



Apne Aap Women's Collective

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

Newsletter October-December, 2018

Dear Associates,

Greetings from Apne Aap Women's Collective!

I present you with the newsletter from October - December 2018 specifically designed to update you with our on programme activities, developments and challenges faced in the last quarter.

The outreach team with its rigorous home visit was able to enroll 11 new Umeed beneficiaries under the adult literacy programme by making them realize the importance of being able to write their name, recognize documents and provide their signature on official documents.

They have been explained the value of basic literacy so that they are further not exploited or misguided by their community.

The team was successful in opening bank account for 14 Umeed beneficiaries, which is a small victory for us as it is an imprint that our financial literacy classes have a positive impact on our Umeed beneficiaries. The small step to open a bank account lead us to help them break the cycle of debt and enable them to avoid high interest rates that are often imposed on them due to their lack of literacy.

As the section we are dealing with have physically weak immune system due to their exposure to unhygienic living conditions and lack of nutritional food they are more susceptible to varied kind of diseases and infections hence considering that health is important for overall development we conduct regular medical referrals and medical camps for our beneficiaries.

This quarter for our Udaan beneficiaries focus was given on life skill sessions. These sessions help our Udaan beneficiaries deal with many issues and gives them a positive perspective of life. This boosts their confidence and self-esteem. Which in turn leads to positive changes in their behavior and increase in the sense of responsibility.

This quarter Journal writing was introduced as a new activity in which the Udaan beneficiaries write down the whole days activities, what they like or do not like. The beneficiaries have accepted this activity happily and they do it religiously every day. This activity has been introduced to improve the beneficiaries writing skills and to provide a platform for them to be expressive.

On behalf of AAWC, I would like to thank all of you for your perpetual support and encouragement as none of these developments would have been possible without you.

Manju Vyas
CEO, AAWC.

Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Letter from the CEO | 1 |
| Table of Contents | 2 |
| Umeed | 3 |
| • <i>Program Updates</i> | 4-6 |
| Udaan | 7 |
| • <i>Program Updates</i> | 7-10 |
| Umang | 11 |
| • <i>Program Updates</i> | 11-14 |
| Impact Statistics | 15 |

One Umeed beneficiary was referred to a fellow organization for a vocational training course of Bag Making. After the training, she was selected by the organization for Job placement considering that she is hard working. Now she has a Job with monthly Salary of INR. 11,000.



PROGRAM UPDATE

Education:

AAWC realizes that providing formal education to women with erratic lifestyle due to their profession being prostitution is not an easy process, and hence have designed a program that works along with the routine of our beneficiaries. Our outreach team conducts regular adult and financial literacy drives- an important parameter of the Human Development Index, and even provides our beneficiaries with notes and assessment sheets at their homes on a daily basis.

a) Adult literacy: In this quarter, due to our efforts, we have been able to enroll 11 new beneficiaries under the adult literacy program. We have continued teaching English and Math to our beneficiaries by reaching them regularly within their work area. Our field team has been successful in reaching, educating and monitoring a large number of beneficiaries for the adult literacy activities who have learned to write their names.

b) Financial literacy: Along with the prescribed adult literacy programs, we also work on providing our Umeed beneficiaries with specialized financial literacy aid. While working within the community over 20 years, we have recognized the need to spread awareness and bring confidence to our Umeed beneficiaries with regard to the money they earn through the trade. Often, the women are duped by money lenders, community members, like the brothel owners, pimps, temporary partners, family members, etc.- thus trapping the women further in this cycle of prostitution.

This quarter, 14 of our Umeed beneficiaries have been able to open their own bank accounts, after rigorous discussions and support from our outreach team.

Health



Hepatitis B awareness session

AAWC understands the importance of access to quality health care, and has always been proactive about our beneficiaries accessing only the best and certified healthcare professionals. From providing our Umeed beneficiaries with monthly health-checkups to medical referrals to government hospitals for aiding the HIV+ beneficiaries/ STDs with specialized care, we realize the needs of our beneficiaries and support them accordingly.

We conducted the health camp where 112 beneficiaries got themselves checked. 8 medical referrals have been done for TB patients and 229 medical referrals have been done for antiretroviral therapy (ART) patients. Apart from these, 25 HIV+ women and 5 Tuberculosis (TB) infected women have been identified through regular health checkups held by AAWC. We have also been able to collect CD4 reports for 32 beneficiaries in order to track the improvement in their immunity.

Apart from medical assistance, we also provide our Umeed women with nutritional aid like multivitamin/protein supplements, health packs of soymilk, bananas, moringa seeds, multigrain breads, etc., additional hot meals and snacks as required.

