

Social Mobilisation for Rights of Adolescent Girls Focusing on Gender Equity and Education Report for the half-year July – December 2020

The organisers could not conduct physical meetings every time owing to the lockdown and the risk of infection. They oriented community groups on a one-to-one basis on the use of social media. The Gram Panchayat, KBS members and the CRPF were given detailed information on the concept of social media tools, installation of Digital Apps and their applications in one-to-many communication. Most of them opined that the tools had been very instrumental in enabling them to interact with and learn mutually from each other. It was also a new experience for them.

SOCIAL MOBILISATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Meetings with Gram Panchayat members at the Panchayat level

The organisers were invited to Gram Panchayat review meetings, during which they discussed a wide range of children's issues including the functioning of the KBS and WhatsApp groups. The details of their participation in these meetings are as below:

Mandal	Meetings
Atmakur	57
Maddirala	12
Nutankal	37
Shankarpally	5
Vikarabad	7
Total	118

The outcomes of the meetings are as under:

- The Sarpanch of Maddirala identified 60 children that had been commuting by auto rickshaw to work and personally motivated their parents, following which 30 children stopped working
- Upon being informed that children were not able to access online classes on television, the Sarpanch of Kukkudam took steps to activate the channels
- The woman Sarpanch of Kotalaguda prevented two potential cases of child marriage
- Gram Panchayat members from Nemmikal prevented a potential case of child marriage
- The Sarpanch of Dontanpally is a member of the KBS in WhatsApp group
- Sarpanchs in Parveda, Dontanpally and Dhobipet instructed teachers to undertake community outreach activity and motivate children
- The woman Sarpanch of Dontanpally warned a teacher of the local school after being informed that the latter had appointed a volunteer to discharge his duties by proxy, following which the teacher has mended his ways
- The Sarpanch of Kondakal instructed the school teachers to clean the school premises after school reopened
- The Sarpanch of Proddutur arranged 33 CC cameras in the village after receiving information that some locals had been causing trouble by trespassing in the school
- Sarpanchs of more than 50 Panchayats have participated in KBS meetings, the details of which are as follows:

Mandal	Sarpanchs
Atmakur	17
Maddirala	9
Nutankal	8
Shankarpally	7
Vikarabad	11
Total	52

One mandal level Zoom meeting each was held in Rangareddy and Vikarabad districts each with the formation of 8 and 11 members each.

Gram Panchayat members from Mukkudidevunipally received information that the VRA proposed to get his 17-year old daughter married. He claimed that she was 18 years old, but the records showed that she was just 17. One of the Anganwadi Teachers, who was supportive of him, made mention of an incident in which a 16-year old girl from the village had eloped and that this was why the VRA might have taken this decision. The Sarpanch called up 1098. The ICPS team and the ICDS Supervisor came to the girl's home and counseled her. The groom-to-be also refused to marry her, as he did not know she was so young. The VRA finally dropped plans of the wedding.

Meetings with Village Federation of SHGs

The organisers participated in meetings of the village level SHG federation (VO) and discussed issues such as online classes, child marriage, problems faced by girls against the backdrop of COVID, malnutrition and seasonal work. Some of the members expressed that they were working women and that they felt insecure about their daughters. They were also unsure how their daughters were using their phones. These were some reasons why they were keen on marrying off their underage daughters. The organisers told them that though they were wrong in doubting their daughters, they were not fully wrong. The only solution was to demand reopening of schools. being in school would ensure the girls' safety. VO leaders subsequently spoke to teachers and asked them to motivate their children. They could teach the children by rotation in groups of 10. children each. This would help them reach all children. VO leaders from Nassimpeta in Atmakur (S) mandal requested the Sarpanch to act on an incident of eve teasing. VO leaders across the project area demanded reopening of schools.

The details of VO meetings attended by the organisers are as follows:

Mandal	Meetings
Atmakur	124
Maddirala	17
Nutankal	55
Shankarpally	26
Vikarabad	14
Total	236

Seshu Kumari – a 15-year old girl from Beerelli befriended a youth on Facebook. Her parents took her to task upon learning of this. She missed a series of KBS meetings. The organiser came to know of this and inquired into the issue. Both Seshu Kumari and her mother were invited to a VO meeting. The woman was told that there was nothing wrong in the girl's socialising as long as she did not cross the limits of decency. Seshu Kumari's mother has now changed her attitude.

