



CREATING A SAFER WORLD FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

IMPACT REPORT 2023



MY CHOICES
FOUNDATION



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5TH ASIAN
ANTI-TRAFFICKING
FORUM

NAME: *Bujata Andhare*

ORGANIZATION: *My Choices Foundation*

PROGRAM

MY CHOICES
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5TH ASIAN
ANTI-TRAFFICKING
FORUM

CREATING SAFE HAVENS FOR VICTIMS
OF TRAFFICKING. JOINING THE BATTLE.

AND REACHING EVERY
ONE BEHIND.

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**THE
POWER
OF OUR
CHOICES**

MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER

Namaste friends,

In a world marked by profound hurt and grief, we as a team acknowledge the weight of the challenges surrounding us.

Yet, amidst the collective pain, we recognise that now, more than ever, we cannot afford to avert our gaze from the unspeakable atrocities inflicted upon women and girls worldwide.

It is with a heightened sense of purpose that we commit ourselves to deepen our focus on combating gender-based violence, ensuring that the voices of survivors resonate louder than the darkness that seeks to silence them.

The journey towards empowerment and equality for women and girls continues to face deep obstacles, inspiring us to redouble our efforts.

- Worldwide, 1 in 3 women has experienced physical or sexual violence – mostly by an intimate partner.
- Every 20 minutes, a woman is raped in India and child rape cases have increased by 336% in the last 10 years.
- Women and Girls represent 71% of Modern Day Slavery, of which 99% of them are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

THE REALITY IN INDIA

In the vibrant tapestry of India's beauty and technological strides, the heart and soul of this nation shine brightly.

However, beneath this tapestry persists the shadow of a patriarchal system, rendering it one of the world's most dangerous places for a girl to be born.

As we navigate the juxtaposition of progress and challenges, My Choices Foundation remains steadfast in its commitment to unveil the potential for change and cultivate a landscape where the inherent beauty of every individual, irrespective of gender, flourishes free from the constraints of inequality and danger.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

This year, our foundation has continued to make remarkable strides in empowering women and girls, as detailed in our Impact Report.

From "Operation PeaceMaker" to "Operation Red Alert," we have seen the deep impact of our efforts on the lives of those we serve.

- **> 18,100 families received counselling at one of our five centres**
- **1,17,384 school children reached by school outreaches**
- **3,75,368 people educated on gender-based violence**
- **8,941 Safe Village Programs conducted across 10 States in India**
- **36,32,759 people educated on sex trafficking and its related factors**
- **20,80,252 people received educational comic books about sex trafficking**
- **16,527 village custodians identified and trained, who are fondly referred to as Gram Mitras (friends of the village), Rakshaks (vigilantes), Nodal Teachers (protectors) and Community Leaders (Guides) 115 partnerships with community-based organisations (Implementing Partners) across 10 states in India**
- **> 79,000 calls received through our anti-sex trafficking helpline**

As the founder of My Choices Foundation, my heart swells with an overwhelming sense of pride for each member of our team.

Their unparalleled dedication and passion in the tireless pursuit of making India a safe haven for women and girls inspire me daily. Their unwavering commitment, relentless efforts, and boundless enthusiasm fuel our collective mission, resonating with a shared vision of empowerment, equality, and transformative change.

THE POWER OF EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

Investing in and educating a woman or girl facing abuse or sexual exploitation is a profound act of sowing seeds not just in their lives but in the very soil from which the next generation of empowered women and girls and boys will emerge. By believing in the intrinsic power and beauty within every woman and girl, we unlock the limitless potential for extraordinary accomplishments.

"I raise up my voice - not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. We cannot succeed when half of us are held back."

– Malala Yousafzai

Before I close, I want to honour the women and girls we serve.

Every day, we are inspired by the incredible strength and unwavering spirit of the women and girls who have are facing extreme violence. Their resilience in the face of adversity fuels our commitment to stand by their side, fighting for a world where every woman and girl can live free from fear and with dignity.

Together, they remind us that in the darkest of times, hope and courage can illuminate the path to change, inspiring us to push forward, stronger and more dedicated than ever.

"NOTHING IS SO STRONG AS GENTLENESS AND NOTHING IS SO GENTLE AS REAL STRENGTH."

Let us choose to give someone the choice to live a life of purpose, meaning, and fulfillment.

Thank you to each and every team member, donor, and partner for your invaluable role in our journey. Together, we are making the world a better place for women and girls through our collective strength and gentleness.

I invite you to take some time to read through the impact we have had at My Choices Foundation in 2023.

Journey with us on this road to end gender-based violence against women and girls and share in the joy of the stories that ignite change in generations.

With gratitude,

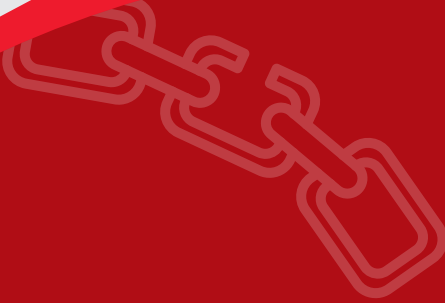


WHAT DOES A SAFER WORLD FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN LOOK LIKE?



In a safer world, all children and women would be free from abuse, violence and exploitation, and their fundamental rights are respected.

**WHERE DO THINGS
STAND IN THE WORLD
FOR WOMEN AND
CHILDREN TODAY?**



Worldwide, 1 in 3 women has experienced physical or sexual violence – mostly by an intimate partner.

Every 20 minutes, a woman is raped in India and child rape cases have increased by 336% in the last 10 years.

One in three of the world's child brides lives in India. Of the country's 223 million child brides, 102 million were married before turning 15.

Women and girls represent 71% of modern day slavery, of which 99% of them are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

650 million women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday.

One in three girls missing globally due to sex selection, both pre- and post-natal, is from India – 46 million out of the total 142 million.

THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN IS THREATENED EVERY SINGLE MOMENT.

INNOCENT CHILDREN AND HELPLESS WOMEN ARE SHAKING, CRYING, BLEEDING OR DYING RIGHT NOW.


Close to 40% of Indian married women in poor households are victims of sexual or physical violence.

Women empowerment is a CSR first priority for less than 5% of large companies in India.

It may take another 286 years to remove discriminatory laws and close prevailing gaps in legal protections for women and girls.

Globally, over 380 million women and girls are in extreme poverty, living on less than \$1.90 a day. If current trends continue, more women and girls will live in extreme poverty by 2030 than do today.

Close to 55% of girls who are not in formal education worldwide live in crisis affected countries.



Sources: Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, WHO, 2018 | UNFPA's State of the World Population 2020 report | Gender Inequality and modern slavery - How to break the cycle of women and girls' exploitation - The Freedom Fund, 2020 | Towards Ending Child Marriage, Global Trends and Profiles of Progress, UNICEF, 2021 | Ending Child Marriage, A Profile of Progress in India, UNICEF, 2017 | NFHS-5 (National Family Health Survey) 2019-2021 | India CSR Outlook Report 2023, CSRBOX | The Sustainable Development Goals, Special Edition, 2023 | Progress On The Sustainable Development Goals - The Gender Snapshot 2022 | National Crime Records Bureau, India

Domestic violence and sex trafficking are the signs of the deepening loss of conscience and humanity. They strip away the fundamental rights of children and women and infringe on their physical and mental integrity. Both are complex patterns of abusive behaviour and unsafe living environments that enable and perpetuate violence against children and women, yet they remain shrouded in a culture of silence.

The global and national dimensions of these types of violence are alarming, as highlighted by incidence and prevalence in the statistics. No village, community, city or nation can claim to be free of such violence, the only variation is in the severity, frequency, patterns and trends that exist within.

Gender-based violence transcends boundaries of caste, class and religion, exhibiting a stark absence of discrimination. It manifests universally, casting a dark shadow over any community, regardless of their age, education, income and, socio-economic background, emphasizing that the menace can afflict anyone, anywhere.

It deeply affects communities who are disadvantaged as a result of interacting structural inequalities such as poverty, and gender inequity together with harmful societal and cultural practices. While males and females of all ages can be victims,

it has a gendered pattern with the majority of perpetrators being male and the majority of victims being girls and women.

A common risk factor of domestic violence and sex trafficking is vulnerability. We all want to be loved and cared for, and traffickers and abusers prey on these vulnerabilities. They promise to address the victim's needs for love, a better life, a good job, financial security, a good education or commitment to keep the victims under their control. Other tactics include physical and sexual violence, emotional abuse, financial abuse and isolation from friends and friends.

