

# Apnalaya Newsletter

April – September 2015



## *Revisiting and Recasting Community Development*

Apnalaya continues to work with the most under-served people in Mumbai, seeking to catalyse the process of transforming slums into self-sustaining communities.



Given the enormous challenges in the slum settlements in the M-East Municipal Ward located adjacent to one of the biggest waste dumping yards in Asia, we have been periodically revisiting and re-casting our methods and strategies. The process of restructuring our programmes and teams reached its logical conclusion this year.

Despite all the odds, Apnalaya has spread its roots deeper with a current reach of 2,80,000 people spread across over a score of slum-clusters. In a years' time, we hope to extend our work to another 1,00,000 people in the adjacent areas.

We have been able to facilitate an increase in

- Institutional deliveries and health seeking behaviour
- Number of children coming out of malnutrition
- Number of children completing school and enrolling in colleges
- Number of girls and women making informed decisions regarding their lives and careers
- Number of people holding ration cards and accessing food subsidies
- Number of families accessing safe drinking water
- Number of rag pickers getting organised under the *Kachra Vechak Seva Sangh* and availing welfare schemes

Our multi-pronged interventions are now organised along the following three verticals:

- Health and Disability,
- Gender and Livelihood
- Education and Citizenship

As a part of revamped strategies, we have embarked upon a fun filled journey with adolescents, youth and adults from the community to create a model where integrated community development as an approach will be co-owned by our community volunteers as leaders and mentors. In this issue of the *Apnalaya Newsletter*, we bring to you snapshots from our programmes hoping that they will help you take your connection with Apnalaya even deeper.

## *Celebrating Youthhood through Stories, dance, drama and dreams*

During the 15<sup>th</sup> August Youth Programme, 16 year old Sakina looked radiant and joyous as she danced away on the stage. It reminded of the first day she came for the story telling session. She had shared coyly, "I just love dancing...wish I get an opportunity on stage". Fakhruddin had choreographed the dance which followed an intense drama on exploring 'Being a man in Shivaji Nagar' performed by a group of girls and boys.

Just a few minutes before the drama began Swaleha and Shakila had done their bit by presenting their group's video and PPT on sanitation and Drug Abuse. This was a culmination of their journey of acquiring life skills while learning a little about rights and responsibilities as citizens.

In another frame from 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> August, 10 mentors – girls who teach Kabaddi to over a hundred younger ones – from our *Parivartan* project completed their last capacity building session on marriage and violence, even while they indulged themselves with fun and frolic during the two day residential retreat!

## **Home Based Crèche... a unique model**

At the end of a month long training that began on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 20 women had forged such strong bonds that they did not want to be separated. At a valedictory function held on 4<sup>th</sup> September, they glowed with pride, having obtained certificates as the fruits of their labour – even unlettered women who gave oral exams passed with flying colours!



The above training was on how to run home-based crèches, with 5-7 children each. Each crèche will be run by two women. One of them will take care of the children while the other will manage a small business supported by Apnalaya. This will ensure:

- Women running these crèches earning a livelihood
- Mothers going out to seek work
- Children staying in a safe environment

MLA Abu Asim Azmi addressed our rag pickers' association (KVSS) on 15<sup>th</sup> August. The Association presented a charter of demands pertaining to the rights of rag pickers. This elicited his promise for action.



*The Apnalaya Family extends a warm welcome to:*

*Sheetal (Programme Manager, Adolescents' Intervention), Farzana (Programme Manager, Education and Citizenship), Apurva (Deputy Programme Manager, Gender and Livelihood) and Rajni (Deputy Programme Manager, Health and Disability)*

## *Apnalaya at Meetings to Combat Under-nutrition*

From a National Consultation on Under-nutrition, held at Delhi:

*"While most people need to understand the basic determinants of malnutrition, irony is those who know, even they are ignoring and jumping on to quick fixes."*

This was in response to Arun Kumar's nuanced presentation on the interplay of Health, Gender, Education, and Livelihood and how a sustainable solution to acute malnutrition would invariably come from engaging with all its central determinants.

From the National Urban Health Mission Meet in July:

*Dr. Ninad Salunkhe, our Programme Head, Health and Disability, stood out as he illustrated Apnalaya's unique model of investing in local capacities through Mahila Arogya Samitis in 12 clusters of Shivaji Nagar*

## *Facilitating Access to Safe Drinking Water*

*"I never knew one lane from the other despite living in Rafi Nagar for more than twenty years now",* said Prema, cradling her six months old daughter while participating in a workshop aimed at equipping members of the Self Help Group (SHG) to work towards increasing family income, and creating greater access to safe drinking water.

The Water Purification Plant at Rafi Nagar – the second community managed water purification project facilitated by Apnalaya – has been set up in collaboration with Eureka Forbes Institute of Environment (EFIE) and Rotary Club of Bombay and is being run and managed by seven women from the *Muskan Mahila Bachat Gat*.

Inaugurated on 30<sup>th</sup> June, the plant has, by now enlisted 391 families who purchase water from the plant to fulfil their daily drinking water needs. It is imperative to reckon that Rafi Nagar is one of the most marginalised slums in Shivaji Nagar, located virtually on the dumping ground and completely lacking access to BMC water.

Rafi Nagar Water Plant  
Inaugurated: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
Special Feature: Water ATM  
No. of Customers: 391 families  
Price of Water: Rs. 10 for a 20 litre bottle  
(Rs. 0.50 per litre)

## Heartfelt Gratitude to our Supporters and Partners

We take this opportunity to thank all our well-wishers and supporters, individuals and institutions, who have continued to believe in us.

They include: Save the Children, ICRW, The Australian Consulate, The Swiss Air Staff Foundation, Child Action, Give India Foundation, United Way of Mumbai, IDBI Federal Life Insurance, Eureka Forbes Institute of Environment, Rotary Club of Bombay and Government of India, Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS).

Recently, we have joined hands with the HT Parekh Foundation to implement a comprehensive life skills and gender based programme with adolescents from Shivaji Nagar. A new collaboration with Tata Institute of Social Sciences aims at teaching Citizenship and Integrate Community Development to under graduate college students. Another partnership with ACF/Fight Hunger Foundation aims at strengthening Health intervention with a focus on acute mal nutrition in new geographies Apnalaya is expanding to.

*I am very happy that we are launching this newsletter as a means of reaching out every six months to our supporters and well-wishers. Be with us on our journey, as we move ahead with renewed vigour to tackle the problems that surround the people living in Mumbai's most marginalised communities.*

*Annabel Mehta  
President, Apnalaya*

Watch Apnalaya on:

**NDTV on Mumbai's Air Quality**

<http://www.ndtv.com/video/player/clean-air-my-right/a-tale-of-two-cities-air-quality-in-bengaluru-and-mumbai/372027>

**BBC on India's Food Subsidies**

<http://www.bbc.com/news/business-33109040>

**BBC on India's Social Security Plan**

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