



Apna Ghar provides holistic services and conducts advocacy across immigrant communities to end gender violence.

2015 Annual Report

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Message from our Board President & Executive Director



Dear Friend and Supporter,

2015 was an exciting year for us at Apna Ghar. We celebrated our 25th anniversary and more! Apna Ghar was founded by five Asian American women who recognized that linguistic, cultural, and legal barriers prevented South Asian and other immigrant survivors from seeking the services they needed. These exemplary women shaped Apna Ghar from an idea in the 1970s to a volunteer run crisis line in the 1980s and then to an incorporated organization in December 1989. At its inception Apna Ghar became one of the first agencies in the United States to comprehensively address the personal, community level and systemic barriers that immigrant and refugee survivors face. Apna Ghar has been on a tremendous journey of transformation over these 25 years. Today, we are issue based and community focused, and our work extends to all underserved communities.

Each year, with your help, Apna Ghar conducts advocacy and provides critical services to survivors of gender violence, a global public health and human rights issue. **Globally 1 in 3 women will experience gender violence over the course of her lifetime.**


In this annual report, we want to share with you what your contributions mean to Apna Ghar and the communities we serve. In calendar year 2015, Apna Ghar reached more 5,000 women, children, and men through outreach and direct services including our 24 hour crisis line, emergency housing, comprehensive case management, counseling, legal advocacy, and supervised visitation and safe exchange services. In 2015, we provided technical support to Maryville Academy to launch their own supervised visitation and safe exchange program.

We expanded our school based prevention and intervention focused programming. Our counseling staff use art-based therapy to conduct therapeutic and educational groups for adolescent girls who have witnessed or experienced gender violence. We engaged in systems change advocacy to improve outcomes for our program participants who are in need of consistent language access and better responses from child welfare services, law enforcement, and the legal and medical systems. On the national level, Apna Ghar and partner agencies conducted a policy briefing to provide important and needed perspective on gender justice and immigration reform to federal policy makers in Washington, D.C.

In 2016, we look forward to the construction of our new safe home which will double our current capacity to house and care for survivors of gender violence. We also plan to enhance our current programs and services while expanding to serve new communities in Chicago's suburbs thanks to a wonderfully generous gift from Marjorie Pelino. We will also expand health and wellness programming in a space generously donated by the Ramzan and Parvin Dhanji Family Foundation.

Our talented and dedicated board and staff, the courageous survivors we're privileged to serve, you our generous donors, and our extended community propel our work in the movement to end gender violence. We sincerely thank you and we look forward to what we can achieve together this year, and over the next 25 years!

Sincerely,


Saiyed G. Rabbani
Board President


Neha Gill
Executive Director

Gender Violence & Barriers Faced by Immigrants

The World Health Organization has deemed violence against women particularly intimate partner violence and sexual violence against women **"a major public health problem & a violation of women's human rights."**

What is Gender Violence?

All acts of violence upon women or those who fall outside dominant cultural gender norms, that result in physical, sexual, psychological, economic harm or suffering. These can include survivors of human trafficking, forced marriage, or intimate partner violence. Threats or acts of coercion and deprivation of liberty can occur in public or in private life.

Globally, as many as

38% 

of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner.

Unique Barriers

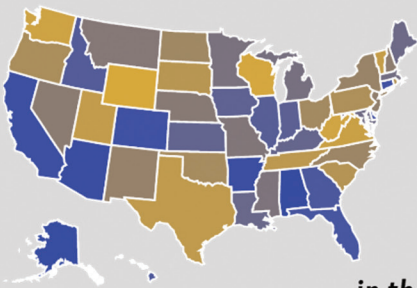


- Language, economic, racial, cultural, religious barriers to social and legal services.
- Barriers due to immigration and refugee status.
- Sophisticated manipulations by batterers so their victims are treated as perpetrators.
- Stigmatizing LGBTQ individuals, divorced women, single mothers, widows, young women, and other marginalized individuals.
- Nexus of public disclosure and shame is a barrier to seeking help.
- Community attitudes that use victim-blaming, silencing, and shaming to reject survivors, that end up increasing abusers' impunity and entitlement to violence.