SMC meetings at school level on girls' issues from a gender perspective

It had not been possible to convene SMC meetings at the school level because schools had been closed down on account of the lockdown. Both physical and Zoom meetings were held with the members to discuss online classes, dry rations, school enrolment, issuance of uniform and textbooks, and school sanitisation. The details of meetings held are as below:

Mandal	Village	Members	Zoom (Mandal)	Members
Atmakur	39	284	1	24
Maddirala	15	147	1	7
Nutankal	26	138	1	11
Shankarpally	0	0	2	30
Vikarabad	0	0	4	90
Total	80	569	9	162

District (Zoom)	Meetings	Members
Suryapet	2	28
Rangareddy	1	12
Vikarabad	1	25
Total	4	65

A district body of the SMC was formed in Rangareddy district with 12 members. Mandal bodies of the SMC were also formed in all 3 mandals of Suryapet district with one Convenor and Secretary each and 2 male and female Co-Convenors each in addition to 10 Executive Members.

CRPF

As many as 160 people from Nemmikal in Atmakur (S) mandal were diagnosed with COVID infection. Sanitisation of public places and supply of provisions to the needy through the Gram Panchayat were discussed during the meetings. Other issues discussed included child labour, child marriage, malnutrition, dry rations, reopening of schools, risk of girl child abuse and security for the girl child. Every section of society was asked to own up the responsibility in this regard. The CRPF and the Mothers' Association petitioned to mandal officials in this connection. A group of 6 girls from Nutankal mandal went to the District Collector's office along with the organisers and the CRPF and sought action on issues of girl child abuse.

The details of district and mandal level meetings held during the reporting period are as follows:

District	CRPF	
	Zoom Meetings	Members
Suryapet	1	24
Rangareddy	3	27
Vikarabad	1	30
Total	5	81

Mandal	Meetings	Members
Atmakur	1	28
Maddirala	1	14
Vikarabad	3	42
Total	5	84

As many as 4 cases of girl child abuse had been recorded in Suryapet district within a period of just one month. Community groups from all 3 mandals of the project area petitioned to the SP, seeking his intervention. They had earlier tried to contact the SI, but he did not respond. The CRPF and the Mothers' Association later approached the SP along with the organisers. He sought suggestions from them. They opined that a cultural awareness campaign could be taken up by the police department and they could also ensure convictions under the POCSO Act. The police department subsequently held cultural performances in Thallasigaram, Mukundapuram and Nassimpeta villages on a pilot basis. This activity was replicated in 6 mandals outside the MVF project area.

Mothers' Associations

District Mothers' Associations were formed in Rangareddy on 8th September with 13 members and in Vikarabad on 4th September with 15 members. Mandal bodies of the Mothers' Association were formed in Atmakur, Maddirala and Nutankal mandals with 14, 12 and 9 members respectively. These members were entrusted with the task of resolving girl child issues and campaigning against gender based discrimination. Another key objective of forming the mandal bodies was to give them visibility. The organisers also facilitated the formation of 3 village level Associations in Maddirala mandal. Members of the Association have now emerged as stronger individuals and are more proactive. KBS members are referring issues of concern to the Association. Unresolved issues are being referred to the district body of the Association. Mandal bodies are already functional in Shankarpally and Vikarabad with 15 and 16 members respectively.

A mandal level meet of the Association held on 15th December in Shankarpally was attended by 17 members. They reviewed the problems associated with online education. They called upon the SMC to coordinate with school teachers and ensure the conduct of physical classes for at least Classes 9 and 10. Members of the Association also undertook door-to-door visits and extended support to adolescent girls. They also motivated the parents of these girls send them to school at any cost.

VCPCs

Village level CPCs in villages of Suryapet mandal were highly inactive. The organisers spoke to the mandal officials and urged them to reactivate these VCPCs in and build their capacities to uphold children's rights. VCPC meetings were convened in 6 villages of Vikarabad to plan awareness drives against child marriage and child labour. Members from Erravally demanded the reopening of school and also proposed to conduct a rally with civil society organisations and NGOs.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Tracking of school and college children's attendance and follow up

Schools and colleges remained closed during the entire duration of the reporting period. The organisers followed up the participation of children in online classes that commenced in public schools upon instructions from the Education Department.

Follow up on online classes

Meetings were held with the Gram Panchayat, teachers and the SMC to discuss the conduct of classes. They were asked to ensure the availability of smartphones and televisions with recharge. Steps would also be taken to make sure that children could access television channels. Teachers were asked to maintain class wise lists of children and share the schedule of the classes with them. Special drives were launched to this end. The teachers' mobile phone numbers and the timetable were shared with parents on a door-to-door basis. Once they had identified children without smartphones and televisions, the organisers spoke to local satellite television operators. Some of them had cut off connections due to non-payment. Operators in some cases refused to provide connections due to the COVID situation. They were told that it was a mandate of the government. It was also their social responsibility to restore connections. Sarpanchs and ward members were involved where necessary.

