

ANNUAL REPORT

2009

SPANDHANA, Channapattana,
Ramanagar District



INTRODUCTION

New strategies with new experiments and fresh approaches gave a wider platform to implement our ideas this year. SPANDHANA, an organization which has emerged moreover with self experiences of women right violation and learning from community, we will be experimenting with new strategies and programmes focusing the ultimate objective of 'Gender equality and Social Justice' by strengthening our implementation so far.

In this background SPANDHANA extended its working areas to implement Community Development works and also has started to invest effort among construction laborers and Beedi rollers to uphold their rights and to fight for equal wage and equal rights to women in these unorganized sectors. SPANDHANA started these movement with an holistic approach taking the issue of laborers both men and women form a mass movement to address their basic rights for minimum wage, job security, insurance facilities and other facilities which ensure a standard of living. But it was also a strategic approach to organize the women in these sectors to ensure them justice against the gender discrimination which is prevailing in these unorganized sectors especially on the basis of wage and dignity. But the Beedi rolling sector contains a majority of women from Muslim community who are into beedi rolling for their livelihood. A survey has also been conducted among this sector to analyze about the socio-economic conditions and other basic information through base line data collection.

As the year 2009 ends it's our effort to recollect our experience, learnings, failures and achievements through this annual report to our reference and to share with organizations and people like you, who have been a support and guidance in the path of struggle to bring a free and just society. The annual report contains all our ideas, strategies implementations, reflections, impacts and the experiences and learning including the feedback collected from our community and people which actually guide us to mould our approach to make it at its best. The report contains special studies and survey which we have carried out as part of our programmes and also the case studies of some of the real incidents which actually bring you closer to our working community.

ACTION PLAN

SPANDHANA has a support system through which we collect the ideas, strategies and plans other than the formal strategic group in organization. The collective groups in the villages organized by SPANDHANA for women, children and youth and the general body of the SPANDHANA comes under this category of support system who have a major role in influencing the action plan of SPANDHANA every year. The board of SPANDHANA also plans the activities analyzing the situation and build strategies to implement the same. All these action plans and strategies will be focused ultimately on the objective of Gender Equality and Social Justice. The Action Plan of 2009 had focused on major Three Programmes.

- **'Gender Equality and Community development'**: This focused mainly on the Empowerment of women and unorganized sector worker specifically mid day meal workers.
- **'Fighting against Fundamentalism and Empowerment of Unorganized Sector Women'**: This distinctively focused on empowering Muslim women and unification among beedi rollers and construction workers with a focused intervention with women laborers.
- **Child Rights and Social Justice**: This focused on the community participation in ensuring rights and freedom to children and the empowerment of Dalit community.

Relating to these 3 major programmes SPANDHANA charted the action plans and strategies to implement the programmes.

Hodike Hosahalli is a village which is witnessing the caste discriminations from several years. After the intervention of SPANDHANA we noticed a severe problem the village is facing, that it does not have a graveyard. The upper caste people use to bury the dead bodies in their own land where as the Dalits who are generally landless in the country use to bury on a small embankment of a pond and they face a treacherous situation during rainy season. This issue was taken up by SPANDHANA and organizing the people for this cause demanded the government to allot the government site for the graveyard. After this incident the people in dalit colony started to join their hands with SPANDHANA wholeheartedly and started to discuss and realize about their situation. On this process they revealed that it was their wish from almost 30 years to start an 'Ambedkar Sangha' in the village and fix the board. But due to the domination and torture by upper caste men they were afraid to initiate the effort. Over the assurance and support of SPANDHANA on December 6th they organized the Sangha and fixed the board as Ambedkar Yuvajana Sangha in their colony. But very next day the men from Gowda community created problem though somehow it settled on that day the very next morning colony people were shocked to see that the board is missing. Then SPANDHANA initiated a caution rally throughout every streets in the village and again fixed the board. Till today the sangha is working actively and the board at the entrance of the colony welcomes every stranger to the village.

