

**Prayas:**

**Report for the period from April 2010 - March 2011**

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**I. Development Objective:** Enhance access of legal rights and promote the use of the existing correctional laws and procedures to aid rehabilitation.

*Law, Policy and Procedure within following departments to be addressed:* Education and Libraries, Health, Police, Prisons, Judiciary, Women and Child Development.

**Immediate Objective:** Mobilise departments concerned to activate and strengthen existing law, policy and procedures that aid rehabilitation of custodial populations and those at risk to crime and forced prostitution.

***Field Interventions:***

**1. Prisons**

**Mumbai**

**1.1 Mumbai Central Prison**

*Inputs and Activities:*

At Mumbai Central prison, Prayas made regular prison visits. In the course of intervention, the social worker:

- Took up cases of inmates who approached the social worker.
- Made home visits, court visits, and police station visits.
- Provided emergency support to families of prisoners in need.
- Referred cases to the India Center for Human Rights and Law for legal aid.
- Facilitated the transfer of juveniles in prison to the Observation Home (under the Juvenile Justice Board) and followed up on their cases.
- Followed up with lawyers and families on the telephone.
- Visited NGOs for case related intervention.
- Visited institutions such as the Byculla District Prison, the Observation Home and other juvenile institutions.
- Engaged in individual counselling and small group discussions on family life, health, vocational education and rehabilitation options and possibilities.
- Organized and conducted awareness programmes on topics such as the Prayas Rehabilitation Programme, vocational training opportunities provided by an NGO Yuva Parivartan, legal information, de-addiction, importance of literacy classes, planning for

post release, HIV/AIDS, the Probation of Offenders Act, the Bal Sangopan Yojna<sup>1</sup>, legal information and government schemes related to employment.

- Held periodic meetings with the prison superintendent, jailors, and the medical officer to highlight issues and problems faced by prisoners.
- Conducted an informal drawing competition with the objective of facilitating clients in expressing themselves and their emotions.
- Concentrated on developing long-term relationships with prisoners towards enabling a continuation of positive social networks after release.
- Collaborated with NGOs on the issue of de-addiction.
- Referred youth who were released from prison to the Prayas Youth Development Centre and the India Center for Human Rights and Law.
- Repatriated and reconnected up country/local youth with their families

*Outcomes of intervention:*

- A total of 12 inmates established contact with the Prayas social worker after their release and were referred to the Prayas Youth Development Centre for help.
- As a result of sessions organized by Prayas, there was increased awareness among prisoners on issues relevant to their lives. The inmates responded positively and expressed an interest in more in-depth sessions on each topic.
- The session on the Probation of Offender's Act led to some inmates approaching Prayas to get the benefit of the Act.
- The District Probation Officer is taking initiative and is willing to work with cases of probation in coordination with Prayas.
- Increased sensitization of the visiting Sessions judge was indicated through a commitment to Prayas that he would make monthly visits to the prison with the law college students and pick up cases for legal aid. A visit was made by him following this.
- The prison staff also started referring cases for legal aid to Prayas.
- In the session on "Foster Care Scheme", inmates obtained information about the scheme, documents needed, and the filling up of the forms. Prayas submitted copies of the forms and a list of documents needed, to the senior Jailor for further follow up.

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<sup>1</sup> Bal Sangopan Yojana is a fostercare scheme of the DWCD, GoM

- NGOs coming inside prison have started to give orientation sessions about their programmes to the inmates.
- Prayas Intervention led to 10 clients being repatriated/reintegrated into their families
- There is increased coordination between the prison staff and Prayas in cases needing psycho-social intervention

## **1.2 Byculla District Prison**

Work with women prisoners in Byculla District Prison continued in order for Prayas to reach larger numbers and meet with the goal of reaching persons in need of rehabilitation support.

### *Inputs and Activities:*

- In the course of the year, Prayas underwent internal restructuring of the team leading to the number of social workers visiting prison increasing from one to a team of five social workers. They worked together to focus on organizing information sessions, taking up cases of children of prisoners, arranging legal aid for women prisoners without legal aid, working with women prisoners disconnected from their families, those eligible for release on probation and those in need of shelter post-release. Weekly visits were made by different workers to the prison.
- Cases were identified by Prayas social workers, through self referral, and referrals by the prison staff and other inmates.
- A decision was taken to conduct regular information sessions. For this, permission had to be acquired from the Inspector General Prisons (Southern Region).
- In the course of case related intervention, visits were made to families, police stations, courts, NGOs, government offices such as that of the Department of Women and Child Development, the Observation Home, the Reception Center for Women, and government hospitals.
- Prayas arranged meetings between the Prison Superintendent and the District Probation Officer to discuss a work plan comprising of regular visits, information sessions, and taking up of cases.

- The social worker was also proactive in maintaining regular contact with the Department of Women and Child Development in order to facilitate the availability of benefits of the Bal Sangopan Yojna, grant-in-aid scheme for released prisoners, and ICDS programme to children inside prison with their mothers.
- In the course of work, Prayas took up issues such as obstacles in availing of the benefit of the grant-in-aid scheme to released prisoners, and assisted two women prisoners who had been released after completing a life sentence.
- Prayas also put in intense efforts towards getting the Department of Women and Child Development to acknowledge their responsibility towards children of prisoners inside custody with their mothers, by working towards facilitating the extension of the ICDS programme to them.
- The social workers also intervened in a case where minor children went missing following their mother's arrest, a case where a woman without any family support was assisted in applying for pre-mature release, a case of a woman who was diagnosed with moderate retardation and was still being processed by the Criminal Justice System, and the case of a mentally disturbed woman who had wandered away from her home state to Maharashtra, could only communicate in her native language and had been missing from home a month before her arrest.
- An issue that Prayas had identified during the earlier reporting period was that of an increase in the number of arrests of women traveling to Middle Eastern destinations as domestic workers. An examination of their social situations appeared to indicate that they could have been victims of trafficking.

Prayas met the magistrate of the court that was trying these cases to explore the possibility of the women being released on personal bond into the custody of a licensed protective home that was willing to take the responsibility of repatriation.

Prayas also collected data for a petition which the India Center for Human Rights and Law was willing to file. Some related material supporting the issue was found and shared with ICHRL. Prayas also participated in an effort to identify possible petitioners, and the editing of the petition. In order for women to be made aware of the choice of release on personal bond and shifting to the protective home, Prayas met the Superintendent of the Byculla District Prison, interacted with the accused women and

worked with the Rescue Foundation (a licensed protective home) towards connecting them with cases in need of shelter and repatriation assistance. Prayas also wrote a covering letter to the Special IG, explaining the issue to him, as Rescue Foundation made efforts to get permission to visit the accused women in prison, and orient them about their rehabilitation programmes. The movement towards the petition is currently on hold as petitioners have not yet been identified.

*Outcomes of work:*

- A total of 316 inmates were reached out to by the social workers.
- Through regular visits to the Byculla District Prison, the social workers identified cases of women and children who were in need of services related to addressing emergencies, contact with families, legal aid and case related issues, need for services and supports through government schemes and NGOs, and post release follow up.
- The intervention has resulted in tracing of and reconnection with family, obtaining legal aid, connection with local organizations and appropriate services, receiving benefits of government schemes, transfers to the Juvenile Justice System, child support, and the court being made aware of special circumstances such as mental retardation and illness.
- The Probation Officers made 6 visits to the women's section of Byculla District Prison as a result of the active networking with the DPO, Mumbai.
- There was increased awareness about the Bal Sangopan Yojna, Prayas rehabilitation programme, services of the Rescue Foundation, the shelter facilities in the Kasturba Mahila Vastigruh, the Probation of Offenders' Act, rights of accused prisoners and Criminal Justice processing among women prisoners.
- There was increased dialogue between the prison and probation departments.
- Prayas facilitated access of documents (getting quotations from the government approved fruit whole sale dealers) that had caused an inordinate delay (of two years) in the processing of a grant under the grant-in-aid scheme to released prisoners.
- One woman prisoner was sanctioned the benefit under the grant-in-aid scheme for released prisoners.
- Agreement on the part of the Child Development Project Officer to meet the Special IG Prisons (Southern Region) regarding the extension of the ICDS programme to Byculla District Prison (Women's Section).

- The Prison Department granted permission for Prayas to conduct regular information sessions for women prisoners in Byculla District Prison
- The magistrate at Andheri Metropolitan Court, at the behest of Prayas, consented to consider releasing the category of women accused of traveling on false passports into the custody of a licensed protective home – a movement towards de-institutionalization.
- Four women were reconnected with their families.

#### *Challenges:*

- Plans to start information sessions in Byculla District Prison were delayed as Prayas was required to acquire fresh permission for the same. This is a fall out of frequent transfers at the higher (DIG) level, and also because this post is occupied by IPS officers who are not well acquainted with the prison system.
- Due to obstacles at the ground level with regard to taking the ICDS programme to prison, Prayas decided to raise the issue with the Secretary, DWCD. However, inspite of efforts to get an appointment with her and continuous follow up, this did not happen.
- The issue of trafficked domestic workers in prison was first identified and taken up by Prayas in April 2010. But the petition has not yet been filed because of efforts to identify possible petitioners, and also because of delays caused in the process of coordination and collaboration between the organisations involved in the issue.
- Efforts at getting the Probation Officer involved in prison work have not been fruitful because the department is under staffed, overloaded, and prison work has been pushed to the margins.
- Intervention in cases gets delayed because of rigid procedures and rules.

### **Thane**

#### **1.3 Thane Central Prison**

##### *Inputs and Activities*

Two social workers visit the youth barrack of the Thane Central Prison. These visits were made twice a week with the following interventions:

- Cases were identified directly by the workers and also taken up on the basis of referrals by the prison personnel.
- Home visits were made to reconnect imprisoned youth with their families.
- Work was done with 25 upcountry youth in prison.
- Inmates were connected with the Thane District Legal Services Authority for free legal aid services.
- A legal information programme was jointly organized and conducted in prison by the Prayas social workers and the Thane District Legal Services Authority.
- Inmates released from prison were connected with welfare services provided by NGOs.
- Awareness was generated about the Prayas rehabilitation programme among the police, observation home, and jailors of Thane and Kalyan prisons. This facilitated the referral of cases to Prayas.
- The number of arrests made immediately on the release of prisoners by police posted outside the prison, have reduced, as a result of Prayas's continuous dialogue with the police on the issue of prevention of arrests merely on suspicion.
- The social worker maintained regular follow up with released prisoners.

*Outcomes of intervention:*

- A total number of 152 cases were provided services of Prayas.
- 35 clients contacted the Prayas social worker for post release assistance.
- Out of a total of 42 families visited during the year, 29 youth were accepted back into their homes.
- Out of the total of 25 upcountry cases, 8 youth were repatriated to Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Bangalore.
- 25 under trial prisoners were assisted in obtaining free legal aid from the Thane Court

*Challenges faced:*

- Due to an increased focus on security measures, the social workers had restricted access to the client group and hence found it difficult to conduct outreach and intervention.
- The process of post release reintegration gets disrupted when the police re-arrests youth (merely on suspicion) whose cases are being regularly followed up.

- Most of the youth arrange for private lawyers. However, many do not appear in court regularly, requiring the Prayas social workers to intervene, thus creating additional work and diverting focus from rehabilitation.
- The Thane district is very vast. It is difficult for a single social worker to make home visits as well as police station visits.

#### **1.4 Kalyan District Prison**

##### *Inputs and activities*

During the course of the reporting period, regular visits to the prison by the Prayas social worker did not take place. However, the following activities and interventions were initiated:

- Efforts at encouraging better NGO coordination.
- Placement of 2 social work students at the Women's Section of the prison.
- Accompanying and guiding the students to the prison and providing the necessary inputs.
- Taking up cases through the students with a focus on children of women inmates, legal aid and referrals from the prison department.
- Continuation of intervention in cases that were taken up by the students after the completion of student fieldwork.
- The facilitation of visits by Probation Officers to prison. To this end, one meeting was organized between the Superintendent and the Probation officers. However this has not been instrumental in visits and extension of services by the Probation Officers, as it appears that the department is under staffed and over loaded.

##### *Outcomes of intervention:*

- Dialogue between the Prison and Probation Department was initiated towards better coordination between them.
- In-depth intervention in the case of a devdasi woman who has been in prison for over three years.

## **Bharuch**

### **1.5 Bharuch sub Jail (Male and Female section)**

The following services were provided: Home visits, discussions with clients and families, follow-up in court, medical support, follow-up in community, follow-up in training centres, liaising with police, obtaining documents and benefit of government schemes, job placement for client's families, training and education.

