



PLUS

Case studies January 2010

Aurangabad

Purba lives in Ahmednagar. Two years ago when Purba's husband died of AIDS, she collapsed with worrying about her future life. She found out she was HIV positive herself. When she came to know about her HIV status, she was very depressed. How would her children face society and the world? At the same time she was facing lots of problems at her mother-in-law's house where she then lived. They abused her, telling her 'my son died because of you' and blamed her for spreading HIV. They also mistreated her children. They denied her her property rights. Her mother-in-law also demanded Rs. 50,000 from Purba to pay for the boring of a well in the farm.

She had very little knowledge about HIV so we in the district network informed her about modes of transmission, prevention, how to care for herself, and the importance of adherence. She decided she couldn't live with her parents-in-law anymore and moved to her parents' house, where she has lived for the past year.

Purba has two daughters, both are living with her in her parents' house. For their sake she finally decided to file a case for her rights and register her case in the session court of Shivgoan District, Ahmednagar in April 2008. She is still in a legal process on the issue that her parents -in-laws are not giving her her rightful property share which she is entitled to have after her husband's death. But her father-in-law has filed a case against Purba, claiming they are old persons with no support after their son's death and that they need the property for their daughter's marriage which was their son's responsibility to provide for. Purba is telling the court that her father-in-law demanded Rs.50, 000 for the bore-well as a dowry. Also, that her economic condition is very low, and asking for money to support her children's upbringing.

Two people from the network went to court with her recently to try and bring the legal cases to a conclusion. They went to the court to meet the advocate. They explained the case and highlighted some issues facing positive people to try and get justice from the court. The issues were domestic violence, the dowry demanded by father-in-law, and her entitlement to a share of her property after her husband's death.

The advocate advised her clearly on her legal rights to her property, and that she and her children should face no violence.

Amravati

An ICTC counsellor referred a client, Praveen, to the Adhar office. When he came to the office he looked tense and scared. We first relaxed him and gave information about our organisation. After feeling comfortable he told us that he is unmarried, and from the age of 18 years he had many addictions. He had sexual relations with female sex workers. After a few years he started losing weight and became weaker day after day. So, the doctor suggested

that he have a blood test. The result came positive and he was terrified. But he never told his family.

He lives with his maternal aunt and cousin. After a few days the family came to know about Praveen's HIV status and the real problems started. They began discriminating against him, they refused to wash his clothes, kept his utensils separately, and hardly talked to him. After listening to him we gave him counselling and advised him to try not to worry about this matter. We suggested that if he brings them to the office we will try to educate them and solve the problem. He said he would try and after a few days he came to the office with his aunt and cousin. We informed them about Adhar Sanstha and its work, aims and objectives. We counselled them, explained the four modes of transmission, and tried to eradicate their misconceptions. We explained that the HIV infection doesn't spread by sharing clothes, toilets or from mosquito bites, these are all myths. We asked them to visit us again and take care of Praveen.

When they came the second time we once again counselled them and told them that Praveen was losing weight and needed proper care and treatment. We explained that positive people can live a long and normal life, just like a diabetic, if he takes good care of himself and follows the treatment guidelines. We asked them to give him emotional support. We explained that there are many people in our organization who are living life positively with the support of their families. We asked them to come with Praveen to the Support Group Meeting.

When Praveen came next he looked satisfied. Now his aunt is taking good care of him and reminds him to take his medicine, and the behaviour of his cousin is improving slowly and now he is quiet satisfied. He thanked us for the efforts. Now, every month he attends the support group meeting at the office. When he comes, he shares his emotional and health related issues with us. He is now recovering quickly and the problem of stigma and discrimination is no more in his life.

Report by Mukesh Patle, Regional Social worker, Amravati.