What are other forms of abuse?

- + Intensive surveillance, cyber-stalking, monitoring cellphones and utilizing multiple technologies.
- + Withholding food, healthcare, medication, adequate clothing, and hygiene products.
- + Financial abuse such as restricting access to bank accounts, monitoring activity, or identity theft.
- + Hyper-exploitation of household labor to serve members of the extended family.

Facts & Figures - Violence Against Women



in the U.S. ...



The cost of domestic violence exceeds 9.9 billion dollars in medical and health care services and productivity loss.



3.3 million children are exposed to domestic violence every year.



Domestic violence is most common among women between the ages of 18-24.



In Chicago, there are only 152 beds dedicated to survivors of domestic violence.



A woman is assaulted every 9 seconds and intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crime.



1 in 3 Women will experience gender violence over the course of her lifetime.



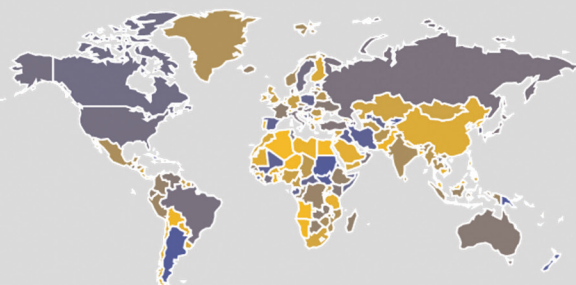
For girls under the age of 15 the incidence of forced and early marriage is 1 in 9.



20.9 million adults and children are bought and sold worldwide into commercial sexual servitude, forced labor and bonded labor.

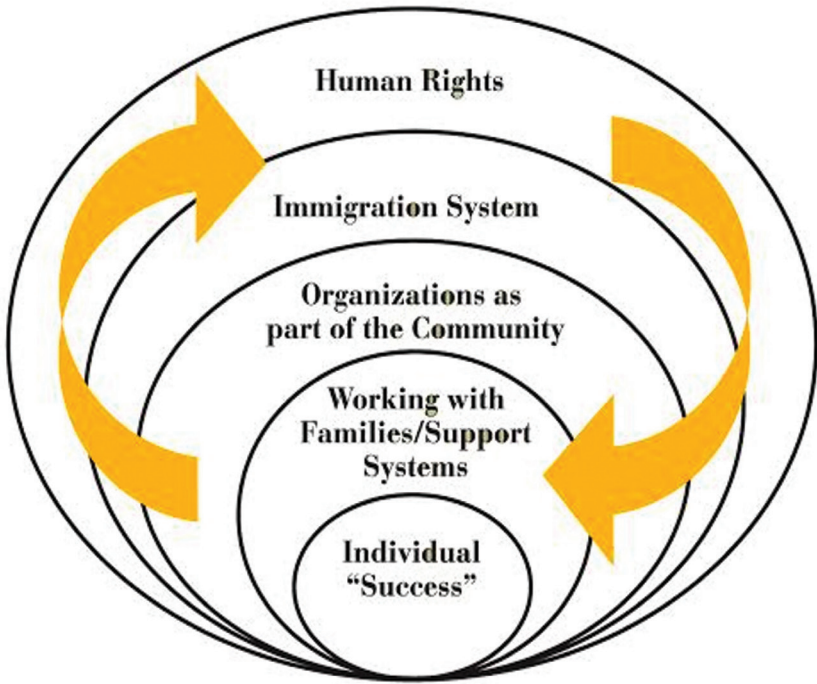


Situations of conflict and displacement may exacerbate existing violence and present additional forms of violence against women.



globally...

