

Annual Report

2022 - 2023

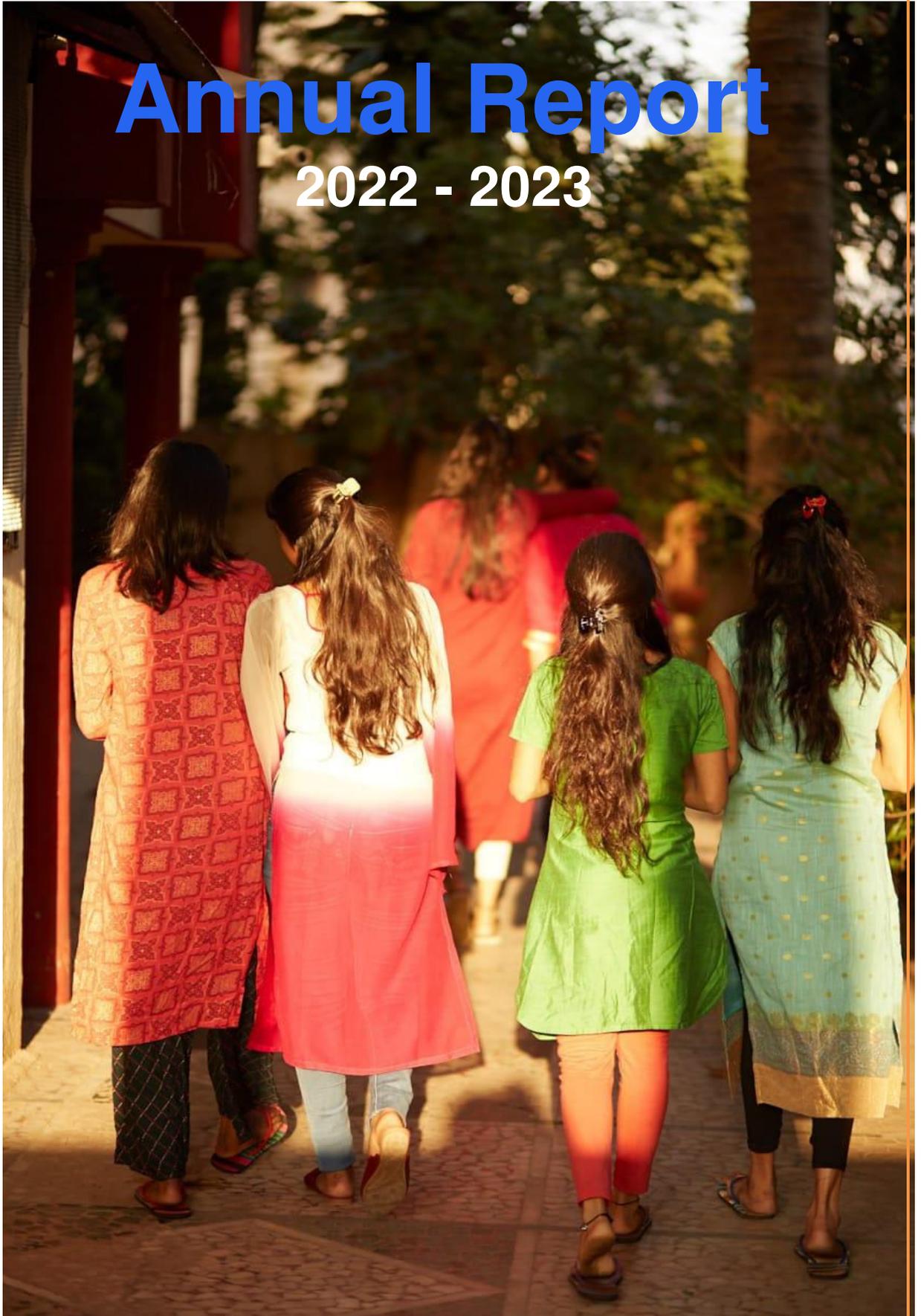


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About us:

Kshamata is a registered trust, based in Thane, E – 6994, whose MISSION is to empower women and adolescent girls faced with vulnerable and exploitative situations including trafficked backgrounds, enabling them to become respected, productive and earning citizens, by providing on-going care and counseling, life skills education, job readiness, appropriate vocational training and placement, necessary arrangements for accommodation, continued follow up and support for reintegration in society.

Our Vision - *to ensure that every woman/girl has the opportunity to lead a life of dignity and self-reliance*

Our Mission - *transform lives by Engaging with, Equipping and Empowering women and adolescent girls faced with vulnerability and exploitation to become respected, productive and earning citizens by providing opportunities for Training, Employment and Reintegration in society.*

- **Internal Residential Program**

These interventions are undertaken through the Kshamata Transformation Center (KTC), a residential training center that acts as a platform to demonstrate the process of deinstitutionalization. Here, the women (aged between 18-26 years) undergo in-depth learning of life skills and vocational skills, both formal training and on-the-job learning. In addition, and probably most important, they learn job and society readiness, e.g. constructive attitudes towards punctuality, time commitment for work, and commitment to quality of work, etc.

Usually women are referred to the KTC by the various government shelter homes (under the Department of Women and Child Development - Government of Maharashtra), on their release. Interventions include providing/facilitating training in tailoring and embroidery, catering, beautician course, and various job preparatory skills, e.g. spoken English, computer skills, functional literacy and also life skills education. Selected girls and women are also supported to pursue further education at school and college levels.

Fig: Kshamata Reintegration Model

Kshamata Integration Model



- **Transition to Independence**

The final stage of the programme results in the culmination of the efforts leading to all round empowerment manifested through financial independence and self-reliance. It also encompasses the journey towards creating social supports systems and mainstreaming within the society. The transition towards independent living is done through a unique model of group stay arrangements, which has proved very successful since its inception 6 years ago.

