



3B AND 3S

THE CROSSING OVER

Understanding of the Issues, Dynamics and Concerns of
Migrant Female Sex Workers at the Destination and Source



3B AND 3S

THE CROSSING OVER

"3B and 3S, The Crossing Over"- *Understanding of the Issues, Dynamics and Concerns of Migrant Female Sex Workers at the Destination and Source*. This report has been published by Director, Communications, Karnataka Health Promotion Trust, IT/ BT Park, Rajajinagar Industrial Area, Rajajinagar, Bangalore- 560044.

Year of publication : 2010

Copy right : KHPT

Publisher : Karnataka Health Promotion Trust
#1-4, 5th floor, IT/ BT Park, Rajajinagar Industrial Area
Behind KSSIDC Admin. Office, Rajajinagar, Bangalore- 560044
Phone: 080-40400200, Fax: 080-40400300
www.khpt.org

Study team : Ashok Shetty, Mallika Biddappa, Mohan HL

Support : Balasubramanya KV, James Blanchard
Raghavendra T, Satya, Senthil Murugan
Stephen Moses, Parinita Bhattacharjee

Acknowledgements : This document would not have been possible without the support of the community women at both the source and destination who boldly shared their lives with us. Their names are not disclosed for maintaining confidentiality. We also thank the following organizations and individuals who supported us in the study as well as in preparing this document:

Family Health International (FHI), Mumbai
ASHA Mahila Sangha, Mumbai
PATHFINDER, Pune
Niramay Arogya Dham, Sholapur
Chaitanya Mahila Sangha, Bagalkot
Payana team
Hemanth M
Priya Pillai
Rajesh
Shalini Bhattacharya

Layout and Design : Artwist Design Lab, Bengaluru

Photo Courtesy : Balasubramanya KV

PREFACE

The South Indian state of Karnataka has substantial HIV epidemic and ranks within the top five states in India in HIV prevalence. The epidemic in Karnataka is highly heterogeneous with the highest HIV prevalence found in a region comprising of three districts in northern Karnataka: Belgaum, Bagalkot and Bijapur. The reasons for this epidemic pattern are not fully known. However, one of the influencing factors ascertained is the migration of large populations of FSWs, predominantly the Devadasis of this region to work in the brothels of the distant large cities of Maharashtra such as Mumbai and Pune and closer towns neighbouring the state boundary.

Therefore, working with migrant FSWs, specifically addressing factors that increases their vulnerability is an important part of our intervention in this region. Efforts to effectively link this group to the project activities/ services have been on since 2005. We learnt that the issues that emerged with the migrant FSW group are very distinct from those of resident FSW. Therefore, adapting our existing strategies to contact, mobilize or organize the women here would have been futile.

The need to develop specific strategies to work with them was realised with time. Quantitative information was made available through studies and research projects that gave a fairly good understanding on the scale and patterns of migration, key stakeholders involved and possible areas of focus. Nonetheless, to support the intervention, lay down the specifics of our work with this group and effectively plan and design an intervention program, we conducted a qualitative study spanning over a 6 month period. As a part of the qualitative study we engaged in a thorough process with the migrant female sex workers to elicit the ground realities.

The qualitative study is an effort to gain an authentic and in depth understanding of the lives of the migrant FSW, the dynamics within migration, factors that drive these women to this life, the issues and challenges that envelops them at various stages of their life, right from childhood to the end of their professional life. The study findings offers insights that could support the intervention effectively, provide possible explanation to questions that quantitative data on its own falls short of answering. In addition the study also helps gain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of migration. 3B and 3S- The Crossing Over, is an account of what we did as part of this study, how we did it and the outcomes that emerged out of it.

KHPT Study Team

ABBREVIATIONS

- 3B - Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur
- 3S - Satara, Sholapur, Sangli
- BCC - Behaviour Change Communication
- BPL - Below Poverty Line
- CBO - Community Based Organisation
- FSW - Female Sex Worker
- HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- KHPT - Karnataka Health Promotion Trust
- LSE - Life Skills Education
- MFSW - Migrant Female Sex Worker
- NGO - Non Governmental Organisation



CONTENTS

1. BACK GROUND	6
2. STUDY DESIGN.....	8
3. PROCESS	9
4. KEY FINDINGS AND STRATEGIES	12
1. Stage 1- Adolescents.....	12
2. Stage 2- Post dedication to initiation into sex work.....	16
3. Stage 3- At the destination	20
4. Stage 4- At the source.....	26
5. CONCLUSION..	29
6. ANNEXURE	30
1. Case studies from the destination and source.....	30
2. Independent case studies at source	74
3. Case study analysis framework	84
4. Workshop outcome	105
i. Workshop overview.....	105
ii. Play synopses.	106
II. Experience sharing during workshop	109



MIGRATION STUDY REPORT

"At every stage of our lives, we have faced struggles and challenges with nobody to help us. We have been used by our own families, by the ones we love, only to be cast out. If there is anybody who can change our lives, it is we ourselves. We are the ones who need to decide that this change is needed,"- Renukavva, Bagalkot

BACKGROUND

The South Indian state of Karnataka has a substantial HIV epidemic and ranks within the top five states in India in HIV prevalence. However, the epidemic in Karnataka is highly heterogeneous with the highest HIV prevalence found in a region comprised of three districts in northern Karnataka: Belgaum, Bagalkot and Bijapur. Data from the sentinel surveillance among antenatal clinic attenders and a population-based survey have indicated that in the past several years the HIV prevalence has exceeded 3%, with those living in rural areas having as high or higher prevalence than urban dwellers.

There are two particular features of sex work in this region that are relevant to HIV transmission and prevention programs. First, since the Devadasi tradition is largely embedded into the rural socio-cultural life, many of the FSWs in this region live and practice sex work in rural areas. Secondly, over several generations, a pattern has developed whereby FSWs from villages in these districts have migrated to towns and cities in the state of Maharashtra. Historically, large populations of FSWs from northern Karnataka have worked in brothels in large cities of Maharashtra such as Mumbai and Pune. They have also worked in the brothels in smaller and closer towns and cities to the north of the state boundary.



A mapping conducted in 2004 in the 3B villages estimated 3277 sex workers who migrated from the villages. This contributed to 19% of the estimated urban and rural sex workers in these districts. The mapping and reverse mapping done at destination sites revealed the volume of Karnataka sex workers in these regions. There were 604 FSWs from Karnataka in the Bhiwandi red light areas, 871 FSWs from Karnataka in Pune and 127 in Sholapur.

With this background, the Payana Project, a knowledge building initiative funded by Avahan was initiated in a defined geographic area of Northern Karnataka and Southern Maharashtra. The project goal was to increase knowledge about the patterns of migration of rural FSWs and the impact of this migration on HIV risk and vulnerability and transmission dynamics. This project worked in the 3 B*, 3 S* districts and the cities of Mumbai and Pune. The aim was to reduce the migration-related risk and vulnerability of migrant rural female sex workers (FSW) from northern Karnataka at both migration source and destination locations. This report is of a cohort study of approximately 1,500 FSWs from villages in the three districts of northern Karnataka: Belgaum, Bagalkot and Bijapur.

The Payana project reveals that:

- Nearly half of the total migrants move to Sangli (20%), Bombay (14%) and Pune (14%). Around 15% of them move to other destination places like Goa (7%) and Bhiwandi (7%). About 27% of the women also move within the state to other districts including 3 Bs.
- Large proportion of migrating sex workers are in the age group of 25- 29 years. However, destinations like Pune (19%), Sangli/Miraj (21%) and Mumbai/Bhiwandi (17%) also received young (below 25 years) migrant sex workers.

- Similarly, majority of sex workers migrating from the 3B districts belong to the age group of 25 – 29 years. However, sex workers from Bagalkot (21%) migrate at a younger age.
- The mean duration of stay in the destination place is 5.8 years in Bombay/Bhiwandi, 4.7 years in Sangli/Miraj and 4.5 years in Pune. However, an interesting observation is that 24% of sex workers in Pune and Goa, 22% in Bombay/Bhiwandi and 19% in Sangli/ Miraj have been in the destination sites for less than 1 year. This means that during the last one year, new sex workers have gone to the destination sites.
- The most frequently visited destination sites are Hanuman thikali (26%), Kirdar and Worli (4%) in Mumbai, Gokulnagar (52%), Swarup Talkies (16%) and Prem Nagar(11%) in Sangli and Budhwar Pet(36%) and Murgi Galli (7%) in Pune.

With these findings, the migration project initiated several activities with the migrants and their families at destination and source respectively. All the efforts were directed towards gaining an improved understanding of the migration dynamics at various levels. This was in turn expected to strengthen and guide the project's work in this area.

With four years experience of the project, corroborated by subsequent discussions with the project staff as well as migrant FSWs, there emerged a need to develop a specific communication strategy for the migrant FSWs at both destination and source. Gaining an in-depth understanding of their real situations, needs, desires and challenges was important before any kind of intervention strategy could be implemented. The team at KHPT, in its attempts to develop a clearly defined strategy to work with them, conducted a need assessment study to gain this understanding.

* Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur

* Satara, Sholapur, Sangli



STUDY DESIGN

Over a span of 5 months, the team engaged in a thorough process, to elicit the realities of the lives of sex workers who migrate. The purpose was to understand the actual dynamics that surround migration as a practice.

The objectives:

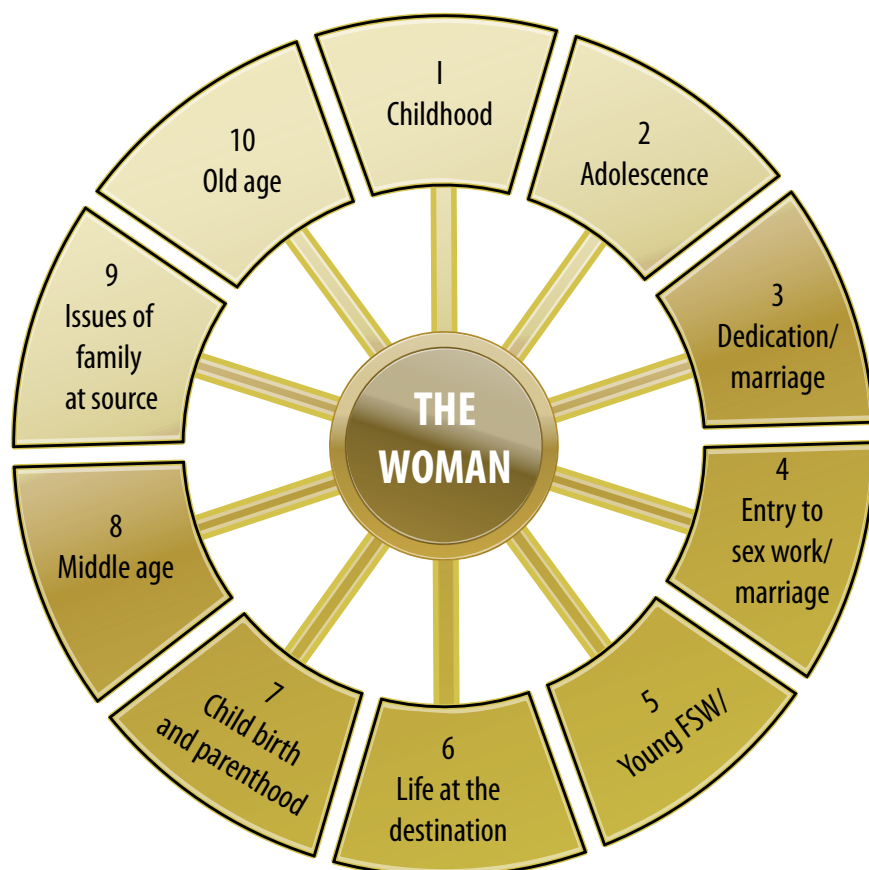
- To identify issues and concerns of the migrant FSWs, encompassing all aspects of their lives, across various levels of their sustenance, so as to gain a broader perspective on their vulnerability to HIV.
- To evolve a deeper understanding of their lives, struggles, challenges, hopes and fears and to explore the community's key priorities.
- To enable them to think constructively and collectively, in terms of small but significant steps that they can take or facilitate others to take for engaging with the community to bring about long term impact.

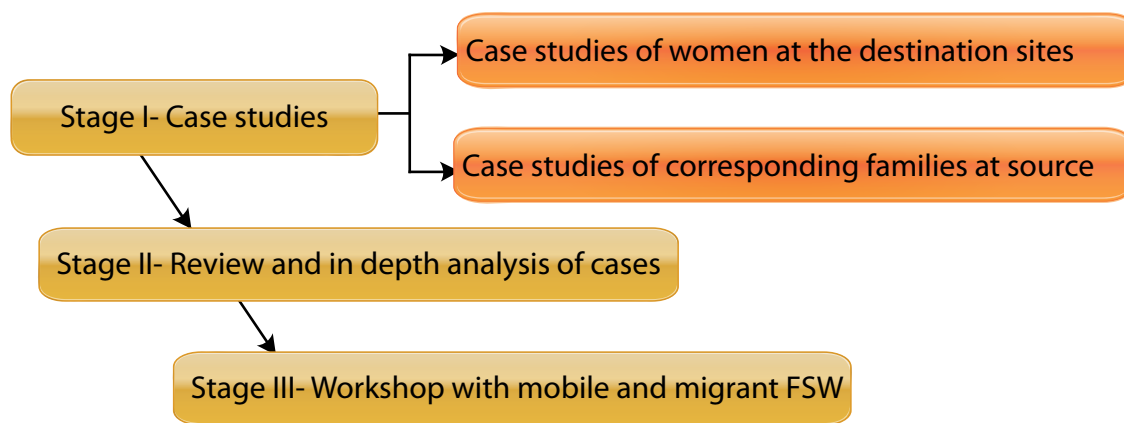
Through the entire study, the women were not viewed as mere sex workers but as valuable individuals with their own unique set of experiences. This helped us to carefully consider every issue that cut across all important stages of their lives as shown below. At every stage, we also explored the roles of the other key stakeholders and influences that operate in a girl's life like parents, siblings, immediate family members, friends and other key persons in the village. We tried to understand the impact of relationships the women share within the families that, very often, have had an overriding control over her decisions and choices

Throughout the workshop, we adhered to fundamental values of being receptive listeners and allowed no pre-conceived perceptions to influence or disrupt the community's opinions, thoughts and judgments. Every discussion was influenced by the belief in the women's inherent and matchless ability to provide genuine information of their lives and be effective change agents. The team members who were involved in the process have had the experience of working with sex workers. This ensured minimal room for prejudices or any gaps in communication. No

questionnaires or systematic formats were used to collect information. Our focus remained on tapping into their real lives and learning from them.

Three stages marked this process which in the end added to the understanding of migration and the issues of migrants.





PROCESS

Stage I- Case studies

Interviews of the women at the destination: The team identified 30 migrant FSWs at destination sites like Bhiwandi, Pune, Mumbai and Sholapur. In-depth individual interviews of these women resulted in 30 case studies containing information about their lives, families, profession, interests and challenges. The focus was on young migrant FSWs (25-35 years) from the 3B districts.

The interviews of the women at the destination resulted in 30 case studies offering insights into their lives at the brothels.

"I'm 42 years old and am a Devadasi. I came to Mumbai when I was 15 years of age, after my father fell really sick. My mother then made me Devadasi. I came straight here to Kamatipura as a child and stayed in a brothel run by my aunt. When I first came here, the rate was only Rs.5 or Rs.10 per client. I have never really known happiness all my life"- an FSW in a brothel

Interviews of families at the source: The team went back to the families of the women who were interviewed. Families of eight women were tracked at the source along with eight other families who had sent women for sex work to the destination. These interviews with the family members offered insights into some aspects of their life at the source. We gained a fair understanding on:

- ◆ The reasons why the women were dedicated as Devadasis
- ◆ The key influencers in the family
- ◆ The state of finances
- ◆ The extent of support a woman has from the family
- ◆ The situation with regard to their children and
- ◆ Other socio economic realities of the village

This exercise resulted in 30 completed case studies from the destination and 16 from the source.

See ANNEXURE 2 for the case studies from the Source

Stage II- Review and in depth analysis of cases

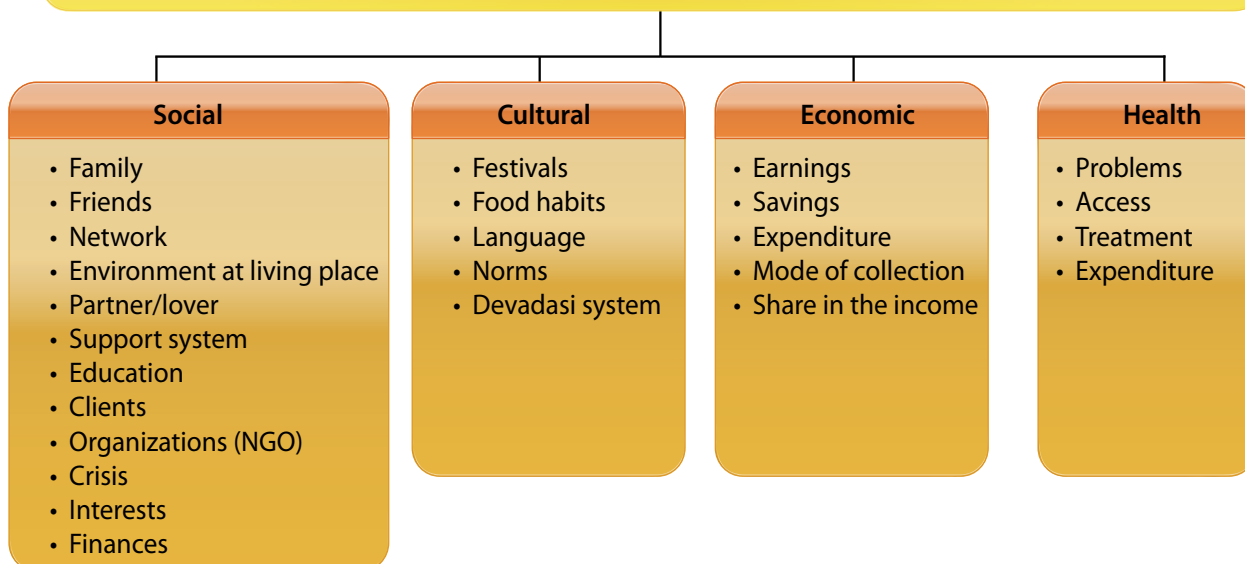
In the next stage of the process, the team analyzed the case studies, individually first, to identify common situations, issues, needs/ desires and generated a matrix. On a further holistic analysis, common concerns underlying all the case studies emerged.

On scanning the lives at the destination, we found that:

- ◆ Most women were initiated into sex-work as Devadasis.
- ◆ Almost all have large family dependent on them for survival.
- ◆ They live away from children who are left to be cared for by the family in the village.
- ◆ Most of them lack support from their parent family.
- ◆ Most of them experience a sense of isolation and lack of support in the destination.
- ◆ Most do not have assets or social entitlements or a bank account.



The Interview framework covered the following broad areas



- ♦ Very few save for themselves. Formal institutional savings among them is negligible.
- ♦ Most transfer money to the family through others or personally during their visits.
- ♦ Very few of them are part of a community organization/SHG or any support group.
- ♦ There is a near universal desire to care for their children – education, jobs and marriage.
- ♦ Most of them want to own assets.
- ♦ They want support to interact with their family and children.
- ♦ A significant number desire to quit sex work and return back to their village once their children settle or once they have saved enough money.

Certain common threads were weaved out of the interviews with family members as well - the families were often very large and very poor; they were ignorant of the situation at the destination sites; many of the families were dependant on the FSW for meeting their financial needs and most of them poorly managed their earnings.

"We made them Devadasis out of ignorance. Yes, they earn for us but sometimes I feel I should have got my daughter married to somebody. What place does a "prostitute" have after all?" - A mother of an MFSW.

This analysis offered a basis and a direction for evolving a plan and strategy. The approach adopted was not to look at the exercise from a risk reduction but from a vulnerability reduction perspective.

See ANNEXURE 3 for the case studies analysis matrix

Stage III- Workshop with mobile and migrant FSW

Vetting these issues and hearing it from the horse's mouth was essential before any planning could be done. We conducted a 5 day workshop with 18 migrant and mobile FSWs. It was an informal and intensive process that engaged them and provided them with the space to come out openly about their issues. The process enabled them to, critically think and evaluate their experiences to arrive at a clear consensus on what the core aspects of our work with them could be.

The workshop was not bound by a stringent timeframe or a pre-decided agenda. The objective was to provide an environment that would stimulate the women to reflect and share aspects of their life that perhaps they have never shared before. The choice of the venue for the workshop was also carefully decided to suit this purpose. ADIMA, a cultural centre developed and built on the principles of equality and freedom of expression and belief in the strength of the common man was chosen.



The workshop helped the women to trace their own lives. While they took on the role of the facilitators, we listened. The first day was spent by the women to explore ADIMA and share their experiences of the place.

"I like that huge rock that is being balanced so well on just four tiny rocks. It is really amusing!" exclaimed **Radha** after going around the place.

The initial discussions with the women were aimed at making them critically think about what has been said/ assumed/ believed and concluded about their positions, realities, status and their very existence.

The sessions were directed towards bringing out real issues through a variety of methods such as the use of drawings/art, role plays etc. The women were offered colours and paint and asked to draw anything that they wished to. They gradually moved from not

We in the project call you sex workers. Does that describe you? Some of us call you sisters; does that really make you our sisters? What do you want to be called? Who are you?

wanting to draw to drawing general pictures like flowers, flag, children and then drawing out situations in their life that left bad memories.

"I am holding a pen for the first time in my life. I never thought I can do this" said 30 year old **Dalavva**

Most drawings reflected their experiences - bad and good - unfulfilled desires, hopes and fears. The women went on to explain these drawings which offered an open door to share some intense and real experiences.

"I have never shared these things that I went through as a young girl with anybody before this. I am being absolutely open here with you all"; says **Renuka** in tears.

Parallel to the drawing exercises, the women were also engaged in making a play of their own. After the catalytic drawing sessions where they found space for expression, the women met in groups to discuss their play. The play progressed in depth and genuineness as the process continued.



Play highlights [version 1] - Migrant FSW goes to a brothel in Mumbai- contracts HIV- is neglected by the gharwali- comes back to her village- meets some project persons- goes for testing- young girl dies shortly after her positive status is revealed- family grieves- regrets decision of sending her to Mumbai- mother of the girl blames herself

Play highlights [version 2]- The migrant FSW contracts HIV- the family is ignorant- they go to a quack for cure- a drunkard father- a brother who is a bonded labourer- an exploitative village gowda - girl dies- family continues in stark poverty.

Play highlights [version 3]- Girl made a Devadasi to get brother married- mother takes the initiative for dedication- finds support from other women in the village- a rich gowda is the first to initiate her into sex work- forced to migrate for more money- lured by a neighbour girl- difficulties in the brothel- takes to drinking- lover in the village leaves her- gets cheated by lover in the destination- family pressurizes her for money- two brothers are lazy- one drinks and the other demands money from her- is alone when ill- family gives up on her- leaves her to die

As the plays progressed, newer characters were introduced & deeper realities reflected. The plays got built eventually and moved from being somebody else's story to their own. It brought out elements that were later discussed in depth with the women. From it emerged several findings

From a viewer's perspective, the first play's underlying message was the following: The women know nothing about HIV and take no precautions at the destination. The field staff helps them get tested and link them to available services. The family is grateful for that. The second play brought out elements of sacrifice, hopelessness, ignorance, wrong beliefs,

misconceptions, ill treatment, caste differences that were absent in the earlier play. The plays evolved with each passing day and the final play had all real life factors added in. It was an authentic reflection of the women's life. It was what they wanted to show us and not what we wanted to see.

At the end of the workshop, several aspects of the lives of migrant FSWs were revealed directly and indirectly through the processes the women were engaged in. These proved to be pegs for discussion. At the end of the workshop, key issues, concerns and possible strategies emerged from the women.

See ANNEXURE 4 for Workshop overview & play synopses

"In the first play, we showed you what you wanted and in the last play we showed you what really happens in our lives"- Prema, MFSW

KEY FINDINGS AND STRATEGIES

At the end of the entire exercise, several issues and ground level realities surfaced. More focused discussions that revolved around possible strategies to work with the women took place.

Below, the key findings and strategies are being grouped into distinct areas that mark four stages of the women's lives. Interventions will revolve around issues that come into view in each of these stages.

STAGE 1- ADOLESCENTS

The women shared their experiences of what each one's adolescence entailed. From it, the key issues were identified which would have a direct or indirect impact on their ability to face situations that their life as Devadasis or sex workers throw up in the future.

Issues:

- ♦ **Early/ child marriage-** Getting girls married at a very young age (10-15 years) is more a norm than an exception in most districts of northern



Karnataka. For the girls, at that moment, marriage is a matter of excitement. However, they are unprepared mentally, physically and emotionally for the responsibilities that marriage brings with it. Many girls are exposed to violence within marriage, drunkard husbands and situations that drives them into sex work.

"I got married about 3 years ago and one of the persons I knew remotely lied to my husband that I am going out with him. My husband left me and has married somebody else. Now I have to fend for my family and myself."- Sudha, 18 years old.

The women shared that in most cases the girls were forced into marriage. They fail to develop any natural liking for their husbands and instead develop feelings of attraction towards other men. Many a times, these men publicize their relationship with the women that negatively affect the girls. They neither earn respect from their husbands or from these other men in their lives.

The case studies of few women also revealed that apart from those that were dedicated to be Devadasis, women who were married young and subsequently separated from their husbands were also driven into sex work. **Renukavva, an old sex worker says,** *"In my village there are many women who were married young but have had bad marriages. They are lured into sex work saying 'you are still young and beautiful and just one or two clients a day will fetch you a lot of money instead of having to struggle with daily wage labour'".*

"I was exposed to unimaginable violence from my husband. I get disgusted when I think about men. My husband was a cruel man. He has burnt me and sexually abused me many times. My parents also did not stand by me. It was for this man they made me give up school and got me married. I almost lost my mental balance at a young age because of being driven into marriage"- Renuka, MFSW

- ♦ **Children in the family as a means of economic gain:-** In most cases, especially in big families the

children are considered as a means of additional financial support. Hence, the school drop out rate is high and the priority among parents is to find possible ways to have the children earn for the family. While the boys are often given on loan for bonded labor, the girls are sent for sex work.

"Our condition demands that the children work. How else can we support the family? Even though our old bones are giving way, we too still work in the fields. We have no choice", says Mareva and Madevappa, Parents of MFSW, Bilgi Taluk

- ♦ **Devadasi dedication apart, families evolve ways to initiate girls into sex work-** The Devadasi tradition is practiced within the Madar community. However, the women shared that people from other communities have also been influenced by this tradition. "There are cases where secretly people from other communities force girls in the family to sleep with a man for a huge amount of money and then begin to use her to earn through sex work." The women also state that the mother plays a major role in such decisions taken for the girls.
- ♦ **Girls have no decision making power or freedom of expression-** In 95 % of the cases the fact remains true that somebody else decide for the girls in the family. This emerged from the plays, the case studies and discussion during the workshops. The girls are the most vulnerable and silent bearers of what they claim to be 'their fate'. They are dedicated to be Devadasis without their consent; are made to 'sacrifice their lives for the others in the family' and are falsely epitomized as 'lucky girls'. They are not given any room for expression of their emotional trauma or even their desires for life. *"I used to love going to school. One day, when I was taking the goats to graze, I left them in the field and ran to school to watch the flag hoisting. My mother dragged me from there, beat me and said I don't deserve to be in school. She slapped me and that was the last day I went back to school"- Renuka, MFSW*



This experience of the girls has left them bitter with no confidence in themselves. Often, absence of room for emotional expression is responsible for getting them entangled in wrong relationships at a young age where they are further exploited. Such experiences in the women's lives as young girls are projected even in their actions and decisions as they grow older.

"I have two small daughters and a son who is 6 months old. I love my son. He has brought joy to my life. I hate the fact that I have daughters. I beat them up and cannot stand their behaviour. Why should I love the girls? Their life is anyways destined for misery"- Prema adds in one of the discussions during the workshop.

Analyses of the case studies reveal that creating support systems, nurturing interests and a sense of purpose among the women is therefore necessary. 'Sources of comfort' is what the women seek.

- ♦ **The lifestyles of migrant sex workers in the village- a motivation to earn-** Many times, young girls tend to get carried away by the 'image' of someone from their village who has returned from a big city like Mumbai or Pune with a new mobile phone, new make up set and interesting 'stories' about life in the city. Girls become adamant to pursue and seek money. This in-turn makes them gullible for initiation into sex work. They have no information or understanding of the real challenges and struggles of the FSWs in the cities.

"The girls in the neighbourhood often flock around the women who have returned from the city. They love to listen to their stories and often make these women their role models", Renuka, Migration peer.

- ♦ **Lack of education and school drop-outs-** Majority of the women interviewed are school drop outs and illiterate. To this date, it remains true of the girls in the village. Marriage or sex work often pressurizes the girls to drop out of school. Some of the villagers claim the situation to be far better

than what it used to be earlier. *"Earlier we used to see only boys in our village school. Either the long distances or lack of money would discourage family members from sending the girls to school but now this is slowly changing"- Marewa, a grandmother of an MFSW.* Though cases of distinct discrimination are hard to point out, in all cases the preference for boys education is higher than for girls.

- ♦ **No respect for their feelings and a high level of control exerted by others-** The thoughts and opinions of adolescents find no respect or space in the families. Members of the family exert high influence especially on the girl's future. *"Often the older brothers in the family decide what the girl should do, what she shouldn't, who she can marry etc," says a MFSW in the workshop.*
- ♦ **Peer pressure and lack of correct information-** Among the adolescents, there is great pressure from the peers to act and behave in a certain way. Misconceptions and partial truths often misguide them into decisions and actions that can have severe consequences on their lives and health. There is an obvious absence of an information source or a redressal mechanism to support and assist this group. Girls often succumb to misconceptions. Discussions during the workshop revealed that unwanted pregnancies, rape by boys of her age, exploitation by rich older men in the village are a common result of their ignorance.
- ♦ **Home based sex work and its environment as an influencing factor-** Women also suggested that girls who are daughters of sex workers are most likely to be influenced by that life. They closely observe the interactions of their mother with clients/ lovers and partners. *"The girls take on the role of an assistant to the mother. She runs errands like bringing water/ juice for the client, buying her mother flowers for the night etc," adds Rekha.*



During many instances, clients build good rapport with the daughters of the sex workers and give them attention which the girls enjoy. This encourages the girls to step into sex work. The relationship between the lovers and their mothers motivates them to look for 'love', most times in the wrong places. The interviews with women in the destination reveal that many of the MFSWs are influenced by their own mothers who were also sex workers. This obviously points to the influencing environment of their upbringing.

- ♦ **Girls under pressure to be "responsible"**- The families have no qualms in accepting that they want the women to earn for them. The girls at their young age have no understanding of the extent to which she should/can take responsibility of the family. They

are misinformed about the thin line between the family's dependence and exploitation. The women while sharing at the workshop confessed that their own mothers would expect all the work to be done by the girl with minimal expectation from the boys. Boys have the right to be 'comfortable' while the girls have to be 'suppliers' of this comfort. This was portrayed through the plays, in which, the women showed the gender divide burdening women to shoulder responsibilities far beyond their ability.

The above issues mark the adolescent lives of girls in the village based on the first hand accounts of the women. The key players around these issues include family members especially the mother and peer groups.



Core issues:

With this background, certain core issues of this group can be identified as:

1. No Space for expression
2. Absence of mechanism for information sharing
3. Detrimental peer group influences
4. No awareness on rights and responsibilities
5. Poor self esteem
6. Lack of knowledge amongst them and their families
7. Reservations and fallacies in their beliefs and attitudes
8. Unsupportive environment

STAGE 2 – THE PERIOD BETWEEN DEVADASI DEDICATION TO INITIATION OF SEX WORK

This is an important phase in the lives of MFSWs. The reason being, important decisions that would decide the future course of their lives are made in this stage. Several 'outside individuals' and 'influencing agents' enter into their lives who play key roles in guiding the actions of these women.

