

## VACHA FINAL REPORT

- a. Organization Name: Vacha Charitable Trust
  - b. Program Title: Leadership Training for Adolescent Girls in Marginalized Communities
  - c. Grant Amount: USD 19615.20
  - d. Contact Person: Medhavinee Namjoshi
  - e. Address: 5 Bhavana, S.V.Road, Vile Parle West, Mumbai 400056, India
2. Recap briefly what outcomes the program was designed to achieve.

The main goal of the project was to work with marginalized girls to expose them to knowledge, opportunities, and the world outside their *basti*. This is so that they complete their schooling through class 12 (senior level of high school), gain the skills, confidence, and experience that are essential for modern life, live in a safe environment, understand and can access health and hygiene resources, have a voice in their family and community, have agency to participate in civic life, and delay marriage until they are over 18.

This project will serve marginalized girls living in two different communities: Sanjay Gandhi Nagar, Jogeshwari (east) in Mumbai and in the Shelar Chauk community in the Kalyan Dombivali area on the outskirts of Mumbai. In year two, we expect 120 girls to be directly impacted and 250 people to be indirectly impacted. Approximately 80% of these will be women and girls. Those indirectly affected will be the girls' parents and siblings, other children not directly participating in the programs, neighbors, community leaders, and other relatives.

Following outcomes were designed to achieve the above mentioned goal.

**After school sessions:** 80% of the girls participating in the after-school program will stay in school through Class 10. Each year, 80% of participants will graduate to next level in conversational English, Computers and Leadership Skills. 75% of these girls will learn advanced computer skills like photography, use of Internet and social media, and be able to make power points with animation. By the end of the grant period, 70% of girls will have gained knowledge of their rights and 50% will have gained public speaking and expression skills.

**Workshops:** 3 workshops per year will be held where girls will learn about nutrition, safety, sex education, and their basic rights. Over 100 girls will participate in these events. From these workshops girls will learn to take control of their nutrition, their safety, their sexual activities, and their basic rights.

**Community events / Social Action:** 50% of girls will participate in some public event in year one, 70% in year two. Through public events like street plays, rallies, distribution of pamphlets, community meets etc., over 700 adults and children will become aware of girl's issues and rights. 40% of Vacha girls will be empowered to take community problems to local councils. We expect to see 60% of boys' attitudes and beliefs on gender equality will have changed.

**Field Trips:** Girls will participate in up to 3 field trips a year, opening up the world to them.

**Staff Development Training:** 12-15 Vacha staff will participate in up to two staff development trainings to improve their skills and knowledge on gender, participatory methodologies, theater workshops, and/or video or photography documentation techniques. The staff's capacity will increase, improving their ability to provide programming to the girls we serve.

3. What was accomplished in connection with this project? Please address each stated objective. If any project objectives were changed, please also explain the circumstances leading to the modification of the objective(s).

<b>Project Objectives</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
<p>More girls completing and succeeding in secondary school and college</p>	<p>Total 144 girls took their exam out of 145 girls and moved to the next class. 67 boys passed the exam. One girl passed 12th standard but has not enrolled for further studies, we have convinced her to do so in the coming academic year.</p> <p>13 students appeared for 10th standard exam last year out of which 12 passed. In this current year, 14 girls &amp; 5 boys have appeared for 10<sup>th</sup> standard and are awaiting results.</p> <p>In the previous year, 12 students took their 12<sup>th</sup> standard exam and all of them graduated. In the current year, 10 girls have appeared for their 12<sup>th</sup> standard boards and their result is awaited.</p> <p>11 girls have enrolled for graduation and appeared for their first year exam.</p>
<p>Imparting the skills, confidence and experience essential for modern life</p>	<p><b>English Improvement Skills</b></p> <p>In this current year, English was taught at three levels. We are following the curriculum designed by Leap for Word for English with the help of their teaching aids. Test papers are sent to them and they send in the results. Below are the results based on their assessment:</p> <p><b>Shelar</b></p> <p>Foundation Level - 97% girls and boys have basic English skills by the end of the year</p> <p>Ground Level Test 1 - 96% girls and boys have basic English reading and writing skills</p> <p>Ground Level Test 2 - 94% girls and boys have basic English reading and writing skills</p> <p>Ground Level Test 3 - 92% girls and boys have basic English reading and writing skills</p> <p>Ground Level Test 4 - 93% girls and boys have basic English reading and writing skills</p> <p>Comprehension - 89% girls have learnt to construct small sentences in English, understanding and using proper tense in conversation.</p> <p><b>Sanjay Gandhi Nagar</b></p> <p>Ground Level Test 1 - 94% girls and boys have basic English reading and writing skills</p> <p>Ground Level Test 2 - 92% girls and boys have basic English reading and writing skills</p> <p>Ground Level 3 - 89% girls and boys have basic English reading and writing skills</p>

