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**Annual Report: 2019-20**

**International Foundation  
for Crime Prevention &  
Victim Care**

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## About PCVC

The International Foundation for Crime Prevention and Victim Care (PCVC) was founded in 2001 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu to create and extend support services for women affected by domestic and interpersonal violence. PCVC is a rights-based organization that strongly believes in a survivor-centric approach. Clients drive the process and make all decisions regarding their life with the full and unconditional support of a team of social workers, psychologists and welfare officers.

Over the last 19 years, the organization has evolved to provide both emergency support and long-term rehabilitative support and created a comprehensive model that takes women from a survivor to a thriver. Through our crisis intervention services, women have access to immediate information about interfacing with the police, devising safety plans, leaving abusive homes, negotiating with families, legal and medical referrals and specialized services for children.

Our long-term psycho-social and economic services help in creating a network of care by providing residential services for women and children, counselling and emotional support, financial support, education, skill-building and employment opportunities that will lead to



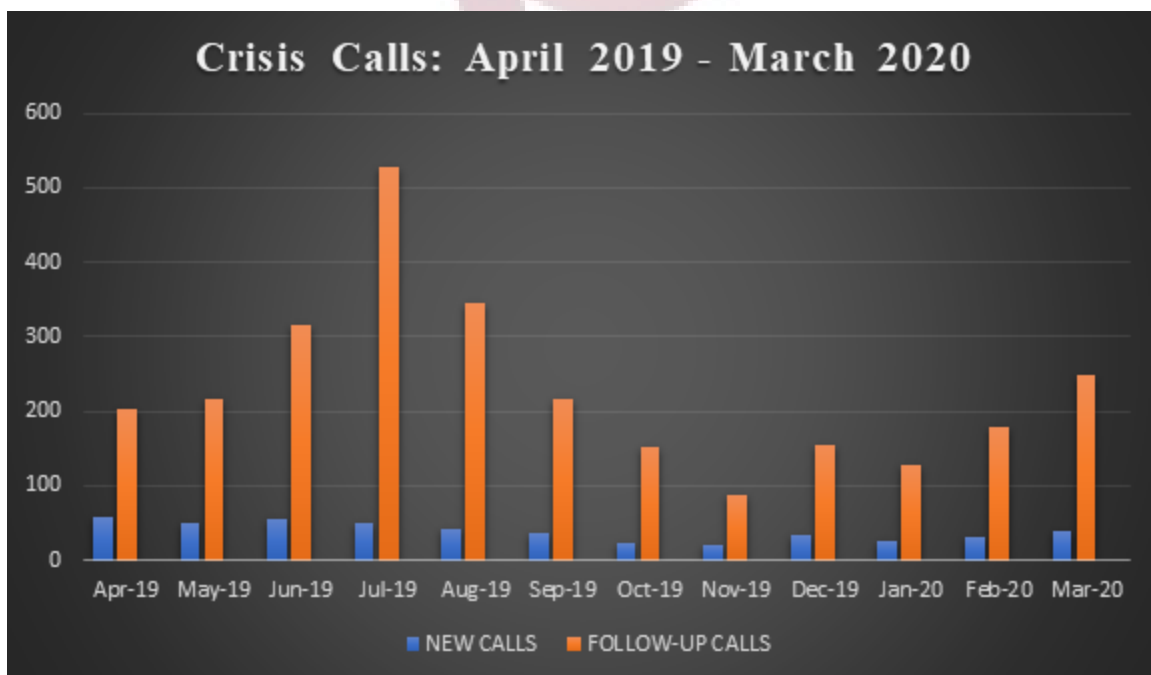
economic freedom. We are also building a robust prevention program with our outreach efforts in schools and colleges on healthy and violence-free relationships; sexual harassment prevention and redressal in workspaces and public spaces; institutional and community programs that work on changing the attitudes and mindsets of people regarding gender and violence.


The prime focus at PCVC is to ensure that we employ a gender-just, DV-informed, trauma-informed, rights-based lens to our work and create an enabling environment for clients that will facilitate more equal and just interactions with patriarchal family and societal structures and institutions so we can all live violence-free lives.

## Dhwani Crisis Hotline

The hotline has a **24-hour, toll-free number** that survivors of intimate partner violence, family violence, burn violence, their families and caregivers can dial into during an emergency to access immediate and timely help as well as follow-up and referrals services that provide information to meet the needs of survivors at various stages of the recovery and rehabilitative process. The hotline serves as a critical resource for women and queer individuals affected by violence to safely access information, discuss their situations, recognize patterns of abuse and seek emotional and physical support especially given the conspiracy of silence and shame that surrounds violence within the home.