Children ensnared by the harrowing grip of gender-based violence may find themselves so manipulated and silenced by fear that they often fail to recognize the heinous acts inflicted upon them as sexual violence or abuse. The insidious nature of the manipulation perpetuates a profound state of unawareness, shrouding their experiences in a disturbing veil of ignorance and silence.



The current context exacerbates the vulnerabilities of children and women and is unfolding at a time when women and children requiring help continue to grow to historic proportions.

My Choices Foundation is on the frontline to fight inequalities because we believe that together, we can create a safer world for women and children where they live and thrive free of abuse, violence and exploitation.

Our unwavering commitment and relentless activism over the past 12 years in India have yielded tangible progress, showcasing significant advancements and encouraging outcomes. The fruits of our dedicated efforts are evident in the transformative impact we have made, demonstrating a resolute stride towards positive change in the realm of gender-based violence.

However, we are no way near to our mission. We have so much more to do.

WE WANT A WORLD WHERE NO CHILD OR WOMAN IS A SURVIVOR OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE OR SEX TRAFFICKING.

TILL THEN, WE WILL NOT STOP.



INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED DEFINITIONS

Trafficking in persons means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Child trafficking is the act of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation regardless of the use of the illicit means, either within or outside a country. All different forms of exploitation

shall be considered within the definition, including: exploitation of prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery or servitude, the removal of organs, use of children associated with armed groups or forces, begging, illegal activities, sport and related activities, illicit adoption, early marriage or any other form of exploitation.

Under these guidelines, the consent of a child victim of trafficking to the intended exploitation is irrelevant, even if none of the following illicit means have been used: force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person. A child victim of trafficking is any person trafficked under the age of 18.

Domestic violence also called domestic abuse or intimate partner violence can be defined as a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Violence is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviours that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone.

Domestic violence, in the context of our work, extends beyond traditional boundaries and is not confined solely to married couples. It encompasses violence perpetrated against individuals within a domestic setting, affecting young girls who may face harm from family members such as fathers, brothers or uncles. This pervasive issue transcends demographic factors, impacting individuals of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender.

Such violence can unfold within various relationships, including those of married couples, cohabitants, or individuals in a dating context. Regardless of socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels, these incidents are seldom isolated, typically escalating in frequency and severity. The repercussions of domestic violence can be grave, potentially leading to serious physical injury or even death.



OUR MISSION

We aim to give women, children and families choices to live lives free from abuse, violence and sexual exploitation.



OUR VALUES

Our values are the foundation of our actions and decisions. It reflects the priorities, attitudes and perspectives we bring to work.

Passion

We are kind, caring, brave and passionate.

Courage

We act with courage, ask tough questions and challenge the status quo.

Transformation

We believe that a better world is often a choice away.

Innovation

We always strive to find new and innovative ways to solve society's tough problems.

Accountability

We do the right thing and take responsibility for our actions.

Equality

We treat all with respect, dignity and integrity.

Partnerships

We trust the power of partnerships and collaboration.

A close-up photograph of a vibrant red flower, likely a hibiscus, with numerous yellow stamens extending from the center. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green. The image is partially obscured by a large, curved red graphic element that frames the text on the left side of the page.

OUR GOALS

GOAL 1

Empower women and children to become change agents in their own families and communities.

GOAL 2

Educate at-risk women, children, families and communities.

GOAL 3

Ensure a supportive environment for survivors and their families.



OUR OPERATIONS AND FOUR-PILLAR HUMAN RIGHTS- BASED APPROACH



Operation PeaceMaker aims to resist harmful social norms which perpetuate domestic violence, empower victims to seek help and strengthen community institutions to provide survivor-centred care.



PILLAR 1
Prevent through awareness



PILLAR 2
Provide support through interventions



PILLAR 3
Protect survivor's safety



PILLAR 4
Prepare boys and men to be allies



Operation Red Alert seeks to reduce the vulnerabilities of at-risk populations to being trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation and create a protective environment for women, children and communities.



PILLAR 1
Eradicate at grassroots level



PILLAR 2
Equip village custodians



PILLAR 3
Empower by helpline



PILLAR 4
Expose by mass media



OUR IMPACT



290

PeaceMakers trained

18,167

families received counselling
at one of our five centres



3,75,368

people educated on gender-based violence

1,17,354

students empowered
through school
programmes

1,366

calls received through our
domestic violence helpline



293

survivors of domestic
violence received safe
accommodation and
financial, psychological,
legal and vocational
training support



8,941

Safe Village Programs conducted

115

partnerships with community-based organisations (Implementing Partners) across 10 states in India



20,80,252

people received educational comic books about sex trafficking

36,32,759

people educated on sex trafficking and its related factors



79,908

calls received through our sex trafficking helpline

16,527

village custodians, who are fondly referred to as Gram Mitras (friends of the village), Rakshaks (vigilantes), Nodal Teachers (protectors) and Community Leaders (Guides)



OPERATION PEACEMAKER



PILLAR 1 PREVENT THROUGH AWARENESS

Violence against women and young girls should stop. It is not inevitable. It is preventable. Our first pillar 'Prevent through awareness' focused on stopping the violence before it occurs. Our awareness-raising initiatives address the root causes and underlying drivers of violence. We generate knowledge about the causes and consequences of domestic violence, challenge attitudes, beliefs and norms that condone domestic violence, and educate people about relevant laws, policies, services and rights.



PEACEMAKERS IN ACTION: COMMUNITY AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

Promoting women's independence, encouraging decision-making at household levels and in the public, challenging gender stereotypes and fostering personal identities on the individual- and community- levels have proven to significantly reduce the prevalence of violence against women in the communities.

Our formative research (interviews and focus group discussions) helped us to determine the prevalence of attitudes, beliefs and norms in the targeted communities. With these insights, we built a unique model, PeaceMakers - to professionally train local community women to be at the forefront of challenging domestic violence in their communities.

With constant guidance from My Choices Foundation's team, there are **66 PeaceMakers**

(51 female and 15 male), who have conducted **12,217 community awareness programmes** by emphasising the benefits of non-violent relationships and the importance of positive norms. The role of PeaceMakers is to create a movement for women's rights and create an enabling environment for women to exercise their rights by building community will.

The effectiveness of our PeaceMaker model is evident, with **53% of domestic violence cases for counselling between January and December 2023 being referred by our PeaceMakers**. Victims sought help as a direct result of our PeaceMakers' impactful awareness sessions and supportive encouragement, underscoring the significant role they play in fostering a proactive response to domestic violence.

WOMEN REACHED OUT FOR HELP TO OPERATION PEACEMAKER BECAUSE OF....

53%
PEACEMAKERS

6%
REFERRAL

17%
POLICE STATION

10%
DIRECT WALK- IN

14%
OTHER SOURCES

SASA! TOGETHER

In our efforts to strengthen Operation PeaceMaker prevention-focused initiatives, we adapted the SASA! Together, a community mobilisation approach that supports communities to create positive and sustainable changes around norms that perpetuate violence against women.

Developed by an Uganda-based non-governmental organisation, Raising Voices, SASA! uses community mobilization as the core strategy to prevent violence against women. The SASA! Together approach has been recognised by UN Women and adapted in more than 30 countries and 75 organisations around the world.

SASA! is a Kiswahili word that means 'now' - underscoring the urgent need to prevent VAW (Violence Against Women) - and the acronym for its four phases: Start, Awareness, Support, and Action.

Community members from different social and economic strata are engaged in a structured process - beginning with pre-contemplation (Start), to contemplation (Awareness), preparation for action (Support) and action and maintenance (Action). Using interactive and reflexive activities, SASA! unpacks different dimensions of power and other key themes (gender, violence, activism, collective responsibility), and the specific content evolves throughout the programme cycle:

START (1)

Involves learning about the community through a baseline survey, relationship building and the selection and training of women and men who live and work in the community to connect with their power within.

AWARENESS (2)

Introduces (or deepens) feminist analysis of men's power over women as the root cause of intimate partner violence and the community's silence about this injustice as key drivers that enable violence to continue.

SUPPORT (3)

Builds momentum as more and more community members learn skills around balancing power and join their power with others to support women experiencing violence, couples trying to change, and community activists speaking out and holding men who use violence accountable.

ACTION (4)

Cultivates the power to take action and formalize mechanisms that sustain new norms that reject violence and encourage balanced power between women and men.



