

Designing a Social Inclusion Plan for Socially Excluded and Marginalised Populations

Report of the State Level Consultation
organized by National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW)

Technical Support: Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR)

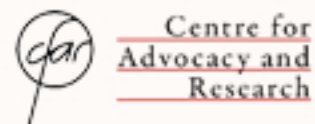


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Preface

This Report emerged out of a day-long Consultation held on 1st October, 2012, with the participation of all the key departments of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, experts, civil society organizations and community-based organizations, hosted by the National Mission for Empowerment (NMEW) and supported by Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR).

The key objective of the Consultation was to deliberate on one of the thematic demonstration projects that has been launched by NMEW to enhance implementation of all development programmes and schemes in a convergent manner.

This project being implemented by CFAR, seeks to develop a consensual approach and an inclusive plan for communities such as sex workers and transgendered people. While sex workers are socially vulnerable, and were subjected to coercive practices such as trafficking, social exploitation and indignity, transgendered people experience extreme social stigma, isolation and exclusion.

To take the process of designing a Social Inclusion Plan for Marginal Communities such as sex workers and transgendered persons, this multi-stakeholder Consultation sought to facilitate a dialogue between different constituents, in particular the community and the government, to enable them to exchange perspectives, experiences, learning and to share their best practices.

Acknowledgement

The Consultation and the rich recommendations that emerged would not have been possible without the active participation and involvement of all concerned. We, therefore acknowledge the invaluable contribution of the following experts:

Ms Ratna Prabha, Mission Director, NMEW and Dr Deepa Ahluwalia, Senior Advisor, NMEW, facilitated and hosted the event. They were supported by a team from CFAR which included Ms Akhila Sivadas, Ms Aarthi Pai, Mr Srinivasa Rao, Ms Sudha Rani, Ms Santoshi, Mr Ratna Kumar, Mr Upendra, Mr Sayyad Ali and Mr. Raghu.

Experts included stalwarts like Ms Sujatha Rao, former Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Director General, AIDS Control Department, Government of India; Dr U Vindhya, Tata Institute of Social Sciences and Ms Girija Devi, Independent Consultant.

Legal experts included: Justice Raghunath Rao, Commission for Jogini, Ms Asha Menon, Member Secretary, Delhi State Legal AIDS Society, Member, Supreme Court Committee for Rehabilitation of Sex Workers

Senior Officials from Key Departments include: Mr Chiranjiv Choudhary, Mr P David, Mr Srinivasa Reddy, Women Development and Child Welfare, Mr Raymond Peter, Social Welfare, Ms Usha Rani, Education and Rajiv Vidya Mission, Mr Praveen Prakash, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Dr B Jayamma, Mr Kailash Ditya, Andhra Pradesh State AIDS Control Society, Ms Aruna, Mr Lingaiah Goud, Rural Development and Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP), Dr Y Sujatha, Mr V Borra Reddy, Urban Development and Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas (MEPMA), Health and Family Welfare, Mr SV Ramana Murthy, Mr S Umapathi, Ms Kalpana Nayak, Crime Investigation Department, Mr P David, Mr Srinivas Reddy, Women Development and Child Welfare.

Community experts included Ms O Laila, MAS Warangal, Ms Sammulu, RDMM Warangal, Mr R Eswari, Chittoor, Ms M Sumithra, Tirupati, Ms Gouri, Krishna Vennala, Ms P Kousalya, PWN+, Ms D Vijaya, CMM Hyderabad, Ms R Sunitha, CMM Hyderabad, Ms Bharati Dey, DMSC, Kolkata, Ms Chandramukhi, TG, Avagahana, Hyderabad, Ms Jyothi, IRDS MAS Hyderabad, Ms Swathi, IRDS, Hyderabad.

Partnering Civil Society Organizations included:

Ms P. Prashanthi, APMSS, Ms T Prabhavathi, APMSS, Ms R Meera, WINS Tirupati, Mr Ch Vishnu, Alliance Pehchan, Ms Pallavi Gupta, Asmita, Mr MV Steven, HELP, Ms P Poorna Chandrika, HLPPT, Mr M Vijay Reddy, HLPPT, Mr Y Anthony Reddy, Care, Ms K Siva Kumari, SWARD, Dr Vijaya Bhavani, PLAN India, Mr V Mani Vannan, Ms Mala Jabeen, Women Rights Advocate, High Court, Ms Girija Devi, Independent Consultant, Ms M Sumithra, Ankuram, Dr N Vasanthi, CSD, Mr Jaya Kumar, HLPPT, Ms Meena Chilafe, Saheli, Dr K Krishna, OU, Ms K Dolly, HLPPT, Dr P Prabhakar, Alliance, AP, Ms Renuka, Alliance, Mr Rambabu, Alliance, Ms Anita Rego, Consultant, Ms Sarah Gideon, Asmita.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Inaugural Session: Advancing the NMEW Mandate by Piloting a Convergent Social Inclusion Plan for Marginal Communities.

The opening presentation looked at the government response based on dipstick evidence from beneficiaries in Guntur, Ananthapur, Hyderabad, Krishna, Nellore and East Godavari districts to gauge if social inclusion was indeed taking place.

We found the following evidence:

Programmes:

- **Housing loan:** Thirty six sex workers in Guntur and 60 sex workers in Ananthapur received loans for the construction of houses.
- **Hostel:** Twenty children of sex workers were admitted in social welfare hostels in Ananthapur.
- **Indira Kranthi Patham (SHG):** The sex workers community is part of Self Help Groups (SHG) across the state.

Entitlements:

- **Voter Card:** A 1000 sex workers in Krishna district, 110 sex workers in Hyderabad and 50 sex workers in Ananthapur have received voter ID cards.

Given the strong evidence on how social inclusion is slowly and steadily growing, what were we striving to achieve?

Advance the process by developing a consensual, convergent “Social Inclusion Plan” for:

- Scaling up of the reach of state programmes through the convergence of all schemes, projects and entitlements.
- Facilitating community convergence through single window delivery.
- Galvanizing leaders, political and elected representatives, opinion makers, professionals, service providers, doctors, lawyers, teachers and journalists.

How will the Plan be shaped?

Key Steps:

1. By holding state level consultations with various stakeholders - government, non-government, community, academia and experts – in order to jointly develop the terms of reference for the process of designing the plan.
2. By constituting “Reference Groups” representing:
 - Community based organizations and allied organizations.
 - Policy and decision makers, officials and the executive arm of all social sector and related departments and statutory and regulatory bodies.
 - Experts and technical advisors.
 - Professionals, service providers, doctors, teachers, lawyers and journalists.
3. By conducting listening exercises with each constituent and sub constituent with the guidance and support of Reference Group members.
4. By evolving a synergized plan which will be deliberated on and finalized collectively.
5. By developing a well defined plan for having a shared understanding on the roles and responsibilities of each player.
6. By implementing the plan in one demo district

Professor U. Vindhya, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad, stated in her Opening Address:

“Presently, there are huge numbers of sex workers and transgenders among marginalized and excluded groups who are facing day to day challenges like poverty, social stigma, discrimination and denial of opportunities like education and basic services.”

“The Consultation will provide these communities an opportunity to directly voice their concerns to officials. We hope the discussions will help in designing a better plan for the empowerment and social inclusion of these communities”.

Major Issues Raised and the Recommendations that were Made

Inaugural Address: Smt. K Ratna Prabha, Additional Secretary, National Mission for Empowerment of Women.

“The National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) aims to converge, all government programmes meant for the welfare of women, especially excluded, marginal and vulnerable communities.

“The pilot project we are supporting in Andhra Pradesh will bring all the schemes together and priority will be given to educating women about the various schemes and how they can overcome the challenges faced in availing the schemes.

“Inclusion of these communities by all departments is the primary responsibility of each department.”

Thematic Address: Shri. S V Ramana Murthy, IPS, DG, Crime Investigation Department

“Social inclusion is an excellent concept but it will require consistent coordination.”

Recommendations:

- Women’s issues are looked after by several departments so the challenge before us is; how do we ensure coordination and integration, which is the need of the day?
- *Make rehabilitation adequate to reduce the 81% of rescued women from being re- trafficked.*

Shri. Raymond Peter, IAS, Principal Secretary, Social Welfare Department: Converging Programmes and Delivery of Social Entitlements to Marginal Communities

“The law has been trying to understand the concerns of vulnerable communities and respond positively to them.”

“We are witnessing some measure of positive change in society with the community trying to overcome discrimination and enable their peers to avail of services.”

“Good schemes and the necessary funds are there but platforms have to be developed to foster the spirit of collective ownership and responsibility.”

Recommendations:

- Develop a systematic plan that will make our schemes and programmes accessible to sex workers and transgender. We can pilot the plan in Guntur and Prakasam.
- Evolve a mechanism for the inclusion of the transgender community.

Mrs. Sujatha Rao, Former Secretary to Health, Medical & Family Welfare: Sex Workers and Transgender Women; Setting out a Perspective on going beyond HIV to Social Development

Keynote Address: Highlights

“Poverty is driving women in to doing sex work; recognize the root causes and work out a strategy to address them.”

“A good beginning has been made with the law recognizing sex workers as victims but if the law treats the clients as criminals, how will they get clients and earn a livelihood. How do we address those dimensions?”

Recommendations:

- Involve the organizations working for women’s empowerment.
- Re-work the rescue and consequent support given to minors.
- Rehabilitation packages must take into account the present cost of living.
- Institutionalize services and entitlements for these communities for better results.
- To achieve all these strengthen collectivization among sex workers.

Community Testimony:

Mrs. O. Laila, TG, President, Modern Awareness Society, Warangal

“Transgender women have experienced extreme forms of stigma and discrimination by society and by institutions like the Railway police.”

“Although some of us have received Aadhar cards, ration cards, houses and land for constructing houses, this is not ensuring complete social inclusion.”

Recommendations:

- Make us part of committees that are advancing the delivery of programmes and schemes for marginal communities.
- Enable us to ensure access to development and welfare programmes that are intended for marginal communities like us.

Mrs. Jyothi, President, Mahila Abhyuday Samithi, Hyderabad

“Sex workers face immense difficulties in availing of government entitlements. Education of our children is also a major concern for us. They are facing stigma and discrimination.

“Some of the children are not able to continue their education after 10th standard because their parents can’t afford the fees and they are unable to get scholarships.”

