Women of Worth

#colourismendswithme

FIGHTING COLOURISM FOR 10 YEARS

#darkisbeautiful

DARK is Beautiful

Advocacy | Training | Rehabilitation | Counselling

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

For JUSTICE, EQUALITY & CHANGE

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FROM OUR FOUNDER

"This is the need of the hour, a relevant and meaningful response to a context reeling under the weight of misplaced attitudes towards women and girls."

KAVITHA EMMANUEL
Founder-Director, Women Of Worth

Dear Friends and Supporters,

This year began with a sense of excitement and satisfaction. We have completed 10 years in our journey of fighting Colourism*. WOW started this campaign in 2009 to address the toxic belief that a person's worth is measured by the colour of their skin. Since its launch there has been no looking back on our stand to celebrating skin colour diversity.

FIGHTING COLOURISM FOR 10 YEARS

As a way of commemorating this we saw the birth of an anthem contributed to this fight by Nandita Das Initiatives called INDIA'S GOT COLOUR (www.darkisbeautiful.in). My heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Nandita Das, Mahesh Matthai (Director) and Ankur Tiwari (Music Director), the actors, singers and the whole crew who contributed their time and talent to this anthem. Efforts are underway to have the anthem dubbed in other Indian languages as well.

This year has been a year of great strides in the direction of building capacity into every aspect of our work. The three streams of WOW saw a steady growth and we added a fourth stream as well. WOW's Mental Health initiative was launched this year to make professional mental health services accessible to all. As per our tagline , 'be kind to your mind', this initiative is committed to addressing the stigma attached to mental health and strives to offer quality mental health programs like one-on-one counseling, psychometric assessments, trauma therapy and mental health workshops.

Our advocacy initiatives and training programs, seminars and workshops echoed the message of equality and safety for women at home, in campuses, at the workplace and in public spaces. Our most requested topics of the year were:

Building a Culture of Safety at the Workplace

Body Positivity and Skin Colour Discrimination

Discovering 'Me' - a module on self-worth, identity and vision

WOW's Chapter initiatives gained momentum as well as we saw new beginnings in Kolkata, The Nilgiris and Bangalore. We hope this will grow further in 2020.

This year however we were sad to bid goodbye to some of our staff. Special recognition and thanks to **SHALOMIE TEWES**, (Creative Head at WOW for 5 years), **CHRISTINA IMMANCY** (Accountant) , **JEZREEL NATHANIA** (Social Worker) and **CAROLINE THOMAS** (Advocacy Executive). We do know that they will continue to be a part of the WOW family from wherever they are. Like I always say, WOW has an open door that works in just one direction; once you walk in, you become a part of our family. Our roles may change but our call to include everyone in the change process will remain.

Everyone has something to give as we press on towards positive transformation. Our staff, volunteers, interns and well-wishers are part of this collective dream to make India safe for women and girls.

This is because WOW is more than just an organization. We are a movement that is committed to change. We take our work seriously. It is more than just a job for us. It is a call, a challenge we pursue with passion.

Help us build a movement that is significantly contributing to the change of mind-set towards women and girls. This is the need of the hour, a relevant and meaningful response to a context reeling under the weight of misplaced attitudes towards women and girls. With the assurance of your support we hope to be able to take huge strides towards transforming our cultures and contexts to be safe spaces for our women and girls.

We urge you to help ensure that our work has the resources to sustain our programs. Help make our efforts bear more fruit. Talk about us to those in your world of influence. Invite us to do workshops and training sessions in your campuses and communities. Participate in our social media discussions. Refer us for CSR partnerships. And when you have time to spare, volunteer with us.

We look forward to 2020 with a sense of purpose and excitement. We look forward to your unwavering support, encouragement and feedback.

Stay in touch! Your place in this movement is irreplaceable.

May this season bring much light and joy into your home and life!

KAVITHA EMMANUEL

**The word Colourism was coined by Alice Walker, to define the prejudice and discrimination against people of dark skin shades within the same ethnic group.*

WOMEN OF WORTH

We CELEBRATE who we are today.
We ANTICIPATE those changes that are yet to be.
We PARTICIPATE in the fight for a better tomorrow.

WOW, a program unit of PROVIDE was birthed in 2006, orchestrated by a team of women who rose up to the challenge of being the change in an environment charged with gender discriminatory practices and attitudes that were prevalent both across boards of institutions as well as in society at large. Discriminatory practices and attitudes are often excused or overlooked as being a cultural phenomenon without considering the stripping away of human dignity and worth. With zero tolerance for abuse and violence against women and adolescent girls, WOW tirelessly works to break stereotypes that cripple women's true potential. We dream of a world where women and men, girls and boys co-exist to make the world as it should be.

VISION

To see women and girls live up to their full potential in the light of their intrinsic worth by creating safe spaces in all spheres.

MISSION

Our mission is to facilitate the birth of an environment that understands the intrinsic worth and immense potential of women and girls. We exist to,

ENLIGHTEN women to recognize their innate value, worth and significance

ENCOURAGE women to live up to their full potential

EMPOWER women by being channels of safety, growth & equality

EQUIP women with tools to live the change they hope to see

OUR FOUR STREAMS

- ADVOCACY
- TRAINING
- REHABILITATION
- MENTAL HEALTH

OUR CAMPAIGNS

girlarise

Raising The Bar On Women's Safety.

