

BUILD CAPACITIES OF 400 DEPRIVED GIRLS IN GUJARAT

Organization Profile

AWAG (Ahmedabad Women's Action Group) has been actively involved with the issue of domestic violence inflicted on women in Gujarat since its inception in 1981. The organization works with women on issues of their identity and self-worth and equips them to raise their voices against oppressive social systems and violence. AWAG developed its own ideology that advocates –'A family does not make a woman; it is a woman who makes a family'. In view of preserving the individuality of women, AWAG initiated its struggle against domestic violence inflicted on women with a women-centric approach through direct interventions such as awareness-raising and community organization, as well as through collaborative interventions such as advocacy and networking.

Area Profile

With a population of about 6 million, Ahmedabad is the commercial capital of the western state of Gujarat. Its growth over various periods of its history has transformed over time, resulting in a deeply segmented city. As a policy, AWAG has chosen to work with women victims belonging to marginalized and minority communities. Since 1985, AWAG works in 36 areas of the industrial belt in the eastern region of Ahmedabad city. This has emerged with the establishment and growth of the textile mills in the late-19th and early/mid-20th century, which came to be surrounded by chawls (*chalis*), inhabited by the working class belonging to these communities.

More recently, AWAG's work in Ahmedabad also includes providing infrastructure, services and facilities for a Migration Support Centre for rural female young candidates trained and provided employment by AKRSP, Ahmedabad (<http://akrspindia.org.in/gujarat.html>). The concept is that of a "home away from home" in the form of a safe accommodation, counselling services, periodic get together and support for initial days to the rural youth girls to adapt to a new work place and environment for a progressive career growth.

Need for the Project

In course of work with the women communities in its work areas in Ahmedabad, as well as with the rural youth girls at the Migration Support Centre, it is observed that this is the first generation of girls that are stepping out and moving towards higher education and career building. The growing generation gap between the youth and their parents, restrains the former from paying any heed to their parents. However, given the profile of these youth, migration causes intense trauma and poses day-to-day challenges at their workplaces that are predominantly at Call

Centres/BPO Companies and Shopping Malls. Given their vulnerable age and profile, factors such as lack of adequate awareness about their bodies, accompanied with loneliness, infatuation, materialistic attractions, fears about performance and financial compensation, often lead them to fall prey to sexual exploitation by their male counterparts/employers. To avert social stigmas related to such acts, these young girls suffer in silence and this takes its toll on their physical and mental wellbeing.

Thus, a pressing need to provide '**Comprehensive Awareness Building and Skill Enhancement for the Underprivileged Adolescent/Youth Girls**' in AWAG's work area in Ahmedabad slums as well a section of the migratory rural girls working in Ahmedabad, has been identified.

Project Plan and Activity

The project will be implemented at two levels: (i) At community level and (ii) With adolescent migratory rural working girls, and will cover a total of 400 participants through a total of 20 awareness-building workshops in each year.

- (i) **At Community Level** - Initially, the field staff will identify trainee adolescent girls from the organization's work areas in the slums of Ahmedabad and organize orientation-level meetings specific for adolescent/young girls aged 12 to 25. Potential participants from the identified areas will attend the 2-day awareness workshop in batches of 20 participants per workshop. The content of these awareness building workshops is stated below.

Health Issues:

- Human anatomy and physiological changes during adolescence
- Women's health, reproductive system, menstruation, conception and related issues
- Importance of personal hygiene

Life Skills:

- Women's independence, individuality, existence and need for social justice
- Decision making, communication, analytical skills etc
- Personal growth, self-worth and confidence-building

Business Skills:

- Setting up a small enterprise
- Marketing & selling through co-operative
- Book keeping and stock taking

Legal Issues:

- Understand and recognize various forms of exploitation and violence inflicted on women
- Seek help to raise a voice against it

(ii) **With Migratory Working Rural Girls** - To start with, young migratory working rural girls (aged 18 to 22 years) from AWAG's Migration Support Centre as well as those residing at local hostels will be identified. For this, the shortlisted participants will go through a 2-day multi-pronged awareness workshop in batches of 20 participants per workshop.

These awareness building workshops will cover the above-stated module for the participants from local communities. Additionally, these migratory youth girls will also be equipped with detailed information about sexual harassment at their workplace and means of protecting themselves from the situation.

Alongside, these participants will also be provided with counselling support and guidance from the organization.

From a total of 400 participants (adolescent girls from the community as well as migratory working rural youth girls) attending these workshops each year, 40 participants will be identified as leaders to undergo leadership training to fight against violence inflicted on women.

Impact

The impact will be multi-fold with an increase in health awareness, skill enhancement, legal know-how and income generation/employment opportunities.

It is anticipated that:

- A total of 400 participants (adolescent girls from the marginalized/minority communities as well as migratory working rural youth girls) will gain opportunity and access to awareness building through a total of 20 workshops in course of 1 year.
- Knowledge about their bodies and reproductive health will clarify their myths and misconceptions and enable them to handle themselves so as to prevent its abuse.
- The project will inform and educate adolescent girls on fighting various forms of violence inflicted on women, thereby leading to a subsequent reduction in exploitation of girls especially at their work place.

- Exposure to life skills will lead to an increase in confidence and self worth among the participating adolescents so as to develop their own identity.
- Entrepreneur skills could assist girls in setting up an enterprise or seek employment and supplement their families' income. This in turn will reduce poverty and help the girls in assertion of their rights.
- Counselling support will help the adolescents to vent their feelings and receive relevant and timely guidance.
- Legal knowledge will further strengthen them in raising a voice against violence inflicted on them.

Timeframe

1 year project, with potential to extend.

Budget for 'Build Capacities of 400 Deprived Girls in Gujarat'

Item	Estimated Cost (INR)	Estimated Cost (USD)
1). <u>Project activity</u>		
• Awareness Building and Skill Enhancement Workshop : 20 workshops x 20 participants @ 375/- x 2 days	3,00,000.00	4500.00
• Leadership Training : 40 leaders @ 800/- x 2 days	64,000.00	960.00
• Local Travel : 2200/-x 12 months	26,400.00	396.00
• Women's day get-together celebrations	35,000.00	525.00
Sub-total	4,25,400.00	6381.00
2). <u>Staff Costs</u>		
• Project Co-ordinator : 6,500/-x 12 months	78,000.00	1170.00
• Legal counsellor : 16,500/-x 12 months	1,98,000.00	2970.00
• Counsellor : 12,000/-x 12 months	1,44,000.00	2160.00
• Field Worker: 5,500/-x12 months	66,000.00	990.00
Sub-total	4,86,000.00	7290.00
3). <u>Administration Cost</u>		
• Administration cost:3,500/-x 12 months	42,000.00	630.00
• Communication Cost: 2,000/-x 12 months	24,000.00	360.00
Sub-total	66,000.00	990.00
TOTAL	9,77,400.00	14661.00