
Annual Report: 2020-21

International Foundation for Crime Prevention & Victim Care



Contents

About PCVC

On Completing 20 Years

The Shadow Pandemic

Dhwani Crisis Hotline

Case Study

Outreach and Networking

Vidiyal - Begin Anew

Astitva and Prem Vihar

Other Initiatives:

- Project Smile
- Workspace Diversity and Inclusion

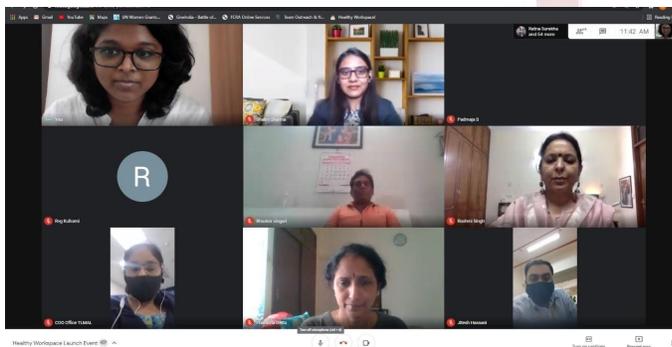


About PCVC

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 and queer individuals 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 20 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 for all of us to lead violence-free lives.

On Completing 20 Years!

PCVC has completed 20 years, and we couldn't have done it without you.

When the year began, we had big plans on how we would mark this milestone. Perhaps fittingly, instead of the events and workshops we had planned, we have spent our 20th year working harder than ever to address increasing domestic violence.

In a pandemic year which has seen unprecedented levels of gender-based violence, we have continued to demonstrate the doggedness, patience and empathy that are at the core of our work.

Through it all, you have stood by us, supported us, funded us, amplified our voice, worked alongside us and it has enriched our work in indescribable ways. We are so thankful to you.

Here's to the next 20 years!

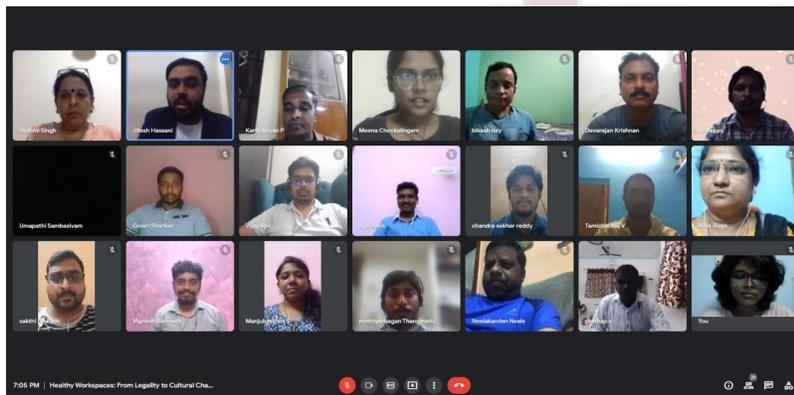


The Shadow Pandemic

The team at PCVC worked overtime to adapt our hotline, counselling, outreach, shelter and burn-care services to the constraints and requirements imposed by the CoVID-19 pandemic in India.

Unsafe at home and unable to step outside, more women faced and reported domestic violence in the first five months of this year than observed in a comparable period in the last three years by PCVC. Our 24*7 National Domestic Violence Hotline - Dhvani has seen a three-fold increase in calls with the imposition of lock-down in March. Situated in Chennai - often a red zone district, Astitva is among a handful of emergency shelters across TN to remain functional and open to survivors of domestic and burn violence during this pandemic.

