

Achievements, Challenges and Changes Summary Pushpa Achanta – June 2018

This report summarizes Achievements, Learning, Challenges and individual and collective stories of change in Me and My World (Andhra Pradesh), Uttara Karnataka Mahila Okkuta, (Karnataka), Karnataka Sex Workers Union and Vadamalar (Tamil Nadu) federations between June 2017 and May 2018.

1. Me and My World / WINS

NADO Meet, Bangalore, January 2018

Achievements

- Dignity and choice were well debated.
- Participants (not associated with sex work/ers) declared that they should not opine whether sex work is dignified or not.
- As the discussions and debates were inconclusive, NADO plans to continue the conversation.

Cross movement dialogue by NAPM, PAIRVI and CFA, Hyderabad, January 2018

Learning

- Insights into social reform movement
- Arguments about choice and rights
- Fighting discrimination in public sphere
- Protesting societal violence against Sex workers as a right
- Link between deprivations of Dalit women leading to sex work and sexuality rights issues
- Progress Sex workers made in courts – how soliciting section was removed from law?
- Arguments favouring accepting sex work as work
- Exploitation as per Karl Marx and resisting it
- Inequality and exploitation clarified
- Other professionals derive dignity from their performance. As sex work is physically and mentally stressful, how will they substantiate “dignity”
- Identity issues
- Sex workers choosing discontinuing sex work

Achievements

- Awareness creation though done sincerely, is polarised, because of politicians. Only when the party is sitting on opposition they extend their support to people’s struggle. Nevertheless, they express solidarity if people resist.
- People’s movements resist mega energy projects, Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu set an example of opposing nuclear plants - they shared their success stories through video clippings, triggering people’s interest.
- Community members gathered information and tips about strengthening people’s struggles against ‘developmental’ projects.

Learning

- Social media publicizes people's sustained struggles. Mutual support and solidarity conveys hope to the leaders.
- Eloquent speakers said, "Energy is not sustainable, society is"
- Environmentalists emphasized that unlike money, extra energy cannot be printed, but must be sourced alternatively or used judiciously.
- People's power can overthrow MNC's. Tribals ousting Vedanta in Odisha inspired many activists.

Meeting on Violence Against Women (SexWorkers), Chittoor District, January 2018

Instances

Community described police violence against them. They specified that East police station staff are brutally beating them and that police exercise torture in CI's chamber frequently and sometimes in the verandah. Group assumes that the CC cameras installed might not be working or police might switch them off while giving the so called *treatment*. They specified a constable named Venkatesh and another female constable were ruthless and lead this brutality.

Community women revealed that police coerce auto drivers to be informers to catch them effortlessly and sometimes police make the auto drivers insert needles into the fingertips of arrested women. Many of them said that police sexually abuse them, loot their money and register cases against them.

Suvarna asked why police harassing only them while TG people who also do sex work and cause public nuisance, pickpockets and murderers are free?

Learning

Ramu advised community members to fight jointly and effectively against their issues. He mentioned the need for training within the community on procedures to follow when they face police violence. MLC procedure was explained.

Community members concurred, "whether we fight back or not, the police harass the community; so let's be courageous to show resilience against the unlawful violence against us". Only their resolve to fight for their rights will enable WINS to join the fight and extend necessary legal support. They must be prepared to oppose police violence publicly at any meeting. Silence, fearing false cases continues the sad saga of violence. Collecting evidences of violence is essential. WINS trained the community to use their phones to audio/video record evidences.

WINS explained the police arrest procedure. They feared the illegal police procedures follow -they blackmail to uncover whereabouts of other women, torture them and threaten false and severe cases against them. Police treatment of community in stations is miserable: they are denied drinking water and restroom access. WINS convinced them to highlight all police misdeeds before influential officials like magistrate/judge and police department seniors.

Kalpna, CBO president complained judicial prejudice against them. She said that when a community woman challenged the allegation in a case hearing, the judge remarked, "I know all about you people and your nuisance" and imposed fine and imprisonment. She mentioned that police ask them, "do you share your earnings with WINS?" Police questioned them after WINS visited a police station if WINS takes money from them.

WINS explained the benefits of collectivization, illustrated NNSW's achievements as a strong collective and explained the need for regular gatherings and meetings within the community. WINS advised not to include non-community members in meetings to show strength and will contact lawyers for help to fight against violence.

Each of them vowed to meet minimum ten other community women to inform about the upcoming meeting and collect information. WINS also explained the importance and benefits of social media in uniting the community and being regularly connected with each other and the need to solicit more support from other social groups in fighting this injustice.

Conclusions/Action Points

- Advocacy with Police
- If police does not respond to community's issues, WINS will organize a meeting with District Judge Ramgopal immediately.

CBO members must prepare community to openly highlight their violent experiences with police and collect more evidences about them.

Meeting with District Judge against Police violence, Tirupati, February 2018

Some grievances shared are:

- Police drag them to the police station forcibly whenever they are found publicly
- Mayuri (name changed) said agonizingly that a constable visited her house around midnight to force her to the police station as police knew her house. And showed her a video where a woman was with a man murdered a few days prior, indicating that she is being suspected and this comprised investigation. She was asked to identify a woman suspected of that murder. On requesting leave due to a recent surgery she was left only after showing surgery evidences by undressing immediately. She said that the police modus operandi includes pounding local auto drivers until they reveal a sex worker's name and house. Auto drivers comply to escape from police bludgeoning.
- Karuna (name changed) said that when she was arrested a few days prior, constables tortured her by inserting needles under her fingernails.
- A pregnant woman was arrested for 10 days, electrocuted and nearly had theft cases lodged against her
- Sujatha (name changed) said she witnessed an episode at East police station, Tirupati where a girl was knelt on the floor with sand sparsely spread on it. Though she cried and yelled in pain, the police was merciless.
- Another woman said that a constable brutally kicked her face when she was caught in a case. He was cruel to her as she denied him sex previously and asked why she refused him while she had sex with the SI.
- Another woman grimaced as she recalled police hitting a disabled community woman on her leg.
- Another woman, who migrated from West Godavari district, said in distress that after her first arrest, police habitually beat her on her back whenever and wherever she is visible, irrespective of what she does. "I am very scared to leave home. They beat and abuse us orally. I dare not accompany my children for their festival shopping", she cried.
- A few revealed that police harass them even if they change professions. They said that a few women constables are worse than men in torturing them and police turn the CCTV cameras off before torturing them in police stations

- Sex workers contribute immensely to HIV control, the base of the HIV Program; but they were never appreciated for it. The community needs more support in securing their rights and to allow them to prosper in their lives.
- WINS Secretary, Ms. Meera and Program Manager, Ramu said SP, DySP, Tirupati and CI Tirupati East, responded adversely when WINS approached them to discuss the issue.