We have conducted a community profiling exercise and finalised 50 target communities in the state of Telangana. Our PeaceMakers reside in or have close access to these locations. It has been observed that these selected communities have a high rate of child marriages, school dropouts, women living in abusive relationships and discrimination in accessing institutional support. **As part of the Start phase, a baseline assessment has been conducted to understand the target communities' knowledge, attitudes and practices of both women and men.**

Only 1/3 of the men in the community believes that if a woman has been beaten by her husband it is acceptable for her to tell others.

Only 19% of men believed that if a husband is verbally abusing his wife, others should intervene.

Only 16% of women and 12% of men have seen any posters/ activities/advocacy in their community on how to prevent and address violence against women and girls in their society.

65% of the women believe that men's power over women is the reason why violence against women happens.

Only 21% of men agreed that married women in this community have a say in deciding if and when they have sex with their husband.

56% of the men in the community believed it is acceptable for a man to have sex with his wife whenever he wants to, even if she does not want to.

67% of of the women in the community is not employed.

Only half of the women in the community believe it is possible for men to stop using violence.

25% of men and 41% of women agreed that it is okay for a man to control his wife's movements.



SCHOOL- AND COLLEGE-BASED OUTREACH PREVENTION PROGRAMMES

Domestic violence is a generational problem. The evidence points out that children who grow up in families with domestic violence are highly likely to become either victims or perpetrators of violence.

Our school- and college-based awareness programmes are designed to fit the local context and messages are delivered in an age-appropriate manner on a range of topics such as the effects of domestic violence, recognising the signs of domestic abuse, laws of domestic violence, dating violence, healthy relationships, responsible decision-making and how to help themselves and others.

We continue to build strong partnerships with schools and colleges in the targeted communities to ensure children and young girls develop positive attitudes towards relationships to prevent domestic violence or report the violence if it happens to them or their friends.

Till December 2023, we have conducted close to **3,000** school- and college-based outreach prevention programmes reaching **1,17,354** boys and girls.





SUPERSMART SHAKTI GIRLS' NETWORK

Stemming from our collaboration with an NGO that aims to empower girls, SuperSmart Shakti Girls' Network is a long-term mentorship programme for adolescent girls. We connect them with peer networks to make safe and right choices and be vigilant and determined about their futures. Regular sessions with girls enable them to understand their rights, and access to available services and raise their aspirations to pursue educational and employment opportunities.

Our survey results showed that 94% of girls feel confident to complain to the police and 88% of girls feel confident to complain to the school authorities when they encounter abuse compared with 49% (complain to the police) and 59% (complain to the school authorities) before joining the network.

Girls' perception of the role of women as someone who cooks, cleans and takes care of children has significantly changed – 99% of girls disagreed with the question after the network while only 67% disagreed in the pre-survey.

The analysis revealed that 99% of the girls believed that hitting a girl/girlfriend/wife is unjustifiable. 99% have reported that they have a safety plan in place while 41% had no idea what a safety plan meant before joining the network. It was also encouraging to see that 100% of girls became aware of local organisations, child helpline numbers or officials to approach for help/guidance when in a difficult or unsafe situation (65% before the survey).

BEFORE JOINING THE NETWORK

AFTER JOINING THE NETWORK

49%	of girls feel confident to complain to the police	94%	of girls feel confident to complain to the police
59%	of girls feel confident to complain to the school authorities when they encounter abuse	88%	of girls feel confident to complain to the school authorities when they encounter abuse
67%	of girls disagreed that role of women is someone who cooks, cleans and takes care of children.	99%	of girls disagreed that role of women is someone who cooks, cleans and takes care of children.
64%	of girls became aware of local organisations, child helpline numbers or officials to approach for help/guidance when in a difficult or unsafe situation	100%	of girls became aware of local organisations, child helpline numbers or officials to approach for help/guidance when in a difficult or unsafe situation

AFTER ATTENDING THE SUPERSMART SHAKTI GIRLS' NETWORK, 99% OF THE GIRLS BELIEVED THAT HITTING A GIRL/GIRL FRIEND/WIFE IS UNJUSTIFIABLE AND HAD SAFETY PLAN IN PLACE.



PILLAR 2 PROVIDE SUPPORT THROUGH INTERVENTIONS

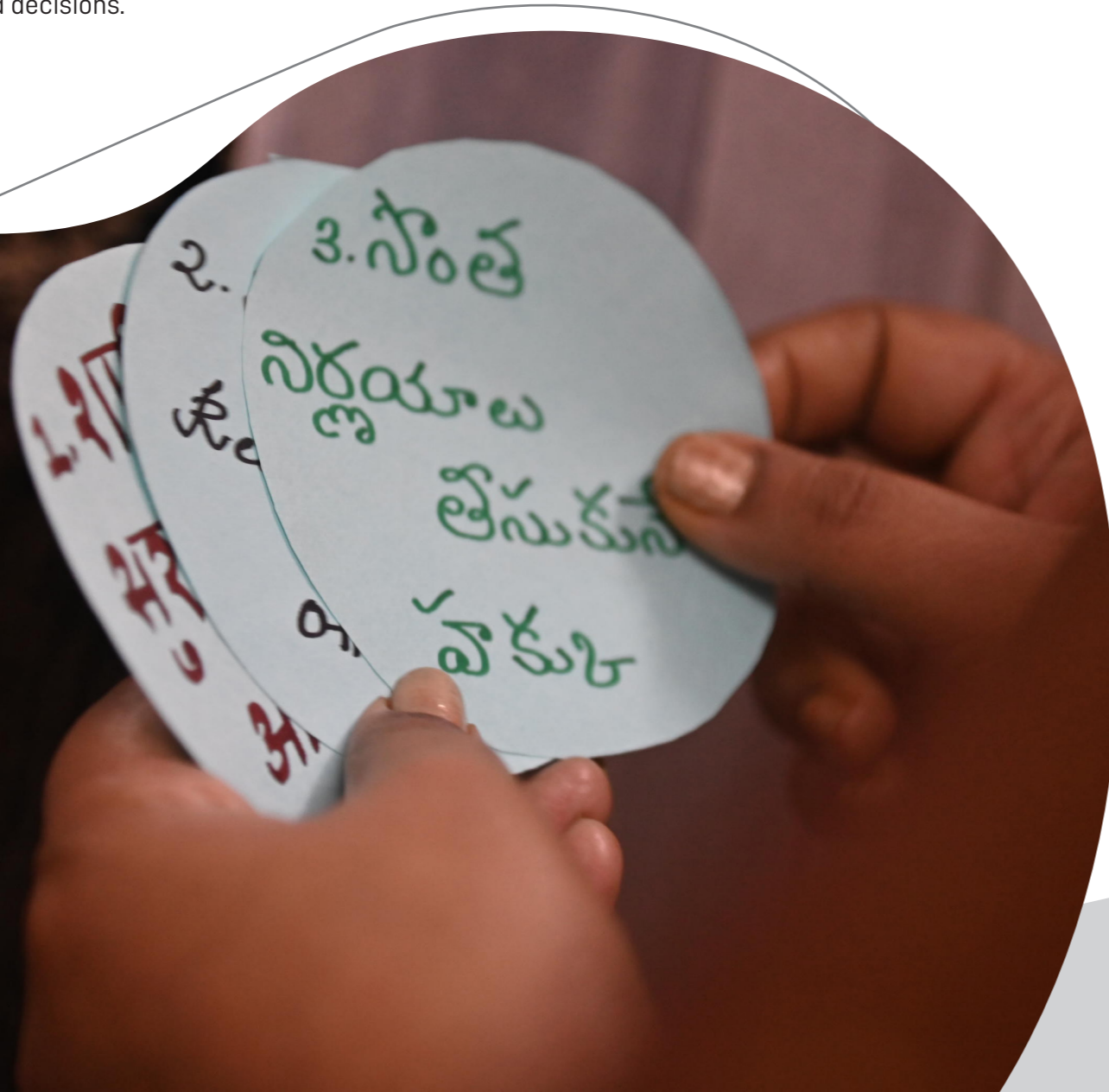
A simple decision can be daunting for women and girls who experience domestic violence. It is crucial to provide the most appropriate services and assist women in their recovery to help them make informed choices, prevent 're-victimisation' and change the attitudes and perceptions of domestic violence at the individual and community levels. Our work through 'Provide support through interventions' is based on the survivor-centred approach, ensuring that services are women-focused, child-friendly, non-judgemental and non-blaming, and guiding to make informed decisions.

A SURVIVOR-CENTRED APPROACH TOWARDS COUNSELLING

Our professionally trained counsellors are available for in-person counselling and support at our five centres in Shah Ali Banda, Golconda, Lakdikapul, Warangal and Secunderabad in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Adopting a survivor-centred approach, our counsellors develop a warm and accepting bond with the survivors and offer services to women who have experienced and/or witnessed domestic violence.

