



ANNUAL REPORT
2022-2023

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Executive Summary

SIAAP's ongoing efforts to define our mission, vision, and objectives persist, particularly in our work with marginalized populations. Engaging with these groups presents considerable challenges due to prevalent stigmatization, abuse, and isolation. Our projects focus on addressing the needs of vulnerable groups such as adolescent boys and girls, children in institutional care, sex workers, and LGBTI communities. By tailoring our objectives to confront the specific challenges faced by these underserved communities, our projects significantly contribute to the country's development while aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2022- 2023, initiatives were undertaken to establish fresh collaborations with government entities and allied organizations dedicated to serving the same communities. Significantly, interventions underwent modifications, activities were bolstered, and community outreach was expanded following assessments that uncovered the diverse array of challenges experienced by these communities.

Through persistent dedication, our projects have achieved remarkable outcomes and propelled us to forge invaluable partnerships, exemplified by our collaboration with a high school to deliver life skills education to students. Engaging directly with school representatives and fostering teacher referrals for child counselling facilitated a deeper trust among educators, establishing a robust relationship with school staff. Notably, 608 children spanning 17 districts have undergone successful deinstitutionalization, with 17 poised for reintegration. In addition, identification of 158 potential foster care parents across 24 districts, alongside feasibility assessments for 51 families, marks substantial progress. Over 75% of the children have completed 20 training sessions, yielding heightened confidence and the ability to articulate choices, prioritize positive behaviours, and shun detrimental habits like alcohol and drugs. These sessions have also fostered notable improvements in gender-sensitive behaviour, decision-making, and a willingness to seek guidance from community counsellors. Moreover, they've instilled healthier eating habits among many, opting for nutritious breakfasts and eschewing easily accessible junk food, notably in the tsunami quarters. Noteworthy strides include increased access to sexual and reproductive health services by female sex workers (FSWs) at government healthcare facilities, covering safe abortions, protection from intimate partner violence (IPV), and nutritional aid for those living with HIV/AIDS. Sensitization workshops for college students and faculty have spurred interest, attracting volunteers, particularly from mental health backgrounds, willing to collaborate. Some counsellors have generously offered free support services to the community. Efforts to counter harmful social media narratives have been undertaken, culminating in greater policy inclusion at academic institutions like the University of Madras, which launched a pioneering scheme benefiting transgender students. This initiative not only allows students to identify as transgender but also reserves a seat for free education, relaxing eligibility criteria to 50% marks.

This annual report comprehensively details each project undertaken during the reporting period, providing insights into our interventions, impact, and showcases the outcomes achieved by each project, emphasizing their individual accomplishments.

We express our gratitude to all our donors, partners, and supporters for their diverse contributions that have shaped our work. Additionally, we extend our thanks to our hardworking employees, whose tireless efforts were instrumental in achieving these outcomes.

Project name: Urban Programming for children and Adolescents in Perumbakkam, Tamil Nadu

Project period: March 2021 to March 2022

Objective:

- To build evidence for current status of vulnerable children and adolescents in underserved urban area and cost-effective long-term intervention strategy for children and adolescents in underserved urban areas
- To increase access to stigma and discrimination free nutrition, sexual, mental health issues by children and adolescents in underserved urban areas.
- To build supportive environment in the family and community for children & adolescents
- To strengthen capacities of children and adolescents on nutrition, life skills, education, gender safety, sexual health, mental health, child marriage and teenage pregnancy through capacity building sessions
- To establish safe and discrimination free community-based service delivery models for sexual health & mental health of children and adolescents and community members
- Increase parental and community support in well-being of children and adolescent in the community, for sexual health, gender safety, mental health child marriage and teenage pregnancy and for planning, monitoring and advocate for sustainability of interventions
- To build community led sustainable intervention strategy and foster alliance between communities and policy makers and service providers.