Below are a few police responses/comments:

- The police prioritizes pilgrims' rights, not the sex workers'
- We will discuss further only if you show us anything legal supporting '*this*' profession
- We have video evidence of some of "these" women doing thefts and robberies
- The S.P. has instructed the police to take severe action against sex workers
- Police are receiving many WhatsApp complaints against these women's activities in and around bus stand and railway stations
- We are not harassing them, everything is lawful. They must leave '*this*' work and go, choosing some '*decent work*'
- The CI said, "do not call or approach me to discuss this. They are increasing crime rate - there was a murder case due to these women. I spare none; they must leave, otherwise I will book non-bailable cases against them
- Client demand reduction was discussed in High level meeting at the Secretariat. They presented their statement that punishing clients will further harm Sexworkers and not help nab traffickers.
- Police Action on Sexworkers is highly unpredictable. Sometimes they lie low, when they prioritize other crimes. They would arrest them and book cases and when a senior Police officer is strict, they even use third degree treatment to drive street walkers away.
- Members shared Police action on Sexworkers. They break the law and connive with outlaws to torture Sexworkers. Here IPC section 370(A) was also discussed. This section gives them a moral high ground to detain clients and extort money from them. This directly impacts Sexworkers. Either the client will stop visiting the sexworker or extract cash from her, when police hassles him or divert the police to take a bribe from sexworker so that he is free.

ITPA is silent on sexwork - it is not illegal, but all activities around sexwork are criminalised. So how should communities mobilise themselves for decriminalisation?

Achievements/Highlights

"Poverty, unemployment due to mechanization and automation, deception, workplace sexual harassment" are among reasons for us to choose sex work, which the police know. Sadly, police harass voluntary sex workers without addressing the root causes. If police considers sex work illegal and unethical, is police having free sex with sex workers and robbing them, ethical/legal?

Police generally considers sex workers as trafficking and exploitation victims, then as law-enforcers how do they criminalize victims? Criminalized sex workers need money to handle the cases against them forcing them to increase sex work. This encourages sex work indirectly.

Ms. Ushakiran, a lawyer, revealed hearing of police looting money from sex workers. "You must be outspoken and fight back to solve their issues", she advised. She explained a case where she tried exposing a policeman to the ACB for demanding money from a few sex workers, but those women withdrew in fear.

Ms. Alivelu, board member, Me and My World, A.P. Network, disclosed witnessing an incident where male constables brutally hit a pregnant lady and when she questioned it, they callously said she was involved in theft cases along with two men. "People appreciate the police if they legitimately control criminals indulging in illegalities, she added. It is inhuman and pointless to harass the poor, marginalized and people living dangerously", she continued.

Chief guest and speaker, Sri Ramgopal, condemned the police brutality after hearing all community members. He said, constitutionally, Prostitution is not criminal but relevant aspects are considered crimes and punishable. He said torturing criminals is unlawful and he will register cases if any of them gives written complaints and bring justice to victims. He stated that producing an accused in court within 24 hours of arrest is mandatory. As per recent legislative amendments, women cannot be taken to a police station before sunrise or after sunset. During emergencies, accused women can be interrogated at their homes only, with women police presence. Law prohibits inhuman investigations through beating. He also assured that he will warn higher officials about this.

He advised all community women to care for their health by using condoms, consulting doctors regularly and test for HIV. He assured support in securing ration and Aadhar cards and in utilizing other government schemes for women. He encouraged all to benefit from government schemes like 35 kilos rice monthly for white ration card holders. He also warned them about professional hazards like HIV and impact on their children.

WINS assured support to fight if they have photographic or other evidence.

Later the community women discussed the need for monthly meetings to share their issues devise a follow-up and accountability structure.

State level networking meeting at WINS head office, Tirupati, February 2018

Learning

Evidence based advocacy produces desired results. CBO's are helping children to return home, after long conversations with them.

Each member can describe exploitation insightfully and demystify trafficking and sexwork. Many members would benefit, live guilt-free lives, develop and deepen their agency.

Each peer/participant understood the value of communications and associated responsibilities. What will they tell a new woman at their site who wants to enter sexwork? She will be warned of police action, how they foist false charges on them, rowdies, roguish behaviour of auto drivers, and the wrath, discrimination, they face from mainstream society.

Each member listed their CBO's achievements. We can proudly recall that 2-3 CBO's received awards for their outstanding performance, in Delhi. They are part of NAZ foundation and International Habitat foundation has appreciated their work. Some of them struggled and acquired house site deeds for members. Some have written songs and sang well. One of the members is active in all work related to children. She received death threats during her work, but was brave.

Achievements

Active team members from each CBO formed a group and willingly supported community women without expectations. Value based networking was introduced and members agreed to follow it.

Some women initially hesitant to consent for photographs to be published in social media, later gave full and informed consent, which evolved from actively participating in the sessions.

Each group committed their active participation and immediate response for the community issues, especially for the advocacy issues. Community members understood the inherent hidden issues and gaps between sex workers and TG communities.

The perception changed because of strong TG leadership (Ms. Sameera, formerly of WINS) who articulated the concerns practically. Now, Me and My world CBO's are prepared to listen and work alongside TG Movement for their common good.