Project Objectives	Accomplishments
	<p>Ground Level 4 - 90% girls and boys have basic English reading and writing skills</p> <p>Comprehension - 91% girls have learnt to construct small sentences in English, understanding and using proper tense in conversation.</p> <p><b>Computer Skills</b> <i>Shelar</i> 98% girls and boys have acquired basic computer skills by the end of the year.</p> <p><b>Sanjay Gandhi Nagar</b> 64% girls and boys have acquired basic computer skills by the end of the year.</p>
<p>More women empowered to make their own life decisions</p>	<p>163 out of 165 girls &amp; 56 out of 63 boys have an increase in their skills and confidence as leaders for girls' rights and gender equality. 158 girls &amp; 57 boys have increased confidence in living independently (life skills). 3 girls have registered their names in voter's list. 32 girls and 9 boys have opened their own bank account.</p> <p><b>Shelar</b> Workshops on Jewelry Making, Umbrella Painting, Understanding Gender &amp; body, Menstruation, Designing a Survey Tool, Best out of Waste, Love &amp; Attraction, Solid waste Management, Group Bonding were conducted as trainings on life skills, health and hygiene. 96% have increased positive self-concept, 93% have increased self-confidence, 95% increased self-efficacy and 93% reported increased confidence to speak in public. 73% learned project planning, 78% learned self-expression, 76% girls learned critical thinking, 70% developed understanding of community, 77% developed greater understanding of gender, 72% gained additional social capital, 80% perceived themselves as change maker. Visits to a Hospital, Post Office, Solid waste management Department, Vanrai Mohastsav and Science exhibition were made.</p> <p><b>Sanjay Gandhi Nagar</b> Workshops on Origami, Body mapping, Understanding body &amp; menstruation, Solid waste management, Love &amp; attraction, Best out of Waste workshop, Leadership &amp; Group Bonding were conducted as trainings on life skills, health and hygiene. 95% girls have positive self-concept, 93% girls reported increased self-confidence, 83% increased self-efficacy and 88% reported increased confidence to speak in public. 82% learned project planning, 85% learned self-expression, 79% girls learned critical thinking, 86% developed understanding of community, 73% developed greater understanding gender, 78% gained additional</p>

Project Objectives	Accomplishments
	social capital, 89% perceived themselves change maker. Visits to Railway Station, Solid waste management department, Ration Office, Fire Brigade were made.
More girls are delaying marriage until after age 18 or when they complete college	Not a single girl out of 151 under the age of 18 years got married during the program period. Only one girl out of the rest 14 aged above 18 years is scheduled to get married in the month of May. Remaining even from that group have managed to avoid marriage in favor of education.
More girls, boys, women and men are taking action in their communities to advance girls' rights and gender equality	<p>62% of the boys demonstrate a positive change in their attitudes and beliefs on gender equality by the end of the grant period.</p> <p>75% of the girls demonstrate a positive change in their attitudes and beliefs on gender equality by the end of the grant period.</p> <p>Girls have become aware of toilet issues in their community and decided to work on this issue.</p> <p>4 community level newsletters were produced.</p>

4. Have the number of beneficiaries changed? To report this please refer to the original numbers in your grant proposal under *Number of women and girls Directly Impacted and Indirectly Impacted*.