Apna Ghar's Service Model



Apna Ghar developed its own service model through a research collaboration with the Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) at Loyola University, **Transcending Boundaries: Investigating Domestic Violence among Immigrant Women**

Apna Ghar Programs & Services

Every year Apna Ghar reaches more than **5,000 women, children, and men** through these **transformative services** and outreach activities that affect systemic change.

	2014	2015
24-Hour Crisis Line Calls	1,650	2,027
Case Management	188	287
Counseling services	167	225
Supervised Visitation & Safe Exchange	274	310
Legal Advocacy	173	201
Emergency Shelter	77	96
Outreach & Education	3,311	3,600

How We Make a Difference



CRISIS LINE When Time Matters Most

The 24-hour crisis line serves as the primary point of access for those seeking help from Apna Ghar, and is in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our staff and volunteers provide callers with information about our programs and services and resources available for immediate and long-term safety. In addition, we provide information on gender violence, available protective options, and referrals to other organizations.

.....
Responded with information and referrals to **2,027** calls in 2015
.....



EMERGENCY SHELTER Empowers

Our 15-bed emergency shelter provides survivors fleeing violence and trauma a home-like, culturally sensitive, safe and secure environment where they can begin their journeys of healing and empowerment, and regain control of their lives. While at the shelter, survivors receive wrap around services, including counseling and therapy, legal advocacy, and case management services.

.....
Provided a safe home to **54** women and **42** children survivors in 2015
.....



CASE MANAGEMENT Identifies Goals

Apna Ghar's case management services are offered to our residential and nonresidential program participants to ensure long term stability and self-sufficiency. Case management helps survivors identify personal goals and connect to community resources to meet health care, educational, employment, permanent housing, financial and other critical needs.

.....
Provided case management to **207** women and **80** children in 2015
.....

LEGAL ADVOCACY Provides New Options

At Apna Ghar, we guide our program participants through the legal system. Our advocates help immigrant survivors understand their rights under local and federal law, as well as the protective options available to them. Advocates support survivors in obtaining legal representation through an in-house legal clinic and partnerships with legal aid agencies and pro-bono attorneys. Advocates help survivors access available legal remedies such as orders of protection, child support, custody and divorce, as well as immigration relief via protective legal statutes such as the Violence Against Women Act.



Assisted **201** survivors in accessing justice in 2015

COUNSELING Makes an Impact

Apna Ghar provides individual, family and group counseling as well as art therapy for adult and children survivors of gender violence who are residents of our shelter and for nonresidential program participants. Counseling helps survivors process and heal from the trauma of abuse and helps them in their journeys towards stability and self-sufficiency. Some of the groups that we offer include a prevention and intervention group at local schools for elementary-aged girls and a drop-in self-care group that is open to our program participants and community members.



Provided individual and group counseling to **150** women and **75** children at three locations in 2015

SUPERVISED VISITATION AND SAFE EXCHANGE Provides Stability

Our supervised visitation and safe exchange (SVSE) program provides a safe place where children can interact with their non-custodial parent in the presence of a trained facilitator. It is an opportunity for a relationship to form and develop in a comfortable, non-threatening and conflict-free environment. We also offer a safe location for parents to pick up and drop off their children when the courts determine the non-custodial parent may have unsupervised visits. These safe-exchanges are also facilitated by Apna Ghar's trained staff.



Enhanced the safety of **176** adults and **134** children through SVSE services in 2015

Outreach and Advocacy

Community Engagement

Apna Ghar continually educates community groups, health professionals, law enforcement, religious leaders and high school and university students on gender violence and available resources to combat this violence. Apna Ghar also provides the state-required 40-hour domestic violence training for new volunteers, staff and community members.

Technical Assistance

Apna Ghar provides training and technical assistance to community organizations and conducts systemic and policy level advocacy to impact larger scale changes to further benefit the survivors we serve. In 2015, Apna Ghar helped Maryville Academy launch their supervised visitation and safe exchange program.