On World AIDs day on 1st of December'18, our team conducted a street play in order to spread the awareness about HIV and Aids among the community.

Counseling

AAWC understands that women in the red-light district go through both mental and physical traumas, and hence deems it imperative to support them through its mental-health assistance.

We conduct regular counseling and therapy sessions with all of our women, along with specific discussions on topics, which may have adverse effect on their mental or physical well-being, such as sexual and menstrual health, substance abuse, personal relationships, effective parenting, healthcare for chronic illnesses, etc.

Some beneficiaries are constantly in need of counseling regarding the importance of ART, daily care and health issues, consequently our outreach workers provide them with extra counseling when needed outside of counseling sessions. This quarter we have conducted 94 counseling sessions.



Empowerment

All of our Umeed women lead a rather precarious life; they work throughout the night and are able to rest only at early mornings. They are also often under the influence of heavy drugs and do not have the will power or time or liberty to make it all the way to our centers for the vocational training sessions.

In order to overcome this challenge we conduct “Area Activities”, where the Outreach Workers (ORWs) mobilize women and discuss about various topics such as Beauty Parlor practice, ration card and bank accounts, alcoholism, drug addiction and legal advocacy. Beauty parlor practice has started as a follow up activity with the beneficiary in which one of the Umeed beneficiary is taking practice and teaching new beneficiaries hair cutting and styling as well as beauty Facial.

The discussion does not stay confined with specific topics we also indulge in variety of other topics that is beneficial for the beneficiary in their day-to-day life. This quarter we conducted 21 area activities which involved discussion on personal hygiene, and human rights such as right to Vote, basic right to food, shelter, health, equal treatment, equality, education, wages equality, right to speak, right to live etc.

Apart from the area activities, we also hold monthly meetings, where the beneficiaries gather and discuss specific agendas. The major topics for the meetings of this quarter has been information about the post office accounts and Sukanya Yojana (money saving scheme by govt for girl child), cancer where knowledge about different types of cancer was given and hepatitis-B awareness was conducted by United Way of Mumbai about types of hepatitis, duration of medicine and time of vaccination.

Recreational activities

In October, we celebrated Dusherra and during the November monthly meeting, we celebrated Diwali. For Diwali there were around 120 beneficiaries at the meeting, which was hosted by us in collaboration with the Lion's Club of Bombay. Our field director Mrs. Poonam Awasthi presented AAWC and her work to the guests. AAWC's CEO Mrs. Manju Vyas also participated to wish everyone a happy Diwali and introduced our work in the area. Our Ardent donor Mrs. Abbas Bootwala donated steel plates along with snacks for all beneficiaries and Lion's club gifted all beneficiaries a beautiful jewelry set. Everyone was very happy about the celebration.

Human rights day was celebrated on 10th, December. During this celebration, the beneficiaries explained about their rights and they highlighted how AAWC has made them aware about their rights, which has been helpful for them. On this occasion, Nirmala Thakur distributed Ration among the PLWHA beneficiaries.



Navratri celebration through dandiya



Ration distribution for umeed beneficiaries

UDAAN



This quarter our 7 of our Udaan beneficiaries who had participated in their School sports day won prizes in different categories & were felicitated with certificates & medals. This motivated the girls as they received lot of appreciation from their schoolteacher's for their performance.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Education

We have continued with our new classes the “Friday Sessions” where the tuition teachers have a discussion on various subjects. The objective of these sessions is to clarify fundamentals of the subjects every week, so that the base becomes strong in those subjects.

This quarter we have covered the sessions on benefits of mediation, girl empowerment and writing. We have also emphasized more on tuitions, where we have conducted regular monthly assessments of 75 beneficiaries.

Regular school visits and follow-ups are conducted in order to get new admissions done along with assessing the beneficiaries' performance and to motivate parents to continue sending their girls to school.

Multiple spoken English classes and computer sessions have taken place at the center. While the spoken English classes concentrated primarily on developing the grammar and social skills of our beneficiaries, the computer classes aimed at enhancing their understanding of Microsoft Word, Excel and Paint tools and Internet search.

Health

We aid our beneficiaries with specialized awareness programs (ex: puberty and the ensuing bodily changes, gender and sexual education, medical treatments for contagious diseases, seasonal healthcare, etc.), routine medical referrals, nutritional aid provided through a well-designed diet chart, multivitamin and protein supplements, following up with hospitals and doctors, etc. The team also regularly records the height and weight of the beneficiaries through a growth chart, which helps them understand the level of physical development of the beneficiary. As part of our Nutrition Aid, 5 times nutrition and 1-time, multivitamins are regularly provided to more than 63 Udaan beneficiaries.

