literacy classes, provide meals, follow up on health conditions, conduct meetings and awareness sessions. 135 new beneficiaries enrolled in three centers of Kamathipura, Falkland Road, Turbhe due to effective rapport building through door-to-door services that led to increasing trust towards the organization and outreach workers.

Awareness activities in the area and centre were conducted on varied topics related to health empowerment, information in regards to government welfare schemes etc. Through continuous follow up with the women in the area it has been observed that the women express gratitude towards the team and are very respectful towards the outreach team. The indirect beneficiaries in the area have also started talking about the organization in the community, following the footsteps of our direct beneficiaries

Effective networking was conducted with Ration Card office, post office, voting card office and Aadhar card office, leading to strong support from the government organizations. Effective networking with other non-governmental organization such as Seefar foundation, Yuva Parivartan, has helped the team to undertake varied activities in the Community and Center.



AWARENESS SESSION IN THE AREA

EDUCATION:

During this quarter beneficiaries showed an increased interest in adult literacy session. They took out time on their own to practice and also requested the outreach team to check their books. As compared to before elder women beneficiaries are no more hesitant in participating in the adult literacy session. They are getting acquainted to the concept of age not being a factor while learning.

Through basic learning women feel empowered as they are now able to sign, understand documents, keep a track of their money as well as implement their learning in their day-to-day life which makes them happy and fills them with confidence. Women are keener on learning English as they want to be able to speak and write in English as they want to mingle in the society and attain acceptance.

Women have started asking for homework, since they are scared of forgetting what they learnt. Women who have been showing progress in their basic lessons are now being taught to memorise and write their phone numbers, spellings of their address etc. The ORWs conducted adult literacy classes regularly which has resulted in few beneficiaries now able to read the Taxi/ Rickshaw meters, bus numbers and even able to recognize the spellings of their names on official documents, they are aware about the days of the week, month and date.

Awareness and regular follow up with beneficiaries reiterating the importance of saving money has led women beneficiaries understanding the importance of holding a saving account thus we see an increased number of beneficiaries approaching the outreach team for the same. Beneficiaries are familiarized with the process of banking they are guided through the process which helps them open bank accounts. Ability to sign on documents have led women beneficiaries attain ATM cards leading ease in the process of withdrawals. Owing to our constant support, beneficiaries now visit the banks independently not just for deposit and withdrawals, but also for ATM renewals, KYC forms, reactivating accounts etc. They are not scared of speaking with the bank officials, due to increased awareness and confidence. The beneficiaries who used to give money to the pimps for simple bank activities like depositing money, making Aadhar card etc. now they do not have to be dependent on them curtailing the exploitation which is one of our major impacts of our financial literacy program.



ADULT LITERACY CLASSES IN THE AREA

HEALTH:

ORWs continue to conduct daily distribution of nutrition in the area. We have introduced distribution of cooked meals for 150 women beneficiaries in the area who are in absolute need to consume healthy food to improve their overall health. Nutrition is regularly provided to the women beneficiaries under ART and TB Medication to improve their overall health and immunity. Increase in weight of beneficiaries indicate that the daily nutrition, ration and cooked meal support has positively impacted the women in the area.

2400 women beneficiaries received ration kits during this quarter to help them meet their nutritional requirement. Regular medical referrals are conducted for beneficiaries to improve their overall health. Regular visit to the government hospitals have made the women beneficiaries acquainted with the process that has led them overcome their fear of doctors and hospitals, it has also reduced their trust on imposters and has also reduced their cost of treatments which initially they had to spend in private hospitals. General counselling is conducted with beneficiaries to provide them information of taking their medication on time, having healthy home cooked meal, going to hospitals for regular follow up, taking ART on time, ANC/ PNC, immunization of children, importance of vaccine, ways of dealing with varied issues and problems etc. One to one counselling conducted of beneficiaries to address crucial problems faced by beneficiaries which may be related to their health, personal issues, their environment etc.

Varied sessions were conducted with women beneficiaries in the area on stress management and practice of yoga that brings about an overall improvement in their health and physical fitness. Regular reiteration about the harmful effects of substance abuse has brought about a change in few beneficiaries as they have completely left consumption of tobacco, gutka, alcohol etc. Hygiene session was conducted through the resource person for the beneficiaries giving them an idea about menstrual hygiene and precautions to be undertaken during the said time.



