

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2020
TO
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Best Practices Foundation



From the desk of the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of March 2020 and its subsequent lockdowns caused untold misery to over 3 crore people in India, with marginalised populations being even more severely affected than others. Subsequently, the stringent isolation rules took an enormous toll on both economic and social well-being, resulting in intense poverty and malnutrition. However, it brought out the tremendous potential of community based organizations (CBOs) and the power of communication technology to save lives from the effects of the novel corona virus.

Over the past four years, BPF has been the acting Secretariat of the Alliance of Feminist Collectives (AFC) in Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Assam representing over 1,40,000 strong members from 23 collectives consisting of women, girls, persons with disabilities and gender sexual minorities. The crisis of the COVID-19 wave led to the AFC partners closing ranks and leveraging funds for each other wherever possible.

The federations and CBOs emerged as the main actors for relief as the lockdown prevented NGO staff from travelling. This led to federations and CBOs managing over one crore of funds, handling logistics of identification, distribution, social distancing, monitoring of processes, providing multiple quotations for relief, learning first-hand financial management, and scrutinizing bills and accounts. Community members learnt the importance of self-sufficiency in food and started their own kitchen gardens which in turn improved nutrition levels. The CBOs and federations thus had much greater visibility with a sudden expansion of membership as members understood the importance of having the support of their own local collectives in moments of crisis.

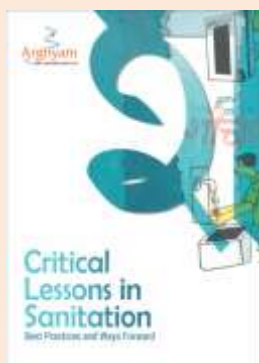
The year 2020-21 also witnessed the shadow pandemic of increased gender based violence. The AFC has been steadily working on strengthening these collectives and addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV). Since training could not be conducted by NGOs at all levels of the CBOs and federations, leaders emerged as trainers who were able to cascade the training down to their communities either in person or by using phones. Visual materials were developed and shared by the AFC partners and training of trainers took place using smartphones or the internet, on a range of subjects such as digital literacy and mobile training, VAW issues, accounting and managerial skills, legal committee formation, COVID awareness, feminist principles and gender equality.

BPF began preparation for its first experiments with MOVE, our livelihood intervention for gender sexual minority communities in Raichur, Bihar and Hassan in collaboration with Sangama and in Bagalkote and Shivamoga.

We are grateful for the continuing support of our many generous donors - both institutional and individual – which allows us to maximise impact, build capacities, provide access to information and technology, and be in a position to empower vulnerable populations. We thank our dedicated caring staff and partners who allow us to complement these efforts and make a difference in the quality of life for those who need it the most.

*Dr. Sangeetha Purushothaman
Bangalore*

Harvesting Lessons in the Field of Sanitation | ARGHYAM | 16 January 2018 to 30 September 2020 |



Commissioned by Arghyam, Best Practices Foundation conducted research on the sanitation practices of five other organisations namely Gandhigram Trust, Gramalaya, Athmashakti, and Bhartiya Jana Utthan Parishad; in the states of Karnataka, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu respectively. Arghyam, has supported a range of innovations and developmental practices in the areas of groundwater and sanitation, ranging from solutions catering to sanitation, financing for the marginalised, new inventive toilet technology, the revival of defunct toilets, and an efficient system to manage community and group toilets.

BPF documented the practices to capture the training, implementation, monitoring, staff roles and responsibilities, sustainability factors and the reliability and outcomes of the practices.

Through the Theory of Change, Arghyam aspired to increase use and access to toilets, increase engagement between civil society and government, enable successful implementations of public programs, and innovation of solutions to address gaps in sanitation. By recognising the credibility and expertise of CSOs in sanitation while protecting their autonomy, Arghyam has set the stage for a new way of partnering and has set a precedent for governments to better implement programmes with professional expertise.

It is believed that the work captured in 'Critical Lessons in Sanitation' portraying the contributions and advancements made by Arghyam, will shape the initiatives and understanding of practitioners and policy makers in their attempts to ensure good sanitation for all.

MS Federations Mobilise Adolescent Girls Collectives (Year II and Year III) | American Jewish World Service (AJWS) | August 2018 to October 2021 |

The goals of institutional strengthening of sanghas and federations, and empowerment of adolescent girls to become change agents were continued with zest, despite the hindrances COVID-19 in the four states of Assam, Bihar, Karnataka and Telangana. 1,499 women sanghas (grassroots collectives) and 268 kishori (adolescent girls) sanghas are now functioning in the 4 states, of which 448 are revived sanghas. The consistent efforts in forming and reviving sanghas, along with continued institutional strengthening, has given birth to the Alliance of Feminist Collectives (AFC) which steadily expanded from 4 NGOs and 12 Community Based Organisations (CBOs) to about 37 CBOs currently.

Resilience building and Livelihood: As many self-employed women had been adversely affected during the trying times of COVID, 20 federation leaders from three districts in Bihar have been trained in mushroom cultivation and are moving towards creating Farmer Producer Organisations. Similarly, in Assam, federations have started focusing on the education of girls and their advancement in livelihoods, apart from institutional strengthening. A production centre of Eri Silk has been planned by the Jagoron Block Federation of Dhemaji District at group level. A business model has been initiated in Dhubri for marketing of Muri (puffed rice). Self-Help Group (SHG) training was conducted in Periyapatna, Mysore district – one outcome of which was a successful self-sustaining kitchen garden initiative which is now being replicated across three district federations in Karnataka. Kitchen gardens are being developed with food security as well as livelihoods being the prime focus. Two federations in Telangana continue to support sanghas in the on-going collective farming programme. From December 2020 to January 2021, Bihar undertook an exercise of creating a robust database of 29 indicators towards institutional strengthening. This focused on statutory compliances such as the status of audit, annual report, KYC, membership fee norms, total corpus, bank account details and details of account holders/signatories.