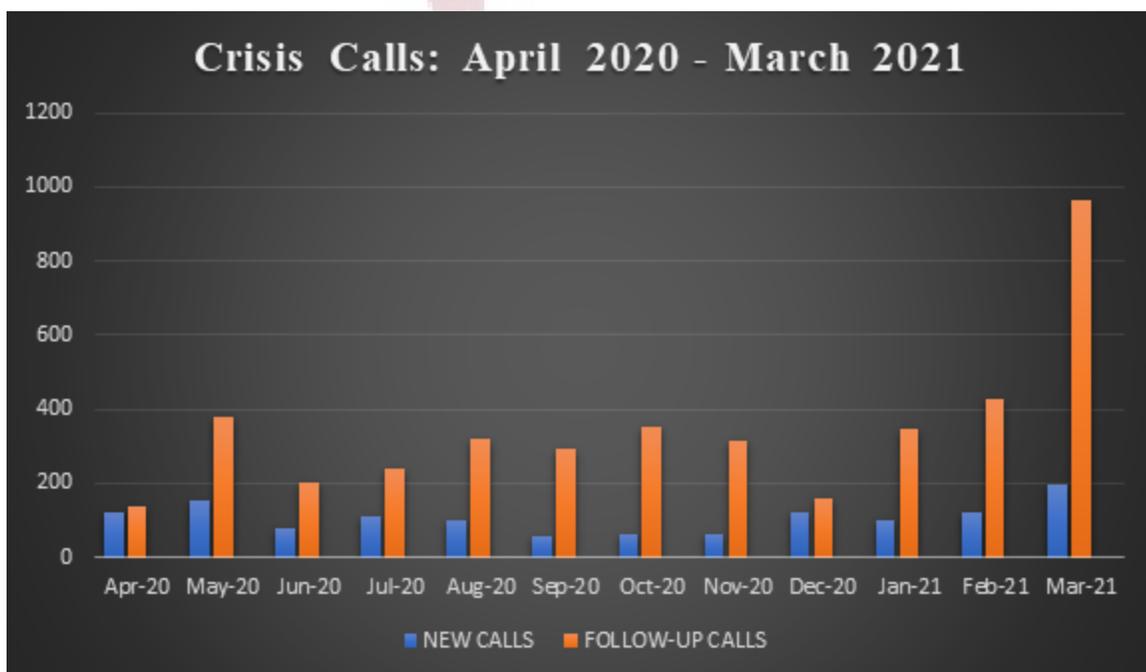
Working at the forefront of this shadow pandemic, we have expanded our outreach activities through commercial and community radio campaigns, media articles, social media activities, virtual awareness sessions with NGO allies and networking with stakeholders across the state to alert women to the availability of domestic violence support services.



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.

- Dhwani Hotline registered a **three-fold increase in calls** following the imposition of lock-down in March 2020.
- The hotline received a total of **1275 crisis calls** this year.
- **4141 follow up calls** (incoming and outgoing) were done with clients, family members and perpetrators to provide continued support.
- On average, counsellors spent 20 minutes on a crisis call and 1 hour on a counselling session.



-
- While most women reach out to PCVC through phone, there has been a rise in the number of women reaching out over WhatsApp. As many women were unable to talk or seek support due to lack of space and time, they preferred reaching out to us on WhatsApp.
 - Survivors of violence reached out from different districts like Chennai, Ariyalur, Namakkal, Dharmapuri, Villupuram, Karur, Coimbatore, Cuddalore, Thiruvallur, Salem, Dindigul, Thirunelveli, Tirupur, Thoothukudi, Vellore, Kanyakumari, Kallakuruchi, Chengalpattu, Madurai, Perambalur, Thiruvannamalai, Krishnagiri, Thanjavur, Nilgiris, Sivagangai, Ramanathapuram, Pudukottai, Virudhunagar, Tirupattur, Trichy. The team coordinated with stakeholders and One Stop Centres in and around Tamil Nadu and facilitated services needed by the client.

Case Study:

Akshaya 32, is a survivor of domestic violence. She was referred to PCVC by Thirumangalam All Women's Police Station for a couple's counselling session. Akshaya has been married for 5 years and has a 1-year-old son. She was facing severe physical, emotional, and verbal abuse from her mother-in-law. Though her husband had initially been supportive, he was being increasingly abusive to her. He neglected her needs and during an argument, he abandoned her on the road and never came back. Akshaya filed a complaint to resolve the issue.