#### *Activities included:*

- Family support and guidance: Services were extended to 162 persons in the male section and 23 cases in the female section.
- Legal aid and guidance: Social workers of Prayas provided legal guidance. Applications were also submitted to the District Legal Services Board (DLAB) for mobilizing legal aid to persons in need. Legal awareness programmes were also organized with the help of DLAB.
- Information and awareness: Sessions are conducted by social workers of Prayas as well as officers from govt. departments. When govt. officers were invited as resource persons, all inmates attended the sessions. The following sessions were conducted for a total of 1085 prisoners:
  - Vocational Training – 100 inmates.
  - Citizenship rights – 90 inmates
  - Government welfare schemes – 600 inmates
  - Families of 6 convicted clients were helped to gain access to welfare scheme (Kedi Sahay Yojana). 10 inmates applied for loans.
  - De-addiction – 55 inmates.
  - BPP course and other educational courses by Baba Saheb Ambedkar University – 175 inmates.
  - As a result of the awareness programme, 20 inmates have filled form to attend the BPP exams.
  - Vocational Training course from Baba Saheb Ambedkar University – 40 inmates.
  - Discussion on importance of literacy and follow up on their attendance in literacy classes conducted in prison – 25 cases.

- Vocational training programmes: A tailoring programme was organized for women in Bharuch Sub-Jail. Permission for organising training in male section was not granted by the Superintendent due to security reasons.
- Co-ordination with the administrative staff in prison continued in order to sensitize them to the need for welfare and legal provisions for inmates. On an average, this was pursued for around 10 cases every month.
- Facilitating entry of NGOs in prisons: 26 Organizations working in Bharuch district were contacted and invited for a meeting so that they can extend support in welfare work at Bharuch Sub-Jail. Ten organizations have submitted their proposal to contribute in various ways in Bharuch Sub-Jail.
- NGOs from Rajpipla and Chhota Udaipur were also contacted to motivate them to initiate work in prisons of their district. A meeting was held for organizations interested in initiating work for orientation.

*Challenges:*

Follow-up of cases released from police & prison custody has been difficult as most cases belong to rural areas. Coming to Prayas Bharuch involves travel time, expenses and missing out on daily wages for clients. As a result, they do not prefer to come to Bharuch. Many clients on release join some kind of work on daily wages for their survival. Identifying training for illiterate and semi-literate populations – which comprise of a majority of the cases in contact with Prayas – is also difficult.

## **2. Juveniles in Conflict with the Law**

### **Mumbai: Umerkhadi Observation Home**

In the course of the year, intensive efforts were made by the social worker to establish the need for social work intervention with juveniles in conflict with the law.

The Superintendent and Chief Probation Officer of Observation Home and the Probation Officer of David Sassoon Industrial School started referring cases of male adolescents to *Prayas*.

#### *Inputs and activities:*

- Home visits to enquire into the home situation of the youth, counsel the family and provide emergency support and legal guidance.
- Court visits to follow up on cases referred to *Prayas* and arrange for legal aid through the India Center for Human Rights and Law (ICHRL), as well as through the *Prayas* resources wherever required.
- Police station visits to enquire on legal documentation.
- School visits to facilitate enrollment following discharge.
- Arranging for financial resources for education purposes through funds available with *Prayas*, and other organizations.
- Identifying NGOs working in the area of child support.
- Referral of cases of released adolescents to the *Prayas* Youth Development Centre.
- Participation in a counselling workshop in Delhi.
- Initiated an NGO network comprising organizations from Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Odisha and Chhattisgarh, for referral of upcountry cases from *Prayas* towards their rehabilitation.

#### *Outcomes of intervention:*

- The social worker intervened in a total of 101 cases.
- As a result of intervention in a new area, the worker observed that:

- a) Around 5 per cent of the children (between 12 and 18 years of age) were repeaters – having previous record in the Observation Home.
  - b) Children were generally accused under sections relating to theft, assault, murder and rape (sections 379, 380, 324, 326, 302, 376 IPC).
  - c) Most children came from single parent homes or were orphans.
  - d) Many children had addictions and had moved out of home.
  - e) Children living on the streets are prone to get into/continue addictions which furthers their disconnection from their families.
  - f) There is no support and guidance post release for these children.
  - g) A significant number of adolescents plead guilty.
  - h) Following release, many of them are once again accused of committing an offense and produced before the Juvenile Justice Board.
  - i) There is an absence of services being provided following the hearings from the JJB.
- NGOs were approached for client sponsorship – 7 clients got financial assistance to continue their education.
  - An average of 15 cases per month were referred by JJB to Prayas for rehabilitation.
  - New NGOs were made aware of the issues of juveniles in conflict with the law.
  - An increased number of NGOs are willing to support the said group of juveniles.
  - 31 clients were referred to Prayas for post release intervention.
  - Prayas’s intervention was instrumental in 6 clients being reintegrated into the family and getting employed.
  - Many of the juveniles joined school again and continued their education.
  - In 5 cases, the magistrate passed orders favorable to rehabilitation, following social investigation reports submitted by Prayas

- The Superintendent of Observation Home for girls requested *Prayas* to accept cases of girls released from the Home, for enrollment in the NGO Placement Programme.
- DSIS has invited Prayas to work with children in the institution, and has offered space for the same.
- JJB has asked Prayas to submit a letter for recognition under the JJ Act.

*Challenges:*

The transfer of the magistrate affects case referrals.

1.

**Bharuch**

In order to further understand the situations and needs of juveniles in conflict with the law in rural and district settings, a social worker started following up cases released on bail by the Juvenile Justice Board. The social worker visited the Observation Home and attended sessions of JJB to identify cases in need of social work intervention. Services extended to juveniles included: home visits and work with family, support for training and education, exploration of jobs, liaising with staff of observation home and families.

### **3. Women's institutions**

#### **Mumbai**

#### **3.1 Navjivan Mahila Vastigruh (Government Protective home) and Kasturba Mahila Vastigruh (Government Reception Center)**

Work with women rescued from commercial sexual exploitation continued to focus on demonstrating the possibility of other alternatives, providing family support and guidance and post-release assistance.

Long-term and short-term training programmes, in-house preparation and exposure to the NGO Placement Programme were organised. In-house placement was carried out in the Probation, Medical and Kitchen sections of NMV. Institutional staff mentored these placements. Other placements mentored by visiting NGOs included Justice and Care Mission's tailoring classes, Oasis India's literacy classes and Save the Children's (India) embroidery and beauty-care classes.

Towards strengthening the services within the institution, students of social work maintained follow up with the District Library Services and the District Legal Services Authority. While further dialogue with the former is required, the District Legal Services Authority agreed to make arrangements for awareness sessions and provision of legal aid to residents of NMV. The matter has to be now followed up with the Superintendent.

Family support especially to families of women who have been discharged is provided to help women settle down and meet basic requirements while exploring alternative options for livelihood. Counselling the women and the families towards better communication and relationship is taken up.

In-house placements (exposure to range of work options while residing in the institution) at the Navjeevan Mahila Vastigurha (NMV), and activities at the Prayas Training and Income Generation Centre continued. 46 women from the NMV and 189 women from KMV and the Female Beggars Home attended these activities.

Post institutional services continued for those women discharged from NVM.

A new development was the designing of the education and information components. Accordingly, activities will now be streamlined to target the following areas:

- a) Social work, role of NGOs and potential for developing a career in social work.
- b) Home Management
- c) Production and skill development
- d) Education and information

A staff member held meetings with the women residing in KMV in order to explore and ascertain areas that needed to be included in the syllabus. Sessions covering the above listed areas commenced in August 2010.

Theme	Sessions
Social work	What is social work, options for career in social work, Prayas's NGO Placement Programme
Home Management	Conducted by S.N.D.T University
Production and skill development	Services and training by WIT
Education and information	Shelter facilities, legal awareness,

### **3.2 Prayas Training and Income Generation Centre, c/o Female Beggars Home**

While this Centre was set up to cater to needs of women residing in all three institutions, it continues to extend outreach to only two institutions, i.e. Kasturba Mahila Vastigruha and Female Beggars Home. Women from Navjeevan Mahila Vastigruha continue to face restriction in movement – not being allowed attendance at the Centre which is located in the adjacent premises.

While training in handicrafts and work on piece-rate basis continued, a new development was initiation of the awareness and information sessions according to plan reported in the last report. Inputs were to be designed to address 4 main topics: Home Management and Relationship skills, Social Work, Vocational Skills for obtaining work on piece rate basis and General Information (savings, financial management, health, legal information, etc).

Trainees were provided with inputs in bag-making, embroidery, jewellery-making, diya-painting, candle-making, greeting card-making, basic tailoring (skirts) and making book marks. A certificate course conducted by WIT was also organized.

Sales were organized for marketing the products made at the centre. The trainees participated in organizing and manning the stalls.

Besides training in handicrafts, the sessions organized addressed the following topics:

- Nature of social work and role of social worker: 3 sessions
- Travelling information: 2 sessions
- Legal Aid and awareness: 2 sessions
- Production related training: 3 sessions
- Shelter, with specific reference to Sukh Shanti: 1 session
- Women helpline services: 1 session
- Business skills :1 session
- Women's issues: 1 session
- Significance of education: 1 session
- Services by Yuva Parivartan -1 session
- Health and hygiene -1 session

In order to identify resource persons for providing inputs and conduction session, attempts were made at establishing networks with NGOs.

### **Bharuch**

A certificate course on beauty treatment and tailoring was organized in these institutions. 24 women and girls from Reception Centre and Juvenile Home attended these programmes.

## **4. Court Based Intervention**

### **Mumbai**

The legal aid unit of Prayas based at the Mumbai Sessions Court functioned in coordination with the Mumbai District Legal Services Authority (DLSA). The unit has grown in strength after getting office space in the City Civil & Sessions Court premises in the last week of August, 2010. Intensive efforts were made to get cases referred by the judiciary during the initial stage. There was need for considerable resilience while dealing with the court administration and judicial departments which were resistant to third party influence or intervention, as this was seen as irregular.

The High Court permission that was obtained through the Maharashtra State Legal Services Authority permitting the judicial officials to refer cases of vulnerable groups was circulated recently.

The unit took up cases that were self-referred, referred by the judiciary, other units of Prayas, NGOs and members of the community. They engaged in the following interventions:

- Provided legal information, guidance and legal aid to members of vulnerable groups, through the government legal aid system or through assistance from Prayas.
- Followed up cases that were taken up and facilitated the registration of cases, speeding up cases and explored alternatives to enable reintegration and rehabilitation of marginalized groups.
- Worked in collaboration with the Probation Officer in facilitating the benefit of probation.

## **Thane**

There was one social worker placed at the Thane Sessions Court to work in collaboration with the Thane District Legal Services Authority. In the course of the intervention the social worker:

- Took up cases that came to the court which had scope for psycho-social intervention, cases that were referred by the advocates panel of the TDLSA and cases referred by the Prayas social worker from Thane Central Prison.
- Identified cases in need of legal aid and referred them to the TDLSA for free legal aid.
- Maintained ongoing discussion and dialogue with TDLSA to strengthen the work of Prayas.
- Remained present in the Family Court with a senior advocate who is a member of TDLSA legal aid panel for family counselling.
- Maintained contact with the judges presiding over the production of under trial prisoners through the video-conferencing facility, and discussed with them issues such as the Probation of Offenders Act, youth and crime, family situation of prisoners and referral of cases to Prayas.
- Counseled families who came to attend the production of prisoners through video-conferencing facilities.
- Assisted families who had private lawyers by following up with the lawyers.
- Took up cases for crime prevention and rehabilitation that were referred to Prayas from Vartak Nagar Police Station, Wagle Estate Police Station, Naupada Police Station, City Police Station, Kasarwadavali Police Station, Kapurbavadi Police Station, Bhiwandi City Police Station, Shantinagar Police Station, Narpoli Police Station, and Nijampur Police Station.
- Intervened in cases of inmates referred by the Bhiwandi Observation Home.
- Took up cases of juveniles referred by the Kalyan District Prison and the Thane Central Prison and worked towards their transfer to the Juvenile Justice Board, by making home visits, follow-up to get their birth certificates or other age proof documents and medical reports, and following up with the court and lawyer.

- Provided Information about the Prayas rehabilitation programme to clients and their families.
- Took up cases referred by the court for rehabilitation, free legal aid, home enquiry and counseling.

*Attended the following programmes:*

- Legal awareness session in prison as a resource person.
- Maha Lok Adalat, Thane, as a panel member of the jury.
- Programme at the TDLSA on Motor Accidents and Compensation, organized by the court social worker.
- Programme in the Jan Vikas Society, organized by the TDLSA on the occasion of Women's day where Prayas shared its work experience.
- District IDC Sub-Committee on Prisoners meeting in Thane Central Prison, chaired by the Principal Judge of Thane District and Sessions Court.
- Programme organized by the TDLSA on the Senior Citizens Act.

*Challenges faced:*

- There is no female social worker in T DLSA for family counselling with women.
- Since the work of Prayas has been extended, there are requests from judges that the social worker be present in their courts so that they can refer cases. However this is difficult since there is only one social worker.
- The social worker finds it difficult to cover the vast area of the Thane district when required to make home visits.

During the course of the reporting period, the Court Unit at Thane had set certain targets which could not be met for the following reasons:

- A training programme had been planned for judges from the Thane district on the Probation of Offenders Act and the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act. This plan was discussed with the Principal Judge on August 2010. He liked the concept of the training programme and suggested that Prayas give a proposal regarding the programme. After much coordination in identifying a venue, fixing dates as per the

suitability to resource persons and participants, the training programme did not take place because of lack of involvement and initiative of the functionaries concerned.