- **External Outreach Program**

Kshamata also works with women and girls in various state- and privately-run shelter homes for the Government of Maharashtra). The girls and women are provided some degree of counseling and awareness of alternative livelihoods that are possible, and potential career paths available to them. Kshamata's Outreach Programme includes conducting a series of activities for initial engagement followed by counseling, training and undertake where possible, activities for earning income.

- **In-house social enterprise initiative**

Kshamata has an in-house social enterprise initiative is aimed at providing a 'sheltered' employment approach to the women, prior to their independent placement. Under this initiative a variety of products, mainly tailoring and catering based, are made including hand crafted jewelry items. The process enables women to "earn-and-learn", at the same time providing a space to develop work ethics – work discipline, punctuality, communication with others, and responsibility.

Impact

The overall interventions have impacted over 700 women survivors of trafficking and gender-based violence during April 2022 to March 2023.

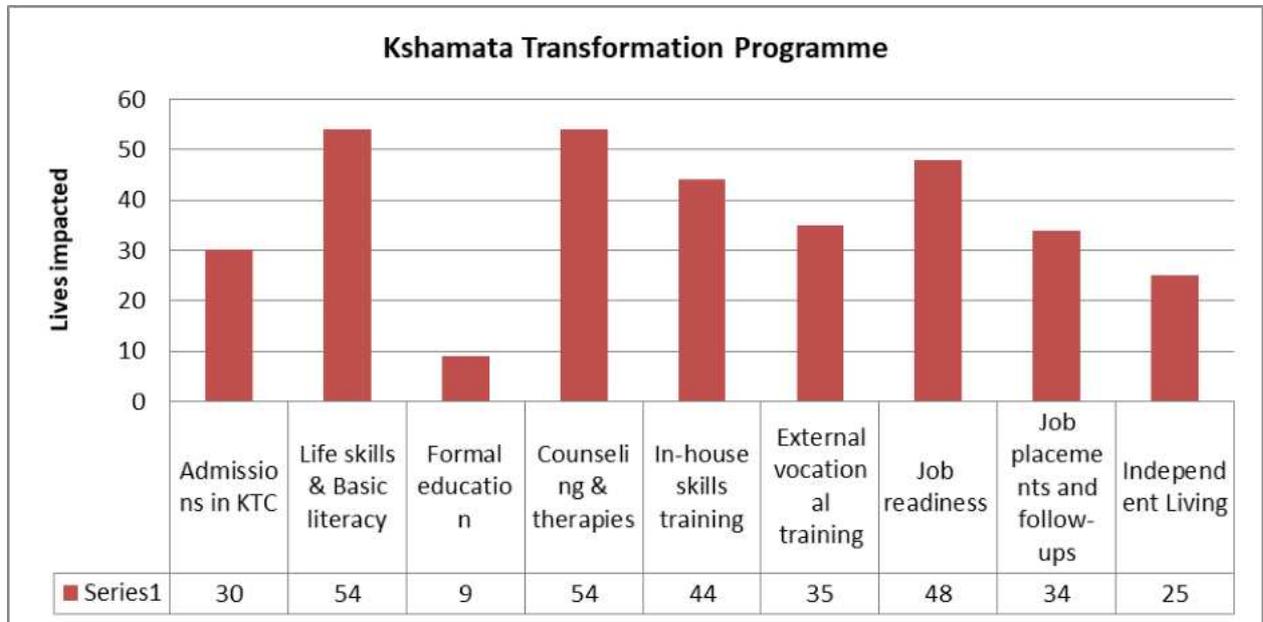


Fig.1

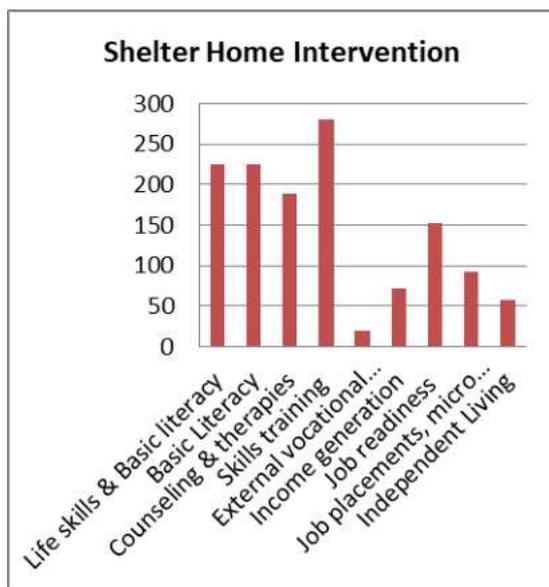


Fig.2

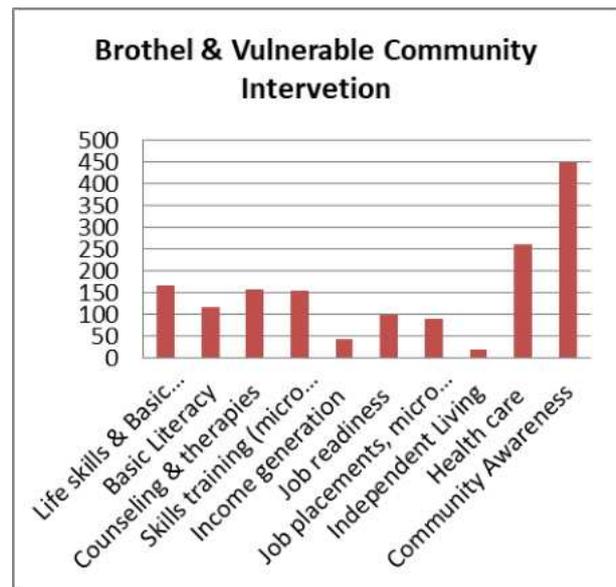


Fig.3

- **Government shelter home level intervention:**

Key updates:



The display cupboards in both the homes have given a visibility to the products made by women. It has provided a platform through which

Showcasing of skills of women:

we are able to showcase the skills and talent of the women in the homes. Whoever walks into a home, doesn't leave without seeing the display cabinets and products. The looks of the products change when they are displayed in a cabinet.