Issues:

- ♦ **Emotional and mental trauma of women-** Soon after dedication, once the girl attains maturity, she is considered 'ready' for sex work. The girls have no understanding of what to expect and are often exposed to great emotional and mental trauma of having to enter into a sexual relationship, most often, out of pressure. Young girls often view the dedication as an exciting event and wait in anticipation of similar life experiences only to be rudely disappointed. This is a stage where reality strikes them.

Most of the Devadasi women who were interviewed share their experience of initiation into sex work as a "traumatic" one. *"When I was made a Devadasi, I never knew that this is what I am supposed to be doing. I was a little girl. What did I know then? Only*

later the older women in my family told me that this is what my life will be like"- Yellavva, Bhiwandi.

Their initial experiences often leave deep scars and make the women feel that they have no option but resign to a life of rejection and hopelessness. *"Did I choose to become a Devadasi? No, I did not. What value does my life have? Nothing. This is what I am destined to be and I don't deserve anything better. Education and honour are not for women like me", Sunitha, Bhiwandi.*

- ♦ **No support mechanism-** At this stage, the entire family looks to the woman as a feasible source of financial support. Individuals who are even remotely linked to her end up taking advantage of her state. She falls prey to false promises and false 'love'. She has minimal support mechanisms, either from the family siblings or peers.

The play that the women enacted revealed this truth clearly. The girl once made a Devadasi, has no support whatsoever to bear the burdens of her life. *"If my own mother has made me what I am, then what support do you expect me to have from others?"* adds Dalavva, Bhiwandi.

It is in this stage that most of the women are exposed to initial instances of abuse, both physical and sexual. Case studies reveal that these are from clients or gharwalis who begin to exploit them for sex and money respectively. Therefore, the presence of support systems to help women is significant.

In fact, in many cases, as the analysis of the case studies reveal, bad treatment is meted out to women who go back to their homes from the destination sites.

- ♦ **Young Devadasis exposed to high risk behaviour during initiation into sex work-** Devadasis are made to go through the 'first night ceremony' or Seragu Hidisodu at the source. It is a ritual where a potentially 'viable' client is identified by the elders of the family who will sleep with the girl for the



Suggested Strategies:

- 1. Adolescent volunteer groups:** Building adolescent girls volunteer groups for villages and engaging them in LSE. This group will be strengthened regularly. Ideological and cultural tools for this group will be designed that will help build their perspective and engage them in critical thinking. This group needs to be built up as a proactive body that knows and understands issues of adolescents. This would be done through broad intensive trainings rooted in their specific cultural contexts. These volunteers (and not staff who are outsiders) will further play the role of mobilizers in their village among the girls of their age. The group felt that it is important to involve all the adolescence girls (school going and out of school) in this process.
- 2. Phone in facilities:** As of now, the help line is only expected to receive calls from sex workers, but this design and approach needs to be changed if the community should take ownership of and trust this system. The groups suggested that the helpline can be used to hear out the issues of adolescents and provide them with day to day support. The helpline can be publicized through the adolescent groups and sensitive and aware counsellors should be available over the helpline.
- 3. Addressing needs of drop outs:** Planning programmes for drop outs while working closely with 'SARVA SHIKSHANA ABHIYANA' a government of Karnataka Program for education. Night schools for adolescent girls to be opened in tie up with the village panchayat. Peer motivation to be used as a strategy to link the adolescents to these schools.

first time. This marks her initiation into sex work. As shared by the women, the clients are chosen on the basis of just one criterion - the amount of money they pay. Men of all sorts engage in this ceremony. Case studies and the women's experiences reveal that they could be the village's gowda, very aged men, disabled men and even drunkards.

The main danger in this ceremony is that the girls are exposed to risky sex. They have no decision making power on aspects such as condom usage, age of client etc. The girl is under tremendous pressure to sleep with the man because the family would be paid a huge amount for the night. Most often, these 'first night' ceremonies become a means of HIV transmission. Neither the family nor the girl is educated enough to take the necessary precautions. The women shared that sex may happen multiple times through the night, it would happen without condoms most times and the man is considered to have the freedom to exert all his power over the girl.

"What can we say? If the family decides that this is the man that we need to sleep with, so shall it be. We have to quietly listen because of the money that the man would have promised to the family. For the man it is a thrill and for the girl a misery"- Renuka, recounting her own experience of "seragu hidisodu".

- ♦ **Influence from other MFSWs-** Many case studies and discussions with the women reveal that the most migrant FSWs begin to move to the cities under the influence of women from their neighbourhood or village. They become the means of migration. The already migrated women link the new girls to gharwalis and brothels. Girls with aunts and cousins also dedicated to be Devadasis end up migrating to the same sites as them. This, they feel, can ensure some sort of security. *"First, my older sister came here as a Devadasi. Then after about 5 years of her coming, she brought me too. Ever since then we have been practicing sex work together", Dalavva, Bhiwandi*





“ My sister is a gharwali in Bhiwandi. She took my daughter promising that she will look after my daughter well in her brothel. So I sent her” **Mother of a FSW**, Bilgi, Bagalkot.

Navalgi, a village in Bagalkot narrates the story of more than 30-35 Devadasi women, all who migrated to Pune to a single brothel run by an older Devadasi woman Ranavva of that same village. “Ranavva is like a guardian of all these girls”, adds **Roopa’s grandmother**, Navalgi (Roopa is also a migrant FSW)

- ♦ **Selection of destination, identification of brothel madams-** It is in this stage that decisions about the place the girls will migrate to for sex work, the brothel they shall go to, the person who will accompany her etc are made. It is, therefore, an important stage for correct information to be shared with the girls and family members to avoid making wrong decisions and also to foster greater preparedness for migration. The family makes these decisions for

the girl based on the experiences of earlier cases of migration from the village. Migrating to the same destination sites and brothels as other Devadasis from the family or from the neighborhood is a pattern observed among the MFSW. Analyses of the case studies show that brothels in the destination sites often have girls from the same village as the gharwali of that brothel.

- ♦ **Loans taken over the girl-** In the initial stages of entering into sex work, post ‘seragu hidisodu’, the family takes loans over the girl and this is cited by the women as one of the main reasons for migration. The loans are taken from the gharwali for reasons as varied as brother’s marriage, buying a new piece of land, constructing house, paying off medical bills, surgeries or operations of parents etc. The girl is never consulted before the loans are taken and it is taken for granted that she will pay off the loans through her earnings as a sex worker.

Most women, in their case studies as well as through the workshop, revealed that the male children in their families do not take any serious responsibility for the family. They too are heavily dependant on the girl's earnings and this pressure to provide financial support and pay off loans is burdensome on the young shoulders of a new Devadasi. One of the sex workers at a brothel in Grant road reveals, *"I have been working in this brothel for 15 years and a major chunk of my earnings goes to support my family back in the village. I have not saved up anything for myself. I feel burdened by the irresponsibility of my family members to fend for themselves"*.

This feeling echoes in many of the MFSWs whose families have ruthlessly taken huge loans over them.

- ♦ **Influence of superstitious beliefs among family members and girls-** In this stage, one can see a lot of superstitions playing within the families. Logical decisions are few and far between. Most decisions are made as a result of common local beliefs. Such decisions win the support of the local people. Even Devadasi dedications are usually a result of such beliefs. Despite enough awareness being spread and a law in place, there still are families that believe that Devadasi dedication brings good omen to the family. **Drakshayini**, a young Devadasi from Bilgi says, *"irrespective of knowing how difficult it is for me, my parents want to make even my two younger daughters Devadasis."*

Many families in northern Karnataka observe the Jagat pooje during full moon which only Devadasis conduct. This is believed to bring good fortune to the household. As a result, many families pursue dedication that would ensure at least one Devadasi to perform this pooje. Another common belief among older Devadasis is that if they do not have further dedications in their families, the members of that family could be struck by skin infections. Also, people believe that if a grand-daughter of

a Devadasi is dedicated, she would inherit the grandmother's name and this is a good omen for the family. Such beliefs are common reasons for continuing dedications and are used as ways of convincing the girls for agreeing to dedication.

Core issues:

1. Poor information among newly dedicated Devadasis. (Myths, misconceptions, beliefs, traditions)
2. Ignorance among families on the realities of migration
3. Absence of social and emotional support for girls
4. Poor decision making power among girls
5. No alternative to loans being offered to families
6. Poor BCC with newly dedicated Devadasis for HIV prevention
7. No strong linkages of the women in this stage to the local CBO

Suggested Strategies:

1. **Community/ peer counseling-** The women felt that only migrant FSWs can understand the issues at the source and destination. Hence the peer counselling process was initiated in the migration project. The women agree with this in principle because they feel that only the sharing by a community member of her own experiences at the destination can encourage or motivate another migrant FSW to come out openly about the issues she faces, how she faced/ addressed it etc. Hence, the existing system uses the support of migration peers who establish rapport with other migrants through their own experiences, does needs assessment of the women, makes efforts to link them to available service and conveys



certain important key messages. The women feel that lack of correct information among the new migrants or Devadasis is a serious concern. Hence community/ peer counseling can help her to stay informed and prepared for the possible challenges she could face after dedication or initiation into sex work.

2. **Education and interaction with family-** The women feel that right through the growing up years to dedication and initiation of a girl into sex work, the mother in the family plays the most importance role. She is the one who makes the decisions on what the girl will do, where she will go and who will go with her. Interacting and involving the mother in our intervention with the migrant FSW will help. Working with the families can also encourage the women to participate more in the program.
3. **Information before departure-** Preparing the girls before they leave for the destination sites in terms of sharing with them what to expect, the needs that they may have, the local NGO/ CBO information, the possible challenges they may face etc is important. This is to inculcate a greater preparedness among the women.
4. **Working with old Devadasis and others-** The older Devadasis have a very strong influence over the girl and her family members. The family makes decisions related to the girl's migration only after consulting older Devadasis. They know the networks, the gharwalis, and the issues at the destination and are usually responsible for organizing the 'Seragu Hidisodu' of the newly dedicated girls. These women influence the mother of the girl as well. The women feel that working with old Devadasis can help influence the families positively.

STAGE 3 – AT THE DESTINATION

Issues:

Some of the common issues that the women faced at the destination are as follows:

- ♦ **Gharwali controls and exploits the girls-** One of the most commonly faced issues by the women is the control that the gharwalis exert over the lives at the brothels. Right from the decisions on what they should wear, what they will eat, where they would go, whom they should meet is decided by the gharwalis in most cases. There have been rare examples of 'kind hearted' gharwalis but these are few and far between. For example, Ranavva is an admired and loved gharwali and so is Jaya, a gharwali in Bhiwandi who claims that *"though most gharwalis exploit the girls, I believe in earning justly and giving the girls a comfortable life"*.

Life in the brothel is full of struggles if not uncertainties. Women share that *"once in a brothel, we have little say in the goings on of our lives. Everything revolves around money and for the gharwalis, money is all that matters. We fetch them money, we have food. We don't fetch them money, sometimes they even refuse us a basic square meal a day"*- **Yellavva, Bhiwandi**. The case studies reveal that there are brothels where the gharwalis discriminate amongst the women on the basis of their caste. In many cases, the women's hesitation to interact with us in the brothels was very evident in the presence of gharwalis.

Many women recall instances of physical abuse meted out to them by the gharwalis. They also speak about the times where they would be refused any food for dinner so that they might be able to stay awake to entertain more clients and not succumb to sleep. Also, gharwalis have been responsible for deteriorating health conditions of the women.



Interacting with the women at the destination, in the workshop and through the plays enacted by them, this reality emerged - the pressure on the women to entertain clients continuously leads them to neglect their health and compromise on visiting clinics. *“Most gharwalis do not allow girls to go for regular clinic visits in order to save time. It is only when the health condition worsens that they permit them to either go back home or get admitted in a hospital. Many times, it is too late,”* says **Renuka**.

- ♦ **Loans are a reality in every migrant’s life-** One of the most common issues that every migrant FSW face is that of loans. Migration begins with loans the family takes. Even at the destination sites, the women get trapped into regular loans, paying heavy interests to gharwalis and others. Most of their earning is spent on repaying loans. The women are gullible and are easily cheated where finances are concerned. *“In a brothel, all our earnings are given to the gharwali who at the end of the month or 15 days does “Hisaab” where she takes her share of the earning (50%) and gives us ours. There are times that many of us are not paid a penny because she cancels our earning against the loan taken by us and we cannot say anything. I don’t even know how much I earn in a month. I just keep entertaining clients”;* adds **Dundavva** during the workshop.

In our interviews with the women in the destination, most of them share that loans are the single most important reason why they remain indebted to the gharwalis and this restricts their decision making power as well as mobility. The play brought out this aspect starkly. The gharwalis often prevent girls from visiting their families if they have huge interests to pay back.

“Women do not think before taking a loan. They do not even know what they are getting into. They do not check the interest rates. They just follow the trend. Someone in the neighbouring brothel will suggest taking loan and they buy it easily. They are



not even aware of the other options available”; adds **Prema**, MFSW

Loans are often the reason for heavy client loads as well. Women take loans for everything ranging from buying sarees, jewellery, paying medical bills, sending money home, children’s school fees, building a house in the village to gifting vehicles for their children. Almost every woman has an experience of being cheated over loans in the destination sites. Lack of awareness makes them vulnerable in the hands of local money lenders and gharwalis. Family pressure for immediate financial needs also drives them to borrow.

“This man comes every morning to collect at least 30 Rs from me. I buy sarees on loan from him. I think I owe him about 3000 Rs. I am not sure”; says **Sunitha**, Bhiwandi

During one of the discussions at the workshop, one of the women claimed that *“it would be most difficult to have a woman with heavy loan interest to participate in any other activity because of the tremendous pressure on her to pay back the gharwali. She will never involve herself in anything else even if she wants to”*. The woman without the loan has more freedom and bargaining power.

- ◆ **Partners and lovers create trouble for women-** Many sex workers tend to have partner or lovers at the destination who initially get introduced to them as clients. More often than not, the lovers become dependant on the women for their daily sustenance. The women rely on them for emotional support while they seek sexual and financial gains out of the relationship. The women share that it is through lovers that they get initiated into habits like drinking, smoking and gutka. Over a period of time, the lovers begin to exercise their control over the women.

“I am not foolish like the other women. I do not want any lover and I am determined not to have one even in future. They are there only to squeeze our money

out. Emotional support and love is a myth in our lives”; says **Durgavva**, Bhiwandi

Unlike Durgavva, many women feel that lovers are important and that they bring in a sense of security. It is their way of leading a life that ‘a normal housewife’ can lead. Here it is not a husband but the presence of a man in her life. During the interviews, many women shared that despite knowing that their lovers are not permanent they prefer to have them while they last. Women like Yellavva are few of the ‘lucky ones’ who have settled down well with their lovers. Yellavva has taken a house with him. They have been together for 3 years and she says he keeps her happy and even visits her mother in her village. *“I make only mutton because my man likes only mutton”*, she adds.

However, during the workshop, most women shared that lovers only create problems for them. They get exploited sexually and financially. Physical abuse is common in these relationships. And usually, nobody is allowed to interfere in their matters. *“We as staff also hesitate to help out women with problems with their lovers because our women keep changing their mind about lovers and most often they choose to go back to them despite all the violence and abuse”*, shares **Vikas**, migration counsellor

- ◆ **Goondas or the local goons induce fear and exploit women-** Another common issue faced at the destination is from local goons or goondas. Demanding free sex, making threatening calls, assaulting women physically and controlling their mobility are commonly seen at destination sites. During the discussions with women in the workshop, one of them claimed that *“even the gharwalis join hands with goondas at the expense of the women for financial benefits. They choose not to complaint and sometimes even make the women entertain local rowdies to win their favour and support for running the brothel.”*



This is a commonly seen problem and the women feel that they are not in a position to do anything about it but keep a safe distance from the local goons. *“Many of them call us during the day to keep a check on us and if we resist them or cut their calls, they threaten us. Most of the times, I lie to them saying I am out at the clinic or have gone to see the doctor”,* says **Sumitra**, MFSW, Grant Road.

- ♦ **Police keep them on their toes-** Another common issue at the destination is regular police arrests and raids. Women see this as a constant threat and fear being arrested more than anything else. *“If we are arrested, we had it! Once, I was arrested in Kamatipura and that was one of the worst experiences of my life. The police will extort money from you and fine you more than what is needed. They humiliate you in public view. At times like this, we have absolutely nobody to rescue us”,* **Shanta Kamble**, Kamatipura.

Women go to any extent to escape from being arrested. They also share that when they get arrested they can expect no help from the gharwali. Everybody only tries to “save their own skin”. Police harassment, illegal detention, extortion of money is commonly seen at destination sites.

- ♦ **Isolation due to separation from children-** This is a common reality amongst all migrant FSWs. Staying away from their families and children for long duration leaves them lonely and emotionally distraught. Many feel that they want to get back home after they have earned enough money for themselves and their children. Many women leave their children behind in their villages to be looked after by their parents or relatives. They hope to see their children live out their unfulfilled desires. *“We will be cursed if we expose our children to the lives we lead here. That’s why most of us leave our children*



back home. We long to visit them and speak to them" Dalavva, Bhiwandi. Discussions reveal that old MFSWs who have lived in the destination for many years consider their children to be the only link to their villages.

Analysis of all the case studies at the destination tells that most MFSWs long to be with their children and desire support for regularly interacting with them. There is a near universal desire to take care of their children's education, jobs, marriage etc. Living away from them is a single major setback in their lives. *"I am waiting for my daughter to finish her 10th standard. She is living with my mother in my village. I am earning money now for her further studies after which I will go back,"* says Roopa, Kamatipura. Whether the women will go back or not is debatable. However, there is enough evidence that children in the village are their biggest motivation to return.

- ♦ **Absence of savings, bank account, entitlements in the destination sites-** Women do not have basic entitlements such as voter's ID or ration card at the destination. They are not aware of the process to obtain them and neither do they have enough support to do so. Almost all women in the destination regularly send money and other things to their villages. They either carry it along with them during their yearly visits or send it through other 'trustworthy persons' from the same village. Absence of bank accounts at the destination and at the source causes them to explore other easier means of money transfer which often proves to be unsafe.

"I have bank accounts in my village and in the destination but most women don't. Because of the absence of bank accounts the women have the tendency to entrust their hard earned money with gharwalis, relatives, lovers or friends. Or they just keep all their money in a trunk. This often gets them into trouble," says Shanta, MFSW, Pune.

Core issues:

1. Exploitation from gharwalis
2. Ignorant about the ill effects of taking loans and absence of any other options
3. No culture of saving money
4. Absence of bank accounts and entitlements
5. Exploitation from partners and lovers as well as police
6. Difficulty in staying in regular touch with children and family back in the villages
7. Absence of opportunities to collectivize or come together

Suggested Strategies:

1. **Helpline:** As of now, the help line is only expected to receive calls from the sex workers but this design and approach needs to be changed if the community should take ownership of and trust this system. The women suggested that the helpline can be used –

To regularly contact migrant FSWs in the destinations and built the rapport. The helpline will initiate calls with the women to enquire about their well being, inform them about their horoscope, to check on any required support, provide information not only about the project but also on their interests, listen to their complaints and over a period of time build trust. So the group felt that the help line should have all the phone numbers of migrant sex workers. (The group felt that as of now 90% of the sex workers have mobile phone and this needs to be utilised). So, a complete redesigning of the Helpline approach needs to be worked out.

The women also suggested that once in a month, a specialist in some area can be invited to talk to women on specific issues. He/ she could be a doctor, a social activist or



an educationist who can speak to the women about issues that are dear to them. This can be locally organised in the region. The helpline can be used to facilitate this meeting and mobilize women to attend them.

The helpline can also be used to inform the women at both destination and source sites of the health camps being organised in the region. The helpline will take the initiative to call the MFSWs and motivate them to attend these camps. They can also act as a link between the families at source and the women at the destination. This can help to build the confidence of the women.

2. **Connecting the family:** Face to face interaction with the families and children through video conference was suggested by the women as an important need of the women in the destination to be in regular touch with their children. This can be facilitated by identified volunteers at destination.
3. **Working with Gharwalis:** This is one of the most important aspects in the migration project. It is evident from our discussions with the women that gharwalis have a major say in the life of the woman at the destination. Without their support, it is difficult to reach these women. The women suggested three ways in which this difficult group's confidence can be eventually won.
 - a. One, by working with the gharwali's family members in the source, getting them entitlements and building a relationship with them. It is important to work closely with their brothers and mothers who are the major influencers.
 - b. Two, by working more closely with the gharwalis who are already being supportive. The community suggested planning a tour for the gharwalis to a

religious place as most of them are god fearing. This may help the staff to reach the women in destination and these can influence other gharwalis. A tour for their brothers at source was also suggested.

- c. Three, by providing social entitlements for the FSWs as well as the gharwalis in the brothels.

4. **Involving community at the destination:** This is quite a challenging task in the migration project as the issues above indicate that it is not very simple to gather women in the destination sites together. The group of women in the workshop also felt that the only way to gain entry to work with these women at the brothels is through the community itself.

To do this, they suggested that a team of MFSW volunteers should be developed. The identified volunteers can gather small groups of FSWs in the destination sites during festivals and Yellamma's pooja that will serve as a platform for discussion whenever possible.

These volunteers will be from the migrant FSWs from various destination sites who will be the key 'influencers' and mobilizers of the community for their area. Their capacities will be regularly built and this group will be involved in activities at the destination whenever required. This can be planned during their visit to the jatras at source where we can get a considerable number of them together at the same time. The group felt that they can identify the supportive FSWs to initiate this task in different destination sites.

5. **Linking with cooperatives:** Most women felt that the biggest problem with women is taking loans from undependable sources like local groups, gharwalis and subsequently getting trapped into paying high interests. Most times, the women are not even aware of what their



actual earnings are at the destination and neither do they have any savings. Those women without any loans have lot of confidence and much more bargaining power than those steeped in loans.

They also suggested that the women be linked to Sangha's cooperative society. Bank accounts are to be opened for the women as well as the family members at source. The women also suggested having an LIC policy for their children at the source.

6. **Working with local NGO and CBO-** Establishing good linkages with the local NGOs and CBOs would be essential to address issues of violence from police, goondas or lovers.

Stage 4 – At the source

Together with the above mentioned issues that women face at various stages of their lives, understanding the concerns of their families at source is also equally important to work with this group and evolve holistic strategies.

Issues:

- ♦ **Financial security of the children of FSWs-** Back in the villages, one of the major concerns is to ensure financial security of the children of FSWs. All the women shared that the reason for them to continue in sex work is to ensure that their children are financially secure and do not lack basic requirements such as clothing, shelter and good education. Though the children are often left with their grandparents, it is the women in the destination who take complete responsibility of the financial needs for the children's upbringing.

Many women are anxious about the future of their children. **Vilasi**, MFSW from Pune says, *"Our lives are as good as over. But if we have not ensured a secure life for our children, all these years of struggle and sacrifice is meaningless and worthless. I want to make sure that my three children will have a secure future. As far as I can I will save for them"*.

Almost every case study of the women at the destination reveals this single universal desire of MFSWs to provide a financially secure life for their children. *"Our lives here are very uncertain. I don't know what will happen to me here. I live in fear for this one reason that I may fail to provide for my children back home"*, says **Shantabhai**, Bhiwandi.

- ♦ **Dependent on loan from local money lenders-** The families of most FSWs often borrow money from unreliable local moneylenders. They are not aware of the consequences of taking immediate loans with huge interest rates. Very often, hasty loans taken by the families end up putting more pressure on the girls in the destination to pay off not just her loans but also the families' loans at source. This aspect came out clearly through the play that the women enacted. Repeated loans taken by the family further burdens the women to mobilize money and in order to do this, they take more loans from the gharwali in their brothels and get caught in this cycle of borrowing and repaying.
- ♦ **Health of the family members-** One of the main concerns of the women at the destination is the health of her family at source. There are no proper facilities for good treatment at the villages. Interviews with the families at source indicate that they depend on the woman's earning for their treatment. *"My daughter fell really sick. We did not know what was wrong with her. We had to spend 30,000 Rs to get her treated. All the money was given by my grand daughter Roopa who is Pune now. Without her we would have been helpless,"* **Roopa's grandmother**, Navalgi.

Analysis of the case studies shows that a major portion of the FSWs earnings is spent on treatment and other medical expenses of the families at source. *"I spent all the money I have for my mother's treatment. As soon as she got better my father fell sick. Following that, my brother died. I had to meet all the medical expenses myself. I kept coming back to the destination to earn enough for all of them"*, says **Shanta Kamble**, Grant Road.





- ◆ **Families do not have social entitlements-** Many of the family members of MFSWs do not have any social entitlements such as voters ID, ration card, hostel facilities for children or houses under the available schemes. They are not aware of the process to acquire them as well. *"It would really help if our families at source would be given the entitlements that are available. It would help ease the burden on us"*, adds **Balavva**
- ◆ **Lack of direction and guidance for the adolescent children of FSW-** Many women with adolescent children shared a common concern. They felt that their grown up children had no role models

to look up to and their lives were devoid of any direction or guidance. Many of them drop out of school. *"Our children grown up with nobody to tell them right from wrong. We are away most part of the year and many of us have had the experience of our children growing up with wrong values. They go astray and only squander the money that we send them"*, **Jayashree** shared during the workshop.

Women also shared that many of the Devadasi's children resort to wayward living. They take their mother's money for granted. Very often, women make the mistake of giving the children everything they demand for without questioning its necessity.



"This is their way of caring for the children. Providing their every need makes the women feel that it would in some way fill the gap of their absence in the children's lives," Says Renuka, migration counsellor.

The women claim that their children need direction and vocational training that can help them to lead independent and responsible lives.

Core issues:

1. Financial security of the children of MFSW
2. Health facilities for the family members
3. Social entitlements for the families
4. Vocational support for the adolescent children of MFSWs

Suggested Strategies:

1. Helping the families at source by:
 - a. Opening bank accounts for the family members
 - b. Facilitate the process of obtaining social entitlements like voter's ID, ration card, accessing housing schemes, BPL card etc for the family.
 - c. Linking them to the clinic facilities from the local CBO. The women suggested that the current free clinical services made available for the community through the local CBO should be extended to the family members and the children of the MFSW as well. This will motivate the families to take the children to clinics or else



they tend to neglect their health out of lack of money for treatment.

- d. Skill building and vocational training programmes to be organized for the adolescent children (both boys and girls) of FSWs. This can be done by linking these children to the adolescent volunteer groups.

CONCLUSION

After having engaged closely with migrant sex workers, the team drew a couple of important conclusions.

At the end of the study, strategies came from the women themselves. These, we believe, are sound and have tremendous potential to impact the field level work. This outcome can be assigned only to the intensive process and the qualitative thrust given to the study preceding it. Engaging with the communities in rigorous and meaningful processes is a must if we are to evolve strong standing strategies for programming. These are not strategies decided over a meeting in the presence of a couple of community

representatives but strategies that came unasked for from the women themselves after going through the entire process patiently with them. If the process is the focus, the outcome will follow.

Secondly, our project objectives have influenced the community more than we are aware. Efforts should be made to help them come out of the project psyche if we are to get a peek into their real life situations. The community is willing and ready to open up. They have questions and answers too but willingness to elicit them at the community's pace and the community's way is essential from our end. An unprejudiced environment with non judgemental and an open minded group of people can assist this process.

As a team, we understand that it is important that migration is not seen in isolation but in totality-tackling the issues of women not just from a risk reduction but vulnerability reduction perspective. Work will have to deal with several key players that are indirectly and directly entrenched in the migration system on a long term basis.

It is their world and they know it best. We will always remain outsiders.



ANNEXURE 1

CASE STUDIES FROM THE DESTINATION AND SOURCE

1. Name: Sheela (name changed)

Place: Hanuman Tekdi, Bhiwandi

Date: 6-09-09

Source address: Bisanal Village, Bilagi tq,
Bagalkot district

My name is Sheela. I live along with people from different states and castes in India. I am an illiterate, I don't know how to read or write. My father's sister is a Devdasi. I do not recall when was I made a Devdasi. My aunt used to practice sex work in Sangli. I was 16 when I was taken to Sangli, I stayed with my aunt for a year and started practicing sex work. I was there for 5-6 years. Then I came to Bhiwandi and for the last two three years I have been staying here. Once every 3-4 months I travel back to my native place. I had two kids. I lost my first son in a miscarriage. The 2nd son stays in my village with my aunt. I do not have my parents; my uncle and aunt are everything to me. Along with their two sons, they look after my son as well. Every time I go home I leave some money with them. My aunt has a bank account, since I do not have an account or a house or anything, I trust her with my money. My aunt and me used to practice sex work in Sangli. Once I left Sangli my aunt came back to the village. I have a brother who is not living with us. He has some property, he looks after that.

I try and solve all the problems that my uncle and aunt face. Since I don't have a mobile I borrow my friends mobile and call home. My biggest ambition is to educate my son, once he reaches 15 years; I want to send him to a hostel to continue his studies.

When I came to Sangli I was unaware that I will be a sex worker. I came to know only after I spent a year in Sangli. Once I started practicing sex work my aunt advised me to use a condom regularly, I started. There were other people who would also come and educate

us on the benefits of using a condom. They used to distribute condoms free of cost

Now I am 25 years old. I want to stay in touch with my son and family. I know that whatever little I do for the well being of our family member's benefits them, this comforts me.

I live with a girl from Athani. It costs us 1500 Rs for the room, including electricity and water. The girl from Athani and I share the cost. There are gharwalis around but we are not under any gharwali. We live independently here. I save around Rs. 3000-4000 every month and keep the money with me. Though I have an account, I do not keep my money in the account. I do not have an account, ration card in my destination but I do have a voter's ID. I do not have a house. I live in my aunt's house.

Though I am a Devdasi I do not get any pension because I am young but my aunt gets her pension. There are 4-5 members from my village who live here. They are a couple of years younger to me. They also came here through some contacts. We do not face any harassment by the police, unlike the girls from Andhra. This raids happens by the Andhra police because of some trouble that these women had caused in Andhra. There are no Goondas here. We get a lot of clients whom we call Bhaiyas. They work in the weaving mills.

Usually I never go out with any of the clients. I do not have any permanent partner. My contact with these bhaiyas is more on a one to one basis. I do not have a problem in meeting with my family members in the source and every year we go to the Yellamma temple, all Kannadigas also meet once a year during the harvest festival in Bhiwandi. We, the women from Karnataka do not meet regularly.



I want to go back to my village after a couple of years. And I want to work and take care of my family. Any support to interact with my son and family will be a great help. I have full trust on my aunt. I always give her my money when I go there. She is the one who took care of me after my parents passed away when I was very young.

We never allow any clients to have sex with us without a condom. Majority of the people in Bhiwandi are Muslim. My priorities in life currently are earning my bread and butter and educating my son. Can somebody help me get a house in my village?

My seragu was not done in my village but in Pune. We have around 25 houses in our village that belong to the Madar community. Around 10-12 members practice sex work outside the state. Remaining women practice locally.

INTERVIEW AT SOURCE

There are four of us at home. I stay in my parental house along with my brother. My brother has three children, two of them are girls. The girls don't go to school, instead work at the field while the boy is studying in 8th standard.

I¹ work as a coolie and earn around Rs.40-50 per day. We work in the field. We don't get work for all 30 days. But most of the times we get work.

My brother also works in the field along with his wife and two daughters. We need to work. Otherwise how we can live our life? You have a job and get a salary even if you come and sit with us, but we can't live without working daily as a coolie.

There is nobody in my family who works outside the village. Everybody works here in the field. We get enough work around the year. I am the only one who has gone outside for work. I was in Karad for many years. I lived there. Later, when it became difficult to live, I returned.

Earlier there were many people in Karad, practicing sex work. Now all of them have come back and started working as coolies. They are living a disciplined life.

I am a Devdasi woman. I am the last *Devdasi* in my family. I was practicing sex work in Karad. I came back ten years ago. I am not practising sex work anymore. .

There is a lady called Marugavva who is in Bhiwandi, practicing sex work. She is staying with someone like you and has got two children. Two more women in this galli are in Bhiwandi. She comes home only for the Doddajathre. All the others are back home now.

Devdasi girls will be in contact with the people who visit the village. They go with the visitors if they are promised work.

Doddajathre is one of the big events in our village. There will be lot of interesting games - Cycle race, Tagaaru kadadata, Race etc. Members of various communities - *Kurubas, Beda's, Okkaligas and Reddys* etc. - come together to celebrate the occasion. We are not supposed to enter the temple and touch the people as we belong to the community called *Madara*. There are more of *Bedas* and *Kurubas* in this village.