## **5. Police Station**

### **Bharuch: 'A' Division Police Station:**

- Referrals: The social worker based at the police station was involved in active liaising with NGOs and the District Legal Services Authority in order to refer cases. 35 cases were referred to NGOs while 54 cases were referred to the Legal Services Authority.
- Introduction to post release opportunities: 49 youth and 12 women in the lock-up were contacted to explore post-release options. A total of 39 cases out of these were referred to the after care worker for follow-up and assistance. 23 youth and 4 women were referred to the prison worker, where the person was transferred to judicial custody.
- Legal aid and family support: Legal aid was given to 95 persons and 60 persons were also extended family support. Medical support was given in 8 cases.
- Socio-legal support to women and youth: While working at the station house with women and other citizens, the social worker intervened at various levels. Cases were referred to hospitals, families were contacted, referrals and follow up was done with shelter homes, legal aid through District Legal Aid Board was mobilized, opportunities for jobs and training were explored, worker also coordinated for cases between police station, chowkies, court, DSP office, clients and their families.
- As work at Police Station is now getting recognized and established. Apart from the social worker reaching out to people in crisis, 28 cases were referred by police, 10 cases by NGOs and 2 cases by the District Legal Aid Board.
- Training for CJS functionaries:
  - The work at the station house to address needs of women and youth for rehabilitation required co-ordination and follow up that was pursued by the social worker.
  - With objective of reaching out to rural women in crisis and vulnerable to crime, a legal awareness training was organized for 122 Anganwadi workers at the taluka level.

- Facilitate better communication between police and public: The presence of a social worker at the Police Station helped facilitate better communication
  - Workers visits and discussions with DSP and Police Inspector to facilitate support for clients was aimed at fostering communication of needs of vulnerable groups to the system.
  - The co-ordination meeting between police and Superintendents of Observation Home and Juvenile Home for boys and girls were organized to address the issue of co-ordination between police and shelter homes.
- Rehabilitation of children reaching the Police Station: The social worker has effectively worked towards implementation of Juvenile Justice Care and Protection Act in the Police Station.
- Support to Women's Police Station: DSP Bharuch requested Prayas to extend support to WPCs at newly formed Mahila Police Station.
- Extensive follow-up was made with District Judge and DLAB to appoint Legal Aid lawyers for recovery of maintenance cases under Section 127 of Cr.P.C.

## **6. Prayas Vichar Manch**

### **6.1 Libraries**

Prayas continued to direct its efforts at promoting libraries in prisons in Maharashtra. Efforts have been invested in:

- Strengthening existing libraries in prisons.
- Co-coordinating between District libraries (government) and prison libraries.
- Identifying possible budgets for membership fees in order to strengthen the library infrastructure in prison.

*Inputs and activities:*

- Correspondence with the Principal Secretary, Home Department, Government of Maharashtra, Prison and Library Departments regarding State Library membership for all prisons, the need for a budget within Prison Department for prison libraries, education, and vocational training and the utilization of a part of the Prisoners' Welfare Fund for such educational and library use.
- Raised library related issues with the Principal Secretary, Home Department, the Deputy and Additional Secretaries, Home (Prisons), and thereafter at the State IDC meeting.
- Meeting with Librarians of State and Central Library for library membership in prisons, and also the Mulund District Library to meet the Librarian, regarding the opening of bank account to start library membership for Mumbai prisons.
- Meeting with the Prog. Coordinator of the IGNOU Regional Centre to start the educational programmes in Maharashtra Central Prisons.
- Met expenses towards fees for starting library services at Jalgaon District Prison.
- Requested Vallabhdas Vachnalaya to provide books to prisoners under the 4C Plan-Charak Scheme.
- Made presentations about libraries at seminars and workshops (at Matru Seva Sangh Institute of Social Work, Nagpur, Dr. Ambedkar College of Social Work, Yevatmal, and the Academy for Prison and Correctional Administration, Vellore, Tamil Nadu).
- Maintained continuous follow-up and contact with libraries, the prison department and other government and non-government organizations.
- Held meetings with the prison and the library departments to facilitate the process of libraries in prison.

*Outcomes of intervention:*

- Raising the library related issues at the State IDC meeting resulted in the prison department making a commitment to provide space and cupboards to activate prison libraries and also to make available a list of prisons to the State Library Department. It was decided that all prisons would become members of district libraries. The State Libraries Department would provide books to prisons. Books would be provided to under trial prisoners too.
- The Taloja Central Prison became a member of the District Library, Thane.
- On 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 the Civil Judge and Secretary of Legal Services Authority Jalgaon inaugurated the prison library in Jalgaon District Prison. He donated Rs. 1001.00 and a prisoner donated Rs. 51.00 towards this library.
- Nagpur Central Prison has shown interest in starting a prison library, and is in contact with Prayas. They have requested the social worker to visit the district to help activate library facilities for the prison.
- In response to a suggestion by Prayas, the Director of the State Central Library issued a circular wherein books from government recognized libraries run by NGOs were made available to prisoners in Amravati (Nagar Vacahnalaya), Osmanabad (Nagar Vacahnalaya), Aurangabad (Balwant Mofat Vacahnalaya), Parbhani (Ganesh Vacahnalaya, Nanal Peth) and Jalgaon (Vallabhdas Valji Vacahnalaya).
- A total of 9 prisons have library membership (Thane Central Prison, Nasik Borstal School, Chandrapur District Prison, Akola District Prison, Alibaug District Prison, Aurangabad Central Prison, Jalgaon District Prison, Taloja Central Prison, Mumbai Central Prison)
- 5 prisons are in the process of obtaining library membership (Nagpur Central Prison, Wardha District Prison, Morshi Open Prison (Amravati), Amravati Central Prison, Nasik Central Prison).

*Challenges:*

- Permission regarding prison visits to strengthen libraries in prison is still pending.
- There is GR permitting under trial prisoners to avail of library facilities
- Some prisons do not have teachers to take the responsibility for running the library.

- Currently there is no budget head in the prison department to make the payment of the membership fees of Rs. 650.00.
- There is no facility to maintain library and education material such as cupboards, book shelves, registers, etc.
- In some prisons, the library department has issued circulars but the prison department is not aware about them.
- The distance between the library and the prison in some districts is very far. Since travel expenditure is not reimbursed to teachers by the prison department, the teachers do not take the initiative.
- The superintendents and teachers of prisons need to be convinced about the need for libraries and education – a lot of energy and time goes in this.

## **6.2 State and District Legal Services Authority**

Being a member of the Mumbai District Legal Services Authority for almost six years, Prayas has been able to understand the intricacies of the functioning of the legal aid system. The legal aid structure has scope to collaborate with NGOs through a NALSA scheme which makes funds available to NGOs to conduct legal awareness programmes for vulnerable groups of society. Prayas has been getting financial aid since the last three years. With these funds, it has organized seminars and awareness programmes on Probation of Offenders Act, Borstal Schools Act, Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, release of under trial prisoners on Personal Bond and legal aid services for the poor for judicial officers, police, prison staff and DWCD officers to sensitize them, help them understand ground realities and come out with suggestions. The Unit worked with the objectives given below:

- To establish the need for social work intervention within Courts.
- To raise funds from the government for activities and salaries.
- To bring together the different functionaries of CJS for better co-ordination to implement social & correctional laws/provisions.
- To develop and strengthen the functioning of the legal aid machinery.
- To encourage legal professionals to take up legal aid matters.
- To study the functioning of legal aid machinery and provide suggestions for its improvement.

- To develop a model for social work intervention in court/legal aid settings and help other NGOs to replicate the same in other parts of the state.
- To developed mechanisms for improving/strengthening legal aid services.

*Inputs and activities:*

- Co-ordination between the State and Mumbai District Legal Services Authority: The conducting and facilitation of Seminars and interactive exercises with judicial, police, w/c and probation officials in co-ordination with MDLSA and MSLSA. The content of the above seminars were focused on how to ensure the effective implementation of Probation of offenders Act, the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act and the legal aid scheme. The aim was to bring CJS functionaries together on a single platform, collate their suggestions and come out with practical solutions.
- Conducted legal awareness programmes under the grant-in-aid scheme of NALSA for vulnerable groups within the Criminal Justice System as well as for the larger community. The groups that awareness programmes were conducted for included prisoners, tribal community, workers from backward castes, aanganwadi workers, health workers, members of self-help groups, slum dwellers and the general public. The topics were the acquisition of ration cards, caste and income certificates; access to the benefits of various government schemes available for SC/STs, minorities and women; SRS and the Redevelopment Scheme; legislation relating to women and the Atrocities Act; and the union budget and its implications for backward communities and minorities. The resource persons were eminent members of the judiciary and government officials. Some of the sessions were conducted in coordination with local NGOs.
  - Visiting the prison jointly with session court judge to identify prisoners in need of legal aid
  - Referral of legal aid cases for rehabilitative intervention.

*Outcomes of intervention:*

- Regular monthly meetings of MDLSA with a proper agenda.
- The amendment of the legal aid application form.

- Referral of cases by judicial officers.
- The formal initiation of social workers within a court setting.
- Decrease in the number of cases of Prayas legal aid and an increase in the number of cases being given government legal aid.
- Increase in the cases being considered for probation by the judicial officers.
- Increase in the number of visits by Probation Officers to metropolitan courts.
- The facilitation of a change in the procedure so that persons in custody are exempted from attaching court fee stamp in their judicial applications.
- There is now no need for a Rs. 100/- stamp paper when submitting affidavits to the government offices.
- Recognition of Prayas among the judicial fraternity

### **6.3 Health**

#### *Inputs and activities*

Since June 2008, Prayas has been making efforts to involve the health department in a larger programme for the rehabilitation of custodialized women and youth. During the said reporting period, Prayas:

- Follow up with the Directorate of Medical Education and Research (DMER) and the Preventive Social Medicine (PSM) Department of the Sir J.J. Hospital to implement the proposed programme.
- Followed up with DMER that had issued three letters directing the PSM Department to implement the programme and the Head of the PSM Department who denied the receipt of the correspondence.
- Approached the Joint Director, DMER regarding the obstacles being faced in the matter and submitted a letter. The Joint Director communicated to Prayas that he had received a letter from the PSM Department which said that they would like to discuss the Prayas proposal in person.
- Followed up on the final letter that was issued by the Joint Director, DMER saying that Prayas should meet the department concerned to work out details. Contacted the Head of the PSM Department, but with no positive result.

- Involved the Dean, Sir J.J. hospital, who was of the opinion that the proposed programme was not within their role (unlike the earlier Dean who had extended his support).
- Wrote to the Joint Director, DMER, requesting him to call a meeting with the representative from J.J. Hospital and Prayas. The meeting was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011. The discussion focused on the clarification of roles. Prayas proposed that the primary objective was that persons in custody should be exposed to health education and training towards their rehabilitation. Te Joint Director (DMER) promised to call a meeting between the departments implementing the national health programmes
- Initiated exploration with the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai in order to understand their health delivery structures and schemes that clients could avail of, and the possibility of extending health education for custodialised populations.

*Outcomes of the intervention:*

- The DMER has forwarded the matter back to the Directorate of Health Services.
- Having gone through the process of exploring possibilities for health education and training for persons in custody, Prayas gained an understanding about the practical difficulties involved in including socially excluded population in government programmes.

*Challenges:*

- There is no structure available within the Health Department to additionally take on the responsibility of health education and training for custodial populations. Hence while the plan proposed by Prayas was accepted in principle, it was difficult to put the same into practice.

#### **6.4 Inter Departmental Committees on Prisoners**

Prayas continued to direct its efforts to facilitate the functioning of the State and District Inter Departmental Sub-Committees on Prisoners.

##### *Inputs and activities*

- The Prayas social worker continued to follow up with authorities concerned to convene the State IDC meeting 2010.
- Prayas wrote to the Principal Secretary, Home Department regarding suggestions relating to rehabilitation of prisoners and children of prisoners for the revision of the Maharashtra Prison Manual.
- Prayas met the Principal Secretary and discussed the above suggestions and urged her to call the State IDC meeting. Prayas also raised issue about creating a budget head for payment of Rs. 650/- per prison as a subscription fee for district library membership in all prisons in the state, extension of library facilities to under trial prisoners, revision in the newspaper-prisoner ratio, starting vocational training and education facilities through the higher and technical department, and the computerization of prison records as ordered by the High Court in a PIL in 2007.
- Visits were made to Kolhapur, Ratnagiri, Raigad, Beed, Parbani, Aurangabad, and Jalna to assess the functioning of the respective District IDC Sub-Committees.
- As a follow up to the State IDC meeting of July 2010, a decision was taken that issues concerning different departments would be taken up separately with the respective department secretaries. To this end a letter was sent to the Principal Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development.
- Prayas also wrote to the Principal Secretary, Home Department about hospital admission for prisoners from the Taloja Prison who were in need of hospital admission, but were being denied the same. This was also an issue raised at the State IDC meeting and Prayas was requested to take up the matter.
- At the Thane District IDC meeting on 20.1.2011, issues like police escort, health and education for prisoners were discussed.

- Awareness sessions on Probation of Offenders Act and Plea Bargaining were conducted inside Parbhani District Prison. 15 sessions court judges, JMFCs, Probation Officers and nearly 100 inmates attended this session.
- Follow-up was maintained with Aurangabad District Court and Central Prison, for starting and ITI Centre inside the prison. The Principal, ITI, was contacted for this purpose.

