

SAMPADA GRAMEEN MAHILA SANSTHA



SANGRAM ANNUAL REPORT



2012-2013

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A. OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANIZATION

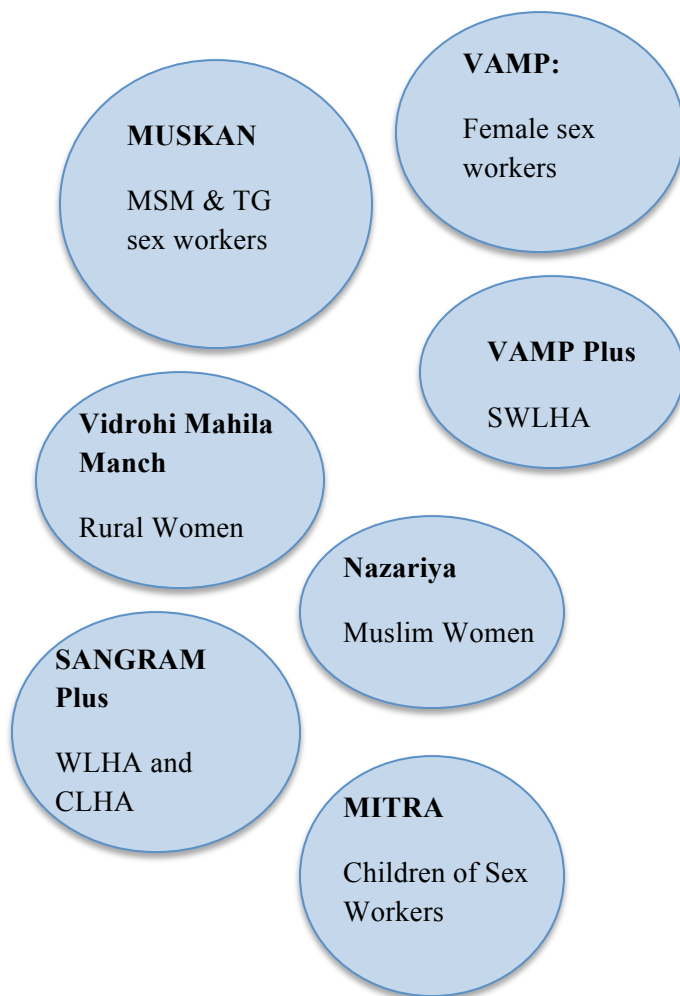
SANGRAM is a health and human rights NGO reaching out to vulnerable people in rural districts of western Maharashtra and northern Karnataka. It works to address social inequality and promote justice amongst communities discriminated against because of sexual preference, sex work, HIV status, gender, caste, and religion. It focuses on building solidarity amongst diverse and marginalized communities by using a rights-based approach to self-determination that organizes the voiceless to collectivize.

This report presents SANRAM's activities and events during the year 2012-2013. The structure of the report begins by giving an overview of major milestones over the course of the year. It then moves on to details of each specific SANGRAM Program. It ends with a few case studies.

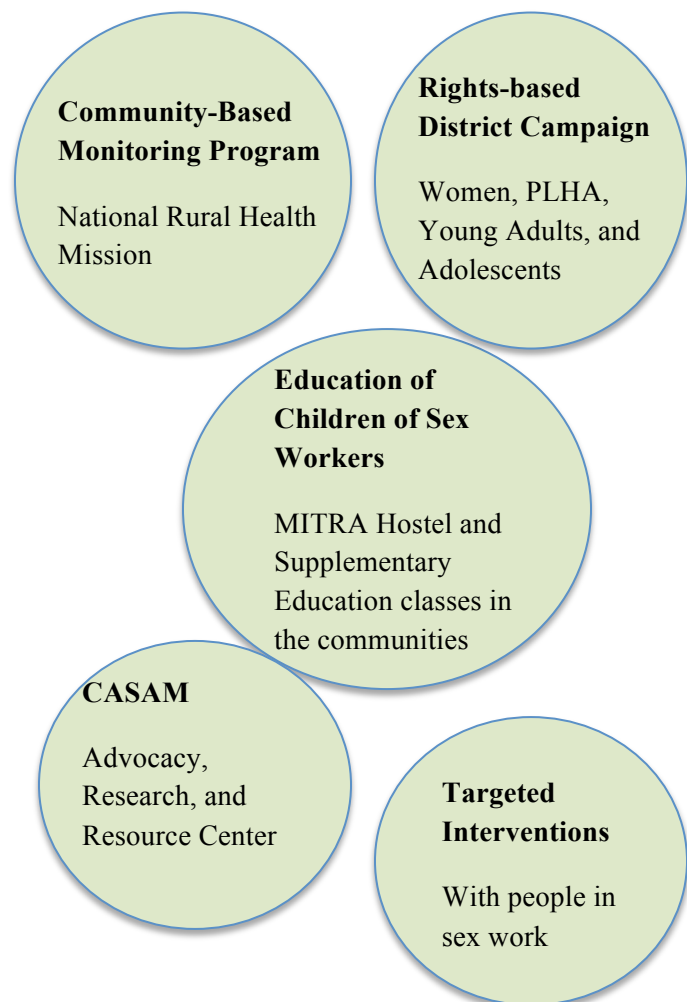


SANGRAM

Collectives



Programs



Overview

Collectives

VAMP: VAMP, an abbreviation of Veshya Anyay Mukti Parishad, is a collective of 5,511 women in sex work in Maharashtra and North Karnataka. Since 1990, they have been working on issues of health and human rights of sex workers. They serve as a model of a strong sex workers collective in region, at the local, national, and international level. Importantly, VAMP also works with transport and migrant workers in the region.

VAMP Plus: VAMP Plus is a collective of HIV positive sex workers. They engage in advocacy with health officials and government officials to access health and welfare schemes.

MUSKAN: MUSKAN is a collective of male and trans sex workers, which formed in 2000. They run support groups, facilitate targeted interventions, focus on issues surrounding HIV/AIDS, and are involved in local advocacy.

