



Apne Aap Women's Collective

Newsletter

Issue 19/ July-September 2013

The right to a better life for Women and Children in red light areas.

Editorial

Dear AAWC Supporters,

This year AAWC celebrates its 15th anniversary. From a program that began with only five women, we now have more 1,500 women, 650 girls, and 420 toddlers. Our tireless staff, dedicated director Manju Vyas, and committed Board of Trustees have worked consistently to improve the quality of services offered. The guiding philosophy at AAWC has always been quality over quantity.

Some of AAWC's biggest achievements over the past 15 years include the placement of our Udaan members at hotels, beauty parlors, offices, and retail outlets and the acceptance of our alumnus Shweta Katti into Bard College in the United States on a full-tuition scholarship. We have also successfully opened a second centre and a night shelter, launched an alternative income generation program for the women in prostitution and are planning the launch of a nutrition program for pregnant mothers and newborn infants.

To commemorate AAWC's 15 years, we partnered with Kidville India for a

fun-filled day of activities for our toddlers, held an anniversary program where the women who have moved out of the sex trade shared their inspiring stories with our other members, and are planning a celebration for our devoted staff.

We are also excited to announce the relaunch of our website (www.aawc.in) with all new stories and photos; our new Facebook page and YouTube channel (accessible from the website); and our new online donations portal (www.aawc.in/act/give.html). We hope you will visit the new website, watch the new 15th anniversary video, and learn more about how to empower our remarkable members during our 15th anniversary fundraising campaign. We are relying on your continued support to make this endeavor a success!



15th Anniversary Celebration

Unfortunately, in the midst of all this excitement, our director Manju Vyas has had to take a three-month medical leave of absence. We wish her a speedy recovery and look forward to welcoming her back to the office!

Thank you for your continued support and encouragement. It has been the wind beneath AAWC's wings.

Ashika Mehta
President, AAWC Board

AAWC Update

- > AAWC participated in a rally demanding an immediate tabling of the HIV/AIDS bill in Parliament. Hundreds, including people living with HIV (PLHIV), patient groups, NGOs and public health activists joined hands together to push the proposed bill, which aims to protect HIV-positive people from discrimination in both the public and private sectors.
- > We are registered for the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon 2014. Please join us on 19th January 2014 to support our runners!
- > In order to create awareness on various health services that AAWC provides and to connect the women to primary health centres in the community, the staff conducted a street play in the 8th, 9th, 11th and 14th lanes of Kamathipura that reached approximately 160 people. Taking references from this play, women came to the centre asking for services related to pre-natal care and immunization.
- > AAWC welcomed two summer interns, Ms. Meghna Mukherjee and Ms. Doreen Mohammad, from Columbia University in New York. Both AAWC and the interns enjoyed the experience, and we hope to continue expanding our partnerships with other university career programs both in India and abroad.

“I like to come to AAWC centre because apart from studies, I get to learn new art and craft activities every week from Susan teacher (volunteer)”.

UDAAN Update



Diwali diya painting workshop

- > Ms. Nisha (name changed) received admission to a 3.5-year nursing course at KEM Hospital.
- > An essay competition was organized on the occasion of Gokulashtami. The girls were divided into four age groups and given various topics of social concerns to write on. The winning essays included discussions on Independence Day and the status of Indian women in the 21st century.
- > The girls were taken to watch Miracles on Wheels at Y.B. Chavan Centre, a phenomenal dance performed by differently abled artists. It was a very innovative, entertaining, and inspiring experience.
- > The Raksha Bandhan celebration this year was a feast for our girls. Among the chief guests at the KP centre were Ms. Susan Laidlaw, the girls' favorite arts-and-crafts teacher; Mr. Richard Laidlaw, the Consul General for Canada in Mumbai; their friends Ms. Cindy and

Mr. Guym; and Mr. Sudarshan Loyalka, founder of AAWC. At FR centre, Mr. Vivek Gore, a Marathi television and film director, was invited as chief guest. The girls anchored the entire program and tied rakhees to the chief guests as well as to their teachers.

- > Ms. Umaima Mulla-Feroze from Seva Sadan informed the girls about

vocational courses offered at the institute that can be taken as a career path after HSC/graduation.