Recommendations:

- Measures must be initiated to provide education to our children till the intermediate level and if possible till graduation.
- Government needs to extend support to CBOs to establish and manage old age homes for sex workers as most of them become destitute as they grow older.
- Nutrition supplements are essential for HIV affected sex workers and their children. Give our CBOs the responsibility of ensuring the distribution of food supplements.

Mrs. Usha Rani, IAS, Project Director, Rajeev Vidya Mission

“The aim of the Vidya Mission is to provide education to the poor. The residential Special Training Centre can be accessed and availed by the children of sex workers and transgendered women.”

Shri. Praveen Prakash, IAS, Commissioner, Health & Family Welfare

“All health related schemes must reach all sex workers and transgender women.”

“The recently started MAARPU (Convergence Programme) is supporting vulnerable families.”

Recommendations:

- Include transgender women in district level committees for ensuring quality health services.
- Make CBOs a part of the District Health Committees (DHCs) that will be initially set up in Krishna, Guntur, Warangal and Hyderabad.

Community Testimony:

Ms. Chandramukhi, Project Manager, Avagahana, a CBO of Transgendered Women, Hyderabad

“Transgender women face problems with regard to castration and Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) and in getting health services in hospitals.”

“Doctors have to be sensitized.”

Recommendations:

- The government must set up committees to monitor the quality of services and the attitude of service providers.
- We should be given representation in hospital committees and allowed to participate in review meetings.
- People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) should be provided nutritional support.
- Doctors must be sensitized on sexuality.

Sri. Chiranjiv Choudhary, IFS, Commissioner, Women Development & Child Welfare Department

“Implementation of the Domestic Violence Act should be strengthened; counseling services improved.”

“Facilities in rehabilitation centers, hostels and homes must be scaled-up.”

Recommendations:

- The CBOs can help in strengthening policies for the community.
- Continue to have such inter-departmental and multi-stakeholder interactions in the future.

Civil Society Response:

Ms. Pallavi, Asmita

“The Women and Child Welfare Department, which has many schemes, should take steps to ensure that marginalized women have access to them.”

Ms. Aruna, Program Manager, Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP)

“We are following a thematic approach, in coordination with all departments, based on local priorities. Set up Social Action Committee (SAC) in each and every village to deal with social issues at the village level and family counseling centres to address social issues like dowry.

“We have helped 800 female sex workers to get Antodaya cards; 500 sex workers have been provided an amount of Rs. 1 crore through Self Help Groups.”

Recommendations:

- To work with communities like sex workers we need to develop a special agenda.
- Sex Workers could be included in mandal samakhyas

Community Testimony:

Mrs. Sumithra, FSW CBO, Tirupati

“Partnership with rural sex workers in providing entitlements and services is necessary; mandate the sex workers to join SHG groups.”

Recommendations:

- The loan must be increased to Rs. 2 0,000 to ensure overall development.
- It is essential, to converge the various programmes and ensure that communities are benefitting financially from the SC, ST, BC Corporation.

NMEW Recommendations:

Civil Society Response:

Mrs. Chandrika, Senior Programme Manager: CBO, HLPPT

Recommendation:

- There is need to include transgender in SHGs so that they can avail of schemes.

Civil Society Response:

Ms. Meera Ramachandran, WINS, Tirupati

“The condition of children in the centers run by the government is pathetic. They are being taken care of by Anganwadi teachers, who are already loaded with a lot of work. These children need health facilities and we must ensure that they are secure and don’t get trapped into the work being done by adult women.”

Dr. Jayamma, Additional Project Director, APSACS

“We are implementing HIV prevention programmes and providing free bus passes and pension for people living with HIV. We are also working with the transgender community through targeted intervention programmes and encouraging them to be part of SHGs to strengthen their economic independence and sustainability.”

Community Respondent:

Mrs. Eswari, President of Prema Sangham Mahila Mandali, CBO, Chittoor

“The Targeted Intervention has equipped us with knowledge about HIV/AIDS, STIs and prevention methods and linked us up with the health services in government hospitals for the last two years.

“We want our concerns to be addressed across all programmes.”

Recommendations:

- CBOs representatives must be involved in all district committees set up by DAPCU, District Hospital and related committees.

Civil Society Response:

Ms. Sumithra, Ankuram, Hyderabad

“Facilities in Ujwala Homes for rescued women are far from adequate. Collaboration with the government is also essential in many ways.”

Recommendations:

- A coordination committee has to be formed for better maintenance of Ujwala Homes.
- Comprehensive services have to be made available by appointing qualified counselors.

“We need to strengthen the implementation of schemes and entitlements and highlight and resolve the challenges facing the system to enable more effective outreach.”

Dr. Sujatha, Specialist in Health & Nutrition, Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas (MEPMA)

“Selected Peddapuram, in East Godavari, as a model site and formed 836 sex workers groups in 13 districts, especially in Krishna (Vijaywada), Guntur and Nellore districts.”

“MEPMA is linking the SHGs members with banks to enable them to avail loans so that they can take up livelihood programmes.”

“There is immense scope for forming groups among marginal and vulnerable communities and make many more women part of SHGs across the state.”

Recommendation:

- Strengthen the formation of SHGs for marginal communities and discuss with the Commissioner the inclusion of Transgender women in the SHG groups

GOING BEYOND RAIDS AND RESCUE TO SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Sri. S Umapathi, IPS, IG, Crime Investigation Department

“To prevent trafficking sensitize the village Panchayat and motivate the villages and towns to take ownership. Keep girls in school; discourage them from dropping out of school.”

“One of the important changes that have occurred in the legal status of sex workers is the fact that women are now treated as victims of circumstances beyond her control and rehabilitated.”

“The ITPA Act has to be amended to strengthen social inclusion and social empowerment so that children of sex worker can be treated as a child in need of care and protection.”

Recommendations:

- If Rajiv Vidya Mission set up a system in mandals where children can go to school till the age of 14 it would yield some result.
- Interventions at railway stations are another step towards prevention of trafficking.
- To bring all these things together there should be a common agency, which is why it is so essential to bring all departments under one umbrella.

Shri. V. Raghunath Rao, Chairman, Jogini Commission

“Stigma and discrimination against Joginis, Matangis and Devadasis is very high.”

“Education of their children is a major concern which must be addressed. The government must provide them with identity cards and initiate holistic rehabilitation programmes.”

“Officers enforcing the Devadasis Prohibition of Dedication Act of 1988 must be made aware of it to step up cases booked under this law.”

Recommendations:

- Complete package has to be worked out for the girl children of the Jogini community to enable them to reach the stage where they can be financially independent, live on their own and take care of their families.
- Sanctioning of the loans to these women must be done without asking them to provide any security.
- Change people’s mindset through awareness raising campaigns

Mrs. S.V. Bhavani, Programme Manager, Plan India

“We are working on prevention and advocacy by providing residential care to vulnerable children and run Transit Homes where we provide trauma counseling and community foster care for orphan and destitute children.”

“Some major challenges we face include lack of social acceptance and social integration.”

Community Respondents:

Sammulu, project Director, Rudramma Devi Mahila Mandali, Warangal

“Dommera community which is akin to Joginis faces a lot of discrimination and marginalization.”

Recommendations:

- Communities like Dommera and Joginis should be treated with respect
- Stop treating us as “culprits”, withdraw the police picket set up outside our settlement and stop harassing us and our children.
- Guarantee equal educational opportunities for our children.

Prasanna, TG, Tiruapti

“We are providing services to 3,800 transgenders and MSM community members and 900 members of the sex workers community in our district.”

Recommendations:

- Our communities should be made part of the committees that the departments form so that there can be a wider understanding of our issues and concerns.
- Initiate employment generation programmes for educated transgender women

BUILDING COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP AND FORGING GOVERNMENT-CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP

Smt. Asha Menon, Member Secretary, Delhi Legal Services Authority, Delhi

“Strengthen the execution of schemes by ensuring inclusion. The government should implement existing rules such as father’s name is not necessary when applying for school admission to strengthen social inclusion.”

“The protocol for rescue and raids has been set and the police have to follow it. The courts have stepped in to safeguard the rights of women.”

“Government is obliged to set up homes and provide skill development and educational programmes.”

“Rehabilitation packages must keep in mind the compulsions under which women do sex work and include women who continue to do this work.”

Ms. Bharati Dey, General Secretary, All India Network of Sex Workers, Kolkata

“Usha Cooperative Society can be used as a model for sex workers and the transgender community.”

“State level Consultations on the issue and concerns of female sex workers must be organized in all states.”

Mrs. Gowri, President, Krishna Vennela Mahila Mandali, Krishna district

“CBOs have succeeded in improving the lives of its members by enabling them to access social entitlements and schemes.

“Recognize them and involve them in the Convergence Forums set up by the District Collectors.”

“Strengthen opportunities for livelihood and income generation programmes including running micro enterprises.”

Mr. Jaya Kumar, Team Leader, Technical Support Unit (TSU), APSACS

“Strengthen forum/platform from where the community can voice their concerns and challenges.”

Recommendations:

- There should be greater trust between the community and government officials.
- Government should design new schemes and revise the guidelines in the existing schemes by taking the community's needs into consideration.

Dr. Prabhakar, Director, India HIV/AIDS Alliance

“Communities should be capacitated to create evidence on issues.

“Civil society's role should be that of a facilitator. It should bridge the gaps between the community and the government and help the communities in advocacy, documentation etc.”

Mrs. Chandrika, Senior Programme Manager – CBO, HLPPT

“Collaborative efforts are essential for addressing the concerns and issues of communities in accessing government entitlements in a more effective way. “

“To strengthen the community involvement in SHG, reduce stigma and discrimination against sex workers and transgender women.”

Recommendations:

- A review of delivery of schemes, programmes and entitlements should be done every three months.
- Increase Para Legal volunteers drawn from the community of sex workers and transgender.

Ms. Girija Devi, Independent Consultant

“Revisit the protocols for rescue of sex workers and minors so that the dignity of women is not undermined.

“Do not reduce rescue initiatives to a piece-meal effort; see it as a long term program for the government, the police department and all social sector departments including the Women's Development and Child Welfare Department.”

Azmath Ali, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)

“Strengthen literacy with the support of Computer Based functional Literacy and teach community to read and write in their mother tongue in 40-50 learning hours.”

