

The cover features a dark blue background with a diagonal red band from the top-left to the bottom-right. Out of focus, golden-yellow circular lights are scattered across the dark background. The text is white and positioned on the red band.

2020-2021

ANNUAL REPORT

SHAKTI SHALINI

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I am not afraid of
anyone. To be able
to do anything, you
must have courage.
Balancing your
enthusiasm and
consciousness
helps you get the
work done and that
is how I have
always worked.

SHAHJAHAN 'APPA'

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ABOUT SHAKTI SHALINI

Shakti Shalini is a non-governmental organisation based on Delhi, India, committed to gender equality. To contribute towards the vision of a gender equal world, Shakti Shalini supports survivors of gender sexual violence/ discrimination; it works with socio-economically marginalised communities to prevent everyday violence/ discrimination; it trains youth and students to become champions of gender equality; it produces insightful audio-visual content and literature for awareness and sensitization ; and it networks actively with individuals and organisations across the world to strengthen and expand alliance and solidarity building for the cause. Each one of the interventions carried out by Shakti Shalini uphold their unique character while, simultaneously, complementing one another so as to work in unison to target systemic and discursive patriarchy – the roots of gender/ sexual violence.

In 1987, Shakti Shalini established as a healing process for two women, Shahjahan Begum and Satyarani Chadha, who had lost their daughters to a horrifying death by their respective in-laws on the pretext of insufficient dowry. The violent loss of their daughters galvanised them to join hands and commit their lives to fighting gender/ sexual violence.

In 1987 they established Shakti Shalini and it became a pioneer of grassroots gender equality work, specifically, during the second wave of feminism in the 1970s and 80s. The organization played a leading role in advocacy for the Anti-Dowry and Domestic Violence laws currently prevailing on the land, it established the first shelter home for women in distress in the city of Delhi, and supported countless individuals (most women) in navigating varied forms of violence and discrimination toward a life lived on their independent terms and choices.

PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

FOUR FOLD MECHANISMS FOR PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

Response Mechanisms: The variety of support services offered to survivors at Shakti Shalini include a shelter home for women in distress with basic amenities, regular counseling, crisis intervention, legal counselling and litigation services, physical and mental healthcare, rehabilitation/reintegration including educational and earning opportunities, and follow-up. The response mechanisms function on the principles of upholding individual choice, gender diversity, identify self-determination, grassroot impact, all-round response, intersectionality, sensitive and empathetic engagement.

Preventive Mechanisms: We conduct rigorous outreach, awareness and sensitisation in five socially and economically marginalised urban communities in South-East Delhi, conduct a skills development centre for combating violence and organise numerous art and cultural events that promote an ethos of zero tolerance to violence.

Educational Enhancement: An upcoming program, educational enhancement, is focussed at an ideological and ethical investment into all interns and volunteers who work at Shakti Shalini in order to ensure that topics such as gender equality, consent, violence, awareness of resources, etc. become core topics in the education of young people who can be powerful future changemakers in the world.

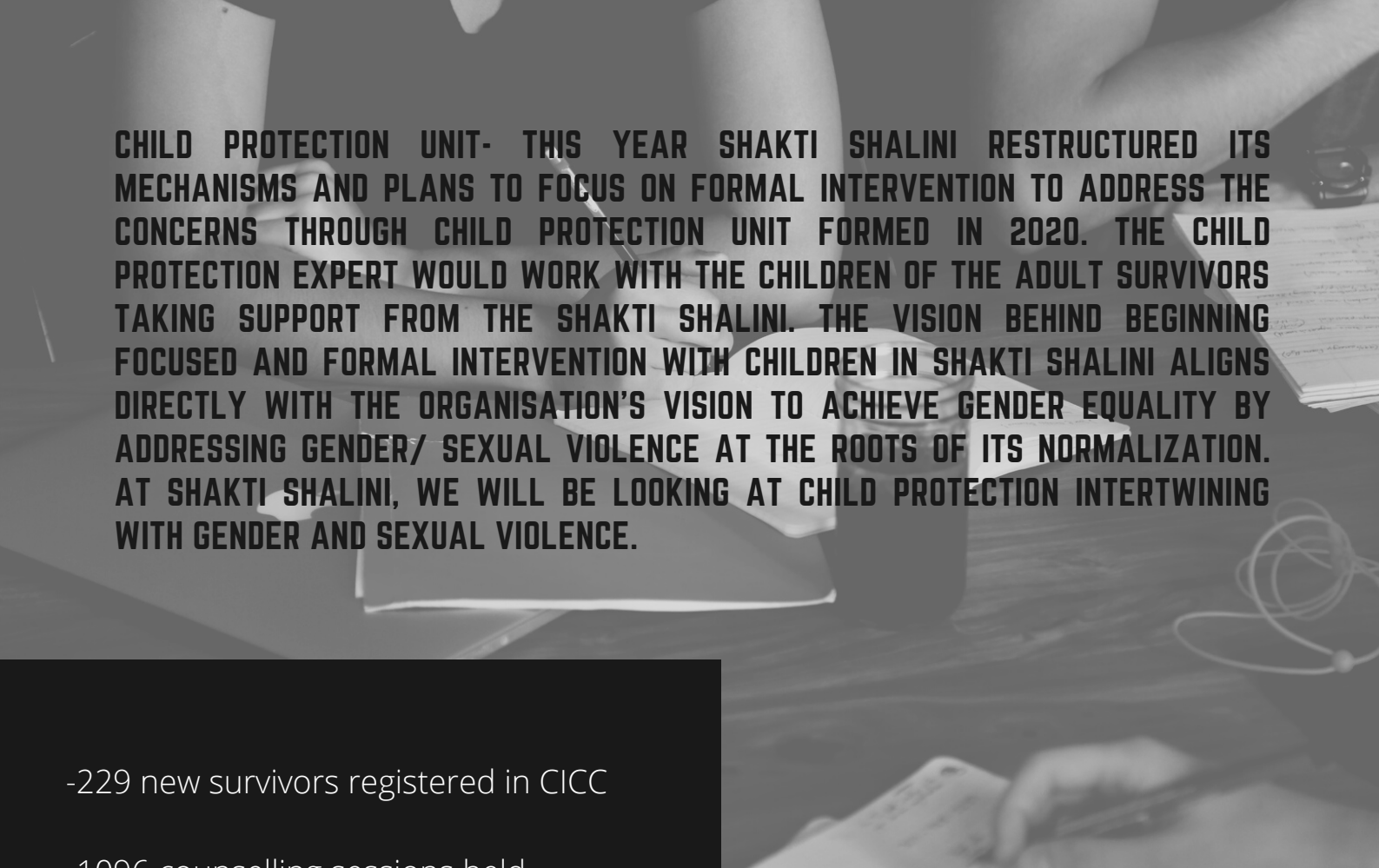
Social media: A platform with a great chance to present our work to the outside world and to get into contact with their supporters, their beneficiaries and other people interested in our work. It is a summary of everything we plan to do and hope to achieve.