Intergenerational Dialogues, Dhemaji, Assam

Adolescents: Kishoris (adolescent girls) are becoming an integral part of movement building. In all 4 states, they played an important role in the COVID-19 relief work and helped to bridge the inter-generational gap. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with adolescent boys and girls on the status of access to education and issues related to GBV faced during the pandemic, after which Assam started 18 and Karnataka one group learning space for those youth who did not have their own mobile devices to attend online classes. In Bihar, Nirantar Trust helped open 14 Ummeed Centres, an alternate arrangement for tutorials, to enroll 238 girls mostly from 10th and 12th grades. A survey around menstruation - access, practice, and social stigma was also carried out with 530 girls of Kishori Manch in Bihar. This resulted in sensitisation drives and collaboration with the helpline 'Hello Saheli' for women and girls to access counselling on reproductive health. In Telangana, Bhumika Women's Collective formed 32 youth groups with young women and men. Bihar, Assam and Telangana also conducted awareness sessions on POCSO Act and collaborated with police and legal departments to support young adults and sangha members.



Mobile training of Sangha women, Bijapur

In Karnataka, a highly visual 'Mobile Training' on digital literacy particularly benefited the COVID relief work operations and continues to be an important tool in building the federation women and reaching out to girls. The cascading format then enabled a reach of around 2,800 participants in four districts of Karnataka in less than two months. Translated into other languages, the training was rolled out in all other partner states. Digital training has resulted in federations now comfortably communicating on

Zoom and WhatsApp while attending online meetings for sharing, reporting and monitoring. Other cascading training modules are committee formation, economic empowerment, governance, legal aid, gender justice, and adolescent issues. Our partner organisations developed training modules on leadership, VAW issues, accounting and managerial skills, documentation skills and digital literacy.

Gender Based Violence: Along with strengthening of legal institutions such as the Nari Adalat, partners started collaborative work with the police and legal departments (SLSA and DLSA). In Bihar, over 580 cases were handled by the Nari Adalat along with 59 cases of child rights abuse during this period. Sensitisation training on sexual harassment in public places and cybercrime had 73 kishori manch members participating. In Gaya, Rohtas, Betiya and Sheohar, Nari Adalats have been recognized by local police stations and DLSA as the First Stop Contact for VAW cases. Formation of Kishori Adalats were initiated on a pilot basis to develop a pool of 100-150 girls who are trained, sensitised and ready to raise their voice against sexual and other forms of violence.



Cascading Legal training, Periyapatna

In Assam, federations handled 45 cases of violence and were able to intervene and stop three child marriages. Federations are being enabled to provide Intensive Support to survivors of violence to ensure their security and to help them regain their space. In Telangana, 277 students attended sessions held in schools across five villages on awareness on violence against women.



Organisation Development workshop, ANT, Chirana District, Assam

In Karnataka, over 250 cases were solved by the Nari Adalats, in Periyapatna alone. The focus of the Karnataka state platform held in February 2021 was GBV where the impact of COVID-19 on violence was shared by diverse communities from across the state using theatre. Points of collaboration were discussed with the State Legal Services Authority and the Karnataka Human Rights Commission.

A People Stronger: Supporting collectives working with sexual minorities (LGTBIQ) communities, and sex workers including groups of trans women and male sex workers, in rural areas at the intersections of gender, class and caste towards greater voice and participation| Ford Foundation | November 2017 to October 2020 |

The grant supported awareness and organisational development training sessions on accessing social entitlements for the gender and sexual minority collectives, leaders in Gadag and sex workers. Training on sexual and reproductive health was supported for three partners - a female sex worker CBO in Yadgir district (Karnataka) and gender and sexual minority (GSM) collectives in Krishna district (Andhra Pradesh) and Warangal district (Telangana). Organisational development work was carried out with the GSM collectives in Gadag district (Karnataka), Ongole, (Pakasam district, Andhra Pradesh) and Karimnagar district (Telangana).

A Feminist Collective Response to Address Gender-Based Violence in Public Spaces| Ford Foundation | November 2017 to October 2021 |

Over the past four years, BPF has been the acting Secretariat of the Alliance of Feminist Collectives (AFC) in Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Assam. Representing over 1,40,000 strong members from collectives consisting of women, girls, persons with disabilities and GSM, the AFC has steadily worked on strengthening collectives and addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV). The initial dialogues on GBV was conducted through FGDs by alliance partners across four states of Assam, Bihar, Karnataka and Telangana and between January and March 2020 with 765 women, kishoris, GSM persons, and female sex workers (FSW), resulting in a report titled “*Violence Against Women in Public and Private Spaces*”. Its findings provided insight into the sites and forms of GBV across identities and socio-economic constituencies.