Lions Club organized a health camp in association with AAWC where almost all of our 75 beneficiaries took part. In addition, this quarter, with their help, we conducted monthly medical check-ups and it was noticed that the beneficiaries mildly suffered from cold and cough. A few health issues were detected during the health camp. However, none was of major distress.



Hepatitis B awareness session for Udaan beneficiaries

Empowerment

Along with recognizing the fundamental need for better health and education, we also work on empowerment in terms of vocational activities, identity-based documentation aid, life skills sessions and development of leadership skills through various extra-curricular. This quarter, we helped in creating 10 Aadhar cards (social security number card) for the beneficiaries.

To inculcate a sense of responsibility, we have a system of weekly “house on duties”, where different groups of girls are made and these groups are assigned to monitor and implement different chores of the shelter on a weekly rotation basis.

This quarter we introduced a new activity of journal writing in which the Udaan beneficiaries write down the whole days activities, what they like or do not like. The beneficiaries have accepted this activity happily and they do it religiously every day.

It has been noticed that Journal writing improves the writing skills of the girls as well as it becomes a space for girls to vent out their emotions through writing as sometimes they tend to hesitate to express themselves and undergo a turmoil which creates a stressful environment for them. Journal writing has become a positive influence in the girls life helping them analyse their situation and understanding themselves better.

In this quarter, regular Udaan girls’ monthly meeting was conducted, wherein discussions about the various rules, do’s and don’ts’ for the day and night activities were discussed with an aim of developing a more learning and role-modelling conducive environment from big Udaan girls to younger beneficiaries.

Regular mother’s meetings took place in order to discuss the Udaan beneficiaries’ performance in the school and in the shelter home and discuss the parent’s involvement in the beneficiaries’ education, motivation and morale. During the November’s mothers meeting we had a volunteer visit from Public Awareness for Healthful Approach for Living (PAHAL) he presented about Hepatitis B its causes and the vaccination for it through which it can be prevented. The elder Udaan girls were a part of this meeting.



Art and Craft activity with the volunteer

Recreational Activities

In this quarter, we also had a visit from our partner organization 'Gilbarco' who came along with their staff and volunteers to perform a magic show. They also made paintings for the children. They brought tasty snacks and donated clothes both to our Udaan girls and to Umang toddlers.

During their Diwali break, 6 Udaan beneficiaries visited National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) for a craft session on photo-frame making.

On 29th December, our Udaan beneficiaries were taken to the ISRO Centre for an exhibition as part of their exposure visit. The exhibition exhibited Satellite Aditya, which will soon be launched, as Satellite Aditya will be the closest satellite to record Sun's corona. The main aim of this exhibition was to attract kids and children towards science and space studies.

This quarter, all staff at both of our centers had participated in session on the Juvenile Justice Act 2015 and a POCSO session where the Protection of Children from Sexual Offence Act from 2012 was discussed.

Celebrations:

In October, we celebrated Navratri and Dusherra wherein we celebrated Navratri by playing garba and Dusherra was celebrated by performing various plays. In the month of November, we celebrated Diwali where elder girls had prepared a wonderful show from things that they have learned in their extracurricular-activities.

Girls also attended a Diwali festival celebration on 3rd of November organized by "Salam Mumbai" at Mahalakshmi Race Course.

Children's day was celebrated on 14th November; an activity was conducted wherein a video screening of moral stories took place teaching the girls about child rights. The videos were based on child labour and its ill effects, importance of education, nature, good behaviour and habits.

We had Christmas celebration in the month of December, wherein the older beneficiaries explained about why Christmas is celebrated, they sang Christmas carols gave dance performance and played Secret Santa.



childrens day celebration



Christmas celebration

UMANG

“When Shahid* wrote 1 to 100 on his slate without copying, my heart was filled with JOY. I kept the slate aside and showed it to everyone in the office. I could see how Shahid* was proud of himself. Being a first generation learner, as his mother is illiterate; she does not even understand poems or oral alphabets that he utters in front of her. Shahid* has become a success story for Umang” –
Umang Program Manager.



PROGRAM UPDATE

Education

This quarter we have started a collaboration with International Child Recourse Institute, which work with educating Balwadi teachers in early childhood care and education. We now get weekly visits by specialist Ms. Shaila Chitnis who comes to observe the Balwadi program and then discuss with the teachers about methods of teaching. She has also gives illustrations of various activities that will promote the cognitive and physical development etc.