MITRA: Mitra is a collective of children of sex workers. SANGRAM runs MITRA hostel and provides supplementary education classes to these children. They also work with adult children of sex workers in terms of capacity building to support VAMP. While the work with children of sex workers began around 2000, the formal MITRA collective was formed in 2009 by VAMP in collaboration with SANGRAM in Nippani.

Vidrohi Mahila Manch: VMM works on a myriad of issues, from violence against children in schools to caste discrimination. It also encompasses the District Campaign and SANGRAM Plus, both of which are described below.

Nazariya: Nazariya recently formed in response to the need to work with Muslim women, after 12 years of trying to work with them. They focus on the collectivization of Muslim women through information sessions, support groups, among other methods. While it is still in its initial stage of the collectivization process, the goal is to form a strong collective.

SANGRAM Plus: SANGRAM Plus serves as a support to HIV positive women in the Sangli district.

Programs

Targeted Intervention: Targeted intervention is an HIV prevention program designed by the government. The goal of the program is to create awareness about HIV/AIDS, make HIV testing/treatment available, and do follow-up. VAMP currently has three targeted interventions programs, and MUSKAN has two. However, sometimes, the targeted intervention lacks a human rights approach; so, SANGRAM's strategy attempts to make the targeted intervention more familiar to the community.

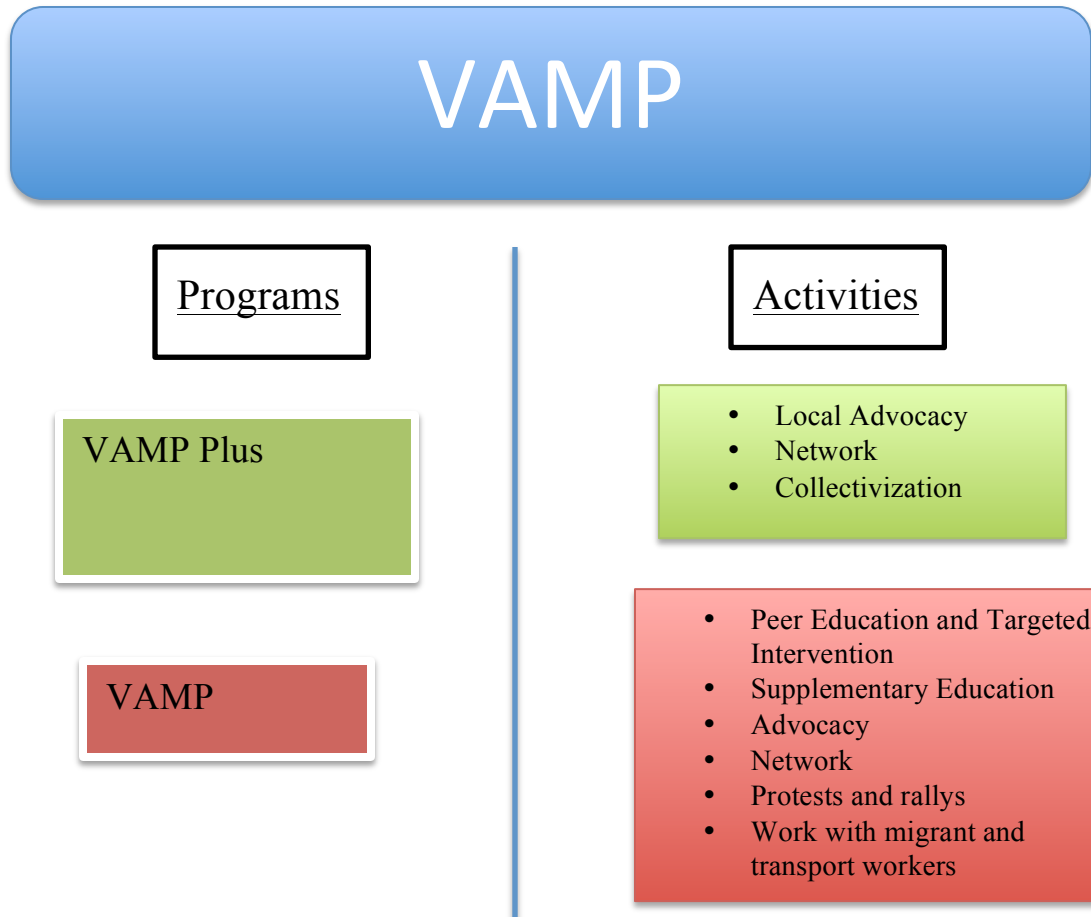
Community-Based Monitoring Program: CBM is a new, village-level monitoring program under the National Rural Health Mission that focuses on reviewing government health services. It is run in 13 districts in Maharashtra, and seeks to improve existing health structures and facilities. As a part of CBM, SANGRAM works in 30 villages Kolhapur district. CBM also works in collaboration with Sanvad, an NGO based in the Bhudargad bloc of Kolhapur District.

CASAM: CASAM serves as an Advocacy and Resource Center for issues focused on stigma and marginalization. They play an important role in documenting and publishing important issues that SANGRAM deals with. CASAM Resource center consists of books, periodicals, articles, newspaper clippings, posters, CDs, and photographs.

Rights-based District Campaign: The District Campaign focuses on the rights of women, people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA), young adults, and adolescents. They work in 713 villages in the Sangli district of Maharashtra. District Campaign activists themselves come from within the villages, strengthening the sustainability of the projects.

Education of Children of Sex Workers: In sex worker communities, we run supplementary classes for children of sex workers. These range from nursery to 10th class. We choose teachers from within the sex worker communities. This also allows mothers to do their business without having their children around. Before the supplementary education classes, children were roaming around while their mothers did work, but now they have structured activities.

B. SANGRAM COLLECTIVES



VAMP has accomplished a number of things this year. For one thing, there has been more of an importance given to the children of sex workers. VAMP has worked especially with mothers to emphasize the importance of education, even at a young age. VAMP has also been focusing more on these children's' lives as a whole, including social, educational and physical development.