PCVC Intervention:

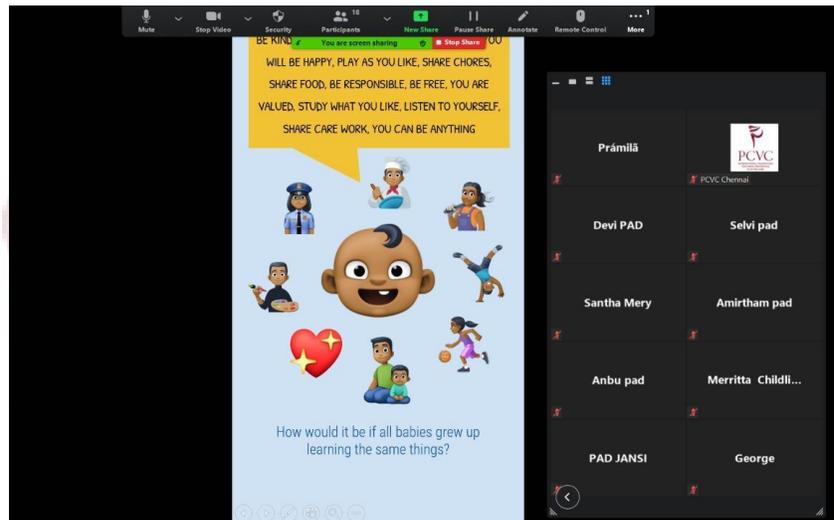
- An in-person couple counselling session was held with Akshaya and her husband, where he expressed his wish to separate. Dhvani counsellor negotiated and explained the maintenance support needed for the child and he had agreed to provide monthly support.
- Dhvani team coordinated with the Thirumanagalam police station regarding continuous maintenance support for Akshaya and her son.
- Akshaya took part in several virtual group sessions and support network sessions and is actively engaged with various PCVC interventions.
- Thiruvallur One Stop Centre referral was provided to file for domestic violence and maintenance support.
- Legal guidance and referral were provided to Akshaya regarding the notice sent to her by her husband.
- Regular follow-ups are being done to ensure safety and well-being.

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

Outreach and Networking

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.

The onset of the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown had the Outreach team working to adapt the model of sustained in-person engagement with communities and students to standalone virtual sessions with field workers. With domestic abuse on the rise with women forced to stay with perpetrators of violence, the team recognised the need to spread awareness about ways to access help.



At the beginning of the lockdown, the objectives of conducting an awareness session were modified to include the following:

- To create awareness and share a deeper understanding of gender, sex, sexuality and violence
- To maximise the visibility and reach of crisis intervention services provided by PCVC during the extended lockdown
- To reach socially responsible individuals with community and institutional reach such as NGO members, stakeholders, college students that are part of social work departments or clubs

106 such **sessions** were facilitated by the team among college students, NGOs and stakeholders, reaching over **3,798 participants**. A total of **866** members registered to be **changemakers** as part of the campaign. Training and engagement sessions were conducted for changemakers where they were provided with toolkit and communication materials to share the message within their communities. The movie 'The Great Indian Kitchen' was screened to sets of changemakers from Chennai colleges, NGOs and PCVC staff to engage changemakers and initiate conversations on gender roles, stereotypes and patriarchy.

The team expanded outreach through commercial and **community radio** channels, social media and press coverage. PCVC expanded its social media presence by venturing into Instagram in October. A video series on forms of domestic violence with the call for action **#MakeTheCall** was shared on YouTube, Instagram and Facebook by PCVC. PCVC premiered a 195 second-long and dramatized video intended to destigmatize reaching out for help and publicise Dhwani Hotline number. On each of the sixteen campaign days, 16 Indian influencers shared the video on their social media account under the hashtag **#ShutUpPannadhinga**. Celebrities like Kareena Kapoor, Sai Pallavi Senthamarai, Parvathy Thiruvothu, Sona Ali Khan took part in the two campaigns.

One for Ten is a campaign that was launched around March 8th where changemakers from 6 districts of Tamil Nadu reached out to over 1720 residents of Thoothukudi, Vembar, Keelakarai, Rameshwaram, Villupuram and Chennai and sensitised them on gender-based violence through a poster and brochure drive.