Intervention:

The intervention followed a bottom-up approach and was a community based, adolescent friendly, non-medical model, explicitly addressing mental health needs through promotional, preventive and curative systems. Secondly, this intervention attempted to go beyond individuals and households to places where adolescents hangout. The interventions in this project were crafted drawing heavily from the 'capabilities approach', where work together with key stakeholders to strengthen capabilities of each and address core themes. In children, the project envisaged strengthening of capabilities related to emotional well-being and seeking support for emotional wellbeing, no use of drugs, sexuality and sexual health, boredom, avoid peer pressure and take responsible action, making healthy choices, resolving conflicts, social capital, using community resources, self-esteem and confidence, communication, positive relationships. Simultaneously, the project worked together with key stakeholders to strengthen their capabilities that would positively impact the adolescents' mental health. Overall, nine activities were planned for the year that included integrated and age-appropriate intervention focusing on life skills, nutrition, safety and violence, relationships, child marriage, teenage pregnancy, sexual health and mental health. The project began with a (i) situational analysis survey among 123 adolescents and covered nutrition, education, mental health, sexual health and reproductive health, gender, safety, abuse, bullying, personal hygiene, domestic violence, child marriage, teenage pregnancy, and child labour. (ii) Community perspective building included active engagement with children's parents, youth groups, SHGs and other community members to help them understand, and be more sensitive towards the needs and concerns of children in the community better, which will empower them to address the issues affecting children and adolescents. (iii) Life skills trainings were facilitated to develop Knowledge, Attitude and skills of children and adolescents in the community. Sessions were facilitated through play – based and arts - based methods of experiential learning strategies. The topics were facilitated for the children based on an intervention continuum that had been created based on the age and ability to understand certain topics. (iv) Sensitization of service providers including healthcare providers, Anganwadi workers, teachers and other stakeholders on SRH and mental health issues, and needs and concerns

of children and adolescents were carried out after sample survey findings indicated that service providers lacked knowledge and understanding about attitudes of children and their behaviour. (v) Training parents and guardians on various pressing issues related to their children, including educating parents on positive parenting practices such as usage of positive language, planned discipline, and healthy coping mechanisms which in turn will lead to the child demonstrating healthy behaviours. (vi) Establishing child / adolescents' friendly centres which act as one stop centre where children and stakeholders come together to access services. Centre is utilised to facilitate training sessions, to provide linkages and to avail social entitlements /welfare schemes and to access counselling sessions. (vii) Accompanied referrals and linkages for mental health issues, SRH and employment of adolescents. (viii) Establish platform to foster alliance between community collectives and policy makers and service providers. (ix) Identify children, adolescents and adults in the community for sustainability planning and capacity building.

Impact:

The findings of the situational analysis survey provided clarity in shaping the tailored interventions that include active engagement with parents to inculcate positive parenting attitudes, creating one stop centre where child/adolescent can avail/access services, eliminating junk food consumption by life skills training to educate on the importance of healthy food using locally available resources, and so on. Baseline findings also revealed some children discontinued school post the pandemic or children who have never attended school. For these children, this centre in the community was used as a safe space to learn and attend remedial classes facilitated by the project team members. The recruitment of community counsellors brought about a transformative change in program dynamics, with a significant enhancement of skills. Their presence led to a shift towards more community-based interactions and accelerated project progress. A noteworthy collaboration with a high school facilitated life skills education for classes 7 and 8. On-field engagement with school representatives, teacher referrals for child counselling, and increased trust among educators resulted in the establishment of a strong rapport with school staff. The initiation of after-school tuition classes proved to be a beacon of hope for children who had previously faced multiple failures in the 10th grade. Mobilizing social capital through known resources, these classes provided an exclusive one-on-one learning experience for the children. Furthermore, the establishment of a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and Child Spokespersons empowered individuals to advocate for improvements in bus timings and the absence of street lights within the community. As a result, timing boards are now set up at the bus stop, ensuring the timely arrival and departure of buses.

Donor: UNICEF

Primary stakeholders / Beneficiaries: Children and adolescents, health care providers, parents, teachers, police, Department of Social Defence, TNUHDB, Department of Education.

Project name: Building an alternative care system to promote family-based care

Project period: June 2022 to December 2022

Objectives:

- To establish a resource group/think tank to review and create Social and Behavioural change, communication Materials and monitor the program progress
- To identify children and families for reintegration and foster care
- To create effective and efficient system for monitoring and evaluation of alternative care programme in the state
- To establish replicable and scalable model for deinstitutionalisation through restoring 10000 children from Child Care Institutions by 2024
- To equip Child Protection Functionaries with family strengthening systems

Intervention:

SIAAP collaborated with the Directorate of Social Defence (DSD), Child protection functionaries, and UNICEF, to enable the successful rollout of a 5- year strategic plan on building an alternative care. The rapid assessment of children in kinship care during the COVID pandemic led to the development of targeted interventions designed to support and address the specific vulnerabilities faced by children in institutional care. strategies to promote family-based care involved perspective building, capacity building, collaborations with domain experts, linkages and accompanied referrals to services, and alliance building with local partners. Activities included (i) Prioritizing CCI ad developing district specific implementation roadmap in consultation with the directorate of Social Defence to roll out alternative care programme across Tamil Nadu, (ii) Empowering child protection functionaries delivering alternative care services to children in institutional care and their parents, (iii) Assisting child protection functionaries to create a database of prioritized children and explore conditions to thrive in the family, (iv) Establishing effective monitoring and evaluation system through resource group to review progress of the intervention.