- > The Rotary Club of Kopri-Thane invited and felicitated our teachers for their valuable contribution in education and social work on the occasion of Teacher's Day on 5th September.
- > The volunteers from Capgemini Consulting visited KP centre to meet with the children and conducted painting, dance and other interactive activities with them. They also distributed some chocolates and donated educational and administrative resources. All of the volunteers were very happy to spend time with the children and expressed their interest to be associated with AAWC in the future.
- > A Diwali diya painting workshop was conducted by our interns from SNDT University. They helped the girls paint and decorate very beautiful diyas which will be exhibited next month at SNDT University-New Marine Lines.



Capgemini volunteers conducting a drawing activity with girls



Rakshabandhan Celebration with our supporters

“I feel extremely content to see my children growing in a good place (boarding home). I am very grateful to AAWC. When I see other children in the community, I feel they all deserve a healthy and a socially sound environment like my children are living in today.”



UMEED Update

- > Sankalp Rehabilitation Trust conducted a session on de-addiction for the women, and two women were referred to the rehabilitation centre to address their tobacco, drug and alcohol addictions.
- > A cancer detection camp was organized in association with Sanjeevani. During the camp, a total of 42 women were examined, of which 8 were suggested for further examination at the Tata Hospital. 100% follow-up was taken after the camp through continuous outreach, counseling, and regular visits to the hospital with the women. Currently, the women independently go to the hospital for further treatment and follow-up.
- > An agent from Life Insurance Corporation was invited to orient

the women on low-premium insurance policies for themselves and their children. The objective was to encourage the women to save money for the future and to enroll them in life insurance policies in case of unforeseen future emergencies.

- > Group meetings with a small group of women were held frequently in the community to connect them to AAWC and inform them about the vocational training program.



Meeting on Deaddiction



Cancer Detection Camp



umang

UMANG Update

- > On the occasion of the 15th anniversary celebration of AAWC, the children were taken to Kidville India in Worli. The kids had a lot of fun and enjoyed every single moment at Kidville. They loved playing at the

gym, making milkshakes, planting saplings, dancing to the music, and watching the puppet show.

- > A monthly health checkup was conducted at Gaurabai Hospital. More than 60% of the children are suscep-

tible to frequent illness due to unhygienic living conditions at home.

- > Raksha Bandhan, Independence Day, Gokulashtami, and Eid were celebrated at both centres.