Madara will celebrate separate *jatras* at their community level and celebrate Ugadi. Durgavva, the community goddess will be taken to the river for a bath. We too go along with the procession and take bath. All of us cook and eat together at the riverside. It is celebrated only for a day during Ugadi. Only *Madara* community celebrates this festival.

I don't have children. I don't have God's blessings to have children. I have been looking after my elder brother's daughter after her parent's death. She has one child. He is studying in 2nd standard. Her parents expired long back and she goes to work in the field now. What to do? Something has to be done for a livelihood.

¹ On being asked about the number of members at home, the respondent requested to refrain the questions about her health and herself. She was not open to a discussion about her family.



Here, my brother looks after the family. I also go for work. There are many people from Bagalkot and Bijapur who are settled in Mangalore.

I have a ration card and got it recently. I have a voter ID and I vote. But we don't have a bank account. Where is the money to keep in the bank? Now the prices are so high for all the things. Whatever we earn, it is only enough for the day-to-day expenses. After that, there is nothing left to deposit in the bank.

There are many Devdasi women here. All of them must have gone to the field for work at this time. They will come in the evening.

All the Devdasi women have come back to their home in the village. No matter where we go for work, we need to have our home town. Even if we go to Delhi, we have to come back to our home at some point in time.

There are lots of *Madara* people. My house is the boundary for our community in this area. There are other people like *Bedas* and *Kurubas*.

I go to a private practitioner if I am ill. I don't go to the government hospital. They will also take money from us. They won't give free service. For an injection syringe, they will charge Rs.10. They will write a prescription to be bought from the medical shop. There is no rent for the cots. Everything else is charged. Why should we go there? Nothing is free. It is cheaper to go to a private practitioner than a government hospital. They will give tablet for Rs.10.

Government is there because of us. They will give us facilities only if we pay them.

My elder brother's daughter has no husband. My daughter is also a Devdasi. She lives in Bhivandi with someone. She does not do sex work. She is happy with him there. Why should I hide this from you? It is better to share the truth with you.

How many children do you have? Why didn't you get married? You are lying to me that you are unmarried?

She (Durgavva) comes for the *yellamma jatra*. My grandson is here. He calls me *Ajji* and my brother *Ajja*.

We are looking after him. He listens to his grandfather. He does not bother, if I call him for any work. He will come now. What's the time? He will reach here at 5 o'clock. He is eight years old, studying in 2nd standard.

She comes once in a year. If I need money, she sends a money order. The postman will deliver the money to me. She is healthy. It seems that madam had gone and met her in Bhiwandi. She came and told me that she is fine.

It's been just 3-4 years since she has gone. Her first child expired. The child was not well. It was a homedelivery. After that she gave birth to a second child who is with me. His name is Dinesh. My name is Gangavva.

There are around 4 people from our village at Bhiwandi.

If you want to do any program here, all the community people will come together. There would be no issues in gathering members of the other community. Public programs can be organized here with the participation of all the other community members.

Devdasi girl is accepted at home in their old age. They have to come back to their parents. Or else, where do they go? Wherever we are, we have to come back to our home. If someone asks, where you are from, you will remember your home town. In the same way, we also return here to our home.

What is your salary? You have studied. If there is no work, you can take up some business. But that we cannot do. We are illiterates. We have to work for our livelihood. Ok. I have work now. I have to feed the goat. I am going.

2. Place: Grant Road, Mumbai

Date : 7-09-09

Source address: Shimoga

I am 27 years old. I have been living here for the past 15 years. Now, I am a manager in this brothel owned by a person from Mandya in Karnataka. There are ten girls here, mostly from Bengal and Andhra. The rate per client is fixed at Rs 160 in this entire building. Out of this, 50 % goes to the girls and the remaining 50 % to the gharwali and the landlord. The manager gets a share of Rs.20. It would add up to about Rs.15,000 per month for the manager. Out of this earning, I send



Rs.10,000 to my house, keep Rs.5000 for own expenses and deposit Rs.2000 in my children's name.

I came to this profession because my husband died in an accident, just after three months of our marriage. I have two children. One daughter is 4 years old and my son is 7 years old. At present, my father, mother, brother, sister in law, brother's four children, sister's one child and my two children are all living in Shimoga. My sister also expired due to ill health. I look after all of them. Whatever I earn, I spend on these family members. I have constructed a house. From the last 2-3 years, my brother has been misbehaving (playing cards etc). He has become very irresponsible. So I am planning to send him abroad. I am saving up money for that.

All my family is together at one place and I am here all alone. On the one hand, all of them are doing absolutely nothing and I am single handedly having to feed them all. I feel bad sometimes, when I think about it. Though I send Rs. 10,000 to them, many times even that is not enough. My father was not well. I spent a lot of money on him. Mother also keeps falling sick. Nobody knows that I am into this profession. But I do not lie to my mother, so I told her the truth. My mother feels bad that I had to get into this line. She knows that life is difficult for me but the situation at home is such that I cannot do anything. My brother is actually a carpenter but for the last two years, he has been creating problems.

I have bought everything for them. Last month they said they do not have a fridge and so I bought them a fridge. There are only two people who truly think about me in my family. They are my mother and my sister in law. But my sister in law is very proud of me because without my support, her children would have been on the streets. However, my own brother does not think that way.

I have not saved any money other than what I give to my family. I have kept money for my children. I only see my future with my children. I have a voter's id and ration card.

I have kept Rs.20,000 in my daughter's name. I am worried about my daughter because she needs to be married etc. But I know I will be able to manage my son.

The Seth who is from Karnataka initially had nothing. He has now made money and is wealthy. He has two rooms here. On an average, each girl will entertain 5-6 clients. One day, we had a big fight with my brother and he consumed poison. After that I stopped shouting at him. I do not have a permanent partner on purpose because I am struggling to earn for everybody. Why would I need another partner? Even if I have one, in what way am I going to benefit? They will want us only for a physical relationship and nothing beyond that. So, why do I need a partner?

Police also come here but we have regular hafta which is paid by our Seth. This depends on the position. It starts from Rs.300 to Rs.3000 per month. Many of these girls are sold by others. They are sold here; they practice sex work for a month or so and go back. When they do, they are treated very badly. So many of them come back and never leave again. No good people come here. Only drunkards, cheaters come here.

Out of 1000, only one or two good people come. For example: they have some tension in their families. Many of them come up to the door. They see the people and the surroundings and go back.

We have a cook here who prepares food for the girls. We do not force any female to stay here for a long time. Few people leave after 3 months, few after 6 etc.

3. Name: Radha (name changed)

Place: Grant road, Mumbai

Date: 7-10-09

Source address: Raichur

I am from Raichur. I ran away from home about 4 years ago after a fight with my mother. I got into a lorry and came to Mumbai. For one year, I practiced sex work in Kurla and after that I met a man whom I got married to. He runs two brothels here with another partner. There are 10 girls in each of them. Most of the girls are from Bengal and Andhra. Nobody forced me into



this and I have no issues now. I am married to a person who meets all my needs.

I do visit my family. They do not know that I am into sex work. They think I have married somebody here and living in a home. I do not think I will go back there for good. I keep visiting my family once in 4-5 months. I go there whenever I feel like. I stay there for about 10-12 days. I need a ration card. What can I do to get it? Can you please tell me? I do not practice sex work anymore. Why should I? Anyways, my husband meets all my needs. I just supervise the women who live in the two brothels. We have a cook here too. So I do not have to cook. It is time now for the customers to come in.

4. Name: Jayanthi (name changed), Gharwali

Place: Bhiwandi

Date: 7-10-09

Source address: Jhamkhandi, Bagalkot.

I am a Devadasi and now a gharwali. I have been practicing sex work for the last 20 years in my aunt's house in Bhiwandi itself. Recently, me and another lady started our own brothel in which three girls stay. These girls regularly shift from place to place and are more like mobile sex workers. At present, there are three girls from Karnataka who are staying here with me. Sangeeta from Tikota/ Honavada, Bijapur district; Rekha from Kelasanga/ Maradagiri, Jath/ Bijapur; and Neela, daughter of Kalappa Balappa Poojary, Bendwala, Gokak taluk, Belgaum.

All these girls practice sex work in Kohlapur, Pune, Bandupuri. Now they are here. Out of these three girls, two are Devadasis and one is a non Devadasi. I pay Rs. 2000 as rent to the landlord and share 50-50 with the girls for each client. We have a very cordial relationship with the police and so far nobody has raided this brothel. Police usually raid Bengali and Nepali brothels because they feel there are girls below 18 years in them. I am very clear on that. There will be no girls below 18 years with me.

All the girls entered sex work through some woman, who have once practiced sex work here and have gone

back to their villages. These girls visit their native place during the jatra time or when there is any situation that arises with regard to family, children etc. All three girls are illiterates. I am of the strong opinion that I do not want to exploit the girls. There are gharwalis who do exploit them. I do not discriminate amongst them. I am here to earn but I do it justly. I do not discriminate on the basis of caste. I have women from both low and high caste. There are some gharwalis that serve separate pickle/ food to the girls. I do none of that. Whenever they need money, I also help them with money. The choice is left to them to stay here or to move out. They can stay for a day or even a year. When the girls leave, I do not have to go searching for newer girls. Because I treat the girls well, other girls hear it and come to stay here.

The girls charge Rs.60 – 80 per client. One girl was murdered in the area. After that the police have advised us not to practice sex work after mid night. So we do not practice after midnight. Also, no girl in the brothel goes out for soliciting. Majority of the clients are the mill workers who belong to UP, Rajasthan and Bihar. There are gharwalis who do not give full meals because the girls fall asleep. On an average, they get four to five clients per day. Even the police visit as clients but they do pay.

I am of the opinion that I should help my children get jobs in Bagalkot. My children do not know that I am into sex work in Mumbai. I have got my daughter married. My son has also studied and is looking for a job which I request you to help with. The girls who come here are from Devadasi community and also many of them land up here after problems with their husbands.

5. Name: Shanta (name changed)

Place: Bhiwandi

Date: 7-10-09

Source address: Honawad village (Tikota), Bijapur

I am from Tikota, Bijapur. I am from the scheduled caste. She is around 23 years old. I have lost both my mother and father and have one brother who is doing



centering work. I have two children who are staying with my brother. Their ages are 1.5 and 3 years. I visit the family once in 6 months. I am not a Devadasi. I got married early but my husband was a drunkard and I used to often get beaten up by him.

Meanwhile both my father and mother died due to paralytic attack. Whenever I go, I give two to three thousand rupees to my family members. I am with Jaya from the last two years. There are 6-8 girls practicing sex work who belong to Tikota, Bijapur. Due to the recent flood, we lost our house which needs to be rebuilt. That is why we are currently in severe crisis, finding it difficult to take care of my grandmother, my children and my brother. Usually, I call from here to the village to the nearby shop or neighbouring house and talk to my family regularly. I do not send money through post or any bank but whenever I go I hand over the money to them.

We are landless. I do not have anything in my name. No voter's card, house or ration card or BPL card but my name is listed in the family card. I came to know about sex work through one of the girls who returned from Mumbai. Then I went to Kohlapur and Pune and then came here to practice sex work. If somebody helps with my children's education and the family members to get some facilities, it will be a great help.

6. Name: Roopa

Place: Bhiwandi

Date : 7-10-09

Source address: Bendawad, Raibag tq, Belgaum district

I am a Devadasi. I was made one at the age of 12. I have two children - 5 and 2 years old. Both my mother and father, who live in the village take care of my children. I have one brother who is a daily labourer. When I was 15 years old, through one of the known lady from the village, I went to Pune and stayed for 8 years. From there, I went to Sonapura, Bandup to practice sex work where I stayed for 6 months. From there, to Kohlapur and stayed for a year. From there, I came to Bhiwandi and I have been here for the last one month.

In my opinion, if the gharwali is not good, we just leave and go. One of the girls, staying in this gharwali's aunt's place is a friend of mine. It is through her that I came here. I want to practice sex work for another 5-6 years to fulfill some of my commitments of building my house and sending my children to school. In my village, I do not have any voter's card or BPL card of my own. The house that is given by the government is on the verge of collapsing. I do not have an account of my own. Whatever are my earnings, I take that money once in two to three months and give it to my mother to take care of my kids and the family.

Everyday, I talk to my children over phone. My ambition is to educate my children and build my house. In a total of 15 years of sex work, I have seen lot of clients who are very aggressive, drunkards and young boys. Each time, we need to negotiate with them for various reasons. Earlier, the clinic here used to give the medicine free of cost. Now they only give us the prescription and we buy the medicines from private clinics.

7. Name: Shanti (name changed)

Place: Grant Road

Date: 7-10-09

Source address: Gandhinagar, Bijapur

I belong to Gandhinagar in Bijapur and I used to roll beedis in Bijapur along with my family. A person, to whom we used to give the beedis, brought me here after promising a job in Mumbai and sold me into sex work. After being here for a year, I went back to my village. I stayed there for 2-3 years and I came back to Mumbai. Here, I had an affair with a Hindu boy and got married to him. I stayed with him for 10 years. After having two kids, we had a problem in our marriage. He left me and went back to his place in Solhapur and remarried.

I have been practicing sex work from the last six years. In my house there are 5 girls who all belong to Kolkota except me. We pay 50 % of the money to the seth and also Rs.600 per month for giving us food. There are 75 brothels in this building. In each brothel, there





are 5-6 girls. All these brothels are owned by different sethans/ seths. They will manage the police, goons and others. We don't have any problem with police raid and other issues.

In Mumbai, I have a bank account in Bank of India, from which I send money to my parents through my maternal uncle's account in the same bank in the village. We shifted to my mother's native place, Koppal, after my father died. We have our own house in Barapet, Koppala in my name but it is still not registered in my name. I have one brother who is working as a labourer who stitched bags. My sister got married and has two children but her husband was not a very nice man. He was a drunkard, so she left him and is staying with my mother. She has two kids studying in 2nd and 1st class.

I have two sons studying in 2nd and 5th Std. I go to my village every 6-8 months. Every month, I send three to four thousand. I feel, my entire family is dependant on me and my brother. Earlier, there used to be police raids because lot of small girls used to live here. Now, there are no small girls here. We get clients on our own. Some of them call us and come. I don't have a voter's ID or a BPL card or a bank account in my name in Koppal. So someone, who can help bring up my children by giving them good education and get us some facilities from the government will be very helpful.

With regard to condom use, we strictly follow it and I do not have any partners or lovers; I have few regular clients with whom I use condoms.

8. Name: Rani Kamble (name changed)

Place: Kamatipura, Mumbai

Date: 5-10-09

Source address: Bijapur

I am 42 years old and am a Devadasi. I came to Mumbai when my father was really sick. My mother then made me a Devadasi. I came straight here to Kamatipura as a child and stayed in a brothel run by my aunt. When I first came here, the rate was only Rs 5 or Rs 10 per client. Then my mother was diagnosed with a cancerous tumour. I had to arrange for Rs 25,000 for my mother's operation. So I took loan from the gharwali and some other people I knew and arranged for it.

After 3 years of that operation, my mother again had a heart problem and my father was soon after diagnosed with cancer. So, I had to arrange for those expenses too. I brought my mother to Mumbai for her treatment. Then she chose to go back to the village. She finally passed away. My younger brother soon after was infected with HIV through one of the blood transfusion processes he had to undergo for some other problem. He survived for 15 years after that. I used to send Rs 3000 per month only for his expenses. Meanwhile my older brother had taken to severe drinking. He died because of that and after 3 months even my HIV positive brother passed away. I was in the village for sometime in between. When all this happened, I had to come back to sex work in Mumbai as there was no other way we could manage the family necessities.

I came back to the brothel my aunt was running but I was not doing sex work. One of my friends said I can do some work as a labour and I was earning Rs. 1500 per month. By then, we had learnt a lot about HIV, how it transmits and about using condom; not compromising on safe sex even if we are paid more money. By then, I realised that Rs.1500 was not sufficient for me to support my two boys who are in the village now with my sister. Even with that I used to try and save Rs.500 per month for them and deposit it in the bank. I started practicing sex work again.

One of my sons is 16 years old and is going to school. I do not entertain too many clients. I make sure that I go for my STI testing and am very careful about my health. It's only when I am healthy that I can do something in the future and provide for my children.

When I first came to Mumbai, I was 15 years old. I went back to the village after my mother's death 3 years ago. I then stayed there for a few months and came back again. I went to the village for my sister's delivery and also during my brother's sickness. I stayed there for a year and got back. When I go there, I do not do anything and neither do I practice sex work. I just manage with the little food we have and be with my family.

Whenever there is some trouble in the village, I go and then come back here again to earn. Usually, my visits to the village is twice a year during Yellamma's Jatra and when someone is sick/ or when there is some crisis in the family and when my children ask me to come. I go for about 15 days and come back. I have to inform the people here before I go.

I send money through post. They charge me Rs. 5 for every Rs.100 I send. I have still not opened a bank account in my name here. I do send some things for the house through people here from my village who are traveling that side. There are not too many Kannadigas here now. More women are from Bengal. We were 20 women living in one brothel before but all of them have died. Only 3 remain now. Nobody knew about AIDS and condoms then. There were many gharwalis from Karnataka but due to the regular deaths here, all of them left. They gave off the houses for rent or sold them off and went back to the villages.

I don't live in a brothel anymore. I have taken a room for rent. I have to pay Rs. 120 per day for that room. My husband (partner) lives in a separate house in the town. I come here, practice sex work and go back to him. We were actually a rich family in the village. We had fields and all that but my father was a drunkard. He sold off everything and we became nothing.



I won't live here forever. Once my sons grow up and get jobs, I will leave this place. It is very difficult for me to survive in the village now. We get paid only Rs.20 per day, whatever we do. Here at least I am able to save Rs.50 per day. One of my sons is 20 years old and another 16. They do not know that I do sex work here. Now they are big boys and are also educated. They know about AIDS and all that. They ask me to go to the village and be with them. I tell them I am doing some other work.

I am in regular touch with them and they are nice to me when I go home. They call me at least twice in a day. Especially, when I am unwell, the children keep calling me. Recently, I had a small growth and my sons have said that if I am getting it operated I should do it only in the village. They are saying they will take a loan or something and get it done.

In my family, there are no other grown ups now, only my sons and my bhabhi. If at all there is any help that I need, it is only to bring us out of poverty. Financial support, loans or a house will help us. Sometimes people in the village ask me to go back. They made me a Devadasi out of ignorance and I did not know what I was getting into.

Earlier, the families used to send the girls very frequently to Mumbai but now, it has reduced drastically. Girls used to come here and earn and the girls in the villages used to get attracted to this lifestyle and would want to come here too. All that has come down a lot. Actually, HIV is the main reason that the number of women coming have reduced. They feel they are safer back in the village.

We cannot afford to get caught by the police. If they catch you standing on the road, they will slap a fine of Rs 1250 on you. Nowadays, most women, only if they are in dire straits like poverty, illness etc are opting to come to Mumbai. Now most of the women are Bengalis. Once these women have come, the chance for our Kannadigas is very less. Some of them just take whatever is offered and stay quiet. We don't have the freedom to demand here anymore.

We don't have any specific number of clients per day. It all depends on our fate. Sometimes there are 4, 5 or 6 clients. Sometimes there are 10 clients. Sometimes nobody comes. Some of the men only want younger girls wearing skimpy clothes who wear make up. People like me cannot stand on the roads anymore. Who will want me? Some clients pay Rs.100, some Rs.70, some Rs.60 or Rs.80. It depends. Earlier, we could manage with less money but now, even if they pay me Rs.100, we cannot manage.

There is no leisure time for me. Just live it like this and wonder and worry about what will happen tomorrow. When will God take me out of this world? Most of the time, I am tensed. If I was employed in a job that paid me Rs.5000 a month, I would have no cause to worry. If I don't do, who will do for my children? Only if I work hard, the stomachs of my children will be full.

I have not gone to school. Only my brother went to school for a few years. I started working very young to help my mother earn. My father never worked. Eight of my siblings (4 brothers and 4 sisters) died at a young age. Finally only three of us were left. My sister got married. Since my young age, I have known nothing but poverty. I have never got myself into any bad habits. No drinking, no smoking, no gutka. Also, by God's grace, I have never fallen ill after all these years of being here. I have always wanted the best for my people and also for others around me. I think that's why God has kept me happy.

Today even the clients are aware of HIV. They also want to use condoms and if they do not know, we share with them about the risks etc. How their health will be affected and how their wives also will be infected. Most customers are happy when we explain things to them well. We also tell the other women to never practice sex work without using a condom. Many clients get the women drunk so they can have more fun. But we warn the women that they will have fun and they will also get infected! Once in three months or in a month, the women go to the clinic for check up.

Now, most of the women here are above 25 years. The gharwalis are also scared to bring young girls. They may be found in bungalows or hidden somewhere.

If I continue to be healthy and do not get any disease, I want to go back to my village and settle down with my children.

Ever since I got arrested I stopped doing sex work and entertain only clients who come home and whom I know. When my son was very young, he stayed here with me. When he was 7 years old, he used to see men coming around and he used to tell me- "Ma don't talk to these uncles. I will work and earn money for you." Then I took him back to the village. My son really wants to be with me. He says, "When I see all the women around me, I remember my mother".

My partner is a Muslim man. He met me as a client 30 years ago and has been with me ever since. He has been so faithful and has also decided not to marry for my sake. He has tried his best to keep me happy but has not found any work. Even if I feel a little sick he gets very upset. His family lives in Kurla. I also stay with him but the people in his house do not know that I am a sex worker. I just tell them that I go to work outside. I spend the day here and in the evenings, I go off to my partner's place. He does not know that I still practice sex work. Though he met me as a client, he thinks I have left that profession. I hide and come here.

I have sinned against my partner but he has remained faithful. I ask Allah to forgive me. I don't do this for pleasure. I do it for him. I do not want money or gold. All I want is my children to be happy. I have done a lot for my parents. I pray that God will keep my children safe and they will also look after me. I have never worn a good saree or eaten good food. People say this Shanta is crazy but I know God will bless me.

9. Name: Veena (name changed)

Place: Pavwali gali, Grant road, Mumbai

Date: 5-10-09

Source address: Shimoga

I did not know when I first came here that I was going to be a sex worker. I got married in Shimoga but my

husband was a drunkard. He used to beat me up and I left him. Then I took up a job in a government school in Shimoga. An old lady also used to work there. One day, she promised to bring me to Mumbai so that I can work in some person's house whom she claimed to know. So, I came here with her. Since then, for the last three years, I have been in this brothel.

I am the oldest girl here and the gharwali trusts me. Initially, it was very difficult. I did not know the language. I did not know what to speak to the vegetable vendor. For the first 15 days, I was not even allowed to step out of this room but now I am very used to it. I never thought I will be a sex worker. I never imagined my life will turn out to be like this but that is what is written in my fate. I am an Acharya by caste - upper caste but see what has become of me. I miss my family a lot. I want to go back there.

I do not have any children. I send all my money to my mother. People there do not know what I do for a living. I just support them. I personally take the money or things. I do not give it to anybody. Whom to trust here? Nobody.

For the last few days, I have a boil on my leg that is not allowing me to sleep. It is very painful. I just woke up (2.30 p.m.). Here, we go to sleep very late and wake up late. The clients come from evening to late next morning. We have all kinds of clients. Some are good, some are bad. Recently a boy from Mangalore has been visiting me. He is a very kind boy. He also keeps calling me (phone rings and its this boy). He has just called to see if I have woken up (phone rings again). This is another client. I have told him that I am with a doctor and will give him a missed call later. Some of them get angry if you do not pick up their calls.

I got to the nearby temple. I also go out a lot with the clients. They take me around and I come back in the night. I do not know, how long I can be here. I want to build a house. I have saved up Rs. 1 lakh under chit funds and have got a gold chain worth Rs.30, 000 made. I do not have any account in my name. I trust my mother.



Here, most of the girls are Bengalis. Since I am the one who has been here the longest, I am called didi by all. We don't have any trouble inside the brothel. We also make sure that we use condoms. If they refuse, we ask them to go find somebody else. I never use make up like these Bengali girls. I only wear a saree. If men come, they come or else they don't. I am around 28 years old. I am waiting for the day I can finish my responsibilities and go back home. I want to stay in Shimoga itself but I cannot leave until my home is built.

10. Name: Radha Madar (name changed)

Place: Hanuman Tekdi, Bhiwandi

Date: 6-10-09

Source address: Neelawwa kamalavva Madar, Atharga village, Indi taluk, Bijapur

My name is Radha. I am here since 8 years. I do not know old I am. I am a bit busy collecting water. If there is power, water comes every morning or else it does not. When it comes, we have to quickly collect it. My husband lives here with me. I do not have children. I was first living down and then I came here. There, we had a big fight with the gharwali.

I have taken this place for a rent of Rs.1500 per month. I usually cook only in the evenings, so that it will be fresh and hot when my husband comes back home after work. I make rice and mutton. We don't eat chicken. My husband does not like chicken. (A young girl enters with a plate full of food) This girl is my friend's sister. My friend from when I lived down. She just comes sometimes and visits me. I am used to staying here now.

I go home once in three months. In fact, I returned only this Monday. I was there for two days. My mother needed some things from the market. So I gave all that and came back after purchasing from the market here. I do not trust anybody here so I have to go myself to give them anything. Going and coming, I have to spend Rs.100. I take a train. The train runs only on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. It does not run on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. It starts at 11 pm in the night. I reach the next day at noon, 2 p.m.

My mother, sister and sister's children live in the village. I have brothers too but they are not married. We are 4 sisters and 2 brothers. I am the oldest. Nobody goes to school. I have to get my two brothers married now. I would not have come here but we are poor. Who will feed my family? That's how I came into this line.

It was very difficult earlier when I came here. I was very scared. I came here alone. I don't even know how old I was. We are very poor. Unless I earn, our stomachs are never full. If I have money in my hands, people will talk. If I have no money then people will only kick me and chase me out. As long as parents are alive, I will go. After they are gone what will I do there?

I take money and things home whenever I go. I have my father too. They work on the fields. I stay there only for a day or two. I cannot stay there longer. I do not like staying there. My heart is always here. More than 2 days is too much for me in my village. There is nothing there. Nothing close by, nothing to buy. I have gotten used to this place. I go alone and come back alone. I do not have any fear any more. There, my mother will put me on the train and I reach back at 6 p.m. to Bhiwandi.

I am the reason why my mother is alive or else they will not even live. They know that I am a sex worker. Earlier, they did not know that I was a sex worker. Now, they have come to know everything, which is also one of the reasons, why I do not want to stay there for long. People say, "Look at her. She is one of those from the streets". My parents are nice to me. My mother, sister, all of them speak to me. Uncles and children also speak to me. I just sit around when I have time. I do not enjoy watching films and all that. I just stay here, eat and rest.

I do not want to go anywhere looking for clients. I do not want to force anybody. If not today, someone will come tomorrow. Sometimes it rains heavily and nobody comes. If they come, they come or else no.

I came here through my aunt (mausi). She only brought me here. I did not know that she was bringing me for sex work. She is actually a gharwali. It was in her brothel that I stayed before I came up here. So what



if she is an aunt? She will still take money from me. Why will she spare me just because I am related to her? I was very young when I came. Slowly, I understood what this is all about. Earlier it was scary. Not anymore.

All kinds of clients come. I do not entertain men who come heavily drunk. All kinds of men come, old and young. They pay around Rs.70 to Rs.80. Earlier, they used to pay only Rs.30. I have done sex work for that less amount also. I have very poor memory. I am an ullu. If I was smart, I would never have come into this line. I was not smart, so I landed here. Otherwise, I would have married and had my own family. I do not have a seth here. I am independently practicing sex work. I buy sarees from these men. I have to pay them on installment basis every month.

My husband only pays the rent. In fact, he also sells sarees. His family is in the village. He has his mother and brother. I have never been to his place. He has been with me only for four months. I was alone before him. I am happier with him. I do not get scared. When I am alone, anybody can exploit me or beat me. Now that I have him, at least I know that somebody is there to defend me.

I have no interest in studying. It is very expensive to buy gold. So, I wear these artificial earrings. I don't think I can have children. Even if I want, how will I manage them? I have to look after them and on the other hand there are clients.

Raids keep happening especially for the Andhra girls. We get to know through various sources that the police are planning a raid. When they do come, I just run away somewhere. Sometimes, we get prior information and we all run away in advance. After the raids are over, we come back. We lock our houses and run. They raid only for Andhra girls. They catch them and put them in jail. Many police try to convince the women to get out of sex work. They say "Leave all this and go back to your village. We will get you as much money as you want from the government. Why do you want to do all this?" The minute they catch us, they first ask, are you Telugu? There is more number of Andhra girls here. I

do not talk to any girls here whether they are Bengali or Telugu. I do not know when new girls come and go. Only the gharwalis will know all this. The gharwalis make money only because of the girls. If the girls do not earn, the gharwalis will kick them out. They will go find other girls.

I buy sarees and I am yet to pay Rs.2000 to the sareewala. I have to pay him Rs.50 every day. I have to pay 7 more people. Some people Rs.2000, some Rs.2500 and Rs.1000. I have to give when I have. I have to pay Rs.50 per day to all of them. Down, lot of clients used to come but up here not many come. Down there, I used to earn Rs.1000 per day but here 4 clients per day itself is a big deal. Just finding 2 clients per day is a big thing here. I had a big fight down there, that's why I fought and came here. The gharwali was causing lot of trouble there. Just because I am her niece, will she let me go? No she won't. She used to take money for water, food, expenses, electricity and everything.

INTERVIEW AT SOURCE WITH RADHA'S MOTHER

I had rice and sambar for lunch. These two women are my neighbours. One of them is also a Devadasi. I have 4 girls. My daughter is married and she is staying in her husband's place. I have 2 sons. My husband has taken away both my sons and two daughters and left me about 15 years ago. Now I have no contact with them. What can I do? I simply come home and sit. I have a grandson. My older daughter has gone to the field now to work. I am unable to work now. Most of the time, I just sit at home. I live alone here. It has been 7-8 years since I have actually gone out to some place for a long time. I don't work also. My health is suffering especially since yesterday. Your PE has given me a pill. I took it, I told her that if I die, I will make sure the neighbours tell the police that it was she who gave me the pill and the pill killed me!

My daughter is in Bhiwandi. Very recently, she called me there because I was all alone and was not well. So, I went there for two days. I left on Tuesday and got back on Friday. She was initially staying with my sister but she created problems for my daughter. My other children



just do not come to see me. I also don't go that side. Why should I? I have been having cold and stomach pain. I have given off my older daughter in marriage to my younger brother. She has two children, one son and one daughter. They are in the 7th and 9th std. My brother was a terrible drunkard. He drank endlessly. For the last 4-5 months, he has stopped. They stay close by.

I hurt myself on my hand. I got a current shock on my thumb joint. It hurts a lot when I work. There are many Devadasis near by my home. Now there are no dedications happening. It is such a good thing that they have been stopped. Otherwise everyone would have died by now from some or the other disease. My daughter Neelamma comes here for the Jatras. She comes whenever she feels like. She stays for about 4 or 5 days. She decides when she wants to come and go.

Her presence here is actually of not much help to me. She just sits in one place and does nothing in the house when she comes. She will go out. I continue to do all the work. She does work hard and send money for the house. We are in dire straits. We are living in extreme poverty. This house is given to us by the government. Neelamma has found someone there, her lover. He is a good man. He too has come here twice. So she seems well settled there with this person. She doesn't have any other problems. She is staying in her own place. She doesn't have issues from a gharwali.

She was made a Devadasi about 10 years ago. I wasn't even here when that happened. My husband had left me by then. I was out. By then, my husband made her into a Devadasi and my sister who was in Bhiwandi asked me to take her there. So, a lady from the village Bhimmavva took her to Bhiwandi. My sister took a loan of Rs.9000 over my daughter and harassed my daughter a lot. She fought with her and left the house.

Radha comes everytime she knows I am unwell. My husband is old now. He has not remarried after he left me. I do go to that village because that is my mother's village but I do not look at him and he does not look at me.