Direct number of girl beneficiaries actually reached was 151 whereas projected was 120. Indirect outreach was 967 instead of the projected 250.

5. What challenges did you face in connection with this project? How did you address these challenges? The challenges were different in both the centres. In Shelar, the girls had identified and had decided to work on the issues around the community toilet's availability, safety and hygiene at a larger level. The local community leader who was supportive and also responsible for toilets gave us some trouble but now we are in a better position and the issue has picked up momentum in the community at large. In Sanjay Nagar community, the challenge was and continues the momentum of our work around the safety drive for girls. In both the communities ensuring the continuation of girls' education till class 12<sup>th</sup> is a challenge, as the results depict we have managed to mitigate this problem.

6. Is your organization or program situation different than presented in the approved proposal? For example, new executive director, significant program staffing changes or NGO affiliation, loss of large funding, or other significant changes?

Vacha has completed due diligence processes and received Advanced Level Gold Certification from GuideStar India. Yagna Parmar, our chief project coordinator, has been promoted to Co Project Director. Dr. Veena Devasthali has joined as a new board member.

7. What were the most important lessons learned?

For safety mapping and other community actions, an efficient process identified has been

- Issue identification and prioritization

- Training of girls on selected issues
- Training of girls on methodologies to collect baseline information
- Collection of baseline data
- Data tabulation and report preparation
- Visits to concerned government departments
- Presenting data and facts about issues to various stakeholders
- Formation of support groups
- Activities for addressing issues
- Follow up and re-strategizing.

Pressure groups and women’s groups have been formed to create a favorable ecology for girls. An inclusive approach has been found to be more effective and hence both boys and women are now part of our program.

8. What has changed within your organization as a result of this project?

We have expanded to more pockets of the communities in Sanjay Nagar and Shelar along with schools leading to wider outreach.

9. Describe the unexpected events and outcomes, including unexpected benefits.

Our actual beneficiary outreach has exceeded our projections. This has benefitted more adolescents and expanded our work. But at the same time this has created budget issues and adjustments. We have had to make budgetary adjustments in staff development trainings and have resorted to using in-house resource persons for capacity building exercises.

10. Did you change your strategy as a result of obstacles your encountered? How will you address these challenges in the future?

At Sanjay Nagar, the number of registrations received were more than anticipated. We had to create multiple batches to accommodate all the students.

At Shelar, girls who have become aware of toilet issues in their community decided to work on this issue. To tackle the resistance and opposition of the local political leader, the girls have built a guerrilla strategy and have worked with women to take this issue up at a bigger level through them. We also sought the intervention of the local government departments. Our general strategy of working in the background has been successful where community leaders are not receptive and where community support is sketchy.

11. Approximately how many lives have been touched, both directly and indirectly, by the program?

<b>Direct Beneficiaries</b>	10-14 years	15 -18 years	19-24 Years	<b>Total</b>
# Girls / Young Women	70	81	14	<b>165</b>
# Boys / Young Men	49	14	0	<b>63</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>228</b>

#### **Indirect Beneficiaries**

Total reach out through indirect interventions in community and in schools were 967 people including parents, community leaders, community adults, youth groups, young boys and girls. These interventions

were fairs, workshops in schools, film screenings, newsletter release functions, parents meetings, awareness events in the community, meeting with pressure groups etc.

12. What are the measurements used to monitor success and how was this information measured (e.g., surveys, observation)? Be specific and include measurable results.