Outcomes:

The revised state action plan for 2023-2024 was formulated, pinpointing 15 high-priority districts to effectively roll out the alternative care program. District-level Child Protection Forums (CPFs) have assumed responsibility for promoting non-institutional care services within their respective areas. Draft district action plans with monthly targets were created for these priority districts, each with a specific roadmap tailored to implement the alternative care program. Clear roles and responsibilities for District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) staff implementing the program were outlined. Additionally, measures to enhance monitoring and reporting of alternative care activities at state and district levels were planned and assigned. Furthermore, 37 case workers and 36 case managers were trained to execute the program effectively. Notably, 608 children across 17 districts have been successfully deinstitutionalized, with 17 children poised for reintegration. Moreover, 158 potential foster care parents have been identified in 24 districts, and feasibility assessments for reintegration have been conducted for 51 families.

Donor: UNICEF

Primary stakeholders / Beneficiaries: Children in institutional care and their families, care givers and child protection functionaries including District child protection unit (DCPU), State Adoption resource Agency (SARA), Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA), District of Social Defence (DSD).

Project name: Malarkal – A million blossoming: Integrated approach to strengthening health, gender, safety, and employment preparedness of adolescent girls and boys in urban slums

Project period: 2017 – December, 2023 (This report accounts from April 2022 to March 2023)

Themes: The project's primary theme is to empower adolescents and strengthen their agency using comprehensive approach across various verticals. These include nutrition, life skills, mental health, sexual and reproductive health, as well as safety. This holistic strategy aims to build adolescents capacity and resilience and ensures a well-rounded and inclusive support system for their development.

Objectives:

- To build life skills, address psychosocial needs and improve capacity to address violence through self-defence and sports among 2500 adolescents (2000 girls and 500 boys) aged 8-17 years living in Ernavur slum community through interventions at the community and schools.
- Increase parental and community sensitivity to issues of adolescents regarding issues of life skills, sexual /reproductive health, psychosocial needs, safety and self-confidence building.
- Build sensitivity of doctors at PHC, VHN, teachers, AWW, private health professionals nearby and law enforcement personnel on the issues relating to adolescents in the community.
- Establishing effective monitoring and evaluation systems and gathering evidence on factors contributing towards improved abilities of adolescents.

Intervention:

During the reporting period, comprehensive training initiatives were undertaken to equip both community and school counsellors with fundamental and advanced counselling skills, along with specialized training in adolescent life skills, perspective building, and facilitation techniques. Psychosocial support sessions were organized to support adolescents coping with challenges such as parental abuse, self-harm tendencies, and disengagement from education. Additionally, interventions were extended to parents contending with marital conflicts, extramarital affairs, and substance abuse issues, ensuring they received essential psychosocial support. This intervention notably benefited 117 children and their respective parents. Moreover, proactive engagement was facilitated through Parents Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, totalling 24 sessions. These meetings served as platforms to discuss on emerging adolescent challenges, assess implemented strategies, measure progress, and provide valuable suggestions for further enhancements. Efforts were also directed towards transforming negative parental perceptions of the adolescent phase, conducting 283 sessions aimed at sensitizing and fostering a positive outlook among parents. Furthermore, 744 parents underwent skill training sessions covering critical topics like menstrual hygiene, gender identity, roles and responsibilities, problem-solving, and decision-making. Extensive life skills training was conducted across the community and school settings, benefitting a substantial number of adolescents. A total of 448 groups comprising 2,734 children were engaged in community-based sessions, covering topics ranging from problem-solving, decision-making, family support, mental and sexual health, to nutrition and personal hygiene. Additionally, 95 school-based groups involving 2,823 children were provided with specialized training on relationships, gender understanding, bodily changes, violence awareness, and safety. Enrichment programs, including bi-weekly sports training sessions featuring volleyball, throwball, and football, as well as weekly self-defence classes, were consistently offered. A total of 60 sessions catered to 300 children in sports training, while 36

sessions effectively covered 300 children in self-defence classes, contributing significantly to their holistic development during the reporting period.

