



TRANSformation

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VHS-MSA DIVA Project has been taking every efforts to bring change in the quality of lives of Transgender/Hijra people in India. This quarter has been tremendously challenging and fruitful for us. We are very delighted to highlight some of our specific success stories during Jul-Sep 2017.

A Champion In Advocating For Transgender Rights

The state of Odisha has been displaying exemplar efforts in advocating for Transgender rights. Meera Parida, Director at Bhubaneswar is based CBO, SAKHA.

Meera has been a champion of human rights of the deprived and disenfranchised in general and transgender and LGBTQ Community in particular. she has been actively working as a professional in the field of HIV/AIDS, health and well being for past 8 years. Her journey started with working at the grassroots level, spanning across more than 150 street plays around Odisha. She displays great courage as a spokes-person in media and press very frequently for a community struggling for their basic human rights which are violated and infringed upon day and in and day out. She has been able to inspire thousands of transgenders in the state to work for right to live with dignity, by being a part of short films like 'the reel and the real' she has been a face of several public health related campaigns mostly focused around HIV/AIDS advocacy for example, 'friendly five odisha'. She has channelized the energy among LGBT youth to work for the community, and



Meera Parida with her chelas

to work for a dignified life, starting with employability training, gender sensitivity and health and wellbeing training etc. She has been master trainer in HIV/AIDS Counselling for DIVA project, and thereby trained thousands of community members and students around the country , by spearheading the campaign of 'moadhikaara' (equal rights of transgenders in the society). Notably , she has been recipient of several local ,national and international awards ,honors and accolades including Odisha Press Academy's 'Odisha sanman 2015' and a prestigious fellowship. She has also received a State Award for Social Service in 2016 from the Chief Minister of Odisha.

In partnership with SAKHA, VHS DIVA conducted a healthcare providers sensitisation program in Bhubaneshwar for 20 doctors at the Bhubaneshwar Municipal Corporation (BMC) in October 2017. This training was a huge success and the results that followed it were a milestone in our achievements. The corporation hospital has now allocated five beds for Transgender people. It has been a huge step forward in improving the accessibility of health care services and facilities for transgender people in the state of Odisha.



Meera Parida receiving her award from the Hon. Chief Minister of Odisha, Mr. Naveen Patnaik

Corporates' interest towards Transgender people welfare

During the month of October, VHS also gathered members of FICCI (Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry) to provide a sensitisation training on Transgender people at Uttar Pradesh. The objective of this training is to spread awareness on appropriate behaviour and treatment of Transgender people at the workplace to promote



Mr. Amit Gupta, Head of FICCI, Lucknow with other dignitaries lighting the lamp at the inauguration of the FICCI programme

the creation of employment opportunities in the corporate sector.

This event was the first of its kind to be held in the State in Uttar Pradesh and is a step to making workplaces inclusive and safe for transgender people in India.

Another feather in the cap of Kerala State

The sensitisation and mainstreaming efforts taken by VHS-DIVA at Kannur and Kollam Jilla panchayats of Kerala has paved way for another district panchayat council in Malappuram, Kerala to encourage for the inclusion and mainstreaming of transgender people.

Mallapuram has been known to hold a conservative outlook. VHS DIVA conducted a sensitisation programme for the Panchayat Raj officials in Mallapuram district of Kerala in September 2017. As an outcome, the President of the Jilla Panchayat announced two Transgender representatives to be part of the District Advisory Committee. This is a great step in involving



President of the Jilla Panchayat, Mr. Unni Krishnan and Sub-Judge Mr. Rajan Thattil at the Panchayat Raj Sensitisation programme.

transgender people in the decision making process within their local regions. The Mallapuram district Jilla Panchayat also went on to announce the allocation of 30 Lakh rupees for promoting livelihood activities for the transgender community in their district. These activities may include set up of individual and community enterprises for TG people livelihood. We hope this model be replicated in other districts also in the near future.

VHS At International Forums

The APCOM- Rights, Resources and Resilience Asia Pacific (RRRAP) Summit was held between the 13th and 17th of November 2017. We had two members from the DIVA team participate in knowledge sharing at the event. This summit seeks to promote dialogue within stakeholders and influencers across the Asia-Pacific Region who are combating and aim to put an end to HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030. The summit hopes to come out with a strategic inclusive and progressive 5 year plan for TG - MSM communities.

DIVA Project is also very excited to announce that we have released stickers. We hope that this sticker serves as a symbol of inclusion and commitment to a stigma free environment.

Write to us and receive a sticker!



DIVA Project's Deputy Director Dr. Vijayaraman and Senior Manager Programmes Mx. Shankar Silmula at the RRRAP Summit, Bangkok.

STEPPING STONES...

Breaking Barriers

24 year old Ganga Kumari is the first transgender to join the police force in the state of Rajasthan. Ganga is from Raniwara, Jalore District of Rajasthan, and is India's Third transgender woman to join a state police force, following two from Tamil Nadu. This achievement did not come easy for Ganga, as her attempts were first stalled by the police department. It was only after a two year legal battle, which resulted in the Rajasthan High Court directing that she be inducted in the police force.



Taking the first step

Paving the way for transgender women everywhere who struggle to validate their gender identity in official ID. Mx. Sadhana Mishra, working as social development officer at Kalinga University of Social Sciences is the first person in the state of Odisha to receive her passport with her transgender or "T" gender mentioned. Mx. Girish Kumar P, Regional manager from VHS MSA DIVA Project had a meeting with her to motivate to apply for change in gender in her passport. Thanks to the Regional Passport Officer - Mr. Digvijay Giri for supporting Mx. Sadhana Mishra.



A Dazzling Performance by Born to Win

Subsequent to the resource mobilisation training of VHS-MSA DIVA Project, we aided Born2Win CBO of Chennai in conducting their cultural event during October 2017 for mobilising resources. The program was a tremendous success and we had many popular personalities from the film industry who showed their support for the transgender community. The likes of Mysskin, Uma Riaz and Riaz Khan, Aditi Menon, Prithviraj and many more were present at the event. Born2Win was successful in generating 4.18 Lakh rupees through their Mx. Trans Queen Paegent event and we look forward to all our CBO's putting together many more success stories!



Loss of Trans Activist

Mx Sapna, a TG leader in Purvanchal, Uttar Pradesh, was working as typist outside the Gorakhpur district court. She has always supported local CBOs and the VHS MSA DIVA Project in mainstreaming TG issues in various districts of Uttar Pradesh. She developed multiple trans community members as second line leaders and due to a sudden health complication leading to multiple health issues she left us all on the 23rd of October 2017. The transgender community in India is faced with a tragic loss of a strong and reliable leader. May her soul rest in peace.



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