Local Level Initiatives

Apna Ghar is part of a South Asian coalition, as well as a broader Asian coalition with several partner organizations to conduct outreach into the Asian community in the metro Chicago area relating to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA), as well as other available immigration remedies. In addition, we participate in HC3 (Healthy Communities Cook County) to advocate for health care for all, and in a medical response collaborative to improve health related outcomes for survivors.

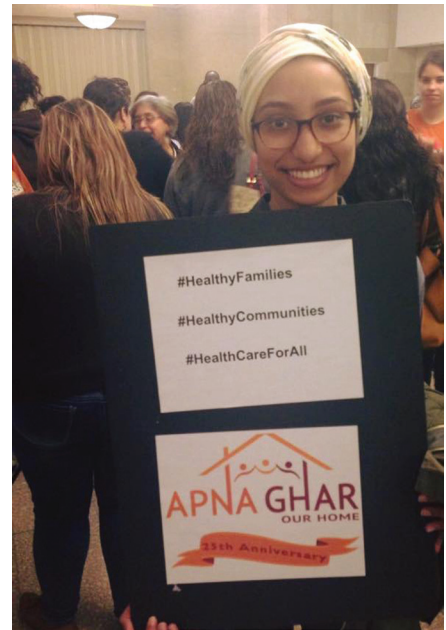
National Level Initiatives

In 2015, Apna Ghar's executive director, Neha Gill, participated in API Heritage Month activities in Washington, D.C. that included policy briefings and meetings at the White House with partner agencies Sakhi, Manavi, Daya, Raksha, and South Asian Network. It was a unique and important opportunity to provide perspective on gender justice, immigration reform and civil rights issues to federal policy makers.

.....
Reached over **3,600** people through **346** outreach events
.....



Apna Ghar staff with South Asian coalition receiving the 2015 ChangeMaker Award from SAALT in Washington, D.C.



Sofia Sami, outreach volunteer at rally for healthy families and healthy communities



Executive Director Neha Gill with leaders of South Asian partner organizations at the White House

Events

Art Show

February - March 2015

The 2015 art show, **Collective Voices, Shared Journeys**, explored issues of gender violence, immigration/refugee rights, wellness, disabilities and mental health. The show featured art created by survivors of gender violence and advocates for the cause. The opening reception included a panel discussion and live performances.



Taste for Life

May 7, 2015

Apna Ghar's 7th Annual Taste for Life featured special guests Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, activist and performer Fawzia Mirza, Chef Art Smith, and restaurateur Naushab Ahmed. During the event, **we reached our goal of raising \$20,000 for our new safe home**. We were glad to feature 11 local restaurants who provided tasting portions from their menus.



25th Anniversary Gala

September 24, 2015

In 2015, we celebrated our 25th anniversary with a gala featuring guest of honor, Nobel Peace Prize winner and founder of the Grameen Bank, **Muhammad Yunus**. We were also happy to honor longtime supporters of the organization, hear **Alderman James Capplemans** moving and inspiring personal story, and enjoy live entertainment from **Fareed Haque and his band MathGames!** We also **raised over \$40,000 for our new safe home!**



Stride Against Violence

October 25, 2015

Over 400 runners, walkers and volunteers joined us at the 9th annual Stride Against Violence and helped raise awareness of the prevalence of gender violence in our communities. The event **raised over \$40,000** to assist survivors and was **featured on WGN Channel 9 news**.



A Survivor's Story



Neena
New Delhi, India

Neena was 22 years old when she had an arranged marriage to Ashish and in the beginning they were happy. Ashish, a U.S. Citizen, petitioned to bring Neena to the U.S. on a "conditional green card" and in 2011, the pair started to settle into their new lives in Chicago. For a while things were good, Neena was happy and she dreamed about finishing her education and starting a family with Ashish. However, soon after Neena became pregnant with their first child, Ashish's behavior started to change. He had mood swings and violent outbursts when things didn't go his way. Ashish started imposing financial restrictions on Neena and became verbally abusive.