Conclusions

- Sexworker must be supported to address their needs.
- Women were advised to avoid open locations, where they are assaulted and perpetrators easily escape.
- Implementation of SC panel recommendation must be tracked. AHTU should house Sexworkers as equal partners to reduce trafficking.
- Raising awareness about all forms of labour exploitation can change public perception on sexwork.

Meeting with activists, Chittoor district, April 2018

Achievements

- Free and frank discussions to raise awareness and change public perception brought desired impact.
- Small groups discussions during closed door session, helped allay their fears. They shared their dreams and aspirations, which can be realized through the network meetings.
- Referral linkages with activists.
- Sensitivity increased during interaction session with Sexworkers.
- Volunteered to participate in AHTU events to end abuse and exploitation.
- Promised to rehabilitate willing women

Learning

AHTU on ground is not upfront to tackle trafficking entirely. Strategic ties with frontline workers, can reduce their nightmare of handling victims alone. Periodic review and re strategising should be mandated, with direct outreach agencies. Analysing situations leads to meaningful dialogues and creates pathways for housing solutions. Planning village level discussions, developing programmatic support around housing and linking them with the resources is essential. Sexworkers survive despite government rehabilitation scheme, as coordinated victim service is absent.

Conclusions

Moralistic thinking slowly changes, after direct arguments and counter arguments. All participants condemned police violence on Sexworkers. Consultation with affected communities by high level committee produces huge impact. Multi-disciplinary task force alone can act as they know the goals of trafficking and vision of women's equality.

Preparatory Meeting for secretariat meeting, Guntur, April 2018

Achievements/Discussion Highlights

People's movements and their struggles were well received. Affected communities explaining the success of HIV movement is an example. Sexworkers designed condom promotion strategies which was unique, even before "AVAHAN"

CBO's can function on any issue they like. They are not considering sustaining their effort and most CBO's wonder what will happen after HIV prevention and care programs. As there is therapy for HIV, will they close their CBO?

Have you planned for your old age? What services can your CBO do? What are you doing to enhance your leadership skills?

They may access government pensions. How can one activate CBO on this count? CBOs have been working for the past ten years; have learnt nothing other than HIV related services. We are stuck and we have not moved an inch from there.

Guntur CBO was involved in Plan/Swasti supported anti-trafficking work. Participants did not disclose if they have seen trafficking victims and what they can do with.

In CBO's issues in counselling partners, postponing children's weddings are addressed.

Learning

- How sexwork is silent about activities surrounding sexwork, Joint effort can reform laws.
- Beyond HIV, there is a wide world. As CBO's are all registered under Society Registration Act, capacities grow and you can remain in this service domain, provided you all stay together.

Conclusions

Knowledge is primary, thinking will inculcate leadership and you can be together. It is not merely linked to funding. If you can gather in one place, we (me and my world) can spread information, knowledge and skills. If you desire, we can be with you. Thinking, working methods and strategies can unite you all.

Networking will reduce vulnerabilities. Rights and Rehabilitation can be discussed in collectives. Community based skill development could work well.

Region level Capacity building on updates of trafficking issues, Vizianagaram, April 2018

Achievements

- New CBOs from Vishakhapatnam district expressed interest to join network.
- Formed team willing to work for the community without any expectations.
- Community women can identify their training needs to address their regional community issues.
- Participants would like to continue in network with unity.
- Everybody understood the need of second level leadership trainings.
- Members agreed to participate in creating audio visual material planned for the upcoming month.
- Community leaders can conduct the session themselves.

Learning

- The terms ITPA, consensual adult sex, consent, sex work and sex worker, exploitation, voluntary, brothel, third party, etc. were discussed and participants could explain their meanings when the session ended.
- Community understood trafficking issues, gravity of human trafficking and how it is being diluted and diverted by clubbing sex worker's issues.
- Participants discussed well and could distinguish exploitative practices.

2. Samraksha / UKMO

Training on Leadership and Women Rights, Koppal, July 2017

Learning

Good leaders should have vision, courage, integrity, humility and focus and ability to plan strategically and catalyze cooperation amongst their communities. She should:

- Have concern about our community.
- Respond in a timely manner.
- Know our feelings and respect them.
- Be from the grassroots.
- Address our crises.
- Respect everyone.
- Know about our problems.
- Represent our community in all forums.
- Know how to handle government departments.
- Have networking skills.

Board/CBO Meet, August 2017

Common Problems

Perspectives of men about our community are bad, a few men blackmail us. We face financial and shelter problems, are politically weak and lack religious support. At home we face problems from our husband, mother in law and other family members

Obstacles

Corruption in all government departments, police harassment, societal perspectives about our community, problems from relatives, neighbours, Women can't lead her life alone because of this narrow sight of society, Harassments from partner and husband regularly, Problem from house owner.

Learning

- Accessing government services, right to: live, express, participate, education.
- Right to: have family, protection, law, question (government, etc). We have equal rights as men in India,

Collectivization Training, Hampi, September 2017

Learning

- Being a collective, we should think overall
- We should build our women's self-esteem and self-respect.
- We should practise confidentiality
- We should share our responsibilities among ourselves
- We should document women's problems.
- Creating awareness about women for various departments.
- Thorough advocacy we can change society's perspective towards women in sexwork
- Increasing knowledge of women in sexwork about Law and Rights through training.
- Creating awareness about social entitlements.
- Legal literacy

- How self-confidence and action helps social change.
- Developing capacity of women to plan their children's life
- Criminal Law Amendment Ordinance 2013 on rape
- Fundamental rights and duties.
- Differences between community mobilization and collectivization.
- Myths about sex work.
- Nirbhaya case
- How all we fight for rights, jointly
- About government prioritizing women.

