

2021-2022

Annual **REPORT**



**SAMARA
SOCIETY**
YESHWANTHPUR

Sexuality | Equality | Solidarity

REG. NO: SOR/BLU/DR/1484/2010-11

ORGANISATION INFORMATION

Name of Organization	: Samara Society Yeshwanthpur
Registration Date	: 15th March, 2011
Registration Number	: SOR/BLU/DR/1484/2010-11
Registration Office	: Samara Society Yeshwanthpur, No.360, A/3, Building VNR Complex 1st cross, 5th Main road, Yeshwanthpur, Bangalore-560022

COMMUNITY BASED **ORGANIZATION**

Samara Society Yeshwanthapura - Yes we are ready for the battle

Samara Society Yeshwanthpur is a Community-Based Organisation (CBO) of working class, non-English speaking LGBTQI+ communities in Karnataka working with all marginalised populations and movements in India with an ultimate goal of facilitating South-South cooperation for a Just World!

BACKGROUND

SamaraYes is a Rights-based organisation of Sexual and Gender Minorities. We are a community of sexual minorities of all identities and we work with sexual minorities. We aim to bring together, collectivise and assist sexuality minorities of all identities, including lesbians, bisexuals, homosexuals, gays, kothis, jogappas, Double Deckers, Hijras, transgender people and others who are discriminated against due to their sexual orientation and, or gender identity. We are not excluding others not mentioned here. We encourage and assist our community to live their lives with self-acceptance, self-respect and dignity; We aim and work to bring sexuality, sexual orientation, identity and gender identity into the realm of public discourse and link it to gender, human rights and development issues and movements in India.

SamaraYes advocates and lobbies for the changes in the existing laws which discriminate against sexuality minorities and for shaping the public opinion and discourse on these issues. We work with both general population, bureaucrats, policy makers, politicians and others like media, judiciary and police. We also work with family members, friends, co-workers and partners of sexuality minorities. We focus on working with lesbian, bisexual, homosexual women, who are doubly disadvantaged, as sexual minorities and as women. We also work with Kothis, Hijras and transgender people, who face oppression due to their gender non-conformity. We also work with people of inter-sex, especially female-born. We actively advocate for the rights of sex-workers and people living with HIV.

We emphasize the concerns of sexuality minorities from poor and non-English speaking background and sexuality minority sex workers who otherwise have little or no access to information and resources. At the same time, we sensitise corporate communities and build bridges with English speaking, elite communities.

Samara Society Yeshwanthapura - Core Values



VISION AND MISSION

VISION

“Vibrant and sustainable Samara society yeswanthapura improving gender and sexual minority’s lives by responding effectively to the needs of every Human being”.

MISSION

“Providing high-quality services and facilities in accordance with the requirements of gender and sexual minorities with self-fund and capacitated human resources”.

PROGRAMMES BY SSY

- Samara society yeswanthapura predominantly works in Bangalore which, according to the geographical mapping done by Sangama in 2005, had a population of 0.10 million gender and sexual minorities.
- The first step towards this work was taken by the implementation of targeted interventions with the help of KSAPS and Pehchan from 2011.



- Prior to 2010, the projects related with gender and sexual minorities were scattered and had inadequate coverage. They focused mainly on risk reduction rather than vulnerability reduction. The understanding about the typology was limited and with less or no community participation.
- The HRG mapping estimates of 2006 witnessed the immediate need to completely relook at the strategies.
- During inception it was seen that the coverage of gender and sexual minorities in sex work in Bangalore was about 3,500 annually and treating around 200 gender and sexual minorities for STI per year.

SSY KSAPS PROJECT

ESTIMATION OF SSY TIS	
TGTI Bangalore Urban	2154
MSM TI 1 Bangalore Urban	3650
MSM TI 2 Bangalore Urban	1111
MSM/ TG TI Bangalore rural	900
Total	7815

