



# Apne Aap Women's Collective

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

**NEWSLETTER**  
**OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2019**



## Ways to engage



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## Success stories

Rabiya\* 63 years old at a very young age by her family was made to follow Devdasi system as part of her cultural practice which led her to follow prostitution as a profession . Continuously being in this profession infected her with HIV. and she has been suffering from it from a couple of years along with HIV she has also been affected with cancer due to her age no one was willing to help her when she approached AAWC she was not in a situation to handle her stress, problems, and situations. Regular psycho-social support and counselling sessions helped her come out of it. AAWC referred her to Nair hospital for her cancer treatment due to which she is undertaking chemo sessions to fight cancer; AAWC also helped her get basic identity documents so she will get the access of all the government welfare schemes.

Sangita\* 12 years old had a lot of behavioral issues when she joined AAWC 3 years ago and was hesitant in participating in any activities of the organization. Continuous follow up with Sangita\* and making her sit for different activities slowly developed her interest in drawing, painting and extra curricular activities. Currently she won first prize in slogan writing competition in the class which was a very proud moment for her as well as the teacher in the class as the teacher explained Sangita\* has immense talent in the field of writing, drawing and painting. Due to which her name is put forward in various inter school competitions. The confidence built in Sangita\* is a result of the various extra curricular activities conducted in the center which gives them an opportunity to explore their interest area and develop the skills from it.

Rima\* age 4 years, when enrolled in the Umang Program could not even hold a spoon. Due to the health condition. Annoyed by the cranky behaviour mother hit the child which made the child replicate a similar behaviour in the center. Understanding the issue child was facing the teachers focused and tried to improve the health of the child by providing the child with timely nutritious meal. They also oriented the mother about the issue and how she could take care of the child. The child started showing improvement in health and showed controlled behaviour. The child now participates in all the activities and is one of the sincere children in the Umang Program.



Adult literacy session

## Overview

The outreach process is continued to build rapport, follow up and spread awareness about the various service provisions that can be availed by the women beneficiaries. They are also involved in the rigorous process of identifying potential beneficiaries for enrollment purposes. They also visit the home of the mothers whose children are enrolled in our Udaan and Umang programme to update them about the progress of their children and discuss issues regarding absenteeism and importance of education for their overall development. The outreach team conduct boarding follow up continuously to attain the progress of the beneficiaries placed. The outreach work is rigorous and challenging as they work in direct contact with the beneficiaries in the area as well a center.

Education being the tool of one's empowerment and success is imparted to all the three programmes. Umeed beneficiaries undertake adult literacy session wherein basic education is imparted to the women beneficiaries at field. All through these years it has been a change in the perspective of the beneficiaries towards education which emphasize that they understand the importance of it and they are interested in learning.

The Udaan beneficiaries are enrolled in formal schooling which includes both private as well as government schools in different medium. It has been noticed that the beneficiaries are able to grasp what has been taught in school and incorporate in their daily lives helping them attain success in academics which leads them to a successful career path. The Umang beneficiaries attend Balwadi (Kindergarten) in the center as a learning process of basic education and a preparation of toddlers to endow them with quality and behaviour for main stream schooling.

Immunity being the major concern in the area the Umeed, Udaan and Umang beneficiaries are provided with nutrition. The Umeed beneficiaries are provided with nutrition in the form of banana, soy milk, chikki and moringa seeds. The Udaan and the Umang beneficiaries are provided with nutritious meal these meals are prepared on the basis of diet chart.

## Highlights of the quarter



General health camp

### General Health Camp:

General health camp was conducted in Kamathipura center in collaboration with Health Department of BMC E ward. The doctors had come for check-ups along with medicine it was observed that the beneficiaries were not hesitant to tell the health issues they were facing such as skin infection, headache etc. The beneficiaries were checked and were prescribed medicines according to the issues they were facing. Through the health camp 61 beneficiaries were catered. During the camp Udaan and Umang beneficiaries who were suffering from mild, seasonal cold and cough, got checked up and medications were accordingly provided. The camp catered to 59 Udaan and Umang beneficiaries

Other medical camp was conducted in the Falkland road center in collaboration with Lion's Club of Bombay Crescent- health Clinic. The doctors conducted a thorough examination of the beneficiaries and prescribed medicines. Umeed beneficiaries found it the camp useful as they shared that for normal health issues they can't afford to go to government hospitals, hence coming here at the center is much easy. Through this camp we were able to cater to 44 Umeed beneficiaries and 15 Udaan and Umang beneficiary.





Immunization camp

Constant follow ups by outreach workers bring the mothers to the camp and make them realize the importance of getting the beneficiaries vaccinated.

### **Immunization Camp:**

This quarter Immunization camp was conducted in collaboration with Nair hospital. The team of Nair hospital provided vaccinations to beneficiaries and also looked into the immunization card. Along with immunization they were also explaining the mothers the importance of completing the immunization process of children. Information with regards to immunization is an important service that helps outreach workers to build rapport with the women in red Light area, also to find out potential beneficiaries of Umang and Udaan. It is observed that Mothers of new-born babies are careless about the child and due to ignorance, they either misplaced the vaccination book or just forget to bring the child to Primary health care center for vaccination.