*Outcomes of intervention:*

- At the meeting with the Principal Secretary, Home Department, she made a commitment to Prayas that she would forward the suggestions to the Maharashtra Prison Manual Revision Committee. She also took note of the issues raised by Prayas and said that she would discuss them with the IG Prisons.
- A State IDC meeting was called at the behest of the Principal Secretary, on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2010. The Points discussed were libraries in prison with regard to the government scheme, district library membership in every prison, health education programmes within custody and hospital facilities at the Talaja Central Prison.

*Decisions taken:*

- The Prison department would give the Directorate of State libraries a list of prisons.
- The State Library Department would open an account in Mumbai so that membership fee could be paid by the prison authorities for the supply of library books.
- Library books would be given to under trial prisoners on an experimental basis.
- The Prison Department would make space and furniture available for libraries.
- Prayas took the responsibility of assisting the Prison Department in identifying and facilitating the hospital services to prisoners at the Talaja Central Prison.
- The Superintendent of Kolhapur Central Prison called an IDC Sub-Committee meeting. Issues discussed were irregularity of police escort, need for vocational training, inadequate health services, under utilization of the PO Act and need for shelter services for released women prisoners.
- In the Raigad district, IDC meetings are being conducted regularly. Prayas attended the recent IDC meeting in July 2010. Points discussed were irregularity of police escorts,

inadequate health services at the Taloja Central Prison, needs of children accompanying their mothers to prison, and the need for educational and rehabilitation activities. Prayas was asked to support the conducting of rehabilitation activities. It was reported that the previous IDC meeting had been instrumental in getting the medical officer to make daily visits to the prison.

- Officials in Jalna and Aurangabad districts were not aware about the IDC Sub-Committee, and necessary information was provided.
- The Aurangabad District Court called a District IDC SC meeting on 6 .10.2010 and discussed issues of prisoners like supply of newspapers and books, starting a balwadi through ICDS for children of prisoners, shelter, rehabilitation, vocational training and health facilities for prisoners.
- On 21.1.2011, Aurangabad District Court called another District IDC SC meeting for follow up of the points discussed in the last IDC meeting.
- Jalna District Court called a District IDC SC meeting on 30.11.2010 and discussed similar issues.
- A District IDC SC meeting was held in Aurangabad on 18.03.2011 in the Paithan Open Prison. The points discussed included the data that the court had asked the prison to produce concerning the interests of the inmates for ITI training, jobs for prisoners in MIDC, the irregularity of police escorts in the district, starting vocational training by a NGO which had offered its services, directions by the District Judge for a balwadi to be conducted outside prison, and the need for a visiting psychiatrist.

#### *Challenges:*

- There were delays in the calling of the State IDC meeting because the letter from the Principal Secretary, Law and Judiciary Department, to the Under Secretary, Home Department, had been forwarded to the IG Prisons, Maharashtra for his feedback. The response had not come in and no action had been taken.

### **6.5 Children of Prisoners**

The translation of the Prayas publication, ‘Forced Separation: Children of Imprisoned Mothers’, from English to Marathi was finalized. It will now go for printing.

A note was prepared on the role of the judiciary vis a vis children of prisoners (based on the the Prayas publication) and was submitted to the Registrar General High Court. The note has been forwarded by the Registrar and Deputy Registrar, HC to the forwarded to the Chief Justice.

Since the past year, the Juvenile Aid Police Unit (JAPU) has been making efforts to coordinate with NGOs in Mumbai on issues of vulnerable children. For this purpose, they have been calling meetings periodically. Prayas has also been invited and took the opportunity of raising the issue of children whose parents are in prison custody.

**II. Development Objective:** Create employability of (towards sustainable livelihoods) for persons coming out of or vulnerable to crime, prostitution or destitution – released prisoners, women released from institutions or those referred by NGOs/youth groups/ex clients.

**Immediate Objective:**

- A. Develop legal livelihood opportunities for socio-economically vulnerable and excluded communities, groups and individuals
- B. Encourage and support clients' reintegration into family and community.

**7. Community Based Intervention**

**Crime Prevention Project and Legal Information Centre:**

In the course of the year, the Prayas social worker continued to be based at Dharavi for the purpose of preventive intervention. His focus was on youth and families within the community. He accessed the community through local youth groups and members of the community, coordinated with community based organizations, and conducted activities directed at awareness and training as follows:-

*Inputs and activities*

- Two Legal literacy workshops in April 2010 and January 2011 which were attended by a total of 40 community youth participants.
- Two meetings with the family members of the community to orient them about Prayas and to provide information about the Criminal Justice System. The total number of participants who attended the Meetings was 110.
- The social worker visited and followed up with three police stations namely Bandra Railway Police Station, Shahu Nagar Police Station, and 90 Feet Police Station Dharavi, in order to generate awareness about the work of Prayas and to encourage the police to refer cases for rehabilitation.
- Education activities: The social worker made 20 visits to the Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Private Ltd (MKCPL), in order to obtain permission to start a Computer Training Center for youth in Dharavi

*Outcomes of intervention:*

- 3 clients from the community were referred to the Prayas Youth Development Centre.
- The Bandra Railway Police Station referred 2 cases to Prayas for rehabilitation.
- The efforts of the Prayas social worker resulted in the obtaining of government permission for the Youth Welfare Association to Start the MS-CIT course at Dharavi.

## **8. Prayas Livelihood and Reintegration Programme**

### **Mumbai**

#### **8.1 Work with children**

During the course of the year, the social worker took up cases that were referred by the various units of Prayas. Besides taking up new cases, the social worker also continued follow up on cases taken up during earlier reporting periods. The intervention comprised:

- Visits to the Child Welfare Committee to present applications for the institutionalization of children.
- Referrals to the foster care schemes and the Bal Sangopan Yojna.
- Contact with the various Child Welfare Committees for reasons such as arranging meetings between mothers and their institutionalized children and also for extending the time periods of committal orders.
- Counselling of family members.
- Visits to clients' homes, NGOs, police stations, hospitals, schools and institutions.
- Providing emergency assistance by giving ration supplies and paying school fees of families in crisis.
- Mobilizing government and non-government supports for children.

*Outcomes of intervention:*

- A total of 78 children in difficult circumstances were provided support and assistance.

- In one particular case there was a woman prisoner who had 5 minor children left outside. The woman's husband was reported to be addicted to drugs and not in a position to take care of the children. Once again, this highlighted the vulnerable situation of children of prisoners. Upon release, the woman approached Prayas as she could not locate her children. The Prayas social worker intervened and explored the possibility of the children having been committed into a children's home. Some children were thus located. The children reported that they had faced abuse and had been subjected to begging. One of the children still had to be traced. Prayas assisted the woman in mobilizing the police to search for the missing child, who was suspected of being kidnapped. All the children were finally found, and follow up is being maintained to ensure that appropriate care is rendered by the parents. The intervention by Prayas was instrumental in mobilizing the police and Child Welfare Committee towards tracing and rescuing the children.

## **8.2 Legal services for women**

The social worker took up cases that were referred by the other units of Prayas. These cases included those of women in prisons, women's institutions and shelter homes, and clients who were associated with Prayas but residing with their families.

### *Inputs and activities:*

- Regular visits to the Kasturba Mahila Vastigruh and the Women's Section of Byculla District Prison to identify cases.
- Legal awareness sessions on topics such as basic constitutional provisions, women's rights, the Domestic Violence Act, and the rights and criminal processing of accused persons.
- Legal guidance and information to women prisoners, victims of domestic violence and those in property disputes.
- Follow up with lawyers and assisting women to access their rights to shelter, legal aid and relief in situations of marital violence.
- Visits to courts, NGOs providing legal aid, and the District Legal Services Authority.
- Visits to relatives of clients and the police station whenever necessary.

- Contact with Department of Women and Child Development in order to coordinate the conducting of awareness sessions on the Domestic Violence Act and to tie up with the Protection Officer to initially speak with the women and take up DV cases.
- Exploration and sustain networks with NGOs that provided legal support and assistance to persons in need.

*Outcomes of intervention:*

- 61 women were provided legal guidance and aid.
- New NGOs were identified for networking.

### **8.3 Citizenship rights and information on schemes**

*Inputs and activities:*

- Ongoing review of existing schemes and training programmes for illiterate and poorly literate persons.
- Linking families with ICDS centres.
- Follow up for obtaining ration cards, getting documents like name change certificate, school leaving certificate, etc.
- Coordinating with departments and offices for implementation of schemes for small scale business and housing.
- Opening of bank accounts.

*Challenges faced:*

- The instability in clients' lives continues long after documents are obtained. Hence, there is threat of documents being misplaced, or misuse by negative elements on whom the clients are emotionally dependent.
- Convincing government and private parties about providing documents and extending the benefit of schemes is difficult either because the need of the person is not sufficiently demonstrated or the agency has concerns about moving outside the routine.

For example, house owners are reluctant to provide NOCs for ration cards for fear that the property would be taken over.

- Termination of a given scheme while the social worker was following up on its procedures, meant a waste of efforts and time, besides disappointment to the client who was keen on benefitting from the scheme.

*Outcomes:*

- Dialogue with the Superintendent of the Govt. Reception Centre resulted in an agreement that all clients of Prayas who were residing in the Govt. Reception Centre would be issued a letter of introduction and a statement of period of stay – a document that would enable applications for ration cards.
- One client obtained a ration card and cards of two clients got renewed.
- A client's family got a loan for starting business, amounting to Rs. 15000/-, while an application for grant of cattle amounting to Rs. 40,000 has been approved.
- A school leaving certificate dating back to 1977 was obtained, ration cards were traced and documents submitted for change in name and registering the same with the Govt. Gazette office.

*Future plans:*

- To work towards obtaining documentation such as BPL certificates, Domicile Certificates where applicable, PAN cards, Senior Citizen cards, Voting cards, etc.
- To continue exploring access to schemes for women and Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana for senior citizens.

#### **8.4 Emergency services for women**

Women in need of shelter were accommodated in government and voluntary sector run shelter homes.

Procedures for admission and discharge once again proved to be an obstacle in the rehabilitation process. Mandatory admission into State Homes remains a directive. However, admission to women is still refused on grounds of lack of space, mental and physical handicaps and disturbances, past stay record in the institution, assessment that the woman would not be able to adjust to that institution, etc. As a result, there have been instances where Prayas has had to make alternative arrangements for these women. This matter needs to be taken up with some authority for redressal.

Women in need of shelter were referred to shelter homes, with attempts being made to match the profile of the woman with the services of given shelter homes. In view of the fact that most shelter homes have common programmes and similar rules and regulations, matching of interests is often a difficult task. Following admission to a shelter home, follow up is maintained to help a woman adapt to the environment of the home, plan for future, ensure child care and address medical needs. Shelter was arranged for in KMV, Sukh Shanti, Shanti Sadan and Ashray, Bapnu Ghar and Shanti Ghar. Where necessary, case reviews were conducted with the institutional staff concerned.

#### **8.5 NGO Placement (Women)**

Trainees enrolled in the programme were those who were referred from KMV, NMV, prison and other agencies.

Placement agencies included Sahara, Anand Rehabilitation Centre, Bahujan Hitaya Samiti, Fellowship for the Physically Handicapped, Navdurga Vrudhashram, NASEOH, WIT, Swayamsiddha Mission and Manaswini Mahila Prakalp. Trainees were placed in settings offering exposure and training in balwadis, caretaking, training in handicrafts, piece-rate work and tailoring.

While placing trainees in NGOs, follow up and mentoring towards developing personal self and skills forms a core component of intervention. The social workers implementing this programme are required to also address areas such as medical treatment and guidance, conduct home visits to develop relationships between the trainee and the family, and arrange for shelter. Inconsistencies in these areas of the trainee's life affect the trainee's performance as ability to sustain self in the programme.

Prior to placement, exposure visits were organized to agencies including Swayamsidha and Pratham in Thane and Mumbai. Other visits were made to agencies in Kolhapur, to explore placement of two clients. Agencies visited included Savad Sanstha, Navjeevan Vyasan Mukti Kendra, Tejawini Mahila Vastigruh in Kolhapur and Matrumandir in Devrukh.

A two day group exposure visit for 34 female clients (interested in the Placement Programme and those already enrolled) was organized to Sai Seva Dham and Bal Seva Gram in Lonavala. Following this visit, one of the trainees made enquiries about a job vacancy for a caretaker, in the agency visited. She has been following up on this information, to assess employment.

During this period, the matter of referral of trainees to the placement programme was under review. In prior meetings held with the Superintendent of the Kasturba Mahila Vastigruha, it was decided that the programme would be made available to women from this institution who attended the Training and Income Generation Centre of Prayas (that is located in the premises of the Female Beggars Home). This was due to two reasons. Firstly, there was sometimes a difference in opinion about the future direction that was to be offered to the resident. Hence, there were instances when it appeared that the trainee was interested in the Placement Programme, but the institutional staff thought it best for her to be employed as a domestic help. Secondly, after identifying women who express interest in the programme, placement does not occur due to delays in procedures that are followed.