CRISIS INTERVENTION AND COUNSELLING CENTRE

Shakti Shalini's primary response mechanism provides support and counseling to clients irrespective of their gender and sexual orientation who have experienced abuse, physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual and are undergoing a crisis. Support includes crisis intervention, ongoing counselling, mental and physical health care, legal counselling and litigation aid, educational, skills training assistance, career and housing assistance for rehabilitation and reintegration, and follow-up, always upon the choices and needs of the survivor. Counselling has proven to be an extremely effective method of mitigating the suffering of survivors. CICC fashions and re-fashions its counselling approach to the needs, choices and contexts of each individual client.

The purpose is to assist the survivors in formulating their own plan of action, take their own decisions and supporting in making individual choices. Each survivor undergoes multiple and different stages of counselling based on their individual needs. We prefer counselling in person, however, this year due to COVID-19, we conducted counselling over phone calls and video conferencing as well. Depending on the need and choices of the client, we may counsel the marital and natal families, friends and other concerned stakeholders as well. What is unique about CICC is that it is a **multi-sectoral one-stop centre where a survivor can find multiple resources altogether**. Thus, they don't have to divide their time, energy and capacity between different institutions; support and assistance required in navigating public or private institutional processes and systems that are, unfortunately, overwhelming, intimidating, insensitive and aggressive, for any survivors of violence, is provided at CICC.



CHILD PROTECTION UNIT- THIS YEAR SHAKTI SHALINI RESTRUCTURED ITS MECHANISMS AND PLANS TO FOCUS ON FORMAL INTERVENTION TO ADDRESS THE CONCERNS THROUGH CHILD PROTECTION UNIT FORMED IN 2020. THE CHILD PROTECTION EXPERT WOULD WORK WITH THE CHILDREN OF THE ADULT SURVIVORS TAKING SUPPORT FROM THE SHAKTI SHALINI. THE VISION BEHIND BEGINNING FOCUSED AND FORMAL INTERVENTION WITH CHILDREN IN SHAKTI SHALINI ALIGNS DIRECTLY WITH THE ORGANISATION'S VISION TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY BY ADDRESSING GENDER/ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AT THE ROOTS OF ITS NORMALIZATION. AT SHAKTI SHALINI, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT CHILD PROTECTION INTERTWINING WITH GENDER AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

- 229 new survivors registered in CICC
- 1096 counselling sessions held
- 276 follow-ups
- 34 visits by counselors
- 20 survivors rehabilitated and re integrated
- 27 survivors provided legal consultancy
- 07 survivors facilitated for litigation
- 13 group therapy sessions
- 11 Facilitated for safe space
- 250 total direct beneficiaries
- 1000 to 1050 indirect beneficiaries (approximately)

COVID-19 IMPACT

In March 2020 when the whole world was hit by the pandemic and strict lockdown was imposed all over the country, CICC continued reaching out to the survivors and lending them support. As the lockdown was announced a 24x7 helpline was set up which received calls from survivors in distress seeking support. Both the counselors responded to the survivors 24x7 and still continue to do so.

CICC compiled a PAN India list of organizations providing support to people in crisis in different parts of the country and also partnered with them so that the better support can be facilitated to the clients.

Due to the continued pandemic these sessions were then shifted to video conferences. A mobile helpline number was launched in the month of September; this helpline also provided the services of WhatsApp messaging

A STORY OF CHANGE...



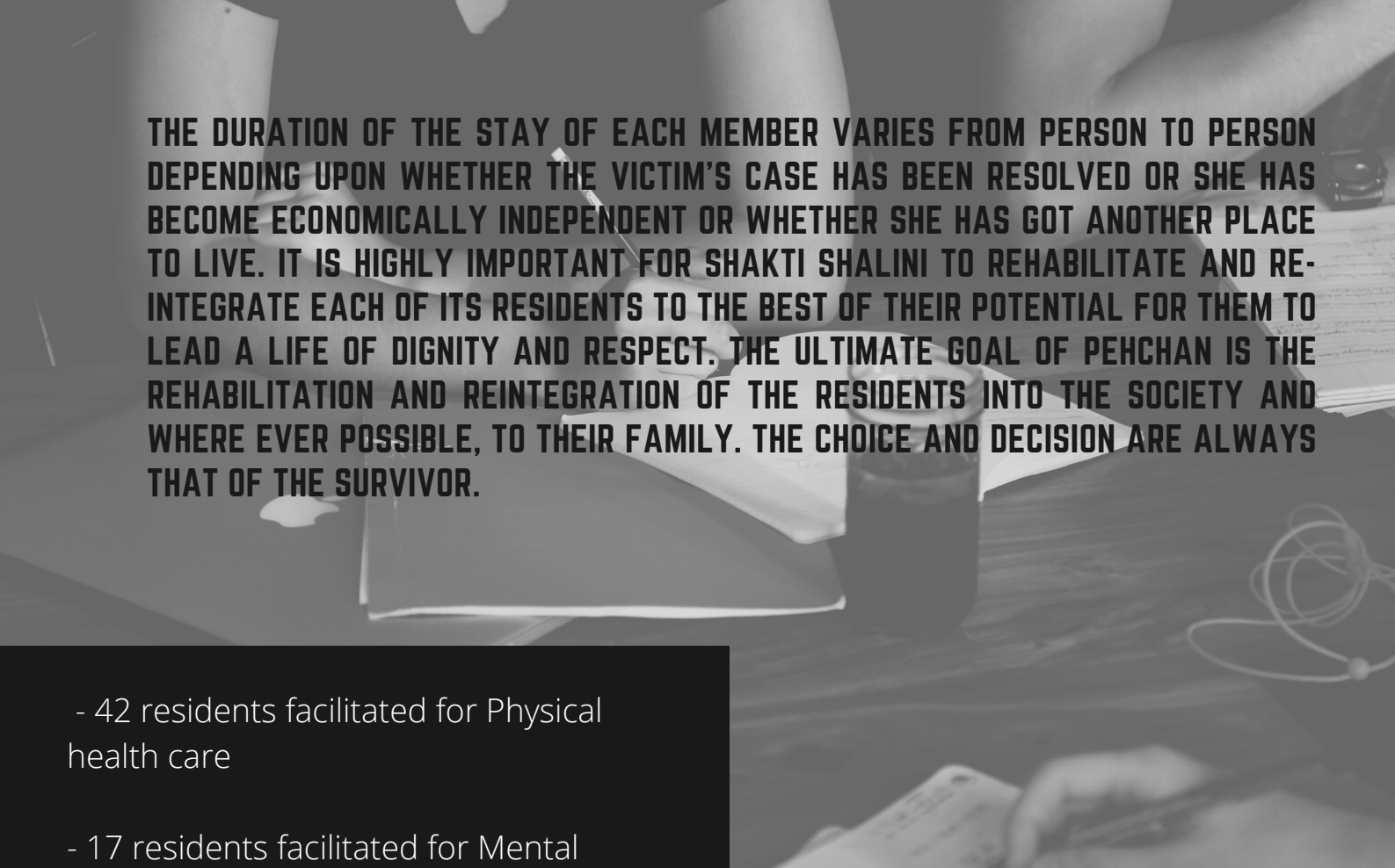
Chandni Banno, supported by Shakti Shalini, was in Class 12th preparing for her board exams when her father threw away her books. They were not in favor of her building a career and wanted her to be under their control and later in life, be dependent on a husband of their choice. She lived in a household where she faced violence by her family members, especially by her mother. If she lost her temper due to some reason, she would hurl abuses, hit her with whatever she could find lying around in the house, and encourage her brothers to do the same. They would pull her hair, hit her head on the bedpost and if she'd get injured, they would not even take her to a doctor. She even threatened to throw acid on her. She lived in constant fear and was not even sure if she'd be alive the next morning. She would apply for part-time jobs and on the day of her joining, her brother would lock the gate and not let me leave. Even when she decided to speak to her friends, she was told that it is okay for parents to hit their children. Some refused to believe her saying it is impossible for parents to be this violent. But she had a senior who helped her by connecting her to Shakti Shalini. She contacted their counselor and finally had space where she knew she could narrate her ordeal knowing she would be believed. Her parents requested the counselor to let them meet her. She then went back home after they'd given us the assurance that they'd let her study and not force her into marriage. She still lives in the same house as them but they now give her the space to do her own things. They know she have Shakti Shalini's support and there are regular follow-ups. She is saving money to move out of her house someday. She said that "I'm confident now that I can take charge of my own life". She is pursuing her M.A. in Political Science. She wants to own business and be her own boss in the future.