Fun at Kidville



Independence Day Celebration



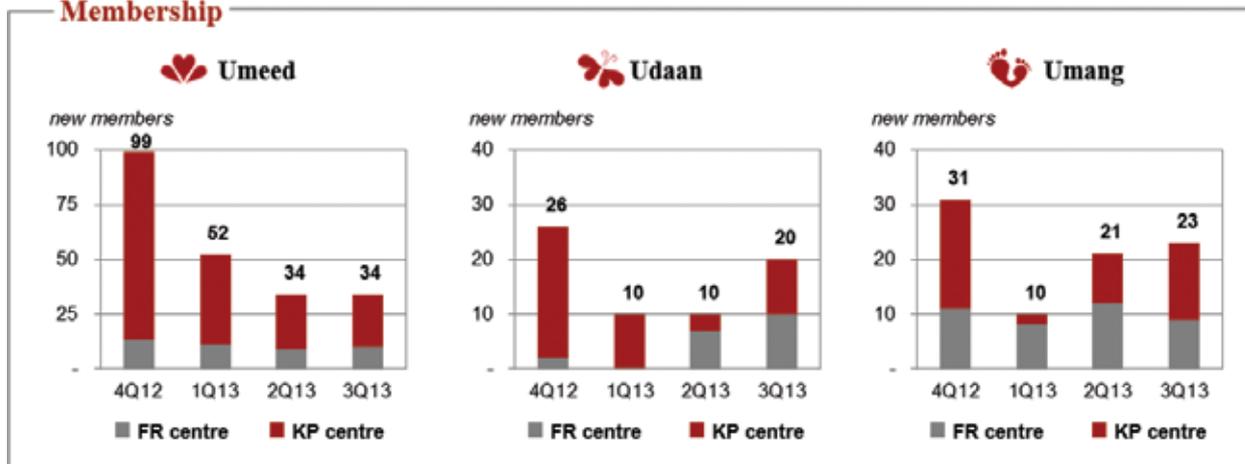
Rakshabandhan Celebration



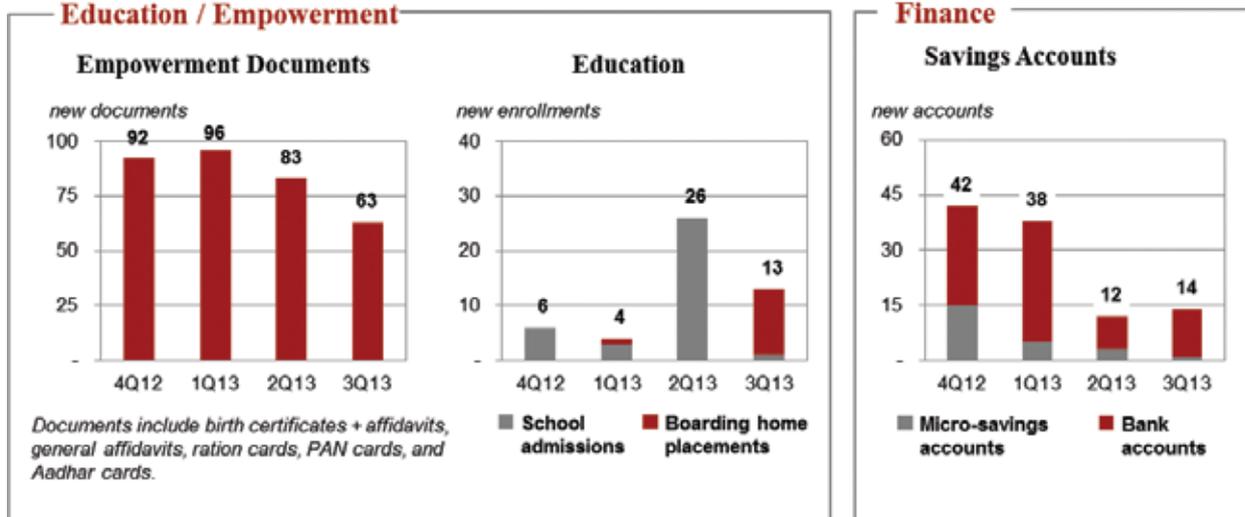
“When I started coming to AAWC Balwadi I only knew Bengali, but today I can understand and speak Hindi, and I wish to learn Marathi from my teachers and friends at AAWC”

(July-2013-September 2013)

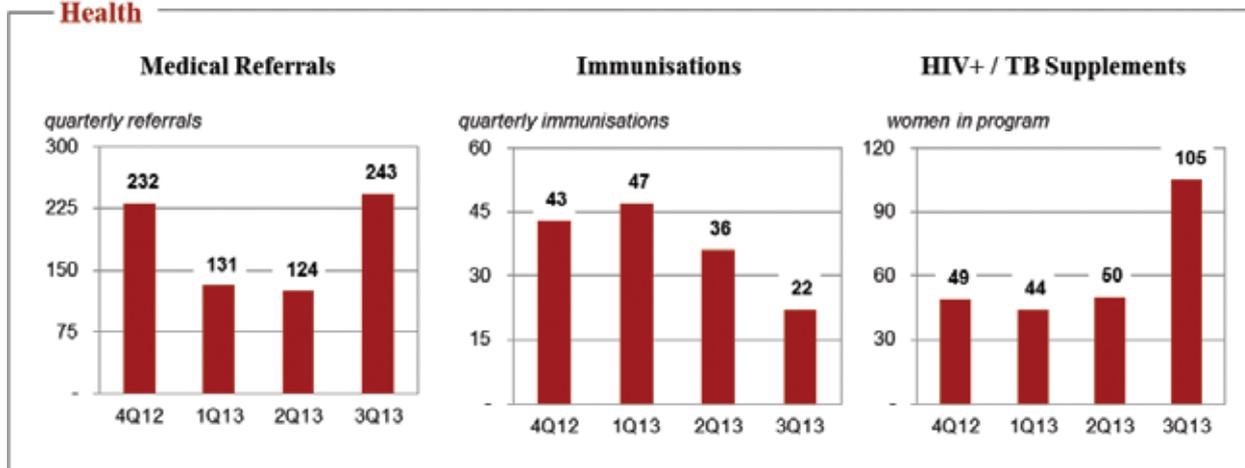
Membership



Education / Empowerment



Health



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