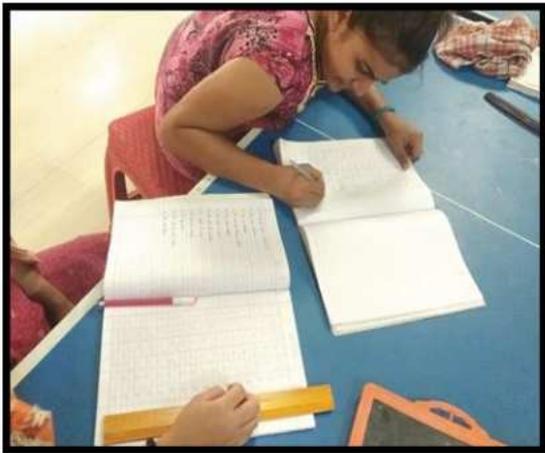
The government authorities don't leave the premises without buying at least one product in the homes. They have all praised the hard work and skills of the women. Seeing all this, the confidence of the women has increased.

The Maharashtra State Commission Chairperson Ms.Rupali Chakankar visited the home and interacted with women and motivated them to learn and earn through NGO skills development programmes and take up the jobs after release.



The Maharashtra State Women Commission Chairperson Ms.Rupali Chakankar at Navjivan home

○ **Basic & functional Literacy:**



The literacy classes are getting very good response at all the homes. Baseline has been done for new women and they are taught as per their baseline. The assessment pre and post enrollment has been done for all women. Their monthly tests were conducted to see how much they have actually learnt in the classes. Women who are already literate are encouraged to teach and support illiterate women after classroom learning time. This help peer educators develop a sense of responsibility and also boost their self-confidence. For peer learners, they help them connect with their peers and develop a sense of gratitude.

Women participate enthusiastically in literacy classes. They are coming regularly for literacy classes. Most of the women turn up on time for a class. They feel happy when they write their name. Most of the women identify the alphabets, reads words and the few makes attempt to build sentences in English. Women who have completed three months in literacy project were felicitated with the certificate. Similarly, women who got released from the shelter homes have also been given a certificate of participation.

Math knowledge is helping them in tailoring training as they have to take measurement of fabrics. More than 40% of women are able to read and write English alphabets and over 60% can recognize the marathi alphabets (*barakhadi*). More than 50% women can read and write in Hindi and around 30% of them understand what they read without any support.

Women are realizing the importance of education in their lives. One of them said that she will educate her two daughters as much as they want. She doesn't want the same fate for her daughters as hers.



Classroom at shelter home and literacy material being used in the shelter homes



Course completion certificate



Classroom test

- *Life Skills Education & Job Readiness*

Life skills assist the women in developing new ways of thinking and problem-solving. Recognize the consequences of their actions and teach them to accept responsibility for their actions rather than blaming others. Basic life skills sessions were held with all newly placed women in order to motivate and guide them on skill training. The sessions are helping them change their life perspective and become focused for their future.



Sessions were conducted on the skill of effective communication with women, in which women were made aware of the importance of communication and how important it is not only at home but also at work. The women were also guided to do the production work accurately and on time and for that they were guided for planning. They were also made understand why and how the team work is important.

48 sessions were held in each home followed by feedback session at the end of each session. The topics covered under basic and core skills were – positive thinking, self-motivation, conflict resolution, grooming, self-care, menstrual hygiene, trust building, etc.

All the sessions were highly interactive which ensured 100% participation of the women. Different methodologies like role play, games, story-telling, etc were used in facilitating these sessions. These methodologies also help facilitator garner active participation and learning. Information about addiction and its consequences was also given to women as more than 50% of women are addicted to tobacco. Some women even shared that they were addicted to alcohol. We repeated this session twice as after a few days some new women had come in.

Life skills sessions were most appreciated by women. In fact, the activity-based sessions were interactive and most women shared that they were very effective and that they often remember what they learnt in these sessions.

Likewise, job readiness sessions were also conducted for over 150 women. These sessions were facilitated by the experts. One of the sessions was conducted by a social entrepreneur. Women liked the session very much and got inspired with her journey.

Job readiness sessions helped women to focus on their future, after living from shelter home. Session on why employment is important, how it help them think realistically and move on life. Post sessions, women had questions which option, they should choose, where they will get opportunity. The trainer keeps a Q&A session at the end of each session.



- A resource person from Tech Mahindra was also invited to interact with women and give information on different career options available in the world today.
- Job readiness sessions were also held to prepare women for the mainstream jobs. The sessions were planned around work etiquettes, self-discipline, values and principles. 4 job readiness sessions were organized which was attended by 152 women in all three homes.

Women and staff of Navjivan home were taken out to visit Somerset manufacturing unit in Mira road, Kshamata production unit and Residential center in Thane. Women were very happy to come out of the home after a long time. They all liked all three places where they were taken for a visit.



Navjivan home women were taken to Somerset manufacturing unit, Mira Road

The objective of the visit was to widen their horizon by providing them the opportunity to get a first-hand experience of learning and choose the right path for themselves. All the travel arrangements and food were taken care of by Kshamata team. The exposure visit has helped us gain trust of women and shelter home staff and motivate women to learn some skills during their detention in the home.



An interactive session on the mainstream job opportunities was organized for the women at Navjivan home. It was facilitated by an expert from The Creative Handicraft. The expert interacted with women and spoke about the opportunities for alternate livelihoods. The session was very inspiring and many women expressed that they would not like to continue with their current profession which is very exploitative and inhuman.

○ *Vocational Skills Training*

Women/girls at all seven homes are doing very well in basics and advanced skills. Most of them are regular to training and they are learning it with a lot of interest. Women were taught to stitch palazzo, jacket cutting, tote bags, lining stitching, Small cosmetic pouch, boat shaped pouch, pencil pouch and so on. Women who hail from Bangladesh and West Bengal state have great interest in embroidery and embellishment work and therefore, our trainers teach them embroidery for an hour every day.