In the photo above, VAMP members celebrate Sex Workers Rights Day on 3 March

- a. Another focus of VAMP has been the emphasis on voluntary HIV testing. They believe that the state's enforcement of mandatory testing for HIV is a human rights violation. VAMP believes in creating awareness for those who are willing to do the test, and keep all their records confidential. VAMP has tried to create a positive environment in which HIV testing takes place, instead of a stigmatized one, and has pushed for testing in existing government health setups. Beforehand, it was difficult for sex workers to access the health system, despite the fact that there are supposed to be free health clinics and medications for all.

VAMP has tried to create a positive environment in which HIV testing takes place, instead of a stigmatized one, and has pushed for testing in existing government health setups

- b. Additionally, VAMP continues to focus on social entitlements under government welfare schemes. For example, last year, most entitlements were only available to mainstream society. VAMP subsequently disseminated information, and now VAMP women have increased access to government schemes, including gaining access to bank accounts. VAMP has also done a lot of advocacy work with state level policymakers, including members of the Legislative Assembly, social welfare boards, civil hospitals, and the health secretariat. They advocated to get rid of compulsory identification papers and documentation in accessing government schemes. These include caste certificates and family name.
- c. VAMP Plus has also done a lot of advocacy work with local medical officials to get testing facilities and sonography machines in Sangli. Beforehand, they were only available in Miraj, but VAMP fought against this and said that it was the government's responsibility to have these facilities in Sangli. VAMP also ensured that there were sufficient supplies of medicine in Sangli, and made the government accountable if there were not.
- d. Furthermore, VAMP members Minakshi and Kiran went to Delhi and Mumbai to present to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

Continuing programmes:

This past year, VAMP has continued to run its targeted intervention programs, with more focus on technical programs and documentation. All of the program staff has been familiarized with this approach, and has gone through a series of trainings. Importantly, community members themselves run this program.

Targeted Intervention

Sangli and Satara TI analysis report March-13										
District	TI	Active Population	PLHA 11-12	Target for ICTC 12-13	Target Achieved as on March 13	Due for April 13	% ICTC	Total PLHA	Not linked with ART	PLHA discontinued
Sangli	Miraj TI	886	101	785	619	166	78.85	113	0	0
	Sangli TI	1031	148	883	717	166	81.20	193	36	3
	Muskan	492	55	437	274	163	62.70	61	2	0
Satara	VAMP TI	507	49	458	379	79	82.75	55	3	0
	Muskan TI	288	11	277	217	60	78.34	16	1	0
Total		3204	364	2840	2206	634		438	42	3

VAMP also holds weekly community meetings, and runs VAMP Plus, a support and information group for HIV-positive people. The benefits include getting the necessary medications to people otherwise reluctant to get it. There was also a case of breakage of condom among sex workers, and Kiran went to the hospital to talk with doctors, who said that we don't have storage of medicines. So, Kiran met with head of department and ultimately got concessions.

On 1st December, VAMP and MUSKAN participated in the World AIDS Day rally organized by Civil Hospital in Sangli in collaboration with District Collector's office. Holding hands with government showed their solidarity with the government in fighting AIDS. This was also an opportunity to mainstream the issues sex workers face.

Furthermore, there was a Pension parishad in Delhi (national level) and Mumbai (state level) to gain access to pensions for workers from the unorganized sector. More than 3000 older women and men who needed to get this pension scheme from the government attended the meeting.

Also, in June 2013, one VAMP member, Sangeeta, participated in an online forum with participants from all over the world. The online forum posted questions about multigenerational organizing, and Sangeeta was able to contribute the benefits and challenges of VAMP's approach towards organizing multiple generations.

Importantly, one way in which SANGRAM helps VAMP fight against state violence is through meetings with activists groups. For example, the meeting of sex workers in Pune in November 2012 helped collectivize sex workers across the state of

Maharashtra and share experiences of violence, as well as understand how to deal with these experiences. This meeting was held in collaboration with Masum a women's organization and CFAR an advocacy organization to influence poets, writers and intellectuals from the town of Pune.

Sex Worker Freedom Festival

VAMP participated in the Sex Worker Freedom Festival in July 2012, as an alternative to the International AIDS Conference in Washington, DC. VAMP performed a theatrical show, based on the journey of the lives of sex workers. This show was acted by sex workers themselves and by their children. It aimed to help open dialogue with mainstream society about the stigmatization and harassment sex workers and their children face from society, police, and family, among others. They emphasized the collectivization process as helping empower sex workers.



In the photo above, SANGRAM, VAMP, and MUSKAN members march at the Kolkata Freedom Festival

Caste Certificates for Children of Devadasis

On November 29, 2012, members of VAMP went to Mumbai to raise the issue of caste certificates for children of devadasis. Currently, it is very difficult for children of sex workers to access government welfare schemes because they lack their father's legal history and proofs of residency. This is causing many students difficulty in continuing school.

This was the first meeting directly between community members and high-level government officials. The purpose was to get government officials to understand these restrictions in accessing welfare schemes, and try to mainstream issues of marginalized

communities. It was an important development to have this experience-sharing session, and to give a platform for sex workers to share their personal stories. SANGRAM has asked the Chief Minister of Maharashtra Hon. Pritivraj Chavan for an appointment to discuss the same.

Work with transport and migrant workers

VAMP has continued its work with transport and migrant workers in North Karnataka. This includes creating awareness about HIV



SANGRAM works with transport and migrant Workers

prevention through group discussions and training sessions. It also includes condom demonstrations and distributions, referrals to health systems, and PLHIV follow up visits.

VAMP Outreach in North Karnataka

Refer for TB: 18
 Male: 8
 Female: 10

Condom demonstrations: 27,480
Condom distribution: 1,621,428

Private doctor visits: 25
 Private lab visits: 170
 Government doctor Visit: 208

One to one session: 26,439
 Male: 10,460
 Female: 15,832
 TG: 147



SANGRAM successfully runs the government program in distributing condoms in preventing HIV and STIs.