Throughout the reporting period, various initiatives were undertaken to support the holistic development and well-being of the program participants. These efforts included organizing sports events, such as the annual sports event that catered to 392 children and parents, providing them with uniforms, certificates, and medals. Additionally, 86 children were honoured with medals and certificates, while 15 children showcased their athletic prowess in a state-level sports meet. On World AIDS Day, an informative session on sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and AIDS was conducted for the members of the parents' advisory committee, engaging 27 women. Recognizing the importance of education, daily tuition sessions were initiated to enhance the fundamental understanding of subjects like Tamil, English, and Mathematics for children with specific literacy needs. In collaboration with the SCARF organization, mental health sessions and art-based therapy were facilitated for 30 children, promoting their emotional well-being. Two health camps, organized in partnership with SIMS Hospital and the Greater Chennai Corporation, catered to 501 enrolled children and 135 family members. These comprehensive camps provided specialized services, including blood tests, eye and dental check-ups, and paediatric consultations, ensuring a thorough assessment of the participants' health status. Furthermore, specific attention was given to addressing sexual and reproductive health concerns. Nineteen children and their parents were provided with staff-accompanied referrals to address issues related to vaginal discharge, irregular periods, and abdominal pain, aiming to ensure their overall health and well-being.

Outcomes/Impact:

A study was carried out to evaluate the repercussions of COVID-19 on the mental health and sexual and reproductive health of 100 adolescents. The results of this assessment played a crucial role in pinpointing the challenges faced by adolescents in these areas. Utilizing these findings, we adjusted our project interventions midway to better address these challenges during implementation. Community counsellors have been actively engaging in perspective-building activities, conducting regular house visits, but face challenges in maintaining consistency in this effort due to prevalent migration. Over 50% of parents have attended counselling sessions, finding comfort in discussing their issues with the community counsellors. Community counsellors reported various changes in follow-up sessions, including increased mobility and participation in sports activities outside their homes among 58% of adolescent girls who reached puberty, 45.9% engagement in sports and self-defence classes post-puberty, distribution of three-month IFA tablet supplies to children aged 11-18 through community counselling centres sourced from PHCs, dissemination of nearly 10,000 sanitary pads via these centres with 213 adolescent girls as regular recipients, sponsorship linkage for 20 single-parent and orphan children in extended families, financial support of 4000/ per month for 17 vulnerable children to prevent institutional care, successful reintegration of 23 long-absent children into school through the Malarkal program, along with reported cases and support for 14 instances of child marriage, child labour, child sexual abuse, and domestic violence, as well as support provided to 13 children dealing with sexual abuse. Over 75% of the children have completed 20 training sessions on identified topics, resulting in a noticeable boost in confidence among them. These sessions have empowered the children and adolescents, enabling them to effectively communicate their choices, prioritize positive behaviours while disregarding harmful habits like alcohol and drugs. They've shown remarkable improvements in gender-sensitized behaviour, decision-making, and a willingness to confide in community counsellors about their concerns. Furthermore, these sessions have instilled healthier eating habits, with many opting for proper breakfasts and avoiding easily accessible junk food in their surroundings, particularly in the tsunami quarters.

Donor: Azim Premji Foundation

Primary stakeholders: Adolescent girls, their parents, their neighbourhood communities and schools, Anganwadi Workers, TN Urban Habitat Development Board and Police Officers

Project name: Strengthening access to SRHR and wellbeing among female sex worker community in 3 states in India

Project period: March 2022 to March 2023

Objective:

- Growing a stronger SRHR movement by empowering sex workers to advocate as a community
- Improving access to comprehensive SRH and well-being services and information through policy and community advocacy
- Organisational strengthening to enhance the effectiveness of the coalition, particularly in the COVID-19 context
- Generating evidence of the impact of COVID-19 on SRHR in the SW community

Intervention:

Our project aimed to break down barriers hindering female sex workers (FSWs) in India from accessing vital services concerning safety, protection, sexual and reproductive health, and mental well-being. We identified several key challenges such as restrictive laws, pervasive stigma, discrimination, and violence from service providers, as well as a lack of awareness among FSWs regarding safety, sexual health, and mental health issues. Our strategy involved implementing interventions across multiple levels—structural, institutional, organizational, and individual—targeting policymakers, healthcare institutions, community organizations supporting FSWs, and individual sex workers. These interventions were designed to empower and improve the overall sexual and reproductive health and well-being of FSWs. (i) Policy recommendations for comprehensive and non-discriminatory access to these services for FSWs. (ii) Strengthening sex worker organizations helped to build the capacity of FSWs to advocate for their rights to safety, health, and well-being, and to initiate a national, inclusive, and multisectoral collaboration to translate these rights into actionable policies and programmes. (iii) Strengthening knowledge and skills of individual sex workers to help community members to access safety, SRH and MH health and social services without fear of discrimination. (iv) Integrating a pleasure-based approach into SRHR

Outcomes:

Key outcomes include: 1. Stronger SRHR rights movement through (i) strengthening advocacy capacity of selected peers to support and represent sex workers, and confront/collaborate with government authorities, law enforcement agencies and healthcare providers; and (ii) establishing an effective crisis response mechanism through training to be assertive, interact confidently with authority figures, take pride in their work, and participate in regional and national meetings. 2. Building broad support of key stakeholders - sex worker networks, government agencies, UN bodies, international and national CSOs, and independent experts for the policy recommendations developed with the support of Amplify Change, to strengthen access to comprehensive and non-discriminatory services for safety, sexual and reproductive health, and mental health for FSWs. 3. Significant increase in numbers of FSWs accessing SRH and safety services at government healthcare facilities, especially for safe abortions, protection from IPV, and nutrition assistance for sex workers living with HIV/AIDS. talking openly about their problems, and seeking help. This was primarily through (i) sharing SRHR and MH related information emphasizing key risks, morbidities, symptoms, and services using participatory learning, providing accompanied referrals, and using sensitive medical professionals as resource people; and (ii) sensitizing local service providers about the concerns and needs of FSWs. furthermore, The Government of Tamil Nadu has collaborated with us

to conduct a survey of government protection homes to identify and release adult sex workers who are being detained without their consent over the next 12 months. This gives us an opportunity to reach new, younger SWs with SRH/MH related information and help.

Donor: Amplify change

Primary stakeholders / Beneficiaries: Female sex workers, LGBT, PLWHA, Survivors of violence and others children of sex workers.

Project name: General operating support for the LGBTI Program

Project period: 1 February 2022 to 31 January 2024

Objective:

- Advancing equal rights for LGBTQIA+ people and to achieve significant legal, policy and cultural changes towards equal rights for LGBTQIA+ people
- To bring changes in public understanding of LGBTQIA+ issues and communities and/or new narratives by and about historically oppressed people within LGBTQIA+ communities
- Building stronger relationships, alliances, and partnerships to advance LGBTQIA+ rights
- Strengthening crisis response team and burnout prevention among social workers
- Sensitizing mental health professionals about LGBTQIA+ community and enhancing the quality and availability of mental health support services for LGBTQIA+ community

Themes:

Creating awareness about gender and sexual diversity and promoting inclusion and acceptance of LGBTQIA+, strengthening mental health support services for the LGBTQIA+, addressing crisis situations and building capabilities of the community groups

Intervention:

Some of the key activities undertaken through this grant include (1) Peer-Counselling Training where about a dozen participants including our team members, community leaders, and volunteers were trained on the basic principles of counselling. This has empowered them to provide counselling and mental health support while working with their own community groups, (2) State-level consultation on the transmasculine community where for the first time, we organized a state-level consultation of the transmasculine community with participation of transmen from various districts across Tamil Nadu. (3) Program with school and college faculty including with government school teachers, where getting permissions has historically been a challenge for us, but we were able to organize successful programs with the additional support of our passionate interns and volunteers who have been inspired by our work, (4) making presentations in college and university programs, for example on the discussion event on World Mental Health Day in a government institute for empowerment of persons with multiple disabilities, and (5) helping organize initiatives like the Pride March in Coimbatore. Beyond the specific programs, our team has been addressing community crisis situations and providing support on an ongoing basis through phone calls, online communication, and in-person meetings based on need and situation. We have also collaborated with various organizations and networks to address crisis situations and provide support to members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Outcome / Impact:

Peer counselling training for community members and volunteers has helped build their capability to address crisis situations and provide peer support to community members. The sensitization workshops for college students and faculty have inspired many students and volunteers, including from mental health backgrounds, to come forward to work with us. Some of the counsellors have also offered to provide free support services to the community. We have also taken steps to address harmful narratives in social media. For example, anti-LGBTQIA+ thinker Parisalan made a video criticizing LGBTQIA+ Pride, referring to it as Western culture and making derogatory remarks about

the community. Our team member Siva's video response to it has received more than 6000 views¹. While through community consultations, we had helped the community coin and promote terms like "திரும்பி" for "transman," the government of Tamil Nadu has endorsed the use of such inclusive and accurate terminology through the publication of a glossary of terms². In a historic first, the Tamil Nadu Transgender Welfare Board has started to issue identity cards for transmen and for intersex individuals as well. We also have continuously revised and updated our modules to ensure scientifically accurate presentations, for example, definition of sex and sex characteristics, with the creative use of audiovisual content and theater activities to create meaningful emotional engagement, which in turn would promote social inclusion of the LGBTIQ+ and other marginalized communities.

Donor: Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice

Primary stakeholders / Beneficiaries: Queer community members, social workers, children and adolescents from underserved communities, sex workers.

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urnqDMA4evA>

² <https://www.paalputhumai.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Glossary-for-addressing-LGBTQIA-Community-2022-by-TN-SW-Dept.pdf>

Project name: Promoting Inclusion and Welfare of LGBTIQ Communities

Project period: 1 November 2022 to 31 October 2023

Themes: Inclusive policies for LGBTQIA+ communities, creating unity among the subgroups of LGBTQIA+ community and building capabilities of the LGBTQIA+ community groups.

Objective:

To strengthen and empower members of the LGBTQIA+ community, facilitation of support groups for social workers and community leaders to include LGBTQIA+ community members and women in sex work, to create awareness, prevent discrimination, and promote understanding, sensitize legal and media persons, facilitate communities to come together and work toward inclusive policies, raise visibility through initiatives like the LGBTQIA+ Pride, to address issues within the subgroups of LGBTQIA+ community.

Intervention:

We have organized various programs to bring unity among diverse subgroups of LGBTQIA+ and to develop second line leadership in the community. For example, in a program with transgender and kothi community members in Trichy, they said they came to know about intersex identities for the first time in their lives. We, as part of the Coimbatore Rainbow Coalition, organized the Pride March in Coimbatore in June 2022. This was the first after the coronavirus lockdowns and also the first Pride with full representation of all segments of the LGBTQIA+ community. We also organized various events like cycle rally, film festival, mental health awareness programs, etc., as part of the Pride month celebrations in Coimbatore. As part of capability building activities under this grant, some of our team members were trained in the theatre of the oppressed and one of our team members attended an advanced course on sexuality organized by Nirantar. We continued to be in follow up with the theatre group and through them organized programs for the general public in Chennai. For example, in one of the programs they organized the participants brought their family members along and they stayed with us for continued discussion even beyond the allocated time for the program. The learnings from these training sessions were also shared among our team members and the insights have helped us further develop our modules, for example by creative use of theatrical activities in our sensitization programs.

Outcome / Impact:

As a result of continued engagement with universities and colleges, we are seeing greater inclusion at the policy level as well, for example, University of Madras has launched a scheme for transgender students³. Now, students are not only able to select transgender as a gender option but also there is one earmarked seat for free education for transgender students with relaxed eligibility criteria of 50% marks. While the demand to provide gender inclusive restroom facilities for transgender persons is already pending with the Honorable Madras High Court, we also see some institutions where we conducted sensitization programs earlier like the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, are already providing accessible restrooms to

³ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/mu-plans-one-free-seat-in-each-college-for-transgenders/articleshow/90384824.cms>

transgender and gender nonconforming students by redesignating some of their existing restrooms as gender neutral restrooms.

One of the students who participated in our program at National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Chennai, Sreepriya, shared her own beautiful artwork about the session on social media⁴. Another participant of that session also took efforts to organize a sensitization program for a jewelry store. Beyond the sensitization programs, our team members continue to be actively involved with theatre groups like Sterling Playback Theatre which serves as a safe space for the queer community. The Tamil Nadu government has also amended the Subordinate Police Officers' Conduct Rules to specifically prohibit police from harassing LGBTIQ+ community members or those working for the welfare of the community⁵. In yet another positive development, while ruling on a case about maternity benefits for unmarried women, Honourable Justices Chandrachud and Bopanna have ruled that families include queer families (Deepika Singh versus Central Administrative Tribunal and Others⁶). As a result of our previous sensitization programs with writers and media persons, M Anandhan has authored the book Kairathi-377⁷ which includes the stories of 11 queer individuals. One of those stories is based on the personal experience of our team member Siva who was also invited as a special guest for the book release in Coimbatore⁸. Overall, although significant challenges continue to exist and there is a long way to go, we are already seeing more inclusive and sensitive reporting about LGBTIQ+, especially, in the vernacular media.