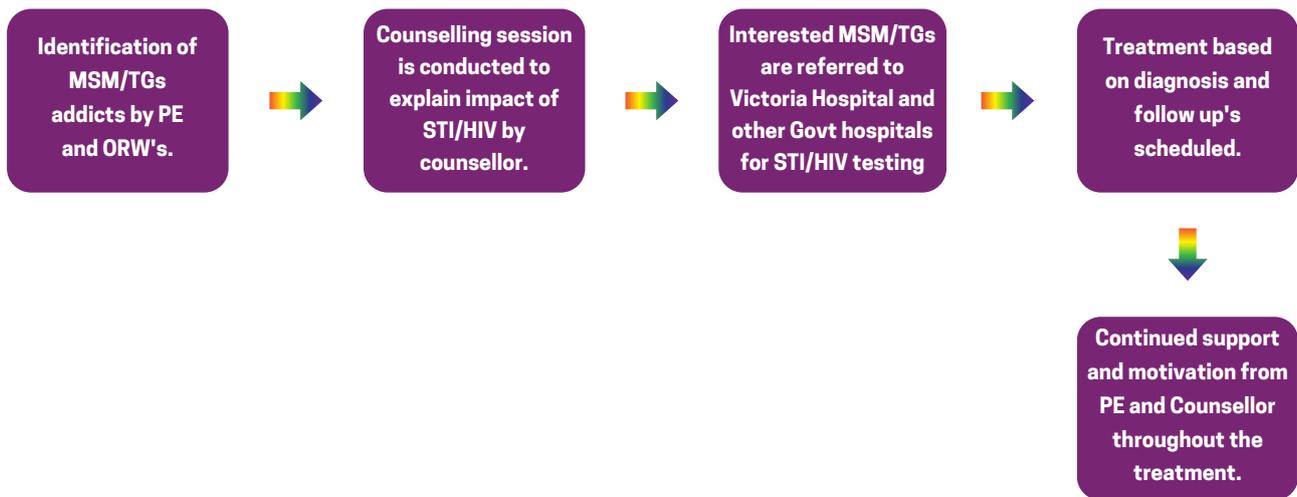
- Initially it was planned to cover 6000 population in the allotted four TIs
- Project KSAPS i is staffed by over 64 team members, more than 80% of which are from the Key Population. The positions range from field peer educators(PE) to field operations manager

Combination Programming



- This project has reached over 6600 MSM/TGs and has provided STI treatment and referrals to over 6000 MSM/TGs in Bangalore urban & Bangalore rural this project has reach 800 FSW and has provided STI treatment and referrals to over 700 FSWs . Around 100% condom are distributed every month.
- The partnership between SSY and KSAPS is based on mutual respect, equality and tolerance and involves them in designing the project and implementation.
- Project KSAPS is staffed by over 125 team members, more than 95% of which are from the Key Population. The positions range from field peer educators(PE) to field operations manager

THE PROCESS



STRATEGIES

- The strategy which assisted in making the endeavour a success was working with the key leaders among MSM/TGs. When these leaders shared their experience they served as role models for many others WSW's and paved way for many others to follow.
- Regular campaigns are conducted to create and maintain awareness.
- The SSY team has received training and support from institutes , which has allowed them to continue their work, despite the many challenges.

SSY VIHAAN **PROJECT**

- On 16th June 2018, SSY and KHPT together launched Vihaan (re-energizing in hindi), a programme for TGs in sex work who are HIV positive to improve their quality of life and their family's through collective and cooperative approach.
- The Vihaan Network operates largely in the district of Bangalore Urban, Bangalore rural, Gulbarga, Bellary and Belgam
- The Vihaan Network comprising of PLHIV, works at each of the SSY Mane's to motivate TGs with HIV to visit the ICTC's.
- Those who disclose their status are referred to different support services and also become part of the support group, which meets regularly.
- The Vihaan team also works with the larger community of women in sex work to help them understand the issues of HIV positive women in sex work. This helps in reducing the stigma and discrimination within the community.
- Its impact has largely been through establishing institutional linkages with
 1. Care and support centers
 2. ART centers
 3. Residential facilities for TGs and their partners
 4. Government departments for social entitlements and other facilities
 5. HIV Positive networks of CBOs and NGOs
 6. TB treatment centers
 7. Nutrition support centers
 8. Child Welfare organizations
 9. Social welfare organizations providing financial support

SSY SAVI SUPPLYMENTARY NUTRITION

- Proper and adequate nutrition, along with medical treatment, plays a very important role in maintaining good health as it improves the immunity of the body, helping in prevention of secondary infections; energises the body; maintains the CD-4 count in the body.
- Recognizing this need Vihaan project decided to take up preparation and distribution of a nutrition supplement –SSY Savi . A production unit for SSY Sav, a nutritional supplement in powder form, was started on 30th November , 2018.
- The powder has undergone testing at the Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysore and the results reveal that the supplement provides 429 kilo calories per 100 grams.
- An average of 150 kilograms of nutritional food is produced and sold every month. About 60% of the supplement is distributed or sold to PLHIV either directly through Vihaan i project or through the network for positive persons.