The Placement Programme continued, with two new cases being enrolled. Towards preparation for the programme and increasing exposure to nature of work in the social work sector, exposure visits were organized to: Sukh Shanti, Yuva Parivartan, Apanalaya, Swamy Siddha, Aditya Puri, Shanti Sadan, Param Shanti Dham, Pratham, Vikalp India, Ugam, Parbhani, Mahila Samasya Kendra, Bhandhilki, Aasara, Reception Centre, Prerana, etc.

Group exposure visits for pre-placement and placement trainees were organized to Yuva Parivartan and Swayam Siddha Old Age Home. Outstation visits were made to Parbhani to attend the marriage of one trainee. The placement agency had arranged for the marriage. Following the marriage, adjustment problems between spouses were visible, requiring the social worker to engage in telephonic counselling on a regular basis.

To facilitate better matching between trainee needs and placement opportunities, social workers explored placement potential and possibilities in other NGOs. Yuva Parivartan, Apanalaya, Adity Puri, Pratham, Vikalp India, Ugam, Parbhani, Mahila Samasya Kendra, Bhaandhilki, Aasara, Reception Centre showed potential and accepted the idea of placement of trainees.

One case was referred by another NGO, while the Superintendent of the Ulhasnagar Reception Centre requested Prayas to extend activities to women of that institution.

Contact was maintained with ex-trainees of the Placement Programme, where it appeared that the woman was in need of social work intervention such as individual and family counseling, emergency support, family support and re- enrollment in the Placement Programme.

*Issue:*

- Who decides for the woman – considering that women in the Reception Centre are not detained and it is an open institution, does she not have a right to decide her future area of interest and direction. This matter continues to be debated upon by social workers of Prayas and the institution staff.
- Some agencies show reluctance in placing women released from prison. The relevance of this reluctance needs to be assessed, so as to ensure that deviant/crime behaviour does not continue while in placement. Making arrangements and dialogue with placement agencies to prevent misuse while giving the trainee a fresh chance are necessary.

*Another recurrent area is that of nature of relationships affecting performance in placement. Three trainees dropped out due the following reasons:*

- a) Relationship with person on streets resulting in residence in unstable area and inability to attend programme on time, drowsiness during the day and fatigue.
- b) Dependence on and relationship with another resident of the institution after discharge resulted in the latter affecting decisions. Residence was again in an unstable area and not conducive towards facilitating routine and discipline required in the placement programme.
- c) A trainee referred to another NGO for education developed a relationship with a man and dropped out. No contact has been made, though efforts are made to locate her.

A need among young girls to develop relationships while being valid is not met with a systemic response to address the issue. As a result, relationships are established with unstable persons, thereby pushing the woman to move from one difficult situation to another. The family unit of Prayas has started reviewing this matter, in order to assess possibilities for intervention.

While follow-up on cases will continue as part of the future plan, during the coming period, efforts will be made to identify more agencies that could act as host agencies for the placement programme. A staff member was assigned for the purpose of consolidating existing data base of NGOs and identifying new contacts. Regular individual and group visits to NGOs for the purpose of providing exposure to the NGO sector will be given attention.

### **8.6 Employment Cell (Women):**

Over the last year, initiatives in this area were directed towards:

- a) Exploring employment within the NGO sector
- b) Exposure to employment sector.
- c) Assisting employed clients with other areas such as shelter, develop educational and vocational skills, and deal with difficult family situations.

The work of this unit concentrates on three components:

- a) Helping a woman find a job
- b) Information and awareness for pursuing and sustaining a job
- c) Helping her settle in the job.

The social worker mentors the woman to develop personal and work related attitudes that enhance performance on the job e.g. relationship with family and colleagues, deal with increasing workload, plan leave etc. Efforts continued to explore employment in NGO sector, and prepare trainees towards developing employability skills. Exposure visits, individual counseling, and group discussions were conducted. Preparation included topics such as preparing bio-data, interviews, management, relationships, savings, education, importance of documents, (such as appointment letter, experience letter etc) , need for stable shelter to sustain employment.

Women who have developed employability skills are fairly more stable and show interest and capacity in addressing other issues such as creating documents (ration card, PAN card), savings, investment in gold and marriage. The social worker is required to provide necessary guidance to help the women take informed decisions about her life.

*Outcomes:*

- a) Women's India Trust (WIT) opened doors to women in custody. Women having basic knowledge in tailoring can obtain work on a piece-rate basis.
- b) Vacancies were identified in SHARE for co-ordinating a group of women for undertaking work; and in Vision for Social Arena, Navdurga Vrudhashram, Prerana, and Pratham. Sai Sewa Dham for caretakers.
- c) On obtaining inputs on procedures required for obtaining documents, clients show confidence in pursuing procedures themselves.

*Challenges and lessons learnt:*

- a) Need for caution in planning and identifying agencies for placement and employment was indicated once again: In one agency, there were allegations of sexual misconduct

made against the Director of the agency. This was an agency that did not have a well defined staff structure and was almost solely run by the Director and his family. Another incident indicated tendency of employing agency to use employees for cheap labour. New appointments were not made, rather the existing staff was overburdened with work, making turnover high in that agency.

- b) Lack of documentation: One agency was keen on employing a trainee who had been placed with them. Agency procedures required that employees appointed submit personal documents for issuing them an identity card. Owing to a marital dispute, it was not possible for a trainee to obtain and submit necessary documentation.
- c) As mentioned in the last report, difficulties in other areas of life affect work performance e.g. disturbed family, unstable shelter, relationships with negative or unstable persons translating into behaviour such as beating up children in the institution, and love affair with ex- client.
- d) Expectations sometimes cannot be met: Even if there is a vacancy in a sector the trainee possesses skills for, she may resist the idea due to reasons such as distance from residence, low salary etc. Sometimes, salary according to skills and education level are not on par with expectations of clients.
- e) Trainees lack educational qualifications, work ethics such as management of money, communication skills, report writing, etc, increasing the challenge of finding a job of their interest and meeting demands of the employer.
- f) The profile of the mentor in the placement agency is under review. There was an instance where an intimate relationship developed between a married mentor and the trainee, with the trainee getting emotionally dependent on the mentor. The latter too was involved in the relationship. Being adults, Prayas could not intervene beyond a point, even though it was evident that there was no future in the relationship and there was a chance of the woman having to deal with the situation on her own in future.

## **8.7 Youth Development Centre (YDC) and NGO Placement (Male)**

Around 53 referrals were made to the YDC from the social worker visiting prisons and the observation home for juveniles in conflict with the law. Activities at YDC included exposure visits to NGOs, basic literacy, computer training, awareness sessions, individual and group counseling and information, personality development activities, medical and legal support. Meetings with parents were organized to help the family work together in meeting objectives of reintegration.

24 youth were further enrolled into the NGO Placement Programme. 11 trainees later found employment on their own, while Prayas arranged for employment for 3 persons, in the private sector.

Exposure visits were conducted to Yuva Parivarthan, Way to Life, Lalji Meherotra Vocational Institute, Niramala Niketan College of Social Work, Yusuf Meherally Centre and Don Bosco and Bal Sewa Gram in Lonavala.

NGO Placements were arranged in agencies including Yusuf Meherally Centre, Yuva Parivarthan, Disha, Lalji Meherotra Vocational Institute and Saathi.

### **Bharuch**

## **8.8 Women's Development Center**

*Inputs and activities at WDC:*

- These included training in woolen products, tailoring, cloth bags, embroidery, jardozi, and bandhni.
- Clients were supported with counseling and guidance, family support, legal aid, visits and discussions with family, courts, magistrates and advocates.
- Discussion with Taluka Shikshan Adhikari resulted in purchase of torans by schools of Bharuch Taluka. An order of 70 torans was placed and executed by WDC.

- Educational support was extended to children of women attending rehabilitation activities.
- Literacy and awareness sessions touched on AIDS, legal awareness at Centre for Social Justice, legal awareness training at Taluka Panchayat and NGOs thorough exposure visits.
- Certificate courses: Certificate distribution of trainings organized for Prayas clients was organized at DIC in presence of the Prison Superintendent.
- Referral to outside agencies for training: Clients were referred outside for training in beauty treatment, blouse and dress making, tailoring, special dress making, special blouse making, agarbatti, phenyl making.
- One client was supported to appear for the government entrance exam for the post of Talati.
- Schemes for loans: 5 clients were helped in obtaining loans through Manav Kalyan Yojana. Forms have been submitted for 13 clients for grants, and follow up with DIC continues.
- Employment/small scale business: 3 clients were helped to find a job. 1 client was given an income generation kit to start business.

### **8.9 Work with Male Youth (released from Bharuch Sub-Jail and A Division Police Station)**

Cases were referred by the social worker visiting prison, police station and observation home. The worker was engaged in individual and family counseling, legal aid and guidance, dialogue with employers and facilitating training and education.

**III. Development Objective:** Develop trained human power for rehabilitation services in CJS and for affected populations

**Immediate Objective:** Generate and disseminate knowledge in the field of correctional social work through training & documentation

## **9. Training, Research and Documentation:**

### **9.1 State level seminar for Superintendents of Women's Institution**

Seminar held on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2010 in Pune (SOSVA) on “Women’s Institutions and Social Reintegration” jointly by Prayas and Department of Women and Child Development, GoMah:

Towards highlighting the issue of rehabilitation of women released from custody and institutions, and addressing needs towards reintegration, a research project was initiated. This was followed up with a State level Seminar organized in association with the Dept. of Women and Child Development, GoM. The purpose of the workshop was to explore field experiences and share challenges during reintegration of institutionalised populations, with special reference to women.

Financial support and planning of content of the workshop was jointly done by Prayas and Dept for WCD. Fifteen social workers of Prayas and twenty four representatives from Dept of WCD, including Dy. Commissioner, Probation Officers at Commissionerate, Superintendents from State Homes and Protective Homes across the state attended this workshop. Shri. R.K. Sahay, I.G. Prevention of Atrocities against Women, and Member of the Justice Dharmadhikari Committee for Prevention of Atrocities Against Women gave the valedictory address.

Discussion on intervention strategies were divided into three components:

- Rehabilitation within institution:

*Admission procedures:* Need for ensuring admission to women in need: If not suitable to the profile of the agency, alternative arrangements by the Superintendent should be made *after* admission to ensuring basic shelter.

*Vocational Training:* Suggestions for connections with ITI, MITCON, application of DTPC schemes under the Collector's Office, co-ordination with NGOs and local groups for increasing scope for activity inside institution.

*Employment:* Need for creating employment cards for residents, marketing products prepared within institutions, challenges faced by women in fitting in to existing courses, marketing of products trained to prepare during institutionalization after discharge from institution.

*Health:* Providing health facilities especially for mentally disturbed women, dearth of special facilities for this group and challenges faced by staff in communication, care and addressing their needs, risks faced by other residents in the face of mental and/or emotionally disturbed persons.

- Rehabilitation after released/discharged from the institution:

*Schemes and documents:* Need for issuing letter of introduction to all women being released, for consideration at time of assessing eligibility for schemes, possibility of issuing identity cards.

*Marriage:* Procedures to be followed for arranging marriages, committee for the purpose.

*Follow up:* Support of NGOs, gram panchayat, anganwadi sevika, police patil, schools of social work and law colleges, family counselling centres, timely police escorts for repatriation, need for group homes.

- Institutional management:

Lack of funding for vocational training programmes, medical facilities, need to fill vacant positions, trained personnel for relevant posts, need to increase amount of petty cash, delays in receiving grant amount, need for passing notification of rules for institutions.

Discussions focussed on the following issues:

- What is rehabilitation – views of participants
- What should a rehabilitation programme comprise of?
- Challenges faced by superintendents, probation officers and social workers.
- Decision making in planning programmes and rehabilitating individuals.
- Women's participation in decision making.

Some suggestions from the workshop to be followed up with Justice Dharmadhikari Committee and different stakeholders within the state:

- Co-ordination with Missing Persons Bureau for follow up.
- Creche/other child care facilities for children of mothers in institutions. Alternatively, incentives for women ready to look after children of mothers going outside for training or employment.
- Desk / Nodal officer in DWCD for addressing all issues in regard to women in institutions (schemes, resources for vocational training, repatriation, etc).
- Inter-departmental Committee (IDC) for addressing the needs of women in institutions and their reintegration. The existing IDC for Prisoners could extend area of concern to women in institutions.
- Special training for judiciary and police on application of ITPA.
- Representation of Superintendents in Mahila Sahayya Kakshas.

Following the workshop, the Dy. Commissioner, DWCD, instructed the District Office to process proposals submitted by Prayas under the Ujjwala Scheme. While Prayas continues to face the challenge of 'fitting in' its agenda within the existing schemes, the GoMah decided that on their part they would recommend sanctioning the scheme to Prayas.