PEHCHAN, SHELTER HOME FOR WOMEN IN DISTRESS

Pehchan, connoting “identity”, is the shelter home, a safe space, for distressed women survivors of gender violence (often accompanied by their children), provided by Shakti Shalini. Indian women often face many difficulties within their family, community, and patriarchal society. Women or girls who have experienced domestic violence and abuse are victims of abject social situations most often do not have a source of help or a place to go to seek refuge. Most often they have to come back to their abusive partner, family or they commit suicides. Lack of education, awareness, and fear of social stigma has made thousands of women suffer in silence. The shelter home is equipped with holistic support services including **counseling and crisis intervention, food and nutrition, sanitation and hygiene, security and confidential location, physical and mental healthcare, sexual and reproductive healthcare, legal counseling and litigation aid, skills development and vocational training, educational and income generation support, rehabilitation and reintegration including housing aid, and follow-up.** The project activities include providing this entire range of support services available to the women who avail aid at Pehchan as per their individual needs, preferences, and choices.

We conduct workshops, facilitate discussions, and carry out regular activities to keep the residents occupied which eventually help them heal from their disturbing situations. As a policy, no woman is ever denied shelter post sunset. Counselling forms an integral part of the work that is carried in the shelter home. The organization has appointed a caregiver and a coordinator who look after the functioning of the shelter home along with the needs of the residents.



THE DURATION OF THE STAY OF EACH MEMBER VARIES FROM PERSON TO PERSON DEPENDING UPON WHETHER THE VICTIM'S CASE HAS BEEN RESOLVED OR SHE HAS BECOME ECONOMICALLY INDEPENDENT OR WHETHER SHE HAS GOT ANOTHER PLACE TO LIVE. IT IS HIGHLY IMPORTANT FOR SHAKTI SHALINI TO REHABILITATE AND RE-INTEGRATE EACH OF ITS RESIDENTS TO THE BEST OF THEIR POTENTIAL FOR THEM TO LEAD A LIFE OF DIGNITY AND RESPECT. THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF PEHCHAN IS THE REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF THE RESIDENTS INTO THE SOCIETY AND WHERE EVER POSSIBLE, TO THEIR FAMILY. THE CHOICE AND DECISION ARE ALWAYS THAT OF THE SURVIVOR.


- 42 residents facilitated for Physical health care
- 17 residents facilitated for Mental health care
- 17 residents facilitated for counseling
- 3 Litigation
- 8 Rehabilitated
- 7 Reintegrated
- 18 Emotional well-being session

According to Shakti Shalini's ground report on the impact of COVID Lockdown on domestic violence victims, publishes in 2020, "The lockdown has been a particularly unique period in time for domestic violence-it's victims as well as those of us who respond to this issue. It has created an unprecedented scarcity of support systems, options, isolation and helplessness for the victims. The means to transport oneself to safety, to communicate with supportive individuals/groups, to negotiate with police and judicial systems, to retreat into domestic privacy and solitude, shrank for the victims, most certainly, and also for social workers and activists."

COVID-19 IMPACT

Due to national lockdown, the shelter home had a great impact and faced a challenge with regards to the emotional well-being of the women and children living in the shelter. Since the health risk in Delhi continues to rise, we kept the shelter home closed against all external activities and entries, as a result, the organization had to re-strategized for the survivors. This radically changed the lives of the shelter women who used to frequently travel outside the shelter for counselling, making purchases, recreational activities, and also regularly entertain people from neighbouring communities and various skills trainers and volunteers at the shelter. The shelter was a very active place prior to the lockdown thriving with different people and energies. Since the lockdown, ensuring the emotional and psychological well-being of the residents has been an added challenge requiring major re-strategizing. We have been following a series of digital activities to meet this challenge.

A STORY OF CHANGE...



Back in 2018 when I first met Kajal at my aunt's house I was drawn to her immediately and we exchanged phone numbers. I had been facing violence at home because my parents were always suspicious of me being in a relationship with some boy or the other from college. They did not approve of me using mobile phone even though I'd use it to co-ordinate for my projects and assignments. I managed to keep in touch with Kajal since the day we had met.