FGD on VAW, Federation women, Ballari

A second study on the impact of COVID-19 on GBV, livelihoods and access to services was conducted post the nationwide lockdown in 2020 resulting in two reports namely, “*COVID 19 pandemic aggravates violence against women in rural India* and *COVID-19 Pandemic Crushes Women’s Livelihoods in Rural India while Needed Services are Inaccessible*”. About 27 FGDs and 21 in-depth interviews were conducted with a total of 257 participants representing women, kishoris, GSM and women with disabilities representing vulnerable communities from the states of Karnataka, Assam, Bihar, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, to understand how COVID-19 and the lockdown impacted their livelihoods, access to services and mental health. The data revealed differences in the causes of GBV across various groups and the intersectionality of violence experienced by the identities based on their caste, religion, tribe, gender, sex, ability or occupation. Women reported an increase in drudgery post lockdown, having to cook, wash utensils and clothes, and fetch water in higher quantities and a greater number of times due to the presence of extra members and enhanced focus on health and hygiene. Families hardly provided support, and in cases where women received support, it was mainly from their daughters. Financial distress was particularly high and the inability to financially support the family led to conflicts within the home with parents, in-laws, spouses and even children. Most women reported men’s consumption of, and lack of access to alcohol as triggers for violence, and a factor causing increasing financial stress at a time of no work and/or no income. The pressure from having to handle the financial strain from lack of work, the inability to service debts, and provide for the family further led men



AFC: Karnataka State Platform meeting, Feb 2021

to drink, making them more irritable and violent towards their partners. Findings from this report were shared at the first ever Karnataka AFC meeting in Bangalore on 30 January and 1 February 2021, with around 70 CBO and federation leaders along with representatives from 10 CBOs and 2 NGOs from various districts of Karnataka.



Skit on GBV presented at the Karnataka state platform meeting, Feb 2021

On 31 January 2021, the leaders presented the findings to member secretaries from the State Legal Services Authority (SLSA) and Karnataka Human Rights Commission. The participants shared in detail the impact that the lockdown had left on their lives and livelihoods, enacting it out through skits and plays. As the participants put forth their requests for support, the SLSA and KHRC responded and offered to train the CBO members and provide support at district levels to address GBV.

Additionally, an abstract based on this study was submitted for a book to be published by Routledge authored by BPF staff and ex-colleagues, Dr. Preethi Krishnan and Priya Pillai - currently experts in women's federations and GBV. The abstract titled, "*It's Power, Not Pandemic: How Identifying Power Structures Enables Emotional Resilience During Crisis Care-giving*" has been accepted and work on the article is ongoing. Editors for the book are Marci Cottingham (University of Amsterdam), Rebecca Erickson (University of Akron), and Mathew Lee (Harvard University). The report on COVID-19 impact on livelihoods and access to services was written and co-authored with help from Professor Jennifer Parker, Pennsylvania State University and Neela Talwar-Parker. Currently, options are being explored for publications of this study.

Training on GBV and legal committee formation: Three separate training modules focusing on GBV and laws were developed and delivered by experts, Vani Periodi, Amrutha Valli and Akhila V in Periyapatna and observed by BPF staff for roll-out in other districts. Simultaneously, in depth documentation has led to cascading training modules being developed to be taken forward by federation trainers. Federation and CBO leaders emerged as trainers since training could not be conducted by NGOs at all levels of the federations. Instead, visual materials were developed which federation women leaders used to cascade the training downwards. Cascading training took place on a range of subjects including a) digital literacy and mobile training, b) legal committee training and formation, c) COVID awareness with women and kishoris, d) feminist principles and gender equality. The training material created by BPF has been translated and used by partners in Assam, Bihar and Telangana.



GBV Workshop, Federation women, Periyapatna

Digital training has resulted in federations now communicating through Zoom and WhatsApp. All partner organisations focused on leadership training, VAW issues, accounting and managerial skills, documentation skills, and digital literacy, which has facilitated the emergence of a learning platform.

Three meetings were held in Bangalore (Karnataka), Hyderabad (Telangana) and Madurai (Tamil Nadu) with partner CBOs and leaders from communities of women sex workers, gender and sexual minorities and women with disabilities to share experiences during the COVID-19 lockdown and later. They were significant spaces of empathetic listening, sharing experiences and stress handling strategies employed when the lockdown began. The Bangalore meeting was partially supported by the Ford Foundation grant. The grant also supported awareness sessions on new and modified government welfare schemes, crisis intervention and benefits for gender and sexual minority communities in Karnataka and Telangana.

Challenging Invisibility: Building evidence to grow our movements | Creating Resources for Empowerment and Action Inc. (CREA) | October 2018 to December 2020 |

Historically, women and gender/sexual minorities (GSM) have suffered immense violence while patriarchy creates and maintains certain social hierarchies. The negative stereotypes and beliefs around sex workers, GSM and people living with HIV cause violence, compounded when they are from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The project aimed to document GSM and sex worker (transgender, male and female in small towns and rural areas) collectives' crisis interventions and human rights violence and violations narratives on community members. Trainers and lawyers created a Kannada manual for sex workers and GSM on basic laws and entitlements. They also documented narratives of violence and violations on community members (from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) which was edited and published in English. CREA also supported COVID-19 relief work (providing dry ration and hygiene kits) and partly the CBOs' crisis intervention work in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Community led Development | Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF) | February 2019 to March 2021 |

The GFCF team with community leaders in India, Mexico, Nepal, Russia, Vietnam, and Zambia co-designed a process for identifying community-led approaches, to gather evidence of such approaches and their long-term impact, and to discover how funders' policies and practices promote or inhibit community led approaches.

The grant built capacities of small organizations in small towns that have scarce access to a range of opportunities and for their institutional development (including local resource mobilization and participatory processes). This was achieved through a range of activities like building a corporate strategy, local fundraising, self-care workshops, enhancing and expanding the use of participatory tools, and building linkages and alliances. It also helped to increase trust and visibility among the general public and increase support (financially and in terms of expertise and solidarity) for the partners.

One output from the research conducted by the team was a set of tools that can determine the degree to which organizations are community-led. A quantitative and a qualitative questionnaire of nine essential factors of community-led work, with a total of seventeen factors constituted the Community-led Assessment.