We adopt varied counselling modalities such as strength-based counselling, motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioural therapy to support the client in processing their own situation and arriving at solutions. Throughout the counselling process, we uphold the rights of the survivors and respect the boundaries of the client.

The assessment on the impact of counselling showed significant knowledge improvement about varied domestic violence areas and was also effective in changing related behaviours, attitudes and skills.



The level of knowledge related to the emotional impact of abuse at home has increased among 89% of women.

87% of survivors became aware of how to handle abuse (47% before counselling)

85% were ready to seek legal help (48% before counselling)

87% took control over their finances (45% before counselling)

82% learnt coping strategies to deal with the trauma (46% before counselling)

88% of women said they are now empowered to leave the abusive relationships (51% before counselling)

89% of women said that they would seek help for partner's violence (only 53% of were confident enough to seek out help before counselling)

Family-based counselling has also played a significant role in deterring all forms of violence against women by increasing awareness of couples and improving their relationships.

With more than
175,000

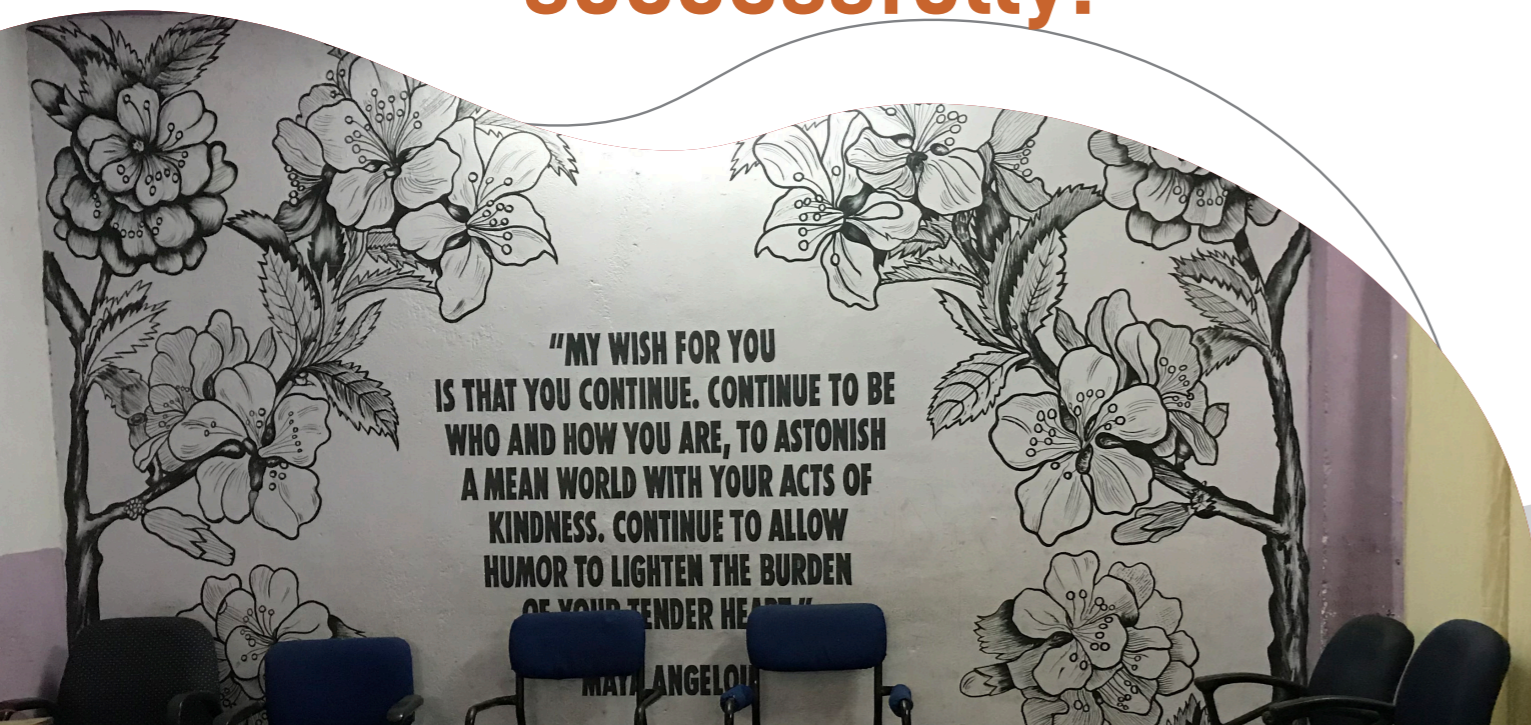
hours of counselling and the incredible support of partners, we were able to help women find new meaning and lead a dignified life -

82% of cases
have been resolved
successfully!

Before coming to Operation PeaceMaker for much needed support and counselling -

62% of women
have not sought out
any help!

Our professionally trained counsellors, employees and volunteers are also available around the clock to answer the domestic violence toll-free helpline 1800 212 9131 and WhatsApp 9333 40 4141, and provide community referrals when needed.



IMPACT STORY

Building healthy relationships: the realisation journey of Nirmala and Shankar

Nirmala* had no say when she was asked to marry Shankar*. Within a few days, she was married and sent to her in-law's place.

Life seemed pretty okay for the first couple of weeks. But things took a drastic turn when her husband quit his job and started drinking. He demanded Nirmala's gold jewels; he pawned and sold them to make ends meet – and cater to his drinking habit.

Drinking became worse and he began to physically and verbally abuse Nirmala. His father also joined him, and everyday became a nightmare for Nirmala. She was even slapped, kicked and pushed and punched during her pregnancies, and she lost two babies before they were born.

Nirmala resigned to her fate and started surviving. After a few months, she gave birth to a baby girl for which she was scolded and beaten due to the preference of male babies in the community. Most of the families cite the financial burden inherent in providing dowry for girls and so they are considered as low-value.

She got pregnant again, hoping for the son to be born. However, she was beaten to the extent that she was hospitalised and lost the baby. Unable to bear the abuse and violence, Nirmala filed a police complaint

and her husband, Shakar was arrested. She left to her parents' house.

After Shankar's release, he promised Nirmala that he would quit alcohol and take care of her and the child. But he couldn't keep his word and Nirmala was abused again.

It was a huge blow to Nirmala, but her determination strengthened. She filed a complaint with the police and found a new job to support her and her daughter.

Years of abuse and violence had taken a toll on Nirmala's physical and mental health. Police officials introduced her to My Choices Foundation where she received in depth counselling. Our counsellors ensured a safe and confidential space for her to express her feelings, thoughts and fears, helped her to process traumatic memories and presented the possibilities of moving on.

Her husband, Shankar joined the counselling sessions and reflected on his abusive behaviour due to excessive alcohol consumption. Our team were able to make him understand the importance of treatment for his addiction and he has enrolled in a rehabilitation centre.

In our gender-based counselling approach, which embraces inclusivity as a fundamental

principle, we actively involve men in the counselling process. Shankar participated in the counselling sessions, allowing for a reflection on his abusive behavior stemming from excessive alcohol consumption.

Through our collaborative efforts, our team successfully communicated the significance of seeking treatment for his addiction, leading to his enrollment in a rehabilitation centre. This inclusive approach recognizes that finding peaceful solutions in families, necessitates the active involvement and support of all individuals involved.

Nirmala and Shankar learnt about a healthy relationship, which involves trust, honesty, respect and open communication between husband and wife. They continue to work on their relationship for a happy and peaceful life.

*Names have been changed to protect identities.

LEGAL AID FOR SURVIVORS

Limited knowledge about legal rights combined with a strong stigma surrounding domestic violence prevents many women from staying in their abusive relationships. During our counselling and awareness sessions, we share crucial legal information about protective orders, divorce/marriage laws, child custody and pressing charges against the perpetrator to ensure that the victim makes an informed choice.

We support them with their decisions and provide free legal assistance, advice and court support services. Our legal team comprises three advocates who help them at every stage of the legal proceedings and guide them through the final judgement.

NEW BEGINNINGS WITH THE LOTUS FUND

Women leave abusive partners at what is often the lowest point in their lives. And, when a woman decides to walk away from an abusive relationship, a little financial help can be a lifeline for her and her children – and not keep her locked into a dangerous situation.

The Lotus Fund is intended to serve the individual needs of the survivors of domestic

violence. We support emergency needs such as accommodation, kitchen utensils, school-related costs for children, medical expenses and supportive materials/skill development training to start their work.