Donor: AJWS

Primary stakeholders / Beneficiaries: Social workers, Community leaders, LGBTIQ+ community members and their partners and family members, sex workers

⁴ https://www.instagram.com/p/Cpp9n4YPg_Y/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y%3D&img_index=1

⁵ http://www.stationeryprinting.tn.gov.in/gazette/2022/7_III_1a.pdf

⁶ <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/26134676/>

⁷ <https://thamizhbooks.com/product/kairathi-377/>

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEn1eF2sG9s>

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Medical camp at Perumbakkam Housing board: SIAAP collaborated with SIMS Hospital, Chettinad Hospital, and Vels Dental College for a medical camp at Perumbakkam Housing Board on September 3rd, 2022. The primary focus was understanding the nutritional needs of children enrolled in SIAAP's Malargal Program. A team of 40 staff members, including doctors, nurses, technicians, and mental health professionals, conducted various health assessments. Nurses from SIMS Hospital and Medavakkam PHC managed registrations, measurements, and vital checks. Following this, mental health professionals administered a brief questionnaire, after which children consulted paediatricians and ENT specialists. Dental and ophthalmology teams then screened their teeth and eyes respectively. A blood test assessing thyroid, RBCs, WBCs, platelet count, and vitamin deficiencies followed, and children and parents received government hospital medications based on their needs. Although the camp aimed to screen 200 children, only 90 utilized the services. Subsequently, 6 children needed vaccination support referred to Chettinad Hospital's Paediatric ward, 20 were directed to the hospital's ophthalmology department, and 47 were referred to Vels Dental College for oral health concerns. Shockingly, only 5 out of 80 blood samples indicated healthy nutrient levels. Upon receiving referrals and results, children were accompanied to the necessary services for further treatment or nutrient supplement collection based on their requirements.

Awareness programme on Sexual violence among Children and Adolescents: On March 29, 2023, an awareness campaign addressing "Sexual Violence among children and adolescents" took place in Perumbakkam, Chennai. The collaborative effort involved Malarkal Thittam, the Community Development Wing, and NSS students from Perumbakkam Arts and Science College. The campaign spanned various blocks in the locality, welcoming the public to join and partake in the awareness drive. College students orchestrated a street play highlighting sexual violence, reporting protocols, the importance of parental support, and the role of child protection entities. The campaign resonated strongly, involving over 100 children, adolescents, and community members who actively engaged in the program. The culmination of the initiative featured an appreciative address by Mr. Darwin Moses from the Community Development Wing and a vote of thanks from Mr. Raju, SIAAP consultant. Recognizing their outstanding contributions to this impactful campaign, participating students received certificates during their college's Annual Day celebration.

Vadamalar board meeting and Pride March: The Vadamalar Federation board convened on June 25th and 26th, 2022, at Adayar Youth Hostel. The meeting's objectives included strategizing for capacity building among sex worker collectives, formalizing an MOU between SIAAP and Vadamalar, and outlining priority activities for strengthening Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), particularly focusing on sexual and reproductive health, mental health, and emerging needs in the context of COVID-19. Discussions also revolved around confirming budgets for these prioritized activities. A total of 17 members from the federation and various CBOs actively participated in the two-day session, facilitated by Dr. Shyamala Natraj and Dr. Swaminathan. The second day also involved preparations for the Pride March '22. Following the meeting's conclusion, all Vadamalar Federation members and SIAAP staff joined the Pride March held in Chennai.

Vadamalar board meeting: The Vadamalar board meetings took place on October 28th–30th, 2022, in Madurai, and on November 10th, 2022, in Chennai. The primary focus of these meetings was to review the activities undertaken by the federation since the previous board meeting. Additionally, discussions centered around the upcoming Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (GFATM) social entitlement project and the Community-Based Organization (CBO) strengthening project. The

meetings aimed to explore the potential involvement of federation members in these projects and assess their interest in taking up these initiatives. A total of 20 and 21 participants participated in the respective meetings.