Among these factors, relationships are considered to be the foundation of community-led work thus performing a pivotal function in priority setting, project designing, implementation, organizational operations, and decision making. In strong and well-maintained relationships, communities govern themselves and identify work that is important to them by committing to long-term results and holding each other accountable for it. Community-led efforts require strong, collective leadership and a commitment to equity and sharing power. The process of being community-led sparks a notion of impact, evidently because they are led by people with appropriate knowledge and respect for their community members, culture, and context. These efforts can be especially categorized as agile and effective. Funders sometimes inhibit community-led approaches when they impose their own agendas, requirements, and timelines; withhold information, and arbitrarily change funding priorities. Funders help promote community-led processes when they communicate openly and work in partnership by expressing patience, appreciation for the work, and curiosity about local conditions and context.

Institutional Development (Including local resource mobilization and participatory processes) | Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF) | July 2019 to March 2021 |

Work was carried out around the immediate and longer-term community-based responses to COVID-19 among marginalised gender/sexual minority groups and sex workers. Besides relief, they were also linked with government offices and systems were set up to provide emotional and psycho-social support.

A mobile application is also being developed for Community Based Organizations to gather and build data on violence and track progress on institutional strengthening and social entitlements access by women sex worker and gender and sexual minority communities.

Enhancing Leadership among intersex activists and building organisational strength and advocacy | Heinrich Boll Sifting | January 2020 to October 2020|

Discourse around intersex issues is still new in India, thereby bracketing intersex persons as either trans women or trans men or being forced to hide their identity. Deprived of the appropriate help and resources that should be directed towards them, leaves them isolated and uncomfortable about their identity. The project strengthened the support group of intersex people and helped to spread awareness about their issues with the medical establishment, law/policy makers, and members of the LGBTIQ+ community, child rights organisations and other allies.

Intersex persons' briefs/guidelines for healthcare, media and legal professionals and childcare institutions were translated into Telugu and Tamil. Audio recorded (in Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu) and subsequently transcribed into English, of eight south Indian intersex persons' narratives and experiences during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown were documented. The edited transcriptions were published in an English e-report titled Corona Chronicles. Additionally, short films were scripted and filmed with 2 intersex persons and 2 of their supporters who shared their experiences. Three healthcare posters were designed for display in government hospitals to minimize discrimination faced by intersex people. A virtual meeting of the Intersex Human Rights India network was also organised and documented. In October 2020, Gangabhavani, an intersex fellow organised and documented a workshop with healthcare workers and government officers in Anantapur district, Andhra Pradesh. She discussed DSD and intersex variants with around 30 healthcare workers and government officers whom she had mobilised.

The Right Focus: Sex workers' and gender/sexual minorities' together leading an initiative to increase access to appropriate Sexual and Reproductive Health services including stigma-free abortion and Sex Reassignment Surgery in 3 districts of South India| Mannion Daniels Limited – Amplify Change | March 2020 to September 2021 |

The project, Right Focus, aims for increased access of sex workers and GSM to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services in the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana. The project focuses on building capacities of the constituents in various aspects of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH). The holistic capacity building workshops will enable the constituents to form district level committees that will facilitate access to SRH services for their constituents.

The project has been successful in training over 114 persons in the three project districts – Warangal (Telangana), Krishna (Andhra Pradesh), and Yadgiri (Karnataka). Among these, around 24 constituents were trained to become trainers in the field of SRH to cascade their knowledge to other community members. A comprehensive training manual was prepared on various aspects of SRH including abortion, gender affirming practices and medical options, negotiating consent, pleasure, violence, among others. The manual was developed with inputs from the constituents. 30 in-depth interviews were conducted across project districts to understand the current situation (practices, needs and constraints) around SRH.



*Sexual and Reproductive Health training, Yadgiri
November 2020*

The training enabled the formation of 3 district committees with 10-12 community members each in every project district. The project has also enabled capacity building of 6 staff members in SRH who successfully took an online course by TARSHI in 2020. At the onset of COVID-19 in March 2020, the project supported some constituents through immediate relief in the form of dry ration and hygiene kits to survive the impact and the resultant lockdown. Meetings to share experiences of surviving COVID-19 with community leaders, were also supported by the project in October 2020.

Strengthening Individual and Collective Leadership Among Working Class Sex Workers and Gender and Sexual Minorities | American Jewish World Service (AJWS) | April 2020 to March 2021 |

The project enabled sex workers and gender and sexual minorities leaders namely, Shakila Banu, (Theni district, Tamil Nadu), Vimalakumari (Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu), P. Devi, (Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh), T. Pushpavati (Ananthapuram district, Andhra Pradesh) and K. Priyanka (Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh) to work with community members to help them in accessing their social entitlements and link with other progressive organisations and groups. A series of training sessions were planned to strengthen leadership, basic communication, administration, accounting and computer skills, to enhance their knowledge on varied issues relevant to their work. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown, the community leaders prioritised providing dry rations, hygiene products, PPE and medical and emotional support to community members.

ARISE: Trans(forming) Lives Programme | Aricent Technologies (Holdings) Limited | March/April 2020 to September 2021 |

Aricent supported the "Trans(forming) Lives Programme " in covering activities that are aimed at enhancing livelihood opportunities for LGBTQAI+ persons through education, skill development, enhancing entrepreneurship, mental wellness, personality development, placement, career enhancement and creation of respectful workplaces.



Digital Literacy

Between April 2020 and May 2021; the project has been successful in touching over 8304 lives. This includes 995 LGBTQAI+ persons connected with the project, 756 LGBTQAI+ persons trained and 3240 community persons counselled through the mental health initiative. 127 business ideas were generated with three-day training on basic orientation to entrepreneurship and market analysis. In addition to this, the project also conducted gender and sexuality sensitisation for 3146 individuals from different sectors such as corporates, colleges, government offices, etc. Finally, a one of its kind livelihood study was conducted under this project in 17 districts in Karnataka to understand the current scenario, needs, and challenges of the sexual and gender minority communities in accessing livelihood opportunities and income, especially in the post-pandemic world.