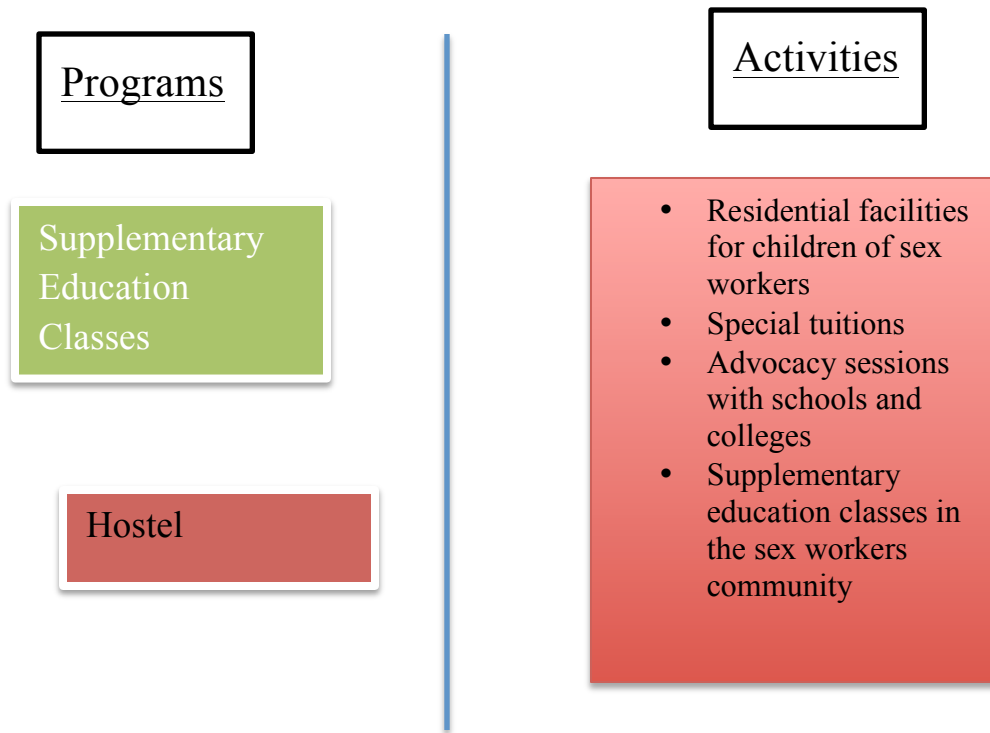
Total ART Registration: 48
 Male: 6
 Female: 42
ART Started: 25
 Male: 5
 Female: 20

Community Meetings: 140
 Total Outreach: 2079
Weekly staff meetings: 45
 Number of attendees: 328
Monthly Planning & Review Meetings: 12
 Number of Attendees: 286

Follow up PLHA: 60
 Male: 14
 Female: 46
Home Visit to PLHA: 184
 Male: 36
 Female: 148

New HIV+ Outreach: 50
 Male: 4
 Female: 46

Mitra Hostel: Supplementary education to kids of VAMP



SANGRAM has continued its supplementary education to the children of sex workers, including 14-20 children in Sangli. SANGRAM has also recently started supplementary education classes in Miraj. Since the Mitra hostel has started, some children have shifted there. These classes focus on building self-confidence and the self-esteem of these children, and they convene when their mothers are doing business. The classes also focus on getting the children's homework finished, and emphasizing the importance of education.

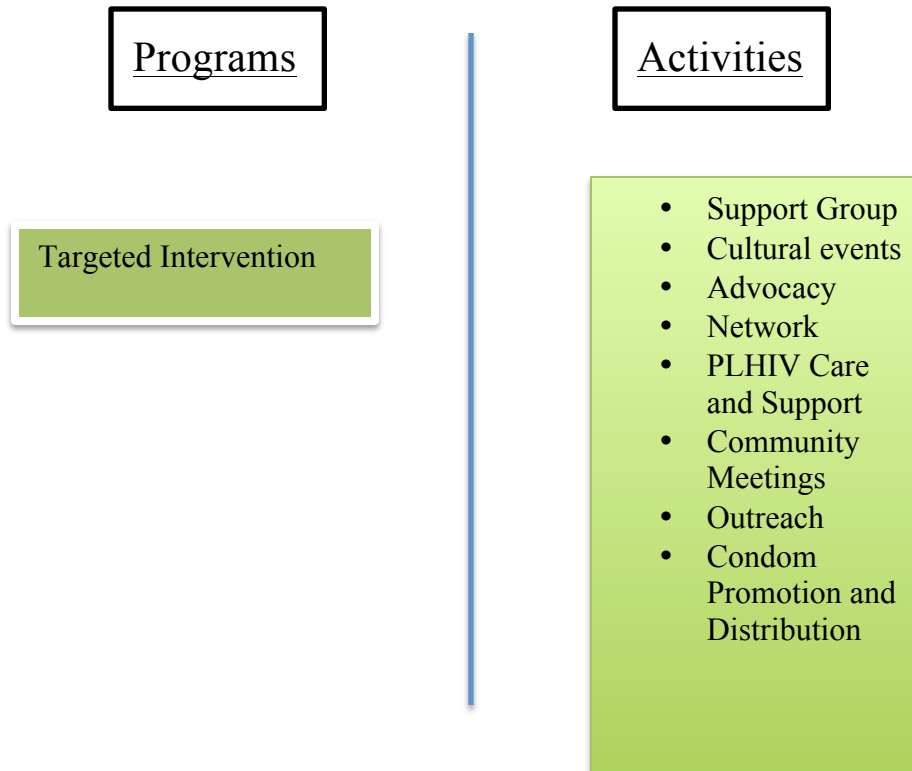
VAMP also runs a residential hostel for children of sex workers in Nippani, Karnataka. The hostel houses 41 children ranging from pre-primary to the 10th standard of education. The children attend the local government run public school and have special tuition after school. Recently, though, they faced one problem where supplementary education classes in North Karnataka were closed because of a lack of teachers in that region. The rest of the classes are run by members of MITRA Collective.