One day I decided to leave home and stay with her after a violent episode. A few days later my parents managed to track me down and came to Kajal's house. We both had inside a room and they took her father to the police station saying that they will not release him till they find me. After some negotiations, I agreed to go back home. After Section 377 was scrapped, I tried to explain to my parents how it is also possible for two women to be in relationship. They dismissed it saying it is unnatural. They were pressuring me to cut ties with Kajal. Her parents on the other hand, had come to terms with her sexuality.

I wanted to be with Kajal and decided to contact NGOs and seek help. In April 2019, I ran away from my house again. We met with Shakti Shalini's counselor and stayed in their shelter home. I had to leave college because we knew they could find me there. They again manage to locate us and we had to file for protection order from the Delhi High Court. Later, we left the shelter and decided to leave for Punjab where we stay with Kajal's relative. She found a job to support us and I managed to complete my graduation. I do speak to my mother now and then who still tells me to return home but I am firm on the decision I've made.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our community outreach program is a form of direct negotiation and communication with the residents of the communities that aims at bringing about an ideological and cultural change in favour of gender equality and zero tolerance to violence. Shakti Shalini currently works with five socio-economically marginalised communities in South-East district of Delhi. To achieve our aim, we work at the level of the individual, the family and the community; with women, men, adolescents and children. The community outreach workers daily interact with the women, men, adolescents, children and families of the community, gaining their confidence, discovering their grievances and attempting to address them.

At the macro level the goal is reduction or total elimination of gender-based violence resulting in a harmonious and peaceful life. At micro level, the oppressed members of the society will be empowered so that they protect themselves from infliction of violence. The Community Outreach Worker regularly interacts with the women, children and families of the community, gaining their confidence, discovering the grievances of women and attempting to address them. The members of the community are encouraged to join Skill Development programs offered by Shakti Shalini at minimal fees.

PROTECTION COMMITTEE IN THE COMMUNITY IS ONE OF THE EFFECTIVE WAYS TO SUSTAIN ZERO TOLERANCE TO VIOLENCE IN AND AROUND US EVEN WHEN THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR IS NOT PHYSICALLY PRESENT IN THE COMMUNITY. THE PROTECTION COMMITTEE CONSISTS OF PEOPLE FROM THE COMMUNITY ITSELF WHO ACTS AS COMMUNITY VIGILANT GROUP AND REPORTS ANY FORM OF VIOLENCE THAT HAPPENS IN AND AROUND. THIS FOCUSES ON MAKING THE COMMUNITIES SELF-SUSTAINED IN TAKING ACTIONS AGAINST ANYTHING WRONG OR UNDESIRABLE THAT HAPPENS IN THE COMMUNITIES BY TEACHING THEM HOW TO COMPLAIN DIRECTLY TO THE POLICE. THE COMMUNITIES THEMSELVES HAVE STARTED IDENTIFYING VIOLENCE AROUND THEM AND HAVE BECOME RECEPTIVE ABOUT IT TOO WHICH IS A SMALL START TOWARDS A BIG GOAL..

- 1997 Psycho-social support phone calls
- 1791 Individual supported
- 9 Gender and legal sessions
- 29 cases identified
- 4 ration relief drive

According to a small survey conducted by Shakti Shalini in the five Socio-economically marginalised communities of Delhi, 'COVID19 Lockdown and Marginalised Urban Settlements, India- A Quantitative Impact Analysis for Food, Employment, Education' to assess the impact of COVID on the employment, education, and ration needs of the communities. The crisis has put the spotlight on the conditions of daily wage migrant workers/ people from the unorganized sector. From major salary cuts to the absence of income because of the lockdown, people had to cut down on their daily consumption of food. In such complicated times with so much uncertainty, families have experienced stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues that led to the increase in discord, fights, and violence in the household.

COVID-19 IMPACT

The onslaught of corona virus not only impacted our community outreach project goals but also put some of the project activities on halt. The organisation's internal resources and systems were re-planned and the management was forced to re-access ways of re-orienting deliverables and targets to a distance-based work approach.

Currently, the team is providing psycho-social support to community residents as well as research-based information regarding education, healthcare, livelihood, and ration support availabilities. The protection committees, that earlier met in person, have been shifted to WhatsApp groups to continue grassroots mobilisation and leadership with them. A ration relief drive has been conducted led by community leaders.

During the lockdown the community outreach team recorded violence cases and many people reached out for help from the communities, the same was addressed and supported through the help of Shakti Shalini's counsellors.

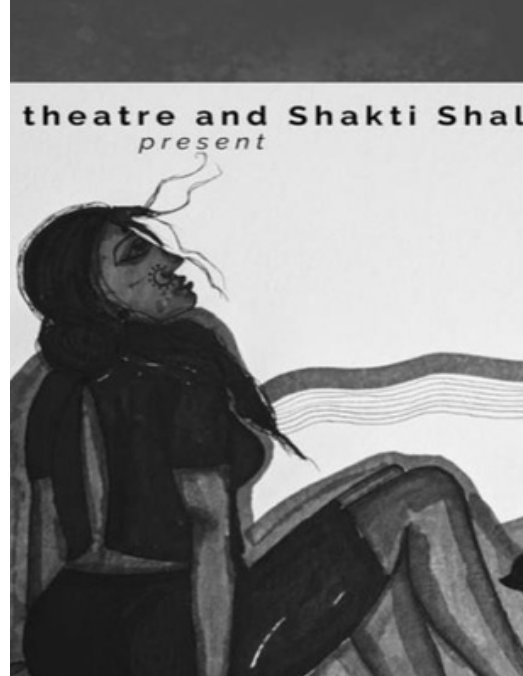
A STORY OF CHANGE...



During the community visits and door to door communications community outreach team met Madhu (name changed). Upon regular interactions the team realized that Madhu is stressed because of something but her family doesn't want her to talk to anybody. During one of the sessions in the communities, the team spoke to Madhu again to understand her cause of concern. Madhu shared with the team that she was married when she was just a child and as soon as she completed her 18th year she was sent to her in-laws. At her new home she observed her husband, Prabhu (name changed) who was an alcoholic and didn't have a job.

For the initial couple of months everybody in the house was okay with Madhu but gradually they grew abusive and violent towards her. Madhu's in-laws asked her to convince Prabhu to have job or else they will not let Madhu stay in the house. When Madhu tried to convince her husband, he turned violent and bashed her.


Madhu's parents helped her to come out of the abusive marriage and now Madhu is living at her maternal house. Madhu shared with the Shakti Shalini team, that now when she is back, she is not allowed to leave the house. However, Madhu wants to learn something, a skill so that she has something to look forward to. When community outreach team asked Madhu if they can speak to her parents and convince them for the same, she refused. With the passage of time and regular conversations with Madhu, counsellors helped her to gain confidence to speak to her family. Madhu finally spoke to her family about her wish to learn a skill and doesn't take violence on herself anymore.