For the Safety of women and girls in 4 spaces - at home, in campuses, at the workplace and in public spaces.

FEARLESS PROJECT

Ensuring the safety of future generations

For Awarness, Prevention and Recovery Programs on Child Sexual Abuse.

DARK is Beautiful

Colourism ends with me

To adress the toxic belief that a person's worth is measured by the colour of their skin.

OUR OVERARCHING GOALS

I. Advocate for and Create environments for the Safety of women and girls

II. Advocate for and Create environments for Equality, Welfare & Growth of women and girls in all spheres of life.

III. Advocate for and Create Environments for Challenging & Changing Stereotypes that define women and girls.

ADVOCACY

OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

The International Day of the Girl Child was observed on 11th October, 2019. An event was held at the Government Girls Home, Kellys, Chennai to commemorate this day. 105 girls participated in this event. The theme of the event was Girl Force - Unscripted and Unstoppable (UNICEF).

At the event, real life stories of girls rising up against the norms of child marriage and violence were shared with the girls.

There was a puppet show which focused on the rights of the girl child and showed that the skills and talents of each individual can be used to bring change in the communities they live in.

The girls pledged to use every opportunity, develop their potential and contribute to society.

The purpose of the event was to:

Raise awareness on issues relating to the girl child.

Encourage the girls to assert their rights.

Motivate and encourage them to contribute to society.

FIGHTING COLOURISM FOR 10 YEARS

This year we took the **Dark Is Beautiful** campaign message to Indonesia and Sri Lanka. Worth mentioning is the launch of the INDIA'S GOT COLOUR anthem in Delhi at the UNESCO national headquarters. We look forward to a fruitful partnership with UNESCO for our 2020 projects to address Colourism and Gender-based violence (VAWG – Violence against Women and Girls).

We take the message of self-worth and equality of all individuals wherever we go - from advocacy events at malls, learning centres (schools and colleges), corporate offices and non-profits to communities, neighbourhoods, conferences, panel discussions and networking events.

OUR REACH & IMPACT

57,000

22,000

23,000

Through our campaigns Dark is Beautiful and Girl Arise, we were able to give a platform for people to tell their stories, engage with us on issues of safety, violence against women and the girl child, prevention of sexual harasment at the work place, leadership of women and rape culture in the nation. Till date, we have an organic reach of 57,000 followers on Facebook, 2200 followers on Instagram and 2300 followers on Twitter.

Through our blog space, this year, we featured a young girl from South India who aspires to become an astronaut, raised questions on Independent India's treatment of its women and the girl child and assessed the status of equality for women from a gender perspective addressing unconscious biases.

girl arise

Raising The Bar On Women's Safety.

DARK is Beautiful

WOW KOLKATA

The Kolkata Chapter of WOW was officially launched in April 2019. The focus of the Kolkata Chapter is to work in the most vulnerable locations in order to prevent trafficking, provide training and empowering girl children. Our work is focused on the three red light areas in the city of Kolkata and in the district of Nadia.

Nadia (110kms away from Kolkata) district shares its border with Bangladesh. This area is infamous for being a "source" for young children (boys and girls) to be trafficked for various purposes within the country and out of the country. It is estimated that 45% of children who are under the age of 18 are vulnerable to being exploited and abused.

In Kolkata, our presence is in the "red light areas", working with the children of sex workers. These children are exposed to the realities of their context with hardly any mechanisms to cope with the issues and challenges that they deal with everyday.

We work to address the safety of these children, and we do this in partnership with other organizations. We have trained law enforcement and government officials on child protection.

Trainings & Workshops at grass-root levels

So far we have trained over **1800** students in Nadia and Kolkata on how to decode media messages (media literacy), improving their confidence (self worth and self esteem) and how to stay safe online (internet safety). We also conducted workshops for parents on parenting skills and how to be updated on the use of media for their children. We have reached close to a **1000** parents in both locations.

In the coming months we plan to reach three more blocks including 282 villages and over 500 schools in Nadia.

TRAINING

"...content was new, very informative"
Staff, Amada Soft, Chennai

Training is an integral part of the work that WOW does. We find it imperative to educate people on core values and morale and help them think critically. Individuals must be empowered to make change happen.

Our core areas of training aim to empower individuals and talk about safety. Training is conducted through workshops, seminars and conferences at schools, colleges, corporates and religious institutions. Our training is a combination of group interactive exercises and multimedia presentations with specific objectives and key outcomes, and conducted by skilled , professional trainers.

WOW conducted training programmes across India this year. We have trained over **4000** people from different walks of life including students, employees of various companies, parents, teachers and college students.

Participant Quotes

"needed for everyone, given the world we live in these days"
A parent on learning how to prevent child sexual abuse. Ashraya, South Chennai

"I learnt to be self-confident and accept the way I am"
Staff, RRD, Chennai

"I enjoyed the interactive sessions, Zumba, and the self discovery test"
Student, St. Hilda's School, Ooty

TAMARA MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mental Health is one of the most ignored aspects in our society. As a society we falsely believe that when an issue is not spoken about, it doesn't exist. Added to this is the distorted understanding of mental illness. There continues to be a widespread stigma attached to mental illness.