MITRA Hostel - Nippani

Sr. Number	Class	Girls	Boys	Total
1	Pre-primary	1	0	1
2	First	2	2	4
3	Second	1	3	4
4	Third	6	4	10
5	Fourth	4	2	6
6	Fifth	1	2	3
7	Sixth	3	3	6
8	Seventh	1	2	3
9	Eighth	1	0	1
10	Ninth	1	1	2
11	Tenth	1	0	1
	Total	22	19	41

MUSKAN



There were a number of cultural events that MUSKAN initiated in the past year. These events are used to encourage members to come to the Drop in Center (DIC) for health check ups etc. There were two major cultural events where community members could have fun, and simultaneously have health checkups in a non-intimidating environment.

MUSKAN has taken on the issues of different types of communities, including MSM, TG, and Kothi for crisis intervention throughout the year. For example, they have fought for allowing TG women to use female public toilets.

Additionally, since last year MUSKAN has been focusing more on People Living with HIV in the MSM program and has provided them care, support, and help with referral services. There are currently 55 people living with HIV/AIDS from the MSW/TG community. Many TG persons come by the drop in center to use the support group facilities. Muskan also provides home-based care, including providing tiffins for patients.

MUSKAN, like VAMP, has also expanded its targeted intervention approach in Sangli and Satara, and networked with other community members in other districts of Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Furthermore, there were two significant events on marital status: first, two HIV positive people got married through MUSKAN (one from MUSKAN and one from District Campaign), and second, two MSM boys were able to live together by going to the police station and getting documents proving that they could live together.

Another accomplishment was that MUSKAN got the Bombay Public Trust certificate, and was recognized by the government as a CBO. Finally, PEHCHAN visited MUSKAN as a CBO for evaluation, and decided to recommend them for direct funding, MUSKAN also got their pan card in October.



Vidrohi Mahila Manch

Programs

District Campaign

SANGRAM Plus

Activities

- Outreach
- Advocacy
- Service Provision
- Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission of HIV
- Prevention of Domestic Violence
- Training meetings and workshops

- Access to government welfare schemes
- Home visits
- Continuous care and support

One important issue that Vidrohi Mahila Manch is fighting against is violence against children in schools. There have been numerous instances of violence in different forms against students, in which there are often times little or no justice for the victims. On the 5th of September, instead of celebrating teacher's day, SANGRAM protested the inhumane acts of teachers against students. Vidrohi Mahila Manch wants teachers to be held accountable for their actions. They are also coordinating with local leaders to have a forum about these issues. In August, the Jayoti savitri sikhsan adhikar manch was initiated. Students who were abused could come to this forum and ask for justice, and their stories were recorded. VAMP and MUSKAN also participated in this protest.

Furthermore, Vidrohi Mahila Manch is working in the area of preventing communal violence. They recently organised a play on the legacy of King Shivaji who challenged upper caste dominance to become King, Since the play offers a historical perspective that is inclusive of the Dalit/Backward class/Muslim voice DC staff mobilized 900 people to watch the play, from different districts.

Additionally, Vidrohi Mahila Manch has focused on the issue of caste discrimination. They screened a documentary about extreme discrimination against Dalit communities made in Mumbai. The documentary discussed things like violence against Dalits, and the video was shown in many communities. It depicted real people's lives, and sent the message that we are first human beings, and we should do some reflection on ourselves and our castes' treatment of other castes.

Another area in which Vidrohi Mahila Manch has focused on this past year is sex-selective abortion. They have participated in government advocacy campaign awareness about sex-selective abortion, and have participated in discussions about what steps need to be taken to fight against this. They have focused on framing the issue about the life of a human being, regardless of its gender, and want to challenge son preference as a norm in the district.

Moreover, they have started working on the issue of natural resource rights. They started a development campaign in Ajara, where people are suffering from attacks of wild animal that have lost their habitat and are now straying into the villages. The government has been demolishing the trees in the jungle for commercial purposes. Therefore, the animals have been coming out from the jungle and into the villages, and attacking people. The campaign has been advocating for a stop in destroying jungles for profit.

District Campaign

The District Campaign has achieved a number of accomplishments this year at the village level, and expanded its approach to not just helping with prevention, care, and treatment of HIV, but also issues like domestic violence against women, caste discrimination, communal violence, and natural resource rights.

Along with VAMP and MUSKAN, the District campaign helped protest the Delhi rape case. Importantly, they were not just protesting the atrocity of the incident, but also protesting the recommendation that the rapists receive the death penalty. District Campaign believes that simply hanging the men will not stop rapes from occurring in the future, and proposes to create awareness about prevention of the conditions that perpetrate rape.

District Campaign also held a rally in a local village about the condition of sanitation facilities. The government had previously decided to close down local toilets, and thus the women of this village got together and demanded the land for a toilet facility. They were successful in protesting against the government and recovering the toilet facilities.

Another issue they fought against was government rations. Formerly, the government had given out rations such as grains, rice, wheat, and oil to villages. Recently, they decided to instead put money directly into peoples' bank accounts instead of handing out the rations called 'direct cash transfers'. This created problems for the villagers, though, as many didn't have bank accounts, the distance was far to withdraw money, and there was often not enough money given to buy these rations. District Campaign is currently in the process of protesting this.

District Campaign has also organized a special exhibition on how to live an HIV positive life through showcasing 250 photographs. Most of these photos are focused on care issues, and the importance of taking proper care of positive people. They also encourage positive people to continue to lead their lives with an optimistic attitude and hope. DC is also working on a program for HIV positive pregnant women, and this year, due to their efforts, *all women in the programme have given birth to HIV negative babies.*

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Activities other than HIV prevention, care and support.

District Campaign has expanded its range to also focus on domestic violence against women by helping the victims. For example, one woman there was a case of one woman who was facing violence at the husband's home, and so District Campaign staff stepped in and helped rebuild the woman's confidence to claim her rights. When this woman returned to her hometown, she needed help to access her property and access to government welfare schemes, which District Campaign staff also helped with. The staff engages in prevention activities, such as programs for boys and girls, and working with teachers. They believe it's critical to educate youth in order to prevent domestic violence. And, they run programs on sex education in schools and colleges, and include the issue of domestic violence in this discussion. Finally, they are working with police, and directly with the women to figure out what the affected women most need.