Volunteers Trainings on Leadership and Women's Rights, Haveri, September 2017

Learning

- We should talk openly during training.
- Each and every woman should know their CBO's goal and objectives.
- They should know the importance of CBOs in women's lives.
- Leaders should respond to every community member's needs and support them
- Leaders should not be dictators
- Leader should be concerned about the community

On attaining goals:

- Individuals can attain goals but all cannot reached quickly.
- With no plan, a group cannot attain goals
- Together we should find solutions for our tasks - we can apply this to our collectives too
- Collectively, we should plan to reach our organizations goal too.
- We see how best we can support other women to reach the goal
- Supporting each other in collective is vital.
- Building courage in our women is important to feel they own their CBO

While meeting government officers:

- We should go with clear information.
- Our goal should be specific
- We should communicate with DC clearly, slowly and 1 point after another
- Each person should speak
- We should plan perfectly before meeting officers

Collectivization and Communication Training for leaders, Gadag, November 2017

Learning

Group was asked to discuss points below and reflect on the word "sexwork":

1. Why do we say sexwork is also work?
2. Why this profession is called sexwork
3. Is "work" used for any work an individual does?

Reflection on question 1: All of us entered sexwork due to personal problems/crisis. CBO's are registered for the welfare of women like us. Sharing our problems gives us solutions and satisfaction that somebody hears our problems.

Reflection on question 2: Our profession is called sexwork, as we practise sexwork. Like being a doctor is a profession. Profession are named as per the nature of work. Our concern is that discrimination is high for our profession.

Reflection on question 3: Sexwork has many names. We should not feel bad/ashamed to call ourselves sexworkers. We should respect our profession and pride it like any other profession. Earlier, society was disrespecting us. Hence we also felt this work was bad, we are cursed and even God will not forgive us for doing sexwork. First, we should learn to respect our work then society will change its perspective on sexwork, accept and respect us.

Is confidentiality important for sexworkers and why? How the law responds to this: Confidentiality is a major issue for sexworkers, The government is enforcing a rehabilitation program for sexworkers. One can avail the facility and can practice sexwork for their livelihood. Although many women are ready to accept sexwork is work, many cannot share openly.

Answering the question “Is practicing sexwork right/wrong, around 99%” of the women termed it wrong. The trainer explained ITPA briefly, need for group to unite as network to make the policy makers to understand sexworkers’ rights and that ITPA should accommodate them.

Group was briefed on UKMO activities, why it was formed and those involved in the federation and how many women have registered under UKMO. Highlighted that a primary activity of UKMO is sensitizing all UKMO district members on ITPA. The Act states that girls below 18 years entering/practicing sexwork is unlawful and wrong. Women above 18 are considered majors and have rights to choose their profession. A few women shared their experience before and after entering sexwork.

Trainer shared how Russia planned to increase its productivity by growing a crop jointly. As a group, people shared work, cost and learnt to overcome challenges in growing crops and planned joint management. Hence they saw the strength of the group. Also discussed Lokpal, Nirbhaya committee and One Billion Rising program in Bangalore where Samraksha, UKMO, other NGO’s and CBO’s participated.

State level meeting with government officials on ‘International Rights of Sex Workers’ and sensitizing them on ‘Sex Work is Work’, Koppal, December 2017

Challenges

- Some guests on stage had old perception of sex workers, not many know the national policies on sex workers’ issues.
- Some guests highlighted exploitation and believe that government schemes should help them leave sex work and they all should have alternate jobs/rehabilitation
- Difficult to reach young women in sex work as they mostly contact clients through mobile

UKMO Board meeting cum AGM, Koppal, December 2017

Issues: Due to poor co-ordination and co-operation from the UKMO board members and no funds, UKMO could not do AGM for last 3 years and same board/office bearers were continuing.

Challenges: Finalizing suitable time for all members from 5 districts for the board meeting cum AGM

SAWF program Review, Pune, December 2017

Challenges: 5 CBOs have much dilemma and confusion about bringing people to the CBO. They lack coordination. We often given them training notice three months prior but still they are unresponsive. Only 60 of the 75 women participated in our communication training and food was wasted.

Tharas Group State Level Networking meeting with CBO's, Dharwad, December 2017

Challenges: Transparency in fundraising for CBO's

Participants' feedback after 3 trainings over past 6 months, Haveri, February 2018

1. **Nirmala:** Initially, I was uninterested in this training. Actually I skipped the recruitment day, Have undergone many trainings from different sources, I presumed knowing this training content. After attending 3 trainings and especially after watching video of Sharavathi (another participant from Utrara Kannada) and her achievements I was motivated and inspired emulate her. Now, I am an outreach worker in HIV targeted intervention program and responsible for managing 2 taluks. I can manage field issues more courageously and confidently.

Communication training: practicing communication and speaking skills has increased my confidence, changed my attitude and softened my tone with field level women. Earlier I would raise my voice and shout at them for small issues. Due to this women were not respecting me. Now I have gained respect from field level women and leant how to behave in each circumstance. During the training, I was told that I was not serious and always joking at others and laughing for everything. This feedback helped me to be serious wherever needed.

2. **Shantha:** My experience is working as "ASHA" although I am in sexwork. I was not comfortable to accept being a sexworker and hesitated to enter this office. Video of Nirbhaya changed my view. After watching the video, I felt because she was from general community she got much support from people across India. As a sexworker, I face much violence every day. So, I thought joining a CBO would help in a crisis as this group would support.

I decided to accept being a sexworker, I was impressed by the way other participants discussed issues and are ready to support women in crisis. I will organize a meeting in my village and want UKMO /Spandana representative to address the group.

Before the training I never travelled alone anywhere. Now I confidently travel alone. Recently I travelled alone to Bangalore to attend customer care interview (to make calls for online purchase) and returned the same day. I got selected and now I have an additional job.

Many of us take clients home and many times, entertained them before our children. I knew we should not do that, but due to poor negotiation skills and diffidence I took clients home

3. **Fairoz:** Happy to participate in this training program. I got an opportunity to travel to other districts and meet other women. I belong to a muslim community and hesitated to disclose that I practice sexwork, I was always under burkha. Now I reach many Muslim women in sexwork and do not wear burkha. My daughter is doing her higher studies - I want her to study well and get a good job.

Monthly CBO board meeting, February 2018

Challenges

The current board was facing some interpersonal issues from previous board members. This created many problems for the field staff and program was not getting timely payments.