SSY NITYA **SANJEEVINI**

A VIOLENCE REDRESSED MECHANISM

- MSM/TGs/FSWs in sex work are easy targets for violence and harassment. They are vulnerable to violence because they are looked down upon by society.
- Under this program, we aim at the prevention and condemnation of any form of social abuse or discrimination. We believe that no group of individuals deserves to be mistreated in society and thus, work to empower women in sex work.
- MSM/TGs/FSWs have an equal right and need to live good, respectable and decent lives. Discrimination by government officials, especially the police, and society at large prevents these women from gaining adequate access to health care, entitlements etc. to secure their lives. Violence and harassment increase the vulnerability of MSM/TGs/FSWs in sex work, affecting their physical and mental well-being.
- Our goal is to empower and mobilize MSM/TGs/FSWs tackle any form of violence and also bring perpetrators of violence to justice. The trauma caused by these types of violence is deep and unless they are given justice, these women will be unable to bring progress in their lives.

- SSV was, thus, formed in order to fight against stigma, discrimination, harassment and violence, respond to crisis and bring justice to sex workers. SNS proactively takes context-specific action based on the severity of the violence. With the help of Swasti and other organizations, local government officials and secondary stakeholders, 7250 cases have been responded till date.

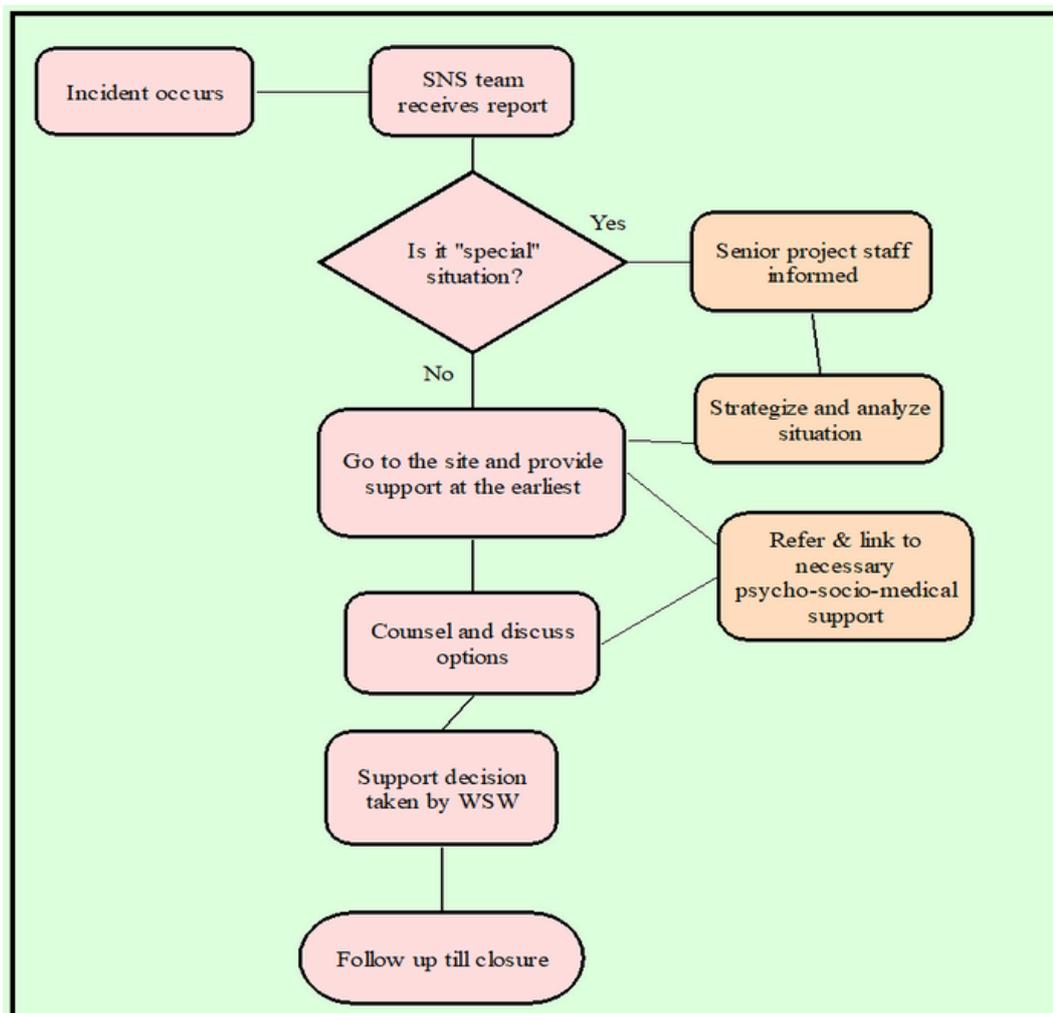
OBJECTIVES

Respond to the atrocities perpetrated against and the trafficking of MSM/TGs /FSWs