KUSHALTA VIKAS KENDRA - SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE TO COMBAT VIOLENCE

Shakti Shalini's skills development centre is to build skills and create gender sensitivity among its participants through the classes so that they build in themselves zero tolerance to violence and come out of KVK as an empowered, sensitive and a person taking charge of their own lives. KVK is dedicated towards encouraging a culture of learning and growth within the communities. KVK provides various vocational and artistic classes to residents of the five economically and socially marginalized communities and residents of Pehchan, Shakti Shalini's shelter home for women in distress. The network of activities and facilities we organize provides our clients with a nurturing environment through which they can develop into strong individuals taking full charge of their lives. It plays a crucial role in healing and strengthening an individual, building self-confidence and independence.

Artivism as the name suggests is **activism through art, is the sister project of KVK and goes hand in hand.** Art acts as a powerful medium to convey messages, make a change, and reach out to people. The objective of Artivism is two-fold one is to give a person therapeutic healing throughout their journey and the second and the most important to build a person as more awakened who is able to question the status quo and raises voice against any injustice. Along with the numerous things that art can do is therapy that acts as a mode of empowerment. Shakti Shalini uses art to channel survivor's angst, frustration, and emotions in different forms of art so that they can use it as their strength and grow from it. Arts such as theatre, dance, music, painting, photography and so on are cultural sites and registers through which ideological changes can be facilitated to conduct a political opposition to oppression, violence and discrimination. Arts can become the points through which one negotiates, engages with, analyses and critiques one's context thereby developing one's political and social consciousness, self-reflexivity, knowledge and identity.



SINCE 1995, SHAKTI SHALINI HAS A CLOSE PARTNERSHIP WITH PANDIES', A THEATRE GROUP THAT HAS UNPARALLELED EXPERTISE IN GRASSROOTS, COMMUNITY-BASED FEMINIST THEATRE. PANDIES' CREATES A SPACE FOR CREATIVITY, SELF-EXPRESSION, SELF-CONFIDENCE, AWARENESS, DEBATE AND DISCUSSION; IT IS THERAPEUTIC WHILE CULTIVATING THE CRITICAL SKILLS OF PARTICIPANTS. THE IMPACT OF PANDIES' THEATRE ON SHIFTS IN MINDSETS IS TRANSFORMATIVE. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE WAYS IN WHICH SHAKTI SHALINI ACHIEVES THE GOAL OF PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE IN THE COMMUNITIES AND CREATES A SAFE SPACE FOR DIALOGUE AND CRITICAL THOUGHT FOR THE SURVIVORS OF GENDER/SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

- 160 Total participants
- 983 Socio-emotional support through phone calls
- 12 video modules of skill components
- 554 Online classes
- 30 Sessions on gender and , legal awareness, sreproductive health, awareness on existing social issues through movie screenings and activities:
- 6. 3 theatre online public performances
- 1 vaccination awareness drive
- 230 people were vaccinated
- 2 community based survey

COVID-19 IMPACT

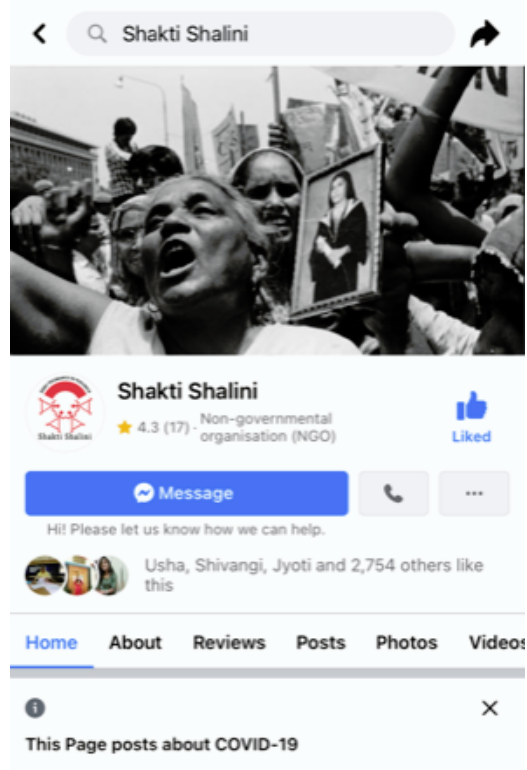
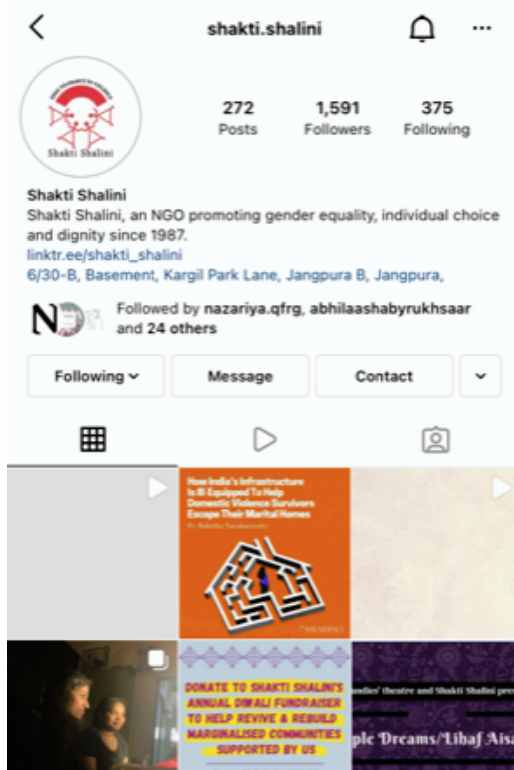
Since the Covid-19 outbreak, regular phone calls have been our primary way to engage with the communities. As a result the team started providing on-call psycho-social support focussed on all kinds of challenges that the communities were facing ranging from loss of livelihoods, lack of healthcare, unprecedented poverty and economic deprivation, displaced education of children, spike of gender/sexual violence, struggles with technology and stress of the times. To attend to the needs, the team built their capacities and collaborated with other organisations and groups to identifying ways to support the community.

With regards to the engagement with the community participants, we started with regular video modules and trainers recorded short tutorials to continue with skills development classes. In February 2021, when the situation smoothened a bit, the team planned first few sessions on 'rebuilding hope' to address the struggles that the communities had to go through with the scarcity of resources.

A STORY OF CHANGE...