Recommendations of National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW):

- Rehabilitation programmes should foster long term results and generate a paradigm shift for the community.
- The cooperative model for the economic empowerment of sex workers should be explored.
- It is vital that all women and minors be treated as “victims” and not subjected to police harassment and violations.
- Rehabilitation is an issue that must be addressed holistically.
- One department should become the focal point for the transgender community as is the case in the Central Government where it comes under the ambit of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- We wholeheartedly support the suggestion that sex workers and transgender women be included in the mandal samakhyas and made part of the IKP Programme.
- Convergence with the police department has to be strengthened to enable us to go beyond raids and effectively plan rescue and rehabilitation.
- We must do everything possible to reduce and remove the stigma and discrimination that the community of sex workers and transgender women experience.
- Convergence is necessary to achieve financial and social inclusion of marginal communities.
- Transgender women should be included in SHGs
- Revamp rehabilitation strategy and package in coordination with Women and Child Welfare Department, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Police.
- Scale up the inclusive and innovative approaches being used by the *Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas (MEPMA)* and urge grassroots and civil society groups to support MEPMA in reaching out to sex workers and transgendered women.
- We support all endeavors aimed at primary prevention and the empowering of adolescent girls
- Social inclusion and empowerment should stem from the fact that women are being treated as victims and not the accused under the law.
- Endorse the recommendation that a special package for the girl children of Joginis must be evolved.
- Good practices must be documented as part of the design of a “Social Inclusion Plan” and replicated and expanded in the demonstration district.

All the recommendations made above will be considered while designing the ‘Social Inclusion Plan for Marginal Communities’. This includes: Exploring the cooperative model and strengthening CBOs capacity in running cooperatives; enhancing the livelihood opportunities of sex workers and transgendered women; building greater understanding and trust between government and community, developing comprehensive plan and revising guidelines to ensure social inclusion and last but not the least empowering the community by strengthening functional literacy.

Introduction

Inaugural Session: Advancing the NMEW Mandate by Piloting a Convergent Social Inclusion Plan for Marginal Communities

The opening presentation looked at the Government Response based on dipstick evidence from beneficiaries in Guntur, Ananthapur, Hyderabad, Krishna, Nellore and East Godavari districts to gauge if social inclusion was indeed taking place.

Programmes:

- **Housing loan:** Thirty six sex workers in Guntur and 60 sex workers in Ananthapur received loans for the construction of houses.
- **Hostel:** Twenty children of sex workers were admitted in social welfare hostels in Ananthapur.
- **Non-Residential Training Centre:** The Chaitanya Mahila Mandali CBO in Hyderabad has been running a non-residential training centre, to support the Sarva Sikha Abhayan of the Rajeev Vidya Mission, for 100 children of sex workers.
- **Indiramma (Rural & Urban Housing):** During the last few years the sex workers community has been receiving benefits through the Indiramma Housing Programme. Two hundred and fifty sex workers got Indiramma houses in Guntur, 145 got them in Krishna, 60 got them in Nellore, 30 got them in Hyderabad and 16 got them in Ananthapur.
- **Indira Kranthi Patham (SHG):** The sex workers community has been part of Self Help Groups (SHG) across the state. Two thousand sex workers in Krishna district, 1000 sex workers in Guntur district, 500 sex workers in Ananthapur, 200 sex workers in East Godavari and 50 sex workers in Hyderabad are part of SHG groups. All of them are availing benefits from the Indira Kranthi Patham programme.

Testimonies from the community:

“With the support of Sarva Sikha Abhayan, we set up a Non-residential Training Centre during Oct 2011 - June 2012. We support 100 children.” - Jayamma, President, Chaitanya Mahila Mandali, Hyderabad

“I have been part of an SHG group for the last five years. The three loans I got through the SHG group have helped me to set up a saree shop. Now, I am able to earn sufficient money to lead my life.” - Majaharunneesa, Guntur

Entitlements:

- **Voter Card:** A 1000 sex workers in Krishna district, 110 sex workers in Hyderabad and 50 sex workers in Ananthapur have received voter ID cards.
- **Ration Cards - BPL, Antyodaya:** One thousand and ten sex workers in Guntur, 1400 sex workers in Krishna, 230 sex workers in Hyderabad and 50 sex workers in Ananthapur have received Anthodaya cards.
- **Aadhar Cards:** Two thousand five hundred sex workers in Krishna district, 500 sex workers in East Godavari district, 230 sex workers in Hyderabad, 50 sex workers in Guntur and 15 sex workers in Ananthapur have received Aadhar cards.

Testimonies from the community:

“I am getting a special pension for single women of Rs. 200/- every month. The Mandal Development Officer was very supportive in processing my pension”. - Devi, 46, Guntkal, Pragathi Mythri Mahila Mandali

“Over the last five years we have been seeking inclusion from the Rural Development Officer, Municipal Officers, DRDA, police department, Mandal Revenue Officer. The MRO of Peddapuram established an Office for Aadhar in our CBO office and many of our community members have got Aadhar Cards.” - Apsar, President, Peddapuram, East Godavari

Schemes:

- **Maternity Benefit Scheme:** Fifteen sex workers in Hyderabad, 5 sex workers in Ananthapur and 2 sex workers in Guntur availed of the financial benefits available under the Maternity Benefit Scheme.
- **Widow Pension:** Three hundred sex workers in Krishna district, 30 sex workers in Guntur district, 18 sex workers in Ananthapur and 3 sex workers in Hyderabad are receiving widow pension.

- **Old Age Pension:** Two hundred and fifty sex workers in Krishna district, 27 sex workers in Ananthapur and 20 sex workers in Guntur are getting old age pension.
- **Disabled Pension:** Fifteen sex workers in Krishna district, 12 sex workers in Ananthapur district and 5 sex workers in Guntur district are getting disabled pension.
- **Deepam Pathakam:** Seventeen sex workers in Ananthapur and 15 sex workers in Krishna have got gas connections under Deepam Pathakam.

Testimony from the community:

“Two years ago I was issued a ration card and I also started getting old age pension. This helps me to meet my basic needs, especially food”. - Padmavathi, 62, Anantapur town, Jhansi Lakshmi Mahila Sangham

Convergence: Ananthapur

The REDS, Kadiri, has been working on anti-trafficking and the rehabilitation of rescued women and girls. The following committees have helped to build strong collaborations and coordination among government departments so that quality services can be made available to rescued women and girls.

- District Coordination Committee
- SC, ST Monitoring Committee
- Social Action Committee

Outcome:

The above committees were involved in providing the following services:

- 72 Sex workers received a relief fund of Rs. 10,000/-
- 38 Sex workers got subsidized loans of Rs. 40,000/-
- 40 Sex workers received housing
- 200 Sex workers got job cards through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

Community Sharing:

“Our CBO is represented in the District Convergence Forum, headed by the District Collector. We have approached and placed our demands before the Mandal Revenue Officers, Police Department, Women and Child Welfare Department and the District

Legal Services Authority (DLSA). 55 petitions have been submitted to the DLSA of which 40 have been addressed.” - Shahanaz, President, Siri Mahila Sadhikaratha Welfare Society, Guntur

Given the strong evidence about how social inclusion is slowly and steadily growing, what were we striving to achieve?

Advance the process by developing a consensual, convergent “Social Inclusion Plan” for:

- Scaling up of the reach of state programmes through the convergence of all schemes, projects and entitlements through awareness about the existing programmes, facilitating access and promote collective ownership and shared responsibilities.
- Facilitating community convergence through single window delivery to reach the unreached and poorest of the poor.

Jointly building an Enabling Environment by:

- Galvanizing leaders, political and elected representatives, opinion makers, professionals, service providers, doctors, lawyers, teachers and journalists.

How will the Plan be shaped?

Key Steps:

First, by holding state level consultation with various stakeholders - government, non-government, community, academia and experts – in order to jointly develop the terms of reference for the process of designing the plan

Second, by constituting “Reference Groups” representing:

- Community based organizations and allied organizations.
- Policy and decision makers, officials and the executive arm of all social sector and related departments and statutory and regulatory bodies.
- Experts and technical advisors.
- Professionals, service providers, doctors, teachers, lawyers and journalists.

Third, by conducting listening exercises with each constituent and sub constituent with the guidance and support of Reference Group members

Fourth, by evolving a synergized plan which will be deliberated on and finalized collectively

Well defined plan for having a shared understanding on the roles and responsibilities of each player

Finally, by executing the plan in one demo district

Expected Outcome:

- The setting of common standards on what we define as “social inclusion.”
- A cohesive assessment and recognition of key milestones and innovations achieved by different stakeholders.
- Jointly resolving to address structural barriers, and the denial of rights and entitlements.
- Developing a reference group representing key groups who will recommend, guide and participate in the process of designing a “Social Inclusion Plan.”

Professor U. Vindhya, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad, stated in her Opening Address that the key objectives of the consultation were to:

- Understand the efforts being made across the board by government and non-government organizations to strengthen the social inclusion of marginal communities.
- Recognize milestones, achievements, challenges, barriers and gaps.
- Plan the next steps.

Elaborating on the need to focus on the economic development of marginal and vulnerable communities Prof. Vindhya said that, “It was imperative for them to be socially included in all aspects; the most important being the prioritizing of their social inclusion in the 12th five year Plan. Presently, there are huge numbers of sex workers and transgenders among marginalized and excluded groups who are facing day to day challenges like poverty, social stigma, discrimination and denial of opportunities like education and basic services.

“Most of them belong to economically backward communities and our research has revealed that such families are being cheated and exploited and many women are forced to enter sex work in order to take care of their families. Overall, these communities are being denied a life of dignity.”

“The issue of trafficking has long been there; the root causes being economic backwardness, poverty and distress migration. In 2003, when Andhra Pradesh was seen

as a state where a lot of trafficking was taking place, the state government established an anti-trafficking wing which follows a three-tier prevention strategy of prevention, prosecution and protection.”

“Since then, the state government, NGOs and civil society organizations, including community collectives, have been working in close coordination to curb trafficking and strengthen rehabilitation. But, despite these efforts, stigma and discrimination and violence against sex workers continue to prevail and these communities still face problems of social marginalization, gender discrimination and violence.”