To provide support to MSM/TGs/FSWa who have faced violence and educate them on their rights.

Support of secondary stakeholders through advocacy and sensitization.

PROCESS OF SNS



SSY SNS AREA OF WORK

- Any support required by MSM/TGs/FSW irrespective of type (mental, physical or social) harassment and violence is addressed by the SSY team.
- Those MSM/TGs/FSW who face violence are counselled, provided alternative methods to resolve issues and are also referred to other organisations for serving their needs and requirements.
- Networking with other CO's which tackle violence and trafficking of women in order to spread awareness on these issues and come up with constructive programs.
- Sensatization of secondary stakeholders (eg. police, etc)

SWATHI NYAYA SANJEEVINI'S STRATEGIES

SNS uses the following strategies to provide effective services to MSM/TGs:

1. Top 'A' site and violence watch committee
2. Secondary stakeholders' management
3. 24/7 response team

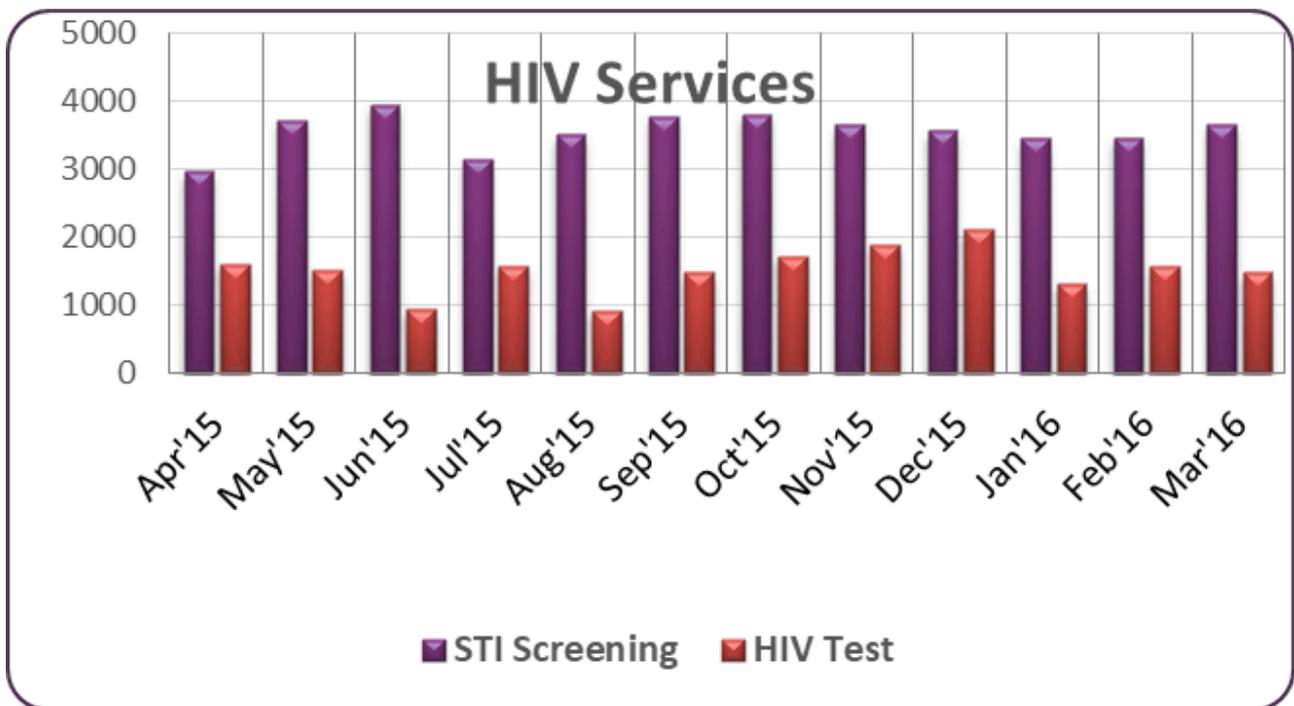
SSY MITHR PROJECT

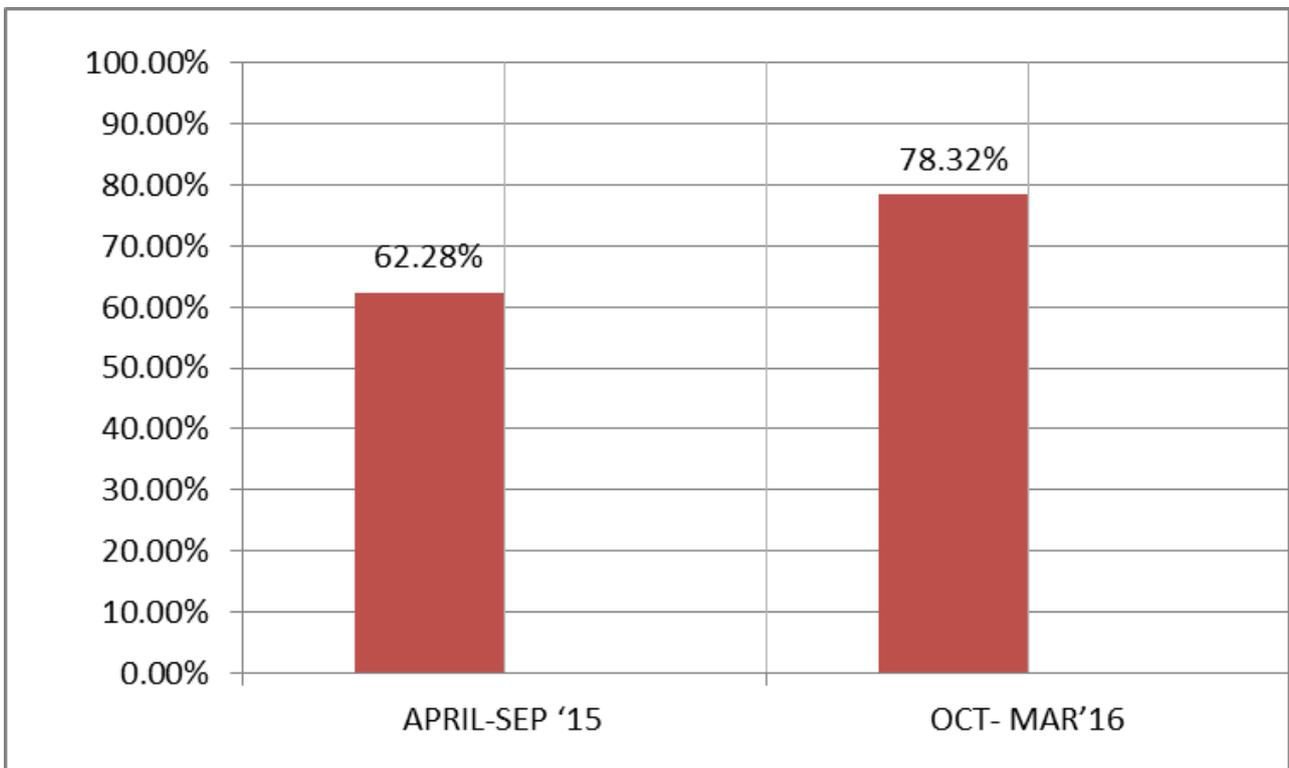
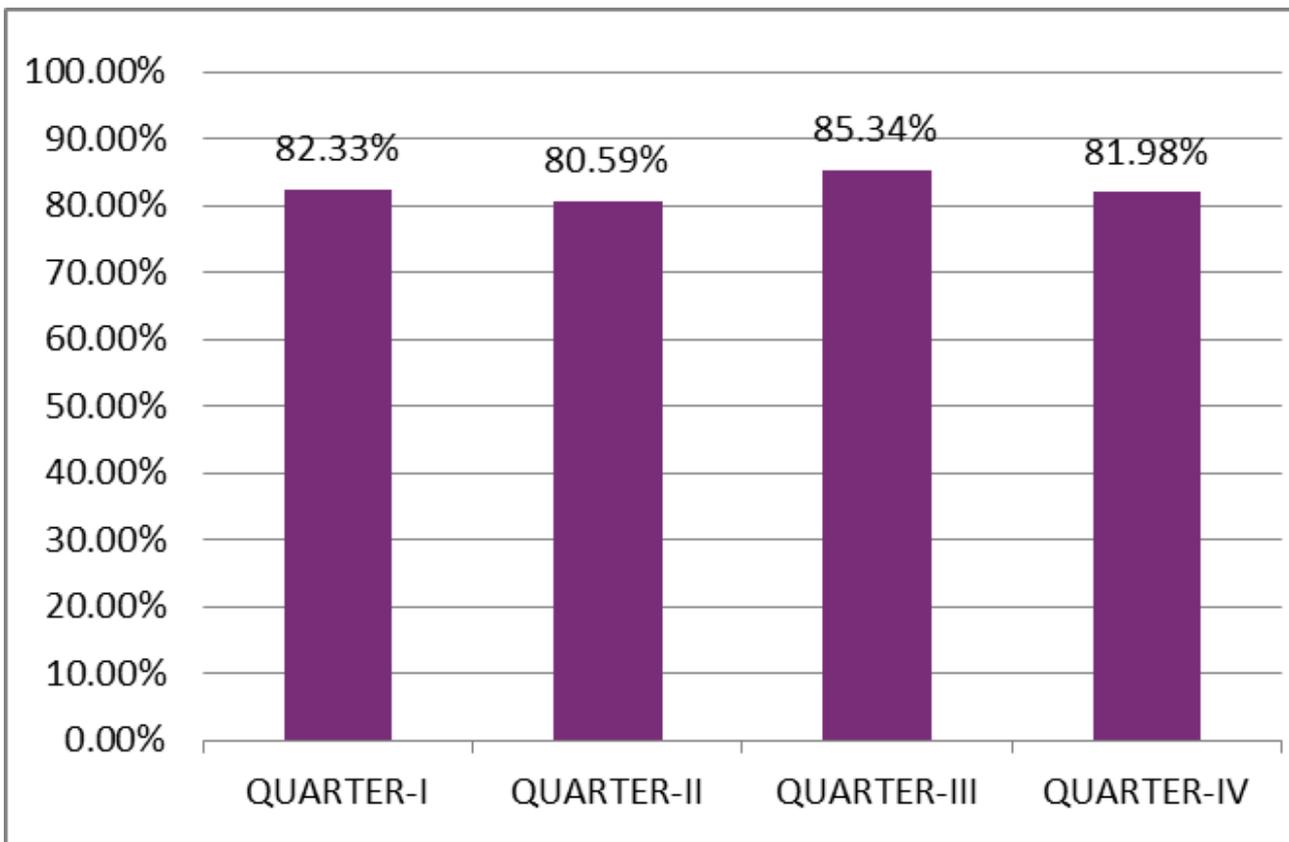
- To facilitate HIV testing services Samara society yeswanthapura in support with Swasti.
- To focus more on New HRG of MSM and TGs in Sites and do HIV testing with the help of Community Health Facilitators
- Focus on more HRGs of MSM and TGs who are in Gap of more than one year
- Promoting MSMs and TGs for CBSC based HIV testing
- Promoting MSMs and TGs partners to do HIV testing's
- This project has started from 1st July 2018.
- Till now we done 8000 HIV testing for New HRGs of MSM, TGs and their Partners
- Till now we got 74 HIV positives of New HRGs
- With help of four CHF we are initiating MITHR project in Bangalore Urban