Below is the information of Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission Activities for April 2012-March 2013:

10,650

- Were registered under SANGRAM's PPTCT programme
- Had Pre-test counseling
- Pregnant women were tested for HIV
- Had Post-test counseling

**Number of Women
Delivered in Primary
Health Centers:**

3114



Babies negative: 12

Babies positive: 0

- Number of HIV+ pregnant women: 28
- Follow up on women not on ART: 12
- Number of women started Zudovudin: 12
- Number of women taking Zudovidine: 12
- Number of pregnant women on ART: 11
- Number of HIV + women delivered: 24
- Stillbirth: 0
- Baby died before confirmed diagnosis: 1
- Number of testing for DNA: 7
- Number of ANC enrolled in project: 10,650

Below is the information regarding Outreach, Advocacy, and Service Provision activities from this past year.

Outreach

OPD Attendees:

84, 385

Female Outreach: 52,147

Male Outreach: 28,180

Total outreach: 80,327

Booth Outreach: 2355

Male: 1010

Female: 1345

Condoms (booth): 2637

Male: 1405

Female: 1091

Boy: 114

Girl: 27



New HIV outreach: 73

Male: 20

Female: 38

Boy: 8

Girl: 7

New TB Outreach:

520

Male: 228

Female: 205

Boy: 47

Girl: 40

Total condoms distributed:

26,370

New STD outreach: 336

Male: 92

Female: 244

Lab visits: 419

Doctor visits: 532

Advocacy with Community

Tarun Mandal (youth group): 522	Number of attendees: 5,890
Mahila Mandal (village-level women’s group): 889	Number of attendees: 19,225
Maitrin Program (SANGRAM women volunteers): 444	Number of attendees: 3,726
Teachers training program: 192	Total Outreach: 1,344
Sex education Program in Schools: 20	Total Outreach: 15, 750
Palak melava (parent’s meeting): 132	Number of attendees: 6,123
Private health provider: 388	Number of attendees: 3688
Poster exhibitions: 14	Number of attendees: 13,000
Kishori program (government-run program for adolescent girls): 100	Number of attendees: 2,173
Village campaigns (hard-to reach communities): 39	Total Outreach: 9,800
Public meetings: 14	Number of attendees: 18,273

People living with HIV/AIDS

This year, there has been more of an emphasis placed on direct contact with PLHIV.

PLHA	Current	Indirect	Direct
Male	709	130	579
Female	1151	153	998
Boy	162	24	138
Girl	150	19	131
Total	2172	326	1846

Service Provision

**Referral Testing:
810**

Male: 325

Female: 395

Boys: 67

Girls: 23

**PHLA Orphan visits:
2519**

Boys: 1266

Girls: 1253

PLHA Visits: 3345

Male: 1331

Female: 1811

Boys: 106

Girls: 97

**Primary Health
Center Treatment:
4140**

Male: 1845

Female: 1875

Boys: 255

Girls: 165

**Domestic Violence
Cases total: 262**

SANGRAM negotiated

Directly by SANGRAM:
155

Village leaders: 12

Grampanchayat: 79

Mahila Mandal: 4

SANGRAM Maitrin: 9

Lawyer/Court: 3



Nazariya

Programs

Working with
Muslim Women

Activities

- Creating awareness about the issues they face
- Focus groups and community meetings
- Fighting educational challenges
- Emphasizing the rights of women and children
- Accessing government welfare schemes

Another important subset of SANGRAM is Nazariya. Nazariya works specifically with Muslim women.

SANGRAM works with Muslim women particularly as a result of communal violence. Previously, SANGRAM had faced opposition in Muslim communities for distributing information on health access and rights, in part because many of these women faced problems coming outside of their homes. After the communal riots in Miraj and Sangli, though, SANGRAM knew it had to break the barrier and reach this population at any cost.

The strategy toward Muslim women combines creating awareness about women's issues in their community, and using that awareness to empower and strengthen these

women on issues pertinent to them. Because of the strong marginalization of Muslim women, SANGRAM, through the District Campaign, wanted to build up a strong collective of women.

This past year, the District Campaign has facilitated sessions where Muslim women could share what they wanted to do and the challenges they faced. Ten Muslim women officially joined SANGRAM, and now provide outreach towards more Muslim women in their communities. While it initially started with dealing with health issues, over the past two years they have expanded to other issues like education of children as well. The group also focuses on reaching Muslim families (including husbands), and providing them a platform to talk about any of their issues—family, health, or anything else. The District Campaign has started collecting family backgrounds of Muslim women, such as information on their education, their skills and is doing a needs assessment. While there is still some tension between Muslim and Hindu communities in this region, SANGRAM works to reduce the tensions.

After the communal riots happened in Miraj and Sangli, though, SANGRAM knew it had to break the barrier and reach this [Muslim] population at any cost.

In focus group meetings, Nazariya focuses on a number of issues that put Muslim women, especially, at a disadvantage. They discussed how many Muslim men, as the breadwinners, don't spend much time with their families as they are constantly working in long-hour/low-paying jobs. And these jobs often don't cover the costs of the family, which are often times large, and thus the women don't get much of a chance to go outside the home. And, even when they do get a chance, their husbands often become suspicious. Many families send their children to Urdu schools, which focus on religious education, but as soon as they complete this, they don't have a chance to get into other mainstream schools and colleges. Thus, their economic conditions deteriorate, and they often follow the work of their fathers or remain unemployed. So, Nazariya is trying to change this pattern, and focus on getting their children more mainstreamed. Nazariya is also ensuring that children are receiving scholarships and access to government schemes.

Nazariya is also focusing more on the well-being of girls and handicapped children. They are pushing to educate girls more, as they are traditionally less educated, and they are focusing on preventing discrimination against physically and mentally handicapped village children. They are doing so by making the government accountable for these children, and getting better facilities for handicapped kids. Furthermore, they have focused on making sure that all children are getting their midday meal, and ensuring that the food is clean. And, Nazariya ensures that children are applying for and receiving government schemes meant for all but are excluded from because of their marginalization as Muslims.