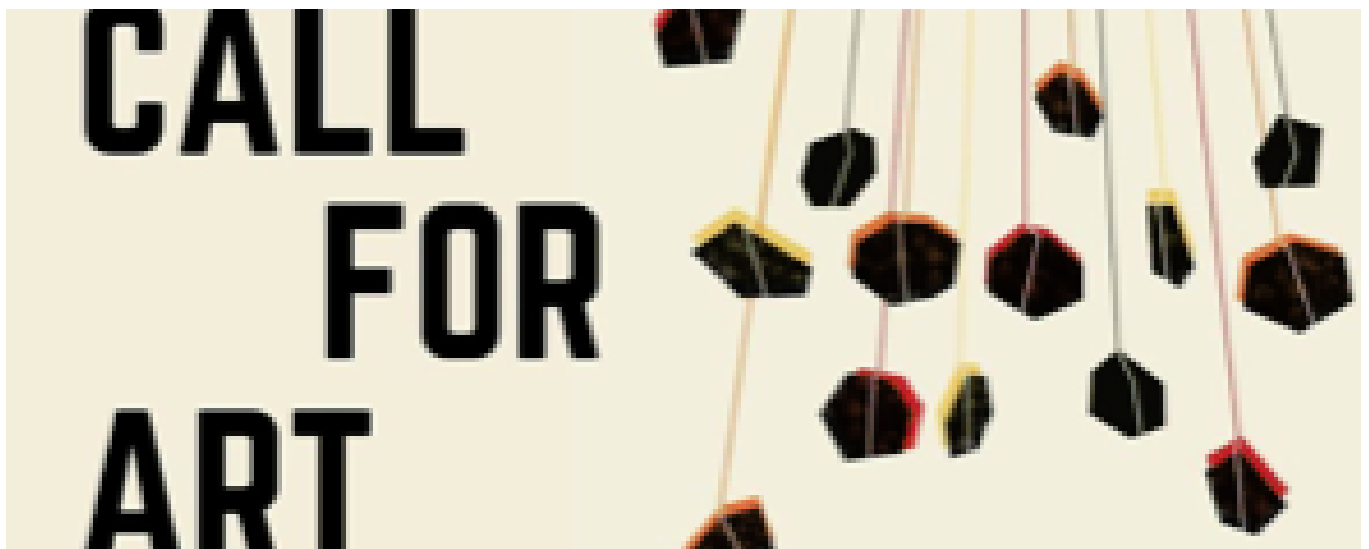


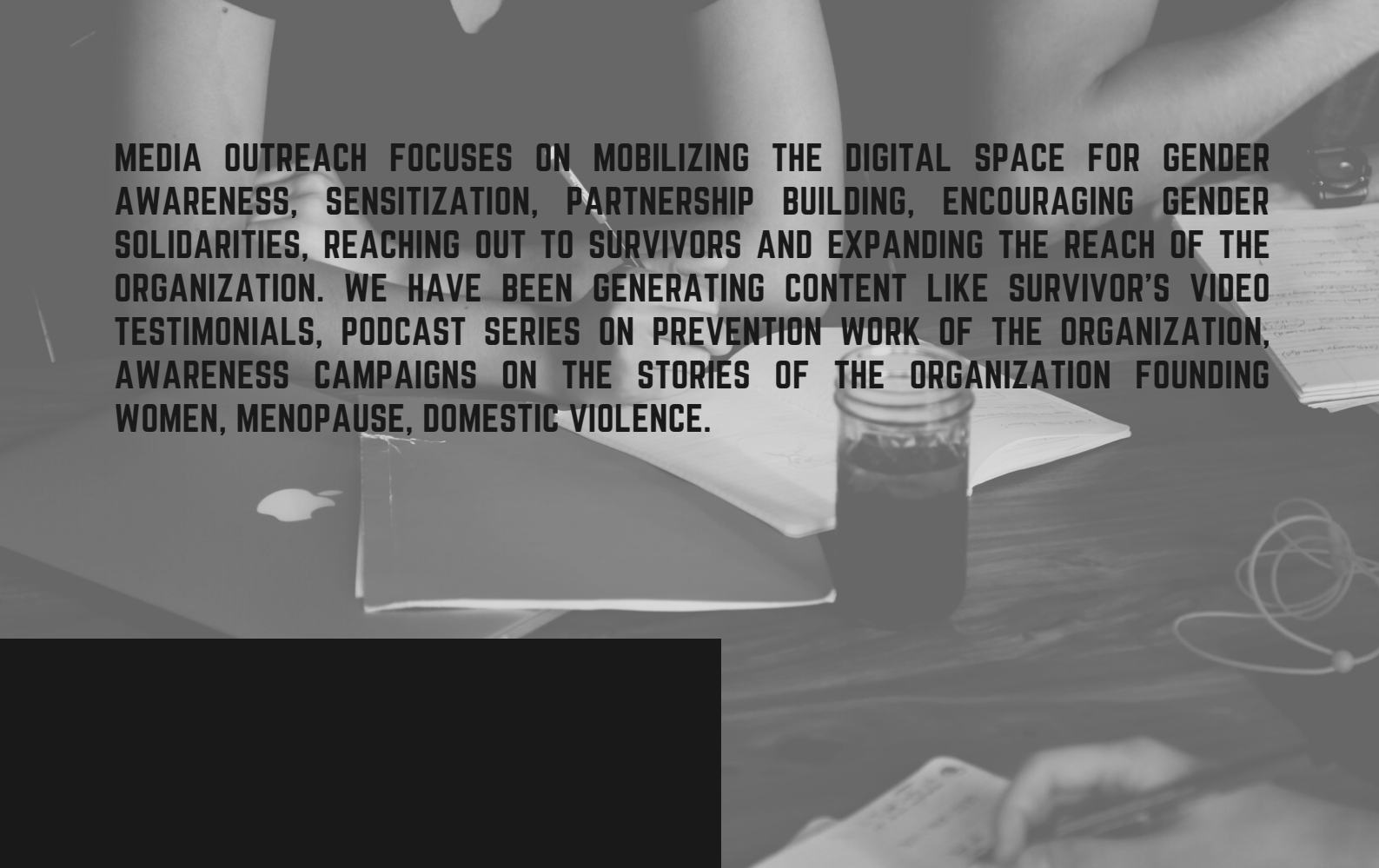
Sonali (name changed) stays in Vijay camp in Jal Vihar, Delhi with 5 other family members including her partner who is the soul earner of the family. Her partner used to work in a small mobile shop but with the commencement of the nationwide lockdown the shop too got closed without any assurance of any monthly payment to its employees thus he stopped getting any salary and even he lost his job. Vijay camp is a slum area in South East Delhi where majorly migrants from West Bengal, UP, Bihar, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan have come long time back and settled in rented juggis, Sonali's family was also one of them thus, financial crisis started with the lack of money for rent. Apart from the loss of occupation of the sole earner of the family Sonali was 3 to 4 months pregnant which demanded good care and nutrition but soon they started to starve. For few days they survived on the meals being distributed in the nearby Government school, the difficulties there were the long queue, the low quality of food and not all 6 members used to get the meals so they had to share 2 to 3 meals among 6 members. When they received the dry ration from Shakti Shalini Sonali shared, "It used to be really difficult for me to eat the meagre amount of meal that was provided, my appetite started increasing and I used to be always sick due to my pregnancy. When we got the dry ration I was relieved that we can now at least cook fresh food the way we wanted" The dry ration served them for a week and half. A family friend tended them some money and as the lockdown has been eased a bit, Sonali's partner has started working in another shop now and Sonali's consultation has started in Laal Municipality hospital wherein the supplements and consultation regarding pregnancy can be done in low subsidised rates.