SSY KSAPS **EMPOWERING LIVES**

HIV SERVICES

- SSY is receiving grant from NACO-KSAPS to implement the Targeted Intervention (TI 2.0) Programme in 3 TIs of Bangalore Urban.
- Organization has reached nearly 6915 MSM / TGs, 900 FSWs and provided information about
 1. STI and HIV
 2. Usage of Condoms in preventing STI and HIV along with distribution of free condoms.
 3. Referring and Linking PLHIV to ART clinics for Counseling, Testing and Treatment services





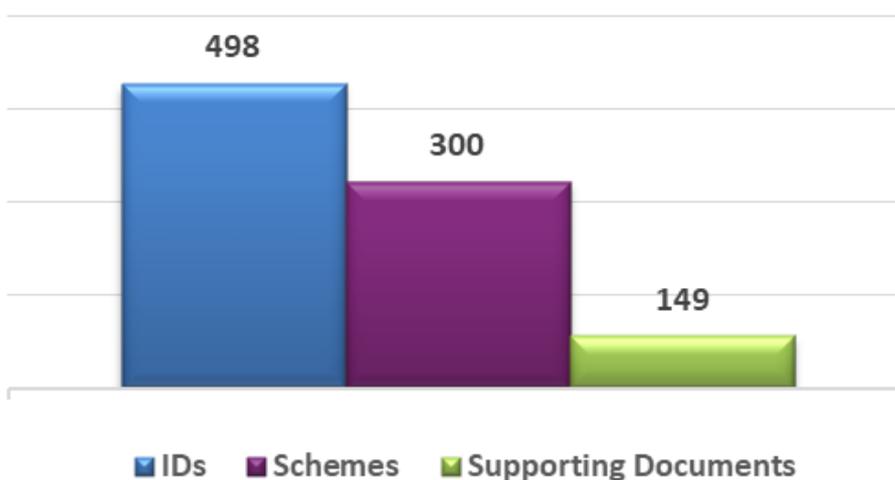
On an average, STI screening was noted to be 82.56 % which shows the existence of referral clinics and availability of drugs, proper linkages along with skilled outreach staffs

- This graph shows that the HIV tests conducted from April to September '2020 were comparatively less due to non availability of HIV testing kits.
- Simultaneously, SSY catered them with low cost nutritional supplements known as SSY Savi to fulfill the nutritional needs due to persistent infections and consumption of ART.
- Rendered services which addressed Stigma and Discrimination among PLHIV MSM / TGs / FSWs.

SSY SOCIAL PROTECTION

- Due to persistent Stigmatization and Discrimination towards MSm/Tgs in the society it poses a challenge for them to entitle the basic rights as a citizen.
- Low level of awareness and Complicated process makes it difficult for the WSW's to access the Civic Identity cards like Voter Id, Aadhar Card, Ration Card and other social security schemes like Widow pension, Subsidy loans, self employment Loans, Housing Loans etc.
- To facilitate social protection services Samara society yeswanthapura in support with Swasti has established a Unified Help Desk – UHD at their 3 Drop in Centers – DIC's.
- The UHD tries to understand the basic needs of MSm/Tgs by reviewing their eligibility, sensitizing them on available schemes and benefits, enable them to fill the application forms, facilitating them for submission to concerned officials, departments and follow-up until they get the services done.
- There are 5 UHD facilitators and 5 CO Managers exclusively working towards generating demand, Compiling demand applications and forming network with concerned departments and service providers.

SP service access in 2018-2019



CAPACITY **BUILDING TRAININGS**

3 two-day capacity building workshops with 20 trans persons from each city

Transgender Skill Building Program

Skill building workshops per CBO with 15 participants

Develop Content for Educational and corporate sensitization

Conduct Sensitization at Corporate and Educational Institutes

Four sensitizations per CBO - two educational institutes and two corporate

National transgender consultation and development of a transgender advocacy

And action plan

Aadhaar Card Camps across three cities - a total of 150 transpersons benefitting

One 3-day Aadhaar Card Camp per CBO - sustainability plan

PAN, Bank Account, and Gazette Set Up - a total of 200 transpersons benefitting

ACHIEVEMENTS

- We have made around 235 voter ID cards
- We have made around 189 Aadhar cards
- We have given Skill building training for 2 members of Car driving
- We have done 4 educational sensitization with KLE Law College, St Mount Carmel College, St Josephs collage and Crist College
- Self employment loan was provided for 234 members

INSTITUTIONAL **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Institutional and Individual Capacities Developed

- The Organization has over 35 governing and thematic community leaders, who are the founding members with over 10 years of experience, middle level leaders with over 10 years of experience and new or emerging leaders with limited or no experience but willing to take up the responsibility to serve to wellbeing of their own community and their own institution.
- Internal leadership development Programme helped to identify, nurture and mentor the leaders pursue substantial role within the organization.
- During the reporting period, over 48 members have undergone LDP training and over 200 plus field level champions received training.

Resource Mobilization

- The projects planned are highly focused and are programmed in such a way that they are closely addressing the specific needs of the community.
- With a surge in the number of projects, the availability of funds and approval of grants gets challenging. As the requirement of the community increases the numbers of grants are coming down.
- To address this situation Organization has decided to mobilize resources in the form of money, materials and services locally.
- As part of the RM programme, Organization has mobilized around 0.6 million through its members as membership fee and 0.7 million from local donors. The amount has been utilized to providing nutrition supplement and medical expenses of PLHIV, HR and administration expenses.