The teacher's have started creating teaching- learning material which include making of puzzles and cards in addition they have also started conducting activities like collage making which promotes cognitive development among the beneficiaries.

This quarter to improve the general knowledge of the children the method used by teachers was pictorial representation of famous personalities and followed by special days and the significance. For instance, the picture of Mahatma Gandhi was shown to the Children and then they were explained why Gandhi Jayanti is celebrated this helps develop interest in children's mind and grabs more attention which helps them learn and retain things better.

Health

At AAWC, we place utmost importance on the health and nutritional aid provided to our beneficiaries. Acknowledging the fact that all of our members are from a highly vulnerable and marginalized community, and live in environments that often trigger ill health due to undernourishment - our activities range from spreading awareness on general hygiene, sanitation, and required medical support to holding quarterly health camps targeting specific ailments. We have also arranged periodic supply of sourdough breads, healthy salads and sandwiches, which complement the beneficiaries' daily meals with varied tastes. MR vaccination to all the day and night shelter children were done.

Along with this, we aid our beneficiaries with specialized awareness programs for their mothers (ex: neonatal care, medical treatments for contagious diseases, seasonal healthcare, etc.), routine medical referrals, nutritional aid provided through a well-designed diet chart, multivitamin and protein supplements, following up with hospitals and doctors, etc. Nutritional aid in the form of healthy and warm meals, protein and multivitamin supplements, moringa (drumstick) seeds and soymilk is provided on daily basis. This quarter, we also had our General Health Camp in October.

Empowerment

Add a little bit of This quarter, we focused on the procurement of identity documents for the children. For those mothers who have birth certificates of their children AAWC has now helped those children get Aadhar cards (social security number). We have also discussed saving habits at our Child's future planning meeting where mothers were informed about the opening a savings account process and encouraged to open them for their children. Which lead to two women opening saving accounts after the meeting.

Having noticed that the Umang beneficiaries are closer to the adolescent Udaan girl beneficiaries of AAWC, we realized that designing a few sessions between them might lead to positive changes in both sets of beneficiaries. This quarter, the Udaan-Umang sessions included storytelling and games on the themes of discipline, morals, and kindness.

We have continued our new activity on social skills this quarter. These sessions aimed at educating the young Umang children on behavior aspects and routine formation. From teaching the children about washing hands regularly before meals to toilet training for the extremely young, these sessions are imperative in creating a fundamentally healthy and socially adept child.

body text



Udaan and Umang activity together

Recreational Activities

Activities such as indoor and outdoor games, arts and crafts, story-telling sessions, watching quiz on television, etc. were held this quarter for our Umang beneficiaries. A few of the indoor activities include catch and throw for developing motor skills, drawing, hand clapping games, In and Out etc. All of our beneficiaries have enjoyed these activities, and often look forward to more of these due to the fun and informal nature of such events.



Activity for Umang beneficiaries with the volunteers



Marina dutta session on christmas celebration

Celebrations

During this quarter, we have had many lovely celebrations, which have really been the highlights of this period. We have celebrated Gandhi Jayanti on 2nd of October marking the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

We have also celebrated Navratri during which our team organized Fancy dress for the beneficiaries; they became flowers, fruits, famous personalities such as Savitri Bai Phule, Chacha Nehru, and Professionals such as doctors, police officer, Vegetable vendor etc. One beneficiary became Maggie, which surprised everyone. In the afternoon, all beneficiaries played Dandiya and Garba (Gujarat State Dance Form) with the teachers and Udaan beneficiaries. All beneficiaries were given their favorite Gulab Jamun (Indian Dessert) sweet.

Children's Day was celebrated by making crafts with paper and they enjoyed watching photos of their previous Diwali celebration.

However, the big celebration this quarter was of course our Diwali celebration for which our Udaan girls had prepared a Diwali performance of drama, dance, singing and games, which our Umang children participated in with lots of joy. Beneficiaries were given new clothes to wear and they made beautiful sky Diwali lanterns, with which they decorated the room. During the celebration they all joined teachers and program manager to dance to the song "Happy Diwali". On 21st December, we celebrated Christmas with all the Umang and Udaan beneficiary. They decorated room with Christmas Tree, red caps, Santa clause made with craft paper and symbols of gifts, chocolates etc. Teachers told them stories about Christmas and why it is celebrated. All the beneficiaries were given gifts in which they got beautiful soft toys. Teachers sang songs such as Jingle Bell Jingle bell along with the beneficiaries. On this occasion they were given Chocolates, and cookies all beneficiaries enjoyed a lot.