To provide LGBTQI community members with support to deal with COVID-19 pandemic | Give Out | September 2020 to July 2021 |

The grant provided around 120 gender/sexual minority community members in Andhra Pradesh, with dry rations and sanitary/hygiene items and PPE.

Nai Disha | Moody's Analytics Knowledge Services Private Limited | September 2019 to August 2020 |

The project's philanthropic actions aimed at creating a robust system for entrepreneurship and self-employment among female sex workers (FSWs) that was modeled on BPF'S award winning livelihood model, Market Oriented Value Enhancement (MOVE) with proven and result-oriented processes. The main objective of the project was to prepare around 30 FSWs for the transition to alternate livelihoods, by helping them access entitlements that ensure their creditworthiness. With MOVE training and handholding of women entrepreneurs for about six months, BPF created around 12 successful businesses, each of which has been thriving.

MOVE built businesses and also added value to pre-existing businesses of FSWs, thus providing access to additional incomes which improved their quality of life. A baseline survey mapped the social and financial status of the individuals, their assets, savings, their interest and eligibility to start a business.

Through MOVE training, business development plans were created by each participant who drew a blueprint for their planned businesses. The program facilitated the successful establishment of three Self Help Groups (SHGs) and created bank linkages where FSW groups received loans for livelihoods for the first time from a bank.

Surprise visits and audits of the SHGs were conducted by the staff. This vital monitoring ensured financial discipline and women learnt about required documentation, bank linkages and were able to competently run their SHGs. During the project, all three SHGs managed to return their loans, despite the pandemic. The members managed to use lessons learnt in the MOVE training, adapt to the environment and break even during the COVID-19 lockdown as well as pay off their debts. This itself is seen as a major success which has even motivated other FSWs to start SHGs. Many are ready for loans and have started collecting documents to submit to the bank for their next big leap of business development.



MOVE training, Bangalore

Immediate and longer-term community-based responses to COVID-19 among marginalised sexual and gender minority groups and sex workers | Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF) | July 2020 to June 2021 |

Dry rations and sanitary/hygiene items, PPE, medicines were provided to gender/sexual minority and sex worker community members in Andhra Pradesh. A team meeting was organised to review the COVID-19 relief, other work during 2020 and plan long term initiatives for the upcoming year.

COVID-19 Relief Work | Multiple Donors | April 2020 to September 2020 |



COVID-19 Awareness cascading programme.

The COVID crisis stopped any form of project intervention from late March, leaving federation and CBO members struggling to cope with the lack of income, work, masks, sanitizers and health care protection. As the effects of the lockdown began to be felt across India, BPF and its funders swiftly shifted focus to COVID-19 relief work. By early April, AJWS very quickly allowed the repurposing of some funds to get relief to those in need. Motivated to do more, the AFC partners urged Ford Foundation and Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI) to

provide supplementary relief. These were further supported by Inflow Technology, All Out, Give Out, GFCF and Practo. Individuals and small organizations like Suruchi donated cash and masks. From April to September 2020 rations and masks were distributed to those who were not able to get government relief. Close to 140,000 people across the four states of Assam, Bihar, Telangana and Karnataka were able to survive with the support of all donors amounting to a total of one crore.

Witnessed in the whole relief process, with front-line women and adolescent girls creating awareness on COVID-19 crisis, generating livelihoods for women, accessing entitlements, and training on mobile phone technology, was the strong feminist leadership demonstrated by community members. With the primary responsibility of identification of the most vulnerable in their communities, the efforts of the federations had an enormous reach and visibility in the eyes of the sanghas and members associated. In Karnataka, training on entitlements took place simultaneously with relief efforts. A visual information sheet on entitlements was included with every relief kit distributed. COVID-19 relief and work on VAW have got federations to collaborate with



Ration kits for Jogappa Community

government departments like the police, panchayat and Women and Child Department. There were situations where officers volunteered to help the federations and in turn took the help of federations to reach their target populations.

In Assam, federation leaders encouraged sangha members to stitch masks and sell them, thus providing some income for them. In each of the five Gram Panchayats, 10 to 15 women were stitching masks to sell. All the masks distributed by the federation were purchased from sangha women. In Bihar, Nirantar Trust directly helped 878 women to access their entitlements including ration cards. Also, 11 women received emergency ambulance services and cash transfers were given to 75 women to restart their livelihoods. Bhumika Women's Collective started a helpline in Telangana, a One Stop Center in Karimnagar and a Support Center to give women counselling and information and access to services. They have helped over 2 lakh returning migrants by providing them with information, water, buttermilk and temporary shelter.

Inflow Technology, Karnataka | June 2020 – September 2020 |



(S)Hero Malamma ensured distribution to migrants camped outside, Vijapura

Inflow's donation was utilised to distribute rations to the neediest 225 individuals from the three districts of Mysore, Ballari and Vijayapura. Here, BPF's partnerships with federations and local community-based organisations (CBOs) helped identify and reach those most in need. The support helped create a cadre of leaders from the federations who gained legitimacy by a) identifying the most vulnerable; b) distributing rations; c) implementing social distancing norms; and d) training on COVID and entitlements.

Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives| June 2020 – September 2020 |

With the grant received from Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI), BPF provided relief in four districts of Karnataka – Mysuru, Dharwad, Vijayapura and Ballari. Women leaders from our federations and sanghas identified and located through a detailed survey, vulnerable families especially those who were not getting government relief. These included migrant workers, homeless persons, single women, widows, elderly and differently-abled people in five different locations.

Maintaining the norms of social distancing, the villagers were also informed about COVID-19 and the entitlements they could avail from the government. The relief work impacted 6725 members from 1349 vulnerable families across 62 villages from the four districts.