Women have undergone training in tote bag cutting, table runners, coasters, paper fusion sticking, pocket stitching with attached belt, normal pocket, how to sew and attach zip, scrap cutting, frill making, cross stitch practice, piping, cloth flower making, ironing, sling bags, earphone pouches, scrunches, etc. Apart from sewing skills, they are also taught to how to oil the sewing machines, how to clean, repair and maintain the machines.



Currently, 44 women are undergoing training for basic as well as advanced sewing skills. Of them, 16 women are new who have been enrolled for basic level skill training. Women are coming forward and joining the training on their own.

Embroidery is taught to those women who are not interested in sewing. Some women do very beautiful embroidery, especially the women from West Bengal state and Bangladesh country as their generations is engaged in embroidery business.

At Shanti sadan, more than 60 women learnt basic skills in sewing, of them, 34 learnt advanced level skills and all of them were part of income generation program. Women have also been trained in embroidery and quilting work. One of them is pursuing a diploma in fashion designing through online method. Women at Navjivan home and Shanti sadan home are very ambitious and aspired to make a career in mainstream courses after they get released from the homes. Women who have got released from the shelter homes were taken out to visit and choose various training institutes for further training as per their choice and area of interest.

One of the released women who have left her older profession and started a new life was invited to the home to share her inspiring journey with the women. The women were overwhelmed to hear about her journey. They were inspired to see how beautiful her life has become now.



Women felicitated with certificates

In each home, two batches are formed so that all women are given enough attention and trained properly. It has been observed that most of the women are interested in learning women and kids wears. Trainers have developed the curriculum and the same is being used to train women. The test is conducted at the end of each month. The verbal test was taken for those who cannot read and write. Trainers conducted tests for all three months and evaluated the women for their training performance.



Women are constantly encouraged and motivated to be part of vocational training so that after releasing if women want to start working, they will have some options. The expert visit to homes and interaction helps women to stay motivated and to create new ideas in production.



○ *Income Generation and Livelihood*

Women who have learnt the basics of sewing were promoted to next level of learning and they have also been part of income generation program in both homes. More than 50% of women are engaged in income generation activities in shelter homes and most of them plan to pursue it as their career in future.

Raychem Pvt Ltd has ordered 140 gift hampers for their staff. This order was fulfilled by 26 women in Shanti Sadan and Navjivan home who earned a cumulative income of Rs.12000 in the first tranche. There is great excitement and sense of fulfilment among the women. They have also contributed in making suggestions and ideas to speed up the work. In all the produced 350 bags and pouches in 6 days.

Women under income generation programme produced beautiful products for Diwali festival. The products made by them were – sling bags, table runners, pouches in different shapes & sizes, tea coasters, patchwork for tote bags, cushion covers, etc. The shelter home authorities also praised the products being made at shelter homes. A stall of products was also put up at SNTD College to exhibit and sell products made by women at Navjivan home. It was organized by Mumbai Municipal Corporation.



Production work at Shanti Sadan and Navjivan home

Women at Shanti sadan home were taken out to Delta clothing unit in Palghar for the exposure visit. Women stepped out of the home for the first time after their detention in the home. They were very happy and thrilled to see the factory and outside world after a long time.



Products made by women



Embroidery work by wome

A group of around 40 judges from across Maharashtra state visited Navajivan home on 25th February to see the rehabilitation programmes run by various NGOs. A stall of products was put up by all NGOs. The guests appreciated Kshamata's contribution in the rehabilitative work being done for

women in the home. They also liked products made by women and bought products worth Rs.4100 in the exhibition.



Product Stall



Training sample product display



Diya painting at shelter homes

Brothel & vulnerable community intervention:

○ Life Skills

Life skills play an important role in the lives of victims of exploitation as it equips them with social and other essential skills which enable them to lead a healthy life. The sessions were conducted in multiple batches as we couldn't accommodate more than 15 women at the center. Initially, life skill educator focused was on basic life skills such as nutrition, personal care, hygiene, sanitation, menstrual hygiene management, stress management, etc. As the group progressed, we started conducting advanced level sessions like decision making, interpersonal relationship, conflict management, etc.

In a year, we conducted more than 80 sessions which benefitted over 160 women. The sessions are helping them learn and understand their problems and enabling them to find out solutions for the same. It is also helping them explore their potential and build a new perspective.



Job readiness sessions were organized which were delivered through the experts. Women who are engaged in income generation activity were oriented on the work disciplines, punctuality, time management, communication, and work etiquettes. Since none of them have ever worked outside the community, it's a little challenging for them to learn things which are unfamiliar to them.

Women were also made aware of the importance of health, personal hygiene and menstrual health management through life skills sessions. The general health and eye check-up camp were also organized for over 300 women in the community. Awareness on personal hygiene and community sanitation was created through Global Hand washing Day celebration and group meetings in the community.



Life skills session



Eye Check-up camp

○ Vocational skills training

Training in sewing skills is going on smoothly. Nearly 20 women are coming in for training regularly. Around 22 women have completed their basic level training and have been promoted to advanced level between October to December. They have been felicitated with the certificate of course completion.

The training is held between 1pm-5pm from Monday – Saturday. Most of the women do not come to the center on Fridays as it is their business day and the client flow is high. They are trained on both full shuttle regular machine and industrial machine.



So far, women have learnt different types of products like bags, slings, pouches and face masks. They were also given training in cloth sanitary pad making and patch work. Women feel so happy when they see the final product they make and more so when they are appreciated for their work.

Income generation:

The aim of the project is to build capacities of women by equipping them with vocational skills and create income generation opportunities in the community so that they get a good exposure to working environment and can be prepared for the mainstream jobs in the process.

A total of 44 women were actively engaged in income generation activities and have earned a decent number of wages. They have worked and fulfilled the orders of shopping bags, tote bags, pouches and patchwork. The income generation activity has been a breakthrough for the center as it has helped women boost their confidence and earn some income for their living. It motivated other women who were irregular and had least interest in the training.