Leadership Development

- Due to the persistent stigma towards the WSW's prevailing in the society, they are often not given the due recognition as others.
- SMS is a Community organization which basically works for the well being of WSW. The leaders are chosen from the same community as key population.
- In order to reach out the beneficiaries, it requires large number of people who can manage the organization.

ADVOCACY **ACTIVITIES**

SSY primary aims are to strengthen the LGBTQI movement from within and foster coordination between various LGBTQI organizations around the nation. To that end, we plan to centre our efforts in Karnataka, India, where we have an established network of allies. We also work with other similar organizations around for the first time a voice of Jogappa community addressing the diverse identity of Jogappa.

The country and our goal is to create a strong and capable national network of LGBTQI activists. To that end, we plan to work with similar organizations in various states around the country.

Indian's Constitution provides all citizens with fundamental rights. Fundamental rights are special type of rights for several reasons, in which they are the essential rights necessary for a person to live a complete and dignified life. They are difficult to tamper with, it takes an amendment of the constitution to amend fundamental rights, and this is not an easy process. Compared with others rights, they are easier to enforce. This is because if a person's fundamental rights are violated they can directly approach the Supreme Court or any High Court for justices. The Supreme Court and High Court have extraordinary powers to deal with such cases. This helps a person to get Justice quickly and effectively.

Advocacy work

October 2020,

SSY as a new organization having its rich community mobilization skill we were part of Karnataka Transgender Samiti which is an autonomous group for Transgender community to mobilise around Five thousand Transgender/Sexual Minorities community across the country and media to fight against social stigma occurred based on a local channel sting operation named as Operation Anandi recently in 2019, which led eviction, human rights violation etc.

With the same in mind SSY along with Karnataka transgender samitiorganised an equality walk on 2 October wherein transgender people from all over Karnataka came in to show their solidarity. This walk proved to be a major game changer giving space for transgender voices to be heard by all the platforms of the society and also all.

Pride March coalition for sex workers, sexual and sexuality minorities which made the visibilities of the hidden community Jogaappa voice in open platform by SSY.

November 2021

One of the steps of our success from our SSY co founder who met Honourable President of India, Transgender Bill 2016 draft to discuss various issues which made a kind of thunder sharing of issues.

SSY took part and organized an event on they were to be addressed in the bill with community members from all over Karnataka. The first day's discussion consisted of what were the changes to be made with regard to the bill so as to make it more favorable to the community members. The entire bill was read out in front of all the participants in presence of two legal experts. The problems were discussed and taken into account for further amendments. On the second day of the same, organized by SSY, where the discussion was held on the recommendations on the transgender persons (protection of rights) bill 2016. This was a coalition of various other groups including women's rights groups and child rights group to get better feedback for bettering the bill as a whole.

December 2021

A National Consultation/Dialogue about United Nation Sexual Orientation - Gender Identity, IPC 377, TG Bill, Which brought activists together from West Bengal, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Migrated communities, elderly persons, working class sexual minorities, feminists, child rights activists and others joined for an in depth discussion about the future movements.

January 2022

SSY attended and was a part of panel discussion on the topic "Contesting Exclusions in Higher Education: Pedagogy, Practices and Politics" wherein many different activists and thinkers participated to give views on how education is not equally distributed to everyone in the university Society. SSY participating in talk "Contesting Exclusions in Higher Education: Pedagogy. Practices and Politics."

February 2022

National Level Reviving discussion on the pending cases related to IPC Section 377, where national leaders of LGBTQI gathered to take further plan,

Organized by Lawyers Collective at ISI New Delhi.SSY made a further process on towards the National consultation held in Bangalore followed to - A Delhi visit to meet the standing committee members of TG bill, MPs and Local organizations working in Delhi and also shared our SSY consultation report which was a highlight of the loops and gaps in TG bill and also to share our demands, which was a successful meeting with MP's and organization in Delhi.

One of the biggest and most prominent activities done in April was the body donation camp by five members of the SSY family. Five transgender persons for the first time in India donated their bodies for medical research at Bangalore Medical College proving that discrimination and marginalization is no bar to better the society.

March 2022

SSY visited Bangalore University to give an awareness session on "Transgender Rights" on 22 March 2022. This session was conducted with the faculty, teachers and students of Department of Social Work. It was a very interactive session. SSY also met with the vice chancellor of Bangalore University Dr. M.Muniraju.