Organisers from Shankarpally mandal spoke to school teachers and asked them to publicise the conduct of online classes. Teachers were encouraged to conduct physical classes for Classes 9 and 10 wherever possible. Teachers from Proddutur wrote down the timetable on a sheet of paper and shared it with all children. They visited one street of the village each day along with the organisers and the SMC to interact with the children and verify if they had been doing their home assignments. They asked the children to approach them whenever they had doubts to clarify. Wherever children had no access to smartphones or televisions or had no power supply at home, they were linked to their neighbours in small groups of 5-6. KBS members and graduates in some villages assisted younger children in their classes. A KBS girl from Proddutur owned up the responsibility for coaching 12 children and seated them together.

A number of parents were against the conduct of online classes, as they felt their children were unable to learn anything when classes were being held physically and the situation would be worse in the case of online classes. Parents from Kompally – Vikarabad mandal responded positively to a suggestion from the organiser and seated 10 children in a group. They later informed the organiser that the children felt a lot safer and were very comfortable in the company of their peers. This had also given them an incentive to study well. School teachers from Pulusumamidi in Vikarabad mandal have taken up community outreach activity and visit absentees at their home. The children have also begun to approach them whenever they have doubts to be clarified. As many as 10 children from the Urdu medium school in Ralla Chittampally come to school because they have no access to online classes.

The parents of 10 children from Mylardevarampally and Narayanpur villages in Vikarabad mandal bought phones for their children in accordance with the organisers' suggestions. The local MP had given away televisions to all Gram Panchayats of Vikarabad. The organisers spoke to the Sarpanchs of 4 Panchayats and convinced them to place the televisions in the local schools so children could benefit from them.

Public announcements were made in villages of Suryapet district to inform community in this regard. Schools were sanitised in arrangement with the Gram Panchayat. Some schools printed pamphlets

inviting children to enrol in their institutions. Timetables were printed on flexi banners and pamphlets and shared with community. A number of parents made arrangements to buy phones for their children by borrowing or selling off what little they had. The organisers convinced the brothers of Seelam Rama Devi – a Class 10 student from Atmakur, to spend Rs 7500 each and buy her a smartphone. Their mother was a drunkard and brothers had never cared for her in the past.

Organisers from Shankarpally linked children from 6 families that had no smartphone or television facility to their neighbours for online classes. They involved the SMC in this effort. They also spoke to 3 teachers and asked them to spend time for the children and clarify their doubts. Teachers from Maharajpet go into the village twice a week by rotation to clarify children's doubts. Similarly, 4 village regularly attend school. Teachers from Proddutur go daily to the children's homes by rotation. Groups of 2-3 children each have been formed and they watch television together in school. The Sarpanch has paid the fees of 9 children enrolled in private college. One Maheshwari from the village was linked to a fellow student, as she had no phone. They sit together with a common friend for the classes.

One phone is being shared between one boy and two girls in Miyakhangadda. One girl from Mokila Thanda, who had been staying in a hostel, was linked to Basata Foundation NGO for a phone. Teachers from Mahalingapuram regularly go to the village by rotation. This inspired 3 children to turn up at school every day. Upon being informed that 3 sisters from Laxmareddyguda had no phones, the Sarpanch spoke to their father and counseled him to let them permit the use of his phone. The organisers have had problems convincing teachers and children in Tangaturu, where two people succumbed to Corona. Efforts are on to motivate them.

The details of children that were provided phones and linked to neighbours for television classes through the organisers' efforts are as under:

Mandal	Phones
Atmakur	21
Maddirala	31
Nutankal	46
Shankarpally	5
Vikarabad	5
Total	108

Mandal	Television classes
Atmakur	75
Maddirala	50
Nutankal	40
Total	165

A special drive was taken in 6 villages of Atmakur (S) mandal with the participation of the Gram Panchayat, the SMC and the CRPF to plan for children's admission in school. School teachers were involved in efforts to motivate children in this regard. During the course of the special drive, the organisers came across 3 children from Atmakur (S) that had been working in a cottonseed field 4 kms away from home. They had dropped out because their cable connection had been cut off. The eldest girl fell ill but her parents hadn't taken her to hospital. Upon coming to know of this, the organiser asked him how he could be so callous. He relented and not only promised to get her treated but also got the children a phone.

An SMC chairperson from Jigini Thanda in Atmakur (S) mandal distrusted his daughter's movements and did not buy her a phone because he suspected that she would misuse it. His wife, however, had a different pinion of the girl. She and her mother shared this information with the organiser during a meeting. The organiser discussed the issue with the chairperson during an SMC meeting and advised him to treat his daughter in a friendly manner and to let her have her freedom. He has changed his attitude and is now supportive of her. He has also bought her a phone.