- The hotline received a total of 460 crisis calls this year.
- 2777 follow up calls (incoming and outgoing) were done with clients, family members and perpetrators to provide continued support.
- On average, 20 minutes is the time counsellors spent on a crisis call.
- On average, 1 hour is the time counsellors spent on a counselling session.



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- Efforts to equip the team to handle crisis calls from queer clients were taken this year. Two members of the Dhwani team were selected for a 6-day residential course on Queer Affirmative Counselling organized by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in collaboration with the Mariwala Health Initiative.
  - Dhwani team in coordination with One Stop Centres in Chennai, Tanjore, Thirunelveli, Thiruvannamalai, Salem, Kancheepuram, Madurai, Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli responded to high-risk cases. The team provided counselling and safety planning services through phone and WhatsApp conversations for each client. The team advised the client on what must be done during the time of a crisis emergency and gave our helpline numbers.
  - Some of the clients from Chennai came to PCVC after assessing the risk based on previous incidents.

## Outreach and Networking

Dhwani network was started in 6 districts of Tamil Nadu (Chennai, Kancheepuram, Trichy, Salem, Coimbatore, Madurai) for creating a trauma and domestic violence-informed network that can offer multiple options and choices for women, queer individuals and children at risk. This multi-stakeholder platform enabled various representatives from both government and private sector agencies to come together in rendering services to women and queer individuals jointly.

This year, the Dhwani network initiated the expansion of stakeholder networks to provide coordinated services in 6 new districts of Tamil Nadu, namely Thiruvannamalai, Karur, Nilgiris, Virudhunagar, Thiruvarur and Tirunelveli. The team has identified stakeholders and conducted first phase meetings.

The Outreach and Networking team at PCVC works to support and amplify the various crisis intervention services provided by the organisation. As part of 'I am Dhwani', a campaign run by the team to this end, community-driven awareness sessions that strengthen basic understanding of gender, relationships and violence and give visibility to support services provided by PCVC - mainly helpline number and shelter service - are facilitated by the team. 17 such sessions were facilitated by the team among college students, NGOs and stakeholders.

**Youth Unite** is a PCVC initiative for the prevention of violence. The team engaged students from Mar Gregorios College and Patrician College in a sustained programme on gender, sex, violence and healthy relationships over 30 weeks.

## Case Study:

Christina, 16 years old, is a bold, creative and enthusiastic person who loves to make new friends. Christina lives with her mother and younger sister. Christina's mother has been a long term client of PCVC. She is a domestic violence survivor and single mother. Christina has been facing emotional distress since her childhood due to her learning disability. Lately, she has been having a strained relationship with her mother and sister which has led to serious mental health complications and risky behaviour.

Christina has been active on social media handles and has made many friends. She befriended Maya on Instagram after she received an invitation and shared personal information and intimate pictures. She realised later that Maya was a fake account created by some man who then demanded that she go to his place. If denied, he threatened to upload her pictures online. Panicked and shocked, she contacted PCVC and did not want her mother to know.

### PCVC's Interventions

- Dhwani team provided psycho-social support.
- Dhwani team coordinated with Tulir (NGO that works on Child Sexual Abuse; part of PCVC stakeholder network) to understand the process to file POCSO case.
- A police complaint was lodged under POCSO Act. The police devised a plan and caught the offender.
- Several individual and family counselling sessions were held.
- Christina has been referred to SCARF to address her mental health issues.
- Art-based therapy sessions have been organized for Christina.
- Follow up counselling sessions were conducted and an individualized service plan has been devised to understand Christina's goals.
- Christina expressed her wish to pursue a diploma in fashion designing or jewellery making. Various options were provided.

**\*Please note that the name of the client has been changed to protect their identity**

## Vidiyal - Begin Anew

Vidiyal is a flagship PCVC initiative that serves women burn survivors of domestic violence. The project is the first of its kind to understand the role domestic violence plays in the incidence of burns amongst women in India and incorporates DV-informed, trauma-informed psycho-social care along with physiological care.

The intervention starts at the burns ward at Kilpauk Medical College with providing psychosocial counselling, hygiene and nutrition services. After women are discharged from the hospital, following home visits by trained social workers and wound care specialists, the residential state of the art recovery and healing centre provides women with the space, environment and means to rebuild their lives.

Expansion of hospital-based burn-care service network was the primary goal of this year. PCVC successfully initiated the process of strengthening health and burn support services in 11 districts of Tamil Nadu. Acquiring permission from the Honorable Chief Secretary of Health and Family Welfare Department helped in the mobilizing of hospitals and signing of contracts in other districts. PCVC team along with the appointed field coordinators in this reporting period has had formal meetings with various health officials to briefly learn about existing practices. The team was able to understand the perspective and mindset of the health professionals concerning domestic violence and trauma-informed care.