Months passed and although Neena tried to keep up with Ashish's increasing demands and expectations, Ashish started physically abusing Neena.

Ashish also started to demand money from Neena, and would become extremely angry when she stated that she did not have enough in her savings. He would pound his fist and kick furniture to intimidate and assert his power. Unfortunately, these were not isolated occurrences and in such times, Neena would try to calm him down and apologize, fearing what else he might do.

In 2014, Neena gave birth to a baby girl named Sonia, which she hoped would help their marriage and stop the abuse, but instead Ashish isolated Neena from any contact with family or friends. He controlled her every move, accompanying her to every doctor's visit and restricting her from even making purchases for their child. This is when the sexual abuse began and for years Neena spiraled into a deep depression as her feelings of helplessness and anxiety grew.

Crisis Line

One day, when Ashish was at work, a neighbor came by to visit Neena and Sonia, who was now 3 years old. Aware that this might be one of the only opportunities to disclose to someone, Neena found the courage to tell her neighbor what was happening. Afraid that Ashish was monitoring her online activities, the neighbor went online to find someone who could help Neena. They searched for domestic violence agencies in Chicago and found Apna Ghar. The neighbor called the Crisis Line on Neena's behalf and an advocate conducted an intake to assess Neena's situation and inform her of available options and to plan for her safety. Neena decided to leave her home with Sonia when Ashish was at work.

Emergency Shelter

The next day, Neena packed her belongings and moved into Apna Ghar's emergency shelter. Once there, the shelter advocates helped Neena and Sonia settle in and plan for her immediate future, so she could feel safe and comfortable in her new surroundings. They made sure that all location settings on her cell phone were turned off and advised her to change her routes often, when traveling to and from the shelter, and to be aware of her surroundings at all times.

Counseling

Apna Ghar's counselors met with both Neena and Sonia to evaluate their needs. In her individual counseling sessions, Neena was presented with psycho-educational material on gender-based violence which helped Neena understand the tactics Ashish used against her. The counselor engaged Neena in narrative therapy which helped her reframe her perspective as a survivor and alleviated her feelings of guilt, shame, and self-blame.

Legal Advocacy

Neena also began working with Apna Ghar's legal advocates who further assisted with safety planning by helping her obtain an order of protection against Ashish. The advocates helped Neena understand her immigration options because she feared that leaving Ashish had jeopardized her status. They explained to her that she could self-petition for permanent residency under the Violence Against Women Act. The legal advocates also helped Neena find attorneys to address all of Neena's legal needs. The advocates accompanied Neena to court and attorney appointments, to provide emotional support and guidance.

1 in 6 abused women reports that her partner first abused her during pregnancy.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, at least 4 to 8% of pregnant women report suffering abuse during pregnancy.

Children's Counseling



Sonia
Chicago, Illinois

In order for Sonia to begin her recovery process, Neena and the children's counselor engaged in family counseling. As a result of the trauma, 3-year-old Sonia developed insecure attachments which made her withdraw from adults, including her mother. She had difficulty relating to other children and had explosive outbursts.

Apna Ghar's children's counselor utilized art-based and play therapy around secure attachment to address these issues. The counselor incorporated Neena into the sessions so she could learn how to interact with her daughter in healthy ways by modeling behaviors. Sonia eventually opened up and started to play and share with the counselor and develop a healthy relationship with her mother.

Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange

Eventually, Ashish was awarded supervised visitation with Sonia. Neena reached out to Apna Ghar's Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange facilitators to help her understand how to comply with the court order and how the program could ensure her safety at all times.

The facilitators explained that her arrival time would be staggered from Ashish's and that she would not have to see him or attend the visitation session. Instead, facilitators who are trained to ensure the safety and comfort of the child, would be present during their visitation sessions at all times. Ashish was also informed of the program's expectations, to ensure the safety of all parties.