## **9.2 Documentation**

- Schemes for women in Maharashtra Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh are in the process of being compiled.
- Exploration of NGOs, mahila mandals, family welfare and counseling centers, women hostels, rotary clubs, community centers in Mumbai that could extend services to Prayas' client group.
- Identified internet sources for obtaining Birth Certificate, Caste Certificate, Tribe Certificate, Domicile Certificate, Driving License, Marriage Certificate, Death Certificate, Pan Card, Ration Card, Passport, Inclusion of name in the Electoral Rolls, With State Employment Exchange, Cause list of Indian Courts, Court Judgments (JUDIS ), Daily Court Orders/Case Status, Acts of Indian Parliament, Speed Post Status
- A profile of women in Govt. Protective Home over the last one year, in terms of age, educational status, state of origin, section (ITPA) applied was conducted with the help of students placed for field work.
- Suggestions in regard to procedure and welfare of women prisoners, women rescued from prostitution, women in institutions and women in distress were submitted to the Justice Dharmadhikari Committee for Prevention of Atrocities against Women. These suggestions were circulated to other members and to be tabled at the next meeting.

## **9.3 Translation of the book Forced Separation**

Children of Imprisoned Mothers has been translated from English to Marathi. Publication of this edition will be pursued during the following period.

## **9.4 Expansion of services**

Expansion of services to women in Ulhasnagar Reception Centre was explored. Prayas' programme was shared with the DPO, Thane. Contacts of volunteers who could conduct adult literacy class were shared with the Superintendent of the Reception Centre.

Student Placement and Orientation: Students of social work continued placement during this period. Orientation and information sessions were provided to help students of (VSNG)

Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Social Work Department, Nirmala Niketan College and Baroda Law College, Tata institute of Social Sciences, K.C. College, Jhunjunwala College, Wilson College Walchand College, Rachana Sansad Academy of Architecture, and International Student Office of TISS.

***Group orientations on Prayas work:***

- A batch of 22 second year students from the Center for Equity of Women, Children and Families, TISS
- A batch of 12 para-professional students from Nirmala Niketan, College of Social Work.
- A batch of 20 second year social work students and 5 faculty from the University of South California.
- A batch of 24 students from Centre for Socio-Legal Studies and Human Rights, School of Social Sciences, TISS

**9.5 Students' orientation and training**

**Mumbai**

- Information to students on rehabilitation related assignment: Under Graduate students who took up an assignment on the rehabilitation of vulnerable groups being processed by the CJS, approached Prayas for information and guidance. Prayas provided inputs to 6 students from Jhunjunwalla College, Wilson College, Walchand College and Rachana Sansad Academy of Architecture, Mumbai.
- Field work placement:
  - 5 Law students from the Baroda School of Legal Studies (Vadodara) – duration 1 month.
  - 2 students pursuing BSW III – duration 1 month.
  - 1 second year student from Center for Media Studies, TISS – duration 1 ½ month.
  - 12 MSW students from Center for Criminology and Justice – duration 2 semesters of the academic year 2010 – 2011.
  - 4 BSW / MSW students from Nirmala Niketan, College of Social Work - duration 2 semesters of the academic year 2010 – 2011.

- As a result of discussions with the Center for Human Ecology, TISS, and an orientation lecture that Prayas was invited for, 3 students opted for field work within a prison setting. These students were oriented and 2 group meetings were held between the students, their supervisor, and Prayas. These students have been pursuing a Masters in Counselling. Counseling students were granted permission for fieldwork for only a month, despite the request for duration of 4 months. Once again there was lack of understanding about the work by higher officers in charge of permissions. As a result, the students had to be diverted from prison to the observation home.
- There was increased sensitization of students from specializations such as women studies and counseling.
- Guest lecturers: Prayas was invited to share field experiences within class room settings on the following topics:
  - Counselling within the Criminal Justice System – first year students of Center for Human Ecology, TISS.
  - Social Work Methods in Criminal Justice – second year students of Center for Criminology and Justice, TISS.
  - Women in custody - first year students of Center for Women Studies, TISS.

This year, the following guidelines were arrived at for student placements:

- A letter from the college on the letter head was compulsory.
- The letters needed to specify nature of placement desired, to assess if this could be matched with exposure that could be offered by Prayas.
- Periodic joint meetings between supervisors (from Prayas or the college), field contact persons, and the student were necessary.
- Students were required to maintain punctuality.
- Colleges would be requested to bear travel expenses of the students for field visits. Where colleges were not able to do so and students were required to travel intensively for field work, Prayas would bear some expenses.
- In the initial phases, students would be accompanied by staff and follow their instructions. Their major role would be that of observation.
- Field related information should be shared with the contact person.

- Fortnightly planning would be done with the field contact.
- Leave from field work should be intimated to the field contact, preferable in advance.
- Regular report writing was necessary.
- For any problem encountered in the field, the field worker should be contacted immediately.

## **Bharuch**

Placement of students from the Social Work Department of Veer Narmad South Gujarat University were planned and undertaken in police station, WDC and work with juveniles in conflict with the law. One student was supported for her dissertation.

### **Analysis of field experiences**

- Review of NGO Placement Programme – success cases, problem cases and emergency cases.
- Analysis of agencies working inside the custody, outside the custody and ngos in which clients are placed.
- Placement programme inside and out of custody: Aspects are in the process of being studied: Rehabilitation and family, art and culture, citizenship, social awareness (social work), schemes and documentation for citizenship rights.

## **9.6 Inclusion of institutionalized populations in existing schemes**

An in-house exercise was conducted wherein attempts were made to identify similar groups with whom institutionalized populations could be included. Discussions with resource persons in the field resulted in a decision to pursue this exercise at two levels:

- Cases by case level wherein the social worker would try to include the client group of Prayas within these categories for obtaining a ration card – a prerequisite for government schemes.
- A national level study to ascertain the number of institutionalized persons in the country, in order to advocate the need for special schemes or inclusion of these groups in existing

categories. In the coming period, a proposal would be drafted and infrastructure required to pursue this exercise to be put into place.

These exercises will be pursued in the coming period.

- Discussion on the needs of institutionalize women with Apnalaya resulted in their decision to advocate the need to include a category of these populations in the draft Right to Food Act.
- Study of welfare schemes for women, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh:

Towards an exercise to understand common and unique issues in regard to institutionalized populations in different states of the country, a visit to AP was made by a team. Some special provisions/activities identified:

- A relief fund of Rs. 10,000 for women rescued from prostitution
- Attempts to claim grant of Rs. 1 lakh for victims of trafficking, under the grant for rape victims.
- Mahila pranganams for adolescent drop outs
- Role of anganwadi workers in identifying cases of women in distress and school drop outs
- Co-ordination between anganwadi workers, CDPOs and Voluntary organizations in extending services
- Special schemes for promoting and protective girl children

**IV. Development Objective:** Production Unit: Facilitate self dependence within Prayas

**Immediate Objective:** Increase production capacity and explore marketing avenues

### **10. Prayas Production Unit**

Sale of products at the Income Generation Centre of Prayas amounted to Rs. 834130.00. This year, another karigar was employed so as to meet the demands for orders, and increase income for programme expenses.

#### *Challenges:*

- a. Lack of manpower to arrive at optimum potential of production: To meet this challenge, another 2 karigars need to be appointed. Training to women's groups and other NGOs are also being explored, to outsource work on a piece rate basis.
- b. The unit premises need urgent repair and renovation.
- c. Outlets for sale and display of products need to be identified.

**V. Development Objective:** Strengthen the professional approach in social work intervention in Criminal Justice System

**Immediate Objective:**

1. Developing a forum of NGOs and to discuss on key issues related to policy within the CJS.
2. Encourage and facilitate new social work initiatives in CJS
3. Strengthening and capacity building of the existing initiatives in CJS.
4. Training and developing of new specialized workers in the field of CJS to encourage them to take up the challenges in the field and to create a fraternity of social work initiatives in the field of CJS.
5. Coordinating and developing a database of various initiatives in CJS.

**11. Prayas Mentoring Project**

**11.1 Fellowship Program**

The following activities were undertaken as part of the Fellowship program of the Mentoring Unit:

The Mentoring Unit has laid down the following criteria for sanction of Fellowships:

Criteria for Fellowship:

*Basic qualification*

- Basic education of 12<sup>th</sup> Std passed.
- Minimum one year experience in the field.
- Age limit upto 35 years and more in exceptional cases.
- Personality – flexible in adjusting to new circumstances, travel, open to learning.

*Procedure for sanctioning of Fellowship*

- Submission of application and proposal for the Fellowship along with two recommendation letters by end of December.

- Selection process would take two months and by March the Fellowships would be finalized.
- Presentation by the applicant before a panel of experts, Prayas staff and Mentoring Unit staff about the proposal submitted for the Fellowship.
- Personal interview of the applicant.
- If required, personal visit to the applicant's district to gain more information about the work done, or being undertaken by the applicant.
- Final decision of sanctioning the Fellowships will be on the basis of the expert panel's views, personal interview and field visit.
- The Fellowship would be issued for a period of one year
- The amount of Fellowship would depend on the qualifications of the applicant, work experience, area of work selected.

#### *Procedure after selection for Fellowship*

- After selection of the applicant, there will be a 3 months induction period within or outside Prayas to help the Fellow gain more knowledge about the field and related issue he is interested in taking up in the future.
- There will be presentation by the Fellows every 3 months about the work undertaken by them, difficulties faced by them, etc
- Besides the presentations, monthly reports would be submitted by the Fellows to assist in gaining a better understanding about the development of their work.
- Each Fellow will be assigned a Mentor to assist him/her in developing the cause taken up by him. The other Mentors would also be available if needed.
- There will be regular visits by the Mentors to review the work being undertaken by the Fellow.
- There will be a review at the end of one year about the work undertaken by the Fellow on the basis of a report submitted by the Fellow and his oral presentation of the work done during the one year.

#### *Sanction of new Fellowships*

In the month of June'10, Prayas had called a meeting to look into the new proposals for sanction of Fellowships in the coming year. We had received 8 proposals – 3 [From Yavatmal, Satara, Aurangabad] for work in prison, 2 [Pune, Amravati] for work with

juveniles in conflict with the law, 1 [Panvel] for work with women rescued from prostitution, 1 [Satara] for rehabilitation of beggars released from the Beggars' Home and 1 [Ulhasnagar] for aftercare work with children discharged from institutions.

After the presentations by the applicants, it was decided that the proposal for initiating aftercare work with children discharged from institutions could be given a Fellowship for a period of one year. But after a month, the applicant informed that he would not be able to work in the field but would appoint a worker. He was requested to refer the person to Prayas to assess whether he was competent and motivated to work in the field. But he was unable to do so and thus the Fellowship could not be issued to him. Besides this, visits were made to Satara to find out how the Satara applicant could initiate work in the Beggars' Home there. The other proposals were rejected as they could not fulfill the criteria.

In continuation to the work of sanctioning of new Fellowships, Prayas staff visited Satara in the last week of June'10 and visited the Beggars' Home. The Superintendent of the Beggars' Home expressed keen interest in extending all support and assistance to an NGO willing to initiate some work in the Beggars' Home. But since the applicant had no professional knowledge and/or experience of the field, it was decided that he could be placed for a period of 6 months with Koshish – a field action project of TISS working in the Beggars' Home Mumbai.

Later, the Pune applicant who could not be present for the first meeting due to ill-health was given an opportunity to make her presentation in the last week of June'10. After her presentation, it was decided to visit Pune and assess the work initiated by her with juveniles in conflict with law (JCLs) in the past six months. In the month of August'10, a visit was made to Pune to visit the Jawaharlal Nehru Industrial School, Yerwada where the applicant has gained permission to work and take up cases of JCL from there. Her work seemed quite good, but she too informed the Prayas that due to other commitments, she would not continue in the field. She proposed to further the work by appointing a part-time social worker who is completing his MSW. Thus, a Fellowship to this applicant could not be granted under the circumstances.

The next meeting to scrutinize new proposals was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February'11. The Unit had received 4 new proposals for Fellowships from individuals and NGOs wanting to work in

the area of juveniles in conflict with the law (Pune), children of women in prostitution (Beed), rehabilitation of women in prostitution (Solapur) and rehabilitation of released prisoners (Aurangabad).

Out of the 4 applicants, only 3 (Pune, Beed, Aurangabad) were present and after oral presentations by the applicants and personal interview with them, it was decided that the individual wanting to work with prisoners in the Aurangabad Central Prison could be given the Fellowship, as he had already initiated work through activating the library facilities in the prison.

#### *Supervision & evaluation of Fellows*

There has been regular contact between the 5 Fellows and their mentors with regard to the progress of their work in the field.

#### **Nagarcoil, Tamil Nadu Fellow**

This Fellow informed Prayas that since he wished to pursue further studies in M.Phil, he would not be able to continue the work and thus a decision was taken to terminate his Fellowship from the month of April'10. He was informed to submit a detailed report of the work done in the field by him. Prayas was informed by the Fellow that the work initiated by him would be further continued by the other trustees of his organization on a voluntary basis.

#### **Solapur Fellow**

In the month of May'10, a visit was made to Solapur to evaluate the work of the Fellow based there working with Juveniles in Conflict with the Law (JCLs). Despite being refused permission from the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) to take up cases of JCLs, the Fellow did not deter and approached the Police Commissioner for permission to be based in a police station and handle cases of JCLs, who readily granted the permission and work was initiated in one of the police stations. Thus, she was able to acquire cases of JCLs from the police station records and handle them. Besides this, she would also be present for the JJB sittings and meet the juveniles and their families coming there and take up the cases. Or she

would approach the lawyers and get some cases from them also. Thus, she has been able to develop good relations with the lawyers, Observation Home staff and secure cases. Appropriate and good services are being provided to the cases taken up by her. Besides this, she is also planning to initiate work in the community from the objective of prevention of crime.