There are also women who have lost their husbands or have left their husbands who go to these big cities. Neelavva does say she will comeback. Actually speaking, she does not have to do this work in Bhiwandi. We both can easily work here and earn enough to fill our stomachs. It is our responsibility to stay healthy. It is best to work in the fields and eat.

When she comes here, she runs off to her sister's place, goes for movies or just sits at home doing nothing. She says she will do what she feels like. It is certainly difficult for her there. Who knows what kind of clients go and visit them? What is that thing? Hmm...nirodh... yeah... if not for it, many girls would have died by now. Her lover keeps calling me "come mausi...come mausi to Bhiwandi"...that's why I went there for a couple of days but I could not stay there longer.

There is no use living. There is no help from anywhere (starts crying...) There is nobody to know if I stand or if I fall. Thankfully, here people around are good. There are no caste differences here in the village. Madar, Kuruba, Okaligar, Muslims- all of us live together peacefully. There is a small land that the government has given me about 20 years ago. Once in a while, I go see that land.

11. Name: Sukanya (name changed)

Place: Hanuman Tekdi, Bhiwandi

Date : 7-10-09

Source address: Yamunavva Marewa Madar, Bisnal Village, Bilagi talk, Bagalkot district

My name is Sukanya. I still have not had my tiffin. I eat my first meal at 1 p.m. and then at 11 p.m. at night. I stay alone in this brothel. I do go to the village. In fact, I returned just 8 days ago. I go for the Yallamma Jatra once in two months. I have my parents. We are 5 sisters and 2 brothers. They all are there in the village. This is my 5th year here in Bhiwandi. I am 22 years old. I was young when I came here.

I send money to the village through money order. There is a post office close by. I send things also. I carry the things myself. My mother also comes here sometime. My family knows that I am here. They are



nice to me when I go home. I stay for about 2 months in my village when I go there. Here, sometimes I go out with my friends. I go to Mumbai also. I am allowed to go. The gharwali is also a Kannadiga. Why should she stop me? My parents know. We have nothing to hide. I am Devadasi's daughter of Yallavva.

The clients come from 10 a.m. in the morning and we end at 10 p.m. It is not like Mumbai where sex work happens through the night. I am the only one in this brothel. Yes, there are brothels where there are many women staying. Many of them come here hiding but for Kannada girls there is no problem. I have come here only to feed my family. When I came here for the first time, I knew I was going to be in sex work. I did not do sex work in Bilgi. I was in Sangli before I came here. I was there for 2 years.

It's the same everywhere. For sex workers, it does not make a difference where they are. I came to Sangli all by myself. There were people from my village in Sangli like Renu and all. In Sangli, there were many Kannada girls. I want to collect money, build a house, and look after my parents. What else is there to hope for?

Two of us are Devadasis, three other sisters have been married. My older sister is also here in Bhiwandi. She came after me to Bhiwandi. She was in Sangli too before coming here. She was in Sangli for 5 years and she came here after I finished my 3 years here in Bhiwandi. She has been into sex work for the last 15 years. I don't feel like I should leave. If I miss home, I go there. Stay there for 2-3 months and come back again. I don't feel like quitting or anything. What is there to like or not like? If I have to feed my family, I have to work right?

I have no problems here at all. We can't do anything to the clients. Even if they come drunk or in which ever state , there is nothing that we can do . You can help in whichever way you can. If you do help, I will leave Bhiwandi (she leaves in a rush because gharwali around).



12. Name: Asha (name changed)

Place: Hanuman Tekdi, Bhiwandi

Date: 6-10-09

Source address: Yallavva Merawa Madar, Bisnal Village, Bilagi talk, Bagalkot

My name is Asha and I am from Bagalkot. We are two girls staying here. I have been here since 10 years. I keep going home. Once in 3-4 months I go and come back, when there is a festival or some function in the family. My parents and brothers live in the village. I do not send money home and all that. I have come here for my comfort. Why should I give them money? (This is mostly a lie because the gharwali was present there). I was in Sangli before I came here. I came here alone. I was made a Devadasi and so I knew I was going to be a sex worker.

When I have time, I just spend time talking to everyone here and have some fun. Everyone is my friend here. I have breakfast at 10 a.m. in the morning. I have tea again at 2 p.m. I have lunch. I am up till 10 p.m. in the evening. Clients come whenever they feel like. There are no set timings.

I will stay here as long as I feel like. After that, I will leave and go back to the village. If I get tired of this, I will go back and work in the fields or something. Whatever said and done, I have to do some work to survive. My family looks after me well. There are other madams also who come here. I know them well. I am seeing you here for the first time. There are not so many Kannada girls. Telugu and Nepali girls are more here. I do not know if more girls are coming from 3 B.

They have given us all information about HIV. We use condoms strictly. Since past 5 years, I have been in Bhiwandi. When I go to the village, I stay for at least 1 month or 45 days. I have no more news.

INTERVIEW AT SOURCE WITH ASHA ANDS SUKANYA'S PARENTS (ASHA AND SUKANYA ARE SISTERS)

Mother's name is Mareva and father's name is Madevappa.

We go to the nearby fields about a kilometre away to do daily labour. Where we have to go depends on the need in the fields. We have no choice but to work. We both work together. We have 6 children. We have just one son who lives in the next house with his family. He is a son so obviously he has to help us when we need. Two of our daughters are Devadasis. What to do now? Our situation was bad. We did not want to do this to our daughters but their grandma insisted and made the girls Devadasis. We both said no. We said no but she told us that it will help our situation of poverty and things will improve (The grandmother is now dead. She is Madevappa's mother). The girls were made Devadasis when they were 15 years old. Three other girls are married off, two to the nearby village and one to Badagandi. They do keep coming home. We have 4 grandchildren and two are on the way.

During our times, many girls were made Devadasis but now it has stopped. We personally feel, it is better to get the daughters married off. It is good for the daughters and it is nice when they come home with their husbands and kids. What do we do with 'prostitutes' in our house? Our daughters Asha and Sukanya both come home. They do send us money. We need it. Who is there to look after us?

They come home once in 4-6 months. When there is Yelamma jatra they come. They bring us things and money, only when they come. They don't send it with others. We do need their help. It is not nice to have Devadasis though. My son also shouts at us and asks why we gave our daughters to be Devadasis. It is not the girls' fault also. They did not know anything. They were young. They also tell us now that if they knew that this was what being a Devadasi meant, they would have refused and got married.

They say that in Bhiwandi also they have their own issues. There is not really much choice. How can we ask them about all that? What else to do now? Once they are made Devadasis, there is nothing one can do. They went to Bhiwandi at the age of 18 years. First, the older daughter went and then the younger. We know one lady here in the village who is in Bhiwandi. She took our



daughters. It has been about 5 years since they have been in Bhiwandi.

It's been continuously raining here. It is difficult. There is a school in our village itself for our grandchildren. We have two jatras here in our village. We have no caste differences here.

The girls keep telling us they want to come back. We tell them that they can come whenever they want. We will work in the fields. When the girls come home in the village they do not practice sex work here.

Their life there is also very difficult. The old lady kept telling us that things and situation in our homes will improve if we made our daughters Devadasis. There is a 2 year age difference between the two of them. They are 23 and 25 years old. They are staying with a gharwali. If the girls come back, obviously we have to accept them and receive them at home.

We are also against the practice now. It does no good to anybody. The girls call us once in way. We do not know how to call. When they call, we talk. They call us once in a month. We have never been there. What will we do going there?

We do not know anything about city life. We have to go to Bilgi or Galgalgi to visit hospitals. If you all help, why will they practice sex work? If there is some help for them- house or work, it will help our girls. If the government gives them a shop, it will help. We do not know how much the girls earn. How can we ask our daughters?

There are no women in the village who are not Devadasis and yet practice sex work. There may be women but it's all hidden. We do not know. We are 7 sisters and all have been married. None of us were made Devadasis. Even in my husband's family, there are no Devadasis.

My husband lost one of his eyes. When he was working, something fell into it. It has been many years. Actually, we had two sons but we recently lost one. He was married only for five months. The girls stay at home for 3 months, 6 months and sometimes even a year. They then work with us in the fields. When they come to

the jatra, they will stay here and go. We are sometimes worried about them. The girls question us- why did you make us Devadasis? We could have worked here and earned whatever little we could. It is difficult for them there also. The villagers are nice to the girls. They do not discriminate against them.

Now most people work. The old lady was not a Devadasi. She passed away about 8 years ago. The lady that our daughters went to Bhiwandi with is also not a Devadasi. She just knew that place.

13. Name: Bhavani (name changed)

Place: Hanuman Tekdi, Bhiwandi

Date: 6-10-09

Source address: Bhavani Madar, Badagandi Village, Bilagi talk, Bagalkot district

I am actually from Bijapur. I have been here since 12 years. I came here when I was 14 years old. They made me a Devadasi as soon as I matured. I live with my own sister here. This is our own house. My sister's husband and their children also live here. She has four children. They all go to school. They come here only to eat but we do not allow the children to stay here. "It will be a sin on our part to expose the children to our lives and make them live here. So we make them stay in another room that we have taken outside."

My sister is also a Devadasi. She came first to this place. She used to come back to the village for her delivery but the first three of her pregnancies were a failure. All three children were still born. So my father sent me here to look after my sister and help her during her deliveries. They told her not to go back to the village unless absolutely essential and to try to have the deliveries here itself. Ever since I came here, my sister's health improved and now she has four children.

I will continue to work as a sex worker as long as there is strength in me. After that, I will go back to the village and live there. I got to the village to visit everyone during Yellamma's jatra and other big festivals. I do not send money home through anybody else but take it along with me when I go. I can't trust anybody.



I had no choice. I landed here because my fate was to be a sex worker. I also have my own house just next to this house. Many older Devadasis tend to become gharwalis. Now our main responsibility is to give the four children a good education and make them successful in their lives.

INTERVIEW AT SOURCE WITH BHAVANI'S MOTHER AND SISTER IN LAW

Met the mother and sister in law of Bhavani. Bhavani's mother is very old and is apparently under medication for some mental illness. The relationship between them seemed a bit strained. The family here at source feels that Bhavani has not been doing enough for the family and that the sisters there are not bothered about them.

My name is Bhagavva (mother) and my name is Priya (Bhavani's brother's wife - she is also her niece). Bhavani and her sister are both Devadasis. There is another sister married here and I am her daughter. We live here, my husband, ajji and my baby. We have been having terrible rains. It has been troublesome.

Ajji: I have 3 daughters and one son. So you have come from Bangalore is it?

Priya: My daughter is 3 years old. ON November 20th, she will be 3 years old. No, she is not going to school yet. I am from Sunag. I studied till class seven. I wanted to study further but they did not send me. What to do? I can speak broken English.

Ajji: My son works as a construction worker. He leaves at 8 am and comes back at 5 pm. He is also a poojari in the nearby temple.

Priya: Ajji is crazy. So many times, we have taken her to the mental hospital in Dharwad. She is better now. I have two younger brothers. They both go to school. One is in the 9th std.

Ajji: Both my daughters are in Bhiwandi. Another is married and Priya is her daughter, married to my son. Bhavani does not have children but her sister (Dundavva) has 4 children. They don't come here any more. Even during Jatra and functions they do not come. They do not even call. The last I saw them was 2 years ago. It has

been 18 years since they have been there in Bhiwandi. We do even have their phone number. Whenever Dundavva fights with her husband, she will call us. Not otherwise. They are not bothered about us. I just work here and we live on my son's earning. Dundavva's one son, Sanju is here with us. We eat because of my son. Sanju does not go to school anymore. He is 12 years old. He just hangs around here. Dundavva first went to Bhiwandi and then Bhavani followed. Both are Devadasis. Earlier they used to come but not anymore.

It is so good that you have gone to school and are independent. So nice to see you girls like this. When did you go to Bhiwandi? When will you go next? So you keep traveling on work. I do feel like seeing my daughters but what is the point? I have been to Bhiwandi long back to see my daughters. Now I keep myself occupied with the temple work. Cleaning the place and changing the goddess's saree.

Priya: I have to take ajji to the hospital. It has been 4 years since I have been married. I am only 18 years old. My husband is a poojary at the temple (most likely a yellamma temple).

14. Name: Ramya (name changed)

Place: Hanuman Tekdi, Bhiwandi

Date: 7-10-09

Source address: Budni KD, Mudhol Taluk, Bagalkot

I am from Boodni village. I live here alone. It has been raining very heavily in my village but there has been no harm to my house yet. I am actually going home tomorrow. I go by train from Kalyan to Miraj and then take a bus. I stay in the village only for two or three days. I don't like to stay there longer than that. Sometimes, I stay there really long like one or two months when my heart really desires. I go there and then decide when to come back.

I have a sister and parents in the village. My sister is married and she has 8 children. Out of them, 5 died due to ill health. Now there are 2 boys and a girl. They don't go to school. I have no brothers. If I had brothers why would I come here to do this? I have been here



since 8 years. I was in Mudhol before this. I practiced sex work in Mudhol also in my own house. I have an own house there. Now, no one lives there. It is locked. I myself don't go there. Since I lost my father, we moved out of that house. I was in Mudhol for a very long time. I don't remember for how many years. I have travelled to Sangli and Mumbai.

This is a rented house. There is a gharwali. She has also gone to her village Kalagahalli. She is also from Karnataka. There are many girls who are from Kannada here. I do have friends. One cannot stay here alone. My gharwali is nice. I do not have any trouble. I do have to send money home. Obviously, it depends on my fate how much I can send. But I have to make sure that I also save some money for myself. I have saved some in an account. I have to think about my future or else who else will. Now I am young and I can live. Who will look after me after I am old?

If I have money, I have life. If I do not have money, I have nothing. If I do not have money, people will say let her die soon. They made me a Devadasi. That's why I am here. Why else would I come into this place? I knew right from the beginning that this is what I would have to end up doing. What to do? I have no other choice.

I moved out of Mudhol because I wanted to see the city and experience the life here. I came here and I like it better here and so I stayed back here. There is something or the other to do here. We can go out, talk to others etc.

I don't think it is difficult for me to stay with a gharwali or with more girls. More the number of girls, the better it is. What I earn comes to me, what they earn goes to them. There is no question of it becoming difficult just because there are more girls. They won't eat up what I earn. They won't even know how much I earn. I buy my sarees from the man who comes here or sometimes I go to the outside to the shop too. We cook here.

How can I go to the village for good? Who will earn for me? Who will look after me? As long as I am young, I will earn. After I become old, I will leave. I do not know how old I am now. We make sure we use condoms

whether the clients like it or not. If they refuse or they are drunk, we ourselves put the condoms. If clients offer us more money to have sex without condom, we ask them to leave. Why should we lose our health? It is for this life that we have left everything and come here and what's the point in compromising on that?

We cannot say how many clients will come per day. It's our fate. Some days 15 clients come, some days 10. I can't say. Men from all age groups come here. Whoever wants comes. We do not look at all of them. We don't bother looking at their faces. I cannot send money through anybody. There are no people from my village here. I have to take it myself. All those in my family are nice to me.

Till there is strength in me, I will continue this profession. After that let's see what happens. Staying with my family and meeting my people gives me happiness. Staying with all of them, laughing with them gives me joy more than anything else. I do feel lonely here at times. It is not like staying at home. We get condoms here itself. The madam comes and gives us. I do go for movies, very rarely though. If Kannada films come, then we go. Recently I saw Suresh Kumar's film. I go with my friends from here. I have nothing in my heart that I want help for.

People only talk and promise but they don't do anything. They come and ask us million questions, they are nice to us and they leave. They do nothing. In the village also I was a part of the sangha. They only made promises. We will give you house, get land sanctioned but did nothing for me. They put maska on us and get all the information that they need and they leave once they get what they want from us. So, I offer them tea and ask them to leave. Why should I lose my clients because of them? They keep asking us questions like how did you come, how do girls come here, what do you do and all that. I just believe that I should do my work and be by myself.

In Mumbai, the girls work the whole night and sleep the whole morning. I don't count the times I have to go home. I go when my heart wants. Not only for



Yellamma Jatra and all that! I don't like the idea of having a partner. I like to stay by myself. What is the use of having a man? I have not left my parents and family to find myself a man. I prefer working alone and earning for myself. Tension lena ka nahin, dena ka hai. Duniya ko tension dena ka hai mujhe.

We did not have heavy rains here but the last few days it has been raining heavily here. I do not know if girls come. I don't care about all that. I have to earn. That's all. I also don't bother finding out about the girls here. It doesn't help me in anyway. Of course when I am sick, I can tell the gharwali that I will not do sex work. If I am healthy, I will earn tomorrow if not today. If I am fine, this duniya is fine.

I do go to clinics. Wherever I am comfortable, I go there. Why are you alone? You should get married. I don't have to be married to serve men. I am doing that now. If you stay by yourself, you will be alone. I am a Devadasi. But your life is not like ours. For us, anything is fine. Which town are you from? Don't your parents ask you for your marriage? What has made you come into your profession? Why do you want to work with women like me?

We are poor. We have nothing. No house, no field. We do not even know to work. I can't even cook without a stove. In my village I will burn my fingers. At least a house for us will help us. We do it because there is no choice. If we work, only then we can survive. In the village also I joined in sangha. What was the use? Nothing. Many have tried to convince us. Like you, they come and they have tried to convince us to go back. They say don't do this. In fact, once I had a fight with one of such people. In fact, last time somebody had come like this and soon after that there was a raid here. So, most women here feel that when people like you come, it is because you are going to go back and inform the cops and they come and raid us. That's why women don't say anything. They keep quiet. People like you will come, you have your salary. Even if you sit here the whole day, still you will get your salary. We sit here and we lose money. People need to understand

that we are here because of our difficulties. If you stand by us then there is some hope but if you also come here with empty promises, what is the point? What god? God cannot do anything. We have to do, what we have to do. God simply sits and watches us. I am sorry if I said something wrong or if I hurt you with my words.

I have no trust in the government. They just eat and sit there. I have no faith in the government. I will do what is in my heart. I won't listen to anybody. Have you been to Bidri to Yellava's temple? Are you going to stay here longer? This is a voice recorder right? I do not want to trust anybody. We don't entertain madams like you here. You all record this and then make the cops do raid here. You all get your salary but it is we who suffer.

This Renuka is my family relative. I think you should get married soon and not wait till you have grey hair. You must have two children, one son and a daughter. "aartigey ondu hennu...Keertigey ondu gandhu". A real home is a home that has a husband and children in it.

INTERVIEW AT SOURCE

I (Ramya, who happened to be visiting while the interview was conducted at the source) came here about 15 days back. There is jatra for a week, which starts on next Saturday. I had some other work. I do keep coming once in 3 – 4 months. This is my parent's house. Along with my mother, my uncle, my sister and their children stay here. My sister has got 3 children. First child is not going to school. She got married. The second daughter and a son are going to school.

I am not aware of the Gram Panchayat. We have got around 4 acres of land. We have planted sugar cane. We have 2 borewells and don't have any problem for water.

There are no other girls with me from this village. There are no new Devdasis. All girls who go from here are Devdasis only.

You can give information to the other girls. It's the only oni (lane) we have here. There are about 35 families. In those 35 families, there are two parts (bana).Some of



the community members don't even talk to each other. If we have to do any jattras in our community, we take turns. One year they will conduct the jatra and second year we will do. They don't even call us for any functions like marriage. We also don't call them for our functions. Children are going to school. There is a school nearby.

If there is some program from the government, all the people will come together.

Devadasis come back to their home and stay with their families in their old age, even if they go out from the village for sex work.

I don't come here regularly. I have got my own house at Mudhol. I will stay there. Even if I come here, I usually don't go out. I will only stay at home. If I go out, only then people will comment about us. I don't want to give that a chance.

There are Okkaligas, Ahrijans, Reddys, Banajigars and Muslims. We are the only lower class community in this village. There is Humamappan jatra that happens once in a year. People from every community come together for that jatra. Being Harijans we are not supposed to enter that temple. We go for the jattras.

If we call people for the jatra that we celebrate at our community level, other community members also join.

Nobody follows Devdasi system now. I am the last person in our family. Devdasis can't leave this system. In some of the villages people quit the Devdasi system by giving money to the village heads and providing lunch for the community members. It is not in practice in our community. We have stopped this system. We don't follow this system in our family at all.

Gangavva (her mother): My brother (mother's brother) takes care of the family. There is no other program that takes place in the village. There is no hospital in the village. Doctor visits the home and treats patients. They need to be paid.

Vittal: (Co-brother of respondent): Hanumappana jatra is the biggest jatra in this village. People from other community also come to that jatra. The youths throw coloured water on our Devdasi girls. We don't like it. We

refuse to send our Devdasi girls for that jatra. Only few community members have got their own land. Others have to go to the field for coolie work. They had a tough time to get the coolie work from the people of other community. Some of the community members have started sending the Devdasi girls to Hanumappna jatra. We have not sent our girls. So they don't talk to us and the community is divided into two groups.

If there is some government program both groups come together and take part in the public function. If you want to conduct any programs for the community adolescent girls or the boys, people will come together. It won't be a problem. Mang and Madara is the common name used in the community for Madar community.

15. Name: Sindhu (name changed)

Place: Grand road, Mumbai

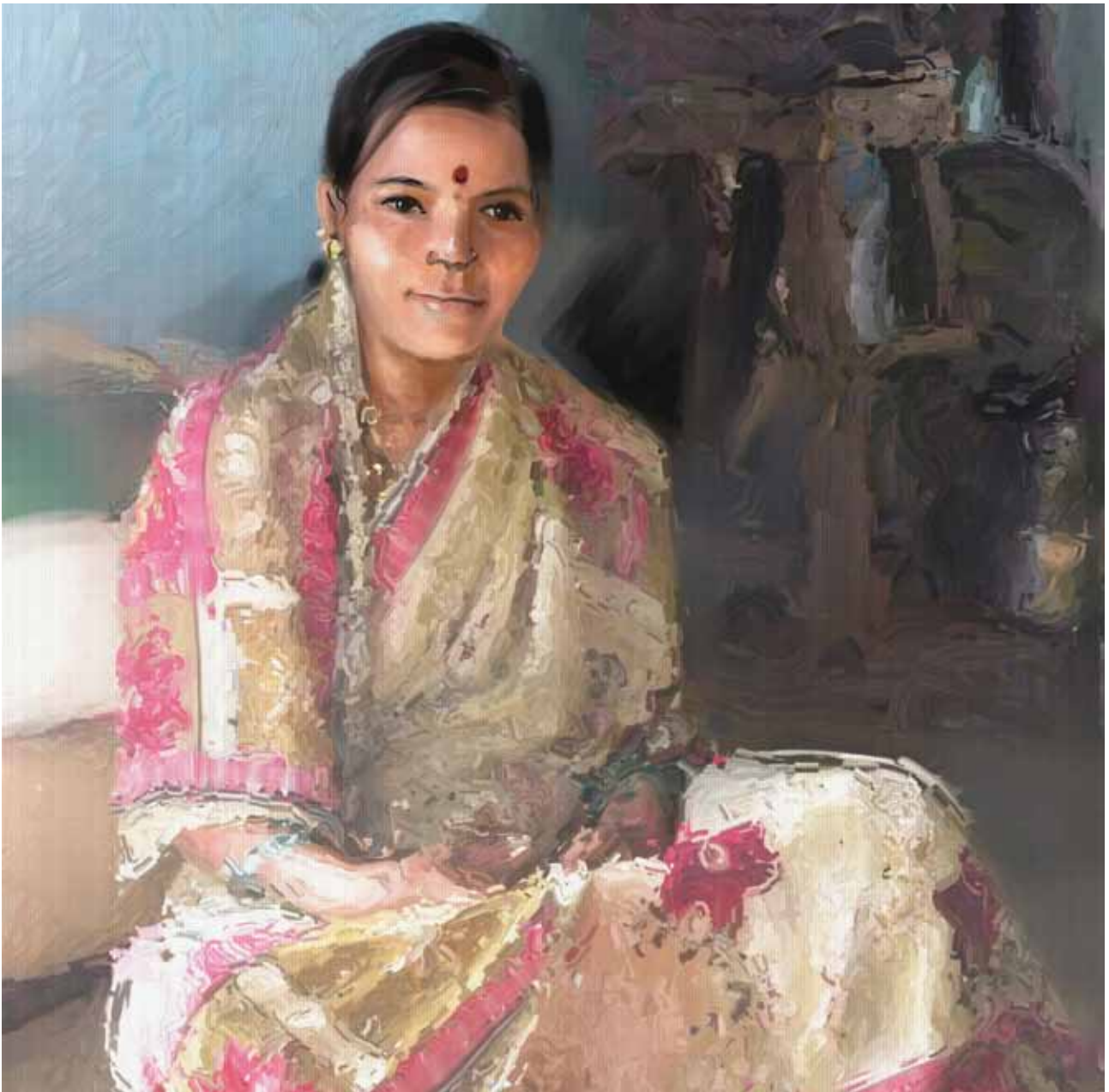
Date: 7-10-09

I am from Bijapur. I have a daughter. I am Devdasi. I came here when I was really young. My daughter is 15 years old. She goes to school. I have put her in a hostel in my place. All my family lives in the village. I have brothers and parents there. I visit my place twice in a year or something. Sometimes I go there and stay for a couple of months with my daughter. At other times, I go for the village jatra. I don't go to the Yellamma jatra very often. I have been here since 8 years. I came straight here from the village. I did not go anywhere else.

I send home all of what I earn. I have bought my family everything - a house, fields, and cattle. I have settled all off them well. I will be here just for another year or two till my daughter completes her class tenth. After that, I want to go back to the village and be there. My daughter is well looked after by my parents. I cannot sit and chat with you now because there is a customer inside waiting for me.

I send the money whenever the need arises through somebody I know who is going there or I take it myself. Earlier the situation was bad at home and I had to send them but now things are far better. They can manage even if I don't send them money. My people





know that I am into sex work but the people in the village do not know.

Yes, my family is nice to me when I go. They have to be. It is I who has helped them till now. Both my brothers are married with children. We all live together in the village. My daughter doesn't know I am a sex worker. I will make her study till 12th and then find her a job. I ensure that I don't unnecessarily spend money, I use it very carefully. I came here on my own. Nobody sent me here. I have to go now. You can have some cold water to drink. Why don't you eat with us?

16. Name: Suma (name changed)

Place: Grand road, Mumbai

Date: 7-10-09

Source address: Bijapur

I have been here since the last 40 years. I came here because I am a Devadasi. A lot of young Devdasis used to come here. I have two sons. One is in class twelve and the other in seven. Both of them are studying in Bijapur. My Chikamma looks after the boys. I have been here for 40 years. I was born and brought up here. My mother was in Kamatipura. We had a house there. We left everything and I came here after my mother died.

I do keep calling the boys and sending them money. Per month, the expenses for both my sons is Rs.6000. My older boy wants to study computer. I have to provide for all that now. I go to the village twice or thrice a year. Actually whenever there is a need. I stay there for a month or two and come back again. Now I have nobody here who is related to me. (Sumitra and Rekha live in the same house under one gharwali). The gharwali is quite non-interfering. We have the freedom to cook our food and do what we want.

Now the business is really down for us because all these Bengali girls have come. They are willing to do anything for money and have any kind of sex and so they are in demand but we are straight. We, Devadasi women, have lost out here. Sometimes, we have as less as just one client per day. It is difficult. The future is difficult for us here. I think two more years and I will get back. I do not practice sex work in any other place in the city. I do go out with customers but always come back here.

I have a bank account, ration card and voter's id in the village. I did not bother getting it done here. Why should I? I have nothing here. In the village, at least your family will benefit from it. Now very few girls come from there. Police keep coming this side very often. Only those who are 25-35 yrs are seen more here. Younger girls are rare to find here now. This Zareena, who is now with the project, I knew her from the beginning. We both practice sex work together in the same place. She has left all of this now. Good for her. I am still stuck here. This is what is written in my fate. What can I do?

I will just say, whatever way you can help, you help us. There is a new girl in the nearby house. When they are new, they are scared. We also have to keep an eye on them. If they are found missing, all of us will get into trouble.

My sons do not know that I am into sex work. I have told them that I am doing other work. The villagers know that I am a Devadasi. Now, I cannot stop the boys from growing and learning about all this. They

are educated now and if they do get to know, I cannot do anything. I send money through money order. Whatever said and done, I have to send a minimum of Rs.2000 every month to the village. I just have to. Even if I go hungry here, I have to send that money. The older boy is in a hostel and his expenses are more. I will do as much as I can. Let us see how far they will go.

I do not think about what I will do when I go back. For now, my life is here. What happens later, we will see then. When I was young, I knew nothing. I grew up in brothels. I worked in cleaning the brothels, filling water and cooking, washing vessels in Kamatipura. Men used to come and I had no idea what happened. I matured here and slowly I began to understand what happens here. Then they 'spoil' me also and then I understood. It was my aunt who first brought me here 'mausi'. Now there is no more Devadasi tradition. Now the girls get married and they run away from their husbands and come here.

I am against the Devadasi tradition. It is better to marry a disabled fellow or a blind fellow than to end up with twenty men. That is better any day.

17. Name: Ranu, 26 years

Place: Pune

Source: Navalagi

I am Ranu from Navalagi village Jamakhandi Taluk, Bagalkot district. I am staying with brothel madam Ranava in Pune. She is whole and sole for me. In the beginning, I came to Bombay with my sister. She died recently and then I came to Pune. I stayed for nearly 5-6 years in Bombay and continued my business. Four months back, I came to Pune. All the sex workers ask the help of Ranava for any problem that they have. She supports us in the time of crisis. I don't go to other places to do sex work other than Pune because it's a safe place for me. Anything can happen if we go blindly to other places. In the beginning, I started sex work at home with the help of my sister and then I came to Bombay. I am practicing sex work since 8 years. In Bombay, we were many FSWs from Karnataka and my native place. Now we are a group of 12 FSWs from my own village.



I am a Devadasi woman. In my very early age, my grandmother dedicated me to Devi Yallamma and tied the nuptial knot. I didn't know what they did for me. I was so happy because it was like a marriage function, I was wearing new clothes, wearing new bangles etc.

I have a partner in my native. He is requesting me to stay there. His wife also knows about our relationship but she has accepted it. I gave birth to two female kids. First one is studying in LKG and the second one is at home. My parents are looking after them. I conducted the marriage of my younger sisters. Now, they are staying with their husbands in their native places. My parents don't know about my profession.

I have a very good relation with my family. Every day, I speak with them on the mobile phone. Once in two months, I visit my native place and enjoy being with the family. My father looks after my family. They do coolie work. I send money to my family through other girls from my village, who stay with me. In the entire village, there is no good opinion about sex work. It's the same in my family and among friends. They use bad words for the sex workers. Sometimes it hurts me. I won't bother as I live because of this profession.

I am 26 years old. I studied up to 3rd standard. In my child hood I used to play with other children. I did coolie work in the landlord's field at my native place. I had five friends in my child hood. Now they are married. Ranavva, the brothel owner advised me to not waste money and have sexual intercourse without condom. Usually we don't go outside. We go only to purchase things for home. We watch TV in our leisure time and discuss with friends about our family. There are two close friends here and we help each other. I am worried about my children and family. I have to help my children settle in life. I have to send them to the school and I have to conduct their wedding. If I die, who will look after them? So I am worried most about my children.

I am earning money and use it for my family. I am earning Rs. 5,000 to Rs.6000 per month. I save money with the private money lenders. I save money for the sake of my children. Every month I send money

to my family. If they ask for money, I send money through other girls. I don't have a bank account. I am planning to have it as early as possible because in a government bank, the money is safer. I don't have any major expenditure. The only expense is on clothes. As a sex worker, it's important for me to attract the clients. Other than that, I don't have much expenditure. I plan to build a house at my native for my parents because the house was destroyed in the recent floods. So I have to save more money and it's an urgent need for me. I wanted to settle down in the future. I don't know when it can happen but I am seriously thinking about it.

To talk about my health, I have no major health problems. If I find any health problem, I consult the doctor. Mainly, we use condoms to protect ourselves from HIV-AIDS. Without condom, we don't agree to sexual intercourse even though clients offer more money. Condom also protects us from STI problems. Cleanliness is very important to maintain our health so we keep our body and home very clean. Usually, once in a month we consult the doctor. We don't have any health insurance or health card. Organization people supply the condom freely. Whenever I visit my native Navalagi, I visit the clinic conducted by KHPT, where everyone gets free medicine. When compared to Karnataka, there is not enough facilities here for the sex workers. We get all the facilities in Karnataka.