'Gender Equality and Community development'

- Involving Women and Youth in social transformative activities through formation of groups among them to illuminate regarding their rights and available facilities.
- Organizing awareness programs, cadre camps, workshops, symposiums for women.
- Formation of Family Groups and discussion on the roles and rights of each individual in the family, since family is the basic institution in society from where the violence against women starts † the grass root.
- Negotiation and advocacy with the Local self Government for efficient governance. And human right intervention in work. Training for Gram Panchayat Women Bearers on power handling.
- Policy level works with the government departments at local level and state level to improve the state of women, youth and children. Process and Event Documentation.

- A periodical publication of crucial issues relating to human rights, Gender Equality and Social justice as small booklets, pamphlets, brochures and books.
- Effectual Cultural approach through trained SPANDHANA cultural troop by playing street plays, songs and skits and Formation of all-women Tamate troop (Dalit folk art)

Fighting against Fundamentalism and Empowerment of Unorganized Sector Women

- Carrying out a research to identify women laborers in Beedi rolling and construction work in Ramanagaram and also to study the problems in detail.

Nagarathna, aged 28 has completed her 10th standard and belongs to Holey community. She elected as the president of Harokoppa Panchayath in the previous local self government election. But unlike other women representatives' Nagarathna was not ready to act just as a rubber stamp when actually their husband or other men rule in reality. She always had an opinion as her own and raised question in the meetings. This action of Nagarathna was not resisted by the upper caste men in the Gram Panchayath committee. The GP secretary Ramesh opposed her in every step and ordered her though he is a lower rank official to her in hierarchy. Haraokoppa is a village which has a caste domination and discrimination from several years and still double-tumbler system is prevailing. So naturally when Nagarathna demanded even Dalit colonies should get development programmes they opposed, denied and started to harass her in many ways. They started to humiliate her in the meeting and complained her husband instigating him to suspect about her chastity(?!). Unable to resist the continuous torture she decided to resign from the post as President. This incident came to the notice of SPANDHANA when we extended our works to Harokoppa. We formed women's collective in the village and slowly awakened the women about the crisis a dalit woman representative is facing and organized them against the unruly behavior of the Panchayath members and officials. We counseled Naarathna to take back the resignation ensuring all support. All women collectively staged a protest demanding the respective officials to resign from their job if they continue their harassment against Nagarathna. At present Nagarathna has rejoined as president and with the support of Women collectives she is slowly struggling for the development in the village. SPANDHANA ensures her participation in all its programme to mould her opinion.

- Conducting the survey for base line data collection of the workers regarding their geographical, social, economic, access to basic amenities, educational, cultural, political situation.
- Compilation of the survey report and presenting in the Local Panchayath Raj Gramasabhas about the situation of women in unorganized sector.

Harini is 12 year old child studying in 7th standard in Ambadahalli. She is a member of a Children's collective formed by SPANDHANA in their village. As SPANDHANA organize a residential camp for children Harini also being selected from village to participate in the workshop. After the workshop when Harini was back to her home after 4 days she shared the activities held in SPANDHANA. While sharing she talked about the revolution and contribution of Dr. B R Ambedkar for social change. But her grandmother scolded her saying "Only dalits will speak about ambedkar so you spent all these with those inferior people" and in the name of purity Harini was sprinkled with the urine of cattle and also she slept overnight outside the house. Harini shared this experience in a public hearing organized to highlight the violation

- Organizing the laborers and awaking them about the importance of union and enrolling them as union members.
- Organizing awareness programmes and workshops on laborer's rights and gender politics.
- Politicization in the thoughts and ideological orientation to women regarding the role of Fundamentalism and faces of patriarchy using cultural binding through Workshops and Seminars.
- Protests demanding equal wage, increase in wage, job security, Insurances and other facilities under Labor Rights specially focusing women laborers.