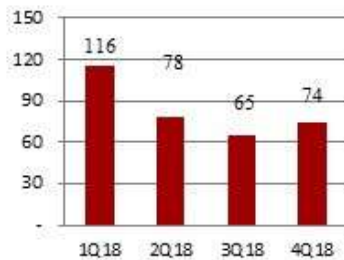


fancy dress celebration

October to December 2018

Membership

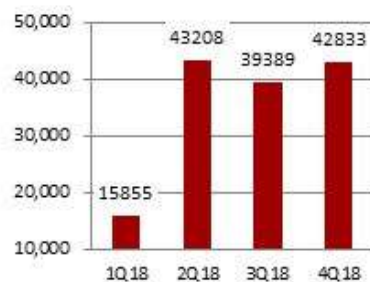
new members



Includes new Umeed, Udaan, and Umang members. Excludes indirect beneficiaries who receive services provided by AAWC.

Outreach

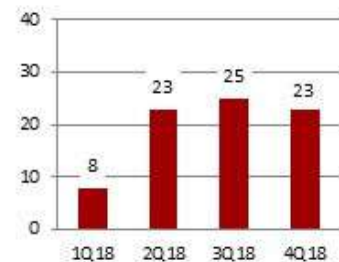
number of home visits



Includes visits by field team to members' homes.

Finance

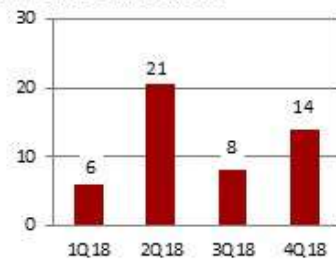
new savings accounts



Includes micro-saving accounts held at Indian Post Office, and formal bank accounts held at Bank of Maharashtra, also includes other service provided.

Education

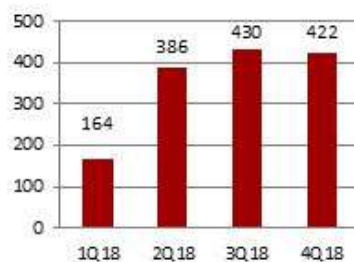
new school enrollments



Includes new school enrollments of Udaan and Umang members as well as non-members. Note: school year begins in June (second quarter).

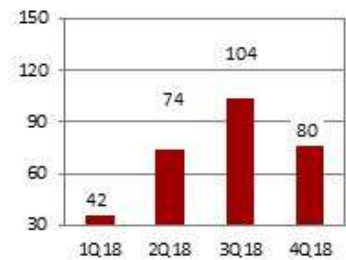
Empowerment

number of activities



Includes all workshops and excursions (legal, health, social schemes, creativity, careers, life skills, professional skills, fitness, human rights, recreation, etc.)

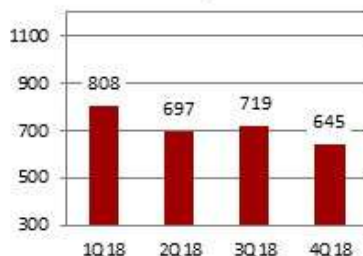
new registration documents



Includes ration cards, PAN card, Aadhar cards, voting cards, birth certificates, birth affidavits, general affidavits, gazette and health card.

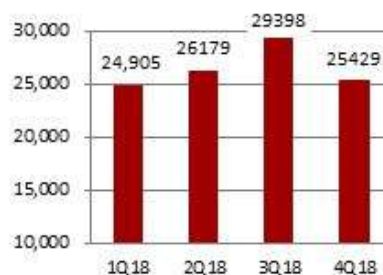
Health

new medical / hospital referrals



Provided to ensure members and non-members are properly treated at hospitals, where they are often denied service due to discrimination. Also include health camp and immunization beneficiaries.

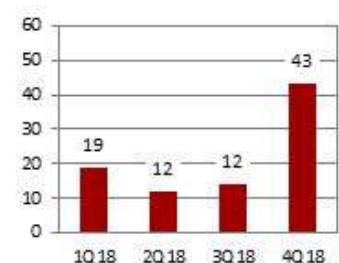
nutritional meals and snacks



Includes snacks distributed to all HIV/AIDS/TB patients in Umeed and full meals distributed to all members of Udaan and Umang.

Shelter

new enrollments



AAWC shelter is located in Kamathipura, while external shelters are located throughout Greater Mumbai. Boarding Placement service is provided to non-members as well.

***To keep supporting us
donate at:***



* Names changed and faces blurred to protect identity