We celebrate Durgamma festival and Maruthi festival in our native. These are the village festivals for us. At that time, we also go and participate in the festival. Yearly once, we go to Yellamma temple at Savadatti. Daily, we worship Goddess Yeallamma. We live with beliefs. I am a devotee of Goddess Yallamma. Beliefs are important not only for a sex worker but also for every human being.

I don't face any problems in the destination. Sometimes police harass the sex workers here but I haven't faced any problem. I have very good relation with my family and I don't face any problem from them. My immediate challenge is to build a house for my family, so I need money for it. That is my only problem.

I don't know about the network. I learnt about HIV-AIDS and STI from the organization people. If we have sex without using a condom, we will get HIV. So we use condom in every encounter.

I have to get love and affection from the family and my children. That is my major expectation from my family. They expect financial help from me.

18. Madhu Poojari (name changed)

Place: Pune

Source: Bijapur

I am Madhu Poojari from Ghorthi village in Bijapur District. I got married when I was a child. My parents are at my native village and my brother is studying. My two sisters are married.

When I got matured, my parents sent me to my husband's house. There was a fight between my husband's family members and me. I stayed there for one year and I left my husband. Then I stayed in my mother's house for almost 3 months. In the same time, I got a boy friend and I went with him. He took me to Indi Taluk and we stayed in a rented house. I stayed with him for 3-4 months. Then there was a quarrel between him and me. In the same time, I developed a friendship with the neighboring woman. Her name is Mehaboobshek. She told me about this work. I felt very bad but I didn't find any other way to lead my life. I came to Bharshy with her. In the beginning, I found it very difficult to adjust to this work but slowly with time I adjusted. We face problems from the Police and the goondas. Organization people protect us from them. Other than that, we don't face any problem. I came here directly. I don't go to any other place. There are 50-60 women from Karnataka engaged in sex work here.

As I told you earlier, I am a victim of child marriage. I don't have children. I don't go to my home town because my parents don't allow me to go there. My younger brother talks to me over the phone without the knowledge of my parents. I send money to my brother whenever he asks for it. If he needs it urgently,

then I will call him here and give the money. My father looks after my family.

Usually people don't respect sex workers. They always humiliate us. My family members hate this work so they don't allow me to go to their house. My friends advice me to save money and have safe sex, otherwise I will face problems in the future.

We have 12 acres of land at my native. I used to work in our land. In my childhood, I had friends at my native. My close childhood friends were Shabana, Danamma, Mamthaz and Lalitha. We went to school together. We used to go swimming in the lake and play together. We used to go together to the village festival. You can go to my village and meet my family but the only thing is whether they will accept you are not.

I am a 24 years old woman. I studied up to 5th standard. Here, my close friend is Renuka Kattimany. If I need any help I will ask her. I discuss all the issues with her. In our leisure time we discuss about our native. Sometimes, we go out for shopping. Sometimes, we go to Ambabhavani temple. We go there once in a month.

My family and my parents are most important to me in my life. Again, I have to gain their confidence. My dream is to buy land and build a house in my native. Then I have to speak to my parents. I always think about my family. About family I get information about my family from my younger brother. About the profession, I believe in the information given by Renuka Kattimani and Manisha Jadav.

I save money with private money lenders (cheeti). I save in 20 private saving accounts. Yearly, it will be Rs. 1, 00,000. I have opened an account in Central Bank. Weekly once, bank people come to my house and collect the money. Whenever I get money, I save it in the bank. Purchasing cloth is a major expenditure for me. Other than that I spend the money on food, cosmetics etc. I give money only to my younger brother for his education. There are no limitations to my saving. Sometime its Rs.5,000 and sometimes it's



more than that. I have to own a shop at my native, buy the land and build the house. It's my plan for the coming 5 years.

I don't have any major health problems. If I get health problems like cold, cough, fever etc, I will take medicine from the organization doctor. Weekly once I consult the doctor in the organization. Sometimes, I face menstruation problems. At those times, I go to the big hospital here. Till today, I haven't faced any STI problems but weekly once I consult the doctor. I don't have health insurance or health card facilities.

I don't go to other places for sex work. We celebrate Ugadi, Deepavali and Nagarapanchami. I fast for Bagamma every Friday, the temple is in Gulbarga district. On that day, I don't do sex work and don't go anywhere. Earlier, none of my family members talked to me. After I started fasting, my younger brother talks to me. I believe that one someday my parents will also definitely speak to me. Daily, I do pooja of Malingaraya. He is my family God. During Ugadi, Jakkaraya jatra takes place and at the time of Deepavali, Malingaraya jatra happens at my native. These two are the major jatra for us. Other than that, we perform Goddess Yallamma pooja.

I don't face any problems here. If we face any problems like health, police or goonda, organization people help us. My family members don't talk to me and that is my main problem. I don't work under any brothel madam. We give money to the pimps. If we get Rs.100, we have to give them Rs.40. If I face any problem, I contact the organization people for help.

I am a member of the support group. Every two weeks, we conduct the meeting. Earlier, I was the president of the support group. Once in three months they keep the big meeting and we participate in it. Organization head and other officers participate in the meeting. We discuss about our problems in the meeting. There will be entertainment activities in the meeting like, FSWs dancing, singing and finally we are given lunch. There is total enjoyment in the meeting. I have attended 3 days of training in Mudhol.

I learnt about HIV-AIDS and STI through organization people. We also educate other girls about it. HIV can spread through unsafe sex, un-sterilized syringe, blood transmission and mother to child. STI can transmit through doing sexual intercourse without a condom. I know how to use the condom. Without condom, I don't agree to sexual intercourse even if the client offers more money, because if we do that we will lose our health.

I like the actor Shivarajkumar's films more because he gives good films. I like Sangollirayanna because he fought for our independence. I like all the food crops because we eat it. There are 20-25 women doing sex work with us.

I don't expect anything from my family. Only expectation is that they talk to me. They also don't expect anything from me. One of my friends was practising sex work. She has not saved money and her earning used to go to her partner. After some time, she became pregnant and at that time there was no money with her for delivery. Then I gave her the money and stayed with her in the hospital. I feel really proud about the work I have done.

19. Ramya Kattimani (name changed)

Place: Sholapur

Source: Gulbarga

My name is Ramya Kattimani. I am a victim of child marriage. After some time my husband died. I have 5 sisters and one elder brother. My parents died. My brother and sisters are married. Now I have one girl child.

I live here with my daughter. I stay here since the last 3 years. Earlier I used to live with two other girls and then we separated. When I was in my native, one woman came to my village. She became friends with me. She is from Almelu village, Indi Taluk. She said that there is work as a cook in Bharshy and if I went with her, she would help me get the job. I thought that I have to work for a better future. So I went with her and for 8 days I stayed with her in Almelu. Then I came here. In the beginning, I felt filthy about this work. I asked



her why she engaged me in this work. She said that if I was not interested I could go back to my village. Then I made my mind to continue here. After some time one person came here from Almelu. He asked me to not do this work and to go with him. I stayed with him for almost 3-4 months. When I became pregnant, he took me to my native village Malli. He left me there and went back. He never came back. My brother didn't agree to my staying with him. Then I went to my sister's house, where I gave birth to a child. Then I went to Almelu village to meet my husband (partner). He had married another woman. She asked me to not spoil their family life, so I went back to my village. My brother told me I could stay there if I went without my child. So I again came back to this place.

My friend Madhuri and organization staff helps me with my problems. Here I don't have any problem. One more girl also came with me to this place. She is from my own village.

As I said earlier, I am a victim of child marriage. I have a two and half years old daughter. She lives with me. In the future, I plan to put her in the hostel in school. I visit my native once in six months. Even if I go there, I stay only for one or two days at my brother's place after which I go to my sister's house. I contact my sister over phone. My brother looks after my family at native. Recently, my younger sister's marriage was conducted in my native. I didn't go for the marriage because people would ask me about my job and it is very difficult for me to answer them. People don't have a good opinion about sex workers. People use bad words for our profession.

In my child hood, I used to help my mother and play with my friends. Cow rearing, sheep rearing, working in the agriculture field under land lords were my childhood activities. I don't get any respect from my family. If I go there, my brother beats me. You can go to my village and ask about me.

I am a 23 year old woman. I didn't go to school. I don't remember anything about my friends but I know that my childhood friends are married. Here, my close

friend is Madhuri. We go out for shopping together. If I need any help, I ask her. If we get free time, we talk about home.

My child is most important to me. I don't have any major desire apart from sending my child to school. I am worried that if anything happens to me there is no one to look after my daughter. I get information from my friend Madhuri. I believe in her information.

I earn Rs. 5000-6000 per month. The major expenditure is the house rent and I have to give extra money for water and electricity. If I go to my native, my expenditure increases. I have an account in the bank. They come to collect the money once in a week. I save Rs.300 to 400 every week. Without saving the money it is difficult to lead life in our old age. In my old age I cannot work like the way I do now. At that time there will be no one to help us. So, it is very necessary to save the money.

I have not faced any major health problems. If I get fever, cold etc I go to the hospital. I get treated by the organization's doctor once every week. I have not taken any medicine for STI because I have not faced that problem. We don't have any health card or insurance. Once I suffered from typhoid and at that time, I took medicine from the doctor at native.

I am not going to any other place for sex work. I travel only to my native and at that time I don't face any problem. I go alone to my native.

We celebrate Deepavali and Holi at my native. Chaudamma festival is a major village festival. At the time of the village festival, I visit my native. We are not doing sex work during the Jatras. Usually, I visit the Ambabhavani temple. It's our family Goddess. It's very difficult to follow the ritual rules here. So we don't do it here. Here, at the time of jatra, we entertain the clients. Earlier business was good but now the client volume has reduced.

Earlier we have faced problem from the police. Once I was arrested by the police and that time I gave fine and came back. Now there are no problems from them



because organization people have created awareness. If we earn Rs.100, we have to give Rs.40 to the pimp. Some clients behave arrogantly and some scold us. Some drunken clients also come to us and we don't entertain them. If we face any problem, we contact the organization people. We get treatment for our health problems from the organization. I know about the support group but I am not a member. I don't know about the district collective.

I learnt about HIV-AIDS through organization people. I know how it spreads. If we use condom we can protect ourselves from HIV and STI. In Hindi film industry, I like Ajay Devgan and Kajol. In Kannada, I like Malashree and Shivarajkumar because they act very well. I like Rama because he had a single wife and I like Jowar because most of the time I eat it.

I like Kitturu Chennamma most because she is an example for courage. I helped one woman when she was in the hospital. I am really proud about it. I don't expect anything from my family and they also don't expecting anything from me.

20. Kamakshi Kallavva (name changed)

Place: Sholapur

Source: Arjanagi-Bijapur

I am Kamakshi Kallavva from Bijapur. I am a Devadasi woman. At the age of 14, my grandmother dedicated me to Goddess Yallamma. I have one brother and two sisters. My parents died when I was young.

I live here alone. When I came here, I felt very bad about this work. I didn't like it but day by day I adjusted to this work. A Devadasi (Durgavva) woman from our own village influenced me to come here. She was doing sex work and she told we could earn more money in Sollapur so I came here. I came here directly and we don't go to other places for sex work. We don't face any problem here, if we do, we get help from the organization people.



I have one daughter. She is in second PUC at Bijapur. My brother looks after her. Once in two months, I visit my native. Once, I spoke to my brother and daughter. They don't know about my work. I go to my sisters' house. If they need money urgently, then I will go give it to them because it is only 3 hours journey to my native. My brother looks after my family in the native. I get respect from my family and I love all the members of my family. Sex work is not viewed favorably in the village.

At the age of 14, my grand mother dedicated me to Goddess Yallamma. In that ceremony, women dressed me up like a bride. It was like a marriage function and I felt very happy about it. I always remember that event. You can go and contact my family at any time but you should not disclose about my work to my family. People don't have any respect for sex workers.

I am 30 years old. I have not gone to school. My grandmother forced me to go to school but I was playing around with my friends. Mamtha and Shobha were my childhood friends. At the time of village festival, we meet each other and discuss about the family. They ask about my profession and I say that I do coolie work in Solapur. Normally, if needed, I ask Kashibai for suggestion. She works with the organization. If we get free time, we discuss about our family. Sometime we go out for shopping. In my life, my daughter is most important to me. After 5 years, I plan to go to my native. After that I will stop sex work and continue doing coolie work at my village. We don't waste the money. I get information from Kashibai and I trust her information.

Government has given me Rs.30, 000 to build a house under Devadasi Rehabilitation Project. I plan to add Rs.50, 000 to that money to build the house at my native. Under Devadasi Rehabilitation Project, government has given us Rs.25,000 to put up a shop. In that, subsidy is Rs.10, 000 and I have to repay Rs.15, 000. I also plan to own a shop at my native in another 5 years. Daily, we have to give Rs.15 for electricity

that we get only at night. If we need electricity in the day time, we have to give Rs.15 for every 2 hours. Weekly Rs.70 will go as water charges. Other than that I spend money for food. Now the cost of living here has increased. I have to conduct my daughter's marriage and it will be a major expenditure. I hold a bank account in my native. Whenever I go there, I put the money into my account.

I don't have any major health problems. I take medicine for normal deceases like fever, headache, body pain etc from the organization clinic. I consult the doctor once in a month or whenever I feel unhealthy. I don't have any health insurance or health card. I have not faced any STI problem. Usually, I don't travel to any other place except to my native village.

We celebrate Deepavali and Ugadi. I visit my native at that time and celebrate with my family. We celebrate village festival at the time of Deepavali. Every Tuesday, I fast in the name of Goddess Yallamma. On that day, I don't entertaining any clients. I also do daily pooja for Goddess Yallamma.

Earlier, we faced problems from the police and the goondas. After the intervention by the organization, there is no problem. If we face any problem then we contact Kashibai. I give half of my earnings to Gharwali. I don't have any major health problems. If I face any problem I take treatment from the hospital or from organization clinic.

I don't know about the network. I learnt about HIV and STI from the organization people. In the beginning, we scolded them and we didn't accept them. We asked why we were shown filthy pictures and to not come and spoil our culture. They did not stop and with each passing day we realized its importance in our life.

I know that HIV can spread through sexual contact without a condom, mother to child etc. I like Ajay Devagan in Hindi film Industry. I don't expect anything from my family but I want to be a part of my family in my old age. They also don't expect anything from me.



21. Kavita Jagtap, 27 years old

Place: Solapur

Source: Belgaum

I am Kavita Jagtap from Janatha Plot, Bailahongala in Belgaum district. Since the last 7 years I stay here. I am a victim of child marriage.

When I matured, my parents sent me to my husband's house. Sangli is my husband's native. I stayed with my husband for one year. During the same time, my husband had contact with his brother's wife. I got angry and I started to fight with him. I left him and started sex work in Sangli. In the beginning, I found it very difficult to adjust to this work. Day by day, I got adjusted. I used to cry and think why God cursed me like this. My neighbor was practicing sex work in Solapur. She told me that if I go with her, I would be able to earn more money in Solapur. So I came here. I live here with my son. For the initial one year, I stayed in Solapur. I then went to Bharshy and stayed there for 2 years. I don't face any problem here. Organization people support me. My friend Anitha also helps me.

As I told you earlier, I am a victim of child marriage. I didn't know what they did to me but now I realize what blunder they did and it has ruined my life. I have one boy child and he is 2 years old. He lives with me. Once in two years, I visit my native. I stay there for just 2 days and come back to Solapur. My brother forces me to stay with them but I am not interested. If I go there my sister in law may not accept me. So I don't want to spoil their family harmony. Once in a week, I speak to my brother over phone. I don't contact my husband's house because he is responsible for this situation. My father looks after my family. We are two sisters and two brothers. All are married. There is no good opinion about women practicing sex work. Friends and organization people advice me to stop drinking alcohol but because of tension I drink. At a young age, I started coolie work. I used to play with my childhood friends.

I am 27 years old. I studied upto 7th standard. My childhood friends are Bharthi and Drakshgayani. We

used to go to school together. If I need advice or suggestion, I ask Anitha. She helps me all the time. If I get free time, I spend it with other women. Some time we go to the cinema. My son is most important to me in my life. I have to help him lead a better life in the future. His future depends upon me. I have to send him to school. Other than that, I don't have any hope in life.

My only worry is after my death, who will look after my son? Anitha gives me the important information and I believe her. From my native, my brother gives me the information.

Now client volume has reduced and I earn Rs.200 to Rs.300. So it's very difficult to save the money. I spend most of my earnings on house rent, water bill and electricity. Recently, the cost of living has also increased. I have saved nearly Rs.20,000. There was a woman staying near my house and I had confidence in her. One day, she stole the money and gold and ran away. I don't know where she is now. Now, I save Rs.50 per day.

I plan to have a bank account. Day by day, my earnings decrease. So I plan to save more money to send my son to school. That is my desire. Other than that I don't have any other future plan.

I consult the doctor once a month. Once I had white discharge and I took treatment from the organization clinic. If I suffer from fever, cold etc, I take medicine from the organization clinic. I don't have any health card or health insurance. I under went HIV test and was found negative. Without a condom, I don't have sexual intercourse.

In the initial one year, I did sex work in Solapur and then I went to Bharshy. I stayed there for two years and came back here. Both are safe destinations. One of my friends took me to Bharshy.

We celebrate Deepavali here and Nagarpanchami at my native. Village festival is Maddibasava Jatra. I worship Goddess Ambabhavani. Earlier, I use to do the fasting. Now I stopped it because I can't follow the



rules of fasting. Here, it's very difficult to maintain it. I believe that Goddess Ambabhavani protects us from all the difficulties. I worship her at home daily. Once in a month, I go to that temple.

Earlier, we faced problem from the police and the goondas. Now, there are no problems from them because organization people have created awareness. If we earn Rs.100, we have to give Rs.40 to the pimp. Sometimes, we face a problem in using a condom if the client is drunk. If he does not agree to use the condom then we give his money back and strictly refuse sexual intercourse. If we face any problem, we contact the organization people. We get treatment for our health problems from the organization.

I learnt about HIV-AIDS through organization people. Earlier we didn't know what it is. Twenty years back, I didn't know about condoms. I heard that condom is used for birth control. Now it is used to protect us from HIV and STI.

I like Shivaraj Kumar in Kannada film Industry because he acts very well and his films are related to family bonding. I like Ranichennamma because she was like a man and in her life and was never scared of others. I like crop Jowar.

I believe that my son will look after me in my old age. My family members don't expect anything from me.

22. Hemavati (name changed)

Place: Budwarpet, Pune

Source: Bagalkot

I am Hemavati. Over here, people call me Hemaji or Hema Naik. My real name is Radha Naik (name changed). Here, no one knows my real name and they do not even recognise me with that name. There has been a change in my identity and I also respond only if I am addressed with the new name, 'Hema'. I have spent my last 25 years over here. It is a long walk in my life.

I came from Jamkhandi in the year when Smt. Indira Gandhi was shot dead. I was just 14 years old then. Since then, I have lost contact with my parents. I lost

my father when I was just 9 years old. My mother does not even know that I am here. Neither do my brothers. It is just my elder sister who knows about my existence. She also discovered about my presence after 8 long years of my life over here.

I came with a person who told me that I can get involved in a job which will pay better than what I get as a daily wage worker. I was married to a guy who left me 17years back. I cried a lot on the day he left me. At that time, I had lost interest in doing anything. When I think about it now, I feel it was a very funny and unnecessary action. After my husband left, my son has been everything for me. He is 21 years old now. I have kept him in a separate house from the time when he was just five years old.

I have given him everything. I have purchased a good flat for him in a good location just to help him grow in a better environment. I am sending him to a good college now. I just want to make sure that he gets the best and does not suffer like me. He goes to a good college now and also studies well. He has not failed even once and is a good guy who does not spend lavishly. He takes money only when necessary. Right from the beginning, I used to cook food for myself and my son. When it became difficult for me to look into the daily works at home, I kept a woman to do the work.

Back home, ours is a big family. My brothers sit in the village Panchayat meetings. We belong to the Naik community and are a well respected family. A whole lane is full of my relatives and other family members. Our land was taken for building a factory and thus all our men have got jobs in the factory. After my incident, all my family members and relatives have got their girl child married at a very small age.

I go back home twice or thrice in a year. I feel very sad when I go there as none of my brothers or mother acknowledges me. I walk in front of the house but do not go inside. I do not want to put them in trouble by revealing my identity as they have their own position in the society. I just roam around in the auto and do



not wear the sarees which I wear over here. I wear our traditional sarees over there and cover my forehead with the saree as it is a custom practiced there. I feel happy when I see my family members living happily. Though my mother does not even enquire once about me, I always enquire about my mother whenever I call my elder sister. She is my link to the family. My son does not even know Kannada and he doesn't relate to any of them. It is only my elder sister who comes over here once in a while and stays for a day. My son knows only her and her children.

When I came here, I felt very lonely and had no one to share anything as such. It was an inescapable maze for me. Initially, for six months I was forced to do this sort of work but later, I refused fully and was beaten up by my 'Gharwali' for this. Few of the other senior women who were there at that time came to my rescue. They convinced the gharwali and allowed me to perform other house old work and not this work.

In the initial days, I have worked in at least four to five houses just to earn money that would help me sustain. I used to stay at a different place and not in these buildings. I used to come early in the morning for household work and then go back at night. I have struggled a lot. It is not very easy to balance things in these places and also back at my place.

My son was young and providing a good education for him was a challenge. Somehow, I have managed it. After few years of household work, I took up the job of being a manger to a house in this area. I have worked for 15 years in that role. During that period, I have helped 10 to 15 girls find their permanent partners and even got them married. They lead a very happy family with their children and thank me when I visit them. It makes me feel happy when I visit all of them. Few have even got their children married.

I used to keep all my money in a small iron trunk. It is our bank as such. Now, I have got a PAN card and also bank accounts opened both for my son and myself.

Right from the beginning I cook for myself and even now it's the same. I have been suffering from diabetes since the past 8 years.

In those years, there was no individual who was willing to help us financially when I needed it. I used to borrow money from many individuals and they used to charge a high interest for it. Now, as my experience haunts me, I do not hesitate to help anyone financially when they are in real need. The local police harasses us a lot. During those times, it is the people of this community learning centre who come to our help. I have taken this house where we are sitting, on rent, from the past two years. I have only Bengali girls here and no girls from any other region. I alternatively stay here with my son.

My son says that he will be done with his studies in the next three years and will find a good job after that. I just pray for that. Once he takes up a job, I will leave all these things. I have no interest in being a part of this business. I just want my son to finish his studies, take a good job, get married and settle with his wife. I will also just enjoy looking at my son's family. That is all I want. My elder sister wants to get my son married to one of our brother's daughter. I do not know whether it will happen or not. If it does, it will be the best. No issues even if it doesn't happen. All these years, I have stayed away and will continue to do the same. My son does not have any intention of going back to Karnataka. So, it is up to him to decide. This is the only dream that I have now and I sincerely pray to god to make this happen.

23. Ratna Ragapur.

Place: Budwarpet, Pune

Source: Navalgi, Jhamkhandi

I am Roopa. My full name is Roopa Ragapur. People here call me as Roopa Ganguly and back home, my friends call me as Sapna. Ganguly is my favourite cricketer and that is why I am called Roopa Ganguly. I am from Navalgi near Jamkhandi. I am 24 years old now and I am here from the past 4 years.



I am a Devadasi. My mother was also a Devadasi who died two years back. She also worked here for quite some time. Ranavva is the one who brought me over here. She is my neighbour back home and here, she is the 'Gharwali'. All those who live here with me are from my village. They are all my neighbours. Few were here before I came and few came within months of my arrival. It feels like a home away from home. I have been staying at the same place from the beginning. I have neither changed house nor gone anywhere else.

I knew what my work would be before coming here. I came here with the intention to earn money as it was not possible at my place. In the initial days, the rate per person was not this much and also, I was new to this system. Over the years, I have understood the system and know how to make and save money for myself. I have studied till 5th standard and after that I left studies. I used to go for daily wage work after school. I am not aware of my father. I am the only child to my mother as my younger brother died at an early age due to ill health.

I send money back home through people whom I know and who come here. I do not have any bank accounts. I am in regular contact with my family members. My uncle, his family and my grandparents are the ones who stay back home. I take money along with me when I go back home. I visit my family at least four times in a year. I have constructed a new house back in my village. My mother died because of paralysis and I spent a lot of money on her treatment. Still, I could not save her life. Till now, I have spent around Rs.2.5 lakhs on building a new house and my mother's treatment. My uncle has given around Rs.50,000 and I have taken a good amount from my gharwali. At present, I am in a debt of Rs.50,000.

I do not have any soft feelings towards marriage or anything of such sorts. In the initial days, I had a dream of getting married and staying with my own family. My experiences over here made me understand life and its realities. I understand the importance of money and that is all I want now. There is no meaning for love or feelings.

I live with a guy since the past two years. He works in the hotel next to my place here. He earns around Rs. 8,000 in a month. He spends a lot of money on me. It all started from his side only. Initially, he used to offer me water or tea whenever I stood in the streets. After a few days, he told me that he likes me and wants to stay with me. Though I was not interested, later, I agreed as he supported me very well financially. He has asked me many times to marry him. I am not entertaining the idea as I have no faith in it. I just tell him that I am a Devadasi and married to God. So he has stopped asking me now.

I feel love is both good and bad. It is good as your lover helps you, supports you, lends an ear for all your feelings and sorrows and takes care of you. At the same time, it is bad as you always have the threat of being separated. In my own case, I was in love with my uncle's son. According to culture, he is supposed to be my brother, but, what do I do? I was in love with him and fortunately he also had the same feelings for me. One day, when both of us were talking to each other late in the night in the gardens of my house, my uncle caught us. He abused me for that act and also punished me for it. My grandparents also did the same. My mother was not in a position to do anything. My uncle asked me to either get married to another guy or become a Devadasi. I chose the second option as it would help me to continue talking to my uncle's son. After becoming a Devadasi, I came here and continued speaking to him. After a few months, he got married and now, he is being restricted from speaking to me. Even when I go back home, I cannot speak to him at any point. When I came here, I used to share all my difficulties with him and later with my new partner. I do not share things with any other people over here.

My day starts at around 10 a.m. here. After finishing the morning routine, I just go down and stand in front of the building. Sometimes, if we feel like eating we eat, otherwise, it is just a cup of tea and a pack of biscuits. I work till 2 p.m. or 3 p.m. in the afternoon and then cook for myself. Over here, everyone cook for themselves. After having lunch, I take a quick nap for 2





to 3 hours and will go down by 6 p.m. I work till 2 a.m. or 3 a.m. at night and then go to bed.

I like poori bhaji and poona peda very much. Whenever I feel like going out, I just roam around the city late into the night along with two or three other girls. I play in the building basement late into the night with the other girls. I do pooja regularly and fast once in a week. I do not have any complaints against God. Whatever happens is all because of our predetermined fate and there is nothing to be blamed for it. I like wearing sarees and not any other dresses. I have a fascination towards jewels. I watch a lot of Kannada movies and Darshan is my favourite star. I usually like movies with the theme of love or family. When I go back home, I go for daily wage work as I do not like to sit idle. It also helps me earn some money. These days, I usually go with my partner or if it is an emergency, I just go alone. Since I know Hindi, travelling alone is not a problem.

When I was young, I had the dream of studying well and getting a job. I am still in touch with my school teachers and speak to them when I go to my village. I have the same dream for my children. I just want them to get educated and take up good jobs. Sometimes, I feel like getting married and staying with the family. I will leave this work once I clear all my debts and make little money for myself. I just want to quit this profession if I get opportunities. Hope it comes true. In that sense, I only go around with my lover and have a good time with him.

INTERVIEW AT SOURCE WITH RATNA'S GRANDPARENTS

Off late, we have not been going for work because of the rains. We have been home. We go wherever we find work. This pile of corn that you see was what we were given from where we work. It is for us. We will crush this and use it for making roti. You eat only rice and chapatti in your side of the state right?

Hanummavva is my name. Surya is the father's name. My son, grand children, all live here. My son has a family. My grand daughter is Ratna. Her mother, our daughter lost her life about a year ago. She fell sick. Nowadays, we can never say what will happen to us. Wait a minute, I will make tea for you. We should treat people who come to our house well.

My daughter Champavva was here with us. She moved to Pune and from there she came back sick and that's why we have now decided to do away with sex work. Now, the Devadasi system itself is removed. What do we do with women from our house in this profession? Our entire village has shut this system down. If we get any information about people dedicating their daughters, we will have to inform the authorities.

My daughter was made a Devadasi when she was very young. After she went to Pune, she found a lover there. She has brought him home also. He has come and stayed with us. In fact when she was sick, he was here with her all through but after she died, he said he will go back. We asked him to leave and take care of his life.

When we made our daughter a Devadasi we did not know it's implications. Now we realize it was a mistake. Her daughter Ratna is also a Devadasi. For us, these two girls were like sons in the house. This house is also in Ratna's name. She is the one who got it built. In fact, we have left nothing for the girls. It is they who have. Today's times are very bad. In our age, the girls were so meek. They would always have their heads covered and be so respectful. Now everything has changed. Anyone can do anything now.

Ratna keeps coming. In fact, she left just a few days ago. She will come about 3-4 times in a year. She will stay for 8 days and sometimes even for a month. We are her family. She does not have her own parents. Ratna is like a son. That is Durgavva (on the street). She is also a Devadasi but she stays here in the village. She is a part of the sangha for women. It has been 6 years that Ratna

has gone to Pune. She went with the girls here from our village. A lady from our village called Ranavva has taken these girls. She is a gharwali there and most of the girls with her are from this village. She stays right here, next to our house. Ranavva is also a Devadasi.

Durgavva enters

(Conversation with Durgava)

I also went to Pune but my lover did not like it. He was much older to me so I did not go. He gave me a son and then left me. He got married to somebody else. We can never say. They will come and go. He was with me for more than 20 years. My son, Anand, was born after 12 years. He lives with me. He goes to school. I have been in the village for 25 years. I prefer staying in the village. I'm a part of Chaitanya Mahila Sangha. There was a job for peer educators. I used to do a little before- distributing condoms and all but now I don't. Still, there are two peers from the village. Now, there is a little more awareness on the importance of health.

There are many women who are Devadasis but they still go to the villages. Women who have left their husbands and those that are widowed also go.

Ratnas' grandparents:

Ratna does call us. Rannavva has prospered. There are 20 girls from this village in her brothel. She looks after them very well. She is a big woman now. She has 34 acres of land. We also have a little land. There was a lot of expenditure on the health of our daughter- Rs.30, 000 or more was spent on our daughter. Our daughter fell sick very suddenly². This is the house that Ratna got built. The little place in front of the house is in our daughter's name but she died without leaving any will. So that is just lying there. We cannot do much with it. They have told us that the land in mother's name cannot be passed on to the daughter.

Durgavva: These people just did not understand when I told them. They kept taking her to all the wrong hospitals.

² Could have been HIV but the family did not admit.



24. Ramya Naik,

Place: Budwarpet, Pune

Source: Jamkhandi

I am Ramya Naik. People call me with the same name here. I do not like changing names. I am a Devadasi and I am from Navalagi village near Jamkhandi. I am here since the past five to six years. I am staying with same gharwali as she is from my village and also helps me a lot. She has given Rs.25, 000 to me without any additional interest on it. I have used that amount to build a new house back home. My mother stays back home and I also visit the place frequently. I go back home especially when village jatras happen. I send back money with known people who come here. I do not have any bank account. I keep money with my gharwali. I have two children. One is a five year old girl and the other is a three year old son. Whenever I go back home, I stay for a while and do daily wage work. It helps me to catch up with my family and at the same time earn little money.

I have a lover back home and he is married to someone else. I was in Sangli for two years before coming here. I was taken there by a person whom I knew before. I had my first kid over there and then had the second after coming here. I do have feelings and intend to be in love with someone but till now I have not found anyone worth loving. People just make use of our body and do not think about our feelings. They just depend on us. This is one of the major reasons why I avoid any permanent relations. All men intend to take advantage of me being a Devadasi. I just do not want to entertain that.

I do not have major wishes in my life. I am happy with whatever has happened and will happen in the future. I do not have any complaints against God. I just want my children to get educated at a good place and take up good jobs. I did not go to school. My mother was poor and had no money to educate me. I do not want the same to happen to my children. I will make sure that they have enough money to study. I do not share

any of my feelings with any one. I just pray to God and share everything with God. I do not trust anyone. That is it about me.