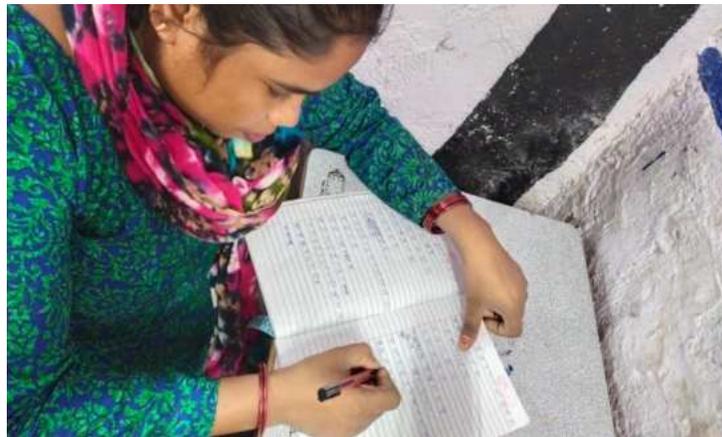


Women engaged in production activity

○ **Functional & Financial Literacy**

Literacy rate among these women is less than 20 %. They cannot read and write. Because of lack of education, they are manipulated by pimps, money lenders, clients and their partners. It further makes them economically vulnerable and gets exploited by the other people. To help them overcome this challenge, we keep on encouraging them to learn basics skills. They are taught to write their name in Hindi and English. The focus is on reading and writing of basic Hindi so that they are not deceived by anybody because of their ignorance.

It is a bit challenging to make women understand the importance of literacy due to lack of exposure to learning environment. However, the field team made door to door visits and interacted with as many women as possible and oriented them on literacy program. In the first two months, only five women turned up at the center, gradually increased to 16 and finally 25 women signed up for literacy. In the second quarter, numbers increased to 34 and as on March 31, more than 140 women signed up and learnt basic literacy skills including financial skills.



Women are taught to write their name in Hindi and English both. They are also motivated to learn Hindi and English alphabets. They are all given notebooks and pencils/pens to practice at the center. Women are quite regular and timings are kept flexible so that they can come for learning whenever

they have time. Sessions on banking, digital transactions and savings were also held to equip them with knowledge and information to manage their hard earned money.

Many women are happy to have learned to sign their names. The women, who didn't have an account, have opened their accounts in the bank. Some women have started saving their money.



- **Micro business training + business launch**

Women have been equipped with micro business skills to start, grow and expand their business and earn a sustained income.

Kshamata has been successfully making forays in transforming lives of hundreds of, at risk & exploited women in the past several years. As part of our last mile implementation in enabling income opportunities & financial independence for survivors of gender based violence in vulnerable communities, hence, our goal is to equip women with entrepreneurial skills to enable them to opt for a sustainable livelihood.



Micro business classroom training

This initiative aims at creating income generating opportunities to combat the injustices against women through micro-enterprise empowerment initiative. Supported by a curriculum tested in the market place, project aims to facilitate dignified income generating opportunities for women through supporting entrepreneurial opportunities.

Under the said initiative, we identified over 60 women who aspired to start their own business and break the cycle of exploitation. The outreach team did assessment for all of them and shortlisted 54 women who were keen and serious about taking up a four month long training. In a year, we trained 40 women and supported all of them with business set up.



Business ideas and plan discussion

To facilitate business operations, we guided and helped 12 women to procure Gumasta Certificate which acts as a proof of legal entity & the right to conduct business in the state of Maharashtra, provisioning for opening a business bank account & making allowance for availing of all benefits & tax subsidies from the Maharashtra State Government available for this scheme. We also facilitated digital transactions by processing QR code payments for 32 women.



Reintegration through Kshamata Transformation Centre (KTC):

○ *Case Management*

Case management approach is enabling the care & support team to chalk out the action/care plans by seeking participation of the girls. Girls are encouraged to participate in the process of planning and decision making for their own futures. The other stakeholders like mentors, psychiatrist, doctors and home authorities are also involved through consultation and guidance. The multiple stakeholders are part of this platform.

○ *Mentoring*

The prospective mentors were oriented on the concept of mentoring and reintegration model of the organization. The mentoring is happening through phone calls once in or twice a week. This learning process is helping girls to introspect and get more clarity on their personal as well as career goals. One of the mentors has been guiding a group of girls for their career planning and preparing them for future jobs. The overall process enables girls to envision for their future and choose career in order to have a socio-economic stability in the future. Considering a short term time commitment of the mentors, we have to keep on searching for more people who can coach our women and it's quite challenging to get the right people on board.

○ *Life skills*



Life skills play a very crucial role in moulding the behaviour of the girls we work with. It enables them to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life and nourishes their socio-psychological attributes. We have to keep repeating the sessions every three months as some girls tend to forget what they learnt some months back.

Developing a sense of gratitude among the girls was very important as we saw some of the girls' wasting invaluable resources like food, stationery and other learning material. Hence, an exposure trip for to the community was organized in order to make them understand the situation and how privileged they are compared to women and children in brothels.



Apart from regular sessions, Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) sessions were also organized to equip them with tools to heal trauma. DMT is used as a tool to identify feelings of sadness, anger, rejection, self-doubt and these are symbolically blown away so as to make room for constructive activities like studying, developing skills and moving towards job readiness which is key to an independent life for all.

Most of the girls have started applying life skills to their daily life and also helping them resolve their problems without any support from the staff at the center. They are showing more commitment towards their own future and their attitude is becoming more empathetic now.

A total of 98 sessions were conducted with 54 girls throughout the year. Pre & post assessment has been done for all the girls by life skill expert. The tools have been developed with the help of external agency to fulfill the needs of our target group

○ **Counseling**

Group and individual counseling is going on very well. Counselling, Art Based Therapy and other health interventions are helping women to heal their trauma, pain and physical ailments. Individual counselling has been happening on a regular basis. The counsellor covered all the girls under individual counselling. The group counselling sessions were also held to build relationship between the new and old girls in the center.