MEDIA OUTREACH

Media Outreach is Shakti Shalini's most recent program begun in July, 2020. Its focus is on mobilizing the digital space for gender awareness, sensitization, alliance and partnership building, encouraging gender solidarities, reaching out to survivors, and expanding the reach of the organization. Within the program at present, Shakti Shalini has published an ongoing series of survivor testimonials, a podcast series on the prevention work of the organization, original and informative content, and awareness campaigns on the stories of the organisations founding women, menopause, and domestic violence.





MEDIA OUTREACH FOCUSES ON MOBILIZING THE DIGITAL SPACE FOR GENDER AWARENESS, SENSITIZATION, PARTNERSHIP BUILDING, ENCOURAGING GENDER SOLIDARITIES, REACHING OUT TO SURVIVORS AND EXPANDING THE REACH OF THE ORGANIZATION. WE HAVE BEEN GENERATING CONTENT LIKE SURVIVOR'S VIDEO TESTIMONIALS, PODCAST SERIES ON PREVENTION WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION, AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS ON THE STORIES OF THE ORGANIZATION FOUNDING WOMEN, MENOPAUSE, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

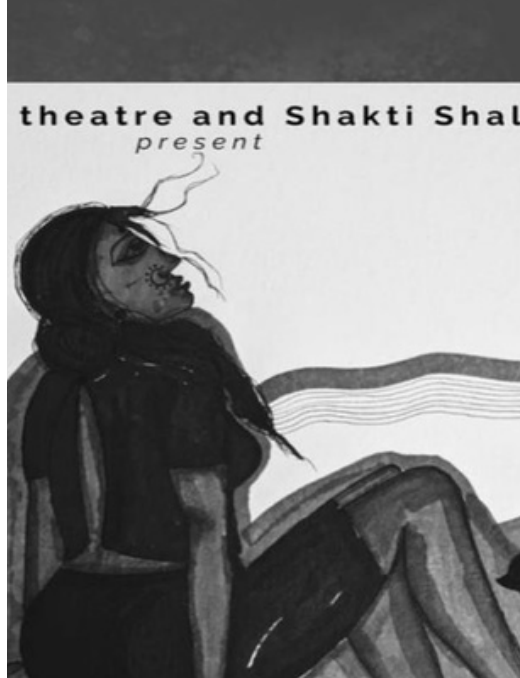
- 5 Total collaborations
- 123 Posts
- 2 Online campaigns
- 1 Podcast series (4 episodes)
- 2 Testimonials
- 15 No. of survivors reached out on Social Media

COVID-19 IMPACT

In the last two years we have been able to launch our own podcast series on the "Resilience of our communities". Shakti Shalini's prevention team shared their experiences as well as their intervention strategies to engage with community members. We talked about the ways our team stayed in touch with the communities even after the COVID-19 lockdown was imposed and how they tried to resolve issues that the members were faced with.

Communications did a pan-week revisiting to the lives of Satyarani Chadha and Shahjahan, founders of Shakti Shalini, who were galvanized to begin grassroots feminist work after their own daughters were burned to death due to dowry and domestic violence.

Online Storytelling Event: Shakti Shalini's shelter home survivors and the ones who have been rehabilitated/reintegrated took part in an online storytelling festival facilitated by our theatre partner, Pandies' Activist Theatre, wherein they creatively shared various experiences, opinions, perspectives, reflecting the lives and realities of women in India



EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT

Shakti Shalini's educational enhancement program encapsulates the diverse range of internships and volunteerships offered by the organisation. Each internship and volunteership is personalised and individualised to compliment the needs of and available opportunities at the organization with the skills and strengths of the candidate. The vision of the program is to train and nurture interns and volunteers, with a priority on youth, to understand the challenges and complexities of addressing gender and sexual violence at the grassroots within the Indian context. It is our hope to qualitatively deepen the practical, theoretical, and emotional understanding of young people upon the subjects of gender and violence so that tomorrow they may be the champions of gender equality, zero tolerance to violence, and build a world of greater safety, solidarity, and sensitivity.

EDUCATIONAL ENHANCEMENT, STARTED AT A SMALL SCALE IN 2014 AND FORMALIZED IN 2020, IS SHAKTI SHALINI'S YOUTH ENGAGEMENT FOCUSED PROGRAM THAT PROVIDES PRACTICAL, THEORETICAL, AND PSYCHOEMOTIONAL TRAINING TO HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, RESEARCH SCHOLARS, AND YOUNG PROFESSIONAL SO THAT THEY MAY BE EQUIPPED WITH BASIC SKILLS TO RESPOND TO GENDER/ SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND MAY THEMSELVES BE CHAMPIONS OF GENDER EQUALITY WITHIN THE SPACES THEY OCCUPY IN THEIR LIFETIMES. WITHIN THIS PROGRAM, STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE CAN ENROLL IN FIVE MAJOR WAYS – INTERNSHIPS, VOLUNTEERSHIPS, CREATIVE PROJECT, RESEARCH SUPPORT, AND STUDENT COLLABORATIONS.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The response team has been able to provide improved quality of its services to its survivors as well as the emotional well-being of its team. CICC team was available 24*7 telephonically for the survivors from the lockdown period to July 2020.

The Counselors of CICC worked day and night telephonically connecting with the survivors to reach out to the survivors in situations of crisis. CICC intends to continue expanding its quality and quantity of services in the coming future.