Resolution

Board members requested UKMO representative to join the meeting, resolve misunderstanding between members and drafted timeline to resolve the issues.

Meeting with Manager SIDBI Bank, fund raising for UKMO training activity, Bangalore, February 2018

Challenges: UKMO needs resources but as a federation must renew the registration and apply for 12A & 80G immediately to get funds directly into its bank account

Monthly Management Review of Targeted Intervention Program, Uttara Kannada, March 2018

Issues: Sex workers and peer educators are harassed in brothels and raids are happening in the area

Challenges

- Strategy to support sexworkers and peer educators needed
- Targeted Intervention Program Team is not receiving money on time.
- Harassment and frequent raids are constraining the team from reaching women.

Feedback from participants on anti-trafficking bill training, Bangalore, April-May 2018

1. Durgashakti – Davangere
 2. Belaku Mahila Sangha – Dharwad
 3. Shakti Mahila Sangha – Gokhak
 4. JJMS – Bellary
 5. Soukhya Samudaya Sangha – Chitradurga
 6. 8 people from UKMO – CBO
- **Lalitha, Shakti Mahila Sangha, Gokhak:** Training was very informative and trainers made simplified understanding through group discussion and repetition. Although, KHPT had trained us in many issues including trafficking, I did not understand completely. Glad UKMO invited us to participate. Now we can confidently return and train many women from our group. We are running 4 TI's - this information will help the field team
 - Remaining members also echoed Lalitha's views. Many of them want to organize a group for the training and request NNSW representatives to execute it
 - Majority expressed that group discussion/work gave much clarity on the bill
 - Many shared that they had heard of NNSW, but its growth from state level to national level was unknown. Kiran's work at Delhi office was very inspiring
 - New CBO's were also impressed with how meetings were organized and community members facilitated them largely
 - CBO's of Gokhak , Ballary, Chitradurga and Davangere registered with NNSW

4. SIAAP / VADAMALAR Federation

Meet to strengthen women's group, Gingee, June 2017

Issues: Harassment by auto drivers

Achievements/Learnings

- Women expressed that they had to be together
- Different opinions among themselves had to get away
- Most felt that sex work is work

Challenges: Bringing women together on time was a challenge

CEDAW Orientation, Supreme court recommendations Panel discussion, LGBT and Female sex workers, Chennai, June 2017

Issues

- Sex workers are unaware of their rights as sex workers
- Women at the panel discussion said that the police often ill treat them. A lady observed that though this was discussed it happens to women entering the profession.
- Women mentioned police stamping them on the stomach. This group bears immense violence. A lady named the policeman and asked us to talk to him - SIAAP will handle this.

Achievements/Learning

- Introduction to CEDAW - a new learning for our women. Important points which women must know will be discussed in small groups when we mobilize our women in Tamil Nadu
- Introduction to sex workers' rights was new to many at the panel discussion.
- Women want to discuss Rights of Sexworkers in their respective districts
- A few women who were silent in closed door meetings shared their experiences.
- A few shared that they entered sex work due to family situation but now claim sex work as their profession because sex work has fed their family when their own kith and kin refused help during their hardships.
- Female sex workers participated in the LGBT Pride March held in Chennai, a first for Tamil Nadu.

Meet on mobilization and challenges Chennai, July 2017

30 sex workers from Villupuram, Nagapattinam and Thiruvananthapuram met

Issues

- Police harass sex workers in Thiruvananthapuram
- Auto drivers, lodge workers, home guards exploit sex workers but NGOs and CBOs do not work for/with them in Villupuram
- Police arrest sex workers under false cases and allegations and women pay fine for release
- Nagapattinam: Police get money from rowdies and release them. Rowdies exploit women through free sex and harass sex workers and transpersons' groups. Police do not arrest rowdies. Women face partner violence and those in sex work without their family knowledge struggle to continue as sex workers once arrested or harassed by rowdies. Police whip them brutally

Achievements/Learning

- Women showed interested and expressed their difficulties
- They acknowledge sex work as their profession since it provides them livelihood.
- Women need an organization which could build their capacity to approach police or senior officials
- They want an NGO willing to hear them and act wherever possible

Discussion on Mobilizing women – Kargalakudi, Dindigul, Chennai, Madurai, August 2017

Challenges/Learning

- Mobilizing women in Chennai is continuously failing. Women either ask for money or are uninterested in relying on an NGO, said women at various meetings in/around Chennai. They are willing to work as peers but uninterested in knowing the latest developments.
- Our Vadamalar office is in Kargalakudi, 2 hours away from Madurai. The women in Kargalakudi join meetings regularly while women from other parts of Madurai are reluctant to attend meetings due to distance. We are unable to rent office space in Madurai for sex workers. However, Vadamalar is initiating efforts to rent space without disturbing Kargalakudi women
- We had a meeting at Dindigul but women are hardly interested. We visited each house and invited them to the meeting. We have kept Dindigul pending.
- Kargalakudi women have close relationship with the Collector, police officers and politicians. Women face no difficulties and if required, they easily access all top officials.

Role of Vadamalar federation and SIAAP in mobilizing, Chennai, September 2017

Achievements/Learning

- All were clear they do not need brokers despite facing many issues. They need only women who rent their houses for sex work.
- They felt that this law opposes trafficking
- It's a law applies for trafficked sex workers as well as for the voluntary sex workers
- Women are filed false cases by the Police
- Without warrant one can get arrested (though they must not be)
- The law is against one rights (as police ignores though they should not)
- If Police beats we can file a case against the Police Personnel
- They understood general problem of a women

SIAAP, NNSW and Vadamalar activities discussion, October 2017, Thiruvanamalai

Challenges

- No cooperation among women in Thiruvanamalai.
- Many are becoming drug addicts and fight publicly. Police immediately whip women.
- Women themselves invite problems particularly in bus stands.
- Women felt that absence of a group or Sangam is disadvantageous.
- Women said that HIV positive women are not getting timely medicines but none represents these difficulties. There is no connection between TI program and women.
- Getting elders' pension and other social entitlements is difficult for sex worker as they lack have a permanent address proof.
- Older women face issues from neighbours, acquaintance, police and rowdies.