DIAL 100, PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TELANGANA STATE WOMEN SAFETY WING, TELANGANA STATE POLICE

We support Telangana State Police and Women's Safety Wing in their initiative to provide counselling support to survivors of domestic violence who reach out for assistance via the Police Helpline Dial 100. We developed online counselling protocols and supported the training of counsellors who operate the Dial 100 helpline. This initiative is a step towards creating an institutional change to ensure the support available to survivors of domestic violence in Telangana, India.

We have conducted 455 counselling sessions for people who have reached out via Dial 100 helpline.





PILLAR 3 PROTECT SURVIVOR'S SAFETY

The safety and well-being of victims/survivors of domestic violence and any accompanying children is our top priority. We ensure confidentiality and privacy and ensure that they are properly protected. embrace healthy approaches towards relationships, respect women and girls, and advocate for gender equality.

REVIVAL AND RE-BLOOM AT THE LOTUS SAFE HOME

Decades of research show that the loss of housing upon leaving an abuser exacerbates fear and insecurity for the victims/survivors of domestic violence, particularly with accompanying children.

Our Lotus Safe Home is a temporary safe and secure accommodation, symbolising unwavering faith and the most beautiful revivals. It is a place where survivors get the opportunity to begin the process of much-needed healing and get back on their feet. At Lotus Safe Home, survivors receive counselling, food, clothing, personal care items, vocational training skills, art therapy, support for finding work, legal help, education and other essential services.





PILLAR 4 ENGAGE BOYS AND MEN TO BE ALLIES

The evidence informs that the high prevalence of violence against women and girls is majorly accompanied by social tolerance. Men are highly likely to build their identities in societal (sexist) contexts where they internalise the idea that masculine power is associated with the submission of women.

Our programmes - Asli Champions Boys' Safety Network and the BoyTalk project create the environment for men and boys to challenge harmful social norms, question their existing beliefs, embrace healthy approaches towards relationships, respect women and girls, and advocate for gender equality.



THE BOYTALK PROJECT

The BoyTalk Project is a casual meet-up with young men to engage in self-reflective conversations about what part of their masculinity they wish to embrace and which gender norms do not serve them and enable them to live fulfilled lives.

ASLI CHAMPIONS BOYS' SAFETY NETWORK

The aim of the Asli Champions Boys' Safety Network is to educate adolescent boys about gender equality, healthy ideas of masculinity and child protection laws for child labour. They are connected to a peer network, where they can have open and honest conversations about their lives, problems and dreams. Mentors are available to answer their questions and guide them to lead healthy and happy lives.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF DATA

At the forefront of innovation, My Choices Foundation leverages cutting-edge technology to harness real-time data, enabling dynamic analytics across all facets of our operations. This data-driven approach empowers us to enhance the effectiveness of our programs, interventions, and outreach initiatives. By staying on the pulse of information, we ensure precision, adaptability, and impactful decision-making, cementing our position as a leader in the realm of gender-based violence NGOs.

Operation PeaceTracker, a custom data management system enables us to capture the details of each case and family that approaches our counselling centres. The software helps us track the progress of each case - the counselling sessions, follow-ups conducted and actions taken. Having a custom-built system has been critical to the efficiency of our processes, and our ability to manage more cases systematically. Through our PeaceTracker platform, the PeaceMakers (change agents with the community) will be able to continue to track their progress and load client data on the platform.

Our analytic tool named Sisense helps to quickly analyse all our live data, and track the progress of individual team members and our five counselling centers. Not only do we evaluate the counsellors, but through the assessment, ensure the upscaling and strengthening of the consultant counsellors with ongoing mentoring and regular capacity-building sessions.

For many women, abuse has been such an integral part of their lives, that it can be hard to determine the frequency and severity of the abuse they are facing.

We have developed an AI tool, Up2Tom which helps women and girls identify potential domestic violence issues through our AI quiz. This has enabled us to embed the expertise and knowledge of our Counsellors and PeaceMaker into decision support applications for the women and girls we serve in our communities.





OPERATION RED ALERT



PILLAR 1 ERADICATE AT GRASSROOTS LEVEL

The 'Eradicate at grassroots level' pillar calls for the elimination of grave violations of fundamental freedom and rights of innocent children, young girls and women living in the rural parts of India.

At the grassroots level, the significance of prevention work cannot be overstated as it plays a pivotal role in raising awareness about the menace of trafficking. By fostering community education and vigilance, we empower individuals to recognise the signs, protect themselves, and collectively work towards building resilient communities where the chains of trafficking are broken before they can take hold.

The chilling reality is that only 1 out of 100 human trafficking victims gets rescued. This underscores the urgent need for robust prevention efforts. This staggering statistic reveals the pervasive horror of the situation, emphasizing the critical importance of proactive measures to protect vulnerable individuals from falling prey to trafficking.



30% of victims of human trafficking are children worldwide and two out of three identified child victims are girls.



GOING DEEPER WITH THE PREVENTION-FOCUSED SAFE VILLAGE PROGRAM

At the heart of the Safe Village Program is to protect the rights and fundamental freedom of girls, boys, women and men at all times.

Our Safe Village Program is a behavioural research-informed prevention effort of Operation Red Alert, the anti-sex trafficking wing of My Choices Foundation. The Safe Village Program has been meticulously designed to address the specific vulnerabilities and needs of individuals, families and communities, based on the insights gathered from neuroscience and behavioural economics research on what drives vulnerable and marginalized communities to 'buy' and 'sell' sex.

The Safe Village Program aims to sensitize at-risk communities about sex trafficking, its causes and its risk factors, create awareness about ways to prevent trafficking, sustain awareness, take action and respond to trafficking.

The Safe Village Program happens in four stages:

1. PRE-VISIT

Our Implementing Partner visits the village to gather permission from the elders of the village and school authorities to conduct the Safe Village Program. During this day, they visit the households in the village and encourage people to attend the programme, and also identify Grassroots Stakeholders – Rakshak, Nodal Teacher, Gram Mitra and Community Leaders – to help conduct the programme and sustain the awareness of the message in the long-term.

2. SAFE VILLAGE PROGRAM

On the day of the Safe Village Program, we use comic books, flip charts, short films and skits to reach people and show them the dangers of trafficking so they understand the risks they, their families and communities face and know how to avoid them.

The comic book tells the story of heroes in a community who discover that a young girl has been sent away to a big city for work

and may be at risk of sex trafficking. It outlines positive behaviours for girls, boys, mothers and fathers.

Our comic book is an essential component of the Safe Village Program and has been distributed to more than 20,80,252 people across 8,941 villages in six languages - Bengali, Hindi, Kannada, Marathi, Telugu and Odia.

THE MAIN CHARACTERS OF THE COMIC BOOK ARE:

- A Good Father who protects his daughter and ensures that she stays in school.
- An Informed Mother who will not marry her daughter before she turns 18 and teaches her sons to respect all girls.
- A Guardian Girl who is determined to study, protect her friends and mobilise people to keep her village safe from traffickers.
- A Smart Boy who respects girls, creates awareness about trafficking in his village and speaks against injustice such as child marriage, child labour etc.

Community engagement flip charts are a visual aid for field trainers to conduct group-based outreach sessions with children, mothers and fathers.



OTHER CREATIVE TOOLS INCLUDE:

Bhavani video, tells the real story of Bhavani, a girl who was trafficked, at the tender age of 12 years, for commercial sex work as a child. It showcases the signs of deception used by traffickers and marriage as a pathway to trafficking.

Komal's 'Good Touch, Bad Touch' video, tells the story of Komal, whose neighbour next door gained her trust before sexually abusing her. It showcases positive behaviour traits from the teacher who noticed changes in her behaviour and reported it; the mother who encouraged her to open up and talk about her feelings; and a father and mother who reported and requested for support from ChildLine. The ChildLine volunteer then introduces the topic to a group of children and shares information and messaging about good and bad touch.

Animations create awareness about child marriage, child labour, unsafe migration, sex trafficking, laws related to trafficking in India, domestic violence, gender inequalities, and signs of trafficking amongst other things.



There are four different categories of outreach, as part of the Safe Village Program: Fathers' Meet, Mothers' Meet, Community Meet and School programme.

FATHERS' MEET

Our vast experience has taught us that Fathers want to do everything for their little ones, but what they lack is knowledge and awareness about the consequences of not keeping their girls in school, early marriage or sending children to the city for work/better opportunities. We engage Fathers as enablers of sex trafficking by helping them to understand the risks, warning signs and consequences of falling prey to sex trafficking through deception.