Cancer awareness session

### **Cancer Awareness Session:**

Cancer awareness session was conducted in collaboration with the Indian cancer society. During the session beneficiaries were told about different type of cancer, causes, prevention and effect on the self and family due to such health issues. Majority of beneficiaries understood the gravity of the disease like cancer and how important it is to get it detected at an early stage hence many beneficiaries asked about further check-up and the name of the hospitals for such treatment.



Area activity HIV awareness session

### **World Aids Day Celebration:**

On World Aids Day area activity to spread awareness about HIV/AIDS was conducted which was done through varied slogans display of placards that reflected the importance of getting HIV testing done. Through a street play they showed the impact of HIV along with its prevention's and also highlighted on the myths attached with a patient suffering from HIV/ AIDS. Visual presentation of the impact of the disease help the beneficiaries to understand its effects better and why is it important for them to get tested for the treatment to begin.



Fashion designing session

### **Fashion designing session:**

Keeping in mind the empowerment aspect of women beneficiaries the Fashion designing sessions are ongoing the women beneficiaries have learned stitching and are rigorously involved in practicing bag making to refine their stitching skills to produce completely finished bags. During this quarter woman had gone through a bi-annual evaluation which helped us understand their progress. It has been observed that the beneficiaries are regular in the session and are dedicated to learn which is seen as they come early for the class and also practice whatever is being taught at the center as well as their home during their free hour.



Session on superstitious belief

### **Awareness session on Superstitious belief:**

This quarter a session was conducted in collaboration with Andh Shradha Nirmulan Samiti with the beneficiaries wherein they were explained how various tricks are performed by impersonators to give rise to superstitious belief. The beneficiaries were made to realize that it is always better to believe in science and logic rather than having faith in superstitious belief and blindly following an impersonator who can trick them and exploit them on the basis of their belief easily.



Child internal committee meeting

### **Child internal committee meeting:**

The objective of child internal committee meeting this quarter is to enhance the participation of children in decision making process at the center level. The committee meetings make the beneficiaries comfortable in talking in a group and make them confident to put forward their view point they openly share about what they are learning in the center as well as share the varied issues that they are facing. This quarter the beneficiaries spoke about what they like in the center and the understanding they are developing of being good leaders.





DHL visit by Udaan beneficiaries

### **Exposure visit to DHL Express:**

Udaan girl beneficiaries were taken for exposure visit to a corporate DHL. We are grateful to Mr Aman Bhalla and Mrs Sarbani Sengupta from DHL for arranging the visit. The beneficiaries learnt about the work of DHL across the globe. They got oriented to the functioning and operations of the service center. They also observed the work ethics lingering in the office environment. The girls were interrogative as well as responsive throughout the visit. The DHL staff members were impressed by the girls because of their confident personalities, kind and respectful attitude.



Music event at Billawa Bhavan

### **Live music event at Billawa Bhavan, Santa Cruz:**

The Udaan girl beneficiaries were taken to Billawa Bhavan for a live musical event in which they observed the live show and expressed their interest in preparing and performing a similar show. Not just the lead singer, but the beneficiaries also observed and appreciated the performers who were playing instruments in the background and appreciated the energy that was put into the live show by all performers. This understanding and respect for all the elements that make up a live show has developed among beneficiaries due to exposure they receive about music and its elements in the regular music sessions.



Activity with volunteers of Ceres Global

### **Activity with volunteers of Ceres Global:**

A culmination of activities was conducted with Udaan and Umang beneficiaries by the volunteers of Ceres Global to give them an opportunity to develop an understanding of virtual reality, body parts, types of animal's distinction between domestic and wild animals. They also took an initiative to update the laptops of the beneficiaries so that it would be helpful for them during the computer session.



Annual picnic at Tikujiniwadi

### **Annual Picnic:**

Annual picnic for Udaan and Umang beneficiaries was conducted in the month of December wherein the beneficiaries were taken to Tikujiniwadi a fun resort. Starting from Music Train to boating children have had different new experiences and undertook varied rides. Breakfast and snacks provided was also enjoyed by the children. Surprisingly except one beneficiary no other beneficiary was scared or reluctant to play on the rides. They also got to see various fish, birds and animals which were kept in the small zoo at the park. Beneficiaries were amazed to see the Rabbit and big Brazilian parrot. The greenery, and breezy air made all the beneficiaries fresh and joyful. It was indeed a good gateway for all.





Annual picnic to Trimbakeshwar temple

The Umeed beneficiaries were taken for annual picnic to Nasik Shri Trimbakeshwar temple. The beneficiaries spend a relaxing time and enjoyed the meals that were provided. They enjoyed all through the journey as well. They were seen talking to other women, singing and dancing, clicking pictures, praying at the temple and shopping in the market. The entire day was fun filled and gave them an opportunity to venture out of the area leaving all the worries behind.