As many as 90% of children from violent homes witness the parental abuse.

Witnessing domestic violence is the single best predictor of juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. It is also the number one reason children run away.

Case Management

The advocates helped Neena prioritize and plan for the future so she could achieve her personal goals and connect to community resources. Apna Ghar's economic empowerment programming helped Neena understand how she could open a bank account and eventually strengthen her own financial security. The shelter advocates helped Neena search for jobs and walked her through a few applications as well as enroll her for ESL courses at a local community college.

Outcome

After a few months at the shelter, Neena found ways to cope and process her trauma. Neena shared her story, developed goals for herself, and built the courage to move forward with her life. Neena also found a support network in other Apna Ghar program participants and by utilizing all of Apna Ghar's services, the agency was able to ensure her needs were met.

Neena enrolled Sonia in a school program that would be sensitive to her needs and foster a healthy environment. Sonia is forming healthy attachments to her teachers and peers.

Neena found fulfilling employment and a safe place for her and Sonia to live independently. Neena overcame tremendous linguistic, cultural, and legal barriers in addition to the violence she has experienced during the course of her life but she continues to make efforts to rebuild her life and reach her personal goals. Neena tells Apna Ghar's advocates, that one day, she plans to become an advocate herself to help other survivors of gender violence.



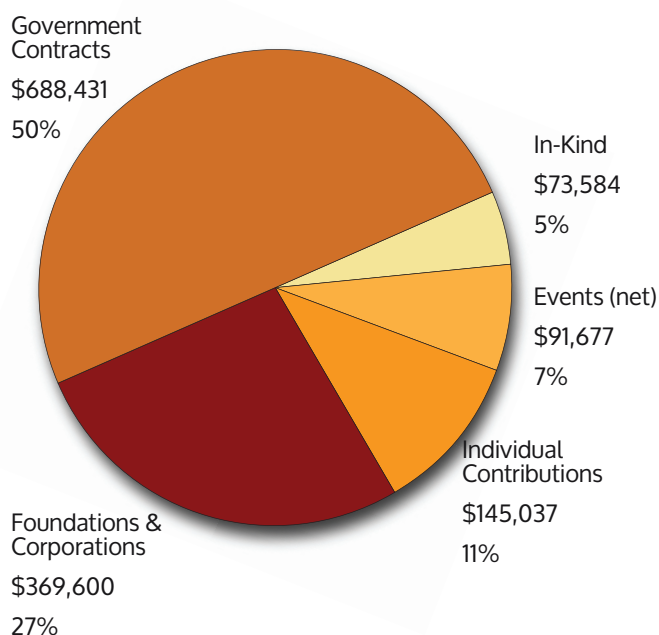
Audited Financials for Fiscal Year 2015

(JULY 1, 2014–JUNE 30, 2015)

Statement of Activities

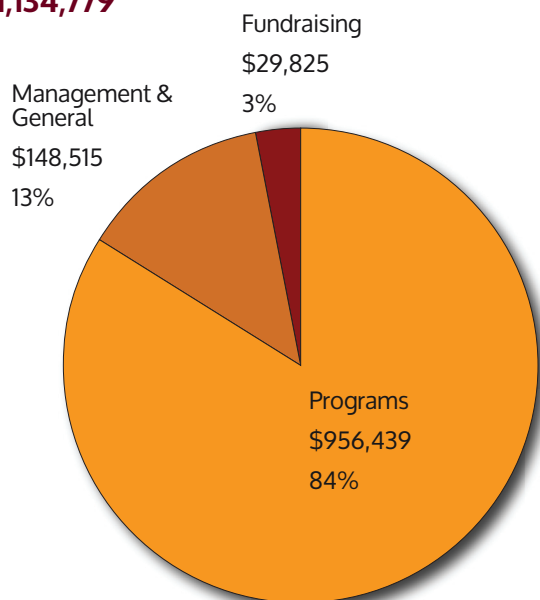
TOTAL REVENUES FY 2015

\$1,373,557



TOTAL EXPENSES FY 2015

\$1,134,779



Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS

Current assets

Cash and cash equivalents	714,897
Investments	1,421
Grant and contract receivables	197,999
Prepaid and deposits	15,144