Below is an overview of the outreach towards Muslim families:

Number of Muslim families reached (total=12,147)

3093 women

4604 Men

2301 girls

2149 boys

Number of Women reached

Widowed: 197

Separated: 208

Divorced: 70

Total: 475

Children with disabilities
(physical)

Boys: 36

Girls: 18

Children with
disabilities (mental):

Boys: 29

Girls: 30

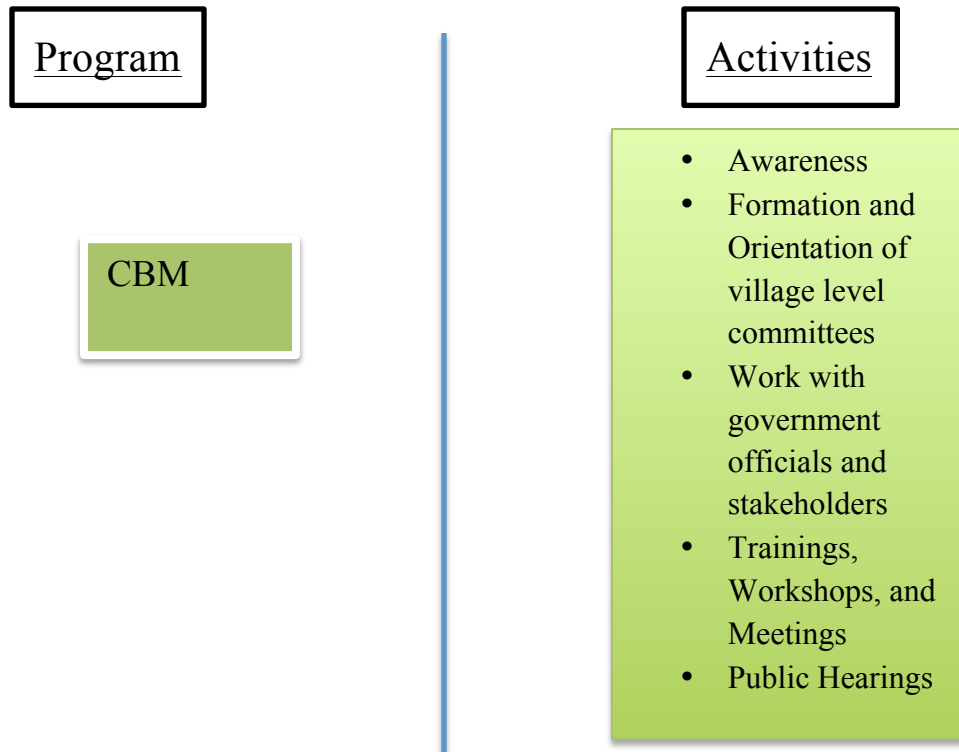
Total: 59

*Cases applied for
government
welfare schemes:*

508

C. SANGRAM Programs

Community Based Monitoring Program (CBMP)



This program is a new, village-level monitoring program that focuses on reviewing government services, such as health services and access to primary health centers. The program is under the National Rural Health Mission.

This government-based program is run in 13 districts. The program was initiated by the central government under the National Rural Health Mission because of the poor quality of treatment services given to rural populations. The Community-based Monitoring Program focuses on monitoring health systems that already exist through the government, under the public health system. We are helping village people to become aware of these services, and report abuse by public health practitioners. Some of this abuse includes the doctor coming late i.e. accountability of the doctor in charge, lack of medicines, improper treatment, and charging money for services that are supposed to be

free. Even pregnant women opt to go to private clinics because of the corruption in government health services.



Photo above shows Jansunwai [Public hearing] at Uttur, Ajara

Furthermore, the government had to ensure committees for health, sanitation, and cleanliness at the village level, but these committees were non-functional. So, the first critical step of the Community-based Monitoring program was to train these committees, and make government health services accountable. We designed an awareness campaign with placards that read: ‘The health system is ours,’ and ‘We have a right to access the health system free of cost.’ This process helped communities to develop ownership of their public health system.

Each village in the project area is visited and provided with pamphlets to give an overall idea of the CBO program, highlighting the roles and responsibilities of people who are meant to deliver the health services. We also do public panels once a year, and invite people who have a background as health practitioners, leaders, and social activists to address the general population. This year, we succeeded in organizing a public hearing, which was a very effective platform where people who were mistreated could give testimonials in front of government officials, in Ajara and Bhudargad. We made them sit

in front of the community members— listen to the testimonies of those affected by inadequate access to the health system—, and demanded redressal for the affected. Through these, we have found so much improper treatment, corruption, and casteism. We are giving all this feedback to the government on a regular basis to the National Rural Health Mission officials.

We formed an awareness program to say ‘the health system is ours,’ and ‘we have right to access this health system free of cost.’

So far, we have received positive feedback based on these programs. We are documenting violations, collecting data and reporting which gives us an idea of what is happening in the field. The program also works especially with women, children, deserted women, and children. It focuses on women’s empowerment as it involves electing women as leaders. It all comes back to the idea of people being able to access health rights without discrimination and severe economic loss.

One specific CBM project involves doing a comprehensive survey on the current conditions of health facilities in the villages. Members provide training and disseminate information on how to survey the village level services. Each of the villages now has a report card with the status of the health centers. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the existing health system is accountable to the villagers, instead of government officials.

CASAM

Center for Advocacy on Stigma and Marginalization

Programs

Engagement with
Indian Policymakers

Global Level
Engagement

Research, Studies,
and documentation

Activities

- Submissions to Supreme Court
- Anu Mokal case on abuse of sex workers

- Meeting with Bangladesh officials
- Sex Workers Conference in Australia, New York, Turkey, Thailand, Switzerland

- Multi-country research on violence on sex workers

Engagement with Indian Policymakers

Annexed are some recent initiative takes in India on inclusion of rights of people in sex work, including the recognition of violence within sex work

- Note highlighting NNSW intervention around Section 370 of the Indian Penal Code (Advocacy Note)
- Depositions made to Justice Verma Commission by NNSW (Verma Commission Submission)
- Deposition made to Supreme Court Panel of Prevention of trafficking and the role of people in sex work therein (SC panel submission)
- Deposition made to Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (1 written - Final Submission SR - VAW and 2 oral submissions in Delhi and Mumbai)

An important project in VAMP's fight for human rights for sex workers has been the Anu Mokal case. The case involved a pregnant sex worker who was beaten by a police officer, which resulted in a miscarriage. Since then, the police have denied the incident, and they haven't registered an FIR. They had ordered an inquiry, but the officer conducting the inquiry is convinced that nothing has happened, and thus Anu Mokal was pressured to withdraw the complaint. Anu Mokal and SANGRAM have filed a case in the high court of Mumbai, which is being heard at present. Courts are so sluggish that it has not had a single hearing since it was admitted 8 months back.