WEIGHT MEASUREMENT TO TRACK HEALTH PROGRESS

EMPOWERMENT :

Efforts are made to help beneficiaries attain their identity documents and guidance is provided throughout the process. Beneficiaries were able to procure their monthly ration at a subsidized rate as they were assisted with Ration Card. Beneficiaries are regular in the vocational training class leading them to slowly increase their interest in vocational activities. They are thankful for the introduction of the vocational training unit as it helps them enhance their skill and think about a future away from the community.

Skill training activities are ongoing and undertaken regularly to enhance skills of beneficiaries on tailoring, embroidery, mehendi application and design and face pack making. Introduced embroidery class in Falkland Road along with Mehndi classes along with in house craft sessions are undertaken in the area to help beneficiaries learn simple items of daily use such as paper bags, paper cups, letter boxes, present pockets, pen holders etc. The beneficiaries also gained from best out of waste sessions. 6 women have been assisted with job placements in the last quarter. 17 women have quit profession across all the three centers in the last quarter.



PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT SESSION

RECREATION :

Various festivals were celebrated with the women beneficiaries like Republic Day, Makarsankranti, Holi, Women's Day etc. with the motive to give them time away from their monotonous life, help manage their stress and give them an opportunity to meet with friends and strengthen their bond among themselves and with the organization. Women participate in these activities with great zeal. They do not shy away from participating even when the activity is conducted in the area. We see that women project great confidence while celebrations and recreational activities. They often say Didi we forget our pain for a while thank you.



RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY

SUCCESS STORY :

Reshma* was brought to the red-light area under false pretence of work wherein she was forced to get married and have a child. Reshma's husband kept her in a brothel where she had to face the cruelty of the Garhwali if she denied to work. Reshma was at a vulnerable juncture as the husband and the child were totally depended on her earnings. As money was not enough to make the ends meet, she was forced to secure a loan. Under debt and violence on regular basis Reshma took to drugs to relief her pain and forget the suffering. Looking at Reshma and her situation outreach team started follow up visits on daily basis, they disseminated information about the organization and various services that would help her and her child. Constant follow up led her to join our financial literacy and adult literacy classes following which she slowly started learning various ways of saving. Being attentive in class and learning the techniques of saving she was able to save quite a sum of money which helped her waive off her debt. Along with adult literacy constant counselling made her aware of the ill effects of drug abuse helped her realize the harm being caused to her through the drugs being consumed. Slowly focusing on her will power she was able to quit her habit. With the reduction in her financial stress, she began taking up jobs in different locations. Her thinking and attitude turned towards education. She found a love for English language and started using small English words daily. She began to spread the message of the importance of education and influencing other women in the community to join in learning process.



MEHENDI PRACTICE IN THE AREA



UDAAN (GIRLS) PROGRAMME

HIGHLIGHTS:

- AAWC day and night shelter reported zero covid-19 positive cases amongst residential girl beneficiaries, given the strict sanitization measures
- 30 beneficiaries supported with milk packets in the morning to help meet their nutritional requirement
- Three beneficiaries appeared for their 10th Examination
- Introduction of Art reach session for the beneficiaries
- Volunteering educational activity introduced for the girl beneficiaries
- Initiation of the Alumni Program
- Vaccination for beneficiaries above 15 years of age is in process
- Clown show performed by beneficiaries in different theaters
- One Beneficiary, who already had a prize from DWCD and CWC on an event of Children Day Celebration won 2nd prize for Drawing on Beti Bachao and Beti Padhau at Stock exchange house
- Initiation of awareness activity and celebrations for girl beneficiaries in Turbhe center.

OUTREACH:

This quarter regular outreach was conducted wherein information is being provided to mothers about community classes, progress of the child and explaining them about the importance of their role which includes spending time with the children. During these visits we are able to get a better understanding of the problems that mothers are facing while dealing with their children. This has been possible due to mothers' evolving trust and comfort in speaking with our outreach team.

Outreach was also carried out to impart awareness about AAWC services and identify new child beneficiaries. Home visits helped to impart information about cwc to the mothers and its rules implemented on the shelter home.