The parents of Swathi – a Class 10 student from Chilpakuntla in Nutankal had no television connection and also did not own a smartphone. This had greatly inconvenienced her and her younger brother – a student of Class 9. The children asked them for smartphones, but the couple did not appreciate their importance. They felt, on the other hand, that having phones would distract them. Swathi shared this during a KBS meeting. The organiser personally met her parents at home and counseled them at length on the necessity of phones for their children. They were both convinced and sold off 3 sheep to buy phones for the children and get a television connection at home.

Lingamma – a Class 10 student from Nassimpeta in Atmakur (S) mandal had migrated to Hyderabad along with her parents. They had put her and her brother, who was studying in Class 7, in a private

school though they had no home or land of their own. Her mother was a maidservant and her father a construction worker. Lingamma was keen on studying after her return home and asked her mother for a phone so that she could attend online classes. Her mother told her that she could not afford one but Lingamma was adamant and asked her why she was so bent on spoiling her future. Her mother finally gave in and borrowed some money to buy smartphones for both her children.

R Anushka and Madhavi – sisters from Isthapuram had problems taking notes from online classes on television. Their parents were too poor to buy them a phone. The children could not manage their homework and their teachers eventually informed their parents of this. They managed with the television for as long as they could, but they finally had to force their parents. The girls were enrolled in Class 10 and Intermediate (First Year) respectively. realising the importance of a phone, they sold some goats a bought a phone for them.

The father of Reshma – a migrant girl from Maddirala and a student of Class 8, was a drunkard. Having employed as a watchman while in Hyderabad, he didn't have enough savings and could afford neither a smartphone nor a television. Reshma was, however, a bright student. Her mother requested the organiser to help her. She was linked to a self-help group run by Bala Vikasa NGO, from who she got a loan of 10,000 loan to purchase a phone for the girl.

Shifting children from private to government school

Managements of many private schools from the project area had cut links to online classes because children had not paid their fees. Consequentially, the children could not access classes and were put to loss. These children eventually dropped out of private schools. The organisers interacted with the children's parents and offered to shift the children to government school. where they wouldn't have to pay fees of any kind. Teachers would be regularly available and would prioritise their children's education. Some girls evinced interest in joining KGBV. Organisers from Mylardevarampally enrolled 3 girl dropouts in KGBV after a fortnight's effort. The girls had been enrolled in a day school earlier and had been expecting schools to reopen sooner or later. The organisers followed up 4 girls from Vikarabad to KGBV Shankarpally, as no seats were available in the local KGBV.

The details of children followed up from private to government school are as follows:

Mandal	Classes 1-5		Classes 6-10		KGBV
	B	G	B	G	
Atmakur	23	19	39	31	31
Maddirala	15	8	22	11	7
Nutankal	19	16	20	19	13
Vikarabad	0	0	0	0	7
Total	57	43	81	61	58

Institutional follow up

The organisers met head teachers of Primary, Upper Primary and High Schools to discuss the follow up of children to higher classes (5th to 6th, 7th to 8th and 10th to Intermediate). Some head teachers replied that no classes were being held and that there was no use enrolling them. The organisers told them that this was likely to lead to a gap in their education and that this would put them at risk of dropping out and joining the labour force. Giving them textbooks could help them keep in touch with education. The children's parents echoed this view. The organisers coordinated with the head teachers of both schools and got the children shifted to higher classes. The organisers followed up 8 children from Dannaram to Pulsumamidi. They had been going to Vikarabad by bus earlier but had dropped out because public transport was unavailable.

Tracking of adolescent children's education by the CRPF at the village level

Hundreds of migrant families had returned to their native villages after the lockdown had come into effect. The organisers undertook a survey to identify such families. They later met these families along with the CRPF and asked them if they proposed to migrate again. Most of them were unwilling to migrate. The organisers noted during their visits to the villages that a number of children from these

families were idle and wandering around aimlessly. Their parents were out at work and they had none to care for them. The organisers spoke to their parents and motivated them to enrol the children in local school during September.

Most of the parents informed that their children had no Caste, Income or Transfer Certificates. The organisers spoke to the Sarpanchs of the Panchayats and head teachers of the local schools and asked them to enrol the children without placing demands on any kind of documentation. They would produce their Certificates at a later stage. Children from Classes 9 and 10 that had Aadhaar Cards produced them. Some head teachers were skeptical and replied that the families were most likely to return to their destination sites after the lockdown was lifted. The organisers convinced them that the children would attend school for the rest of the current academic year and that they should not be any issues enrolling them. They also arranged free textbooks and uniform for the children. Wherever possible, they got the children's Study Conduct Certificates from schools in their destination points through WhatsApp.