Child Rights and Social Justice

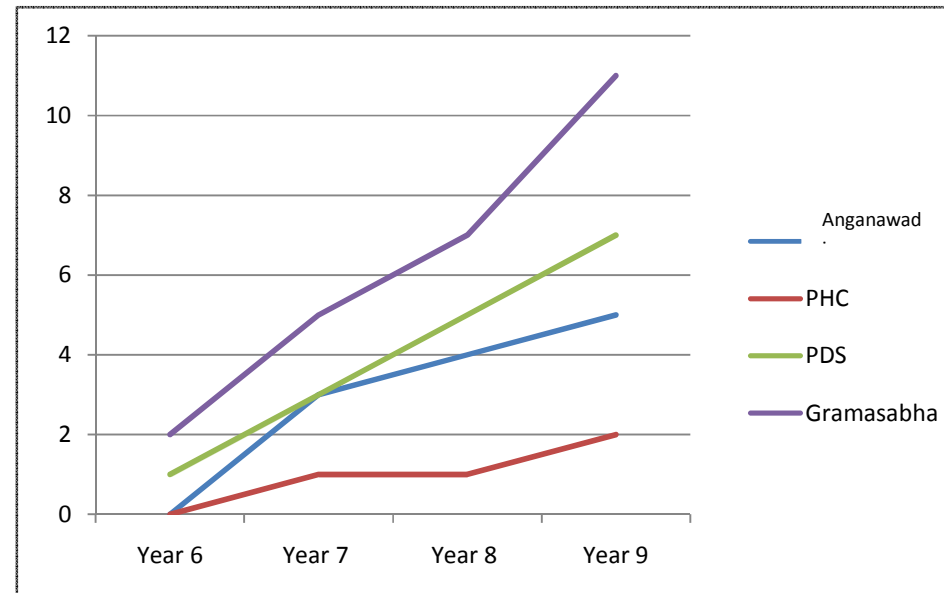
- Community mobilization to further initiate and strengthen women, children, youth and other people's collectives/ federations at the community and GP level towards child right.
- Team members will evolve Syllabus module for the Children's Collective which will aim at providing alternative ideological perspective for children- along with the same theme/ issue based fames and songs will be evolved for the children.
- Team Capacity Building to understand the in-depth SEPC of the operational area to orient on Child Rights and Gender Issues.
- Formation of District level student's Federation for Right to Education campaign. Discussion to be organized for the students in 3 phases in order to understand the Education scenario in depth
- Students and teachers to involve proactively to ensure quality education and to highlight CSS (Common School System) at the Taluka level.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of all programmes has been carried out according to action plan with the help of villages collectives' and the voluntary support group of SPANDHANA which has been formulated by the SPANDHANA team organising and building cadres. The cadres of SPANDHANA act as volunteers to implement programs of SPANDHANA effectively at the grass root. In this background the overall implementations and efforts of SPANDHANA can be divided as following.

Direct reach out programmes to target people

These programmes include the activities that directly connect us to the target people in achieving the ultimate objective. Village and Slum campaigns to organize people as collectives is the initial step in this programmes . These groups are targeted each time during the field visit and they will be strengthened on social, civic, political, economic and cultural issues. Some of them are also working as self help groups and rest are mainly formed to discuss and share the experiences and information which will lead the awakening among the members. In the initial stages SPANDHANA takes up the issues of public grievances in the village and the action that has to be taken by the public to pressurize the local government to implement the essential projects and schemes to rectify the problem like drainage, drinking water, public distribution system, transportation and road, ration cards, etc. . . Later on the process the sensitive and minute issue like gender equality, caste discrimination and



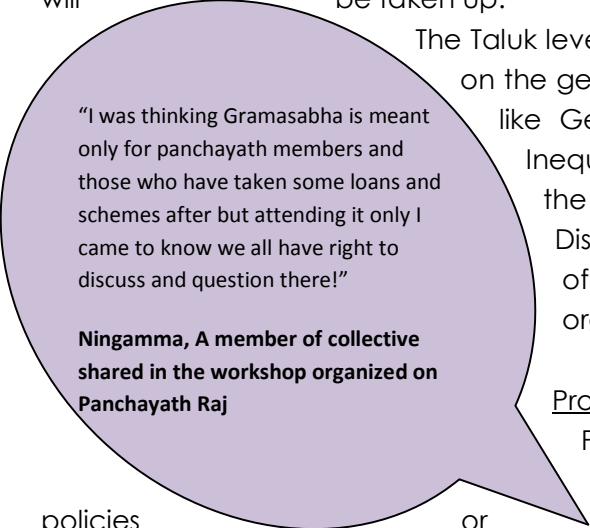
The above chart shows the increase in number of Anganawadi, PHC, PDS and number of Gramasabhas held in the past 4 years.