Boarding follow up regularly conducted in order to understand the progress made by children placed in boarding school. Through these follow up we are apprised of any problems that the beneficiary is undergoing and solve the issue by interacting with the boarding staff and mother

Mother's meetings are regularly conducted in the area addressing concerns about children and also informing mothers about various activities in the center and community and explaining to them their role.



COMMUNITY CLASS IN THE AREA

EDUCATION :

Major focus this quarter was given to beneficiaries' education according to their syllabus to help them cope with their exams. 10th standard students were provided with additional support for Math, Science and English subjects. They were also helped in solving model test papers to give them an understanding of the questions expected in board exams. Thereby, their morale was boosted and the degree of preparedness for the exams increased. In addition, the newspaper reading habit has aided immeasurably in the improvement of vocabulary and correct grammar apart from awareness of the world around.

The beneficiaries have adopted a self-study approach and have become proactive about taking responsibility for their studies, instead of depending on tuition. Internal assessments are conducted to gauge the level of improvement beneficiaries are making in their subjects which are both oral and written in nature. Oral and written assessments conducted regularly in order to assess the improvement in beneficiaries and understand the areas of improvement.

Sessions on general knowledge subjects were undertaken to give them an understanding of our history, places, mechanisms etc. Journal writing is encouraged among beneficiaries wherein varied topics are provided giving them an opportunity to express their thoughts and emotions.

Concerning Kindergarten, the teachers at the Shelter Home taught the beneficiaries rudimentary notions and concepts so as to strengthen their fundamentals when they attended school. They also helped them patiently through their school homework. Activity-based learning which included physical exercises proceeded and helped greatly to strengthen motor skills. The beneficiaries lapped it all up with pleasure. Basic cognitive and motor abilities were refined. Practice through exercises in their note books pushed the processes along. For instance, the beneficiaries mastered the exercise of correlating the missing number card with the number of toys in their possession. The sum of these cerebral teasers was the significant impact on the thought processes of the beneficiaries. They now take time to listen and reflect before they answer any question they are asked.

There were regular visits made to the schools where the problems faced by the beneficiaries were brought to the attention of the teachers and school management. The school coordinator was in regular touch with the school teachers who shared updates on the progress and conduct of the children as they were aware that these reports would go out to the parents and guardians.



EDUCATION IN THE CENTER

HEALTH :

The beneficiaries at the Shelter were provided with nutritious food and supplements as per the monthly diet chart planned for them. There were also special meals that were offered based on donations provided by various benefactors. They continued to be provided meals 5 times a day as part of their nutritional requirement. The impact was that their nutrition levels jumped sharply from their prior condition when their mothers would struggle to provide a daily meal for them. As per the records of the field team, not a single beneficiary fell ill because of the curated fare that was provided. All the beneficiaries who received the special meals were touched and appreciative. The daily intake of food began to impact their mobility and energy. The systematic treatment of sustenance had an impact on the height and weight of the girls as well.

Thirty beneficiaries in the community receive milk packets. Provision of cooked meals is also given to beneficiaries in the community during lunch to help them overcome any nutritional deficit. Regular height and weight measurement undertaken in order to evaluate the growth and impact of the nutrition provided.

There were beneficiaries that were referred to the government hospital for basic illnesses and skin infections. Some of them received the first dose of the Covid-19 vaccinations. Others were referred to the government hospital for dental treatment. A few beneficiaries were administered oral polio doses. The menstrual health of the beneficiaries was monitored regularly.

The fruit of this care is that not a single beneficiary was observed or recorded to have any major illness or ailment. The field team had already made them aware of personal hygiene during this complex time of the month. Menstrual pads were supplied to all. As a result of this attention, none of the beneficiaries suffered fever or skin infections during their menstrual cycles. Regular immunization of the beneficiaries is being done in the community through immunization camps conducted in the area and regular follow ups with ANC and PNC mothers. Regular exercise in the morning is being conducted in the center as well as the community to provide beneficiaries with physical fitness along with improved concentration and agility to learn faster and grasp better. Vaccination for beneficiaries in the age group above 15 years are ongoing.