Various M&E tools were employed to assess performance of participants in the project. These include administration of pre and post-tests in the English, computers, self and general awareness, health and gender, social action modules. Feedback forms were used for workshops and visits. Attendance sheets were used to capture outreach in after school sessions, workshops, exposure visits, gender fairs and at interventions through fairs, workshops in schools, film screenings, newsletter release functions, parents meetings, awareness events in the community, meeting with pressure groups etc. In outreach activities, we used community checklists and democracy wall activity to measure performance. Youth profile forms were used to document profile of girls and boys. Stories of girls were captured for qualitative impact. Monthly field reports from community organizers, project coordinator and expense statement reports from accounting team also have been used to monitor success and impact of the program.

13. If the program is ongoing, provide plans and expected results, including projected timeframe. The project was approved for two years and has completed two years since inception.

14. Provide a detailed list of all expenses incurred during the grant cycle which have been paid for with the Dining for Women grant.

**Budget for Apr 2017 – Mar 2018**

<b>Budget Item (please list budget items for this project)</b>	<b>Total Amount (in USD)</b>	<b>Amount Requested from Shadhika (in USD)</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure (USD)</b>	<b>Balance Remaining (in USD)</b>	<b>Notes or Comments</b>
Part-time coordinator	2,218.00	2,218.00	2,295.00	(77.00)	Offset against Asst. Coordinator's balance salary
2 Assistant Coordinators	4,889.00	4,889.00	4,781.26	107.74	Appointed at a reduced salary
2 Centre Teachers	1,980.00	1,980.00	2,008.13	(28.13)	Offset against Asst. Coordinator's balance salary
After-school sessions	1,990.00	1,990.00	2,377.69	(387.69)	Increase in number of students due to positive response
Field-trips	1,190.00	1,190.00	1,149.53	40.47	Received concession in entry tickets
Community Events	1,551.00	1,551.00	1,749.10	(198.10)	Increase in number of students due to positive response
Day-long Workshops	1,890.00	1,890.00	2,061.65	(171.65)	Increase in number of students due to positive response
Staff Development Training	2,103.00	2,103.00	1,388.64	714.36	To offset expenses in the above 3 categories in-house trainings were conducted.
Vacha Admin Charges	1,647.20	1,647.20	1,647.20	-	

Shadhika Admin Charges	157.00	157.00	157.00	-	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,615.20</b>	<b>19,615.20</b>	<b>19,615.20</b>	<b>(0.00)</b>	

15. Did this grant and relationship with DFW assist your organization in obtaining other funding, partnerships with other organizations, or public recognition in some capacity?

Shadhika is now able to support this program further.

## SUCCESS STORIES

### *Pooja Kanojiya, Sanjay Nagar*

I reside in the Sanjay Nagar *basti* with my family. My family comprises of 5 siblings. Two of my older sisters are married and settled in our hometown. Now they are managing their households. I have recently appeared for my third year university level examination for my undergraduate studies. My mother and Vacha have played a huge role in bringing me to this level where I can realize my strengths and potential. My two older sisters also wanted to study further but only one could complete her undergraduate degree followed by a course in nursing. But she also was forced to get married and now she is taking care of her husband and her children in our hometown. Before marriage she was told by her in-laws that she could work but this decision was changed after the marriage. My oldest sister studied till 10<sup>th</sup> standard and was married off. I was a small girl at the time of these marriages and could not comprehend much. I have two older brothers, one got married 3 years back and the younger one is studying. I am the youngest of the lot and still concerned about my academics. The married brother's family also lives with us. He works in a garment manufacturing unit but does not hand over his entire salary at home. We have to adjust with the amount that he hands over and we have to look after his family. We have our own ironing service which is run by my parents. They work on ironing orders from 4 am till 12 midnight. This ironing service provides for all of us as well as our education. My mother does not find the time for any household work. Hence my sister-in-law and I manage to do all the household chores between the two of us. I study and attend Vacha classes with what little time I find after completion of my daily household chores. Girls do not face any restrictions in my house in general but I have to endure verbal abuse, particularly from my father and brother. The only one who supports me is my mother. I am not sure why my mother supports me but from the time I secured good marks in my 10<sup>th</sup> standard boards she has always stood up for me against my father and brother so that I can continue on the academic track. My mother never abuses me and always encourages me to study.