25. Sarita Patil (name changed)

Place: Barshi

Source: Bijpaur

I am Sarita Patil. I am 22 years old and live here since the past 5 years. I came here with a woman from my village. She had told me that the job is going to be household work, I had no clue of this before coming. I have cursed that woman a lot for making me do this work.

My family members do not know about my work. I have a joint family back at home. I do not have any relation with my father. He has got married to another woman after my mother died 8years back. I do not speak to my father or to his wife. When I go back home, I stay with my uncle and his children. My cousins' work at different places and one of my cousin brothers serves in the Police Department in Bijapur. I came directly to this place from my village.

I am from Chimagundi village near Jamkhandi. I go once in a year to my village and stay for a week or so. I do not wish to stay for a longer time as my mother's memories haunt me a lot. I send money to my uncle and not to my father. My uncle has made all the land titling in my name. I also get monthly stipend from the Government of Karnataka as I am a physically challenged person. Every month, money is credited to my bank account back home. Even here, I have a bank account. Normally, I take money with me when I go home. I am in regular contact with my family members.

I have studied till the 8th standard and wanted to study further. I wanted to be a nurse and pursue a career in the medical field. My village doctor had also promised me a nurse position. My mother's death changed everything. My father did not take care of my mother. Every day, he used to drink a lot and beat her. Even at that time I had no good relation with my



father. In the initial days of work here, I just wanted to leave and run away. It was all new to me. I did not know anything over here. I used to cry a lot at that time. The day I came here, I was forced to do this work. I share all my feelings with my 'Malkin'. She is a good person. I have taken one of her rooms for rent from the past two years. I do not believe anyone.

I had lived with a guy for two years after leaving all this work but he cheated me and ran away. This made me lose faith in relations and words of men. After he left me, I started doing the same work. From the past one year, I stay with another guy. He works as a driver. I do this work only when he is out of house. He does not want me to do this work but I do not trust anyone as such. He has asked me many times to marry him. I have been asking him to marry me, he has agreed to it and says that after this Diwali we will get married. His name is Subhash Patil.

Everything that has happened to me till now is unforgettable. There is not a single event that can be forgotten. Now I just want to get married, have children and lead a peaceful life back home. I do not wish to live anywhere else. I have decided to build another house and settle over there. The guy with whom I am now has also agreed to move with me. I want my children to grow up there, get educated and take up good jobs. I like wearing salwar kameez and also like rose colour. I have little jewels of my mother and wear them whenever I go back home.

My day starts at 4 a.m. in the morning. I cook for both my guy and myself. We have breakfast together in the morning and he leaves home at around 9 a.m. After that, I entertain customers till afternoon. I take a quick nap in the evening and then prepare food for my guy. He comes back at around 8 p.m. Both of us have dinner together and sleep by 10 p.m.

Initially, I used to go to private hospitals for all my health problems. After this centre opened, it provides the necessary facilities to us. I am happy with it.

26. Nazia Sheik (name changed)

Place: Barshi

Source: Bijapur

I am Nazia Sheik. People here know me as Rajee or Rajeshwari. I am from Khajapur which is near Bijapur town. I am here since the past 15 years. I am the eldest child in the family. I have two younger sisters and a younger brother. I have an eight year old son. He stays with my parents back at home. I have got my sisters married and also my brother. I have constructed a new house back home. I take care of my parents and my son. I regularly send money to them and also often visit them. I had received marriage proposals before coming here but my parents were not in a position to get me married. We have nothing back home.

I came here to take care of my family and earn for them. I came along with my aunt's daughter. She worked for a little time here and now stays back in Khajapur. I share all my feelings with her. She is the one who listens to me. Though sometimes I feel tired of this work, I do not wish to go back and settle. I now work as a 'Malkin'. I have come up in a hard manner. In the initial days, I used to share my place with many other girls. Over the years, I have taken a place on rent for myself and have also got all the household things.

After coming here, I stayed with a person for few years. He is the father of my son. After his death, I have not had any relation with anyone and I thank god for it. I came to know that I am HIV Positive 10 years back. Since then, I have avoided unprotected sex. Now, my son is my hope. I want him to study well and take up a good job.

Though I do everything for my son and my family, I do not trust anyone. Till the time we have money, everyone cares for us. Once we stop earning, no one bothers to take care of us. I do not even trust my son in this case. He might also reject me after he grows old. So, I have no plans of quitting this work and taking up anything else. Few of my relatives and even my parents ask me to do other work but I am not interested in it. Rest all the jobs need to be started afresh and there is



no guarantee about money in it. This work I know well and thus will continue to do the same till I die.

My life itself is a big movie for me. I do not watch any movies as such. If I sit to watch movies, I will miss my customers. It is waste of time as well as money. I need to get new girls for the customers. They are always in search of new ones. Though my family and rest all know about my work, no one comments about it openly. If someone asks me, I just say that I work for a company. The changing lifestyle demands us to accept it and adopt it. In this sense, I want to be literate at least to sign. This will help me understand the world in a far better manner.

27. Suma Kamble (name changed)

Place: Tees Naka, Shollapur

Source: Bijapur

I am Suma Kamble. I am from Ekkundi village near Bijapur. I am here since the past 15 years. This is my aunt's house and she is the one who got me here. She died and I own this house now. Two years ago, I constructed a new house in my village for my parents and kid. I have a ten year old girl who studies in 5th standard in a Kannada medium school back home. I go to the village twice in a month. I lost my husband when I was really young. After that I came here with my aunt. I was married to a guy when I was just four years old.

I have a sister and two brothers. My sister and my elder brother are married. My younger brother stays with my parents and he is still young. I only take care of him. I did not come here with any dreams. I just came as it was a necessity for us back home. I had a lover back home and my child is from him. I used to go for daily wage work when I was young. It was not sufficient for our livelihood and so I moved over here. I have never gone to school but I want my child to be well educated. She is the whole and sole for me.

I came here when I had no knowledge of the world. Now, I feel that this work is not good. I just want to leave this once my child gets married and settled. If I get any support or alternative options, I am ready to

leave this work and settle back home. My child does not know about the work I do over here. I am regularly in contact with my parents. During the initial days, I use to feel bad about this work and wanted to quit. Thinking of our family conditions, I just got used to it. Now also, I do this for money and not for anything else.

My aunt taught me ways of dealing with people over here. I do not have any bank account as we do not have that much money to save. I would not have got into this business if I had resources to live on. I do not share my feelings with anyone. There is no one who can really help me. I am just an individual who needs to fulfill my needs all alone. After having a child, I got operated for not conceiving children in future. I got a child just to escape from the harsh words of the society. If I do not have a child then the society looks at us in a different manner and when I have a child, I need to struggle for its well being. This is all what life is for me. My child's future is my one point agenda now.

INTERVIEW AT SOURCE

He is Abhishek, my grandson. We are about 7-8 members. All of them have gone to the field. We are 3 sisters and 2 brothers. My elder sister was married to Honwand village and younger sister is in Sholapur. My younger brother studies engineering and the other brother has gone to work. We had some land and it's drowned in the back water.

My sister went to Sholapur long back. We have got a house in Sholapur. She has got one child, whom you saw just now. She studies in 5th standard. Her name is Shruthi. I have got one sister and a son. Both of them have got married.

We celebrate Ugadi and Shravan Somawar. There is no other jatra that happens here. There are Harijans, Okkaligas, and Muslims. There are many communities. There are no such celebrations or programs when we come together and celebrate with all the other community members.

Now there is no more Devadasi system. It is completely banned in our village. All the girls have got married. My daughter is educated and she is married to one of the



rich guys. He has got field. Most of the girls go to school. If you want to give any information to the girls on their health or any of the other programs, you can do it here in public places. It is not a problem at all. Most of the people in this village are educated and all of them are in some job.

There is no problem in conducting any program in the village. Here, people have good relationship. Most of the people are educated. There are doctors from this village. Some of them have gone to military etc. We are only four Devdasis in this village. You can ask the other community, how these Harijan people are in this village?

I am here since the last 2 years. My parents are there since long. If Suma comes here, she will stay here for 15-20 days. She is in regular touch. She frequently visits home. Her child is here. I have a bank passbook, and ration card. If we need money, she gives money whenever she comes. She doesn't send the money with others.

There are about 10 houses in the surrounding area and lot of Harijan houses down there. My aunt was in Sholapur. My father's sisters were there in Sholapur. We used to frequently visit from our childhood. I and Shaila have gone together.

I feel it's good that Devdasi system is stopped now because nobody respects Devdasi women. We have Ambedkar Sangha here. If anybody does it, we ourselves inform them. Shruthi is in 5th standard. If she completes her studies, we want her to go for higher studies and we wish that she gets a good job.

My elder brother is in his wife's house. They have got land there. He is looking after that. Here I am staying with my father, mother, my son, sister in law and his son and sister's daughter. You can see these photographs. She is one of the Devdasi and there are two more. That's all. People were mad in earlier days. So they have followed this system. Now it has stopped completely.

I don't go to work now. I have got Vatha now. There are no other girls in sex work profession other than Devdasi. All girls go to school. We have got another house in this village. There is no power now. It frequently goes

off. There is a government hospital here. We get all the medicines here. Once we get into this system, we can't leave this because once the name is gone, who will be there for Devdasi? It is completely stopped here. People earn Rs.100 everyday then why do they have to go for this? I am not able to work now. I have got knee pain now (vatha).

28. Kantha (name changed)

Place: Tees Naka, Shollapur

Source: Bijapur

I am Kantha. My father's name is Girman Kamble. I am from Bidari village near Bijapur. I have come to this place only a month back. I was in my village from the past five to six years. For a year before that I was in Goa. I came back from Goa when I was pregnant.

I have a seven year old son who studies in 1st standard. We are six siblings. Along with my parents, I used to go to Ratnagiri for work every year before I went to Goa. I went to Goa once we stopped going to Ratnagiri for work. No one took me to Goa. I had information about the work through other people in my village and went all alone. I have never attended school. My parents know about my work and I visit them frequently. I do not have a bank account and thus carry money by myself when I go back home. I do not regret any of the things that have happened in life and neither have I felt life is stressful. I watch many movies. Darshan in Kannada and Hrithik Roshan in Hindi are my favourite heroes. I go around the city whenever I feel like. Life is good to me.

29. Amrita (name changed)

Place: Pune, Budwarpet

Source: Navalgi

I was married at the age of 11 and became a mother at the age of 13. We were happy for 2 to 3 years then the troubles started. We began quarreling over many issues which led to violence. Fed up, I went to my mother's place. They applied for divorce. Had they treated me well, I would have stayed there. I dreamt of a happy married life. What to do? Finally, we got the divorce in a family court within three months on



mutual agreement. They gave me a choice, property or child. I chose the one and half year old child. My mother died eight months after the divorce and my stepmother took over the family. My father had married her long before he married my mother. So troubles started again. They would not give food to my child when I went out to work. I somehow managed for three years.

I then went to my uncle's place. We are five children, two sisters and three sons. Sisters are married. There is no respect for a lady deserted by her husband. I suffered a lot in those years. So I decided to come here. Whatever work I did here in the field would only fetch Rs.20-30. Life couldn't be managed. When I was going through a rough patch in my life, my neighbor advised me to go to Pune and earn. I'd heard about all this and I knew what I would do in Pune to earn. How is it like? That I didn't know. So I went to Rani's mother and told her. I came here willingly. I came to Pune with a woman who'd come back to Navalgi for a

break. I'm here since the last two years. Now I feel OK, no problems and no tensions.

Raniyamma advised me about the work and how to behave with the customers. Customers would come and this is how it is! Pay no heed to anyone. Akka is the owner. We are about 20 girls from Navalgi here. We all live here. We have separate rooms for business. We all sleep together in the hall, cook separately and dine together. No light bills, water bills etc. Earning depends on the day. A minimum of Rs. 100, or 50 for akka and Rs. 50 for us. Sometimes the customer pays Rs.200 to 300. We give all the money to akka.

Akka gives 100 tokens at a time. Each token is Rs.100, so 100 tokens would be Rs.10,000. It takes about 2 to 3 months to complete all the tokens. Akka keeps the accounts well. We remember the number of customers and tell akka about our count. She writes it down. We don't have any differences. If we complete 100 tokens, it's Rs.5000 each for akka and us.



If there is difficulty at home, we take money from akka. We take about Rs.10, 000- Rs. 20,000 and return it. I have deposited money in the bank. I wait till it is Rs.20, 000 and more, like Rs.50,000. I deposit the money in the bank in my village where I've opened an account. We friends don't talk about our earnings and savings. We talk about difficulties, loans etc. Neither do I share it with any one in the village. If I'm alright and I'm in the mood, I can do the business well. I can entertain many clients, about 200 tokens a month also. No, we are not jealous of each other. We don't have differences about the volume of clients.

If I'm bored I go to the village. I don't go roaming in Pune. I don't go to the cinema. I'm also afraid. It's an unknown town. What if somebody does something to me? I don't know any place in Pune other than this street. I watch TV but am not keen on watching that either. Why should I like stars or heroines? I don't like anyone. I don't listen to stories. No films either. I watch and forget. The present is important. I go to the village to see my son and uncle's family who looks after my child.

I go as I wish, at least once in two months. Sometimes, also once in a month for a day. Navalgi is a ten hour journey from here and costs Rs.234 to reach.

As long as I do dhande I can feed my son. I pay my uncle too. He looks after my son well. I also verify that with my son during my phone calls to him. They had a female child. They wanted a male child. I got a male child to them (found deserted) months ago and that's why they like me. They are not rich, just barely comfortable. I help them with money. Once in a way, I pay them Rs.1000. I send the money through someone from here. When I go myself, I carry four to five thousand. I spend on food, clothing, going to fairs and saree. I used to visit my father but not any more. They were after my money. I lost interest in them. If you have money people come to you. Everything runs on money.

I have never loved a client. Generally, we don't talk much with them. Sometimes, they share with us, we don't react to it.

Once, a man in my village was mad about me. He was really mad about me. He liked me so much that I came close to liking him. I went with him but I told him that he has to marry me. No love or flirting, that I have a child and if he accepted me with the child then I would think of marrying him. He took me to a nearby town and took a room. We stayed there. One fine day, he took my 30 grams of gold ornaments and disappeared. I was completely shattered. Even now he calls me. When I demand for the gold ornaments, he says he would return it but not now. No, I will not go with any one. After that incident, there is no man in my life.

There are some regular clients who have liked me , but I have never felt the same. I have had enough of it. I came back to Pune. I don't share anything with the clients. Some times they bring something, pay more, like Rs.500 per hour when they have money. Sometimes I remember my divorced husband. Now, I think of him.

I believe in God Balaji. He is my house God and I pray to him. I also pray to Ajlee baba. I pray to them to solve problems, for more money and a house.

Suppose the God grants me three boons, I will first ask for the welfare of my son and myself. Then, I don't want anything else

There is no literate person in the family. My son should go to school. He should study well. Education is important. Like any mother, I also dream. He should become a big officer. I don't know whether he realises this dream or not! I don't know whether it's written on my forehead. My son is everything to me now. He is my life. He is my breath.

I call him every day. Just now, I called him. I just want to stay here for some time. I want to build a house and put my son into school. I have suffered so much in life. No one should suffer like me. Even now, I don't want to do this. I'm doing it out of helplessness. I must earn and build a house.



For another two years, it would be difficult. Maybe, once he is grown up. How good it would be if one has a husband, children and family?

I aspire to be a woman who has lot of gold and money. Long ago, I didn't have a good saree. Now, I've bought whatever I like.

How can I foresee my future? I don't know how wealthy I would be. Everything depends on God's will. I must build a house in the plot that I have bought so that others are proud of me. Sometimes, I long for my divorced husband. The husband who tied me tali and gave me a child. We quarreled then but now I think of him. He hasn't contacted me. He comes in my dream. He cries seeing me and my child and takes us. All are just dreams. The next morning, there's nothing. My life is completely destroyed. Husband will never accept me because I am here. I still love him. He must have married some body. You can't get us married. This is hell. I'm always lonely.

Now, who will I share with? I must tell my son and in turn he will share with me. I will not share it with anyone because they can't solve my issues.

No business without condom. We use 2-3 condoms at a time. Most of the clients use two condoms at a time. Sometimes they offer more money but health is important. We may die. We test once a month. We do blood test once in 6 months. Generally, we suffer from cold, cough and fever, if it is too cold outside. We go to the clinic and have a checkup.

I communicate only through phone. I don't write letters. I use only cell phone. I call them more because of my child. I keep about Rs.100 to Rs.150 for my expenditure in the purse.

The project people tell us about Nirodh, HIV etc. I got a ration card here. My voter's ID card is here which they will give us after the elections.

30. Shantavva (name changed)

Place: Pune, Budwarpet

Source: Chinwad

I am here since the last three years. I could be 25

years of age. I was working in the fields in my village. I used to earn Rs.50 a day. My mother also worked for the same money. My father is a priest. Except during the temple festivals and fairs, he doesn't get much income. So, I am working to look after my family. I was not interested in going to school. I didn't enjoy going to school. So I went to earn. Now I regret it. If only I was educated, I wouldn't have come here. I'm not happy.

I came here on my own. The lady Raniyavva or Ranavva is a relative of mine. In a day, I earn a minimum of Rs.200-300 and a maximum of Rs.1000. From here, Chinwad is a one night journey. I often go there. In three years, I must have gone there 6 times. I stay there for a month or two, spend money and come back. I also send money through my friends about two to three thousand. I know and understand life's difficulties.

Nobody helps the poor. We are dalits. Only rich and comfortable people like the okkaligas and others are helped. We don't even have a ration card. I need one. I have given an application for the same.

Here, we are 12 girls aged between 18-25 years. We stay here. We cook separately and eat together. We friends talk about our difficulties. The project people have advised us about condom usage. We use condoms. We go to the clinic regularly. I myself, get checked up once in a month. The madam has strictly advised us not to entertain guests without condoms.

I won't get married. If I get married, who will look after my parents? All my sisters are married. My aspirations are that my parents should live well. There should be no problems in the family. I want to stay here for 7-8 years, make some money, then settle in my village.

31. Mona (name changed)

Place:Sholapur

Source: Bijapur

Mona travels to Gokak from Sholapur to practice sex work. She is from Bijapur, but settled in Sholapur.

I had borrowed a thousand rupees from a friend. I couldn't return it. She took me to Gokak on the pretext of work and lodged me in a house. It was only there that I came to know that I was brought into a brothel.

When a customer came inside the room, I opposed and cried. The women there asked me, then why I had gone there with her? If only I'd known, I wouldn't have gone there.

My husband died because of a liver problem. I have three children. My daughter is married. She has recently delivered a baby and is in the hospital. My son is studying in 9th std. in a Kannada school.

Nobody knows that I practice sex work. It's for the sake of my children that I am doing it. Gokak is so far away from Sholapur, no one will know about me. I am also afraid that if my son-in-law will get to know of it. It's been six months since I went there. I stay for a week and sometimes a month when I go there. I don't pay any rent for the room. I pay fifty percent of the amount to the lady. Everyday, I entertain 3-4 clients.

I get myself tested every month. I was the only one who agreed for the test. Rest of the women refused to get tested.

Police raids happen. Somehow, I have escaped. I've borrowed Rs.20, 000. How will I clear it? That's why I worry. In spite of all this I couldn't get a house. So many difficulties and there is no work. I don't like this. Why should I do this? I shouldn't have come here. I should do some thing else.

I worship Christ. My children and my partner are important to me. My brothers don't talk to me. They never help me during my difficult times. Back in Sholapur, I work as a house maid. I earn about Rs.500 there.

I have a partner, who was diagnosed with TB. He has been cured .He has been advised to use condom whenever he has sex. He is married and doesn't stay with me. I share everything with him. We use condom.

I share everything with these people in Niramaya, Renuka and Praveen.They tell me about condom usage. HIV means sex without condom. Symptoms are diarrhoea, giddy ness etc. You are asking me all this because I do dhandhe. Only my bimba is here, my soul is in the hospital. I have to go there.

32. Shanti Kamble (35-40yrs)

Tees naaka, Sholapur

Source: Bijapur

My name is Shanti kamble. I am from Lokundi of Bijapur taluk in Bijapur district. I have been living here for the past 10-15 years. I go to my place for festivals, fairs and other celebrations. My parents and children live there. I became a sex worker only to look after them. What to do? People talk so much but do they look after my children?

I go to my village quite frequently, for all government communications like ration cards etc. I stay there for two to three months. Life is difficult in my village.

No, I wasn't a Devadasi. I was married. The husband had already married someone else. He didn't look after me and my children. He deserted us long ago, may be 20 years back. I've a son (16 years) and a daughter (18 years). The daughter is married and has a child. I look after my son and my parents. I shuttle between my village and here. I stay for 2-3 months here and go back. My condition was so bad in the past. How to bring up two children? So, I came on my own. I lost my life.

Back in my village, I don't go out. I go only to work in the field or sell vegetables. It's a small village. People know what I do here.

Life in Sholapur

The owner lady is a relative of mine. She is my aunt. She is also a sex worker. She was dedicated to be a Devadasi. She lives in Aurangabad and Nagpur. My aunt was doing Dhandha. I knew it. As she was a Devadasi, nobody bothered.

I pay 50% of my earnings to the Madam. I'll have to pay light bill and water bill. I may earn Rs.1000- 2000. I value trust. Even if I had a client at night, I don't cheat. I would wake her up and give the money. The moment the man enters and goes, the malkin demands money.

All kinds of clients come here. Even old men come here. They are of all castes. I don't ask them about their caste. If the client is not healthy, I send him back. The



moment he lifts his shirt a bit, I'll come to know about his health. A good client is without any infection and boils, skin allergies, sores etc.

I put condoms. Sometimes I put three. Two is common. The fellows cheat. They would nibble at the tips, therefore the moment he enters here, I put it myself. I would not allow him to wear it. I don't talk to them. I don't allow them to stay here for long. Just 10 minutes, just like we have a cup of tea. If the client stays longer, the malkin asks for more money.

I use Ponds powder and nothing else to make myself up, wear a sari and that's all. Nowadays, the girls wear pants and shirts and dresses. The clients I get like us in saris. I used to have lot of clients then but now people have become cautious.

I have a partner. He is from Bijapur. He is an agent, a middleman and married. He asked me to go stay with him. He said that his wife was not alright. I asked him whether he could take care of my parents and children. So, he didn't marry but he keeps visiting me. We are like husband and wife. I share everything with him. We don't use condoms. Some times he comes home and work at my home. Sometimes gives me money too.

If he visits other women, they will use condom. The program people tell me about condom usage. I was 20 years old when I came here. I was young. Now I am 35 years old. I'm old now. Enough is enough. I am bored. I pray him "Take me early".

I worship Amba Bai, Tulaja bhavani and Renuka. I pray to keep my children and parents well, to end my worries and this poverty. I think, my life is over. Take me back.

I don't drink or take tobacco. I love good food, so I cook and eat well. I watch cinema occasionally, family stories like Shivaraj kumar's Tavarige baa Tangi. We watch Kannada films. She likes films that highlight relationships.

How much talking? You still want to talk to me? (laughs out loud). Thanks

33. Roshni, 21yrs (name changed)

Place: Barshi, near Sholapur

Source: Khakandaki, Bijapur

I'm Roshni. I'll complete one year of being here by the next Deepavali. I come from a village Khakhandaki, in Bijapur district. My papa and mummy used to work in Mumbai. I used to live with my grandmother. I loved her so much. I studied up to 8th standard but later I quit. My nani fell ill. I borrowed money for her treatment. It's about Rs. 1, 50, 000. When she died, people started demanding the money back.

My brother and father paid Rs.35, 000. I went in search of work to Bijapur to clear the loan. I begged to be employers in beauty parlors, garment shops etc. but couldn't get a job. Around the same time, Indira bai of my neighborhood drew my attention. They were of the same level as we were but the family had become very comfortable. I would wonder how it was possible! One day, I talked to her about that. She used to work in Mumbai. She said I can also earn money, if I went with her. She paid me Rs.10,000, but, instead of Mumbai, she put me in a lodge in Bijapur.

I was quite good looking. I'm like this because of my Nani's death. First, I was afraid.

There I met a Muslim boy. He fell in love with me and was hell bent on marrying me. I too agreed and we started living together. Our community as well as the family was against my marriage to a muslim boy. Even my brother opposed it. He was a member in the Ambedkar Sangha. He would lose his stature in the sangha. I thought, "Why should he suffer because of my marriage?" Finally, I gave in. So, the marriage didn't happen. I asked the family to make me a Devadasi and I became one (later it was learnt this was not true). They didn't allow me to marry him. In a way I was forced to become a sex worker.

After some time, my brother brought money to clear the loan. I told him, "Any way my life is gone. Don't waste the money. Buy a property and ensure your life is secure". He bought a house. We have kept our parents and a young sister there.



My brother is important to me. I worry about him because he works with all the electrical circuits in a telephone company. How strange! We were poor. There was so much of hunger in the family but the family was in tact. The family was good. Now we all earn. There is no hunger, we can buy anything but somehow, the family is gone, the family is not there! I feel, it's not the same anymore.

If someone came forward to marry me, I will not marry him. I will stop practicing sex work but I won't go with him. I'm afraid, "What if he did anything to me or my life?"

There was someone from Bangalore who had liked me a lot and had even proposed to marry me. I rejected it

outright. He also wanted to have a relationship without using condoms. I told him, "Never, Impossible." I didn't even do it with the one who gave me Rs.1.5 lakhs. I don't like to believe any man. I go to the temple but I do not worship any more. I prayed a lot when my nani was ill but he did not grant my wish, so I stopped.

Here, I live with Seema and the Avva (the brothel madam). I share everything with Avva. She also loves me. I don't go anywhere else. I don't want her to do sex work because she is like my mother. Even if I want to see my people I will call them here. I buy clothes and other things for my brother and others. I talk to them over the phone. It is the only medium of communication. I talk to my brother.



ANNEXURE 2

INDEPENDENT CASE STUDIES AT SOURCE

1. Durgappa Sayadappa Hindu Madar

I am Durgappa Madar, 48 years old, from Baragi village, Mudhol Taluk, Bagalkot District. We are 12 members at home. My two sisters, we three brothers, my wife and my brother's wife and their children are living together. My last sister got married. About 580 people from our caste are living in this village. We have two acres of land in which we cultivate sugarcane. We go for coolie work. My one brother works in Sholapur. We dedicated two of our sisters to Goddess Yellamma. One sister stays with us and another one works in Miraz.

We worship Goddess Yallamma. Yallamma festival is very important in the village. All people from our caste participate in this festival. At the same time, we organize Chodiki Pada program. We also organize the festival of Durgamma and Dyamma. All the people from our community participate in the festival. In the village, some people go to Pandarapura. Some walk and some go by bus. Once in a year, all people from the caste go to Pandarapura. Every Tuesday, and Friday we worship Goddess Yallamma at home.

We do pooja at home on every full moon and no moon days.

Earlier, the people in our community did not send their children to school. For example, my parents didn't send me to school. There was not much importance given to education in our community. Poverty was a big problem for us. I started to work at the age of 12. Earlier, my mother and father were the earning members of the family and they were responsible for other members of the family. So education was not a priority for us then.

Now, children can study up to 10th standard in our village. If they want to study more, they have to go to Mudhol or Yadahalli. Now our community members send their children to school. Now they know the

importance of education. My younger brother studied up to 4th standard and he works in Sholapur. No other members of our family have gone to school. My sisters' children also attend school.

If we face any health problem, we go to Mudhol for the treatment. There are two doctors in our village but they don't diagnose properly. Their treatment does not cure the disease. We take treatment in the private hospital. If we go to the government hospital, they do not treat us properly. Instead of giving us medicine, they give us the prescription. We face more of water related disease in our village. We consult the doctor once every year.

Earlier, there was one person from Ingalagi who used to come here to explain about HIV-AIDS. It's at that time we got to know about HIV-AIDS. Here, there are two condom outlets. In our family, six members have the Yashaswini health card.

We have two acres of land and we cultivate sugarcane in that field. We work as coolies to lead our life. We are very poor and our earnings are spent on our day to day expenditure. I have a bank account but it's very difficult to save money. If we need money during emergencies, we borrow from other people in the village and then give it back. I play the key role at home. Earlier, my father used to look after us. He died last year.

There are caste communities in the village like Reddy, Madar, Muslim etc. There is not much caste discrimination in the village. Upper caste people attend our functions but they don't eat anything because we prepare non-vegetarian food. If we conduct any of our family functions in the temple then they will eat. We also go to their functions. People from all the caste go to Pandarapura together. Upper caste people do not discriminate against us. Earlier, they would not allow us to enter



their house but now the system has changed. They allow us to enter their house.

We have dedicated two of our sisters to Goddess Yallamma as Devadasis. One of my sister stays with me and another one works in Miraz. She stays there with some other women from our village. In a year, she comes here 5-6 times. We contact her over phone. She also contacts us weekly once. Sometimes, she gives us money. We don't ask money from her because she is alone there and she needs money to lead her life. She does not have any children. Another sister stays with us. Recently, she gave birth to a child. We look after her. She also goes for coolie work. Now we don't dedicate any one to Goddess Yallamma as Devadasi. Now, people have realized their mistakes. They are contracting many diseases and it will collapse their life. Government has also brought strict rules to abolish the Devadasi system.

Earlier, there was a system of child marriage in the village. Now, people don't marry at an early age. I am also a victim of child marriage. I got married at the age of 12.

2. Satyappa kallappa Poojari, Baragi

I am Kallappa Poojari, 58 years old, from Baragi village. There are nine members in our family, five women and four men. We live together and I am the head of my home. My one daughter is a Devadasi. We have five acres of land. All the family members work in our field. Sometimes we go to work in other's field.

We celebrate the festival of Durgamma and Dyamma. In the festival, all the people from our community participate. We worship Goddess Yallamma. Here, Yallamma festival is the main festival in our community. All the people from our caste participate in this festival. In the village, some people go to Pandarapura. Some go walking and some by bus. People go to Pandarapura once in a year from our village. We celebrate full moon and no moon days.

I didn't go to school because of poverty. My younger son studied up to 7th standard and he works here. Other members of the family did not go to school.

Earlier, there was not much importance given to education. People used to work in the field and eat. Now, we send the children to school. Children can study here upto 10th standard. If they want to study more, they have to go to Mudhol or Bagalkot.

Normally, people take treatment for fever, body pain, injury etc. We go to Mudhol for the treatment. There are two doctors in our village. Sometimes, people go there for treatment. We take treatment in the private hospital. People don't go to government hospital for treatment because they don't treat properly. We face more of water related disease in our village.

There is not much caste discrimination in the village. Upper caste people attend our functions but they do not eat anything. When we conduct any of our family functions in the temple, they will eat. We also attend their functions. People from all the caste go to Pandarapura together. Upper caste people do not discriminate against us. Earlier, they would not allow us to enter their house but now the system has changed. They allow us to enter their house. There are two groups in our caste so there is no good coordination among us. People fight to become leaders of the group. Two members of our caste has been elected as panchayat members.

We dedicated our younger daughter to Goddess Yallamma as Devadasi. Earlier, she used to do sex work in Miraz. Monthly once, I used to go see her. I had some health problems and I was undergoing treatment in Miraz. At that time, I stayed with her. She used to stay with one of our relatives in Miraz. Once in a week, I used to speak with her over phone. Yearly, she used to visit the village. We did not take money from her instead I gave her money whenever I went there.

Recently, she faced some problems in the destination so she came back home. Now she stays here with us. One person in Miraz had fallen in love with her. In the beginning, they had a good relationship, but, recently they started to quarrel with each other. He started harassing her and her daughter. So, she is planning to leave him. Now, he comes here also. So, I send my



daughter to my relative's house. I told her to not go to Miraz again.

3. Shanta Dasagirappa Poojari, Baragi

I am Shanta Dasagirappa Poojari, 55 years old, from Baragi Village of Mudhol Taluka. I work as a coolie. I was in Miraz. I have four children, two boys and two girls. One of my sons works in Miraz.