class divisions will be taken into task. Since SPANDHANA is also working with the unorganized sector and with a special focus to women laborers the groups that will be formed among these laborers will have a different way of approach since their laborers issues like equal wage system, fair wage, facilities to laborers etc will be upheld. Through this process SPANDHANA tries to organize people and build volunteers and cadres to SPANDHANA at the grass route level to take the activities further.

Awareness Building Activities

Awareness building activities are organized at two 4 levels.

Local level includes the group discussions, seminars and workshops organized within the collective groups and at the village or slum level. In this kind of awareness building programmes there will be one to one interaction with members and issues specifically related to the PDS system, facilities by the government, Gramasabhas, legal aid and on violence against women will be taken up.



"I was thinking Gramasabha is meant only for panchayath members and those who have taken some loans and schemes after but attending it only I came to know we all have right to discuss and question there!"

Ningamma, A member of collective shared in the workshop organized on Panchayath Raj

The Taluk level awareness programmes will be held at the taluk headquarters which focuses more on the general issues which relates equally with all villages and slums. This include programmes like Gender and leadership training, workshops on origin of caste, class and gender Inequalities, awaking mass on the available welfare projects and schemes in government, the policies which affects women and children and youth etc.

District level awareness programmes will be organized gathering people from all 4 Taluks of Ramanaaraga district. Sometimes we also include other organizations as partners in organizing the event.

Protests and Processions

Protests will be held often by SPANDHANA at taluk and district level taking up varied issues to pressurize the government or the respective bodies to implement the policies or to provide justice to the affected community or victim. The protests will also be held asking government to take back some policies or project which are anti-women and anti-people. Focusing on all three major programmes of SPANDHANA, we have carried out several protests. The processions will be worked out more by unorganized sector `laborers unions since it is essential to aware government and public to realize about the several problems like low wages, impermanency, unequal wages, hazardous work style etc. . .

Study tours and exposure programmes

SPANDHANA team and cadres' and volunteers' team will be taken for study tours to give them exposure about various issues, like the strengthening of collective groups, successful self help groups, cultural approach, women movements and unorganized sector workers' union which are using effectual strategies and effectively working and others.

Highlights of the implemented direct reach out programmes to target people

Gender Equality and Community development' and Child Rights and Social Justice and Fighting against Fundamentalism and Empowerment of Unorganized Sector Women: Under these two programmes we are working in 75 villages in Channapattana Taluk and 10 Slums in Ramanagaram district. The major implementations under these programmes can be broadly recollect as following.

- Formation of 16 Women's Collective groups, 6 family collective groups, 8 Yuvaspandhana groups and 23 Children collective groups in 75 villages.
- 12 cadres and 25 volunteers to SPANDHANA including all 75 villages.
- 12 Emergency Gramasabhas have been organized in 13 Grama Panchayaths to discuss about the burning civic [problems and most of the discussed problems relating to drainage, street lights, anganawadis, Ashraya schemes and pensions have been redressed.
- 7 women from Dalit community are also have been trained to contest in the coming local self government election.
- 128 cases of women right violation has approached SPANDHANA and 48 cases have been settled through counselling r, in 4 cases accused has been convicted and rest are still under legal procedure.
- Extension of BPL cards to 7053 people and 1540 households.
- The Dalit colony which was afraid to start a group as their own because of the violence from dominated communities has started with the support of SPANDHANA despite several opposition.
- 2 PHC centers have been rejuvenated.
- Around 13 Public distribution systems have restarted and working effectively.
- Sanction and implementation of proper drainage systems in 6 villages.
- Sanction of 5 Anganwadi schools and process is on to establish 1 higher primary school.

"We were not revealing anything relating to our family problems in Sanghas but once we came to know that there are common problems for women worldwide through many discussions, we started share about the violence we are facing in our own homes."