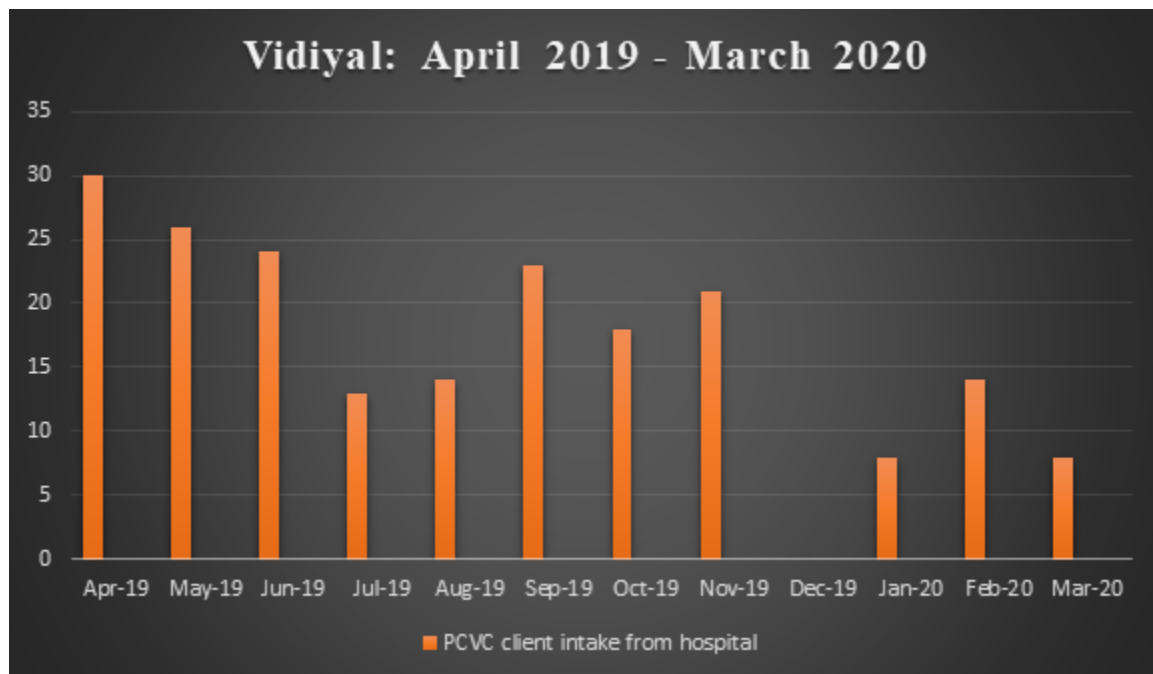


A dedicated external agency is working on developing a training module for sessions on domestic violence and trauma-informed care to be held for these teams at the hospital.

Women Burn Survivors across Tamil Nadu have started accessing domestic violence and trauma-informed burn care services. During interactions with survivors, PCVC has started providing nutritional supplements, creating awareness around the importance of balanced diet, wound management, physiotherapy exercises and psycho-social activity sessions.

This year, PCVC provided specialized post-burn physical and psycho-social rehabilitative services to women burn survivors through the flagship one-stop Recovery and Healing Centre in PCVC premises. Services provided include shelter, nutritional supplements, balanced diet,

physiotherapy, regular individual and group counselling, social outing, art therapy sessions, job referrals/ vocational training and hospitals/ legal service referral. Individual service plans were developed for each client and closely monitored.



## Astitva

Women in crisis situations who need a safe place to stay are accommodated at PCVC's undisclosed shelter home Astitva or referred to other shelters in their city based on need and access. Critical intervention for domestic violence survivors is the availability of safe spaces to go to when they are in an emergency.

PCVC gets many calls from women who have been turned out of their homes, experiencing physical danger or have no other options to leave an abusive relationship. In these situations, the presence of shelter homes provides much-needed respite to women and their children to get counselling support, legal, medical and mental health referrals and consider their options in a safe and secure environment.

In September, PCVC's undisclosed shelter was integrated with the administration office. A total of 48 women and children were taken into the shelter over the course of the year.

## Other Initiatives

- As part of the **Udhayam** project, PCVC worked with All Women's Police Stations to provide crisis intervention and support services to survivors of domestic violence. Operational at 4 AWPS, women filing domestic violence cases (and their spouses) were sent to PCVC for counselling and support.

Udhayam counsellors provided legal and rights-based information to women that informs them about their rights and helps in expanding the options available to them. Support was provided in negotiating with the family and partner and accessing referral services such as emergency shelter, legal aid, job placement, mental health interventions etc.



- As part of **Project Smiles**, child survivors of domestic violence were provided with counselling, art and play therapy, development programs, peer support groups, referrals to child psychologists and financial support to pursue formal education.