Dyamavva festival is very important to us. Here, in our community, Yallamma festival is the main festival. All the people of our caste participate in the festival. People go to Pandarapura. Once in a year, people go to Pandarapura from our village. We celebrate full moon and no moon days. Once in a year, we go to Yallamma temple at Savadatti

All our family members are illiterate. My father and mother were very poor and they didn't send us to school. We used to work as coolies. It was very difficult to send the children to school. My younger daughter studied up to 10th standard in Marati School at Miraz. Here, the children can study up to 10th standard. They then have to go Mudhol. Most of the children from our caste do not attend school.

People go to the hospital to take medicine for fever, head ache and other general diseases. We have two doctors in our village. For normal diseases, people take treatment here. If it's not cured here, they will go to Mudhol. Earlier, there was not much importance given to health. People used to do home medicine in the villages. Now, they prefer the hospital. We don't have a government hospital facility in our village. We have to go to Mudhol to visit the government hospital.

Financially, we are very poor. We work as coolies. It's very difficult to save the money. Most of our earnings go towards day to day expenditure. We save money at home for emergency. Sometimes, we take money from others. My husband is the head of our family and takes care of us.

Upper caste people attend our functions but they don't eat anything. We also attend their functions. Upper caste people do not discriminate against us.

Earlier, they did not allow us to enter their house but now the system has changed. Now, they allow us to enter their house.

Devadasi system was very popular in our village. You will find Devadasi women in each and every house. Now Devadasi system has stopped in the village because people are scared about being infected with HIV-AIDS. Also, there is a strict rule from the government. I dedicated one of my daughters to Goddess Yallamma as a Devadasi. Recently, she gave birth to a child. She is handicapped.

4. Seetavva Poojari

I am Seetavva Poojari, 65 years old, from Baragi village of Mudhol Taluka. I have four children. My elder son has got married and lives separately. I live with my younger son and two daughters. I am a house wife and my children take care of me.

We celebrate the Goddess Dyamavva festival. Yallamma festival is also important for us. All the people from our caste participate in this festival. We celebrate full moon and no moon days. Daily, we worship Goddess Yallamma at home. Once in a year, we go to Yallamma temple at Savadatti.

We do not go to the government hospital because they don't treat us well. We take medicine from the private hospital. We admitted two of my daughters in Miraz for treatment. They got a health problem due to chewing gutka. We spent nearly Rs. 70,000. Now it's been cured. Normally, we take treatment for fever, head ache, leg pain, cold etc.

We don't have land but we go to work in others' land as coolies. We don't have bank accounts. My son and two daughters are the two earning members in our family. My son works here and my two daughters work in Miraz.

When I was young, the caste system was very rigid. Now, people don't discriminate on the basis of caste. Upper caste people attend our functions and we also go for their functions.



I am illiterate. My children did not go to school. We were very poor, so, it was difficult to send the children to school. Now my grandchildren attend school.

My mother dedicated two of my daughters to Goddess Yallamma as Devadasis at an early age. Now they work in Miraz. They live with two other women of our village. They have rented a separate house in Miraz. Yearly 4-5 times, they come here, especially during festivals. My elder daughter has 3 children and younger daughter has 2 children. They send us and speak with us daily over phone. Now, the Devadasi system has been eradicated due to the Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme.

5. Uddavva Basappa Madar

I am Uddavva Basappa Madar, 45 years old, from K.D. Jambagi, Modhol Taluk in Bagalkot District. I work as a coolie in the village. We are 20 members in our family. Here, 8 members stay together. I have two daughters and a son. The son with his family lives separately. My husband, a daughter, her children and I stay together.

We celebrate full moon and no moon days. Our village festival is Lakkavva Jatra. All the people from our community participate in this festival. We worship Goddess Yallamma daily. Once in a year we go to Yallamma temple at Savadatti.

We dedicated two of our daughters to Goddess Yallamma. Earlier, both used to stay in Karada. Now, my elder daughter and her son stay here and my younger daughter stays in Karada. My elder daughter is 35 years old and the younger one is 30 years old.

My elder daughter and her son are HIV positive and take ART. Her son is 5 years old. When she became pregnant, we brought her home. She gave birth to a male child. After two years, she and her son became sick. We took her to private hospital at Mudhol and spent almost Rs.30,000. They then told me to take her to a government hospital where she underwent HIV test and was found positive. Now, she stays with us and we take care of her.

Another daughter works in Karada. There, she stays in a rented house. Recently, she came here and gave birth to a child. She will again go there. She used to speak with us daily over the phone. She sends money with the other women of our village. Now her earnings have decreased because the client volume has reduced. Earlier, they used to face problems from the goondas. Now, there is no such problem because of the intervention of the organization. Like here, there also the organization people have started conducting meetings, blood test, awareness program and health check up. Yearly 5-6 times, she visits the village. Yearly once or twice, I visit her place and stay for 1 or 2 days. She has 2 children and the elder one goes to school.

Dedicating girls to Goddess Yallamma has stopped. No one has dedicated since the last 5-6 years. Now we have realized the mistake which we did earlier. Poverty was the main reason for it. We also thought that if we dedicate our daughters to Goddess Yallamma, they will stay with us. We don't have any facility from the government. Government people conducted the survey here but we did not get any benefit. Earlier, there was child marriage in our community. Now it has been abolished.

About 240 people of our community live here. We come together at the time of village festival. During any functions like marriage and other religious functions, we gather together.

Other caste communities in the village are the Reddys, Kurubas, Brahmins, and Dasas. They attend our functions but they don't eat anything. They don't discriminate against us. We go to their house but they don't allow us inside their house. We eat food in their functions. At the time of Ganesh festival, people from all the caste gather together.

Almost, all the people of our caste work as coolies. Once in a week, we get our payments. On the same day, we purchase things for another one week. We work as coolies. Men get Rs.100 and a woman worker gets Rs.70. It is very difficult for us to save because only





my husband and I earn in our home. We have to take care of all the other members of the family. We don't have any bank accounts. If we need money for emergencies, we will take from others. Sometimes, my daughter also gives us money.

We go to Mudhol for any health problems. We have a government hospital facility in our neighboring village but they don't give quality treatment. So, we go to a private hospital in Mudhol for the treatment. Usually, we go to the hospital for fever, cold stomach ache, injury etc. Earlier, people used to neglect their health. If they got any disease, they used to take home made medicine. Not much importance was given to institutional delivery. Now, all the people go to the hospital. HIV was also a big challenge for us. After the intervention of the organization people, rate of HIV infection has reduced. Now, people know how it spreads and how it does not.

Earlier, only upper caste people used to go to school. Now people from all the caste send their children to school. Earlier, only few of the boys of our community went to school but now all the children attend school. Children can study here upto 10th standard. For higher studies, they have to go to Mudhol or Bagalkot. All the children in my family attend school.

6. Fakiravva Yamunappa Madar

I am Fakiravva Yamunappa Madar from K.D. Jambagi village of Mudhol Taluk. I gave birth to a son and three daughters. My husband and I work as coolies. My son works under a landlord. Two daughters are Devadasis and have two children each. My last daughter got married.

Our big village festival is the Ganesha festival. All the people of our village gather together for that festival. We also celebrate the Dhurgavva festival, God Hanumantha okuli³ and Lakkavva festival. All

³ Okuli - people play in the pond in colored water. In earlier days, the Devadasis used to play in front of other people of the village but now they are opposed to playing this game.

the people of our community participate in the Dhurgavaa festival. We worship Goddess Yallamma daily. We visit the Yallamma temple at Savadatti.

We take treatment in Mudhol for any of our health problems. We have government hospital in Jambagi and sometimes we take treatment in the government hospital. We take medicine for diseases like fever, head ache, injury, cold etc. Earlier, there were no hospital facilities in the village or in the neighboring village. So people were dependent on home made medicines. Now, all the people go to the hospital for treatment if they have any health problem.

I have not gone to school. My husband is also illiterate. My children did not study. Poverty was the main reason for not attending school. Earlier, there was no free education. So it was very difficult for us to send our children to school. More than that, there was not much importance given to education. Now we send our grandchildren to school. Here, children can study upto 10th standard. If they want to study further, they will have to go to Mudhol or Bagalkot.

My husband and son work as bonded labors under a landlord. Once in a year, they get paid for their work. I also work in the agricultural field and earn Rs.50 per day. It is very difficult to save money, so we don't have any bank accounts. I have joined a self help group and save Rs.20 every week. My husband and I are the key breadwinners at home.

Caste system is quite rigid in our village. Upper caste people do not eat anything from our home but they attend our functions. We visit their houses and eat food from there but they do not allow us to enter their house. People from all caste gather together during Ganesha festival. They help us in the time of crisis. Upper caste people do not discriminate against us.

Two of my daughters are Devadasis. They work in Sangli. Earlier, they used to work in our village in the agriculture field. Five years back, they went to Sangli for sex work. There, they stay in a rented house. We contact them over phone. In a year, they visit the village about five to six times. Sometimes, they send

us money. We don't frequently ask them for money as the client volume has reduced and most of their earnings goes into leading their life. According to them, they don't face any problems in the destination. We look after their children.

Devadasi system was there in the village but now it has been abolished. There is a strict rule from the government to eradicate it and people are aware about the bad effect of this system. So many people had started to die because of HIV-AIDS.

Earlier, there was child marriage in the village. I am a victim of child marriage. We conducted the marriage of our younger daughter with my brother. At that time, she was just five years old and he was twenty years old. We are poor and we conducted the marriage without much expenditure.

7. Kasturi Bareddy

I am Kasturi Bareddy, 40 year old, from Kankadaki village in Bijapur Taluk. I am a Devadasi woman. I was in Bombay and recently came to the village. I live with two brothers, their children and my mother. We were twelve members in our family out of which three died. My brothers have six children, three boys and three girls. They attend school. My daughter is Devadasi and works in Mumbai. I help the PAYANA team.

Our main festival is the Urus. At that time, all the people of the village gather to celebrate. We worship Goddess Yallamma. We celebrate full moon and no moon days. At the time of Navarathri, we keep five lights using oil (deepa) in the Kalasha for five days. It should glow for all the five days. At that time, Devadasi women visit every house and do pooja. We celebrate the Durgamma festival also

I am an illiterate. My one brother has studied upto 10th standard and another brother upto 7th standard. My two sisters did not go to school. At that time, not much importance was given to the education of girls. Here, the children can study upto second PUC. They then have to go to Babaleshwara or Bijapur. My brother's children study here.



There are many caste communities in our village like the Madar, Reddy, Brahamins and Muslims etc. Earlier, there was very rigid caste system in our village. Upper caste people would not attend the functions of the lower caste people. They would not allow us to go to their home but now the system has changed. We attend each other's functions. Some eat and some don't. We also attend their functions. We have a good relationship between the communities in the village. They do not discriminate against us.

I became a Devadasi at a very young age. Once I matured, I went to Bombay for sex work. I used to stay there with Garhwali. She was very good and she took care of us. At that time, the earning was very low. We used to get just Rs.10 for each client. Now, the women get more than Rs.100 from each client. From Bombay, I went to Karada. In Bombay, I had not heard about condom. I came to know of it when I was in Karada. Gharwali explained to us about condom and its benefits. Once in a year, I used to visit my village.

My daughter is also a Devadasi and works in Bombay. She does sex work there. I was not interested in dedicating her but was forced by my family members to dedicate her to Goddess Yallamma. Once she matured, she went to Mumbai. She stays with the Gharwali. Her Gharwali is very good. She gives money whenever my daughter needs. My daughter gave birth to two boys. The older one is five years old and stays with me. Her younger son was just seven months old and so he stays with her. The Gharwali takes care of her son. She speaks with us daily over the phone. Sometimes, I go there to see her. In a year, five to six times, she visits the village. She sends money for her son and me.

Almost all the people of our caste work as coolies. I don't work anymore. My brothers take care of me. I received Rs.15, 000 from the Devadasi Rehabilitation Project (DRP). I have kept that money in the bank. I am a member of the Indira Self Help Group (SHG) formed by the DRP. Once in a week, we conduct meetings

and save money. My brothers work as coolies and if I need money, they will give. We don't have land. My daughter also sends me money. Now I am interested to work in projects like the PAYANA.

People take medicine for fever, vomiting, injury etc. There is a government hospital in the village. Poor people go to the government hospital and rich people go to the private hospital at Bijapur. There are many young people in our village who have died due to HIV-AIDS. Earlier, no one knew about HIV-AIDS but after the intervention, knowledge on it has increased. Now, people give importance to health. The number of institutional delivery has increased.

I know about HIV-AIDS. I know how to use a condom. Sometimes, I explain it to the other women in our lane. I think giving continuous education on HIV-AIDS and condom to the same group will irritate them.

8. Shetyappa Kalappa Shigaratti

I am Shetyappa Kalappa, 60 years old, from Kankadaki village of Bijapur taluk. I have three sons and three daughters. I work as a coolie. Both my daughters are Devdasis. My son's works as coolies. I cut the firewood in the village. My sons and one of my daughters are married. I live with my sons.

Our community festival is the Dhurgamma festival. All the people from the community gather during the festival. We celebrate the Urus. At that time, all the people of the village gather to celebrate. We also worship Goddess Yallamma. Once in a year, we visit the Yallamma temple. We also celebrate the full moon and no moon days.

I am the head of my family. All the earning members give their earnings to me and I take care of them. I also cut firewood but I don't take money. Instead, I collect the food grains. I don't have any bank account. I don't have to hold a bank account.

I did not go to school. My children also did not attend school. We were very poor and it was difficult for me to send the children to school. I sent them for work. Here,



the children can study up to second PUC. They then have to go to Babaleshwara or Bijapur. My brother's children study here. My grandchildren go to school.

There is a government hospital in the village. People take medicine for fever, vomiting, injury etc. I suffered from chikungunya, even now my joints pain. If we have money, we will take medicine from the private hospital otherwise we go to the government hospital.

There are many caste communities in our village like the Madar, Reddy, Brahamins, and Muslims etc. Earlier, we were not allowed to take water from the well. Upper caste people had to give us water. Upper caste people would not attend the functions of the lower caste people. Now the system has changed and they attend our functions. We also go to their functions. They do not discriminate against us.

My sister did not have children so she dedicated my elder daughter to Goddess Yallamma. We also dedicated another daughter to Goddess Yallamma. Now, they stay in Mumbai. The elder daughter does not have children. The other daughter has two children. We look after her children. They stay in a rented house in Mumbai. According to them, their earnings are very low and it goes into their daily expenditure. They have been in Mumbai since the last eight years. Once or twice a month they speak to us over phone. Sometimes, we also speak to them over the phone. My younger daughter sends money to take care of her children. Three to four times in a year, they visit the village. Now the Devadasi system has been abolished in the village due to the strict rules of the government. People are also scared about HIV-AIDS.

9. Yellavva, Bisnal village, Bilagi Taluk⁴

I stay here alone with my son. He has three sons. I have grand children who go to school. The school is right here, very close by. This is my village and I have lived here forever. I do not have any land but we work in other fields.

We had very heavy rains. I do go to the clinic to visit. The nearby hospital is in Galgalgi. Everyone who needs a doctor have to go there. There is not really much discrimination between the boys and the girls. They do go to schools. There is a good hostel in the village school here. Many children from the nearby villages also come here to stay in the hostels as food is also provided. From here, our panchayat is about 3-4 km away. I go to the panchayat meetings to clean up the place and sweep.

During the Shravana season, we have a big jatra here when the entire village comes together. We do not have any caste differences in our village. All of us can go for each other's functions. The fields I go to work in are in different places. We go wherever we find work. I usually leave home by 7 a.m., reach by 10 a.m. and get back by 6.30 p.m. I usually take the tractors or other vehicles on the way.

10. Renuka, Devadasi⁵

I am doing well. This is my village. I have never come to Bangalore. Our village is nice.

I have a daughter. She is 15 years old and goes to school. Her name is Madhu. Her grandparents just cannot pronounce her name right. They call her Maadi. Her school is in the nearby village. She does not stay in the hostel. She goes in the morning and gets back in the evening by bus. She is my only child. I don't have any tension with her. When she grows up I want to get her married to a good family, if anything comes by once she is over 18 years old. Why spoil her life like mine? I will give her to some decent boy who lives in a different village. It's better if they are a little far away, otherwise, she will come running to me every time there is a fight. Even if I have to pay Rs.1 lakh, I will get her married. We watch a lot of television together. We watch Suvarna channel - Manasa serial and many other programmes. I watch Udaya channel also, the 8 p.m. news on Udaya.

⁴ Yellava is a non-Devadasi who practiced sex work in Bhiwandi for six years after her husband passed away. She is old and continues to practice sex work clandestinely.

⁵ Renuka was once a migrant FSW.



I feel like coming to Bangalore. Can I offer you some tea? Here, we are all named Renuka - It is Yellamma's name. It is a good and a nice name. I really like Shahrukh Khan. I used to watch his films continuously when I was in Mumbai. I took this picture there. If I got tensed about anything I would watch his films.

My family is here only. My mother and sister have passed away (points to their framed photos). My mother passed away in her old age. She had fever and cold. My sister had TB. She was also a Devadasi (the sister could have died of AIDS). My brothers also live in this house.

(A young girl enters)...This is my sister's daughter. Her name is Kempavva. We have all been given the names of goddesses. My brothers work in the field. I also work in the field and earn Rs.70 per day. I also practice sex work if any client comes. I make sure I use condoms. Nobody from this village come as clients. It is usually men from other villages. They are usually men of my age. Older men are difficult. Younger ones comply to wear condoms etc. Most clients come during the jatra time. I do not entertain any clients when my daughter is at home. I can't do this when she is around. It is very difficult. We both sleep on the same bed. My daughter and I watch TV together and have dinner together.

Apart from me and my sister, there are two more Devadasis in my family - my mother's brother's daughter and my aunt's daughter. In all, we are four Devadasis in the family. We did not know anything. They 'beaded' me when I was one and a half years old. I would have loved to just live with my husband. It is so sick to do this. Don't you feel disgusted to do all this? Don't you think so?

I have joined the sangha here. I am a representative. I got some loan from the sangha for Rs.20, 000. I have bought goats with that money.

I may be around 35 years old. I do not remember. I could be. I was in Bhiwandi for 5 years. I have not been to Mumbai. My grand parents were in Bhiwandi. My sister was also there for a long time then she passed away. She had TB. She did not take proper

medication and she also used to drink a lot. I used to tell her not to but she never listened. I do not have any bad habits. I just have tobacco.

My mother took me to Bhiwandi. I was 15 years old then. I did not like that place at all. It was very difficult. We were about 10-15 girls living under one gharwali. I got the maximum number of clients there. I used to earn around Rs.1000 to Rs.1500 per day. I was the youngest of all the girls. As the days went by, the gharwali troubled me a lot. She stopped giving me money. She started fighting. I got tired of fighting with her. I finally told my mother, she came with my grand mother and took me back to the village. I like my village. I did go to visit Mumbai when I was there. I hated it - too many men and chakkas.

Now, the number of girls going from the villages has really reduced. Now it has become a very clandestine thing. The women decide who they want to sleep with and all that, unlike before. After the HIV infection scare, the girls going for sex work has reduced. Earlier, from each family at least 4-5 girls would go to Bhiwandi and Mumbai. Now we see a maximum of one or two. Only the Devadasi girls go to these places. The ones who have lost their husbands stay here with other villagers. The villagers know that we are into sex work. There are few women here in the village who practice sex work clandestinely but they are very few in number.

Very few dedications happen now. It is ver rare. My brother and others formed Ambedkar Sangha in our village. They also campaign to stop all dedications. I think it is good. According to me, if there is one big difficulty that the women face in the destinations, it is from the gharwalis. They beat us and even refuse to give us food if we do not earn for them. They can be very tough on us.

We do have jatras happening here - Yellamma jatra. We do not have any caste based differences here. I do not face any trouble from men.





CASE STUDY ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

NO	BACKGROUND	SITUATION	ISSUES	NEEDS/DESIRES
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illiterate; Family history of sex work; Initiated into sex work as a Devadasi without her knowledge or consent; been here for 2 to 3 yrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saves Rs.3000-4000 per month; have voter's id; meets family once in a year during Yellamma festival; meets same state sex workers once in a year; money managed by aunt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of assets (house/land), bank account, social entitlements (ration card); police raids; restricted social support system at the destination; no mobile phone to interact with the family in the village; away from children (school going); lack of parental support; dependent families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to interact with son and family; earning for a living son's education and well-being are the priorities wants to own a house want to quit sex work and return to the village Hopes to be able to take good care of children
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Been here for 15 years; working as brothel manager; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widowed Has an own house Have voter's id and ration card No permanent partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not save for self; spends most of the money on family back home; out of the total income large part is spend on consumption on others and not savings; large family dependent on her income; burden of irresponsible family members; sense of isolation and lack of support; worried about the wedding of a daughter who is four years old (focus on children's education); bad treatment meted out to girls who return to their families 	

3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ran away from home to Mumbai; ◆ Practiced sex work for one year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Married to a man who runs two brothels ◆ Family unaware of her line of work ◆ Visits family once in 4-5 months ◆ All needs met by husband 		◆ Wants to get a ration card
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi; Practiced sex work for 20 yrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Gharwali ◆ Runs a brothel with another lady ◆ Family unaware about her line of work ◆ Lost the house to floods 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants to get her children jobs in Bagalkot ◆ Help with getting her son a job
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Early marriage ◆ Alcoholic & Abusive husband ◆ Parents died 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lost the house to floods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Away from young children ◆ No easy communication means with the family (calls to the nearby shop or house) ◆ No easy channel of sending money; hands it over whenever she visits the family ◆ Landless ◆ No voter's card, ration card or BPL card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Help with children's education ◆ Facilities for family members
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Two children ◆ Daily wage laborer brother ◆ In sex work to fulfil commitments such as building a house and educating children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Away from children who are taken care of by the parents ◆ No voter's card or BPL card ◆ Government given house on the verge of collapse ◆ No bank account in own name ◆ Entire money given to the family ◆ No savings in her own or children's name ◆ Clinic has stopped giving free medicines; prescription drugs to be paid and bought 	





7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Used to do beedi rolling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Deserted by husband ◆ Have two children ◆ In sex work for 6 yrs ◆ Has an own bank account through which money transfer is done to the village ◆ Visits village every 6-8 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Own house not registered in her name ◆ Dependent sister with children ◆ Entire family dependent on her (feeds them) ◆ No voter's id, no BPL card, no bank account in her name in the native place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Help with educating her children ◆ Providing them with government facilities they are entitled to
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi ◆ Reached Kamathipura as a child ◆ With the partner ◆ From riches to rags due to father's alcoholism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children with her sister ◆ Saves money for children in the bank ◆ Visits the village twice a year – Yellama's Jatra/ill health in the family/children's demand ◆ In regular touch with the children – speaks twice a day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In and out of sex work ◆ Returned to sex work due to money being insufficient to take care of the family necessities ◆ Troubled by persistent illnesses of parents and family members – economic and emotional burden ◆ Lost her parents and brothers successively. Bore the financial responsibility of care for them throughout ◆ Money sent through post. No bank account in own name ◆ Going back to village not an option since income for work very poor (Rs.20/day) that leaves no scope for saving. Saves Rs.50/day in Mumbai. ◆ Cost of living higher; Earnings not substantial enough to match the expenses ◆ Does not like being in sex work but forced to be in it for taking care of children ◆ Started working at a young age ◆ Partner unaware of her being in sex work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Financial support, loans or a house ◆ Wants to return to the village and settle down with the children

9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Drunkard husband 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pushed into sex work with being aware of it ◆ Wants to return to her family ◆ All earnings given to her mother ◆ Money transfer in person when she visits village ◆ Occupational hazard: irregular sleep patterns/ resulting illnesses ◆ Savings of Rs.1 lakh under chit funds ◆ Asset in the form of gold worth Rs.30,000 ◆ All the money trusted with her mother 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Want to build a house ◆ Looking forward to going back to Shimoga
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Into sex work since 8 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lives with the husband ◆ Into sex work to feed the family/poverty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Fears police raids/escapes in such situations ◆ In debt for purchase of consumer items ◆ No savings to fall back on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Work a must to feed herself and her family ◆ Extreme poverty
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi ◆ 22 yrs old; got into sex work very young 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sends money through money order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Long hours of continuous sex work ◆ In sex work to care for the family ◆ Resigned to being a sex worker ◆ Says cannot resist against violence from clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Save money ◆ Build a house ◆ Look after parents ◆ Will leave sex work if helped
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 10 yrs into sex work ◆ Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Visits home during festivals or family functions ◆ In sex work for own comfort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Working to survive 	
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi ◆ 12 yrs into sex work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lives with sister and her family ◆ Children lives in a separate room rented outside so as to not expose them to sex work ◆ Has an own house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does not trust anyone ◆ Sends money when she visits the village during Jatra & other big festivals ◆ Takes it as her fate that she is a sex worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Give the four children (sister's) good education and life





14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Cites lack of male (brothers) support in the family as reason for her being in sex work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Own house in Mudhol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Family – poor & no assets ◆ Unskilled; cannot cook without a stove ◆ Have saved money in account ◆ Does not know her age ◆ Cannot think about the possibility of leaving sex work due to absence of support systems ◆ Family dependent on her earnings ◆ Takes money by self on her village visits ◆ Loneliness/missing family ◆ Does not trust sanghas or other organizational efforts since she has not benefited from it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants a house ◆ In sex work out of lack of choice – a question of survival ◆ Believes in a real home but does not think it will suit her
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Daughter, 15 yrs old, in a hostel, school going 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports the family back home ◆ Sends all her money home ◆ Bought family house, field, cattle etc ◆ Sends the money through someone or takes it herself when there is a need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Plans to go back after her daughter finishes tenth ◆ Wants to educate the daughter till 12th and find her a job
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Two children (boys) looked after by mother's sister ◆ Has a bank account, ration card and voter's id in the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports the boys home at a monthly expense of Rs.6000 ◆ Concerned about the lack of clients due to competition from Bengali sex workers ◆ Concerned about the future due to lack of good income flow and work ◆ Family benefits from her entitlements ◆ Have to send money – Rs.2000 at least per month – to the village even if she goes hungry 	

17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Old and non-Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Practices sex work discreetly ◆ Lives with her son ◆ Goes to the panchayat meeting to clean and sweep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Assetless ◆ Works in other field to earn for a living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants to get the daughter married to a good family in a different village once she is 18yrs old
18		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Practices sex work when clients come ◆ Representative in the sangha ◆ With a loan of Rs.20,000 purchased goats ◆ Villagers know about them being in sex work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Works in the field and earns Rs.70 per day ◆ Hates being a Devadasi ◆ Problem from Gharwali in destinations cited as a big issues for girls at destination (lack of payment/ violence/abuse/not giving food etc) 	
19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ From a family of 5 girls & 2 boys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sister in remand home for being under age and in sex work. Villages got her out by paying Rs.30, 000 to the remand home. ◆ "Drakshayini says that the parents want to make even the two younger daughters Devadasis." 	
Migrant FSWs at Destination (Pune, Sholapur)				
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In a brothel ◆ In sex work since 8 years ◆ Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Practiced sex work at home, then Mumbai and now Pune ◆ Has a partner who is married and wife has accepted the relationship ◆ Parent family doing coolie work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Away from two young girls taken care of by the family ◆ Money send every month through girls from the village ◆ Sex work practiced discreetly ◆ Worried about the children and family ◆ Saving money with private money lenders ◆ Earns Rs.5000-6000 per month ◆ House destroyed in recent floods ◆ Family expects financial support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants to settle her children's life – education and marriage ◆ Wants to start a bank account ◆ Wants to build a house in the native place for her parents ◆ Wants to settle her future life ◆ Health insurance or health card ◆ Expects love and affection from family



21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Child Marriage victim ◆ Feels proud of having helped someone else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Saves substantial amount in private chit funds (multiple) & Central Bank ◆ Support group member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Issues from police & goonda ◆ Strained relation with parents due to being in sex work ◆ Facing humiliation from people ◆ No health insurance or health card facilities ◆ Under pimps so occasional issues from them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants to buy land and build house ◆ Wants to be in good relationship with parents ◆ Wants to own a shop in the village
22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Child Marriage victim ◆ Widowed & Orphaned ◆ Skilled in cow rearing, sheep rearing & agriculture fields ◆ Feels proud of having helped someone else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ One girl child ◆ Lack of an alternative work in village ◆ persuaded her to continue in sex work ◆ Saves money in a bank (Rs.300-400) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Absence of family support pushed her back into sex work ◆ Sex work looked down upon in the village ◆ Lack of respect from the family ◆ No health insurance or health card ◆ Under pimp – substantial earning goes to him ◆ Not a member of the support group or district collective ◆ No expectations from family and vice versa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Want to put her child in school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi ◆ No parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Daughter studying in second PUC looked after by her brother in the village ◆ Bank account in the native and deposits money on her visits ◆ Family not in the know about her line of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Did not like sex work but gradually got used to it ◆ No respect for sex work in her village ◆ Helps family financially – money transferred in person ◆ No mechanism of saving at destination site ◆ No health insurance or health card ◆ Half the money goes to Gharwali 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To quit sex work in 5 years and resume coolie work in the village. Also own a shop ◆ Received government funding for building a house and setting up a shop ◆ Concerned about her daughter's wedding ◆ No expectations from family and vice versa but wants to be part of it in old age
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Child Marriage Victim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Has a 2 year old boy child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Didn't like sex work in the beginning but got adjusted to it ◆ Depressed about the turn of events in life ◆ Alcohol addiction ◆ Lost money and gold to another woman ◆ Decreasing income due to lower client volume and increasing living expenses ◆ No bank account ◆ Saving a low amount of Rs.50/day ◆ No health insurance or health card ◆ Condom use difficult with drunk clients ◆ Substantial money goes the pimps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Send the child to school ◆ No expectations from family ◆ Hopes will be taken care of by her son in the old age

23

24





25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Deserted ◆ No contact with the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Son, 21 yrs old, college going, settled him in a separate flat (own) with a lady help ◆ PAN card and bank accounts for both son and herself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Estranged from family ◆ Subjected to abuse earlier in the career for refusing to do sex work ◆ Heavy police harassment ◆ Does not like the profession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Waiting for son to get a job to leave the profession
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In sex work to earn money as no alternative in the village ◆ Sends money to uncle, his family & grandparents ◆ Has a house in the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Money send home through known people or takes it personally on her village visits ◆ In debt of Rs.50,000 ◆ Shattered dream of studying well and getting a good job ◆ Does daily wage work while in the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants to educate her children well and get good jobs ◆ Wants to quit the profession once debts are cleared and saves some money for herself ◆ Looking for opportunities to quit the work
27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Built a new house in the village ◆ Two young children and mother in the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No bank accounts ◆ Keeps the money with the Gharwali ◆ Sends money back home through known people ◆ Wary of being used and so is not in any relationship till now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants the children to get educated and take up good jobs

28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Duped into sex work without being informed ◆ Physically challenged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Family in the dark about her line of work ◆ Estranged from father who has remarried ◆ Land titled in her name ◆ Two bank accounts at source and destination ◆ Receives monthly stipend from Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Money send/given to uncle when she goes home ◆ Lost faith in relationships (men) due to repeated ill experiences in life – from father and lover ◆ Regrets not being able to be a nurse ◆ Mother's death left a vacuum ◆ Unhappy being in sex work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants to get married, have children and lead a peaceful life back in the village ◆ Wants to build another house to settle in the village ◆ Wants the children to get educated in the village, get jobs and settle
29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In sex work for 15 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In sex work to support the family ◆ Only son with parents back home ◆ Owns a house ◆ A malkin now and does not want to return to the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports the family financially ◆ HIV positive ◆ Lack of trust in anyone persuades her to work so as to take care of herself ◆ Will continue in sex work since (a) effort required (b) money not a guarantee (c) knows sex work well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Want the son to study well and get a job ◆ Wants to be a literate to be able to at least sign and know the world better
30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In sex work for 15 years ◆ Inherited aunt's house ◆ Widowed young 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Has a house in the village ◆ Visits village twice a month ◆ Only daughter with parents back home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Family dependent on her – parents, daughter and younger brother ◆ Into sex work as coolie work didn't earn enough to care for the family ◆ Unhappy being in sex work ◆ No bank account ◆ No savings ◆ No support system ◆ Gives money in person while visiting home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants the child to get educated well ◆ Wants to leave sex work once child gets married and settle in village