To address this, and raise awareness on normalising mental health, WOW initiated the Tamara Mental Health Services in May 2019.

Over

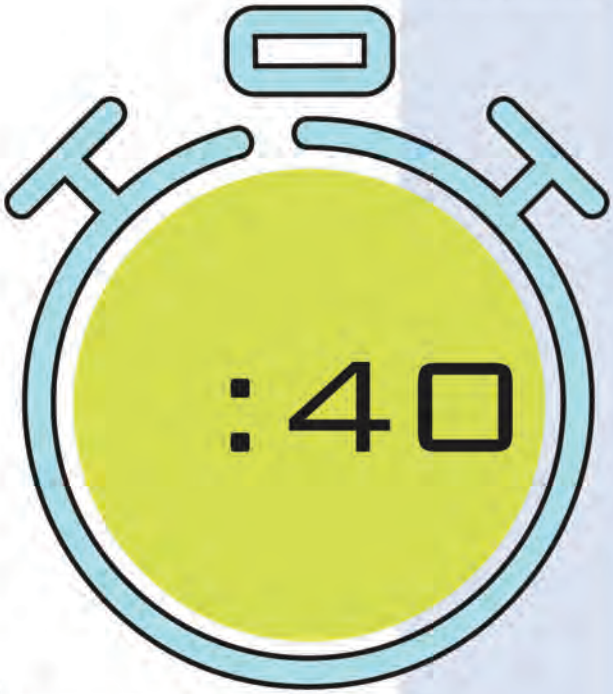
300

students and young people were reached through trainings and workshops this year.

We kicked it off with a workshop and retreat for the adolescent girls in our rehabilitation program and introduced the concept of mental health and the role of a counselor. Since then, we have continued one to one counseling sessions with them.

We have now included counselling and awareness trainings through specific workshops like Body Shaming, Colourism, work life balance, sexual abuse and its effect on mental health. Many care givers and parents were also reached to enable them with basic counseling skills and to help with trauma, especially with child sexual abuse.

40 SECONDS OF ACTION



We conducted a campaign called **40 Seconds of Action** to raise awareness on suicide prevention for **World Mental Health Day, 2019**.

Printed posters were displayed on notice boards in 7 institutions including schools and colleges. On social media, we shared awareness content on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. We reached close to a 1000 people.

REHABILITATION

The Rehabilitation Department at WOW, identifies and engages with adolescent girls who are from abused, trafficked or neglected backgrounds. Specifically, we cater to more than 100 children in the Government Girl's Home, Kellys, Chennai, through life skills training, counselling and awareness programmes. This is a government run centre and is under the supervision of the Child Welfare Committee.

Our programmes focus on psycho-social interventions through counselling, provision of basic necessities, medical care, group work, life-skills training, social outings and retreats, vocational skill training and scholarship programmes empower these girls to cope with their situation. Our hope is through our facilitation, they will be equipped to face future challenges with grit, resilience and confidence. The interventions are need-based, educative and empowering.

SCHOLARSHIPS

HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

Scholarships are an essential part of the rehabilitation department. The desire is to educate and assist adolescent girls/boys who have a desire to pursue higher studies. This year there are three beneficiaries under this programme.

AFTERCARE PROGRAMME

The Aftercare Programme is conducted in partnership with government registered homes. This programme helps in the provision of basic necessities like monthly hygiene supplies, clothes, innerwear, footwear, books and guides to the girls in the program.

COUNSELLING

Girls requiring help are identified and engaged in a regular counselling process to enable them to cope with undue stress or anxiety, resentment or anger or any mental illnesses that could have risen due to their past or change in circumstances.

MEDICAL INTERVENTION

Girls who require specialist medical attention are also sponsored through our programme. Girls requiring ENT and Ophthalmology care were sponsored this year.

LIFE SKILLS TRAINING

We were able to train almost 300 girls in life skills that included topics such as self-esteem, healthy relationships, values, hygiene and personal care. These sessions are aimed at empowering the girls with survival skills once they are back in their communities.

SOCIAL RETREATS & OUTINGS

The aftercare girls are taken out on quarterly social retreats and outings to ensure their socio-emotional wellbeing. These outings and retreats are packed with fun activities and are both educational and recreational in purpose.

VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING

Vocational Skills Training is provided to all the aftercare girls who are unable to pursue higher education. This year, we trained them in the art of decoupage. After a series of trainings, a decoupage unit was set up at one of the homes. Organic gardening skill training was also organised as part of the vocational skills training programme.

girl arise

Raising The Bar On Women's Safety.

ENDRAPE
ENDDOWRY
ENDVIOLENCE
ENDTRAFFICKING
ENDSEXUALASSAULT

www.womenofworth.in/girl-arise

marvelously & wonderfully made

The Fearless Project equips and encourages educators, teachers and trainers to make learning centres, schools and colleges a safe place for students.

FEARLESS PROJECT

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