The important but unattended issues like emotional imbalance, anger, negative thinking, loneliness, and discomfort in adjustments, poor self-care, health struggles, and inappropriate words were tackled through individual counselling. However, trauma healing

takes time and counsellor has made her place in the hearts of girls. Girls who go out for job are counselled over the phone call whenever they want to.



Group activity in a group counselling session

○ **Health & Nutrition**

Physical and mental well-being is a non-negotiable element which is responsible for the development of the girls. The overall health status of the girls was average because of lack of proper nutrition and personal hygiene. During the pandemic time, nutrition and personal hygiene have become a necessity of our life. Their personal hygiene is taken care of by providing them with personal hygiene kits and is monitored by the day care coordinator on a daily basis. KTC places a high value on both physical and mental well-being. Girl's physical and mental health is been given special attention. Regular health and weight checks were performed during the project cycle.



We started giving nutrition supplements to girls at the center. They are given seasonal fruits, nuts, leafy vegetables and eggs on a daily basis and non-veg and sea foods like fish every two days. Paneer is also been provided as a source of protein for girls who do not eat non-veg. The nutrition supplement is enabling girls to boost their immunity especially those who are anaemic. They are given fruits to eat but the girls whose HB level is low are made to eat in front of the day care coordinator. Girls are also given black dates every day and they are closely monitored by the project manager.

One of the new girls was undergoing treatment for TB and her medication was monitored by the day care coordinator. A special diet has been started for three girls who were diagnosed with pulmonary infection. 6 girls were diagnosed with iron deficiency hence we started iron rich diet for them. A few girls had dental problems and had undergone treatment. The daily nutrition and strict monitoring resulted in improved health status of the girls. Girls are given vitamin C & D every day. The menstruation related problems were addressed through doctor consultation and proper diet. For vitamin D, they usually take a sun bathe in the morning. The physical assessment was done on a monthly basis to ensure that their health is sound.

- **Health awareness around prevention:**

Health awareness sessions were conducted to educate the girls on the importance of a good health and healthy lifestyle. The focus was also on personal hygiene and how they can prevent illnesses like Covid, Malaria, Scabies, etc. Topics covered: Thyroid, skin care, menstrual hygiene, personal intensive care, hair fall and dandruff etc. Sessions on nutrition

were also held to make the girls understand the importance of nutritious food for their physical and mental well-being.

The yoga and fitness trainer has trained and guided the girls on breathing exercise, meditation and physical exercise to stay fit and healthy. These activities are helping girls become aware of their mental and physical health. 100% of undernourished women returned to optimal physical health while at the KTC

○ ***Skill-Training and Job Readiness:***



A total of 29 women have undergone training in tote bag cutting, table runners, coasters, paper fusion sticking, pocket stitching with attached belt, normal pocket, how to sew and attach zip, scrap cutting, frill making, cross stitch practice, piping, cloth flower making, ironing, sling bags, earphone pouches, scrunches, etc. Apart from sewing skills, they are also taught to how to oil the sewing machines, how to clean, repair and maintain the machines. Monthly evaluation has been done for all girls.

Currently 12 women are undergoing training for basic as well as advanced sewing skills. Of them, 4 women are new who have been enrolled for basic level skill training. Women are coming forward and joining the training on their own.

Embroidery is taught to those women who are not interested in sewing. Some women do very beautiful embroidery, especially the women from other states like West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh as their generations are engaged in embroidery business.

The training also gives them a chance to learn basic disciplines like punctuality, time management, concentration on work, etc. The objective of having an in-house training is to get them job ready and teach them hard skills which will enable to get a decent job and sustain it in the long run.

A total of 44 women were part of in-house skills training which included sewing and jewellery making skills.



Sewing skill training



Jewellery making training

Job readiness sessions were also held to prepare women for the mainstream jobs. The sessions were planned around work etiquettes, self-discipline, values and principles. 12 job readiness sessions were organized which was attended by 22 women this quarter. These sessions were facilitated by the experts. One of the sessions was conducted by a social entrepreneur. Women liked the session very much and got inspired with her journey.

- **Exposure & learning trips**

Girls are always encouraged to go out for practical learning and live experience. This year, we had organized exposure visits to various sites for their perspective bundling and learning.



Exposure visit to a corporate office

The women were visibly excited & in awe of the facilities at Apraava Energy. They were all ears, as the staff interacted with them & even spoke to them about their career aspirations & dreams. Corporate office visits are part of the job readiness training we impart to survivors for their sustainable reintegration into society.



Corporate and institutional exhibitions provide the opportunities to build connect with people and increase their level of confidence which enable them to prepare for the jobs in the mainstream market.



Girls attending job readiness sessions

○ **Job placement and handholding:**

Equipping people with the skills they need to make their way in the world, empowers them toward self-growth and helps them envision a life different from the one they led before. A person with no skills, who is not aware of options available to earn her daily bread, will more likely to fall target to unscrupulous elements. Hence, helping them develop vocationally, getting them job ready and placing them in jobs is the best intervention to facilitate their re-entry into mainstream social life.

Kshamata works with corporates and other potential employers for job placement. Efforts are made to secure placement, both after training and post internships, till the women are placed in a group stay unit. The background of the women is kept confidential, and the employers are sensitized through meetings and conversations.

This year we have assisted 34 women with job placement. The post placement follow up was done by Project Manager with the help of Day Care Coordinator. 25 out of 34 have moved out of Kshamata programme and started living independently.

Case Stories:

○ Case story: 1

Asmita - (name changed to protect identity)

An Adventure of Threads and Dreams

Have you ever faced adversity, where challenges threatened to consume you and found yourself with no support, only to emerge stronger than ever? Asmita, from Kshamata, has overcome hardships and sought empowerment through the organization. It takes tremendous strength to reach out to an unfamiliar organization and work towards rebuilding courage and hope.