31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In Goa initially 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Son in first standard ◆ Happy with her life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No bank account ◆ Personal handing over of money to parents on her visits 	
32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Victim of Child Marriage ◆ Divorced after two years of marriage due to violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Issues with parent family and shortage of income forced her to take up sex work ◆ Saves money in the village bank account ◆ Has a ration card, voter's id due 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Money earned (tracked through token system) shared with the owner ◆ Away from son looked after by her uncle's family ◆ In sex work to feed her son – does not like it ◆ Sends money home to her uncle's family – sends it through someone or carries it personally on her trips to the village ◆ Lost trust in men due to unpleasant experiences in the past ◆ Deep dissatisfaction about how her life has turned out to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants the child to go to be educated well and be in a good job ◆ Wants to earn and build a house so that others ◆ Wants to stop doing sex work
33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Into sex work for 3 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In sex work to support family ◆ Combined income of parents and her labour in the field was insufficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Regrets not studying while in school. ◆ Does not like the work ◆ Sends money through friends or delivers it personally on her village visits ◆ No ration card ◆ Feels poor gets no help (class/caste consciousness) ◆ Decided to not marry so as to take care of parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants the parents to live well ◆ Wants to make money, quit sex work after 7-8 years and settle in the village

34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Widow ◆ Three children ◆ Has a partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Introduced into sex work without prior knowledge or consent ◆ Got into it because she was unable to repay a debt of Rs.1000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Worried about family knowing about her line of work ◆ Worried about her work affecting her married daughter's life ◆ Shares 50% of the amount with the lady ◆ In debt of Rs.20000. Concerned about clearing it ◆ Disappointed about the life situation – no house, debts. ◆ Concerned about lack of work and insufficient income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants to do something else
35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ In sex work for 10-15 years ◆ Deserted by husband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Parents and children in the village ◆ In sex work out of own choice to look after her family ◆ Has a partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Stigma & Discrimination from the village (small) community because she is not a Devadasi – does not go out often; to sell vegetables or work in the field ◆ Feels she lost her life to sex work ◆ Parts 50% of her earnings with madam in addition to paying for water and light bill ◆ Does not use condoms with partner ◆ Feels old at 35 yrs of age. Does not want to live longer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Wants her parents and children to live well
36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Educated upto 8th standard ◆ Grew up with grandmother 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Introduced into sex work through a neighbour ◆ Did not get work – to clear the dues for granny's treatment - when she searched for it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Disintegration of the family bothers her ◆ Lost faith in God due to Nani's death 	





37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Large Family ◆ 2 sisters dedicated to goddess Yellamma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mostly uneducated family members ◆ Huge financial burden to support the large family ◆ Six family members have yashaswini health card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Lack of proper medical care facilities in the village ◆ Improper treatment in the government hospital ◆ Non-availability of pure drinking water ◆ Family members engaged in multiple jobs for sustenance. Poverty and large family size does not permit savings. All money spent on day to day expenditure ◆ Has a bank account but cannot save ◆ Depends on personal borrowings during emergency situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Positives: Does not demand money from the sister in sex work. If they need at times she sends them money. ◆ Has stopped dedicating to goddess ◆ People realized their mistakes and government abolished it ◆ Taking care of the child of another sister who was also a Devadasis
38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Large family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Works in own field and as labor in other fields ◆ Uneducated family; third generation going to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does not access medical care at the village ◆ Goes to a private hospital outside the village because of poor treatment at the government hospital ◆ Water borne diseases rampant ◆ Intra caste conflicts in the village ◆ Younger daughter practiced sex work. ◆ No family dependence on her ◆ Now not in sex work after lover started abusing her daughter and herself 	

39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Four children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Coolie worker ◆ One son working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Uneducated & illiterate (two generations) since poverty didn't allow for schooling ◆ Youngest girl the only educated child (10th), others didn't attend school because it was unaffordable. Most children in that caste do not attend school. ◆ No government hospital facility in the village. Accesses treatment from the doctors in the village ◆ Very poor economically which hinders saving. All earnings spent on meeting daily expenditure. During emergencies will borrow from others or dig into own savings specifically for this purpose. ◆ Handicap daughter dedicated as Devadasi. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi system stopped – (a) strict government order (b) fear of being infected with HIV
40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 4 children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Taken care of by her children ◆ Works in other fields as coolies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does not access government hospital due to bad treatment. Accesses private hospital care. ◆ Huge medical expenditure due to gutka chewing ◆ No bank account ◆ Poverty prevented two generation from attending school. Grandchildren attending school ◆ Two daughters dedicated as Devadasi working in Miraz. Visits home during festivals. ◆ The daughters send money home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi system no longer exists due to Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Large family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Two daughters dedicated as Devadasis. ◆ Poverty main reason for dedicating daughters to the goddess. Dedication also thought as a way of keeping the daughters with the parent family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Elder daughter and her son HIV infected and on ART. Stays with and being taken care of by the family. Huge expenditure on their treatment. ◆ Younger daughter still in sex work. Supports the family financially. Sends money through other women in the village. Decrease in income of younger daughter due to reduction in client volume. ◆ Poverty and low earnings as coolie workers does not allow for savings. ◆ No bank account. ◆ In case of emergencies depends on borrowings from others. At times helped by the daughter in sex work. ◆ Accesses private hospital care. Does not access government hospital due to poor quality of treatment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ O r g a n i z a t i o n intervention has done away with goonda violence. ◆ O r g a n i z a t i o n intervention has raised levels of awareness (a) about the importance of accessing institutional care (b) about HIV ◆ Eldest daughter of younger daughter attending school ◆ Child marriage and Devadasis system abolished ◆ All the children attending school.
<p>41</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Husband and son bonded labourers under a landlord. Herself a coolie worker. ◆ Two daughters are Devadasis. ◆ Last daughter married 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Takes treatment in government hospital at times. Otherwise treatment accessed at private hospitals in Mudhol. ◆ Poverty prevented two generations from attending school. There was no free education either. ◆ Husband and son get paid yearly once and she gets a meager amount of Rs.50/day. Poor income flow does not permit savings. So no bank account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Dependency on home medicine stopped ◆ G r a n d c h i l d r e n attending school ◆ Child marriage and Devadasis system not prevalent anymore – (a) due to strict government rule (b) due to fear of HIV
<p>42</p>			

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ She saves in a SHG. ◆ Rigid caste system ◆ Devadasi daughters support financially at times. Reduction in client volume so not much money now. Their children taken care of by their parents in the village ◆ The youngest daughter married to her uncle when she was 5 years old. Conducted the marriage without much expense. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Devadasi ◆ Returned from Mumbai recently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Living with her brothers ◆ Helps the PAYANA team ◆ Supported financially by her daughter and brothers. ◆ Daughter is a Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Illiterate since girl's education not given preference. Brothers studied till upper primary and high school. ◆ Forced by family members to dedicate her daughter. She is in sex work in Mumbai. ◆ Takes care of one of her daughter's son. Daughter sends money home for her mother and her son. ◆ Assetless and brothers work as coolies. ◆ Poor people access government hospital and rich people access private hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Good relationship among castes in the village. ◆ Good relationship with the gharwali for both daughter and mother ◆ Received Rs.15,000 from Devadasi Rehabilitation Project. Money kept in the bank. ◆ Member and saves in the SHG. ◆ Institutional deliveries and awareness about HIV has increased after organizational intervention 	





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 3 sons & 3 daughters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Two daughters' Devadasis. ◆ Sons work as coolies. ◆ She herself collects firewood. Takes food grains instead of money for the work. ◆ Sons and one daughter married ◆ In control of all the earnings in the family as she heads it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Has no bank account. ◆ Poverty prevented herself and her children from attending school ◆ When there is money accesses private hospital. Otherwise goes to government hospital ◆ Eldest daughter dedicated to goddess because her sister didn't have children!! ◆ Two daughters in Mumbai. Says income just sufficient to cover their daily expense. ◆ Younger daughters children at home in the village. She sends money for them to be taken care of. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Grand children attending school ◆ Change in caste system related relations
<p>44</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Gangavva -Durgavva's Mother ◆ Devadasi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Girl children not send to school. Works as field labor to support the family ◆ "Devadasi girls will have contact with the people who visit the village, if they say that there is some work, these girls will go with them" ◆ Caste discrimination ◆ Festival time a time of bonding among same caste group ◆ No bank account – does not earn enough to save in the bank ◆ Visits private hospital during illness. Government hospital treatment is not free and charged higher than in the private hospital. ◆ Home delivery led to death of the first child. ◆ Illiterate so cannot take up work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ States community members can be organized easily if a programme has to be initiated
<p>45</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 4 members at home ◆ Earns Rs.40-50 per day ◆ Was practicing sex-work. ◆ Now coolie work ◆ Has ration card and voter's id ◆ Daughter sends money if needed through post 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No bank account – does not earn enough to save in the bank ◆ Visits private hospital during illness. Government hospital treatment is not free and charged higher than in the private hospital. ◆ Home delivery led to death of the first child. ◆ Illiterate so cannot take up work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ States community members can be organized easily if a programme has to be initiated

46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sunitha's (no.10) family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 4 daughters and 2 sons ◆ 2 sons and 2 daughters with the husband ◆ Daughter works hard and sends money ◆ House given by the government ◆ Has land that government has given her 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Deserted by husband ◆ Lives alone ◆ In extreme poverty ◆ Husband dedicated the daughter without her knowledge and her sister took a loan over the daughter! ◆ High degree of dejection with life ◆ No help from anywhere/anyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does not want her daughter to do sex-work. Feels lives can easily be managed by working in the fields.
47	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Yellavva's (no:12) parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Daily labor (agricultural) for livelihood ◆ Six children ◆ 2 daughters Devadasis ◆ 3 girls married ◆ No discrimination against the girls in the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Did not want to make the daughters Devadasis; did that on grandmother's insistence to help deal with poverty. Disappointed with having made the two daughters Devadasis ◆ Dependent on the money send home by the daughters in sex-work. Needs their help but highly unhappy with having Devadasis in their house. Uncomfortable with the concept of 'prostitutes' in their home. "What do we do with 'prostitutes' in our house?" ◆ Girls dedicated without their knowledge of what it entailed – if they knew would have preferred marriage. They want to come back "Why did you make us Devadasis? We could have worked here and earned whatever little we could." ◆ Does not know how to communicate with the daughters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Help to stop sex-work – in terms of assets or livelihood options like setting up a shop





48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Dallava's (no:13) family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mother treated for some mental illness ◆ Family feels the Devadasi sisters not doing enough for them ◆ Son works as a construction laborer and a poojari in the temple ◆ Dependent on the son's income ◆ Devadasi daughters do not visit home even during festivals. One of them has 4 children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Feels Devadasi daughters not visiting or calling as a sign of them not caring for the family. ◆ Son's son out of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Would like to see her daughters but feels helpless
49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Durgavva's (no:14) family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Family – mother, uncle, sister and their children ◆ Assets: 4 acres of land with sugarcane planted; 2 bore wells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Not aware of gram Panchayath ◆ Inter community friction ◆ Does not go out while in the village since people talk ◆ Lowest caste in the village. No temple entry ◆ No hospital in the village. Doctor visits the home and gives treatment ◆ Caste discrimination a barrier in finding work – even manual labor in other fields. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ If programmes are to be conducted people will come together

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Roopa (no 26), Navalgi family ◆ Speaking to Roopa's grandmom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Stays with her son and family ◆ Works in the field ◆ Gets corn from the work place and makes roti for consumption ◆ House in Roopa's name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Decided to do away with sex-work after her daughter came back ill from Pune. She died a year ago ◆ Did not know the implications of making the girls Devadasis while doing it. ◆ "What do we do with women from our house in this profession?" ◆ Pride in her girls. "When we made our daughter a Devadasi we did not know its implications. Now we realize it was a mistake. Her daughter Roopa is also a Devadasi. For us, these two girls were like sons in the house. This house is also in Roopa's name. She is the one who got it built. In fact we have left nothing for the girls. It is they who have. Today's times are very bad. In our age, the girls were so meek. They would always have their heads covered and be so respectful. Now everything has changed. Anyone can do anything now." ◆ Gharwali Rannavva has girls from this village. She has 34 acres of land. ◆ Land in Roopa's mother's name cannot be transferred to her daughter? No will left by her daughter
---	--	---





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Shaila Kamble (no:30) ◆ Shaila's sister's narration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 8 member family ◆ Devadasi system banned in the village now ◆ Has a house in Sholapur ◆ Has a house in the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Land drowned in backwater ◆ She has ration card and pass book ◆ Shaila's child with them in school – 5th standard ◆ "Once we get into this system we can't leave this, because once the name is gone, who will be there for a Devadasi." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ People in the village educated ◆ Wishes Shaila's daughter Shruti goes for higher studies and gets a job ◆ Feels good that Devadasis system has stopped and informs Ambedkar Sangha if they come to know of any new dedication ◆ All girls in the village go to school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Casual discussion at source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Gets support from Sangha with regard to treatment or any other issue. ◆ New girls come through relatives and get entry ◆ No bank account. Money kept at home. Carried personally on visits to the village or send through others visiting the village or in emergencies family members come and collect money ◆ From Sangha: information on condoms, health and unity ◆ Requires information on health. Programmes to address that need. ◆ No issues from goondas and others. "Samastha people will take care of the problems. If they go tomorrow we all should come together to fight against the problems." 		

ANNEXURE 4

WORKSHOP OUTCOME

I. Workshop overview

Following the interviews at the destination and source, the 6 day workshop at ADIMA with the migrant community women was organized. ADIMA, a serene cultural hamlet nestling in the midst of the rocky hills of Kolar proved to be the best option for the workshop. We wanted to give the women from northern Karnataka an experience of a new place and provide them an unrestricted and an open environment to participate, think and comfortably converse.

Establishing the right environment was important since that would directly impact the maneuvering of the processes that followed. Within a day's time, the women grew comfortable, not just with the physical provisions of food and stay but with the entire setting at ADIMA. They had the freedom to walk around wherever they wished to, explore the place, eat the fruits on the trees, help the local women with the cooking, look after each other's children and sing songs till late in the night. Many women claimed that they felt at home and have never really been to a place where they were so easily accepted and loved. ADIMA provided a conducive enough environment that would benefit and contribute to the workshop's proceedings.

The workshop enabled the women to move beyond the limitations they had set for themselves. There were sessions that required them to draw and act. Most of them exclaimed that they will never be able to do that. Women who were shy and simply adamant to even hold a pen finally found themselves not wanting to stop playing with the colours. "This is simply impossible. I cannot do this", is what Dundavva said when she was handed a sheet of paper and few colours. By the end of the day, Dundavva proudly waved around her picture of a colourful bunch of flowers. This was the experience of most women. They progressed from the impossible to the possible.

Many women echoed similar views when asked to act. Their first play had a handful of women who almost trudged through the play with great difficulty feeling inhibited and diffident. As they moved on through the workshop, the entire batch of 18 participants took on roles with no external motivation or even assistance. They all acted bashfully reflecting their lives in a 3 hour long play!

One of the most interesting aspects of the workshop was the way in which the plays that the women enacted in progressed with each day. None of the plays were in any way influenced by the staff or the team. The women were given a free hand to enact what they pleased.

Their initial play on the second day of the workshop, when the women had not yet openly recounted their lives had the ingredients of migration, health, field staff, HIV, testing, counseling, ART, CD4 count and other similar aspects, showcasing the ignorance of most migrant FSWs with regard to their health and project services. The play's underlying message from a viewer's perspective was this- The women know nothing about HIV and they take no precautions at the destination. The field staff helps them get tested and link them to available services and the family is grateful for that.

The second play was enacted after another day of discussion, drawing and interactions. This time, the women had more to say taking examples from their lives. More aspects and newer characters were introduced. Bonded labour, exploitation from the landlord, a stubborn gharwali, alienation from husband, gender discrimination, quacks making quick money, a gullible mother, a money minded doctor and the likes. This play was closer to the women's lives. Discussions revealed that four women in the play team had brothers given off to



bonded labour. Almost every woman's mother had taken loans from the landlord. The second play brought out elements of sacrifice, hopelessness, ignorance, wrong beliefs, misconceptions, ill treatment, caste differences that were absent in the earlier play.

The final play by the women had all of them participating. It was showcased on the penultimate day of the workshop. A lot of their lives were bared open in the play and with great ease they showed us the 'inside stuff'. These included the reasons why girls were dedicated, the role of family members especially the mother, the involvement of older Devadasis, the influence of other migrant FSW, the tremendous pressure on the women to earn, the gender discrimination within families, passive nature of the men in the house, issues at the destination, lovers in the village and at the brothels, maltreatment of the girl when she returns, dynamics at the destination and many other elements. The plays evolved with each passing day and the final play had all real life factors adding in. It was an authentic reflection of the women's life. It was what they wanted to show us and not what we wanted to see. (See below for play)

Above all, the processes and methods the women engaged in only helped them walk through every constraint and lay open hidden facts and experiences of their lives. They openly shared instances and situations that brought out joy, sorrow, fear and rejection in them. Memories both bad and good were shared. Childhood stories and unfulfilled dreams were related. All the sharing was accompanied either with loud laughter, shy grins or unrelenting tears and weeping. Through it all, the workshop enabled the women to share their innermost feelings and as Sudha claims, "You all gave us a patient hearing. That is more than enough for us."

Some of the stories shared brought the women closer to each other. Many found solutions for each other, some just felt good being heard and others took some proactive actions on the spot.

Balavva, when asked to share about any unhappy event in her life, spoke of the tremendous difficulty she was facing from her partner. He was inducing fear in her through threatening calls and physically abusing her. Balavva was living a nightmare. She had almost resigned to the fact that she will have to live with it or die with it. As she completed speaking and wiped her tears, all the women together encouraged her and expressed their solidarity. Immediately, a few calls were made and their local CBO was contacted. With the help of the field staff, a complaint was registered with the local women's rights wing of the government. Balavva has now returned to her village after the workshop with a fresh hope and strength.

II. Play Synopses

Play 1

The first play spoke the story of a girl who is sent to the destination by her family to practice sex work. She readily agrees. She is a newly dedicated Devadasi. The girl is not prepared to face the situations in the destination. After working in a brothel for a short period of time, she falls sick and the gharwali sends her back home. She is received well by her family members.

One of the community field staff from the programme hears of the news that the girl has returned to her mother's place and decides to visit her. She notices that the girl is really unwell and the family does not know what to do. After a couple of days she visits them again and finds that the condition of the girl is not improving. Therefore, she suggests that the girl go for a blood test. The family agrees.

The field staff takes the girl to the clinic and gets her tested after pre test counseling. On acquiring the results, her HIV positive status comes to light. The



counselor encourages the girl and tells her all about CD4 count and leading a good life. The girl goes back and the mother is shattered on hearing the news. She regrets that her young daughter was made a sex worker. Within the next few days, the girl dies and the family mourns her death.

Play 2

A girl is dedicated to be a Devadasi and the mother feels that it is best to send her to the destination so that some additional income will flow into the family. So the girl is sent with a known person to the destination, to a brothel with a gharwali from the same village. The girl practices sex work. She is young and entertains many clients. The gharwali earns a lot through her. She falls ill after a few months and the gharwali sends her home.

The girl returns home and the family feels sad to see that she is sick. Even before she could rest a bit and recover, the gharwali comes to the village and takes her back saying she can come back to her home another time. The family feels that the gharwali is being unfair but they do not have any say. Soon after the girl goes back, her condition worsens and after many days the gharwali sends her back home.

The mother of the girl is shocked to see the state of her daughter and decides to do something quickly. The girl has a young brother who also earns for the family. The mother first goes to a quack to find out a possible way out and hopes that he will give a solution and heal the girl. The quack demands money and the mother gives it to him. She does the rituals that are demanded of her but the girl does not get any better.

She then goes to a local Ayurvedic doctor who promises a cure for the girl but demands another lumpsum amount of money. He refuses to treat the girl unless the money is provided. The mother is desperate. She goes to visit her husband who alienated her 8 years ago and seeks his help. The man even after having deserted her is rude and exerts control over her. With great difficulty and much pleading, he lends her a sum of money demanding that it be paid back.



The mother runs pillar to post trying to organize the money to get her daughter healed. She then approached the local landlord. After explaining the situation, he asks for her son to be left as bonded labour in return for being given a sum of money. She agrees and lets her son go. A list of the tasks for the son is given by the landlord. The boy turns into a bonded labourer at the age of 12.

With that money, the mother goes to the doctor and the quack. She does all that is commanded but at the end all her efforts go in vain and her daughter dies. Her life continues to be shrouded in poverty.

Play 3

A husband and wife are discussing at home. The wife tells her husband to do something about the daughter's marriage. The daughter is still young and goes to school. She complains that he is a useless husband. They also have two sons who are pampered in the house and allowed to have their way at all times. Eventually, they make one of their sons a bonded labourer and earn Rs.1000 through him per month.

One fine day, the mother tells Sudha, her daughter, to give up school and tells her to start working. The mother manages the entire household and everybody listens to her including the husband. She is the one who gives money to the husband to buy beedis too.

The mother complains one day to her husband saying their daughter is useless and fetches no money for the family. She compares Sudha with Lakshmi, a girl from the neighborhood and says that Lakshmi earns so well in a big city. She feels that Sudha also could contribute to the family and all their sorrows would vanish if she was made a Devadasi too. She discusses this with her husband and he gives her the free hand to do whatever she wants.

The mother gathers some old Devadasis in the villages and other women and shares with them her plan for dedicating Sudha. They all ensure their support for it and clandestinely they dedicate her and Sudha is unaware about what she must do. After the ceremony,

Sudha calls her lover in the village secretly and tell him that she has been made a Devadasi and that a rich Gowda in the village will undertake the 'seragu hidisodu' for her. The lover gets wild and tells her that he will give more money than the rich Gowda but does nothing.

Sudha gets angry and she tells her mother that she does not want to go through this and warns of breaking the Gowda's legs if he dared to touch her. The mother tells her that they are being given a lot of money and that Sudha has no choice. Eventually the seragu hidisodu happens and the Gowda turns out to be a lame old man. A middle man is also involved in fixing up the Gowda for Sudha.

The mother again instigates her husband to send Sudha to Pune. She is lured by the wealth that Lakshmi brings. So the mother talks to Lakshmi's brother and tells him to make some arrangements for Sudha to go too. Lakshmi's brother agrees. The next time Lakshmi comes to the village from Pune, she visits Sudha's home and discusses with Sudha about migrating to the destination. Sudha agrees out of pressure from the mother.

Lakshmi makes the mother talk to her gharwali. The gharwali takes a word from the mother and readily agrees to take Sudha in because she is young. She takes a loan of Rs.50,000 from the gharwali to get her sons married and promises the gharwali that Sudha will be a good girl and fulfill all her expectations.

Sudha again calls her lover and informs him she is leaving. He does not do anything. Her brothers get married and meanwhile Sudha reached Pune with Lakshmi.

Sudha slowly learns to entertain clients. She gets introduced to Lakshmi's lover in the destination and through him she also finds herself a lover. Slowly, Sudha gets into the habit of drinking. Both Lakshmi and Sudha often sneak out of the brothel in the absence of the gharwali to meet their lovers and get drunk with them.



Once a month, when the Gharwali does hisaab she pays Sudha less and this angers Sudha. She shouts back and the gharwali reacts strongly. Meanwhile, Sudha keeps getting calls from home demanding more money. Her older brother asks her for Rs.20, 000 and her younger brother asks for Rs.2, 000. Sudha is angered by their regular demands and complains to her mother. The mother tells her to bear with the brothers and somehow send some money.

Sudha goes back to her village for the jatra. Even when she is home, her brothers only keep demanding money and her mother is passive towards her. She gets fed up of her family. While she is in the village, her lover from the destination also calls her and asks her for money. She goes back to the destination only to find out that her lover has left for another woman. She is hurt and feels used.

Both Sudha and lakshmi are in similar situations. One night, they both get drunk together and crib about how messy their loves have become. Sudha falls sick and she goes back to the village. The mother goes to a quack to get her healed. The quack demands some gold but Sudha's brothers refuse to give that gold. So, the mother then goes back to the same Gowda who was part of the 'seragu hidisodu' for some money to get Sudha cured. Even he refuses money. The family gives up on Sudha and let her die.

III. Experience sharing through the workshop

1. SUDHA

Explaining her drawing, Sudha says- "This is Shirol and next to it is my village. From my village, I go to the bus stand to catch a bus to Mudol which is 8 km from my village. At Mudhol, I practice sex work. That's where one man started giving me a lot of trouble"

"Though I was initiated into sex work, I decided that I did not want to pursue that line and was later given in marriage by my family to someone in my village. There was a man who had initially come to me as a client and

he started to really trouble me. He fought with other men who spoke to me and threatened to kill me. He used to show me knife and blackmail me.

After I got married, he came to my husband's house regularly and got into fights with him. He followed me wherever I went and told my husband many lies about me. My husband left me because of him. He said that he did not want a wife of my character. After I was married to him, I remained faithful to my husband. In fact I was so keen to leave sex work that I had even started grazing cattle and going for work in the fields but this man ruined my marriage.

He used to beat me and come to my house after I returned to my family. Even there, he threatened me and fought with my family members. He took me to the Yellamma's temple and broke my mangalsutra. The man even forcefully got a tattoo of his name done on my hand. I used to be scared to go anywhere. I was very young then and could not even give a police complaint. When my mother used to go to work, even there, this man would turn up and beat her. None of our neighbours also would support us.

This man, who was troubling me did everything he could to destroy me. He claimed that he was doing all this only to marry me. At the end, he left me. He was actually a married man with a wife and two children. Just to get rid of him, I went to Sangli for a short while but he showed up even there and told the gharwali to let go of me. The gharwali has two younger sisters who were given in marriage in this man's village. He threatened to destroy their lives if the gharwali did not let me go. I was forced to leave the brothel also. I stayed there only for 2 days.

I am the oldest in my family. I have four younger brothers. My father does nothing. I have the entire responsibility on my shoulders. I have an uncle but they live far off and they also don't support me much.

I could live with my husband only for a month. Now this man has also left me. I am 20 years old now. My



husband is now married to somebody else. Though I tried to convince him many times and wanted to return to him he never took me back. Now, I am back to sex work and continue going to Mudhol everyday.”

2. BALAVVA

I lived in Miraj. This is the road where I used to stand. The clients used to come here. One of the clients came to me one day. He initially started buying things for me but eventually started to abuse me. See, these are the kind of marks he has left on me (shows her hand) after beating me up. He also came to my village and gave complaints 4 times saying I married him - twice in Mudhol and in Saundatti. He also managed to get hold of a marriage registration certificate.

Many lawyers and police have come to my house in his support. We don't even know if they are really cops but we live in fear. He has given a complaint that I cheated him. We have spent so much money. I have sold my house and given him the money also. He is actually from Sholapur. He started coming to me while I was at Miraj. He beats me so much that I can now barely move this hand. In fact, just before I came here I went to the hospital. He scares me that he will kill my children if I refuse to live with him. He used to trouble me in the brothel also. That's why I left and came back to the village. He initially started paying me more as a client and I was so naïve that I did not realize he was exploiting me.

He started coming to my village and began winning everyone's confidence, even my family members. He used to buy things for everyone at home. He is a Muslim man. Earlier my family asked me to leave him and I thought he was a good man but slowly as he started showering my family with gifts, they started to support him and he immediately began to abuse and mistreat me. I did not have the support of the family either.

I have two children but they are not from him. He still demands that I give him my children. He used to attack me wherever possible. I tried so hard to escape from him but nobody believes me. Even if I give a complaint, the police will also believe only him because I am a Devadasi.

He has given complaints on me at so many police stations- Mudhol, Jhamkhandi, Hungund, Miraj showing a false marriage registration certificate. I don't know how he did that. He has taken my gold, my jewellery. He has beaten me. I have not given any complaint to the police because I am scared that I will only be harmed in the process. Actually, I am at fault also. I felt pity on him before giving complaint. He is a goonda. He has a gun, knives etc. He is my father's age.

He is still troubling me. He is trying to attack my children. He is at his village but he keeps coming to Mudhol. My whole family is scared of him. Everyone is tired of him now. My brothers and father are tired. My father says he will kill him.

3. RENUKA

This is the picture of an incidence in my life. There is a big story behind it which I will share with you. In my village, we had two huts, one for my brother's family and another one for my parents and me. I came to Karada, Maharashtra to make some money to build a home.

My mother is also a Devadasi. She had four brothers. She did not like to practice sex work so she went away with a man when she was young. We six were born to them both. When I was still a young girl, my father got me married. I did not even know I was married. My husband was already a middle aged man. I would never go to my husband. When I was sent to him, on the first night, he tore my vagina. I was still a girl of about 13 years of age. I woke up with blood all over my body. This was not all, he burnt me and hit me. I lived like this with a demonic man for almost a year.

I don't think there is any man like him in the whole of the state. He looked like a Gorilla and was an insane man. It was 30 years since my mother had left her home. After my bitter experiences with my husband, I got into the sex trade. My own uncles later began to accuse me and say that there was something very wrong with me and that's why my husband did not want me. They used to force me to go to him. These



uncles brought me to my village in Rugi. My brothers were still unmarried.

My uncles were harbouring a grudge against my mother because though she was made a Devadasi she did not get into sex work and did not earn anything for the family. So, her brothers were still angry and bitter at her. They wanted to somehow make my life miserable and benefit from me at least. What they did was, they took me to Mudhol, made me sit down and put a paper before me and asked me to sign it. I signed it and then they asked me to remove my managalsutra and give it to them. I refused. I started to scream and hold on tightly to my thaali. They still refused. I almost became a mad woman. They washed my kumkum from my forehead. I just did not understand what was happening to me. I ran to my mother and told her what her brothers had done.

For three months, I could not eat and neither could I work. It was as if someone had left a worm in my head and I was struggling for answers. I thought I lost everything. If I lost my thaali, it was equal to losing my womanhood. I almost became a vagabond.

Slowly, my uncles began to send clients to me. One day, they took my mother on the pretext of wanting some help with their cooking. When I was alone at home, they sent a man to me. Now I was defenseless. He spoilt me and after him, my own uncle also raped me. My brother found me lying on the floor and for the next 8 days I could not even open my eyes.

I now have a daughter but she is very ill. She has a heart problem because when I was carrying her, I was going through a very difficult time. I thought, at least I will give my daughter a good life but her condition is worse than mine.

4. SHANTA

I am a Devadasi. I have no children of my own but I have brothers who have their own children. For my brother's son's marriage, he sought my help and I

gave him all the gold I had made and the money I had saved. Now he refuses to give me anything back. He wants me to now give him the only house that I have. He is after that also.

I lived in Mumbai, Miraj, Allahabad. I lived out for about 20 years. I got into sex work as a young girl. I now live in the village. I live alone. I do not have any children. Nobody talks to me. Not my brothers and not even their children or their wives. I have 3 brothers. I have no money with me. I gave them everything I had. I just do some work in the village and earn a little to eat. My saddest moment is being cheated by my own people.

We have a lot of trouble from clients - they beat us and misbehave with us if we do not do what they want us to. There is nothing more painful when your own people turn their back against you. I had nothing to eat for 15 days but still nobody looked at my face.

5. DUNDAVVA

My father had asthma. There was a lot of loan in the village and that's why I went to Pune. They took a loan of Rs.20, 000 from the gharwali. I had to pay Rs.10 for every Rs.100 as interest. I took this loan for my father. They took all the money from me. I lived in Pune for 2 years. Now, I am back in the village. I will not go back to Pune again. I have a 6 year old son. I do not have brothers. Two of my sisters are married. I was made a Devadasi.

My biggest problem was loans. The Gharwali never gave me money. I never even knew how much I earned. When I first took loan, she told me that she will not take interest from me but after going there she cut the interest from my earnings. I came back with no money. I was new. I knew nothing. When I came back, all I had was 10 grams of gold and some clothes. I just paid off the loans of Rs.20, 000. I would have earned at least of about Rs.5000 per month but got nothing back. My family did not know anything either.







Karnataka Health Promotion Trust

Karnataka Health Promotion Trust
#1-4, 5th floor, IT/ BT Park, Rajajinagar Industrial Area,
Behind KSSIDC Admin. Office, Rajajinagar, Bangalore- 560044
Phone: 080-40400200, Fax: 080-40400300
www.khpt.org