Achievements/Learning

Though women are knowledgeable, they cannot overcome police and rowdy pressure. Women feel that though they complain against rowdy harassment, the police disrespect them because they are sex workers. Therefore sex workers are caught between the police and the rowdies.

This group felt that they need brokers as:

- They get timely food
- They are safer
- They get regular business
- They get money in emergencies

Monthly meet, Chennai, November 2017

Achievements/Learning

- Women are more confident.
- They want their children to study and be musicians, artists or sportspersons. They want us to link them to sources where their children can progress.
- They have a savings scheme system initiated by Sudaroli and are doing well.
- Minimal police or rowdy problem as many do sex work elsewhere. Their main occupation is selling fish.
- Women know condom usage and health issues – Sudaroli (local CBO) is their immediate support system
- We must prioritize social entitlements and health over police sensitization.

Challenges

- Many have not identified themselves as sex workers in their area. This disadvantages a few sex workers as someone knowing them disclosed their identity to neighbours during a mutual conflict. The sex workers are worried and do not fight with their neighbours.
- Several incidents affected sex workers' children. In one conflict a sex worker's child learnt that the mother is a sex worker and stopped talking with the mother - a situation sex workers want to avoid.
- Many have relocated here from other parts of the city.
- During a survey we learnt that they have bank accounts and want to open another account in the same bank which was impossible. We advised them to transfer their accounts (where?) which is underway.
- ITPA was understood but they were more interested in property rights.
- They are/were married but were unaware that their husband was already married and do not get their husband's property.
- Parents deny them property share as they are sex workers
- Women know importance of healthcare but neglect it as they must financially support their family.

Villupuram, Thiruvannamalai and Chennai, January 2018

Achievements/Learning

- In Chennai, unemployment also exists. Women are willing to work and their husbands stay home. Women are interested in tailoring. They want us to introduce them to any free centre and also get tailoring machines. They are in sex work with minimal issues, their income source is fishmongering and they are interested to increase their income by acquiring skills. Vadamar and SIAAP are building rapport. This group now interacts with TI's.

- Women in Thiruvananthapuram counter the police with our support. There are strong women doing advocacy and inform sex workers to behave decently publicly. In our meeting we saw different groups with various styles of functioning as sex workers. Our meeting happened in the bus stand. Some of them greeted policemen. We observed the rapport created. There are a few women who are new whom the older women advised that our behaviour can change others. It was a nice interaction. The older women also spoke about ITPA to the newer women. This group is a strong group which is considering registering as a Sangam.
- Villupuram women are minimally interested in us handling the lodge owners because they need continuous business and accept exploitation if they get their daily earning.
- A few Thiruvananthapuram women want to file case against the police but worry that the case will be active for long which would affect their families. They want us to talk with policemen.

Challenges: The Villupuram group has issues but are not resolving them. They are comfortable by themselves and do not want to get disturbed. We are letting them be.

5. Sangama / Karnataka Sex Workers Union

Outcome of Members' Meetings

Members offer each other emotional and social support, spending time with each other, sharing food and housing with each other, assisting each other with childcare or in accessing health care, or advising each other on clients. This emotional support assumes special significance for sex workers as they often lack other support systems. It also serves as a supportive, non-judgmental space.

Sex workers reiterated their individual journeys toward greater courage to speak out against violations they face on a day-to-day basis through their work with Union.

Training outcomes

Individual journeys toward greater courage to speak out about social, legal, and political issues

Specific Instances

Between June 2017 and May 2018, community members have participated in capacity building workshops at district level on writing skills, ITPA, Micro Credit, feminism, the anti-trafficking Bill and overall legal awareness. This enhanced the self-esteem, self-reliance and legal familiarity of community members.

Case Studies

January 2018: In Vijayapura, 2 community members had a mutual dispute which other community members resolved. This was a first and was possible as community members participated in workshops on feminist principles and women's rights in June 2017 which enhanced their perspectives and belief in the need for community based internal conflict resolution.

February 2018: In Vijayapura, a community member was facing domestic violence from her husband and his sister. When the survivor called a community leader based in Bangalore early one morning seeking support the latter counseled and assured her of the community's support. The community leader from Bangalore contacted a local community member later that morning and requested her to accompany the survivor to the police station to lodge a complaint. An FIR was registered but the perpetrators had absconded. Due to follow up by the survivor and community members, the police found the perpetrators a week later, summoned and warned them to stop the violence. Though the perpetrators requested withdrawal of the complaint, community members advised against it. Apparently, the couple reunited and while the husband's sister has left their house. The community members could intervene successfully in this case owing to the confidence, strength and awareness that they gained from the legal awareness and women's rights workshops.

In Hassan, a community member was arrested in 2015 from a lodge during a police raid and branded a victim of trafficking. Community members and supporters had intervened to secure her release. 3 years later, she was arrested on the road for failing to appear at court hearings in the relevant case (which police had denied registering during her 2015 arrest). When community members whom she contacted telephonically for support questioned the police, they were informed that a case under the ITPA was registered against the community member for doing sex work. Her father could bail her out as community members protested to the police that their case was invalid under the ITPA. Though the case was not dropped, the community member decided to attend court hearings regularly. This was possible due to community members gaining legal awareness from relevant workshops.

A community member who went to Bidar newly one evening to meet a client was harassed at a bus stop by a few men. Another community member who was present nearby noticed this, intervened, took the new community member to another lady's house for the night, accompanied her to the bus stop next morning and gave her money to return home. The community member who helped could do so as she had gained courage, confidence and awareness from participating in workshops on feminism and women's rights.