Children's day celebration

### **Children's Day Celebration:**

Children's day celebration was conducted for both Udaan and Umang beneficiaries during the celebration Magic show was organized to be performed by famous magicians Ms. Hansa and team. Before the magic show, beneficiaries sang songs, and showed their talents and they were eagerly waiting for the magic show. Magicians were excellent in terms of entertaining the children, they even made a few children participate in some of the magic moves Beneficiaries had a great time. The celebration helped us build the bridge among all the children from FR, KP as well as BMC school as the children of the school were also invited to be a part of the show.



Annual sports day

### **Annual Sports:**

Annual Udaan sports was conducted which involved enthusiastic beneficiaries participating in various sports event such as running race, kangaroo race, lemon and spoon, book balance, relay etc. The beneficiaries were very sporting and used various strategies to win the races. Prize distribution ceremony was organized for all the winners and a special award was presented by Manju Ma'am and Sarbani Ma'am to the best sports person.



Diwali celebration

### **Diwali Celebrations:**

All beneficiaries, the elder as well as younger ones including Umang beneficiaries came together to celebrate Dussehra. The beneficiaries decorated the activity room by themselves for the celebration. The celebration gave an opportunity to the beneficiaries to learn about the victory of good over evil.

It was really a good moment to realize that the beneficiaries understand the festival which was highlighted when one of the Udaan older beneficiaries shared the ill effects of bursting crackers at Diwali as it causes harm to environment and self. Beneficiaries were encouraging each other to not burst crackers.



Christmas celebration

### **Christmas day celebration:**

The Udaan beneficiaries planned the entire celebration from playing secret Santa to performing dance, Anchoring to decoration as well as distribution of snacks. They also planned surprise for the teachers they made handmade cards and presented it to them. During the Christmas celebration along with knowing about the festivals the event management skills of the elder beneficiaries was honed. It was observed that they were able to manage the programme very well along with portraying good leadership quality. The Umang beneficiaries learnt about Christmas day along with Christmas carols and were engaged in making Christmas tree, snow man as part of their art and craft. The Umang beneficiaries also decorated the Christmas tree in Falkland road center and received gifts from each other. The scenario of the celebration was joyful as all the beneficiaries were engaged in celebration and dancing around the tree.

### **Human Rights day celebration:**

Human rights day was celebrated wherein Udaan beneficiaries were shown video that highlighted their basic rights and a discussion followed the same. It was noticed that Elder beneficiaries were already well aware about human rights as they are learning about it in the schools and other center activities. They were interactive and gave valuable inputs during discussion. For younger beneficiaries it was a new topic hence they were more curious to know about it. The impact of the session is visible during other session where the beneficiaries can relate to violation of varied rights such as right to clean environment.



Staff training on JJ act

### **Capacity Building:**

#### **BCPT Training:**

To train staff members upon effectively conducting English language learning sessions with young beneficiaries. The training was conducted with the help of educational videos. The participants learnt about ways to effectively teach alphabets, words and sentences to students of primary academic level. The method they learnt was to use e learning content by BCPT, use of flash cards, drawings and live objects for the purpose.

#### **POCSO Training:**

The training was conducted twice once with the support staff in order to develop their knowledge and the senior staff to sensitize them about POCSO Act. The session was interactive, provided an open platform for the participants to raise doubts. The staff members learnt about signs that are to be kept an eye upon for identifying a victim of sexual abuse. They have also gained knowledge of the law that is in place for protection of children against sexual abuse.

#### **Crisis Management and work Ownership:**

The training was conducted by Mr. Adrian Rosario to explain the staff how a crisis can be managed and importance of work ownership. Through this training session the Staff learned about the importance of being alert and proactive and through the group activities staff realized that trust is the most important thing while working in the team. Discussion with regards to attributes of a good leader was also done.

#### **ICRI training:**

The ICRI training sessions are conducted in order to train the teachers in various skills of teaching keeping in mind the perspective of the child. Through this training teachers learn varied innovative techniques of imparting knowledge to the beneficiaries and understand the essence of every child's need and level of grasping knowledge. During the training session in this quarters how they can help a child overcome his limitations and inhibition and learn things faster.



## Major Challenges:

- During outreach the dark and dilapidated condition of the building create a big challenge for our outreach workers during the field visit as they have to face various situations such as drunk men carrying small shaving blades, broken stairs, strewn filth, stray dogs, rodents, with no sunlight reaching the building even during the day time further increases the risk to them. The darkness in the building also makes it difficult for our outreach workers to locate the beneficiaries.
- The women beneficiaries frequently change their places without informing us which hampers the services being provided especially medication for Tuberculosis, ART treatment or other important follow ups.
- One of the major challenges this quarter was when AAWC received information with regards to one of the boarding homes closing down due to financial crisis providing a very short notice period to us. The beneficiaries referred by AAWC to the boarding home needed to be shifted as soon as possible hence quick planning and steps required to be taken by AAWC in order to provide the beneficiaries with a safe and secure home taking into consideration that their education is not hampered.
- Being shifted to a new center in Falkland road posed a challenge of decrease in beneficiaries in the center hence steps are being undertaken to overcome this challenge through rigorous outreach and identifying potential beneficiaries for AAWC services.