“In view of all these challenges, the Consultation will focus on the following:

- How to safe guard the rights of marginal communities?
- How to make rehabilitation for sex workers and transgendered more comprehensive and effective?
- How to provide the most-at-risk populations better access to basic services especially education and health services that would enable them for a better life?

The Consultation will also provide these communities an opportunity to directly voice their concerns to officials. We hope the discussions will help in designing a better plan for the empowerment and social inclusion of these communities”.

Inaugural Address: Smt. K Ratna Prabha, Additional Secretary, National Mission for Empowerment of Women

The National Mission for Empowerment of Women aims to converge, all government programmes meant for the welfare of women, especially excluded, marginal and vulnerable communities; the key objective being to ensure the holistic development of these communities in coordination with all departments.

Therefore, based on the lessons learnt from the very successful “Gender Resource Centre” in Pali district, of Rajasthan and the Mission Convergence programme of the Delhi government, grassroots or community-centered programmes will be implemented to enable women to discuss social issues like dowry and child marriage and the social stigma and the discrimination they face in accessing entitlements.

The pilot project will bring all the schemes together and priority will be given to educating women about the various schemes and how they can overcome the challenges faced in availing the schemes. Since we are in the implementation process, it is necessary for all of us to understand the key services each department will provide and the challenges that the community faces on the ground in accessing them.

Partnership building with all departments is therefore essential. And since sex workers and transgender communities are expressing concerns I would request the police to look into it.

Initially, we would like to implement this pilot project in select states like Andhra Pradesh before taking it forward in other states. Therefore, let us develop an action plan and work collaboratively to make it a best practice that can be replicated across India. Inclusion of these communities by all departments is the primary responsibility of each department

We also need to understand what rehabilitation is. In 1990, thousands of acres of agricultural land were distributed to Devadasi women in Raichur, in Karnataka. But 20 years later, while trying to assess the extent of development that had taken place among them, we found that most of the women were unaware of the fact that land had been allotted to them. A few among them were doing some farming, most had just left it fallow. The lesson I learnt from this experience is that just giving land is not enough we need to create solutions that get leveraged.

Recommendations:

- Rehabilitation programmes should foster long term results and generate a paradigm shift for the community.
- The cooperative model for the economic empowerment of sex workers should be explored.

Thematic Address: Shri. S V Ramana Murthy, IPS, Addl. DGP, Crime Investigation Department

Based on his long experience in the police service, Shri Murthy spoke of the critical role law enforcement agencies and the CID are playing to ensure that people enjoy their rights. In this context he cited his experience of a police raid that was conducted in 1987, in Karimnagar, to rescue some women from a brothel.

“In those days, and even until a few years back, rescued women were treated as the accused and kept in prisons in conformity with the then law. Now after many years, there have been changes in the way the law is administered and we have started treating them as victims. We have also done a lot of training with the help of the Women Development and Child Welfare Department to ensure that the law is being enforced sensitively.”

Nevertheless, law enforcement agencies do face problems, in this regard. “For instance, when Bangladeshi women are rescued we have to book them under the Foreigners Act as they do not have passports. And in the case of Sri Lankan fishermen we do not have the right to put them in prisons. So we sought an amendment of the law and the Ministry of Home Affairs made the requisite changes in the law so that it is no longer necessary to register a case. Now in the case of such foreigners the information they provide has to be verified with evidence and they have to be treated like any other victims.”

Referring to the Domestic Violence Act he said that this is a social issue, which cannot be brought under criminal law because it requires a lot of counseling and other kinds of support. This is why it has been placed under the Women Development and Child Welfare Department and the Protection Officer concerned is in charge of the implementation of the law.

In this context he stated that, “While the overall crime rate has been increasing in Andhra Pradesh by 2 to 3 %, atrocities on women have increased by over 40 %. What is also worrisome is that it is continuing to increase every year. However, because of changing circumstances, women no longer have the same level of fears and are even prepared to divorce their spouses since there is no longer any stigma attached to it. This is real empowerment,” he added

He concluded by stating that, “social inclusion is an excellent concept but it will require consistent coordination”.

Issues that need to be addressed:

Women’s issues are looked after by several departments so the challenge before us is, how do we ensure coordination and integration, which is the need of the day?

Is rehabilitation inadequate? It has been seen that 81% of rescued women are again trafficked or into sex work. Why is this happening?

Recommendations:

- Implementation of anti-trafficking interventions must be reviewed and revised.
- Women Development and Child Welfare Department has to be made the focal point for the rehabilitation of sex workers and functional leadership has to come from them. The police are merely there to assist them.
- There should be complete ownership by a single department in the implementation of specific entitlements, schemes and programmes for targeted populations.

- Rehabilitation packages have to be revised. The rehabilitation package allotted for surrendered Naxals is comprehensive and it has therefore seen 99% success. The responsibility of implementing this package has been given to the District Collector and Superintendent of Police in these districts and they have been very successful in implementing this package. Similarly, a strong, economic package is needed for those who have been trafficked to give them a sense of security, enable them to meet their basic needs, care for their families and take up livelihood programmes.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- It is vital that all women and minors be treated as “victims” and not subjected to police harassment and violations.
- Rehabilitation is an issue that must be addressed holistically and efforts should be made to integrate it with the social development for sex workers and transgendered women who have been trafficked or coerced into sex work.
- All programmes must be nested in one department which is mandated to provide the requisite leadership. At the same time, this key department must be linked with other departments to ensure a coordinated response, shared responsibilities and ownership of a comprehensive rehabilitation and social development package.

Shri. Raymond Peter, IAS, Principal Secretary, Social Welfare Department: Converging Programmes and Delivery of Social Entitlements to Marginal Communities

Introducing his presentation, Shri Peter emphasized the fact that the concept of social inclusion of marginal and vulnerable communities was very essential and relevant today because we are seeing many changes in the sexual preferences of people. “The law has also been trying to understand their concerns and respond positively to them and we are witnessing some measures of positive changes in society with the community trying to overcome discrimination and enable their peers to avail of services.” He also re-emphasized the fact that informed decision making is of critical importance and said that, “there is no scarcity of funds in implementing schemes, entitlements or programmes. Good schemes and the necessary funds are there but platforms have to be developed to foster the spirit of collective ownership and responsibility”.

Referring to the issue of trafficking he said that sex workers were constantly exploited and the trafficking of women and minor girls had become a major challenge, the main reasons for trafficking being illiteracy, poverty and ignorance. “Therefore, the highest priority should be given to providing education and rehabilitating them because the Law alone cannot make people access rights and entitlements”.

He also cited the instance of the Prevention of Atrocity Act and that though the Act is very strong but its implementation has not been effective because implementation challenges are very high. Adding that, “Only 30,000 cases have been booked but in reality there are many more cases”.

With regard to the transgender community, he lamented the fact that there is no department to look after their issues. During the last one year, the issue has been transferred from one department to another - Social Welfare, Women and Child Welfare Department, Minorities Department- but no one is prepared to address their issues and include them in their department. The questions, he posed was, “Where should they go? Are we doing enough to mainstream these communities? Whatever we are doing is not sufficient for the mainstream of these communities.”

Speaking about the Services being provided by the Social Welfare Department, he said:

“There are 300 schools working under the Social Welfare Department, in Andhra Pradesh, that are training students from backward socio economic groups to appear for the all India examinations and they are getting good ranks. This year, we are starting a course on communication skills for children from rural backgrounds. We are also supporting the higher education of such children. Presently, there are 100 students studying in top educational institutions across India – Chennai, Kharakpur, Mumbai and Kolkata. And since we are concerned about the overall development of students we are developing their communication skills, which often pose challenges for many of them. There are also 2400 hotels functioning for poor children 4000 students are getting scholarships.”

Recommendations:

- Interact personally with sex workers and transgendered women in order to get clarity about their concerns and develop a systematic plan that will make our schemes and programmes accessible to them. We can pilot the plan in Guntur and Prakasam.
- Evolve a mechanism for the inclusion of the transgender community.
- Take measures to include transgendered women and sex workers in SHGs
- Examine how scholarships can be provided to transgender students.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- One department should become the focal point for the transgender community as is the case in the Central Government where it comes under the ambit of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Sex workers and transgendered women must be included in the schemes of the Social Welfare Department.
- The department must extend its educational schemes to the children of sex workers and transgendered women, including hostel facilities and the training of some of them to excel and compete in mainstream educational institutions.

Mrs. Sujatha Rao, Former Secretary to Health, Medical & Family Welfare: Sex Workers and Transgendered Women; Setting out a Perspective on going beyond HIV to Social Development

In her keynote address, Ms. Sujatha Rao, initiated the presentation, by pointing out that she has been closely following the issue of sex workers and transgendered women for the last few years and realized the complexities of their lives. Several schemes and programmes have been introduced for the welfare of these women – hostels, *swayam sidda*, *sabla* and livelihood skill development programmes are there but the question is do they suffice?

Taking this forward, she stated that poverty is a major concern for them and it is driving them in to doing sex work. No woman will intentionally become a sex worker and many of them enter into sex work after marriage and having children because of unavoidable circumstances but society sees them as criminals, she added. “We must understand the root causes of their problem and work out a strategy to address them,” she added.

She also pointed out that in recent years some changes have been made in the law and a good beginning has been made with the law recognizing sex workers as victims and clients as criminals. But this was also posing a challenge to them because if the law treats the clients as criminals, how will they get clients and earn a livelihood, she queried. “Sex workers are dependent on sex work for their basic food and to care for their children, so how do we address those dimensions, she asked

In this connection, she stated that many discussions have been taken place with regard to this concern and finally the law was modified to some extent. “We have to think about their vulnerabilities, advocate with policy and decision makers and the need to speak up so that Department of Women’s Development and Child Welfare Department are able to see the issue from different dimensions,” she added

In this context she pointed out that the Supreme Court had said that minors must be protected from trafficking and sex work. “We are insisting on all partners and Community-Based Organizations (CBO) implementing Targeted Interventions to see to it that no minor girl enters into sex work and if they find them doing so they have to be rescued immediately. The CBOs have been playing a crucial role in preventing and rescuing minor girls from trafficking and sex work.”

She recommended that any rehabilitation package must at least fulfill their basic needs. According to her, “the present rehabilitation packages are inadequate and therefore ineffective and we have with us many examples of rehabilitation packages, which have not changed the economic conditions of sex workers.