March 2018: In Hassan, a community member was the guarantor for another community member who took loan from a bank the previous year. As the borrower had not paid any installment, the guarantor who received a letter from the bank questioned the borrower about the repayment. They had a dispute as the latter refused to pay the loan and the guarantor complained to the local community who advised her to report the issue to the police. The guarantor had a relevant FIR registered against the borrower but the police could not find her as she had relocated elsewhere. However, after follow up by community members, the borrower was traced and taken to the police station where she promised to repay the loan but did not. Soon after, community members reported this situation to the police and the bank. The police suggested that the guarantor could take over the debtor's tea stall with their help and repay the loan from the earnings. This was possible as participation in various workshops, mobilizing community members on various occasions, counseling community members when required and holding leadership positions in the community had enhanced the guarantor's confidence and legal awareness.

April 2018: At a recent meeting of community members, a community union leader who has been mobilizing and counseling peers for the last few years narrated how she reunited with her younger son in Bengaluru 2 months back. She revealed that she had decided to leave her abusive partner after 7 years. This has improved her health and is inspiring survivors of intimate partner violence.

Advocacy/policy Change :

- We have continuously engaged with the Karnataka Private Medical Establishment Act. Karnataka Janarogya Cheluvali had taken the lead. Karnataka has seen a massive growth of the private sector which has neither self-regulated nor allowed any form of government control. This has led to rampant overcharging, denial of patients' rights, negligence, unnecessary procedures and tests. Patients have been over-charged and held to ransom. The cost to life and the burden that private healthcare has imposed on patients has been well documented in India as well as other countries. The government of Karnataka has introduced a bill to regulate the private health sector. Bharathi represented the sex workers in the standing committee and made her presentation.
- Actively participated in the advocacy around the Transgender Bill, Sex Worker collectives came together in condemning the bill and were based in delhi for a week meeting parliamentarians, addressing the media etc. For the first time, you saw the coming together of Sex Worker groups and Trans groups at a national platform

Collective milestones: advocacy, crisis response, work toward social entitlements and gaining strong membership in new districts like Bidar, alliance building with other marginalized groups

Challenges

- The sex workers union has transgender persons and women and both have a different approach to sex work. Those nuances must be analysed, instead of saying we all are united and ignoring the differences. There should be some continuous dialogue and more understanding of everyone with it.
- Barriers to growth: Challenges in attracting and retaining members. Non-members' reasons for not joining the Union, including perceived inattention to Male sex workers
- Power imbalances: Exist between leaders and members. Lack of ownership among members, irregular communication, low fee payment

STATE	NAME OF COLLECTIVE	DISTRICTS REACHED OUT Please provide a list of districts as given in the example of VAMP below	NUMBER OF OLD MEMBERS IN <u>EACH DISTRICT</u>	ANY NEW MEMBERS REACHED OR HAS BEEN PLANNED IN <u>EACH DISTRICT</u> ? PLEASE GIVE APPROX NUMBER	PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF ACTIVITIES DONE – <u>AT THE STATE LEVEL OR AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL OR AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL</u> SINCE JUNE 2017
Karnataka	KSWU	Bangalore Rural Hassan Bidar Yadgir		29 27 30 19	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ITPA Training: Training on the ITPA was conducted for sex workers. The learning objectives were: The ability to explain the basics of what ITPA is in a few sentences to another person. A deeper understanding of 5 sections and The ability to recognize a situation in which a police officer is wrongly detaining a sex worker (and an idea of how to respond) 2. Alliance Building: We have engaged with other rights based movements (women's rights groups, health rights coalitions, labour groups/unions, sexual minority organisations, minority groups etc) through local campaigns, meetings to build a common plank for the articulation of rights and support 3. The Freedom Festival aspires to bring together music, poetry, art and food culture from across the land while we converse about the unsettling pattern of violence. We began the day with a Public Hearing, listening to the testimonies of the violated, interweaving discussion and analysis. This was followed by a feast of tastes from across the country. Sessions of powerful poetry, enthralling music and engaging art ensued. There was also an installation of Poetry written by sex workers. Few of them read out their poetry. This action is of much significance, because for the first time we have a wide range of groups coming together in one platform. 4. We have continuously engaged with the Karnataka Private Medical Establishment Act. Karnataka Janarogya Cheluvalli had taken the lead. Karnataka has seen a massive growth of the private sector which has neither self-regulated nor allowed any form of government control. This has led to rampart overcharging, denial of patients'