In the month of August'10, the Unit team visited Solapur to initiate a discussion with the District Women & Child Development Officer to request support and cooperation for the Fellow and her organization Sudisha in taking up cases of juveniles in conflict with law. A letter was submitted to the District Women & Child Development Officer to either refer cases given under the supervision of his Probation Officers by the JJB where the Fellow and her organization could assist in the rehabilitation process. The officer accompanied Prayas to the JJB where a detailed discussion was held about the collaboration, but the Chairperson wanted a report of the work done to decide whether Sudisha could be recognized as a fit institution under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2000. Despite a report submitted after a period of 10 days, the response to the same from the JJB is still awaited.

### **Chandrapur Fellow**

In May'10, the Fellow had organized a meeting with the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) representatives of the various industries based in Chandrapur. With the help of Prayas, she was able to conduct this meeting in collaboration with the Ballarpur Industries Ltd (BILT).

*The objective of this meeting was:*

- To create an awareness before the CSR representatives about the concept of social work in the criminal justice system
- To motivate the corporate sector to extend their present services for the persons affected by the criminal justice system.

Thus, invitations were sent to 30 industries but only five CSR representatives and the field staff of BILT attended the meeting. After a presentation of Prayas and social work

intervention in the CJS, the Fellow presented the work done by her organization, Yukti with the cases taken up from the district prison of Chandrapur. This was followed by an active discussion where this new concept was very much appreciated by the representatives. The participants also put forth their shortcomings with regard to the ultimate decisions lying with the higher-ups. Another issue put forth by them was the area of jurisdiction of each industry is decided and they cater to only that population coming within that jurisdiction. So in this regard, they expressed a willingness to extend the available services of their respective industries to the clients of Yukti if they happen to reside or hail from their industry's area. BILT and another industry assured such assistance to Yukti's clients.

### **Amravati Fellow**

Fellowship in Amravati was granted to explore the needs of the people who are the survivor victims in the homicide cases. The Fellow has done good work in this newly identified area; the first year was devoted to the exploration and collection of data. The Fellow approached the Superintendent of the Police (S.P.) and explained to him about the need for the work and for data collection. Thus, the permission to visit the various police stations was granted by the S.P. The cases acquired from the police records were mainly from the rural areas of the district and it was very difficult to reach out to them in the initial phases. After data collection, it was realized that the needs of the people and the locations were very scattered. So it was decided to focus on the data available in and around the city limits of the Amravati district, with the view to put in concentrated efforts so as to come up with a model project on the related issue.

*The objectives of the research study were:*

- To study and identify the needs of the survivors in the cases of homicide matters.
- To come up with the model program to tackle their needs in time to minimize their exploitation and victimisation.
- To advocate this issue at policy level to develop a scheme for the welfare and development of the survivors.

Based on the research data available, the social worker started providing services according to the individual needs of the victims. For the purpose of service delivery, the victims were categorized as follows:

- Aged and dependent parents
- School-going children
- Physically and psychologically ill patients

The services provided are medical aid and sponsoring educational expenses. Besides this, the social worker is trying to connect some of the victims with the available government schemes. 38 cases were identified for counseling, 34 cases taken up for vocational and educational sponsorship, 4 cases for legal aid, 3 cases for follow-up with regard to schemes for livelihood options and 9 cases for medical and emergency assistance. One child who was provided support by the Fellow completed his education up to SSC and is now pursuing further education at ITI. Presently, the social worker is working on the module program to tackle the needs of this group.

### **Bharuch Fellow**

The Unit social worker based in Bharuch also has the responsibility of mentoring the Fellow in Bharuch district through guiding and assisting him in his work with the families of imprisoned cases. The Fellow had been informed to be in close contact with his mentor at least once in a week with regard to discussion of cases, planning out strategies of helping the families, maintaining of documents, etc.

In the month of March & April'10, all the Fellows were given a feedback about the progress of their work and informed to make respective improvements in their work for future renewal of their Fellowships for the coming year. Likewise, the Chandrapur and Amravati Fellows whose Fellowships had terminated in the month of March'10 were given a three-month extension with suggestions for necessary improvement in their work.

In the last week of June'10, Prayas did an evaluation meeting of all the Fellows to decide the further extension of their Fellowships for another year. The Fellows were given

feedback based on their work. It was decided that the Fellowships of the Chandrapur & Amravati Fellows could be extended for a period of 9 months (upto March'11) and the Solapur Fellow's Fellowship for a period of one year (upto July'11). Since there appeared to be some gap in the work and motivational level of the Bharuch Fellow, it was decided to give him an extension of 3 months and later issue him a Fellowship for a period of one year.

On October 2010, the next quarterly presentations of the Fellows were held. In the same meeting, based on the observations and analysis of the Mentor of the Bharuch Fellow, it was decided to discontinue his Fellowship as there was no improvement in his work in the 3 months extension period assigned to him.

### **NGO Forum Meeting**

In 2009-10, an NGO Forum meeting was organized on 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2010 after a gap of nearly 11 months. The reasons for this long gap were the lack of response from member organisations. Ms. Jahnvi Andharia, Sr. Programme Officer, SDTT, who was invited to attend this meeting, informed about the activities of the Trust and the recent initiative of publishing a case study of the work done in the field of criminal justice with the help of the NGO partners. The objective behind this is to reach out to more people and to motivate other donors to fund such projects.

The newsletter of the NGO Forum was inaugurated by Ms. Andharia in the presence of Ms. Ruchi Sinha, Chairperson, Centre for Criminology & Justice, Tata Institute of Social Sciences. A copy of the newsletter was distributed to all present. Later, the representatives of the Forum members from VARHAD, Sahyog Trust, HRLN, Yuva Sevabhavi Sanstha, Sudisha, Yukti, Disha, Sahara Trust, Sudhar, Sahara Aids Control Society, Prayas presented in brief the work being done by their organizations. Post lunch, there was a discussion with regard to the future plans of the NGO Forum. Most of the NGOs expressed a need for such a Forum. It was strongly recommended the the Forum activities should be a shared responsibility between all member organisations.

### **Developing contact with colleges of Social Work**

Keeping in view the proposals received for Fellowships, the dearth of professional social workers in the field of criminal justice and to initiate more partners in the field of criminal justice, the Mentoring Unit decided to approach colleges of social work to motivate them to initiate student fieldwork placement in the various settings of the criminal justice system. Later, in the process if the college is interested in starting a field action project in the same area, then Prayas could issue Fellowship to support the project.

In April'10, Prayas approached the College of Social Work in Chandrapur and made a presentation before the students and faculty. The Principal of the college assured placement of 2 students in Yukti – the organization of our Fellow who is working in the prison of Chandrapur.

The Unit team approached the College of Social Work in Satara in the month of June'10 . Mr. Bhaiyya Mane, the in-charge showed keen interest in initiating student fieldwork in Satara prison and further developing a field action project. Mr Mane promised to contact Prayas after new admissions were completed and before fieldwork begins for a presentation of Prayas work before their students and faculty.

Matru Sewa Sangh of Nagpur was approached with the objective of collaborating in organizing a symposium on 'Social Work Intervention in the Criminal Justice System' for all colleges of social work coming under the Nagpur University. Dr. John Menachery, the Director readily agreed and it was decided to organize a 2 day symposium on the 6<sup>th</sup> (for their students) & 7<sup>th</sup> (for the representatives of the colleges) September'10. Matru Sewa Sangh has a field action project working on the issue of juveniles in conflict with the law.

In the month of August, Prayas visited the Karve Institute of Social Work and Bharti Vidyapeeth in Pune with the same objective. Here too, Prayas received a very positive response and both the colleges expressed assurance of initially discussing with their respective faculty, and then have a presentation before their students before initiating student fieldwork placements in the criminal justice system. This was followed by a meeting arranged with the faculty of Karve Institute of Social Work on 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2010 where they put forth before the Prayas staff the problems faced by them during the placement of students in the prison, in Observation Home, Home for JCL, etc. and also their inhibitions about venturing into the area again through fieldwork placement.

Finally, due to the assurance of the Prayas staff with regard to providing guidance and support in the effort, a faculty was designated to coordinate with Prayas. Finally, on 5<sup>th</sup> February'11, half day's time was assigned to the Mentoring Unit staff to make their presentations before the MSW students to motivate them to opt for fieldwork placements in the criminal justice system. A few students did come ahead with an interest to opt for the same after the presentations.

In August'10, Prayas also approached the College of Social Work in Amravati who immediately planned out a one day workshop for a presentation before their students on 5<sup>th</sup> September'10.

In the same month, Prayas was approached by the School of Rural Development, TISS, Tuljapur for assistance and guidance with regard to initiating student fieldwork in the prison. So Prayas staff based in Solapur visited the Rural Campus of Tuljapur and assisted in the drafting of letters for permission to place students in the prison and police station settings. The response to these letters is awaited.

The Unit worker based in Bharuch had developed contact with the Swami Vivekanand Post Graduate Academy - P.G. Center of Social Work, Bhavnagar through fieldwork placement of their students. In the month of October'10, the Unit workers visited Bhavnagar to plan out a symposium to be organized in collaboration with the college in the month of December'10. Simultaneously, in Maharashtra, a similar symposium was being planned out in collaboration with the Department of Adult, Continuing Education & Extension, University of Pune.

### **Workshop / Symposiums organized**

#### ***With colleges of social work***

On 5<sup>th</sup> September'10, a presentation of initiating work in the various settings of the criminal justice system was done before the MSW I & II year students of the Amravati College of Social Work with the objective to encourage the college to initiate fieldwork placement in

any of the settings of the criminal justice system and also to motivate the students to opt for the fieldwork placement.

On 6<sup>th</sup> September'10, a similar presentation was made before the MSW – I & II year students of Matru Seva Sangh, Nagpur. On 7<sup>th</sup> September'10, a symposium on “Social Work Intervention in the Criminal Justice System: Role of Departments/Colleges of Social Work” was organized in collaboration with Matru Seva Sangh, Nagpur. The participants of the workshop were faculty from the MSW colleges coming under the jurisdiction of Nagpur University. The objectives of the symposium were as follows:

1. To create awareness about issues of the criminal justice system and need for social work intervention in the various settings of the criminal justice system.
2. To initiate a dialogue with the colleges of social work in regard to fieldwork placement of students in the various settings of the criminal justice system.
3. Through gradual development in the fieldwork placement programme, motivate the colleges of social work in initiating field action projects in the criminal justice system.

The presentations with regard to initiating work in the settings of prison, police station, aftercare work with released prisoners, children of prisoners, juveniles in conflict with law, women rescued from prostitution were done by the social workers of Prayas through presentations. Representatives from about 10 colleges attended the symposium out of which a few showed interest in initiating fieldwork placement but the final decision lay with the higher authorities of their respective colleges. A need to follow-up with these colleges was realized which would be done in the near future.

Following this, on 9<sup>th</sup> September'10, a similar Workshop was conducted in Yavatmal in collaboration with Mahatma Phule University where the participants were representatives of Colleges of social work and MSW students. It was observed that the colleges were keen on initiating field action projects due to the Fellowship being offered by Prayas, but did not show much interest in initiating fieldwork placement of students in the criminal justice system.

A BSW college lecturer and principal were very impressed by the work of Prayas and insisted on a presentation before their students who could not be present for this Workshop.

Thus, a 2 day workshop was conducted with the BSW students of Savitribai College of Social Work on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2010. A few students after the presentations of work in each setting expressed their interest in opting for fieldwork placement in the settings of the criminal justice system. On discussing the same with the Principal of the college, it was informed that since they are BSW students, instructions from the University state that they should not be placed in very difficult settings for fieldwork.

On 5<sup>th</sup> December'10, a symposium was organized in collaboration with the Swami Vivekanand Post Graduate Academy- P.G. Center of Social Work, Bhavnagar. The participants were faculty from the MSW colleges coming under the jurisdiction of Bhavnagar University. A total of colleges participated in the symposium and a few expressed the need to start similar ventures through their colleges. On the following day, i.e. 6<sup>th</sup> December'10, a presentation of work in the various settings of the criminal justice system was done before the MSW students of the college. The college as well as a few students is interested in fieldwork placement in the prison setting. The Superintendent of the Bhavnagar Central Prison was invited as a Chief Guest for the symposium. Thus, relations with the prison department have also been developing paving the path for further fieldwork placement of students by acquiring the D.I.G.(Prisons)' permission.

On 7<sup>th</sup> February'11, a similar symposium was organized in collaboration with Department of Adult, Continuing Education & Extension, University of Pune, where the MSW colleges under the University of Pune, a few NGO representatives, government institutions personnel, Probation Officers, MSW students participated. There was active participation of all the participants in the discussions following the presentations of work with the different groups and in the different settings of the criminal justice system. In this symposium, the need for NGO intervention with regard to juveniles in conflict with law (JCL) was expressed by the government institution personnel and Probation Officers. NGOs working in the same area also felt the need for a Forum to come together and tackle issues and problems related to the handling of the JCL cases. *Prayas* assured the group support in this regard.