Ratna, A women Collectives member shared in a workshop.

- Process is on to sanction of a graveyard for Dalit community in Hodike Hosahalli.
- Extension of members in mid day meal union from 263 to 312 and extended to 13 more villages.
- Policies have been implemented for mid day meal workers to ensure job security and hike in the wages.
- The bill to privatize mid day meal union has put on hold by the government due to constant protests and protests are still on process demanding to take back and cancel the bill.

Some of the implemented Awareness Building Activities

Workshop on Law Awareness:



A series of workshop on 'Law and Legal Assistance' were being organized by 'SPANDHANA Kanunu Arivu Samiti – Bembala' in Virupakshipura on 28th January, on in SPANDHANA office on February 2nd, February 10th in Tippunagara, in Mangadalli on 15th of March and on 14th to 16th February in Moledoddi. Advocate Sheela Ramanathan was invited as the chief guest in Virupakshi Pura and she explained about the existing legal rights for women and workers. And explained the procedures ho to avail the rights also elaborated the loophole in our current enforcement machineries like police station, Judiciary etc...

Advocate Vijaya Kumar and Advocate John were invited as chief guest for 14th, 15th and 16th programmes and Mrs Malini Antharjanam spoke to Tippu nagar participants. Several rights of women, workers and other legal issues were being discussed.



Awareness Programme to Construction Workers:

On 1st of March an awareness programme was were being selected by the Channapattana and union. Mr. Shivanna, The chief secretary of All India addressed the participants regarding their rights in economic situation and how it is affecting on the of government in not providing secured employment duties and responsibility if each cadre in the union



conducted to the construction workers who Ramanagara district construction workers Trade Union Congress was the chief guest and the union. He also explained about the global common working sector of India and the role to the mass. He also explained about the and also explained the facilities available from

the government for this sector. Nearly 60 to 7 members participated in the seminars and Dhakshiyi, Malini Antharjanam were also participated in the programme.

International Women's Day:



International Women's Day was being organized on 8th of March in Kenchaiahna Doddi in which about 500 people participated from different villages and slums of Channapattana. The programme included a mass cultural rally throughout the streets of village and a mass programme in the school grounds of Kenchiahna Doddi. Ms. Leela Sampige and Dr. Vasu were the chief speakers of the event. Ms. Nirmla, President of Akshara Dasoha Bisiyoota Federation, Ms. Nagarathna President, Harokoppa Gram Panchayath were also spoken in the programme.

Speaking on the topic 'Working Women and Essentiality of Women's Movement' Leela Sampige explained about the role of patriarchy in Indian society and how the women is being treated s the secondary sub-ordinate. She said, "The labor of women with in the family and outside the family is being exploited and it is getting the least recognition. Thus the minor protest against the exploitation is a great revolt, thus women should not conceal anything but they should revolt'.



Ms. Nirmla explained about the role of women in building a movement and the obstacles she faces on the process.



She explained in simple language taking her on example, which really inspired the percipients. Ms. Nagrathna shared her experience in her Gram Panchayath, how she is being treated by the upper caste men in gram panchayath though they are the lower grade officials to her, she explained how caste and gender issues is playing its role in Indian society though they have provision in law and constitution. Dr. Vasu Explained on the topic 'Working Women and Role of women in Politics'. There were several cultural programmes were organized by the children of 'Makkala Chavadi' From different vlllages. The whole family members were participated in the programme and we could see the accomplishment of the Family collective groups in this programme.

Initial Survey among Beedi Rollers:

As an initial step SPANDHANA started with the survey of working areas where there is a large number of populations from Beedi Rolling and Construction workers laborers Union. The survey collected the basic data about the socio-economic-cultural conditions of the people and their access to basic amenities, facilities, education, health and the political state. The survey chiefly focused on their profession of Beedi rolling and tried to excavate the information to understand their current situation and the level of exploitation. The survey was carried out in Ramanagara Taluk of Karnataka state in the following places, Mehboobnagar, Yarab Nagar, Ijoor, Topkhan Mohalla, Troopline. We have contacted total 250 women workers as 50 women workers from one area. They all are being identified as the members to the Union. The survey among construction workers has already finished and the legal registration procedures of the union have also concluded in Channapattana Taluk. At present there are 180 construction workers who have become the permanent members of the union and 15 construction women workers are taking an active leadership in activities concerning their Union.