The details of migrant families and children enrolled in different classes are as below:

Mandal	Families	Identified		Enrolled	
		B	G	B	G
Atmakur	179	182	187	173	172
Maddirala	436	262	241	36	55
Nutankal	144	67	80	67	80
Shankarpally	11	8	9	8	9
Vikarabad	9	6	4	6	4
Total	779	525	521	290	320

Mandal	Classes 1-5		Classes 6-10		Intermediate		Graduation	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Atmakur	66	51	82	91	20	23	5	7
Maddirala	7	9	18	26	11	20	0	0
Nutankal	22	23	29	39	16	18	0	0
Shankarpally	5	6	3	3	0	0	0	0
Vikarabad	5	2	0	0	1	2	0	0
Total	105	91	132	159	48	63	5	7

Follow up of 10th Class pass outs for higher education

There was no clarity on higher education courses such as Polytechnic, vocational training, etc. Career counseling sessions were being held for children from Class 10 in schools earlier, but this did not happen in the current academic year on account of the lockdown. Head teachers would assemble children en masse in their schools, give them their Marks Memoranda and counsel them on the post-matriculation academic, technical and other opportunities available to them. Both teachers and the organisers counseled the children on a one-to-one basis this year. The children took their certificates online. Children, who were very enthusiastic about their higher education earlier, were caught in a quandary. Most admissions were taking place online. Some children were unfamiliar with the process.

Nearly one half of all children from the project area in Suryapet district were unwilling to join the Intermediate course on account of the high fees and the risk of infection. Their parents were also skeptical of the resumption of classes. The inability to pay fees also made most of them consider either the enrolment of children in government institutions or their engagement in work. Some parents informed that the management of Bhavita Junior College in Atmakur (S) had initially collected Rs 1000 as admission fee from them and had demanded Rs 5000 later towards tuition fees. The organisers told the management that they could collect the tuition fee once physical classes resumed.

Children desirous of enrolling in Srinidhi Junior College, Suryapet were asked to pay Rs 1000 towards admission and were asked to pay Rs 10000 later. The organiser spoke to 5 of the girls and got them enrolled in Government Junior College, Nemmikal. The management demanded money for issuance of Transfer Certificates, but the organiser spoke to them and managed to get the Certificates issues to

the children. The organiser also got a dropout from Gattikallu enrolled in Junior College after a gap of one year.

Organisers from Shankarpally and Vikarabad mandals gathered village wise details of children that had enrolled in government and private educational institutions. Some parents were disinterested in sending their children to college, primarily due to the high fees and the unavailability of public transport. The organisers motivated them, employing the services of other school-going children where needed. They offered to admit girls in KGBV if required.

Meetings were held at the village level to identify children that were unwilling to enrol in Junior College. Parents of girls were particularly unready to enrol them in private college, as they felt it wasn't worth spending money when classes were not being held physically. The organisers gave them the option of enrolling the girls in Model School- or KGBV- Junior Colleges. The head teacher of the High School in Janwada applied online for the admission of two girls from Miyakhangadda that had been studying in his school. He also issued books to them the next day. CRPF members from Parveda offered to provide a smartphone to a girl whose father was unwilling to let her have one. They spoke to him at length and convinced him to change his opinion that she would misuse it. He finally bought her a phone. Organisers from Parveda managed to enrol one girl in Chaitanya Junior College without having to pay any fee. The organiser from Dannaram village of Vikarabad mandal enrolled 18 girls in other KGBVs, as seats were unavailable in the local KGBV. The Child Line team was involved in the process.

The details of children that were enrolled in Class 10 during academic 2019-20 and their follow up to various educational institutions in academic 2020-21 are as below:

Mandal	B	G
Atmakur	282	264
Maddirala	133	113
Nutankal	177	165
Shankarpally	317	309
Vikarabad	302	310
Total	1211	1161

Mandal	Govt. Jr College		Pvt Jr College		Technical Courses		Paramedical Courses		Total	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Atmakur	120	112	147	112	11	17	0	13	278	254
Maddirala	17	21	106	69	8	13	2	5	133	108
Nutankal	21	18	138	139	18	5	0	3	177	165
Shankarpally	24	38	232	236	45	29	0	0	301	303
Vikarabad	64	106	165	129	43	27	0	0	272	262
Total	246	295	788	685	125	91	2	21	1161	1092

Mobilise dropout girls to be mainstreamed through Open School

The following table provides details of children that had registered for this year's Class 10 and Intermediate exams through Open stream:

Mandal	Open 10th		Open Inter	
	B	G	B	G
Atmakur	3	4	1	1
Maddirala	1	0	0	0
Nutankal	1	1	1	3
Shankarpally	0	1	0	0
Total	5	6	2	4