Sangha members in Dharwad packing ration kits

Ration Kits Distribution				
<i>Districts</i>	<i>Leaders</i>	<i>Villages</i>	<i>Families who received kits</i>	<i>Members impacted</i>
Hadagali, Ballari	5	14	313	1565
Periyapatna, Mysuru	6	17	260	1325
Dharwad	5	6	209	1000
Vijayapura	15	16	330	1650
Bagewadi, Vijayapura	9	9	237	1185
Total	40	62	1,349	6,725

Kishoris and kishors (adolescent girls and boys) were roped into packing, distributing the kits and training families on COVID-19 in a few villages thus increasing our reach. As an avenue of livelihood generation, orders of re-usable masks were given to a few sanghas. Stitched by women from Periyapatna and Huvina Hadagali villages, these masks were used by the teams throughout the duration of the pandemic.

The relief work was further extended to identifying and addressing families with dire needs. The initial survey conducted by SHG and CBO leaders revealed that there were large numbers of people who required aid beyond food and essential amenities. The COVID-19 lockdown in the state meant that because families could not pay the fees, school dropouts increased as did child marriages. Pensions not paid for months worsened the plight of the homeless, and loss of jobs meant the inability to purchase medicines or avail medical care.

On BPF's request APPI provided a budget to mitigate these dire needs. After careful consideration and dialogues, 40 cases were selected. These members were provided medical assistance, education funding, aid for pensioners, the elderly and persons with disability. The federation leaders followed up closely with the selected community members, whether it was providing them access to hospitals or getting them medicines, clothes or mobility aids.



Women receiving mobile training, Assam

Many leaders were technologically empowered due to virtual digital training and digital communication. This was supported using matching funds from other projects. Each relief packet was accompanied by a pamphlet on COVID awareness and entitlements resulting in increased access of some to these benefits. While stories on dire needs demonstrated the relief brought to a few select families, it also brought out stories of failures in accessing entitlements. The federations started working on such cases to provide assistance and aid to those seeking entitlements. This has resulted in increased trust

in the institutions. The relief projects provided the federations the impetus to work while other institutions were not functional, due to the lockdown crisis.

The lead taken by the grassroots women in mobilising and distributing the relief kits from start to end was visual proof of the institutional strengthening that BPF has been tirelessly working for. The relevance and visibility of the federations for their communities were established with their relief efforts during the dire situation of COVID-19. Women were encouraged to take on challenges and solve hindrances occurring during the process of the relief work, establishing further a collective voice of the community.



Women leaders loading rations for distribution, Periyapatna

COVID-19 Community Resilience Funds Program 2020 | Huairou Commission | 3 June 2020 to January 2021 |

During the lockdown, many villages in Periyapatna, a tribal belt in Mysuru district were cut off from all access to essential supplies. Unable to move to urban markets, people were also restricted from accessing the forests for food and indigenous medicines. This led to the recognition of the need to address food security. The Huairou Commission's (HC's) COVID-19 Community Resilience Fund was approached to address this issue. HC is a women-led social movement of grassroots groups from poor urban, rural and indigenous communities in more than 45 countries who collectively work for transformative change that improves the living conditions, status, and quality of life of women, their families and municipalities.



SHG training in Abalati B Colony, Periyapatna, November 2020

From three villages of Abalati, Hosakeregrama and Sampigenagara, 33 women came together to set up kitchen gardens in the available space around their homes in an attempt to address the three issues of food security, alternative livelihood and nutrition with support from HC, BPF and the women's federation Kaveri Mahila Mahasangha from Periyapatna. Besides providing a variety of single and multiple-yielding seeds, they were trained in kitchen gardening and composting.



Amaranthus grown in kitchen gardens, Periyapatna

SHG training was conducted with three new SHGs and one revived SHG. The procedural documentation was put in place which included creating bank accounts. As a result, women in four villages have now entered the formal credit system which has encouraged them to save and avail loans in the future. A month after the kitchen gardens began, women realised that the transportation costs to the main market would eat up the profits from selling the vegetables and they decided to use them for consumption rather than sales and to save on buying food from the main market. From these savings, women contributed to their respective SHG, which in turn paid INR 1,000 to the federation. This system of SHGs contributing a portion of their members' savings from the kitchen gardens to the federation, Kaveri Mahila Mahasangha, will now enable the next set of women to get involved in the kitchen gardening program.

The kitchen gardens were successful in yielding vegetables for consumption in each of the 33 households thereby addressing a part of their food security and nutritional needs. In all sizes and types of land that were used for kitchen gardening, nutrition-rich green leafy vegetables had the greatest yield. Women shared their vegetables with other families when the produce was enough. In total 41 families including two undernourished children and seven elderly persons benefited from the kitchen garden produce.

To support the organisation's emergency needs of LGBT+ people during the COVID-19 pandemic| All Out | June 2020 to December 2020 |

Socio-economically disadvantaged GSM community members faced immense difficulties during the nationwide lockdown. The grant provided over 170 GSM community members in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, with rations, sanitary/hygiene items, PPE and medicines. Meetings with partner CBOs and community leaders were conducted to share COVID-19 lockdown experiences - their anxieties, struggles, concerns, along with strategies used to support community members, during the nationwide lockdown.

Livelihoods Needs Assessment for the Gender and Sexual Minority Community in Karnataka | Sangama and Aricent Technologies (Holdings) Limited | 4 August 2020 to 4 December 2020 |

In the aftermath of the pandemic, an assessment to understand the challenges and opportunities available for the gender and sexual minorities (GSM) communities across 17 districts of Karnataka was carried out. Findings from the study would then guide the designing of livelihood interventions. An extensive survey instrument was prepared to examine the socio-economic profile, skills, livelihood options, access to entitlements, to name a few. As the COVID-19 lockdown affected mobility, the survey was conducted with 711 respondents physi-digitally. The online survey app 'JotForm' was used to administer the questionnaire by surveyors in the districts. Since it was the first time BPF was engaging in this form of data collection, the preparatory phase included detailed training and planning of the data collectors. As the survey was being conducted, a dedicated quality control team checked the data collection and quality.