Intensive Workshop for Muslim Women Laborers:

In March one intensive workshop was conducted to 56 women workers focusing on 'Labor rights, importance of women's labor and gender issues associated in exploiting the labor of women. The workshop conducted under the banner of "Our Rights: Being Laborer and Women". Ms. Nirmala, the active leader of Noon Meal workers Union took the classes as special invitee and SPANDHANA activists took all the sessions on various subject relating with the topic.



Ambedkar Jayanthi Celebrations:

On 18th of April 2009 'Ambedkar Jayanthi' had been organized in SPANDHANA office as a remark to celebrate the 118th birthday of Dr. B R Ambedkar. In the occasion the members of our groups from different villages gathered in the office And Goutham Suresh, writer and social activist addressed the people and explained about the life and contributions of the Dr. Ambedkar. And Lankesh, Reporter and Dalit Activist explained about principles of identity and self respect and also explained about how the history has been fabricated specially the Freedom Struggle of Indian and also the need of the

struggle in current situation in the midst of several social problems. At the end of the seminar there were several questions from the audience. The programme concluded with some awareness songs from the SPANDHANA cultural team.

Awareness Camp and Ambedkar Jayanthi:

In the same month a mass programme has been organized in Harokoppa Village as an Awareness Camp about the rights of Civilians in Panchayath Raj System. This camp had also incorporated the celebration of Ambedkar jayanthi. Dr. Vasu Social activist from Karanataka Janapara Vedike and Nagrathna, President of the village panchayath had been invited as the chief speakers and the focused on two subjects respectively "Ambedkar: Contributions and the lessons to learn from his struggles and how to apply it to the current situations" and "Panchayath Raj and People's Rights". Around 500 villagers participated in the programme and actively marked their presence by taking part in the discussions at the end of the seminar.

Children's Cadre Camp:



In the month of May 2009 on 16th and 17th two days children's cadre camp has been organized in a community hall in Channapattanam. The syllabus for these two days included Ideological discussions about child rights, identity, gender & politics and present education system. The camp included games, exercises, group activities etc... as the chief curriculum. The children from 10 villages as 4 from each villages participated in the camp thus making strength of 40 children. Rajaram, A theatre personality and folk artist was being invited as the resource person

to engage children for two days and Artists of SPANDHANA cultural team, MANAVI cultural team also oriented children culturally by teaching folk songs, drama and folk dances and taught about its cultural importance. In the two days workshop the children participated very actively. They built script on poverty, child rights, domestic violence and problems of unorganized sector workers and acted the drama. They went back home with an objective of forming their respective groups very actively towards social causes and with some resolved targets.



Legal and Social Awareness for Mid-Day Meal Workers' Union:



On 20th and 27th of June an awareness camp was being organized for mid day meal workers on legal provisions for the empowerment of unorganized workers under Laborers Act. Union president Nirmala, Secretary Latha, Advocate Vijay Kumar and Malini Antharajanam addressed the participants. The meeting also focused specially on the social awareness regarding the caste based discrimination which is happening among mid day meal workers and the workers were informed about the need and importance of equality among the workers by all means. Two meetings were intended to give for separate groups of 30 members on the same issues and topics.

Construction Workers' Meeting:

As the result of the unification and several struggles at last the 100 members of construction workers union were being given indentivity cards from the Labour Department of the government. Henceforth the card holders can avail all the facilities and welfare projects from the government which are intended for the empowerment of the construction laborers. SPANDHANA organized a meeting on 2nd of June 2009 to distribute the cards to the members and to make them more aware about sthrengththerring the union.



Review Meetings and Board Meetings:

On 5th of May SPANDHANA team and CRY team together discussed about several agendas mainly relating to the Action Plan and about different issues regarding which the team should be trained more specially relating to Child Rights and Gender Justice.