With regards to police violence and the Anu Mokal case, VAMP met with Justice Alkamish Kabeer in collaboration with advocacy and women's groups in Delhi this past August to advocate for justice. Justice Kabeer has since been appointed as the Chief Justice of India.

Global Level Engagement

One key accomplishment has been the dialogue between SANGRAM and policymakers at the regional level. For example, from November 26-27, 2012, government officials from Bangladesh came to Sangli to learn about SANGRAM's approach to HIV programmes with people in sex work. SANGRAM facilitated a Q&A between the Bangladeshi officials and the sex workers/SANGRAM employees, in addition to helping them visit brothel areas to see how the collective functions.

Also, last year Shashikant and Minakshi went to a sex workers conference in Australia. This meeting in Sydney highlighted the international presence of sex workers in their demand to decriminalize sex work. Meena and Meenakshi also went to Turkey to present VAMP's work at the AWID conference. There, they presented on film on

VAMP's protest against racist representation of VAMP in the film made by Sarah Harris called 'Prostitutes of god' depicting the misguided ideologies of international journalists. The video can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16OGyssJTvo>

Furthermore, this past year, General Secretary of VAMP, Shabana Kazi, participated in the Regional Thematic Working group on HIV/Sex Work in Asia & the Pacific in Bangkok. Most of the discussions were focused on how to stop violence against sex workers. Participants also talked about how this topic needs to be discussed on the international platform so that governments can stop violence against sex workers and collaborate at the international level.

CASAM continues to act as an important resource for trainings and reducing stigma and marginalization. For example, sex workers from Uganda and Zimbabwe came for a week to Sangli for training on how to organize collectively. Additionally, during a conference in Pune in early November, CASAM helped organize sex workers to share their stories about the struggles they face in their work.

Research, studies, and documentation

The four-country research project 'Sex Work and Violence: Understanding Factors for Safety and Protection' research project on which CASAM, a unit of SANGRAM, Sangli, India, is providing technical support. In order to strengthen the existing evidence base to inform future advocacy and programming on Gender Based Violence towards sex workers and its linkages to HIV, the UNDP Asia-Pacific HIV, Health and Development Team, the Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers (APNSW) through CASAM, Partners for Prevention (P4P), UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Office and UNAIDS Regional Support Team in Asia and the Pacific, is being jointly implementing research to identify risk and protective factors associated with violence against sex workers, including men, women and transgender sex workers, in four selected countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The primary objective of this research project is to identify the risk and protective factors associated with sex workers' exposure to violence and HIV (during and outside of sex work). The Micro-Capital Agreement between the implementing Partner UNDP APRC and Sampada Grameen Mahila Sanstha (SANGRAM) is happening from 11 November 2011 until 30 December 2013.

D. CASE STUDIES

Case Study #1:

One particular incident involved a man sending threats to a 30-year-old woman, and saying that she must pay him a sum of money or otherwise concede in sexual relations. He sent threatening letters to her work, causing problems in the workplace as well as at home. Workers from the District Campaign helped this woman by making sure the police filed a case against this person, and put political pressure on the man who was doing this. Because of these efforts, this man has now been arrested.

Case Study #2

Another incident involved a mother approaching workers of the District Campaign to report that her 32-year-old daughter was missing and had been missing for 10-15 days. She suspected that her daughter's husband might be responsible. She first went to the police to file a case, but the police did not accept it because they said the daughter was not in their region. Thus, workers of the District Campaign went to the superintendent and demanded that the police help in finding this woman. Because of District Campaign's efforts, they ultimately found the woman, and learned that she had run away because of severe abuse by her husband. Importantly, the woman is now back in her mother's home.

This incident highlighted the importance of making the police accountable to the people and making all voices heard.

Case Study #3

A third incident involved a woman who was constantly being beaten by her husband. This woman went to the existing crisis intervention committee in her village, but her voice was not heard. Thus, she went to workers of the District Campaign to report the abuse, and subsequently her husband was arrested. However, he refused to give his house keys to his wife. So, District Campaign Staff began counseling the husband and convinced him to give the keys back to her.

Importantly, District Campaign staff is working on both building the capacity of crisis intervention committees in villages, while also directly helping victims of domestic violence.

Case Study #4

Another incident revolved around the issue of property ownership. One woman who approached workers of the District Campaign had recently lost her husband, but her brother-in-law was trying to prevent the land from being passed to her. This woman was illiterate, and not able to put the proper documents in place to get the land in her name. The District Campaign staff, though, listened to this woman's story, and brought her up to the government office to file the necessary papers, and made the registrar take the matter seriously. She ultimately succeeded in getting back her property, as well as the shop that was supposed to be in her name, and improve her life.

E. Collaborative Research

Name: Jessica Kahlenberg

Country: USA

Purpose: 10 month fellowship through American Jewish World Service to help analyze the PAN-India Survey on Sex Workers



Name: Andrea Cornwall

Country: England

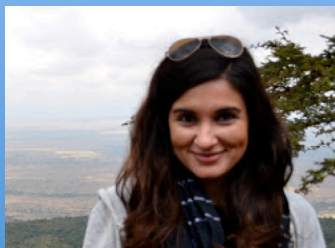
Purpose of Visit: Research with VAMP members to understand the complex relationships they have with their *malaks* (live-in lovers).



Name: Megan Schmidt-Sane

Country: USA

Purpose of Visit: Interview VAMP members about their anti-trafficking methods for masters' thesis





Sex Workers convene for Sex Workers Rights celebrations on 3rd March, 2013 in Sangli