Findings indicated that the pandemic had a devastating impact on their livelihoods and well-being. There were major shifts in occupation with a large proportion of the community moving into sex work as a survival strategy, including those who had never been engaged in sex work before. This implies associated health risks and an immediate response would be to provide health insurance while the long-term measures would require skilling and entrepreneurial programmes that promote alternative livelihoods. The findings of the study as well as the data were also given back to the 17 CBOs in the form of 17 separate reports for them.

For addressing gender-based violence during COVID-19 | Creating Resources for Empowerment and Action Inc. (CREA) | November 2020 to December 2020 |

The project was aimed at addressing gender-based violence during the COVID-19 induced lockdown and later. CREA and other funders supported three meetings conducted in Bangalore (Karnataka), Hyderabad (Telangana) and Madurai (Tamil Nadu) with partner CBOs and community leaders where they shared experiences during and post the lockdown.



Participants sharing experiences of the impact of COVID-19, Bangalore, Karnataka

A 2-day mental wellness workshop was conducted for around 14 GSM community members in Yadgiri district, Karnataka. The workshop was vital in introducing mental health concepts to the participants including understanding the self, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, among others. This project also supported transmen CBO members (in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) to share their specific gender violence issues during the lockdown and relevant coping strategies.

A report on the impact of COVID-19 on marginalised communities of women sex workers, gender/sexual minorities and women with disabilities is being prepared. The report highlights the impact of the pandemic on people's livelihoods, mental health, service access, among others. The report will be disseminated among CBOs, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders to build support for these communities.

Supporting COVID relief and Cyclone Amphan relief | May 2020 to March 2021 |

The IIT-IIT branch of BPF leveraged its networks and partners to deliver and facilitate COVID relief and subsequently Cyclone Amphan relief. The activities which were carried out during the process included enabling partnerships to deliver relief to migrants in Karnataka and raising funds to support COVID and Amphan relief to rural communities in West Bengal, Rajasthan and Bihar.

A total of 1 lakh meals were organised between several food canteens. Distribution of meals via Rotary partners in Karnataka had a huge impact. In Phase-1, a total of INR 40 lakhs was raised to support several rural communities in the states of West Bengal and Rajasthan with the help of their partner Banglanatakdotcom. Phase-2 was followed by raising a total of INR 3 lakhs which supported the rural communities in West Bengal and Rajasthan along with Banglanatakdotcom.



Relief work in different states

Formalising the Principal Partner Project for 'Restoring promise of Water' | May 2020 – ongoing |

The 3-year project has an objective of creating national capabilities for scaling the program. The activities included finalising the states and project designs to deliver the capabilities, firming up the partners, and engaging in implementing the model along with 24 IITians to kick off the project. Karnataka and Rajasthan are firming up as the new states for the project. In Rajasthan, proof of concept was completed with 3 NGO partners for 1 Lakh CuM desilting. Additionally, a 'Water Anchor Based' solution was developed that would commit to various geographies. Furthermore, three water anchors

were signed for Karnataka, namely, Grama Vikasa, Foundation for Ecological Security and Art of Living. Discussions are in progress for state partners of Karnataka with Rotary International District 3190 and Arghyam. About 28 IITian Champions have signed up as volunteers.

Formalising the Principal Partner Project for 'Arresting growth of Blindness' | November 2020 – ongoing |

The 3-year project aims at creating national capabilities for scaling the program 'arresting growth of blindness'. Activities included finalising the scope of the project to establish the capabilities, firming up the approach to define the outcomes and engaging partners and founding members to kick off the project. An external network of eight partners has been identified where key capabilities and outcomes for partners are defined. Currently, IITian Champions are being identified as volunteers for the same and IIT-IIT's further role to enable capabilities are in discussion.

Formalising Principal Partner Project for 'Sustainable Rural Micro Enterprises Program' | September 2020 to March 2023 |

The 3-year project involved finalising the states, creating the project design, engaging partners and IITians to scale up the capabilities of the program. They also held discussions with their partners to include the model. As an outcome, in Bihar, West Bengal and Rajasthan the project design focused on enabling scaled capabilities for market channels, with IITians working as volunteers on the project. Additionally, The Indi-US Entrepreneurs (TiE) was identified as a key partner to engage in the project.

BEST PRACTICES FOUNDATION
Flat 3C/2C, Santosh Apartments, Palmgrove Road, Victoria Layout,
Bengaluru - 560047 Karnataka, India.

Balance Sheet as on 31st March, 2021
(Consolidated)