On 8th of May a review meet as being organized in SPANDHANA mainly to discuss and streamline the roles and responsibilities of each activist in specific. All team members of SPANDHANA were present for the meeting.

On 20th of May a board meeting as being organized to change the Treasurer. And all the board members except two attended the meeting and decided to elect Ms. Latha as a new board members for SPANDHANA.



On 27th of June SPANDHANA organized a planning meeting to plan about the future activities of SPANDHANA with more specific objectives. The organizations like Samanatha Mahila Vedike, Mid0day meal workers Union and Karanataka Komu Souhardha Vedike attended in the meeting and gave their suggestions and support SPANDHANA's activities. Especially the Public Hearing which is intended to organize on August is being discussed in detail.

"Phasalu Tegeyona, Kanasu Kattona"

(Inauguration of AN Ambedkar Group in Hodike Hosahalli Village)

In Hodike Hosahalli village more than quarter of the population constitute the Backward castes and these Dalits are being discriminated socially and culturally by the upper castes of the village. Because of the caste suppression they were not allowed to form their own group under the name of Dr. Ambedkar Association. Therefore since it is our working area and as we could read the situation we initiated a programme with the full support of the villagers and organized a cultural rally in the main streets of the village under the banner of Phasalu Tegeyona, Kanasu Kattona was being organized on 9th of december in Hodike Hosahalli Village. The rally which carried all traditional items headed by the Tamate beats of Manavi Kalatanda. After the rally people gathered for the seminar, which was addressed by Mr. Rajgopal, a Dalit leader and Ms. Malini Antharjanam from SPANDHANA and local influential personalities Chikka chennayya, Neeelisidyya and Gram Panchayath Member Kempajamma addressed the audience.

After the programme the group is being informed about the issues relating to their village and the facilities available for them from government. Thus the members of this group are taking an active role in *Gramasabhas* and also availing the benefits available for them.

Constitution Day – January 26th 2009:

As the resolution taken in the State level Alliance SPANDHANA also took an initiative to celebrate January 26th as CONSTITUTION DAY instead of Republic Day. We invited students, youth, teachers and retired officials from different villages and organized a seminar in SPANDHANA office focusing on the subject 'Relevance of Constitution Day'. Mr. Ra. Shi. Deverajj, the district president of Dalita Sangharsha Samiti spoke on the issue and said, "The constitution created by Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar with great effort but in India rightist forces are trying to spread their hate campaign against the secularism and equality of India. Thus the word republic is also a strategic term to suppress the importance of constitution. Thus it is very much essential to celebrate it as constitution day to uphold its equality". Soma Shekhar, a teacher and activist of BSP also explained the preamble and explained about several legal aspects of the constitution and shared several informative issues. Suresh Goutham from BVS compared the 'ManuDharmashastra' and 'Indian Constitution' and upheld the secularism, equality and freedom of the latter and explained the dark face of Brahminical scriptures and their strategies to subjugate the Dalits and Backward communities in the name of culture. Mr. Gopal, BRCU president, Advocate Vijaya Kumar, Construction and mid day meal workers union, BVS, Ambedkar Yuvak Sangha members participated in the programme.

On the next day a memorandum was given to the District Commissioner demanding

- January 26th should be celebrated as constitution day.
- A small note of constitution should be given to the school children, Govt officials, and Public.
- A speech should be conducted to the children about the contribution and role of Dr. Ambedkar in drafting the constitution and contribution of other leaders like Bhaghat Singh, Subhash Chandra Bose, Azad etc. . .
- The essence of constitution mainly equality, secularism, fraternity, freedom and such other vital aspects of constitution should be explained to the children in all schools while celebrating 'constitution day'.



Awareness camp on Panchayath Raj:

SPANDHANA is planning to orient Dalit and marginalized women to politics by awaking them about the constitution, social problems and ideological orientation to lead a healthy and active politics especially under Panchayath Raj System. SPANDHANA is hoping to emerge these candidates as local leaders to tackle the crisis at



cvillage level. In this perception SPANDHANA organized 1 day workshop for selected village women on 'Panchayath Raj system and Constitutional Rights'. The session was taken by a veteran and renowned Panchayath raj trainer Ms. Karthyaini. Workshop was effective and informative and brought out several healthy feedbacks, comments and clarifications by the participants.