“Moreover, there used to be a lot of violence against female sex workers and transgendered women by the police; they would beat them, collect money from them, abuse them and force them to have sex with them. However, due to consistent advocacy there has been a gradual change in the attitude of the police department towards marginal and vulnerable communities and the “department has also been supporting the initiatives that have been adopted by these communities for reducing violence.” She also opined that the law alone cannot help. “Collectivization among sex workers is stronger now and the institutionalization of providing services and entitlements for this these communities will yield good results,”

She concluded by observing that Tamilnadu government has been a role model in India. It has included transgender women in all departments and provided them with access to government schemes, programmes and entitlements. “When we provide opportunities to anyone, success will follow; whoever we are, we are all citizens of India and hence, government schemes are equally applicable to all eligible people,” she added. She exhorted the NMEW to take on the responsibility of converging all the processes for scaling up and mainstreaming programmes through consultation with all departments.

Recommendations:

- Involve the organizations working for women’s empowerment.
- Re-work the rescue and consequent support given to minors
- Rehabilitation packages must take into account the present cost of living
- Institutionalize services and entitlements for these communities for better results.

NMEW’s Recommendation:

- We endorse all the recommendations made above.

Community Testimony:

Mrs. O. Laila, TG, President, Modern Awareness Society, Warangal

In general, people have the perception that Transgender (TG) means 'sex'. This attitude is resulting in the stigmatization and discrimination of transgendered women by society. For instance, over the years we have had many problems with the Railway Police. They would file cases against TGs without reason and doctors would forcibly do medical examinations in front of others.

With support from the Centre for Advocacy and Research, we interacted with the District Legal Services Authority and told them about the problems we were having with the Railway Police. They spoke to the concerned officials in the Railways and the Railway SP visited our CBO to discuss the issue with the community. Since then necessary steps have been initiated and police harassments have reduced to some extent.

Employment is a major concern for our community. Even if we are educated, people do not come forward to give employment to us in any sector because they see us as untouchables. We also have skills and knowledge like others and can deliver the work assigned. All we are asking is that we be recognized as human beings.

When we approach officers for a voter's card or ration card, they tell that it can be given only if we say we are male. Where is the recognition to us?

Due to consistent advocacy efforts, we are getting some support from a few departments and officers but it is temporary because everything changes when they are transferred and a new officer takes charge. Then the problems of accessing services and entitlements will start again. Some of us have received Aadhar cards, ration cards, houses and land for constructing houses.

Recommendation:

- Make us part of committees that are advancing the delivery of programmes and schemes for marginal communities. This will enable us to ensure access to development and welfare programmes that are intended for marginal communities like us.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- Accord the highest priority to the social inclusion of transgenders.
- Use every opportunity to ensure that schemes and programmes intended for marginal communities reach them.

Mrs. Jyothi, President, Mahila Abhyuday Samithi, Hyderabad

We are still being stigmatized and discriminated against by people and we face immense difficulties in availing of government entitlements. Identity proofs are a major concern for us. We are not able to submit applications because we don't have ID cards. After doing advocacy with the municipal office we have been provided with land and we received Aadhar cards a year back.

The education of our children is also a major concern for us. Presently, our children are studying in government schools because we are unable to send them to private schools. Many of our children are also residing in hostels in different places and they are facing stigma and discrimination. We did advocacy with the students and hostel staff on this and there has been some change. Some of our children are unable to continue their education after 10th standard because their parents can't afford the fees and they are unable to get scholarships.

Recommendations:

- Measures must be initiated to provide education to our children till the intermediate level and if possible till graduation.
- Our CBO can be made part of the government system so that we can facilitate the process of implementation of government schemes, programmes and entitlements
- Steps must be initiated for the better integration of our children.
- Government needs to extend support to CBOs to establish and manage Old Age Homes for sex workers as most of them become destitute as they grow older.
- Nutrition supplements are essential for HIV affected sex workers and their children. Give our CBOs the responsibility of ensuring the distribution of food supplements.

NMEW's Recommendation:

- We endorse all the recommendations made above.
- We would like to flag the importance of providing quality education to children of sex workers and transgendered women.
- We need to examine how existing schemes of the Women and Child Welfare Department such as Swadhar for destitute women can be extended to include sex workers and transgendered women.

CONVERGING PROGRAMMES AND DELIVERY OF SOCIAL ENTITLEMENTS TO MARGINAL COMMUNITIES

Mrs. Usha Rani, IAS, Project Director, Rajeev Vidya Mission

In her address, Smt. Usha Rani stated that since education is essential for a person's overall development the aim of the Rajiv Vidya Mission is to provide education to the poor. She added that a residential Special Training Centre is being established for school drop outs to motivate them to continue their education and the children of sex workers can also avail of these facilities.

Community Testimony:

Mrs. Sunitha, Member, Chaitanya Mahila Mandali, Hyderabad

"I am Sunitha, from Chaitanya Mahila Mandali, a Community-Based Organization of sex workers in Hyderabad. I have been working for HIV/AIDS prevention among our members for the last seven years. Our organization is also working for the health and education of orphans including children of sex workers.

"The former Project Director of Rajiv Vidya Mission, Sri RV Chandravadan, sanctioned a project to our CBO to run a non-residential training centre for the education of orphans including children of sex workers.

"During one inaugural programme, we told him about the lives of children of sex workers who are becoming vulnerable because of the lack of services and suggested that they be provided the support necessary for building a better future for themselves. The Sarva Sikha Abhayan extended support by providing a non-residential training centre but this project was only for 10 months. Once it was over the children again discontinued their education and the entire effort suffered a setback.

"Such initiatives can help to prevent minor trafficking and motivate children to pursue an education. Most of the single women, trafficked women and other women are unknowingly entering into this work and migrating to Hyderabad because they have to take care of their children".

Recommendations:

- Support CBOs in running permanent non-residential training centers. This will result in schooling reaching children who need them most.
- Scholarships to children of sex workers and transgendered women will encourage them to go for higher studies.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- Structure a strong participatory role for CBOs and their federations and networks.
- Encourage initiatives that provide children with a stigma free learning environment.

Shri. Praveen Prakash, IAS, Commissioner, Health & Family Welfare

In his thematic address, Sri Praveen Prakash recognized the fact that all health related schemes must reach all sex workers and transgendered women.

Speaking about the efforts being made by NRHM, he stated that the “MAARPU” (Convergence Programme) was recently started and we have flagged off a new programme in which a cheque is given to families for meeting their medical expenses. We have to reach out to people who are really needy”, he affirmed.

Recommendations:

- Include transgender women in district level committees for ensuring quality health services. It will also give them opportunities to speak about their concerns to the committees.
- Make CBOs a part of the District Health Committees (DHCs) which are initially being setup in Krishna, Guntur, Warangal and Hyderabad.
- Send high level committees to Tamilnadu to study the initiatives that are being done for transgenders so that they can be initiated in Andhra Pradesh
- Sensitize healthcare providers is a programme that have been initiated in Guntur and Vijayawada. Once the programme is completed in these two districts they can be scaled up in other districts. (APSACS needs to follow-up on this).
- Bring all the departments together on the same platforms to maximize the impact of schemes and programmes.

NMEWS's Recommendations:

- We strongly and heartily endorse all the recommendations made above.
- Give representation to transgender and sex workers community members in the district health committees to strengthen convergence between providers and users.
- NMEW will take the lessons learned in Andhra Pradesh to other parts of the country.

Ms. Chandramukhi, Project Manager, Avagahana, a CBO of Transgendered Women, Hyderabad

“We have a lot of problems with regard to castration and Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) and in getting health services in hospitals. Female doctors ask us to go to male doctors and male doctors ask us to go to female doctors. Where should we go?”

“Doctors should know about SRS surgery but they tell us that they are not aware about it. Senior officials are taking measures to ensure our access to health services but on the ground, we are still facing challenges. We are sensitizing doctors and informing them that Avagahana CBO is working for the health of our community members but it is not yielding any results.

“In some institutions, the situation is changing but even there it is not entirely satisfactory”.

Recommendations:

- The government must set up committees to monitor the quality of services and the attitude of service providers.
- We should be given representation in hospital committees and allowed to participate in review meetings.
- Sex workers must also be given representation in committees being set up by the District AIDS Prevention Control Unit (DAPCU) so that they can work closely with the health department.
- The nutritional support to People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) is very essential for our community members
- Sensitization of all doctors about our issues, especially on our sexuality, is needed.

NMEW’s’ Recommendations:

- We appreciate the readiness of the community to partner the government in ensuring that health services reach the community.
- We support the effort being made by the Department of Health and NRHM to listen to the concerns of the community and give representation to the community in various committees.

Sri. Chiranjiv Choudhary, IFS, Commissioner, Women Development & Child Welfare Department

In his thematic address, Sri Chiranjiv Choudhary spoke about the work being done by the Department of Women's Development and Child Welfare (WDCW) and said. "We tried to set up anti-trafficking centres in Andhra Pradesh but local people would not allow us to do so saying, 'Are you going to make this a centre for the sex workers to do sex work?'"

He stressed the fact that as citizens of India, everyone is entitled to the benefits being provided by the government and that they cannot be denied to anyone just because they are transgendered women. Therefore, awareness and the capacity building of the community is important. He agreed that while convergence is important it is not easy to manage it. There are several convergent committees and they need to be reviewed. "It requires a lot of focus and we should not give up until the goal is achieved". He assured the gathering that it is the right of the community to access the many schemes that are available in different departments and the WDCW will "strive to bring them together and initiate a discussion."

In this connection he cited the example of the Integrated Child Protection Scheme, which was introduced a few years back in which a separate unit called the District Child Protection Society, was setup to address child related issues under the District collector.

The implementation of the Domestic violence Act, he said could be strengthened by giving more responsibility to the Women Development and Child Welfare Department. "Counseling must be improved because in many centers because the same counselor is providing counseling on all issues. Their salaries are also woefully inadequate."

He suggested that facilities in rehabilitation centres, hostels and homes be scaled-up in keeping with the number of people staying in these places. He pointed out that an Economic Empowerment Project is being implemented as a pilot project in one district was an immediate relief fund of Rs. 10,000/- being provided to those who are rescued.