The organisers had been following up the case of Uma Rani – a differently abled girl from Proddutur in Shankarpally mandal, for nearly 8 years. She had cleared the Class 10 exams and was a very bright student. They spoke to her parents and offered to get her admitted in hostel. However, this was

not to be, as the lockdown was imposed. They refused later to send her to hostel. Her father was a drunkard. The ward member was involved in the matter and he agreed to send her if any of her friends agreed to enrol in hostel along with her. He avoided the organiser for 3 days and the latter spoke sternly to Uma Rani. Her father finally got agreed to get her admitted but went absconding again. The girl's mother asked the organiser to take the girl to hostel, promising to convince her husband., At the other end, the warden of the hostel was unwilling to take her in, as she couldn't look after herself. She was all but immobile. The organiser asked the warden to enrol her first, assuring him that the issue would be taken care of later. In the meantime, Uma Rani was dissuaded by some of our neighbours and she told the organiser that she did not want to send her daughter to hostel. She was counseled once again and she consented. However, hardly a fortnight had passed when she informed the organiser that she had got a match for her daughter, who she wished to get married to a differently abled man. The organiser brought along some Gram Panchayat members and some CRPF members and persuaded her against spoiling her daughter's life.

Bhargavi from Madanpally in Vikarabad mandal began to live with her grandparents after her father died and her mother left her for another man. She was admitted in the Government Junior College, but her grandparents withdrew her from college and put her to work. Members of the local KBS identified her case and spoke to the organiser. They jointly counseled the grandparents, who tried to avoid them. They had been planning to marry off Bhargavi. Upon coming to know of this, the organiser gathered proof of the girl's age and counseled the couple against proceeding with their plans. Bhargavi had been sent to another village in the meantime. They managed to track down her whereabouts and personally followed her up to College.

KBS leader from Thallasingaram in Nutankal mandal Yamini was keen on enrolling in Sakshisri Junior College but couldn't afford the fee of Rs 16000. The management was unwilling to negotiate. Yamini informed this to the organiser, who accompanied her and her father to the college. She asked the Principal to consider reducing the fee, but he informed that he had to pay his lecturers even if physical classes were not being held. A fee Rs 9000 was finalised and it was also agreed upon that it would be paid in instalments.

Empowerment and Leadership of Adolescent Girls and Boys in Schools

Elocution, essay writing, sports and games in public functions

International Day of the Girl Child

Rallies, meetings and essay writing and elocution competition were held on 11th October in villages on the project area to mark International Day of the Girl Child. The topic for the essay writing and elocution competitions was *New Challenges faced by girls against the backdrop of COVID*. Members that participated in the meetings and rallies included women Sarpanchs, VO leaders, Anganwadi Teachers, ASHAs, women's SHGs, the CRPF, Mothers' Associations, Child Line team members and field staff of local NGOs. Games featured in all 3 mandals of Suryapet district. Corona norms were adhered to in the conduct of the event.

The details of meetings and competitions held on the occasion are as follows:

Mandal	Meetings	Members	Essay writing	Elocution	Games
Atmakur	1	55	20	10	0
Maddirala	1	25	0	5	0
Nutankal	1	31	0	9	0
Shankarpally	5	60	0	0	35
Vikarabad	3	40	0	0	0
Total	11	211	20	24	35

Girls from Dontanpally and Proddutur formed 2 teams each and participated in quiz competitions. They also sang inspirational songs Members of the Mothers' Association narrated their personal her experiences and offered all possible support to the girls. They called upon the latter to assert themselves and to plan well for their future. Activities such as indoor games, role play, dance, whistle and informal games featured in Mahalingapuram and Parveda villages of Shankarpally. A lady

teacher addressed girls and involved them in games in Ravulapally village of the mandal. The Sarpanch and the Panchayat Secretary of Kamareddyguda in Vikarabad mandal spoke on the importance of the occasion. Girls took part in a book reading session and later spoke on the various forms of gender based discrimination. They took a pledge to oppose child marriage and to study at least up to the undergraduate level. They requested the Sarpanch for sports material. A book reading session was held in Pathur village of the mandal.

Children's Day

A campaign poster demanding amendment of the RTE Act to bring under its ambit all children aged 3-18 years was released in all 3 mandals of Suryapet district on 14th November. Elocution competitions were held in Atmakur, Maddirala and Nutankal mandals. Sarpanchs, ward members and the CRPF addressed children on the importance of the occasion and on child rights at the village level. Children's Day was observed in Mylardevarampally village of Vikarabad mandal with the participation of 70 people. The Sarpanch spoke on the significance of Children's Day. Some children present sang songs on children's issues.