NUTRITIOUS MEAL IN THE CENTER

EMPOWERMENT :

Beneficiaries attend art-based therapy which leads them to understand the various nature of emotions, personalities, thought processes etc. this session helps them think beyond their physical appearance and provokes thinking to help improve their behavior and interpersonal relationships. Session was conducted with elder beneficiaries on menstrual hygiene. For mental health and wellbeing beneficiaries participated in Guided meditation session. One to one counselling session conducted with beneficiaries to help them understand the issues and tackle any form behavioral issue.

To enhance vocation among girl beneficiaries they are attending fashion designing and skill training sessions through which they are learning about various stitches, crochet work, DIY art etc. Post office savings account opened for girl beneficiaries. Social skill sessions are conducted with the beneficiaries in a regular basis. Art 1st session attended by older and younger groups taught beneficiaries problem solving skills, being confident, feeling good about oneself. Renowned days were celebrated with the beneficiaries such as National Girl Child Day. Easy cooking classes conducted with beneficiaries to teach them easy cooking recipies. Regular Child Management Committee meetings conducted to address any challenges faced in the center or any changes beneficiaries are looking forward to for the smooth functioning of the center. Drama classes undertaken regularly to enhance theatrical skill of girls.

Also in February, a clown drama performance by more than six beneficiaries was enacted. The audience was clown drama artists who were regaled by the girls and complimented them on a captivating performance. They appreciated all the hard work put in to learn a new craft. Our intent was to convey the value of the tools of humour and drama in dealing with people and situations in everyday life. In addition, the experience was invaluable to the beneficiaries in developing their belief in their public personas. They excitedly voiced their assessment that the improvement in their public speaking skills had made them more confident and secure in their tone and diction.

Child management committees were constituted where various issues pertaining to the child were discussed threadbare. During this period, the discussion veered to the exam schedule and the concerns of the beneficiaries with regards to the exams. Based on their revealed anxieties, they received counselling and were taught methods for keeping the spirits up during exams. Thus, the importance of not compromising on their personal hygiene, tricks to revise and practice, maintain a proper diet and the adequate amount of sleep was impressed upon the examinees. The beneficiaries found this information and guidance fruitful and used it gainfully.

The teachers also undertook the hard task of inculcating social skills in the beneficiaries. The halting but sincere attempts by the beneficiaries to modify their behaviour in the desired directions was touching to behold. A welcome natural development was the guidance of the older beneficiaries to the younger ones concerning time and place in the use of social mores. The visible outcome is that beneficiaries attend school with poise, and mix and interact with different students with dignity.



ONLINE DRAWING SESSION IN THE CENTER

RECREATION :

All festivals such as Makar Sankranti, Holi, Republic Day etc. were celebrated with the beneficiaries. For recreation and relaxation purposes beneficiaries are involved in many recreational activities which involve games, dancing, singing and movie watching. As part of the outdoor recreation activities, beneficiaries were taken to the Maghi Ganpati temple near the Shelter Home. The girls offered their blessings and performed the rituals with reverence and awe. The religious atmosphere was therapeutic and the décor and architecture was examined with rapt attention.

International Women's Day was also commemorated. The beneficiaries participated in all the activities and games. The occasion was special because not only were the links between beneficiaries solidified but the relationship between us and the beneficiaries deepened as well.



REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION

SUCCESS STORY

Boni has been associated with the organisation since 2020. She has been living with her brother, parents and grandparents. Her father is an alcoholic and mother involved in prostitution. Whenever a visit was conducted at home of Boni it was noticed that she was left unattended, weak due to non-consumption of food, low in energy, irritated mood and non-interactive with anyone. Always just waiting for her mother. Considering the vulnerable situation Boni was enrolled in the day care centre wherein quick efforts were made to improve her health and overcome the deficiency of nutrients in her body i.e she was provided nutritious meal during the day, snacks along with multivitamins. As her health showed signs of improvement, she was slowly introduced to varied activities both educational and recreational. Constant effort reaped fruits as we saw Boni improve her health quickly which in turn positively reflected on her daily attendance, her performance and participation in the Balwadi. Considering the immense change in her health and behaviour she was enrolled in school and the teacher's express immense happiness over her ever-improving performance as they state she delivers her homework on time, obeys all the teacher, and follows instructions in the class. Seeing the development of her daughter the mother is overjoyed and thankful for the initiatives and effort undertaken by teachers in the centre.