CICC also launched a mobile helpline number and the same was launched in the month of September. The helpline also provides the services of Whatsapp messaging. A mobile helpline number was launched in the month of September; this helpline also provides the services of Whatsapp messaging.

Shakti Shalini published a report on the impact of COVID-19 lockdown on domestic violence on women during the lockdown, drawing from its own observations and experiences in providing support and intervention

A Child Counselor was appointed in the Response program to support children accompanying survivors and those who are staying at the Shelter Home. From investing in the organization's capacity to integrate the child lens, the child counselor would have to put in place from scratch Shakti Shalini's systems and documentation for all child-related work.

Covid-19 pandemic resulted in shifting all the support services to online counselling

A partnership has been materialized with Saarthak for the emotional well being of the counselors. The counselors were provided sessions by mental health experts for their respective emotional wellbeing.

CICC compiled a PAN India list of organizations providing support to people in crisis in different parts of the country and also partnered with them so that better support can be facilitated to the clients.

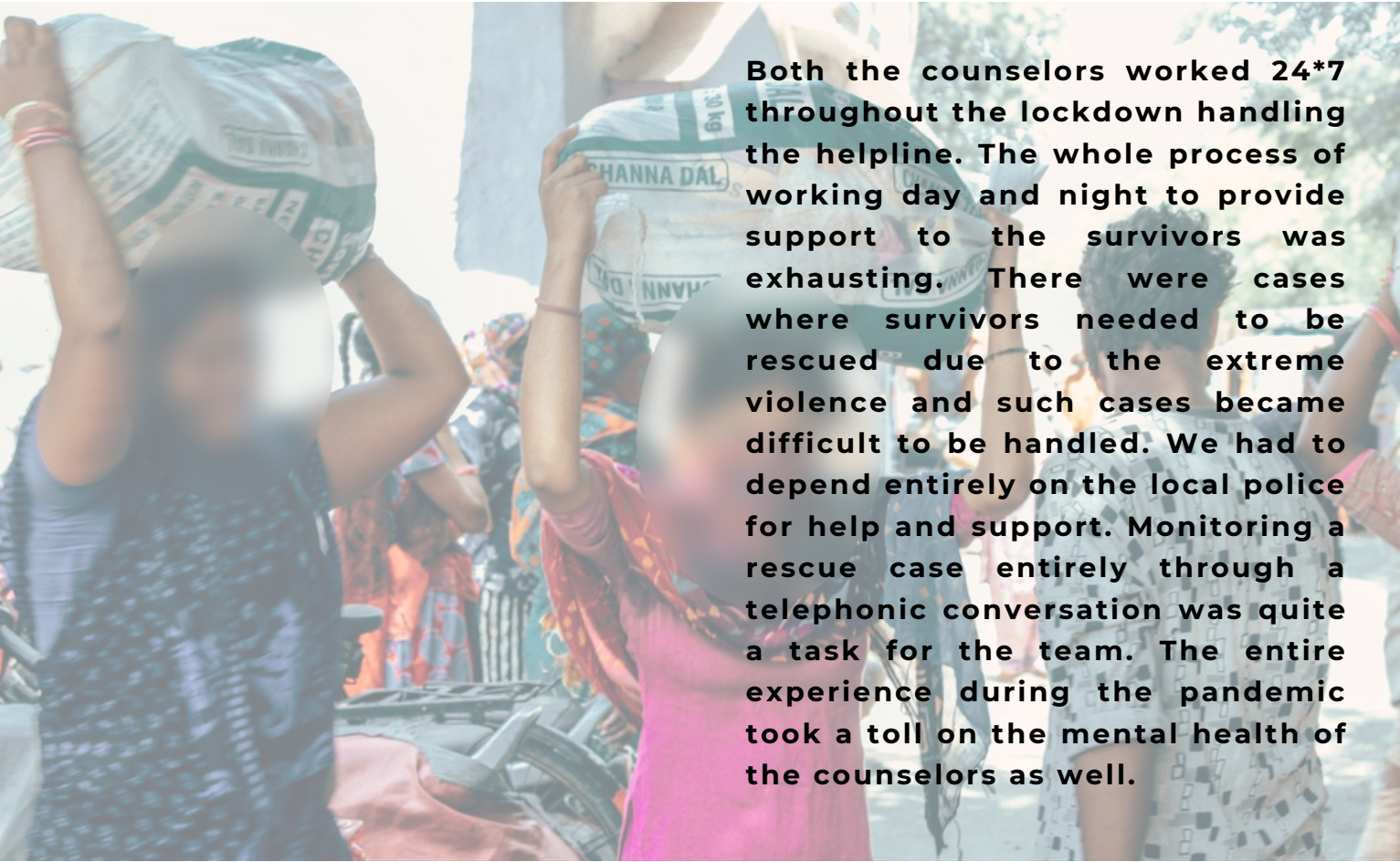
CHALLENGES

The virus and lockdown required the team to cease all in-person engagement with the communities. With all on-call psycho-social and information transmission support, the team has responded to the needs that emerged and focussed on all aspects of the challenges that the communities have faced.

The Crisis Intervention and Counselling Centre received an increasing number of calls for help from victims which strained our limited human resource of two counselors. The increasing number of survivors and work pressure required careful management of stress and the emotional wellbeing of counselors.

The shelter was a very active place prior to the lockdown thriving with different people and energies. During the lockdown, ensuring the emotional and psychological well-being of the residents was a challenge which required major re-strategizing. We planned a series of digital activities to meet this challenge and engage the residents.

The lack of regular classes and accommodating the whole syllabus to two days a week frequency of in person classes. Conducting skill classes without machines and equipment and redesigning lesson plan without them.



Both the counselors worked 24*7 throughout the lockdown handling the helpline. The whole process of working day and night to provide support to the survivors was exhausting. There were cases where survivors needed to be rescued due to the extreme violence and such cases became difficult to be handled. We had to depend entirely on the local police for help and support. Monitoring a rescue case entirely through a telephonic conversation was quite a task for the team. The entire experience during the pandemic took a toll on the mental health of the counselors as well.



WAY FORWARD

The impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on marginalized gender is continuing to show and the organization will focus on ensuring that the trauma faced by survivors in the COVID year is correctly addressed.

Restructuring work schedules to ensure stress management and emotional well-being of counsellors.

Shakti Shalini intends to support its system and teams to gradually restart in-person counseling and support services as the COVID-19 cases in India fall while observing due precautions.

To make Shakti Shalini's social media another medium of building global alliances and networks for pushing for gender equality, information, and awareness.

Working towards greater financial stability to expand Human Resource in order to meet the needs of rising survivors as well as caregiving at the shelter home.



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