Recommendations:

- Ensure consistent follow-ups till the goal is reached
- It is important that shelter homes for sex workers have basic facilities.
- The CBOs can help in strengthening policies for the community.
- Continue to have such inter-departmental and multi-stakeholder interactions in the future.
- Review the facilities that are being provided in homes for children and initiate necessary steps to improve the quality of services.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- We welcome the suggestion that as the nodal ministry, the Department of Women's Development and Child Welfare should play a central role.
- All schemes related to rescue, rehabilitation of sex workers and social security to women from marginal communities should be strengthened and made the fulcrum for convergence and linkages with other departments.

Civil Society Response:***Ms. Pallavi, Asmita***

“You have described the challenges and spoken of the entitlements are there. But the larger question is whether excluded communities are able to access these entitlements.

“The second issue is that of the inclusion of transgendered women in programmes and policies along with sex workers. The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) has Anganwadi workers who can also talk about domestic violence but they must be sensitized to the fact that sex workers also face domestic violence.

“The Women and Child Welfare Department, which has many schemes, should take steps to ensure that marginalized women have access to them”.

Ms. Aruna, Program Manager, Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP)

In her thematic address, Ms. Aruna, detailed the work that SERP is doing to empower women and other marginal communities.

“In coordination with all departments we are adopting a thematic approach, based on local priorities. It started with young widows in Warangal, anti-trafficking group in Ananthapur and child labor in Kurnool. Committees have also been formed in villages which have been central in implementing programmes and schemes. There is a Social Action Committee (SAC) in each and every village to deal with social issues at the village level and family counseling centres have been established in mandals to address social issues like dowry.”

“Access to schemes has also been made easier for these communities and apart from financial needs we have also focused on the challenges they face. We helped 800 female sex workers to get Anthodaya cards. We are currently working with 11 lakh families.”

“We have provided Rs. 48 lakhs towards livelihood programmes for sex workers. A total of 500 sex workers have been provided an amount of Rs. 1 crore through Self Help Groups.”

Recommendations:

- To work with communities like sex workers we need to develop a special agenda.
- Sex Workers could be included in mandal samakhyas so that their needs can be addressed with support from the IKP programme.
- The police department should give us the list of victims they have rescued in different places. That would make it easy for us to give them the designated schemes.

NMEW’s Recommendations:

- We endorse the recommendations made above.
- We wholeheartedly support the suggestion that sex workers and transgendered women be included in the mandal samakhyas and made part of the IKP Programme. Convergence with the police department has to be strengthened to enable us to go beyond raids and effectively plan rescue and rehabilitation.

Community Testimony:

Mrs. Sumithra, FSW CBO, Tirupati

“Stigma and discrimination is very high in rural areas towards sex workers and it is difficult for them to be members of a group. Female sex workers who are positive face double stigma and discrimination.

“You have mentioned various committees but they are not addressing the problems of sex workers. Sex workers above the age of 40 years cannot do sex work. Availability of agriculture works is also very irregular. There is also the issue of how they will raise their children and the stigma and discrimination faced by our groups.

“Partnership with rural sex workers in providing entitlements and services would be useful and it would also be helpful if female sex workers could be part of economic groups. But proving their identity is a major challenge faced by sex workers. We are unable to get membership in SHG groups because we don’t have the necessary proof”.

Recommendations:

- The loan given to female sex workers must be increased to Rs. 200000 to ensure overall development.
- It is essential, to converge the various programmes and ensure that communities are benefitting financially from the SC, ST, BC Corporation.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- We must do everything possible to reduce and remove the stigma and discrimination that the community of sex workers and transgendered women experience.
- We need to shape and provide economic empowerment programmes and income plus asset generation programmes to sex workers and the transgender community.
- We endorse the point that convergence is necessary to achieve financial and social inclusion of marginal communities.

Civil Society Response:***Mrs. Chandrika, Senior Programme Manager: CBO, HLPPT***

In her response, Mrs Chandrika stated that federations have been formed in coastal districts and that they were working with 19 CBO. As a civil society organization they were also in the process of forming mandal samakhyas. As of now Transgendered women do not have an SHG that they can be part of.

Recommendation:

- There is need to include transgender in SHGs so that they can avail of schemes.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- We endorse the recommendations that transgendered women should be included in SHGs

Civil Society Response:

Ms. Meera Ramachandran, WINS, Tirupati

In her brief but very moving presentation, Ms.Meera Ramachandran , Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee, in Chittoor district, spoke of the terrible conditions in which destitute children are forced to live.

“The condition of children in the centres run by the government is pathetic. They are being taken care of by Anganwadi teachers, who are already loaded with a lot of work. These children need health facilities but they are not available at these centres.

“Moreover, there is no security for children who have been physical and sexually abused. We must ensure that they are secure because they may go out and get trapped into the work being done by adult women, she stated.

Dr. Jayamma, Additional Project Director, APSACS

“In addition to the HIV prevention programmes that are being implemented we are also providing a free bus pass and pension for people living with HIV.

“We are also working with the transgender community through targeted intervention programmes and encouraging them to be part of SHGs in order to strengthen their economic independence and sustainability”.

Community Respondent:

Mrs. Eswari, President of Prema Sangham Mahila Mandali, CBO, Chittoor

“As part of the targeted interventions that were started in 2005, in Chittoor, through PASS NGO and the support of Alliance we have involved and motivated sex workers and transgender women to lead the prevention effort in community and among the general population. This programme has changed the behavior of sex workers and transgender. Before starting the intervention, no community members would come forward to access STI services and HIV testing. Now we are all equipped with knowledge about HIV/AIDS, STIs and prevention methods and all our community members undergo a medical check-up every three months.”

“The programme has also helped us to linkup with the health services in government hospitals for the last two years. Thirty percent of our community is utilizing government health services but we are still facing stigma and discrimination in the hospitals. HIV positive women in sex work are utilizing the ART services at government hospitals.”

“Our CBO Prema Sangham Mahila Mandali started with 60 women. Now our membership has touched 617. We are working in 4 mandals and we have a district level network which has 7 CBOs. At the district level we have 9090 members in the network.”

“We get capacity building trainings from NGOs and Alliance on how the CBO should be run for the benefit of our community. We have formed 6 committees in the CBO to look after administration and the other activities of the community. These include: Outreach Committee, Clinic committee, Condom Committee, Advocacy committee, Resource Mobilization committee, Project Advisory committee. Each committee has 5 members.”

“All this empowerment was made possible because of the HIV/AIDS prevention programme. Now we are striving to avail of services and entitlements and also the empowerment of women with support from government and civil society. We want our concerns to be addressed through all programmes”.

Recommendations:

- CBOs representatives must be involved in all district committees set up by DAPCU, District Hospital and related committees.

Civil Society Response:

Ms. Sumithra, Ankuram, Hyderabad

Ms. Sumithra pointed out that facilities in Ujwala Homes for rescued women is far from adequate. She emphasized the point that there is no institutional care and rehabilitation is being done forcibly. “The willingness of persons is most important because we cannot expect results when there is no ownership”. Collaboration by the government is also essential in many ways. When a shelter home was shut down the reason for doing so was not shared by the government. “Problems have to be analyzed and measures have to be initiated for better services”, she added

Recommendations:

- A coordination committee has to be formed for better maintenance of Ujwala Homes. Comprehensive services have to be made available by appointing qualified counselors.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- We will extend all support to the Women and Child Welfare Department, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Police in revamping the rehabilitation strategy and package.
- We also agree that qualified counselors must be appointed.

Ms. Girija, Independent Consultant

“We have to highlight and resolve the challenges facing the system in order to strengthen the implementation of schemes and entitlements and for utmost reach” stated Ms. Girija. We must also discuss the strategies we need to evolve to take this forward.

Dr. Sujatha, Specialist in Health & Nutrition, Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas (MEPMA)

In her thematic presentation, Dr. Sujatha stated that they had selected Peddapuram, in East Godavari, as a model site and formed 836 sex workers groups in 13 districts, especially in districts like Krishna (Vijaywada), Guntur and Nellore.

“We are empowering and building the capacities of the poor and promoting and strengthening self sustainable institutions for them by addressing poverty issues.” She also informed the participants that a participatory monitoring and evaluation system was already in place and MEPMA is linking the SHGs members with banks to enable them to avail loans so that they can take up livelihood programmes.

She affirmed the need to strengthen convergence at the grass-root level for strengthening the system. “Rural people have limited knowledge about schemes, programmes and entitlements and to create awareness in rural areas we are converging with the Anganwadi workers,” she stated.

She believed that there is immense scope for forming groups among marginal and vulnerable communities as seen in Andhra Pradesh where 30, 00,000 women are part of 30,000 SHG groups. “We can make many more women from among the marginal and vulnerable population part of these SHGs across the state but we need the help of the NGOs working at the grass root level,” she added. Speaking about some of the good practices in the state, she told the Consultation that the SHG in Rajarajeswaripet, of Vijayawada, was one of the best SHGs in the state and that it could be treated as a best practice and replicated in other places.

Recommendation:

- Strengthen the formation of SHGs for marginal communities and discuss the inclusion of TGs in the SHG groups with the Commissioner.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- We welcome the inclusive and innovative approaches being used by the *Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas (MEPMA)* to ensure the inclusion of marginal communities. We urge grassroots and civil society groups to support MEPMA in reaching out to sex workers and transgendered women.

GOING BEYOND RAIDS & RESCUE TO SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT***Sri. S Umapathi, IPS, IG, Crime Investigation Department***

Sri. S. Umpathi, in his thematic address began by stating that they have been consistently worked on anti-trafficking for the last seven years. While doing so, he emphasized the fact that the first requirement for prevention of trafficking is to sensitize the village Panchayat and motivate the village to take ownership, “but that is one thing we have not succeeded in doing till now”, he admitted. “We have not looked at the village as the intervention point for taking care of girls, youth and their education and similarly we should also recognize the fact that a town should take the responsibility of taking care of people living in it. Unless this fact is realized by the wider public no such programme will succeed in the manner it should” he stated. The expectation from the government in terms of support should be minimal.