The table below provides details of rallies held on the occasion of Children's Day:

Mandal	Rallies	Participants
Atmakur	4	160
Maddirala	2	45
Nutankal	4	92
Vikarabad	1	70
Total	11	367

Empowerment and Leadership of Adolescent Girls in the Community

Village level KBS Meetings

Meetings were held with the KBS to discuss child marriage, school and college reopening, online classes, gender discrimination, new challenges faced by the girls at home, child abuse and seasonal work and to plan International Day of the Girl Child celebrations. Joint meetings were held where there were two or more KBS in the same village. Only local children had been attended the meetings earlier, but newer members have joined the Sanghas now. Turnout has, however, gone down. The girls informed during the meeting that they had not been able to devote time to classes. Some of them had no mobile phones. Their eyes had been affected due to constant exposure and some of them had been suffering from ill health due to heavy work. The parents of some of them had not been caring for their health. Loss of incomes to their families meant they had no money to meet their basic needs, including the purchase of napkins. They had limited access to nutritious food. They had free time on Sundays earlier, but the situation had changed after the imposition of lockdown.

Some members informed during the meetings that they had questioned their parents' decision to not let them attend meetings while their brothers had all the freedom they needed. Yet others expressed that their fathers and brothers were largely against educating them. However, their mothers had a positive opinion of the KBS intervention. Many of them had changed their attitude and had consented to send their daughters to the meetings. Quite a few mothers are attending meetings in Atmakur (S).

The details of KBS meetings held and participants are as follows:

Mandal	Physical meetings	Members	Zoom meetings	Members
Atmakur	158	2148	11	105
Maddirala	162	2006	4	29
Nutankal	146	1802	7	42
Shankarpally	44	721	1	25
Vikarabad	51	470	4	83
Total	561	7147	27	284

The details of child marriage identified and prevented during the reporting period are as follows:

Mandal	Identified	Prevented
Atmakur	24	12
Maddirala	4	3
Nutankal	10	4
Shankarpally	9	5
Vikarabad	22	7
Total	69	31

KBS members from Suryapet district have been discussing items of relevance in newspapers, cases of abuse, anecdotes and girl child issues.

Members of the KBS in 4 villages of Atmakur mandal, 3 villages of Vikarabad, 2 each of Maddirala and Nutankal mandals and one village of Shankarpally mandal hoisted the National Flag on the occasion of Independence Day.

The issue of girls' elopement was brought up for discussion in villages of Shankarpally mandal following an incident in Dontanpally. Nandini – a 17-year old from the village had fallen in love in love with a youth. Her younger sister informed this to the organiser. Nandini's parents had fixed her wedding with the youth. His parents were expected in the village the next day. She went missing the same day. The Sarpanch tracked her and filed a case against the youth, who already had two cases against him. He and the organiser counseled Nandini against keeping his company. The police also came to know of this and warned her that socialising with him was not good for her. Priyanka – a 15-year old girl from the same village wanted to marry her cousin, but her parents planned to get her married to another man. She left home and went to her cousin's home. The organiser spoke to her mother, who was in the fields, and convinced her to drop the proposal.

Nandini – a 17-year old girl from Mahalingapuram in Shankarpally mandal was engaged to be married to a local youth. She was enrolled in Intermediate First Year and had been facing problems because had no phone. The youth bought her a phone. She was always busy with her classes and spoke to her friends regularly over phone and he found it difficult to maintain contact with her. He raised a ruckus and asked her if her education and friends were more important to her than he was. Irked, he called off the engagement. He blamed her family for this decision. Nandini's mother had abandoned both her daughters and had remarried. Her father was mentally unstable. Upon coming to know of this from an old woman in the neighbourhood, the organiser spoke to the youth along with some caste elders. They told him that it was against the law to perform the marriage of girls below the age of 18. Nandini's parents eventually dropped plans for her wedding.

Radhika – a Class 9 student from Mahalingapuram in Shankarpally mandal was due to get married to her maternal uncle Hanumanthu. She did not want to marry him because he was not only poor but also did not have proper employment. He owned a small hut in which she her parents and her aunts lived. Subsequent to her participation in a KBS meeting, she sent a text message and a Voice message to the organiser, telling that she didn't want to marry her uncle. Her mother and her aunts had been pressurising her. The organiser called up the Sarpanch and informed him of the matter. In the meantime, the Anganwadi Teacher saw that the house was fully lit up and decorated for the wedding. She overheard the family's discussion. The organiser called up Child Line. The Child Line team, the SHE Team, the organiser and the Sarpanch went in a team to Radhika's home and counseled both the bride and the groom. The latter declared in writing that he wouldn't marry her until she crossed the age of 18 years. The Sarpanch offered to meet the entire cost of her education.

