

# Final Report: Project 1042

## Sexual and Reproductive Health Education

Based in the Madurai District of Tamil Nadu in Southern India, this project implemented by the PACHE Trust (People's Association for Community Health Education) empowered adolescent girls and young women through sexual and reproductive health and rights education. This is PACHE Trust's eighth ACWW funded project as a long-time member. Established in 1987, the key mission of PACHE Trust is to inspire and mobilise the poorest groups in society towards their own emancipation and empowerment. PACHE Trust's work prioritises children, women and the environment and focuses on education, health, and HIV/AIDS awareness.

This project aimed to provide education and help empower women and girls at risk of sexual abuse, violence, and exploitation. Through education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, PACHE Trust aimed to provide the project participants with the tools they need to empower themselves.

Following on from a successful first stage of project implementation, PACHE Trust were able to complete project activities according to plan in the second stage. PACHE Trust facilitated numerous education sessions;

- 75 PACHE Trust staff members and volunteers participated in an orientation to generate awareness and knowledge of the impact of sexual and reproductive health on all other health indicators.
- 95 young women and adolescent girls attended education sessions based around puberty, menstruation, reproductive health and safer sex. These sessions also covered sexual abuse and exploitation and access to health care services.

- Engaging men in the conversation around gender equality is vital in order to reduce sexual violence and exploitation and to promote more equal partnerships between men and women. In light of this, PACHE Trust facilitated sessions with 118 young men focused on reproductive and sexual health and rights and interpersonal relationship skills such as communication, decision making and equal partnership.
- Training sessions were held for 68 young women and adolescent girls as an opportunity to develop communication skills, assertiveness and exercising their rights around family and marital matters. This activity was aimed at challenging the traditional male dominant role within family and relationships, to encourage women to stake a claim in the decision making processes that involve them.
- An extensive education session was facilitated on the topic of sexual exploitation, abuse and consent with over 90 women and young girls in attendance. This session was particularly thorough in order to give the participants a clear and full understanding of consent and abusive behaviours. As a result of this session, Women's Health Groups were formed to allow for peer support.

As a result of this project, PACHE Trust has seen positive changes in the attitudes, values and behaviours of not just the young women and girls involved in this project, but also the young men in the local community. The Women's Self-help Groups established will enable the positive impact of this project to continue for future groups of young women across the area.

## Project in numbers:

**75** volunteers trained in Sexual and Reproductive health education

**68** young women given training in assertiveness and communication

**118** men trained in sexual health and rights, and taught about equal partnership and consent

**90** young women trained to recognise signs of exploitation and abuse

**95** girls taught about menstrual health and safer sex.



Above: Children learn about good touch / bad touch to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation

To left: women participate in menstrual health training