Taking the concerns forward, he stated that though we have many SHGs in the villages, they are not able to deal with prevention. School drop outs are high in many places and in about 20 mandals in Kadappa and Ananthapur, he found that girls stop going to school after 2nd class and parents selling their children at the age of 11-13 years in Bombay, Delhi and Bhiwandi for Rs. 1.5 lakhs. “Nobody is obstructing or stopping this practice”, he added

Sharing details about a recent raid he had conducted in Tirupathi he said that two Bangladeshi girls in the 16-17 age group, who were being trafficked from Kolkata by some women, were caught in Tirupathi and taken to Bangalore where they were detained along with the women who brought them. He said that “this information was passed on to an NGO in Bangladesh because under the law, girls from foreign countries and the state of Jammu & Kashmir are treated as minors till the age of 21 years.” In other parts of the country, it is below 18 years and even 16 years and since trafficking with regards to minors is non-negotiable, the anti-trafficking departments have to send them back to their homes, he stressed

He also reminded everyone that the attitude of the police to the transgender community was also shaped by the law. In the case of transgenders, as per the law, a child under 16 years is treated as a child whose consent is not valid for selling his body and if a 15-year-old boy decides to undergo castration, it cannot be considered legal as per the law because the consent of a child is not legally admissible.

With regard to women, he said that one of the important changes that have occurred in the legal status of sex workers is the fact that women are now treated as victims of circumstances beyond her control and rehabilitated. “We need to look at women as victims and not the accused. She should also be empowered to earn at-least Rs 10,000–Rs 8000/- a month and rehabilitation should include training in livelihood skills. But weaving baskets etc can only earn her Rs 3000-4000/- a month which is far from sufficient given the present cost of living,” he explained

He agreed that under the ITPA Act, social inclusion and social empowerment has not been made part of the law and we need to change it so that children of sex worker can be treated as a child in need of care and protection. In this connection, he stated that we have 13 lakhs women and children in prostitution in the country of which, Andhra Pradesh has 3 lakh and till now we have only rescued and rehabilitated 3000 women and children.

He concluded by recommending that we must also focus on bringing about an attitudinal change among police personnel. Stating that it took five years to change the attitude of police towards the women, he urged everyone to bring change in the plight of women through improved counseling and rehabilitation. “Tata Institute is the only institution in India that gives skill building training and in most places counselors are not given the kind of training they need to perform a complex function such as counseling,” he observed

Recommendations:

- If Rajiv Vidya Mission set up a system in mandals where children can go to school till the age of 14 it would yield some result.
- Interventions at railway stations are another step towards prevention of trafficking. Secundrabad and Vijayawada already have interventions and it is in a very nascent stage in Guntur. In Tirupathi, there is no intervention.
- To bring all these things together there should be a common agency, which is why it is so essential to bring all departments under one umbrella.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- We support all endeavors aimed at primary prevention and the empowering of adolescent girls
- We think it is important to ensure social inclusion and the social empowerment of the community of sex workers and transgendered women.
- The recognition for social inclusion and empowerment should stem from the fact that women are being treated as victims and not the accused.

Shri. V. Raghunath Rao, Chairman, Jogini Commission

Shri V. Raghunath Rao, Chairman, One Judge Jogini Commission, described the uphill challenge he was facing in ensuring social inclusion for this highly discriminated and marginalized community.

“There are Joginis, Matangis and Devadasis in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra with different names and what is common about all them is the fact that stigma and discrimination against them is very high,” he stated.

Speaking about their concerns, he found that the education of their children is of major concern to them but the government does not support them. “The government does not provide them with identity cards and the rehabilitation programmes they have initiated for them are far from adequate,” he commented. To make matters worse, he said that even though there are a few programmes for the Jogini community they are not being implemented properly because there is no coordination or cooperation among the concerned government departments. He found that illiteracy was high in these groups, which is why the families dedicate their girl children to God for a livelihood.

He pointed out that until now only 11 cases have been booked in the state under the Andhra Pradesh Devadasis Prohibition of Dedication Act of 1988 and many of the officers who are supposed to be enforcing the Act are not even aware of it. “While the purpose of the act is to eradicate the Devadasi system and rehabilitate the Devadasis, nothing is being done to take the purpose forward”, he stated

Recommendations:

- A complete package has to be worked out for the girl children of the Jogini community to enable them to reach the stage where they can be financially independent, live on their own and take care of their families.
- The sanctioning of the loans to these women must be done without asking them to provide any security.
- Awareness building is another thing that needs to be done at the village and Panchayat level because there is urgent need to change people's mindsets.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- NMEW looks forward to the report and recommendation of the Jogini Commission.
- We endorse the recommendation that a special package for the girl children of Joginis must be evolved.
- We agree that awareness campaigns are needed to change the mindset of the general public towards all marginal communities.

Mrs. S.V. Bhavani, Programme Manager, Plan India

“We are working on prevention and advocacy. We provide residential care to vulnerable children through Drop- in- Centres and programmes have been initiated for adolescent girls in life skills education and vocational training. We also run Transit Homes in Rajamundry, Ongole and Visakhapatnam where we provide trauma counseling and community foster care for orphan and destitute children. In addition to this we facilitate peer counseling among the community and provide livelihood programmes to women living with HIV/AIDS”.

Challenges:

- Lack of awareness about rights and entitlements
- Lack of acceptance among the communities.
- Among traditional sex workers the male community does not support education.
- Educational institutions are not willing to provide space for children of sex workers.
- We have identified 2000 women who can be in SHG groups but none of the banks have come forward to open their accounts because the bank wants a certificate to prove that the women are from the groups.

NMEW's Recommendations:

- We would like to see good practices documented as part of the design of a “Social Inclusion Plan” and replicated and expanded in the demonstration district.

Community Respondents:

Sammulu, project Director, Rudramma Devi Mahila Mandali, Warangal

“We are from the Dommera community which is akin to Joginis and since we are into sex work, we are at risk of getting health problems. Hence, we have been implementing a Targeted Intervention Project to protect the health of our community members. We have 1511 members in our CBO and we have now started speaking out about our problems which we earlier hesitated to do.”

“We have become aware of the need to educate our children so we are sending them to schools and putting them in hostels. But we face lot of problems with schools because the school management asks our children questions like, ‘where is your father? They also insist that they get the ‘fathers’ signature on concerned papers. Despite these challenges, we are putting them in hostels to enable them to continue their education and keep them away from our environment.”

“When our children come to visit us during festivals the police raid our houses and take them away. The police has also set up a check-post near our homes and asked us to stop this work. But what will do apart from this? We don’t have any education. I had also taken up this issue with the Additional District Medical & Health Officer but he also told us to stop this work and threatened to come with bulldozers and break our houses if we did not do so.”

“There were days when people used to give us dowry to marry our children but now we have to give dowry to the other side. With no other source of income, how do we do this? How do we educate our children? The future of our children is a major concern for us. Most of our children become school drop outs because we are unable to pay their fees”.

Recommendations:

- Communities like Dommera and Joginis should be treated with respect and an effort should be made to help us to overcome both self-stigma and stigma and discrimination.
- Stop treating us as “culprits”, withdraw the police picket set up outside our settlement and stop harassing us and our children.
- Guarantee equal educational opportunities for our children.

Prasanna, TG, Tiruapti

“I am Secretary of the Transgender, MSM district network called ‘Navatejam’ and the CBO formed in 2005. We are providing services to 3,800 transgenders and MSM community members and 900 members of the sex workers community in our district. Prior to 2009, the transgender and MSM communities used to face a lot of harassment from the police”.

Recommendations:

- Our communities should be made part of the committees that the government forms so that there can be a wider understanding of our issues and concerns.
- There is need to initiate programmes to provide employment opportunities to the members of our community who have the required educational qualifications. This will enable us to sustain ourselves.

BUILDING COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP AND FORGING GOVERNMENT-CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP

Smt. Asha Menon, Member Secretary, Delhi Legal Services Authority, Delhi

In her address, Smt. Asha Menon, Member Secretary, Delhi Legal Services Authority, Delhi, spoke of the problems faced by the transgender community in accessing services and the need to work out viable rehabilitation packages for this community.

“Several schemes are available but their execution needs to be strengthened. Firstly, there is the question of accessing services. But what do we do when services providers are not supportive. In the morning session, someone said that when a transgender was sent to a male doctor, the male doctor sent the person to a female doctor. Finally the person left without getting treatment.”

“Everybody knows that the father’s name is not necessary when applying for school admission or other issues related to a child’s education. Why is the Directorate of Education not implementing this rule? It is totally in the government hands to do this?”

“Someone said that ego issues come up during raids and rescue operations. The fact of the matter is that according to a judgment, a protocol for rescue and raids has been set and the Delhi police have to follow it. The Andhra police are also expected to do so. The Delhi High Court has also ordered the presence of a NGO or a social organization during raids to ensure that women are treated with dignity. These are the issues where the courts can step in and safeguard the rights of women”.

Referring to the ITPA Act she said that, “the government has been mandated to set up protection homes and it is also obliged to provide some skill development programmes or educational programmes. But the court is more interested in sending the people back to where they come from because the homes are meaningless and they still carry the ugly look of prisons. They are not what a protective or shelter home should be”.

She then requested the government to look into these issues before setting up protective homes and said, “ Moreover, counselors are needed in homes for both children and women because in the absence of a proper rehabilitation programme, most of the rescued women feel there is no place for them to go to so they go back to the brothels. And they have compulsions for doing so. The woman needs to take care of her family’s needs because there is no one to share that responsibility in the family. I would say that no women would like to do sex work but once they get into it, there are lots of compulsions and the women say they will continue in the same profession. We need to keep these issues in mind while working out rehabilitation packages and in trying to provide viable

alternatives to such women. There is also the view that, since it is a paid profession they should be allowed to continue in it if they so desire”.

Ms. Bharati Dey, General Secretary, All India Network of Sex Workers, Kolkata

“Since we are talking about rehabilitation, I would like to talk about the Usha Cooperative Society, in West Bengal and invite all of you to visit it and see how it works. It has over 25 lakh sex workers and a turnover of Rs.13 crores. Many of the sex workers have taken loans and started their own business because they don’t want to be in sex work. This is enabling them to take care of their children’s education and their families. Such cooperative societies reduce the burden of implementation, economically empower the community and help them to lead a life of dignity. I think it can be used as a model among sex workers and the transgender community”.

Ms. Dey also suggested that similar consultations on the issue and concerns of female sex workers be organized in other places.

Mrs. Gowri, President, Krishna Vennela Mahila Mandali, Krishna district

Mrs. Gowri spoke of how a CBO has succeeded in improving the lives of its members, despite all odds, by enabling them to access social entitlements and schemes.

