

## The Change

Kalavva, 40 years, a house-maker, recovered from mental illness, was part of community mental health program in one of the urban partners in Karnataka. She was identified with the help of a community volunteer. When Kallavva was visited first, she was totally bedridden and she could not even interact with people. Her 19 years old daughter Ruma was the sloe caretaker..

Kalavva and Ruma share how life went on and how the care and support provided brought changes in them.....

Kalavva, "I was not aware what was going on within me. I was not interested in marriage, out of elders' force I got married; The anger and desperation in life resulted in illness. I was never aware that I am suffering from mental illness. I heard from my daughter and relatives that people in the community used to call me mad. Relatives and people strongly believed that some evil spirit possessed me, especially the spirit of my mother. But I had not taken any kind of treatment except approaching black magicians, temples etc, it is due to blind belief and lack of knowledge. It is their (Partner) intervention care and support enabled me to take treatment and I was able to talk to you today".

"Due to mental illness some major changes occurred in my life. I stopped talking to my husband & stopped doing daily activities. I never took care of my daughter and was unaware of my personal hygiene. I started wandering in the community and even I was in to begging. My livelihood activity also stopped. The behavioral changes reached the extent that my husband got frustrated and married another lady."

Ruma ... "Actually speaking I do not remember how and when my mother developed illness. But I could remember one thing very clearly she used to hate me like anything. I was with my paternal grandmother. I was afraid of my mother and even I thought that some evil spirit possesses her. Definitely my mother's illness affected me lot, I never experienced the love, care and affection from my mother. I discontinued my studies; it was a miserable childhood and started working in the house at the very young age. I suffered a lot for food and clothing. Now she is a completely changed person and cares for me a lot."

Once the Community Volunteer identified Kalavva, the work began. The partner team made arrangement with the local Government treatment service and gave psycho-education to the family on what is her illness and how to support Kalavva. She joined the Family Support Group. With Ruma's care, treatment support given by the organization, Volunteer and community support enabled

Kalavva to become stabilized. She is back to her family business of selling fancy items like bangles, clips stickers etc. on the pavement.