MOTHERS' MEET

Mothers' Meet equips and empowers mothers to keep their daughters safe from being trafficked by helping them stay in school, not getting them married before they are 18 and encouraging their sons to respect all girls and women, and speaking out against any injustice.

Studies say 40% of rural women face domestic violence and abuse; we encourage them to seek help and provide them with relevant numbers to reach out for help.



SCHOOL PROGRAMME

The school programme targets students aged 10-17 and aims to raise awareness and influence the attitudes and behaviours of children over the long term. At the end of the programme, girls and boys are encouraged to pledge their commitment to protecting themselves and their peers.

COMMUNITY MEET

Community-level outreach – girls, boys, women and men – is organised to increase the reach and better internalisation of messages through different types of events such as participatory role plays, women's groups, sports and leisure events. These events are preceded and/or followed by the dissemination and discussion of trafficking sensitisation messages.



3. STEP UP

After the Safe Village Program, villages are kept under strong observation and surveillance for six to eight months with the support of the stakeholders. The purpose of this period is to gather an understanding of the reach of the Safe Village Program and its penetration amongst the community members.

My Choices Foundation team evaluates the report to identify the village's qualify for additional intervention for strong penetration: 'Step-Up'. Once the village has been picked for the 'Step-Up' initiative, all our efforts towards creating awareness and empowering villagers will be intensified as well as accelerated.



4. BLITZ

The final evaluation report of the Step-Up intervention is a measuring scale for Blitz, which is an important stage and the last phase of the effort to ensure the village is safe. It is a highly intensified effort and gets maximum support and help from external stakeholders such as the Police, Women and Child Department, Paramilitary forces, District Collectors, CHILDLINE, Labour Departments, Domestic Violence Prevention and other NGOs who specialise in community, health, microenterprise and literacy programmes.

It happens after eight months to one year of the Step-Up intervention. During this stage, My Choices Foundation will directly monitor the programme with the support of state Coordinators, Implementing Partners and Grassroots Stakeholders.



IMPACT STORY

Joshana said 'no to child marriage' and 'yes to school'

When Joshana was 16 years old, she was asked to quit school and live with her elder sister's family to help them with household chores. She tried to talk to her parents about the importance of education and what she wanted to achieve in the future. She cried. She screamed. She begged. But nothing changed her parents' mind. Her future has been sealed.

Within a few weeks of living at her sister's place, another blow hit her. It was unimaginable. Her brother-in-law proposed to marry her. She was just 16 years old and had no idea whom to ask for help.

It was around that time Joshana's residing location showed up on our vulnerability mapping tool, a big data solution that analyses India's census data, government education data and other factors to identify the villages that are most at risk of human trafficking, child marriage and child sexual abuse.

My Choices Foundation along with our local Implementing Partner, Aralu (Bidar District, Karnataka) conducted the Safe Village Program where Joshana learnt about the helpline number 1800 419 8588. She built up

the courage and managed to contact the helpline and our local Implementing Partner. Our team reached Joshana's place and made them aware that marrying Joshana at the age of 16 is not only against the law but also poses a major risk to her; they are not only destroying Joshana's future but they could also go to jail for breaking the law. It was not an easy road and the conversation went on for a few months.

India has the highest rate of domestic violence among married women (girls) who were married by 18, with a rate of 67%.

Slowly, Joshana's family came around and agreed to send Joshana to school. We worked with the local school authorities for Joshana's admission.

Today, we are so thrilled to see that Joshana is a happy young girl who works hard to realise her dreams.





FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS TO ACCELERATE ACTION

Recognizing the need for partnership and action at various levels, we have collaborations with many sectors and actors for positive action and change. When we have a shared vision, values and commitment, we can create a lasting change and improve the living environment of each girl, boy, man and woman in the village. We have developed broad and deep networks and signed partnerships with 115 community-based organisations, whom we call Implementing Partners across 10 states in India, Nepal and Bangladesh.

We have joined forces with the Telangana State Police, Women Safety Wing of Telangana Police, Anti-Human Trafficking Units of Telangana Police and organised human trafficking awareness sessions in rural parts of Telangana, social media campaigns and strengthened the capacity of law enforcement officials by equipping them with specialised knowledge, tools and strategies, and enhanced their ability to identify and combat trafficking.



CHAMPIONING COLLECTIVE ACTION THROUGH THE ASIAN ANTI-TRAFFICKING FORUM

Our annual event 5th Asian Anti-Trafficking Forum (AATF) convened under the theme, 'Creating Safe Villages and Reaching Every Victim of Trafficking, Leaving No One Behind' from 1-3 August 2023 in Hyderabad, India. We had representatives from the Telangana State Police, UNICEF India, Prajwala, the British High Commission of Hyderabad, the International Justice Mission, Justice & Care, VIHAAN, KIN India, Quantum India amongst other actors from civil society, and public and private sectors.

The AATF has served as an instrumental catalyst for change, for five years in a row, enabling all attendees to harness the power of partnerships to amplify our collective impact, share information, collaborate, and continue being able to develop holistic solutions in the fight towards a future where exploitation is eradicated, and the rights and dignity of all are upheld.

By fostering collaborations between academia, research institutions, and NGOs, the AATF has contributed to a better understanding of the root causes of trafficking, the effectiveness of prevention strategies, and emerging trends. This knowledge informed our policies, programmes, and interventions, ensuring they remain relevant and impactful.

The AATF is an inspiration and model for all stakeholders to intensify their efforts in preventing and responding to human trafficking through collaboration and cooperation.







PILLAR 2 EQUIP VILLAGE CUSTODIANS

The Safe Village Program relies on four types of Grassroots Stakeholders (community volunteers) to sustain the awareness of the message and ensure that their villages are safe.

RAKSHAKS (vigilantes) provide crucial information about missing children, school dropouts, child marriage, or fake marriages in their community. With extensive knowledge about various government programmes, they connect community members with assistance and encourage them to stay healthy and live peacefully.

NODAL TEACHERS (teachers specialised and trained to prevent trafficking and exploitation) play an instrumental role in forming peer groups, adolescent groups, vigilance committees, and other units to sustain awareness of sex trafficking, domestic violence and child marriage.

GRAM MITRAS (friends of the village) create a safety ring around the village by spreading accurate and relevant information; they report cases, with the help of other community members and village leaders.

COMMUNITY LEADERS (guides) register the movement of the visitors and report any suspicious activity that could lead to trafficking. They come together to ensure the village is safe, children attend school and prevent child abuse and all types of violence.

The Grassroots Stakeholders are identified during the pre-visit of the Safe Village Program and act as a bridge between the field team and the village/school to conduct the program. They receive capacity-building training at regular intervals, participate in the decision-making process and take ownership and responsibility in deepening the intervention and sustaining the messages of the Safe Village Program in the long term.

To determine overall knowledge and awareness related to sex trafficking and its factors, and their commitment to keep their villages safe, we conducted pre- and post-surveys at each of the Grassroot Stakeholders' training.



ಮದ್ಯಸ್ಥಗಾರರ ಕೈಪಿಡಿ

ರಕ್ಷಕ
ಗ್ರಾಮ್ ಮಿತ್ರ
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स्टेकहोल्डर मार्गदर्शक पुस्तिका

नोडल शिक्षक
ग्राम मित्र
कम्युनिटी लीडर
रक्षक

STAKEHOLDERS' HANDBOOK

Rakshak
Nodal Teacher
Gram Mitra
Community Leader

स्टेकहोल्डर्स हैंडबुक

रक्षक
ग्राम मित्र
नोडल शिक्षक
सामुदायिक नेता

MY CHOICES
FOUNDATION

MY CHOICES
FOUNDATION

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FOUNDATION

At a recent Grassroots Stakeholders' training conducted in West Bengal,

84% of participants said that they are much more confident in identifying and addressing the key issues related to trafficking,

such as child marriage, child trafficking, unsafe migration, domestic violence and child labour after the training.

97% of participants said that they would contact the sex trafficking helpline number 1800 419 8588 to report any suspicious activity.

We have conducted 42 Grassroot Stakeholders training till December 2023.



PILLAR 3 EMPOWER BY HELPLINE

My Choices Foundation runs a 24x7 sex trafficking helpline 1800 419 8588, India's only Helpline dedicated to sex trafficking, which has proven to raise awareness and drive behaviour and attitude change in some cases. Our helpline respondents are fluent in five languages, Bengali, English, Hindi, Kannada and Marathi.

Since 2015, our sex trafficking helpline 1800 419 8588 received a total of 79,908 phone calls, reporting different types of cases such as missing children, children forced into early marriage, child labour, domestic violence, child abuse and sexual assault amongst others.