“Till 2004, we lived in our own worlds and did not come out for a long periods. We would go to the clinic for our check-up and return home. In 2007, we decided to form Krishan Vennela Mahila Mandali a CBO with 2500 members. Consequent to that we conducted many mandal and district convergence programmes with government departments and listed our requirements like ration cards, Anthodaya cards, pension etc. Over time, we were able to get them but there is still a high of stigma and discrimination towards us. Often our applications are kept aside because they have not been recommended by an influential person.”

“In 2009, we formed the Convergence Forum with the District Collector and asked him to facilitate economic support from the line departments. We also told him that there was a lot of stigma and discrimination towards us. The District Collector immediately called his Secretary and enquired about the number of people who did not have land. Then he sanctioned land for 50 community members and also helped us in getting housing loans. Now there is a colony for us. In recognition of the work we have done we have been asked to run a targeted intervention. Our CBO is now reaching out to 54 mandals in the district.”

“Many of our community members are illiterates. Therefore I request the government to provide us employment opportunities where educational qualifications are not required. We have social welfare hostels where there are posts for a watchman, cook, in-charge etc which does not require any education. If we are given such jobs, we will not be dependent on sex work”.

Mr. Jaya Kumar, Team Leader, Technical Support Unit (TSU), APSACS

“There should be a forum/platform from where the community can voice their concerns and challenges. Community ownership is possible only through collectivization and civil society and NGOs should help the community in institution building.

“Communities should talk about their concerns/challenges at the right time, at the right place. And as far as possible the community should approach the officials with possible solutions to their problems”.

Recommendations:

- There should be trust and confidentiality between the community and government officials. The government officials should maintain confidentiality about the status of the community.
- There are many schemes with the government but they are not reaching the community. So the government should design new schemes/revise the guidelines in the schemes, take the community’s needs into consideration and see that they serve the purpose of the community.

Dr. Prabhakar, Director, India HIV/AIDS Alliance

“Communities should be capacitated to create evidence on issues. Without evidence the government may not be convinced in taking initiatives forward. While doing so the community should also articulate the evidence in order to get entitlements from the government.”

“Civil society’s role should be that of a facilitator. It should bridge the gaps between the community and the government and help the communities in advocacy, documentation etc. It should also negotiate and create spaces for community interaction to enable them voice their concerns with the government and be a part of the rights based approach”.

Mrs. Chandrika, Senior Programme Manager – CBO, HLPPT

Opining that a good beginning had been made towards the social inclusion of marginal and vulnerable communities, Mrs. Chandrika said, “Such collaborative efforts are essential for addressing the concerns and issues of communities in accessing government entitlements in a more effective way. HLPPT has been working with 30,000 marginal and vulnerable communities in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh and we are also working with CBOs that have federated structures”.

With regard to including the transgender community in SHGs she said, “This community has a lot of limitations, especially stigma and discrimination. Despite all these challenges, seventy percent of the community is part of SHG groups. But as per the information shared by the CBO, they are facing stigma and discrimination in getting loans once their status becomes known to others. We have been promoting savings among community members and convergence meetings have been taking place at the district and mandal level and dealing with issue related concerns. But this should be done at the state level”.

She also referred to the para legal training that was done in Guntur and Sreekakulam with support from CFAR and said that, “Those who had undergone the training had suggested that the training curriculum be revised to include basic skills like how to fill applications, how to start the process etc., because the community needs hand holding in this process and only the support from the legal services authority can make this process effective”.

In Guntur, community para legal volunteers are dealing with cases relating to sex workers and the general population.

Recommendations:

- We have to keep all these issues in mind while working out a comprehensive strategy for the social inclusion of these communities.
- A review of schemes, programmes and entitlements should be done every three months to understand the gaps and initiate necessary steps that will make this effort more effective.
- The number of para legal volunteers needs to be increased

Ms. Girija Devi, Independent Consultant

Referring to the protocols for rescue Ms. Girija Devi, felt that the government should look at this issue as one that calls for long term collaboration with civil society with clear indicators on what the government will do and civil society will do. “We need to plan it in such a way that it yields good results”, she added.

She also explained that it was necessary to do so because, “When you are going for a rescue, it is a kind of fire fighting machine and there is an element of risk because you come to know about the operation and you also know that there are minors involved, so you have to go at the right time etc. There are lots of things that need to be in place when you go for a rescue. At the end of day, you may not find any girls. We must also remember that there are both women and girls in these brothels. So the dignity of these women is also a concern.

“I think the police department, civil society and all of us are leaning from such experiences at a high cost though we are not denying the fact that learning is taking place. Targets are put out to the rescue teams which is why I am saying that it should not be reduced to a piece-meal effort but be seen as a long term program for the government, the police department and all social sector departments including the Women’s Development and Child Welfare Department. I feel these principles are quite crucial”.

“All of us here have realized that sensitive officials, without naming them, have brought about meaningful convergence”, she added.

Azmath Ali, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)

“Since morning we have been talking about literacy and empowerment and how literacy can bring empowerment. We are helping people like you to read and write through a software programme called Computer Based functional Literacy.

“This software is for people from the age of 13 years onwards and it enables the person to learn how to read and write in their mother tongue. The specialty of this programme is that it is a computer based programme and while the conventional method will require you to dedicate 300 learning hours with this programme you have to dedicate only 40-50 learning hours. In fact we had started implementating it in Guntur when Praveen Prakash was there but when he left the programme came to a standstill”.

The programme is being presently implemented in many prisons including Tihar Jail and it can be done in 9 languages including 2 African languages. TCS provides the software and training to the trainers and also reviews the programme.

NMEW's Final Recommendation:

- All the recommendations made above will be considered while designing the 'Social Inclusion Plan for Marginal Communities'. This includes: Exploring the cooperative model and strengthening CBOs capacity in running cooperatives; enhancing the livelihood opportunities of sex workers and transgendered women; building greater understanding and trust between government and community, developing comprehensive plan and revising guidelines to ensure social inclusion and last but not the least empowering the community by strengthening functional literacy.

List of Participants:

S.No	Name of the Participant	Designation	Department/Organization
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Officials

1.	K. Rathna Prabha	ASMD, NMEW	WCD, GOI
2.	K Sujatha Rao		
3.	Raymond Peter	PS	Social Welfare
4.	S. Uma Pathi	IG	CID
5.	Usha Rani	PD	Rajiv Vidya Mission
6.	Praveen Prakash	Commissioner	Health & Family Welfare
7.	S.V. Ramana Murthy	Ad. DGP	CID, Dep AP Police
8.	Chiranjiv Choudhary	Commissioner	WCD, GOI
9.	Kalpana Naik, IPS	S.P	CID
10.	D. Uma Devi	Joint Director O/O Commissioner of SW	SW Dept.
11.	Dr.B. Jayamma	APD	APSACS
12.	Dr. Y. Sujatha		MEPMA
13.	Savitri		MEPMA
14.	V. Borra Reddy		
15.	T. Kailash Ditya	JD, TI	APSACS
16.	Dr. Deepa Ahluwalia	Senior Advisor	Dpt. NMEW MWCD, GOI
17.	R. Aruna	PM	SERP, Hyd
18.	A Lingaiah goud	PE	SERP, Hyd
19.	V. Raghunath Rao	Head of one man commission for Jogini	
20.	Asha Menon	Member Secretary	DLSA, Delhi
21.	David P	SPM	WD&CW
22.	Ch. Srinivas Reddy		WD&CW
23.	David P	SPM	WD&CW

Civil Society

1.	P. Prashanthi	SPD	APMSS
2.	T. Prabhavathi	Resource person	A.P Mahila Sadhikaratha Society
3.	R. Meera	Director	WINS Tirupati

4.	Ch. Vishnu	PO	Alliance, Pahachan
5.	Matangi Jayaram	PO	BMGF
6.	Pallavi Gupta	Coordinator, Research	Asmitha
7.	M.V. Steven	PC	HELP
8.	P. Poorna Chandrika	SPM	HLFPPT
9.	M. Vijya Reddy	PM Advocacy	HLFPPT
10.	Y. Anthony Reddy		Care
11.	K. Siva Kumari	ED	SWARD
12.	Dr. Vijaya Bhavani		Plan India
13.	V. Mani Vannan		
14.	Mala Jabeen	Women rights Advocate	High Court
15.	Girija Devi	Consultant	
16.	M. Sumithra		Ankuram
17.	Dr. N. Vasanthi		CSD, Hyd
18.	Dr. U. Vindhya	Professor, TISS	TISS
19.	Jaya Kumar	TL TSY	HLFPPT
20.	N. Narender		BMGF
21.	Meena Chifale	M&E officer	Saheli
22.	Dr.K. Krishna	C&C RR Dist	OU, Hyd
23.	Ajmath Ali	Project Manager	TCS, Hyd
24.	Y. Nagaveni	Consultant	APMSS
25.	K. Dolly	T.L	HLFPPT
26.	P. Prabhakar	Director	ALLINANCE
27.	Renuka	Advocacy officer	ALLINANCE
28.	Anita Rego		
29.	M. Rambabu		AIAP/ PEHCHAN
30.	Prabhakar Rao		
31.	K. Ravindra	Reporter	Sakshi
32.	Sarah Gideon	Prog Associate	Asmita

Media

1	Gopi Krishna		NEWS9
2	T. Saroja		
3	Jui Mukherjee	Intern	Times of India
4	G. Mohan Reddy		
5	Sushma Farida	Assistant	ETV-2 The Hindu

Community Members

1	P. Prasanna	Secretary	Navasangha, Tirupati
2	O. Laila	President	MAS, Warangal
3	R. Eswari	President	Prem Sangham, Chittoor
4	M. Sammulu	Secretary	RDMM Warangal
5	M. Sumithra	Community	Tirupati
6	Gouri	President	Krishna vennala, Krishna
7	P. Kousalya	President	PWN+
8	D. Vijaya	Community	CMM, Hyd
9	R. Sunitha	Community	CMM, Hyd
10	Bharati Day	Secretary	DMSC, Kolkata
11	Chandramukhi	TG	Avagahana, Hyd
12	Jyohi	President	IRDS, MAS Hyd
13	Swathi	Community	IRDS MAS Hyd