Asmita is a young girl standing tall, with clothes made by her own hands, as she persuades people to buy the bags and pouches stitched together by her and her closest friends. From a young age, Asmita had a passion for fabric, a keen eye for design, and a remarkable talent for transforming simple pieces of cloth into magnificent bags, pouches, dresses, and other garments. Humble and dedicated to her craft, she treats every piece of fabric as a canvas, pouring her heart and soul into her stitches. Working brings her peace and happiness, and she is committed to her job, no matter what obstacles come her way.

As a young girl with a passion for fabric and design, she experienced challenges in pursuing her craft. She lacked the resources and support system to develop her skills and turn her passion into a career. Without any guidance or opportunities, Asmita's talent remained untapped, and she struggled to find a way to showcase her creativity.

Additionally, Asmita faced financial constraints that made it difficult for her to access the resources and materials needed for her work. She had limited means to purchase fabrics, threads, and sewing machines, hindering her ability to fully realize her potential. This lack of financial stability also made it challenging for her to envision a future in which she could pursue her passion and make a living from it.

Moreover, Asmita lacked the necessary skills and knowledge in areas such as time management, money management, and communication. These skills are crucial for anyone looking to establish themselves in the creative industry, and their absence further hindered Asmita's progress.

In addition to these hardships, Asmita faced social barriers and discrimination as a young girl from a marginalized background. She may have encountered biases and stereotypes that undermined her confidence and belief in her abilities. The lack of gender equality.

Kshamata has brought Asmita's dream to life by providing her with training and a safe space where she can pursue her vision without facing too many obstacles. The organization has not

only trained her in tailoring but also equipped her with skills in time management, money management, and communication. Asmita 's love extends beyond tailoring and has sparked an interest in English and computers—their functioning, coding, engineering, and technology.

Asmita and her friends work diligently in their tailoring jobs and often get lost in their work during busy hours. However, she deeply values these friendships and cherishes the moments spent visiting other places and enjoying meals together, momentarily distracted from the stitching machines.

One thing that truly ignites Asmita's imagination is her love for Bollywood movies and actor Shah Rukh Khan. She could binge-watch his movies every night, but the film "Veer Zaara" holds a special place in her heart, with her knowing the lyrics to every song and each line spoken by the actors. During her eight months under the care of Kshamata, Asmita's confidence has been empowered, and her shy, quiet, and scared demeanour has transformed.

- [Case story: 2](#)

Minu (name changed to protect identity)

A Culinary Journey of Love, Home, and Support

Dear wanderer, when life threatens to erode your determination, remember that overcoming difficulties and embracing challenges hold the transformative power to shape you into an unbreakable force. Minu emerged stronger after enduring hardships by seeking help from Kshamata.

In a world where kindness and compassion often fade like distant memories, Minu remained illuminated despite the hardships she faced. She struggled to find stable employment and was often exploited by employers who paid her inadequate wages. As a mother, she faced the challenge of raising three children on her own, with limited resources and support. She also encountered discrimination and societal prejudice due to her gender and economic status. In addition, Minu faced emotional and psychological hardships, feeling isolated and alone in her struggles.

Despite these challenging circumstances, Minu's determination and resilience propelled her forward. She recognized the importance of seeking support and sharing her problems instead of carrying them alone. This led her to Kshamata, where she found a place that provided her with the love, support, and sense of family that she had longed for. Her lifelong dream is to work in tailoring and excel at it, but she prioritizes the dreams of her three children above her own. With unwavering strength, she fights for her children and strives to provide them with the best opportunities for success in the future.

While her resilient and determined personality shines through her stitching and tailoring job, her smile and warmth radiate when she thinks or talks about food. Her mouth-watering

Biryani brings the women of Kshamata together, celebrating every little accomplishment, from birthdays to earning their first salary. Minu recognizes that sharing her problems and seeking support is a solution, rather than keeping them to herself, and her communication skills improve each day.

Every day was a battle against despair, and Minu often wondered if she would ever find a place to call home—a place where she would be loved, supported, and given a chance to thrive. Kshamata provided her with the home and family she couldn't find elsewhere. Warm smiles and a sense of belonging greeted Minu at Kshamata. They offered unwavering support for her and her children. The people at Kshamata became her family, understanding her pain and struggles, and creating a nurturing environment filled with love and compassion. Kshamata encouraged Minu's dreams of tailoring and supported her from training to livelihood.

○ **Case Story 3:**

Ananya, at the tender age of 19, she bore the weight of a past marked by the loss of her parents, a burden she shared with her brother and elder sister. Ananya's sister, a beacon of support in their tumultuous world, struggled to make ends meet. The weight of responsibility bore down on her shoulders, making it challenging to provide Ananya with the education she deserved. Financial constraints cast a shadow on Ananya's dreams, and the pursuit of knowledge seemed like a distant echo. One day, destiny whispered a lifeline into Ananya's life.

A neighbour, sensing the struggles of Ananya's sister, introduced them to Kshamata, an NGO that promised more than just a helping hand in Thane. It was a sanctuary where Ananya's dormant hopes could find a voice. As Ananya stepped into Kshamata, a world of transformation unfolded. The caring embrace of life skills sessions became a balm for Ananya's wounded spirit. Through the window of these sessions, she glimpsed a world beyond her hardships. Teachings of Kshamata Didis were not just about learning; they were about finding the strength to live, to thrive. The winds of change began to blow, and Ananya, once a quiet soul, started to bloom. Her days at Kshamata were filled with sessions that were more than just educational—they were illuminations, guiding her towards a brighter future. She found herself smiling involuntarily, a testament to the newfound joy that Kshamata infused into her life.

The turning point arrived when Ananya, armed with skills honed at Kshamata's main centre, ventured into the realm of employment. Somerset, a distant land on Meera Road, awaited her. The challenge was daunting - a mere two days to grasp the intricacies of her new job. With the support and counselling of Kshamata, she not only faced the challenge but emerged victorious, securing a position within a mere two days. As Ananya's life took a new trajectory, the echoes of her past began to fade. The incessant fights and abusive tendencies, once deeply ingrained, started to wane.