PEOPLE REACHED OUT FOR HELP ON OUR HELPLINE 1800 419 8588 ABOUT...

31% MISSING CHILDREN

25% DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

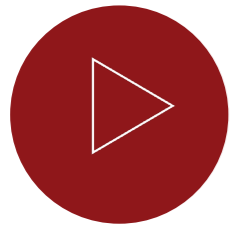
18% OTHERS

15% CHILD MARRIAGE

6% TRAFFICKING

2% CHILD ABUSE

2% SEXUAL ASSAULT



PILLAR 4

EXPOSE BY MASS MEDIA

The distinctive character of My Choices Foundation is not to work quietly behind the scenes; we speak up. We push hard to build a bold, vibrant and sustainable anti-sex trafficking movement using a multitude of platforms.

It is important to acknowledge that sex trafficking is hidden in plain view, and it is nearly impossible to convince the communities that trafficking happens in their communities. If the communities cannot recognise the problem, it is difficult to garner support and find solutions for this grave human rights challenge.

Our mass media campaigns are based on in-depth research; they are designed to raise awareness about the issue and provide the public with direct actions they can take to make a difference. We aim to inspire people to care both at the personal level and the societal level.



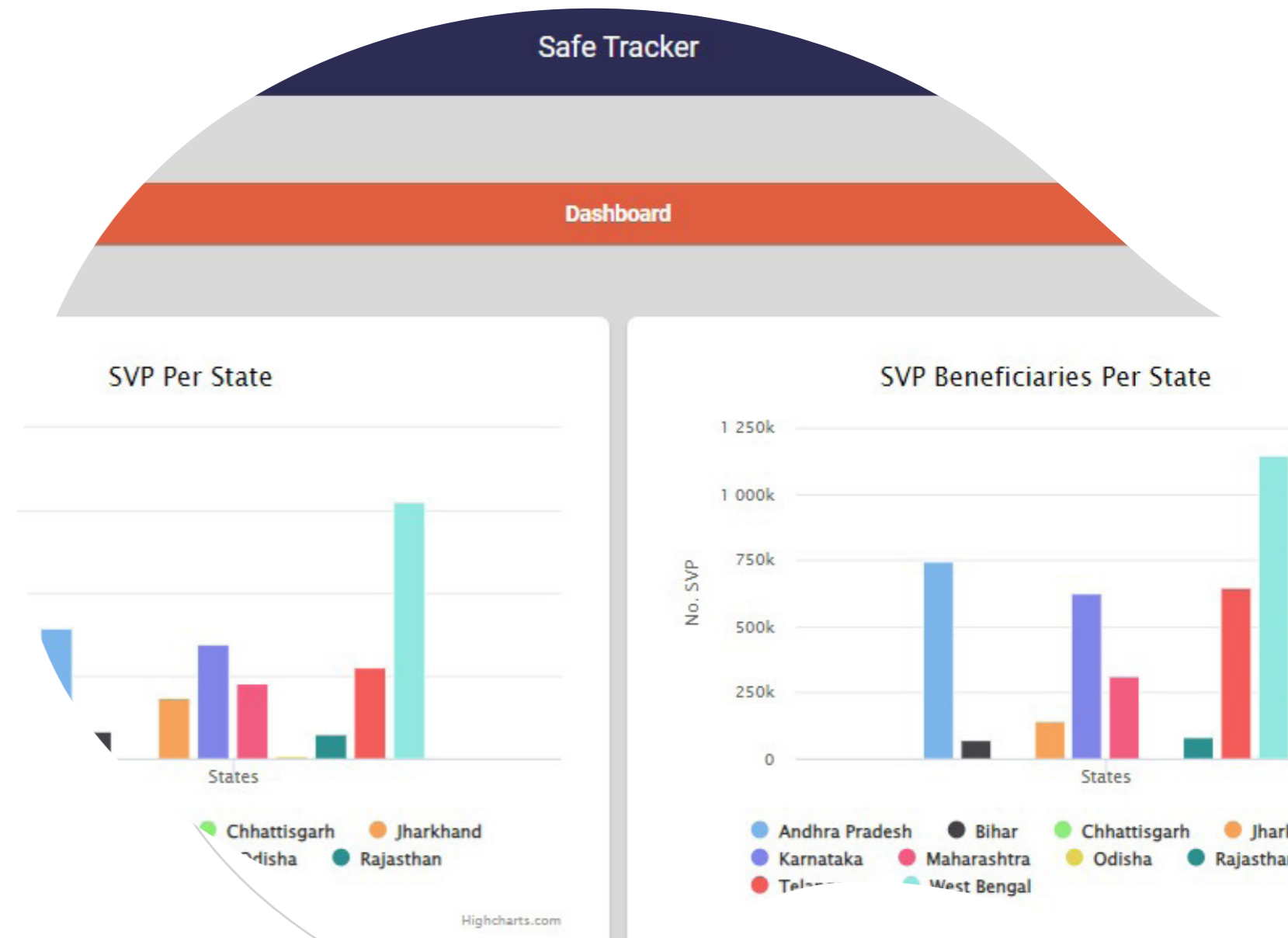
WE MAKE DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS

Quantium has supported the development of the Vulnerability Mapping Tool, a big data solution that analyses India's census data, government education data and other factors such as natural calamities, poverty level, access to transportation, educational opportunities, population and distance to the highways and the nearest police station, to identify the villages that were/are most at risk of human trafficking, enabling us to target the interventions in high-risk areas first, with the help of this data.

Our Safe Tracker application captures and tracks information about sex trafficking awareness initiatives across 10 states of India. To constantly monitor the villages after the awareness initiatives on sex trafficking have taken place, we developed a mobile application – NexGen RedAlert App. The app helps us to address the issues of sex trafficking by gathering data from our implementing partners and field volunteers – they can report suspicious behaviour or any trafficking-related activity in the community. My Choices Foundation experts quickly analyse the information

and we immediately alert the authorities if the situation is called for. The next prime functionality of the app is to collect information about various stages of the Safe Village Program from our implementing partners. This helps us to monitor the behavioural change in the community and further refine our targeted prevention tactics.

The agile connectivity combined with built-in support to uncover key insights helps us with a broader view of gender-based violence activities leading to improved decision-making and enhancing our ability to run more targeted interventions to address domestic violence combat sex trafficking and create a sustainable change in the community.



LOOKING AHEAD

Over the past 12 years, our journey has been marked by continuous learning and growth, moving us forward with an unwavering commitment to create a world that is just and free from gender based violence.

AS WE LOOK TOWARDS THE FUTURE, WE WANT A WORLD WHERE NO CHILD OR WOMAN IS A SURVIVOR OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR SEX TRAFFICKING.

There are those who believe that violence against children and women is beyond their concern. Some accept it. Some normalise it. Some do not challenge it. Some do not want to unlearn it. Some just look the other way.

Gender-based violence is considered one of the most pervasive and critical human rights issues globally. Recognizing and addressing gender-based violence is crucial for upholding the principles of human rights, equality, and dignity for all individuals.

Our strategic plan takes a direct approach based on the fundamental belief of My Choices Foundation that violence against children and women is unacceptable.

PRIMARY PREVENTION

Prevent violence against children and women from even occurring. It is about stopping violence by changing the attitudes, structures and power imbalance that enables violence.

My Choices Foundation's initiatives are aimed at the at-risk population and groups at heightened risk of becoming perpetrators or victims. We focus on addressing the underlying structural, social and personal factors, combined with risky practices that create pathways to domestic violence and sex trafficking. Actions centred on creating a safe world for children and women with a culture of non-violence.



EARLY INTERVENTION

My Choices Foundation intervenes early to change the trajectory for people who are at higher risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence against children and women. Our interventions focus on shaping perceptions, challenging mindsets, changing behaviours, and strengthening the skills of individuals and communities, which will result in reducing the risk, increasing safety and empowering them to speak out against violence.

RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Central to My Choices Foundation's response and recovery is supporting victims and survivors of domestic violence and sex trafficking. We provide holistic support, from ensuring access to a comprehensive set of services to providing legal support and holding perpetrators to account combined with strengthening societal and institutional frameworks and structures.

Together with our partners and supporters, we will continue to speak out, stand up and forge ahead.

Our unwavering certainty fuels the belief that a safer world for children and women is not just a possibility but an imminent reality we are steadfastly working to create.

OUR PARTNERS AND DONORS



My Choices Foundation has partnered with Alliance 8.7, a global partnership committed to achieving Target 8.7 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of all forms of child labour to achieve decent work for all and sustained economic growth.