Total current assets 929,461

Fixed assets (net of depreciation) 1,235,567

Total assets \$2,165,028

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	43,536
Mortgage payable - current portion	32,068

Total current liabilities 75,604

Long-term liabilities

Mortgage payable - non current portion	825,311
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Total Long-term liabilities 825,311

Total liabilities 900,915

Net Assets

Temporary restricted	155,531
Unrestricted	903,234
Board designated	205,348

Total net assets 1,264,113

Total liabilities and net assets \$2,165,028

For additional information, Apna Ghar's audited financial statements and 990 are available our website at www.apnaghar.org.

2015 Apna Ghar Highlights

- Apna Ghar received the **2015 ChangeMaker Award** from South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) along with partner agencies the South Asian American Policy and Research Institute (SAAPRI), Indo-American Center (IAC) and Chicago Desi Youth Rising (CDYR) for our joint commitment to social justice at a national summit in Washington D.C.
- Former board president and long time supporter Dr. Surinder Nand was honored with the **President's Award** by the Indian American Psychiatric Association for her work in domestic violence prevention
- Board Secretary, Sugeeta Kohli received a **community service award** from BMO Harris Bank
- Board member, Ash Luthra was honored with the **Bridge Award** by Chicago United for Business Leadership
- Executive Director Neha Gill was honored with the **David R Barclay Alumni Leadership Award** from LEAP, Inc. (Leadership Education for Asian Pacific Americans)
- Apna Ghar received a **proclamation** from the Illinois Comptroller's office marking its 25th Anniversary
- Apna Ghar's Stride Against Violence 5k was featured on **Channel 9 (WGN)**
- **Apna Ghar's 25th Anniversary celebration** with guest of honor, Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus was covered by media outlets in the US and India
- Executive Director Neha Gill was interviewed on **Chicago Public Radio** on the issue of forced marriage and by **Loyola University radio** on gender violence broadly
- **Channel 32 (Fox)** covered our response to sexual assault in South Asian and immigrant communities
- Executive Director Neha Gill was profiled in the **Chicago Reporter** and featured in **India Abroad's** cover story on immigration
- Apna Ghar's art show and art based counseling services were profiled in **Sixty Inches from Center** in a piece entitled "Challenging Silence: Making Space for Survivors in the Arts"
- Apna Ghar's **advocacy efforts** related to the Purvi Patel case and reproductive rights were broadly covered by various media outlets
- Apna Ghar's practice of cultural humility was featured in the **UK's Inclusive Migration blog** and will be part of a larger research project
- Apna Ghar was featured in the **Chicago Foundation for Women's 30th anniversary video** and in Deepa Iyer's book "**We Too Sing America: South Asian, Arab, Muslim and Sikh Immigrants Shape Our Multiracial Future,**" published by The New Press

Future Plans

With your help, Apna Ghar will continue its work in the movement to end gender violence. The next few years will bring several exciting developments.

New Safe Home

In Chicago today there are only 152 shelter beds for victims of gender violence, with only 8 to 12 beds dedicated to victims of trafficking. Apna Ghar's new safe home will double the capacity of our current shelter and will directly address the city's pressing shortage of adequate emergency shelter. Plans are in place to break ground in spring of 2016.

Program Expansion

In 2016 and beyond, we plan to enhance current Apna Ghar programs and services, including economic empowerment and health and wellness programs. We will also increase our presence in Chicago's suburbs. We were awarded a grant to create a model for enhanced supervised visitation and safe exchange services and establish a physical presence for Apna Ghar in Chicago's northwest suburbs.