					<p>rights, negligence, unnecessary procedures and tests. Patients have been over-charged and held to ransom. The cost to life and the burden that private healthcare has imposed on patients has been well documented in India as well as other countries. The government of Karnataka has introduced a bill to regulate the private health sector. Bharathi represented the sex workers in the standing committee and made her presentation in November 2017</p> <p>Trainings (we had conducted these trainings as part of our SAWF grant, the continuation/follow up of these trainings will be taken forward under this grant)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow-up training on feminist approach was conducted on 30 June and 1 July, 2017 at Bengaluru. 19 sex worker leaders participated, two leaders were not able to come for the follow-up training 2. Workshop on writing skills and Poetry was conducted on 30 July, 2017 at Bangalore. 15 sex worker leaders participated. This workshop was facilitated by Mamta Sagar 3. Labor Training was conducted on 5, 6 and 7 of August 2017 at Bangalore. 14 sex worker leaders participated .This workshop was facilitated by Sebastian Devaraj, Dileep Kamath and Prathiba (old sawf funds used) 4. Media workshop was conducted on 16 and 17 of August, 2017 at Hassan. 27 sex workers participated <p>5. Crisis Intervention and Support: The union provides crisis intervention and support, when a crisis arises</p> <p>6. In October 2017 About twenty marginalized groups gathered this month to discuss our idea of India. All of us shared the rich values of our land encompassing equality despite being surrounded with its many diversities. We also deliberated on the constitutional mandate for the advancement of our country. All of us agreed to put our hearts and minds together for the reclamation of our land to build a nation where the values of love and</p>
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		Hassan	17	<p>nonviolence, diversity in equality, fraternity and social justice merge in reality. A core committee was constituted to further this collective imagination into action. Bharathi is part of the core committee. "Nammellara Bharatha, Our india" with a tag line "<i>Samanyara Bharatha, Samanatheya Bharatha</i>" was the name given to this initiative</p> <p>July 2017, Vijapura The focus of the members meeting was to support in facilitating social entitlements, sharing of the Jaymala Committee Report, Importance of collectivisation, crisis intervention etc .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 new sex workers joined the Union(Bidar.Hassan,Yadgiri and Vijapura) • Two Crises was dealt with relating to trafficking and Murder. After studying the details of the case. Union decided not to support Social Entitlements (Bank account – 2, Aadhar – 1 , Caste Certificate – 10 <p>August 2017 Human Labs Training Nisha and Bharathi were sent to participate in the Human labs training to understand the functioning, dynamics of a group and its behaviours. The training was facilitated by HIDF</p> <p>September 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on ITPA – 14 September,2017 , Bidar One day training was conducted to Sex workers on ITPA. The learning objectives of the Training were: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The ability to explain the basics of what ITPA is in a few sentences to another person 6. A deeper understanding of 5 sections: section 2 (which prohibits anyone "keeping a brothel," and includes under the definition of "brothel" any two sex workers living together for mutual gain), section 4 (which prohibits anyone over 18 living on the earnings of a sex worker), and sections 7, 8, and 10 (7 makes it possible to arrest a sex
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		Vijayapura Bidar		2	<p>worker working 200 meters from any public place , 8 to arrest a sex worker for “soliciting,” and 10 to detain a sex worker arrested under section 7 in a rehabilitation home. However, a 2005 circular from the Inspector General and Director General of Police in Karnataka informs police officers that they should <i>not</i> detain anyone under section 8).</p> <p>3. The ability to recognize a situation in which a police officer is wrongly detaining a sex worker (and an idea of how to respond) The training was facilitated by Bharathi . Sangram’s module on ITPA was the base document for the training. 30 sex workers participated in the training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Meeting – 14 September 2017, Vijapura <p>The focus of the members meeting was to support in facilitating social entitlements, sharing of the objectives /history and the work of NNSW, Induction of new members to the Union</p> <p>During the reporting period,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Entitlements (Loans provided by the government – 20 , Bank account -10 , Income Certificate – 20) • Assassination Of Gowri Lankesh , Union actively took part in mobilisation protest . Planning of events etc) <p>October 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Sex Workers ,Hassan ,29 October,Hassan The focus of the meeting was sharing of the Delhi Meeting, Opening of NNSW Office. 14 sex workers participated • Meeting with Sex Workers ,Vijapura, 5 October,Hassan The focus of this meeting was to facilitate loan applications , Chetana Scheme provided by the Government of Karnataka. Crisis Intervention – Intimate partner Violence <p>November 2017</p> <p>Capacity Building on Gender and Sexuality, Unionisation for sex workers 23 and 24 November, 2017. The training was facilitated by Rajesh . 17 sex workers participated in the training . The focus of the training was on Gender and Sexuality , the connections between sex workers and sexual minorities .</p>
		Vijayapura Bidar			

		Vijayapura Bengaluru		49	<p>The need for unionisation, difference between Organised and Un organised sector</p> <p>14 loan applications were submitted in Bangalore Rural District</p> <p>December 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transgender Bill advocacy in Delhi, Meeting Parliamentarians etc. 15 Sexworkers participated • Mental Health training was provided to 12 sex workers in the month of December,2017 .We regularly conduct monthly Mental Health support group meetings to address issues of mental health <p>January 2018</p> <p>Regular Member Meetings were conducted, social entitlements were provided. The focus of these members is facilitating social entitlements, dealing with crisis. The meets provide a safe space for members to discuss issues, learn negotiation skills. etc. This leads towards active members in the union becoming leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 new sex workers joined the Union (Hassan and Vijapura) • Dealt with issues faced in the Chetana Scheme • Social Entitlements (widow pension 01, referred to hostel 03 at Vijayapura) • One Executive Committee meeting held at Bengaluru • One PMC meeting held at Bengaluru <p>20 members actively participated in Gowri Lankesh solidarity protest</p> <p>February 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Meeting – Vijayapura, 40 members attended • 02 new sex workers joined the Union (Vijayapura) • Three crises were handled at Hassan (by police), Bidar (by public) and Vijayapura (partner) • Social Entitlements (01 Health card, 01 Municipal card and 10 caste
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		Vijayapura Bidar Bengaluru Hassan Kolar			<p>certificate at Vijayapura)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two PMC meeting held at Bengaluru • Training on Micro Credit was conducted to the members 24-27. This training was facilitated by Best Practices Foundation, the training focused on the importance of savings and formation of self help groups, functioning of these groups, rules and regulations etc. • We are part of "Forum to Safeguard Constitution. The forum feels India represents a unique blend of peoples and cultures which have evolved over 5000 years in a constantly changing and dynamic process. This diversity and unique nature of our society and people can probably never be replicated anywhere on this earth. There is a threat to our country's plurality, diversity and the Constitution. Sex Workers actively participated in the Silent Procession on 28th February 2018 from 3-00 p.m. to 5-00 p.m. from Mysore Bank Circle to Freedom Park via Gandhi Statue near Mourya Hotel. <p>March 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Meeting – Vijayapura, 20 members attended • Social Entitlements (Adhar card 01, Income certificate 10 at Vijayapura) • Union actively participated in the Women's day celebrations in Shimoga. Nisha was one of the speakers. This is of utmost importance because the same groups were anti sex work, pushing the narrative that sex workers are oppressed women. It was important for us to occupy the space and have conversations <p>Crisis: 23 sex workers were picked up by KSRTC outpost police station at Majestic, Bengaluru on (21.03.18) at 11 pm. They were brutally beaten up, harassed, and abused in public, and detained in the police station for 3 hours, till lawyers turned up and released them. The DCP (West) Ravi D. Channavvar kept abusing women and said that he wants a "clean Majestic" at any cost. The beatings and harassment happened under his direct supervision, and women were terrified that they would be sent to jail and separated from their families.</p>
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