Members of the KBS from Kothapally in Shankarpally mandal informed the organiser that Jyothi – a Class 9 student was engaged to be married and that her parents proposed to shift to another village. The organiser called up Child Line. The SHE Team, the mandal officials and the organisers counseled Jyothi's parents and convinced them to call off the wedding. They also gave a written declaration to this effect. They came to know only later that the proposed groom was already married. They heaved a sigh of relief.

Sravani – a Class 10 pass out from Gubbadi Fatehpur in Shankarpally mandal fell prey to the evil designs of her mother's fellow worker. Her mother worked in a company located nearby. One day, he approached the girl with some money, telling her that her mother was ill and that she wanted to see the girl. Sravani believed him and went with him. He and his friends forcibly married her to him against

her wishes. She was with them for one whole week. The organiser came to know of this through one of her neighbours and informed this to Sravani's mother, who filed a case against him.

Book Reading Sessions

Members from 8 villages of Shankarpally and 15 villages of Vikarabad participated in book reading sessions. They read books on a wide range of topics including gender, good habits, our environment, adolescence, life skills and human rights among others. The organisers distributed books to the girls whenever they assembled for a meeting. They read the books in groups of 2-3 girls each and later made presentations on the content of the books that they had read. This initiative has helped broaden the horizon of their thought and has also enabled information sharing while also improving their general knowledge and understanding of important issues. They had not been keen on reading earlier but have developed this habit now.

Training of KBS members

Mandal level training sessions were conducted for 162 KBS members from Suryapet district during November. The details of sessions are as below:

Mandal	Date	Members	Resource persons
Atmakur	8 Nov.	60	MVF, police personnel
Maddirala	7 Nov.	55	MV F, Cluster Resource Person, head teacher
Nutankal	5 Nov.	47	MVF, Child Line team, school teacher
Total		162	

The members reviewed their initiatives within the family and the impact of the same, the problems associated with online classes, the status of child marriage and the problems being faced by them. They also spoke on the different forms of discrimination against them and on how they coped with their problems. They were later given inputs on the use of social media tools such as Google Meet, WhatsApp, etc. The organisers involved them in group work to illustrate the use of these tools. A presentation was also made on the provisions of the Child Marriage Prevention Act and the Child Line facility.

Formation of WhatsApp groups with KBS members

Many girls were not able to attend physical meetings on account of the lockdown. WhatsApp groups were formed with these girls with the primary objective of facilitating a common platform for mutual interaction. Associating with the group helped them mutually share information on education and other areas of common interest. The group also served as a means of problem resolution and helped educate the girls on the use of social media tools. The gap between parents and school has narrowed now. Parents have understood the importance of the KBS. The girls now have an opportunity for self-expression, social interaction and redressing grievances. There is also a newfound sense of self-confidence. Their leadership skills have also been honed.

The details of WhatsApp groups formed are as follows:

Mandal	Clusters	Villages	Girls
Atmakur	4	28	105
Maddirala	1	7	29
Nutankal	2	14	42
Shankarpally	4	25	164
Vikarabad	3	29	83
Total	14	103	423

Petitions

Mandal(s)	Petitioner(s)	Recipient(s)	Issue(s)
Atmakur Maddirala Nutankal	SMC, CRPF and Mothers' Associations	MLAs, District Collector, DEO, MEOs	School reopening, dry rations
	SMC	MEOs	Textbooks, Worksheets, dry rations
	CRPF and Mothers' Associations	Tehsildars, SIs, MPDOs and MEOs	Child Marriage
Shankarpally	KBS, CRPF and SMC	Sarpanchs of 4 villages	School reopening, dry rations
	CRPF, SMC, Mothers' Associations, MVF	DSE, District Collector, DEO, RDO, MPP, Tehsildar MPDO	School reopening, dry rations
	CRPF, SMC, Mothers' Associations, MVF	Municipal Chairperson	Details of migrant families, nutrition and water facilities for them, follow up of children by teachers
Vikarabad	CRPF, SMC, Mothers' Associations, MVF	Municipal Chairperson	School reopening, dry rations
	CRPF, SMC, Mothers' Associations	Zilla Parishad chairperson, MLA, District Collector, DPO, MPP	Dry rations, textbooks, follow up of child marriage by Sarpanchs, school painting
	CRPF	Zilla Parishad chairperson	Dry rations, textbooks, teachers' availability in school
	CRPF, SMC, Mothers' Associations	RDO	School reopening, dry rations

Signature Campaign

Mandal	Groups	Signatures	Issue(s)
Shankarpally	CRPF	100	Amendment of the RTE Act to bring all children aged 3-18 years under its ambit, and the CMPA
	Mothers' Association	50	
Vikarabad	Gram Panchayat	21	
	CRPF	150	
	Mothers' Association	90	