Kshamata not only provided her with a job but became the alchemist who transmuted her hardships into stepping stones for growth. With each passing day, Ananya's aspirations soared. The money she saved became the seed for a dream—a dream of starting her own business. The entrepreneurial spirit kindled within her, a testament to the transformative power of empowerment.

Ananya's tale is not just a story; it's a testament to the magic that can happen when compassion meets determination. In the halls of Kshamata, Ananya discovered not just a sanctuary but a springboard to a life she once thought was beyond her reach. As the pages of her journey continue to unfold, Ananya stands as a beacon of hope, a living testament to the belief that every soul, no matter how bruised, can rise from the shadows and bask in the sunlight of a better tomorrow.

○ [Case Story 4:](#)

Ms.Siya (name changed)

Siya is a 26 year old, a commerce degree holder. She was married to a guy in Mira road 2020. Husband works in a furniture shop. She would feel all alone when her husband used to go for work till the late evening. Therefore, she decided to step out and take up a small job in the vicinity. She started hunting for job and she got job in the therapy center.

Her job was going on well and she was very happy until her life took a sudden twist. Post six months of her work engagement, she got caught in police raid with other four other women who used to work with her.

She was placed in Shanti sadan for her rehabilitation. It was a massive shock for her as she wasn't able to believe whatever happened to her. By the time, she could accept the fact, she had already gone into depression. She hardly spoke with her peers in the home nor did she speak to home officials. She was waiting for her husband to come and release her. But her husband never turned up to see her.



Siya's first interaction happened with Kshamata literacy teacher during one of the sessions. She hesitated to participate as she was already well educated and didn't find it worth attending. However, when she saw the way literacy teacher was teaching women there and degree of excitement and interest shown by women, she sat quietly and observed everyone. Gradually, she started liking attending the class and she began to teach other women in the class.

Siya has always been very quiet but very good observer and learner. She participated in life skills and also learnt the basics of sewing skills. All these activities gave a platform to vent out her pain, stress and frustration she was going through.

After a few months, she was released to her husband by court. Kshamata outreach team traced her out and got reconnected with her. During the home visit, she expressed that she doesn't want to do any kind of job because her bitter experience which changed her life for bad. She thought of running a small business as it would give her a safe space.

She was very active and participated in job readiness and life skills sessions during her detention in shelter home. The sessions helped build her perspective and equipped her with skills and information which enabled her to choose right path and focus on her future. As a result, post her release, she enrolled her name for micro business training and started attending the classroom sessions in Thane. She was very regular and didn't miss a single session in a three month long training course. While pursuing this training, she also underwent individual counselling sessions as she was finding it difficult to erase her past event memories. After a series of sessions, she could her find herself and moved on.

Siya was taken out to various markets for the exposure. Training and exposure have increased her confidence. Finally, the day came, she decided to start her business of clothe vending. She sought consultation for budgeting, costing, market competition, profit margin, client management, etc.



When we launched her business, she earned Rs.2500/- in the first month but gradually it started increasing as she got to understand the market sources, vendors, customers and relationship building and today she is earning more than 35000/- a month.

Her confidence has increased initially going for marketing she needed support but now she manages everything on her own. Her husband joined her in business and they both are running it successfully.

Siya doesn't want to stop here as she says " Meri zindagi ki shuruwat to ab hui hai aur piche nahi dekhana hai". Siya's dream is to buy a beautiful house for her family and also to own a shop in Koparkhairane in near future.

Stakeholders

The Government offices and legal bodies

District Women & Child Development Department, Mumbai Suburban	District Women & Child Development Department, Thane
Child Welfare Committee – Ulhasnagar, Dongari and Mankhurd	Juvenile Justice Board – Bhivandi

The Government Shelter Homes

Bhivandi Observation Home, Bhivandi, Thane	Navjeevan Mahila Vasati Gruh, Mankhurd, Mumbai
Ulhasnagar Minor Home, Ulhasnagar, Thane	Shanti Sadan Shasakiy Mahila Gruh, Ulhasnagar, Thane
Deonar Special (minor girls) home, Mankhurd, Mumbai	Kasturba Shasakiy Gruh, Chembur, Mumbai
Bal Kalyan Nagari, Mankhurd, Mumbai	Children’s Home, Dongari, Sandhurst Road, Mumbai

Partner Organizations

<u>Development Partners</u>	<u>Organisations/Groups: Donors+Supporters</u>
Asha Sadan	Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiative
Aid India, Chennai	Apraava Energy
	Amazon India
Alert India	Brindavan Seva Sangham
Amach Ghar	Catalyst for Social Action (CSA)
Apne Aap Women’s Collective	Garware charitable trust
Family Planning Association of India	Giveindia
Giriniwasi Ashram	Helping Hand (Thane)
Inner Wheel, Thane	Hindustan Lever Ltd. (HUL)
International Justice Mission	Henkel Adhesive
iVolunteer	Indian Institute of Banking & Insurance
Justice & Care, Bangladesh	Kindled Spirit, UK
Khula Aasman	Lubrizol Advanced Materials India Private Limited
	SBI Cap securities
Navjeevan Trust	SBI Foundation
Our Children	Stitching OO & BW (Foundation), Netherlands

Parivartan	Social Venture Patners (SVP) Philanthropy Foundation
Pratham	Srujna Foundation
Prayas	Rosy Blue
Purnata	The Amtec Healthcare Pvt Ltd.
Sahara Trust	Tata Strive, Thane
Sanved Kolkata	The Bright Eyes Organization, Australia
Vipala Foundation	The Rotary Club of Mumbai Queens Necklace Charitable Trust
Sneha Sadan	TearFund, UK
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai	The Rotary Club of Hiranandani Estate, Thane
The Good Shoppe	Urja Trust, Canada
weCHANGE	Tirzah, USA
Yuva Parivartan	Young Volunteer Organization
Seva Aur Sahyog, Thane	Zuventus Healthcare Ltd

Contact

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