All these changes did not happen suddenly. I have also put in a lot of effort. I have been attending Vacha classes regularly from the time Vacha started operations in my *basti*. I used to be very diffident and had a lot of fear to start with. But the various Vacha workshops have made me introspect and I started observing changes in myself. Before I would never venture out of the house without a scarf to cover my bosom but now I no longer feel embarrassed or scared to wear any style of clothing. Also I was an introvert initially, I would not interact or play with anyone. I did not have a world beyond household work and my studies. But from the time I have been associated with Vacha, there have been a lot of changes in me. The workshops on T-shirt painting, group work, love and attraction, various short and long exposure visits gave me an opportunity to learn and travel. I was confined within four walls but Vacha's interventions made me explore and increased my confidence level. I have now developed leadership skills to impart the same skills to younger kids, the strength to ventilate and stand up for my rights and an appetite to learn new skills if given a chance. Vacha has instilled values in me and brought about change. If not for Vacha, I would have never understood my own self.

### ***Anita Sitaram Rathod, Shelar***

Anita loves to study. But her family does not permit girls to study. Instead they are made to work to earn money from a young age. Her older sister was forced to quit studies in the 6<sup>th</sup> standard and sent to earn a living. Anita's family comprises of 6 members. Her family relocated from Hyderabad to Shelar, Dombivli 30 years back in search of work. They had a rented house in Vikhroli and moved to Shelar in 2001 after buying a house here. Anita's financial condition is in a dire state. Her father is a daily wage laborer, is into construction work, gets work on a seasonal basis and is an alcoholic. Her mother is a domestic worker. Her brothers are able to continue their education. But her education has been stopped. Her older sister was married at the age of 16 but she has been living at her father's place for 6 years now because of feuds at her in-laws' place. With her sister getting married so early, Anita had to join her mother as a domestic worker. She was constantly dissuaded from studying by her family and would end up missing school, at times 15-20 days at a stretch. All these factors had a profound effect on Anita and she ended up failing in her 9<sup>th</sup> standard. She then quit her studies.

She used to provide housekeeping services at a beauty salon and started taking keen interest in beauty work. She even learned a few skills. Seeing her enthusiasm, the proprietor trained her as a beautician at no charge. Now she works part time as a beautician in the salon in the afternoons. But her yearning for education was revived through Vacha classes. Her passion for learning was very evident when she used to attend Vacha classes. She started understanding the importance of education for girls. She requested the Vacha facilitator to meet her school teacher. The facilitator and school teacher urged her to take her 9<sup>th</sup> standard examination which she duly cleared. Then they encouraged her to register for her 10<sup>th</sup> standard boards. Her school teacher gave her permission to attend school. She attended school daily and took her 10<sup>th</sup> standard exam after a 4 year gap. She is excited about writing her papers well. She wants to study further, wants to have a career as a beautician and start her own salon.

### **Endorsements**

- Four women from Shelar, two of whom are parents of our students, stated 'We are highly inspired by Vacha's work and we have decided to continue our education further'. They appeared for the eligibility entrance test at SNDT University and two of them cleared this test in the first attempt. They will be studying through the distance education program at this women's university from June 2018. The other two will be attempting the entrance test again in May 2018.
- One of the mothers who was suffering from abnormal uterine bleeding was tested at an FPAI health camp organized by Vacha. The FPAI doctor did a preliminary diagnosis and had medical counseling sessions with this mother. Then with regular interventions from the Vacha facilitator, she gradually overcame her fears and gathered the courage to undergo a hysterectomy. Now she has recovered completely and in her own words 'I would have never made it without Vacha's intervention. They have done more for me than my own family members.'

**Photographs**