Genpact drives digital-led innovation and digitally-enabled intelligent operations to solve problems with data and analytics. We are happy to partner with Genpact to build the Train the Trainer model to facilitate the entire training lifecycle - from selection to deployment and continuous monitoring and upskilling.



We are grateful to receive the support of AmSure, for one of our counselling centres and the Lotus Safe Home, which helps domestic violence survivors.



GHR Foundation aims to create lasting change with partners around the world through early action and learning, paired with collaboration on every level to provide the greatest opportunity for adjustment and impact. GHR Foundation provides support to one of the counselling centres of My Choices Foundation.



Aangan Trust build and strengthen child protection systems to ensure that the most vulnerable children are safe, supported, in school, and assured of childhoods free from trafficking, child marriage, hazardous work, violence, and exploitation. We partner with Aangan trust on variety of awareness projects on domestic violence and abuse.



Global Fund for Children has been a great supporter of the Safe Village Program. With their help and support, we activated Safe Village Programs in West Bengal through four implementing partners. GFC has always been available with bridge funds for additional requirements. We are grateful for their adaptability and generosity to sponsor the COVID-19 relief initiative, organisational development and wellness programmes.



Australian Aid is an international aid organisation of the Australian Government that aims to promote prosperity and enhance stability around the world. We are thankful for their generous support to various programmes of Operation PeaceMaker and Operation Red Alert.



Our Safe Village Program, developed based on behavioural research findings to educate and empower rural communities has been awarded a prestigious grant by the Global Fund to End Slavery. The fund helped us to build anti-trafficking behavioural change communications campaigns in 28 villages across three locations in the state of West Bengal.



Breakthrough's 'Bell Bajao' launched in India in 2008. It is a cultural and media campaign that calls on men and boys to take a stand against domestic violence. We have partnered with Breakthrough to translate the advertisements into 17 different Indian languages and distribute them across the country through our grassroots programmes, social media and television.



International Justice Mission (IJM) is a global organisation that protects the most vulnerable from violence and oppression irrespective of their gender, community, caste, race and ethnicity. IJM is a strategic partner of Operation Red Alert of My Choices Foundation.



Operation PeaceMaker of My Choices Foundation is a training partner for Bharosa, the Hyderabad Police support centre for women and children who are affected by violence in the family, community and the workplace.



Invisible Scars is a collaborative venture of two NGOs - SAMVAD Advocacy (Samvad Society for Advocacy & Development) and Good Universe. We have partnered with Invisible Scars to help women and men facing abuse.



My Choices Foundation has partnered with CHILDLINE 1098 to run the 24-hour operational help desk at Nampally Railway Station in Hyderabad through our Anti-trafficking arm, Operation Red Alert. The CHILDLINE helpdesk is a joint initiative of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development and the Indian Railways.



With the support and contributions of the Netherlands Embassy, we worked to deal with vulnerability and misinformation during the COVID-19 lockdown. The three types of interventions are providing essential food supplies to vulnerable communities, providing assistance and support for domestic and sexual abuse victims and raising awareness on COVID19 safety.



Dentsu Impact (A dentsuMB Company), a creative arm of the Dentsu is led by experts in creative, strategic planning and account management with a single-minded objective of creating impact. We partner with Dentsu to launch creative multimedia campaigns to create awareness on child labour, sex trafficking and domestic violence.



Hatch has partnered with My Choices Foundation in 2021 to provide financial support for the Lotus Safe Home and The Safe Village Program, as well as crucial support for covid related activities. We are deeply thankful for their continuous support navigating Covid, as well as support of our programs.



Final Mile is a knowledge-intensive organization, but with the clear intent of applying knowledge to solve real-world problems by developing an integrated understanding of several related fields, including cognitive neuroscience, psychology, classical economics, and design.



We have developed a relationship quiz in partnership with our technology partner Merlynn Intelligence Technologies. Titled 'Are You in a Healthy Relationship', our quiz focuses on the health of a relationship in four core areas: physical, emotional, economic and sexual. The quiz consists of yes or no questions and is completely confidential. This quiz was shared with our employees to help them have a deeper understanding of their relationship and to seek assistance if required. The link to the Quiz can be found here.



The Freedom Collaborative is a platform for and by the global anti-trafficking community to connect partners, provide information and share knowledge. My Choices Foundation is proud to be a regional partner, supporting Freedom Collaborative to connect Indian NGOs with the platform and all the resources it offers.



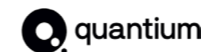
NILA is committed to providing underserved women and children with expert legal aid, counsel and action at rates affordable to each client. Operation PeaceMaker partners with NILA to provide professional legal support to Operation PeaceMaker cases with specialised needs. NILA helps Operation PeaceMakers allocate lawyers on a basis to specific cases, utilising their network of pro-bono lawyers.



We worked with Oculus to create a Virtual Reality film on human trafficking in India. The film was showcased at the Sundance Film Festival in 2017 and became an official selection at the SXSW Film Festival where it made its world premiere.



We are truly grateful and honoured to Opportunity International Australia for their continued support of the selected programmes of My Choices Foundation. Film Festival in 2017 and became an official selection at the SXSW Film Festival where it made its world premiere.



We have partnered with Quantum India to build a data analytics tool, the Vulnerability Mapping Tool, to map villages highly prone to trafficking in rural parts of India where girls and young women are most at risk. Quantum also helped us with a custom-built management system, SafeTracker which enabled core workers in the field to instantly upload data via mobile phone app. We are humbled to receive the help of Quantum to use data in the fight against sex trafficking.



Safa introduces urban women who have not received formal education to sustainable livelihoods and supports them in the education of their children through an area-based community model. We have partnered with SAFA to operate an Operation PeaceMaker training centre in their community which is marginalized.



Sisense seeks to drive meaningful change in the world by making it easy for businesses to infuse analytics everywhere and help people be better at their jobs. Sisense provides an AI-driven platform that any company can use to drive better, faster decisions, for their business and their customers.



The Sall Family Foundation, through Namati, supports My Choices Foundation initiatives to address the issue of child sexual abuse in India through intervention and prevention by training and capacity building of legal assistants who deal with child sexual abuse issues.



We have partnered with the Hyderabad Police to serve as counsellors in domestic violence cases. The impact made by our counsellors involves informing women on all the options available to them to ensure the best decision for their specific situation. The Hyderabad Police also refers cases to us which require legal assistance and our legal team follows up on these cases.



Tharuni is a non-governmental organisation that works for the development of adolescent girls, women and elderly people. We have partnered with Tharuni to expand our SuperSmart Shakti Girls' Safety Network and Asli Champions Boys' Safety Network programmes for adolescent girls and boys.



The William H. Donner Foundation, Inc. supports the Lotus Safe Home which provides shelter to victims of domestic violence. My Choices Foundation opened the Lotus Safe Home in 2018 to help transform victims of domestic violence into survivors of domestic violence.



The Macquarie Group Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the Macquarie Group and provides support to hundreds of community organisations globally each year through financial support, volunteering and skills sharing. Macquarie provides specific support to two counselling centres of My Choices Foundation.



In partnership with the US Consulate, we aim to raise awareness on human trafficking in the South Indian states, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, using community radio stations.



Vihaan works at the grassroots to fight human trafficking and provides survivors access to legal support leading to justice. My Choices Foundation refers survivors of trafficking, violence and exploitation to Vihaan to start the legal procedure of fighting the injustice they endured.



Wandé is an ethical fashion brand, revolutionizing the fashion industry beginning with the supply chain, and setting a standard for ethical and sustainable fashion. They believe that the fashion industry and the tourism industry involve exploitative labor and unsustainable practices, and working to change that.



Women's Education Project equips young and vulnerable women with skills to discover their voice and thrive in rewarding careers. My Choices Foundation with the Women's Education Project since 2016 to expand our Shakti and Asli programs to empower adolescent girls and boys.



Xilinx, a semiconductor manufacturing company provides support to our antitrafficking arm, Operation Red Alert of My Choices Foundation. Through their continuous support, we are able to conduct Safe Village Programs in the state of Telangana, India.



Zariya is a free service that addresses survivors' legal and counselling needs. With their secure website and reputable partners, Zariya provides women with access to such provisions where they can relatively anonymously file a report and connect with an appropriate advisor in a time-sensitive manner. Operation PeaceMaker currently handles and makes referrals on all cases that come through the Zariya system.



My Choices Foundation is committed to working with children, families and communities to end sex trafficking and stop domestic violence by providing choices to live lives free of abuse, violence and exploitation. My Choices Foundation serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.

Contact: info@mychoicesfoundation.org

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