Apna Ghar, Inc. (Our Home) thanks its Government and Foundation partners and grantors

Government

City of Chicago, Department of Family and Support Services
Emergency Food and Shelter Program
Illinois Department of Human Services
Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
Office of the Illinois Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women

Foundations

Albert Pick, Jr. Fund	Isadore and Gladys J. Brown Fund
Allstate Foundation	Michael Reese Health Trust
Anonymous Foundation	Polk Bros. Foundation
Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation	Ramzan and Parvin Dhanji Family Foundation
Bright Promises Foundation	Ravenswood Health Care Foundation
Chicago Community Trust	Robert R. McCormick Foundation
Chicago Foundation for Women	- Chicago Tribune Charities - Holiday Campaign
Designs for Dignity	Taproot Foundation
Eileen Fisher	The Thomas M. and Mary M. Owens Foundation
Greer Foundation	Thorek Memorial Foundation
Illinois Funders Collaborative (for project with SAAPRI, IAC and CDYR)	TJX Foundation
	United Way of Metropolitan Chicago
	VNA Foundation

Special Acknowledgment to In-Kind Donors

Be Alright Foundation
Chicago Desi Moms
Family Tree Resale
FOCUS - Chicago and St. Gregorios Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church
Latin School of Chicago
Muslim Women's Alliance
Zero Percent

Apna Ghar, Inc. (Our Home) expresses its deep gratitude to the Donors who gave in 2015

(\$10,000.00 and above)

BMO Harris Bank
Anonymous Donor
Ramzan and Parvin Dhanji
Dipankar and Alpana Mukhopadhyay

(\$5,000.00 - \$9,999.00)

Alok and Shanthi Gaur
Ashutosh & Sudha Gupta
Ashima Mehta
Madhavan and Teresa Nayar
Usha and Darsh Wasan

(\$1,000.00 - \$4,999.00)

Masoom Ahmed
Sajida Madhi Ali
Anu Bhargava
Sameer Chhabria
Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network
Chicago Spirit Brigade
Rashmi Chugh and Sandeep Mehta
Club of Indian Women
Suresh and Padma Desai
Zainab Ekbal
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Margaret Zangrilli

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Jay Agarwal
Nina Aliprandi
Association for Neuropsychology Students in Training
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Nachi Das
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Lists as of March 2016

Thank You

2015 was an exciting, productive year at Apna Ghar! We are grateful for your support and because of it we feel confident as we look ahead at 2016. Your support is deeply meaningful to the survivors we serve as they embark on their journeys of healing and empowerment.

Thank you for celebrating 25 years with us!

"Apna Ghar helped me regain my trust in justice when I was completely powerless."

- program participant

"The first thing he broke was my confidence. Now I have a way to start reclaiming my confidence and live my life the way I deserve."

- program participant

"When my life was in pieces and in shambles, Apna Ghar helped me put all the pieces together and make me and my children feel safe. I'm very thankful for your visitation services and support during the most difficult time."

- program participant



Stride Against Violence



Taste for Life



25th Anniversary Gala



Stride Against Violence



GET INVOLVED

TOGETHER WE CAN END GENDER VIOLENCE

INVEST

You can help survivors of gender violence reclaim and rebuild their lives

- Donate to Apna Ghar online, by mail, or over the phone
- Sponsorship opportunities available for individuals and corporations at our fundraising events
- Connect us to your giving networks

INSPIRE

Introduce your friends, peers, and colleagues to Apna Ghar

- Host a party or a fundraiser to raise visibility and support for Apna Ghar's work
- Bring friends, family, and colleagues to our events
- Link to us or feature us on your website, blog and/or social media, and print publications
- Raise awareness to end gender violence in your communities

VOLUNTEER

You can make a difference by donating your time and expertise

- Take our 40-Hour Domestic Violence training and work directly with survivors
- Volunteer at special events and fundraisers (applications available online)
- Partner with us for group volunteer opportunities

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