A radio campaign to raise helpline awareness was also carried out. Hello FM and community radio stations Vayalaga Vanoli, Radio Kotagiri, Kalanjiyam Vanoli and Pasumai FM aired staff interviews and jingles on the helpline. All staff from PCVC were involved in a WhatsApp



broadcast campaign in the month of March. Messages on domestic violence, information on forms of violence and ways to access help were shared in a sustained WhatsApp outreach campaign that led to increased visibility on social media and messaging platforms.

The team continued to work with stakeholders, mostly state entities, and entered into networking with educational institutions, corporates and youth groups. To ensure locally accessible holistic crisis intervention and rehabilitative services to PCVC clients across the country, the team expanded networking by proposing a consistent collaboration network idea with its stakeholders: **Nodal Network**. Stakeholders across the state and country were identified in terms of their mission, vision and area of work and willing to provide immediate interventions to women and queer individuals in crisis. First level meetings with stakeholders from Coimbatore, Trichy, Salem, Cuddalore, Madurai, Karnataka, Lucknow, were carried out by the team. The collaboration encompasses capacity building, training and awareness programmes for the staff of stakeholders and other personnel that respective stakeholders work with - such as care workers, lawyers and medical staff to support clients.

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.

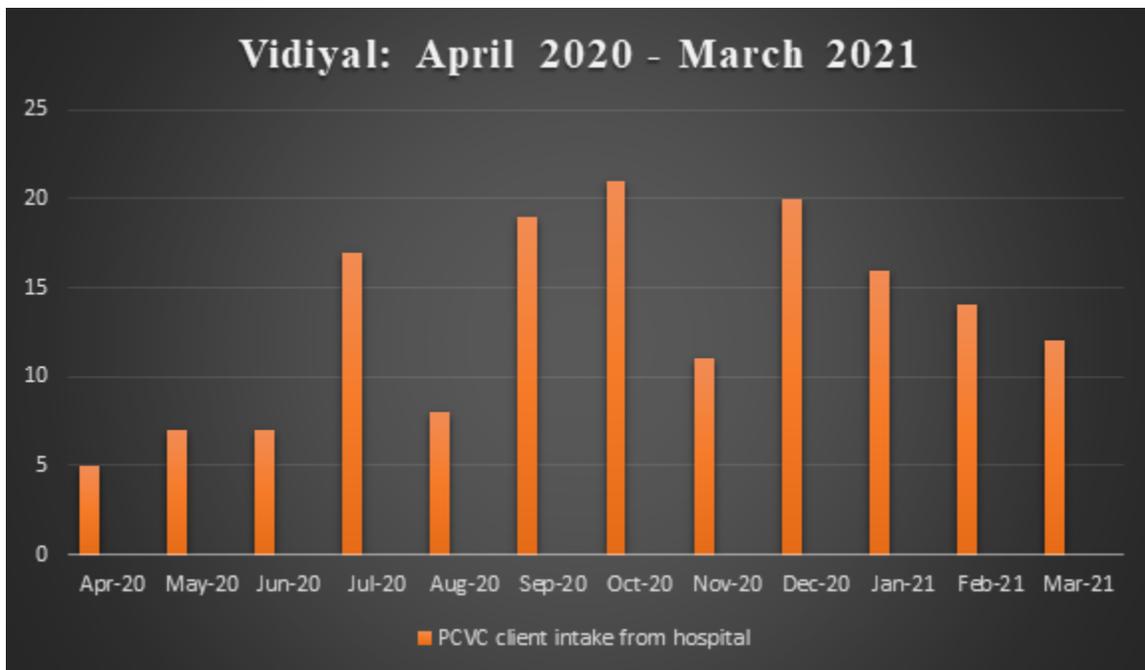
The intervention starts at the burns ward at Kilpauk Medical College with providing psychosocial counselling, hygiene and nutrition services. After women are discharged from the hospital, following home visits by trained social workers and wound care specialists, the residential state of the art recovery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

With many burns wards being converted to CoVID wards and doctors discharging burns survivors early to prevent exposure to SARS-CoV-2, survivors of burn violence received minimal hospital care during the lockdown. Financial vulnerability and loss of livelihoods along with restricted access to hospital care and increased risk to CoVID led to greater vulnerability. Burn survivors have been dealing with the triple threat of burn injuries, domestic violence and CoVID and its impact. PCVC has been providing the following support over the course of the year:

- **Wound-care, nutrition and grocery kits** to survivors of burn violence
- Health and Hygiene kits (sanitiser, disinfectant, cleaners, N-95 masks) along with CoVID safety awareness
- Medical support (testing, CoVID resources, wound-care)
- Financial support to those who are unable to pay for essentials due to destruction of livelihoods

From October, PCVC staff at the Kilpauk Medical Hospital, Chennai started providing direct services to burn survivors. After coordination and follow up with the hospital officials, they were put on the list along with other hospital first responders and acquired the CoVID-19 vaccine. The staff followed strict precautions and protocols while interacting with survivors and hospital staff. PCVC **Resident Centre**, as well as the **Recovery and Healing Centre**, resumed functioning with safety protocol in place for burn survivors who could travel and visit the centre. Survivors who live in Chennai or close to the centre and do not want to stay away from home have been encouraged to make use of PCVC's daycare facility for rehabilitation. The team was also able to kick start the wound care clinics program for women burn survivors across the districts of Tamil Nadu.

Wound Care Clinic Program: The lockdown caused by the CoVID-19 pandemic resulted in the lesser availability of government hospitals for non-emergency cases. Survivors who needed reviews on the progress of their wounds were unable to get this support from clinicians. The purpose of the wound care clinic program is to make sure that survivors avail this service in the time that they need it, without worrying about the affordability in the absence of institutional support. The wound care clinics program helps survivors who need the support of clinicians for the cleansing and dressing of their burn injuries. They are encouraged to take the survivor to a clinic nearest to them that provides this service for the survivor's wound to recover healthier and faster.



Astitva and Prem Vihar

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

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.

Situated in Chennai - often a red zone district, Astitva is among a handful of emergency shelters across TN to remain functional and open to survivors of domestic and burn violence during this pandemic. **Mandatory quarantine** upon arrival and **strict safety protocol** were enforced to ensure the same. A total of 60 women and children were taken into Shelter Astitva over the course of the year.

In September, **Prem Vihar**, an **extended stay shelter** where women working towards economic empowerment and vocational training could stay for 3 to 12 months with their children until they gain financial stability was opened. Nine clients have been taken into this shelter.

Multiple interviews were arranged for the clients and four of them have been placed at full time and part-time jobs. Employability skills training programme through a virtual medium was conducted for the clients to prepare them for job interviews, capacity building and to enhance communication skills.

In addition to the focus on economic empowerment,

- Sessions on work ethics were conducted.
- Clients attend regular affirmations, group sessions and counselling.
- Art therapy sessions were arranged for interested clients.
- Regular instructions on covid safety protocols were explained to clients.
- Immediate medical attention is provided to clients in need.
- Virtual and in-person visits were done regularly and any concerns were addressed immediately.

Other Initiatives

Project Smiles

Child survivors of domestic violence have been deeply affected by the learning crisis caused by the pandemic. Inadequate access to learning devices, stable internet connection and enrollment in schools that lacked the capacity to host online classes have led to many children not attending classes for over a year. Some children have dropped out of school. As part of Project Smiles, some of them were provided with counselling, art and play therapy, development programs, peer support groups, referrals to child psychologists and financial support to pursue formal education.

Workplace Diversity and Inclusion

PCVC launched the initiative 'Workspace Diversity and Inclusion: From Legality to Cultural Change' with support from the U.S. Consulate General Hyderabad. As part of the initiative, an audio-visual learning toolkit was introduced at a virtual event in March.

The event had a diverse audience of 55 mid-to-senior level representatives and individuals from 40 organisations from sectors such as manufacturing, IT, telecommunication, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, development, arts, finance and energy participating. Keynote lecture was delivered by Mr David Moyer, Public Affairs Officer - U.S. Consulate Hyderabad, who emphasised the commitment of The United States towards ending violence and discrimination at the workplace.

15 participants signed up to be part of pilot workshops scheduled to be held in the upcoming year. The launch event was covered by media houses across Chennai and Hyderabad such as The Hindu, The News Minute and Telangana Today.