Liabilities	Amount (Rs.)		Assets	Amount (Rs.)	
	EC	Local		EC	Local
1. Capital Fund:			1. Fixed Assets:		
Opening Balance	546,236.00		(As Per Schedule Y1)		
Add: Amount transferred during the year being Capital Exp.			As per last Balance Sheet	546,236.00	
a) From I & E a/c		5,893,198.00	ADD: Additions made during the year	1,037,496.00	5,893,198.00
b) From FC Project Utilisation	1,037,496.00			1,583,732.00	5,893,198.00
	1,583,732.00	5,893,198.00			7,476,930.00
2. Undisbursed Ear-marked/Specific Funds:			2. Deposits:		
a) FC Section (As per Schedule Y2)	18,838,881.58	-	Fixed Deposits (Schedule Y4)	4,610,116.00	5,906,774.56
b) Local Section (As per Schedule Y3)	-	3,374,409.06			10,516,890.56
	18,838,881.58	3,374,409.06	3. Current Assets:		
3. General Funds:			a) Cash in Hand	98,481.50	15,700.50
Opening Balance	1,118,922.24	10,960,892.91	b) Cash at Banks	728,381.07	522,407.84
Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure transferred from I & E a/c	538,884.45	-	c) Rental Deposits:	440,000.00	100,400.00
Less: Excess of Expenditure over Income transferred from I & E a/c	-	6,915,096.61	d) TDS Receivable:		
	1,657,806.69	4,045,796.30	As per last Balance Sheet	-	375,512.00
			Less: Refund received	-	72,720.00
4. Other Liabilities:					502,792.00
a) TDS Collected:			Add: TDS Receivable during the year		65,890.00
Collected during the year	4,427.00	-	e) Programme Advance Given:	83,879.00	-
Reversal of Transfer	515,000.00	-			83,879.00
	519,427.00	-	4. Others:		
			Ear-marked Funds-EXCESS APPLIED		
Total	35,713,248.63	35,713,248.63	a) FC Section (As per Schedule Y2)	-	14,756,019.70
			b) Local Section (As per Schedule Y3)	-	405,476.46
					15,161,496.16
			Total		35,713,248.63

Vide our report attached
For Shiva Prasad and Co.,
Chartered Accountants
FRN: 014378 S

CA. Shiva Prasad S
Proprietor
MRN: 252414
11-12-2021, Bengaluru

For Best Practices Foundation

Dr. Sangeetha Purushothaman
Secretary

Dr. Surashree Shome
Treasurer

BEST PRACTICES FOUNDATION
Flat 3C/2C, Santosh Apartments, Palmgrove Road, Victoria Layout,
Bengaluru - 560047, Karnataka, India.

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March, 2021
(Consolidated)

Expenditure	Amount (Rs.)		Income	Amount (Rs.)	
	FC	LOCAL		FC	LOCAL
To Other Payments:			To Bank Interest:		
Capital Expenditure			on SB a/c	172,478.00	50,763.00
Building		5,893,198.00	on FDs	323,655.00	812,011.00
Move Programme	200,000.00		Accrued Interest on Fixed deposit	151,478.00	131,549.00
TDS on Move Programme	3,450.00			647,609.00	494,323.00
Bank Charges	683.55	234.82			
* Expenditure from adjustment (Schedule Y3)		2,597,530.35	To Other Receipts:		
Adjustment of Programme Advance	61,204.00		Income from adjustment (as per Schedule Y3)		581,575.00
Adjustment of Last year Leadership TDS	1,600.00		Income from last year Fixed deposit balance adjustment	113,747.00	429,770.56
Adjustment of Last year Professional Tax	4,000.00		Income from - Contribution for Insurance balance adjustment	19,916.00	68,796.00
			Income from - Last Year Professional Tax balance adjustment		1,400.00
			Income from Last Year TDS balance adjustment	28,550.00	
* Excess of Income over Expenditure transferred to General Fund	538,884.45			162,211.00	1,081,541.56
			* Excess of Expenditure over Income transferred to General Fund		6,915,098.61
Total		9,900,785.17	Total		9,900,785.17

vide our report attached
For Shiva Prasad and Co.,
Chartered Accountants
FRN: 014378 S

CA. Shiva Prasad S
Proprietor
MRN: 232414
11-12-2021, Bengaluru



For Best Practices Foundation

Dr. Sangeetha Purushothaman
Secretary

Dr. Surashree Shome
Treasurer



BEST PRACTICES FOUNDATION
Flat 3C/2C, Santosh Apartments, Palmgrove Road, Victoria Layout,
Bengaluru - 560047, Karnataka, India.

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st March, 2021
(Consolidated)

Receipts	Amount (Rs.)		Payments	Amount (Rs.)	
	FC	LOCAL		FC	LOCAL
To Opening Balance (Schedule Y3)			By Specific/Ear-Marked Fund		
a) Cash in Hand	76,387.50	30,856.50	Excess:		
b) Cash at Banks	12,505,683.78	853,400.51	(As per Schedule V2 & W2)	34,992,373.32	7,957,086.85
	12,582,071.28	704,257.01			42,949,440.17
Specific / Ear-Marked Funds received			By Other Payments:		
(As Per Schedule V1 & W1)			Capital Expenditure		
* Bank Interest:			Building		5,893,198.00
a) on SB a/c	172,478.00	30,763.00			
b) on Fixed Deposits	302,526.00	288,340.00	a) Professional tax Collected Paid	7,400.00	7,400.00
	475,004.00	339,103.00			
			Fixed Deposit made		
To Other Receipts:			Head Office	17,800,000.00	11,800,000.00
a) TDS Collected	4,089.00		Leadership	370,000.00	
b) Professional tax Collected		1,400.00	c) Move Programme	200,000.00	
(Fixed Deposit Realised)			d) Bank Charges	683.55	234.82
Head Office	17,213,747.00	19,462,851.00			
Leadership	1,550,000.00				
d) Advances Given out/Recovered	800,286.00	117,322.00	* Closing Balance (Schedule Y3)		
Refund of TDS from Income tax Department		72,720.00	a) Cash in Hand	98,481.50	15,700.50
e) Reversal of Transfer	515,000.00		b) Cash at Banks	728,381.07	522,407.84
				826,862.57	538,108.34
Total		80,585,927.45	Total		80,585,927.45

vide our report attached
For Shiva Prasad and Co.,
Chartered Accountants
FRN: 014378 S

CA. Shiva Prasad S
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MRN: 232414
11-12-2021, Bengaluru



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