



PRAJWALA HAPPENINGS

Knowledge → Reflection → Action

Volume 2

Monthly Newsletter

February 2026

This Month in Impact

- Justice served in 2 POCSO cases resulting in convictions after years of effort - one accused sentenced to 20 years + Rs. 5 lakh compensation to survivor, another to 5 years + Rs. 1 lakh.
- 56 at-risk vulnerable children were successfully mainstreamed into regular schools opening doors to continued education.
- 10 at-risk vulnerable women are placed through employment/self employment initiatives.
- 12 survivors are placed through employment/self employment initiatives.
- 4 transgender persons exited street-based prostitution and secured employment.
- ₹6.6 lakh immediate relief funds accessed by 33 survivors.
- 3 foreign survivors repatriated; 16 Indian survivors reintegrated with families.
- ~1,50,000 community members sensitized through prevention programs.

A QUESTION THAT REBUILDS

What Does a Skill Mean to a Survivor?

How does a survivor begin to see her worth differently after being made to believe that her value lies only in her body?

Beyond rescue and justice, what truly helps a survivor believe in their own future again?

Can learning and mastering to do something new, rebuild what was taken?

[Read More on Page 3](#)

“SAIRA’S LIFE CHANGED IN THREE DAYS. SHE WAS SOLD IN THE NAME OF A JOB. SHE WAS LEFT BLEEDING ON THE ROAD.....”

[Read her Journey on Page 4](#)



WHAT COURAGE LOOKS LIKE

A SURVIVOR'S JOURNEY FROM TRAUMA TO TESTIMONY TO JUSTICE



Vijay Mahnot
ft.
Sunitha Krishnan
(Padma Shri Recipient)
(Co-founder Prajwala NGO)

FULL PODCAST OUT NOW



Cops to HC: Will follow SOP in rescue operation

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, FEB. 13

The state police informed the Telangana High Court that it would follow a draft standard operating procedure (SOP) drawn up by an NGO while effecting the rescue of victims of sex trafficking. A bench of Justice F. Suresh and Justice Narasing Rao Nandikonda granted time to the state government till February 24 to file an affidavit and, if necessary,

traffickers should not be treated as victims in subsequent operations. The perpetrators should not be sent to protective homes or admitted into institutions meant for victims, Prajwala contended. Deepak Misra

Beyond Survival: When Skill Becomes Strength

“A survivor of trafficking is rescued and brought to safety. The immediate crisis passes. Shelter, care, and protection follow. But, when does she truly start believing in herself again?”



Exploitation leaves behind more than physical harm. It often reshapes how a person sees themselves. Survivors are frequently made to believe that their bodies are their only worth, their only use, their only identity.

Recovery therefore involves more than protection. It requires rebuilding a sense of capability.

Skill training becomes one of the first quiet steps in that journey.

When a survivor learns a new skill; say carpentry, welding, tailoring, bookbinding, computers or any other, something important begins to shift. The hands that were once controlled by others begin to do something of their own choosing. A new message slowly replaces an old one: I can do more.

Skill is not simply about earning an income. It becomes a tangible reminder of ability. Completing a task, mastering a technique, meeting a standard of work—each step builds a small but significant form of confidence.

Confidence, in turn, creates something deeper: courage.

The courage to make decisions.

The courage to participate in society again.

The courage to imagine a future not defined by past exploitation.

For many survivors, this rebuilding of confidence is as important as legal justice or economic support. Skill offers proof that identity is not fixed by what was done to them. It can be reshaped by what they are able to learn, do, create, and achieve.

As conversations on trafficking often focus on rescue operations and criminal prosecution, perhaps it is worth pausing to reflect on another dimension of recovery.

WHAT COULD TRUE REHABILITATION MEAN FOR A SURVIVOR?

Is it safety alone—or the restoration of confidence, capability, and the courage to rebuild one's life?

Because recovery does not end with rescue.

It continues when individuals rediscover their ability to shape their own futures.

SAIRA'S JOURNEY

Saira grew up in a large, poor family of eight in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh. In 2005, her father died suddenly of a heart attack, leaving the young children fearful for their future.

Desperate for work, Saira and her sister trusted neighbours promising jobs in Delhi. Instead, they were sold into **trafficking** and faced severe sexual abuse. In despair, Saira tried to end her life but was abandoned on a road by the traffickers.

Police rescued Saira. After recovery in a Delhi shelter, she was transferred to Prajwala's home. Worried for her sister, she shared details to us, leading to a complaint, arrests, and her sister's rescue. Both began healing at Prajwala.

Saira joined Prajwala's **Economic Rehabilitation Program (ERP)**. Doubting herself at first ("men's work"), she found passion in printing with staff encouragement. She built friendships and trust.

20 years with Prajwala, now as the **Supervisor** of the Book Binding section, Saira guides fellow survivors – assigning tasks, monitoring quality, and training them. She stays fully engaged in the work every day. A standout moment: delivering 16,000 books for children affected by floods in just 3 days working day and night with her team. She felt immense joy and pride when it succeeded. She still gets occasional triggers and fears, wondering what might have happened without rescue, and worries deeply about women still trapped.

Saira never compromised her education. With her hardwork and our team support, she completed her 10th grade, cleared ITI, and is now preparing for her Plus 2 exams.

Once silent and fearful around people, she now speaks with confidence and clarity. With steady earnings, savings, and a government sanctioned house, the stigma that once surrounded her family slowly faded. Relatives who had once rejected her now welcome her warmly. Saira reflects,

“When opportunity is shown, anything can be achieved.”

As a child, she dreamed of becoming a teacher. Today, in many ways, that dream is already alive. She trains and guides hundreds of survivors, becoming a mentor and support for those walking the path she once did, turning pain into purpose.

“The same hands that once trembled with fear now guide others with confidence.”

Saira carried deep emotional scars—fear, shame, and the belief that her worth was limited to what others once forced upon her. Skill training began to challenge that belief. With each task she completed and each responsibility she was entrusted with, Saira slowly rediscovered her ability. For Saira, skill did provide more than work - it restored a sense of dignity.

At Prajwala, skill development is a thread that runs through every intervention.

Be it prevention programmes or the rehabilitation process, capacity-building remains central. From five-day employability trainings to months of life-skills trainings and vocational programmes, these skills help rebuild the confidence of survivors, nurture the courage to heal from trauma, make decisions for oneself, and shape a future not defined by past exploitation. In time, they emerge as mentors and leaders for others walking the same path, carrying the anti-trafficking mission.

If You Would Like to Support

Stories like Saira's remind us that recovery is not a single moment of rescue, but a long journey of healing, learning, and rebuilding life with dignity. At Prajwala, survivors receive sustained support through safe shelter, education, counselling, skill training, and opportunities to rebuild their futures.

Your support helps make this journey possible for many more women and children who are seeking a second chance.

To support survivors like Saira, **Donate at <https://prajwalaindia.com/donate>**