### ***Regional level Workshop***

Prayas organised a two-day Workshop on 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> January'11 in collaboration with the Academy of Prisons and Correctional Administration (APCA), Vellore for NGOs working in prisons and prison officers from the Southern states i.e. Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, A.P. and Kerala.

The objectives of the proposed Workshop were:

- 1) Initiating a dialogue with the various NGOs already working in prisons about their work and experiences.
- 2) Initiating the process towards the formation of an NGO Forum at the regional level of interested NGOs working in prisons.
- 3) Creating a platform for sharing of the various strategies of work and rehabilitative initiatives adopted by the NGOs while working with prisoners.
- 4) Initiating a dialogue with prison personnel to identify areas of collaboration towards protection of legal rights and rehabilitation of prisoners.

The participants for the Workshop were the social workers / representatives of NGOs identified by Prayas, as well as those recommended by the Heads of prison departments from the four southern States or by APCA, Vellore. Prison officers of the rank of D.I.G., Superintendent and Dy. Superintendent were deputed for this Workshop whereby the discussions yielded fruitful results.

The resource persons for the Workshop were retired prison officers, prison officers presently in service, NGO representatives, academicians, and Prayas staff members. There were representatives from 18 NGOs and about 40 prison officials ranging from level of D.I.G.(Prisons) to Jailor. There was active participation by both the NGOs and prison officials during the discussions after the presentations of the resource persons.

***The recommendations put forth during the Workshop:***

- There should be a dedicated staff from the prison department as a Nodal Officer in every prison to coordinate the work of the NGOs. This staff should be preferably from the social work background.
- There should be a Law Officer in every prison to coordinate legal aid for under trial and convict prisoners in collaboration with the District Legal Aid Services Authority and the NGOs.
- An NGO Coordination Committee should be appointed in each prison chaired by the Superintendent of the prison. There can be quarterly meetings of this Committee where the presentation of work of each NGO could be done thereby avoiding duplication of services. There could be referral of cases and the problems faced by the NGOs and the prison staff could also be resolved.
- There is a need for a State level NGO Forum for sharing of knowledge, information and resources by the various NGOs working in the prisons. This Forum can conduct six monthly meetings with the D.G. (Prisons).
- A list of the NGOs – name, address and telephone numbers should be displayed outside each prison for the information and assistance of the relatives of the under trial and convict prisoners.
- There is a need for a policy for involving NGOs in prison/correctional services. A list of selected NGOs with expertise could be prepared and each NGO could work in specified areas of work to avoid duplication of services for prison inmates. An MoU could be signed between the NGO and the prison department. The NGO should submit annual reports to the prison department of the work undertaken by them. Space could be provided to the NGOs within the prison premises with some basic infrastructural support and specific timings could be fixed for each NGO. The Nodal Officer for the prison should coordinate the work of the NGOs. APCA and TISS could work towards developing such a policy and put it up before the state governments.
- The various areas of work in which NGOs could venture into in the prisons are: legal aid & guidance for UT and convict prisoners, services for children of prisoners (including setting up of a Creche/balwadi outside the prison walls but within the prison premises), starting de-addiction facilities for prison inmates, provision of library and educational facilities, arranging vocational training and recreation facilities for prisoners, assisting the prison officials and the inmates towards release on parole and

furlough, payment of fine or cash bail (in cases referred by the prison officials) and providing aftercare services (such as shelter, vocational training, job placement, family counseling, medical aid, legal aid and liaison with the police).

- Once a year, the prison department should organize sharing sessions on experiences of prison staff of all levels.
- Once a year, State & Regional level workshops could be conducted with regard to the NGO-Prison collaboration.
- Pre-release preparation of the prison inmates by the prison staff with the help of NGOs could be conducted based on the classification of the prisoners.
- During recruitment of prison staff for the post of Dy. Superintendents and Dy. Jailors, preference should be given to candidates with a social work, sociology, psychology and law background.
- There should be a system to register eligible convict prisoners with the Employment Exchange so as to help in their rehabilitation process.
- There should also be census registration of the prison population.
- There is a need for Grant-in-Aid scheme for both released prisoners as well as for NGOs working in prisons towards the rehabilitation of the prisoners.
- The Modular Employability Scheme (MES) of the Ministry of Labour & Employment could be implemented in the prisons. NGOs could become VTPs (Vocational Training Providers). A White Paper on the procedure to become a VTP through Regional Director of Apprenticeship Training can be prepared with the National Academy of Construction, Hyderabad.
- An Inter-Departmental Committee on prisoners should be set up at the State and district levels in each state to improve coordination between the various departments like police, prisons, judiciary, women and child development, health, education, etc. along with NGOs working in prisons.
- There is a need to reactivate the Discharged Prisoners Aid Societies in Tamil Nadu and some other States, with infusion of young and dedicated members and professional working in the field of corrections and rehabilitation.
- There is an urgent need to fill up the vacant educational and correctional posts in the prisons – welfare officers, teachers, vocational training instructors, law officers, Probation Officers.
- Training of prisoners should be done so that they could become trainers for educational, vocational and library activities.

- For effective implementation of the Probation of Offenders Act, 1958, NGOs working in the prisons could play an important role with regard to identifying cases eligible for probation and bringing it to the notice of the judiciary, filing Social Inquiry Reports, supervision of cases and providing rehabilitation services to probationers.
- There could be an annual publication of best practices of both prison officers as well as NGOs by APCA.

Report writing of the Workshop is in process and will be completed within another 2 months time. There is a need to follow-up on the issues raised during the Workshop and the recommendations put forth.

### **Other Activities**

In the first week of April'10, Mentoring Unit staff attended a workshop on prison reforms in Delhi conducted by Human Rights Law Network. She along with other two social workers from Prayas was able to raise issues related to changes with regard to prison conditions, children of prisoners, coordination between the various government departments and the prison department, role of NGOs in the field of criminal justice and put forth suggestions based on our 20 years of experience in the field.

Work was in process with regard to the preparation of notes on work in the prison, police station setting, with children of prisoners, etc. Finally, in January'11, two notes in English on 'Work in the Prison Setting' and 'Work with Children of Prisoners' were ready. They were taken out in booklet form with annexures of the translated G.R.s, circulars, letters, etc. related to the issue. These booklets were distributed as reference material during the workshop organized at Vellore. The same notes will be translated into Marathi for distribution in the State attached with the necessary annexures.

## **Bharuch Unit Work**

### ***Training & up gradation of Bharuch Unit staff***

Support to the Bharuch Unit staff is being extended by maintaining coordination with the social workers in their day-to-day activities. Time-to-time ongoing discussions are held with the Unit workers about the cases being handled, issues arising in the field or within the group and assisting them in dealing with the same, helping the workers maintain documents and in preparing reports. Besides this, meetings or discussions are held with the system officials along with the Unit members. Support was extended to one of the workers in the form of guidance and motivation to initiate work with juveniles in conflict with law in the rural areas of the district.

### ***Follow-up was maintained and support extended to the Unit members for sustaining new initiatives in the field which is developed during the year:***

- Legal awareness training for Aanganwadi workers :
- Police station worker organizes training for system officials every year. While working at police station and in the prison, we have observed that many of our women clients hailing from rural areas get involved in criminal cases because of lack of legal awareness and lack of awareness about the support systems or resources in times of crisis. It was not possible to reach out to women in all the villages. So Prayas considered various options to reach out to the rural women by approaching Sakhi Mandals and contacting Aanganwadi workers. Aanganwadi workers visit villages every day and they are the ones with whom women are in direct contact because of their children. Thus, it was decided to hold legal awareness training for them

During the training, basic issues were discussed such what are the symptoms of domestic violence, whom to approach for support, role of District Legal Aid Board and the various options/ resources available for women. The training was organized for two days at Bharuch Taluka Panchayat office for Aanganwadi workers of Bharuch Taluka. During the discussions itself, many workers came up with many problems which they had observed during their work.

### ***Work with Juveniles in Conflict with Law:***

Work with Juveniles in conflict with law is taking shape. We have made many visits to juveniles released on bail, especially in rural areas. We have observed many issues concerning this.

1. Most children and family are not aware of the legal status of their cases.
2. There are not many options available for their rehabilitation in rural areas because of the distance, and lack of education. Most children are either illiterate or have studied upto Class VIII<sup>th</sup>.
3. Police are unnecessary further criminalizing their cases, for e.g. in cases of quarreling (assault), sections of rioting are used.
4. Maintaining a follow-up with the cases is proving difficult due to the long distances.
5. Many children already go for labour work (majoori), which they do not want to leave for undergoing any other training.
6. General ignorance is prevalent amongst family members also. It is also very difficult to contact them as they go away for 'majoori' quite early in the day.

As of now, Prayas has been able to gain a general understanding of the problems, and will maintain the follow-up of the cases taken up. Prayas has also met the District Judge, and Chairperson, Juvenile Justice Board to discuss these issues. Areas of concern in these cases are the lack of rehabilitation options, and ignorance on the part of the family members and the juvenile. The police is unaware of the Juvenile justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2000, therefore there is no question of them being sensitive to the juveniles. Use of third degree methods at police station even in cases of juveniles is common.

### ***Developing partners in the field of criminal justice system***

With the objective of developing more partners in the social work field of the criminal justice system, the Mentoring Unit has been issuing Fellowships to interested individuals and organizations for initiating efforts in the CJS in their respective district or State. In this regard, we have also been approaching schools of social work to initiate fieldwork in the criminal justice system by placement of students and later gradually start a field action project in the same setting.

Thus, in Bharuch, the social worker had approached the Veer Narmad University of Surat and made a presentation of Prayas work before their students and faculty. From this college, 6 students have been placed for fieldwork in Prayas out of which 2 students have been placed in the police station setting, two of them in the Women's Development Centre and two have been assigned to handle cases of Juveniles in conflict with the Law who have been released on bail. The college was also assisted in gaining permission for placement of students in the police station.

The students Of Veer Narmad University, Surat who are placed at Prayas for fieldwork placement are involved with the work of Juveniles in Conflict with law. As this is a new issue for them, discussions are being held with their field work Supervisor for fieldwork placement of students in Surat on this issue. .

Our observations while handling cases of juveniles in conflict with law have revealed that the juveniles are coming in conflict with law because of their ignorance. Getting oneself involved in the neighborhood disputes leads to them being produced before the Juvenile Justice Board, getting involved in physical conflicts with other groups in school and in the neighborhood, also leads to police cases being registered against them which means getting involved with CJS

Thus, to work on this issue at the prevention level, the students have been encouraged to conduct awareness programmes in schools to discuss these issues.

Besides this, the Saraswati College of Social Work, South Gujarat University, Vallabh Vidyanagar College of Social Work and Swami Vivekananda Post-Graduate Academy, P.G. Centre of Social Work, Bhavnagar have also been approached for fieldwork placement of students in any of the settings of the criminal justice system. A follow-up is being maintained by the social worker with these colleges and their response is awaited.

The worker is following up with Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad, Rajpipla, for initiation of work in Rajpipla Sub-jail. Swami Vivekananda Post Graduate Academy, P.G. Centre of Social Work, Bhavnagar was approached with the objective to organize a symposium for faculty members of colleges of social work affiliated to Bhavnagar University. Thus, the

symposium was organized on 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 where 10 colleges of social work were present.

Besides this, a meeting was organized for NGOs interested in initiating work in the criminal justice system in the district of Chota Udaipur and Narmada. Issues on how to initiate the work and how to sustain it in future were discussed. They also expressed a need for indepth training in this regard. Another meeting of 25 organizations working in the city of Bharuch was organized with the objective of discussing how work in the prisons could be supported and how follow-up with released undertrial prisoners could be maintained.

As part of the mentoring work to contact Colleges of Social Work, law colleges are also being contacted. As part of their curriculum law college students also are supposed to be doing field based work with regard to legal aid. A discussion was held with the Director of Nirma Law University regarding this and it was realized that the law students can be placed at the police station also. Law students have always been placed in prisons, at Legal Aid Clinics or sent for awareness camps in rural areas, but working at police station could be new initiative for them. Thus, a presentation on the work at the police station was planned with L.L.B. 3<sup>rd</sup> year students.

### ***Meetings with various system personnel***

Discussions were held with the District Superintendent of Police with regard to the training of Bharuch police personnel. Co-ordination with the District Education Officer is being maintained for initiation of the literacy programme in the prison. Discussions are being held with the District Judge on the issues of the Juvenile Justice Board in Bharuch district. Efforts are being put in to coordinate with the Taluka Panchayat, Community Development Program Officer of the Integrated Child Development Scheme, for organizing legal training for the Anganwadi workers who in turn could reach out to rural women in crisis and prevent them from further criminalization.

Prayas had motivated the law college of Bharuch in acquiring permission to place LLB students for fieldwork in the prison to write out applications for the prisoners. Despite permission being granted by the Inspector General (Prisons), due to the wrong

interpretation of the permission letter by the Jail Superintendent, Prayas is helping the college in following up the matter with the I.G. (Prisons)