Children's Cadre Camp:

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Legal Awareness Programmes



Legal awareness programmes had been organized for both Mid-Day meal workers and Construction laborer workers on Laborers rights as they gather in SPANDHANA office for their weekly meetings. Latha, Nirmala and Malini took the classes on various rights relating to workers and also about the importance of forming a movement.

Health and Sanitation Workshop

One day Health and Sanitation workshop was being organised for women, men and children of Sayyadwadi and Tippunagar slums. The health and Sanitation workshop mainly focused on the spread of communicable diseases mainly H1N1 and Swine Flu. Nearly 40 members Participated and a Dr. Hameed was being invited as a resource person and Malini Also addressed the participants.



TAMATE Workshop

SPANDHANA had organised a 6 day cultural workshop for Tamate and to learn various strategies of cultural approach to organise the mass and awake them. Mr. Santhosh Guddiyangadi was being invited as the resource person and he taught effectively. The team SPANDHANA participated in the event.

3 Days workshop on Students federation



A three day workshop was being organized for selected cadres from villages who are students and they have been trained for two days about the importance, ways, and strategies to establish the Student's organization in their school, village and taluk level. The importance of student organization and about the present crisis in education and other issues relating to students were discussed. Lakshmi Ram The cultural and social Trainer, Seetha Lakshmi of SPANDHANA and Dr. Vasu from Karnataka Students Forum had been to the workshop as resource persons to train students.

Unification of Unorganized sector Workers with special focus to women in unorganized sector

Mid day meal workers Union and Construction Workers Union are the two active and effective unorganized sector unions formed by SPANDHANA. After the formation of mid day meal workers Union and as a result of continuous struggles the laborers have been provided Job Security and Hike in their honorarium. To implement other several demands including Insurance, declaring as half day permanent workers and against privatization of this arena struggles are still on process.

In construction workers Union at present there are 274 members and still the membership is expected to grow to include all construction laborers under the umbrella. After the formation of Union the workers have been provided with the permanent Identity cards and some of them have also availed with the facilities that are provided to construction workers from the government like Loan to construct houses, grant to complete the education of their children etc...



SPANDHANA strategically intervening among laborers to channelize them towards the concept of gender equality and many social, cultural, political issues are also discussed in the union continuously to change their mindset and way of thinking.

Legal and Social Awareness for Mid-Day Meal Workers' Union:

On 20th and 27th of June an awareness camp was being organized for mid day meal workers on legal provisions for the empowerment of unorganized workers under Laborers Act. Union president Nirmala, Secretary Latha, Advocate Vijay Kumar and Malini Antharajanam addressed the participants. The meeting also focused specially on the social awareness regarding the caste based discrimination which is happening among mid day meal workers and the workers were informed about the need and importance of equality among the workers by all means. Two meetings were intended to give for separate groups of 30 members on the same issues and topics.



Construction Workers' Meeting:

As the result of the unification and several struggles at last the 100 members of construction workers union were being given identity cards from the Labor Department of the government. Henceforth the card holders can avail all the facilities and welfare projects from the government which are intended for the empowerment of the construction laborers. SPANDHANA organized a meeting on 2nd of June 2009 to distribute the cards to the members and to make them more aware about strengthening the union.

Introductory awareness camp or New Members of Construction labours

By mid July nearly 100 more members joined Construction Workers Union from January. Thus on the 18th of July 2009 we organised an introductory programme to the new members mainly to orient them about the aims and objectives of the union. They have also been informed about the importance of union and the rules and regulation that each member has to follow according to the bylaw and manifesto of the construction laborer's union.

Sudden Action: Protests And Procession

Protest against Manohar Maski:

The minister Manohar Maski gave a statement that the drafter of the Constitution of India is not Dr. B R Ambedkar, thus statewide protests were being emerged to oppose his statement. The minister is basically from a rightist background and since Dr.B R is from a lower community it was directly intended towards caste humiliation and it was an attempt to fabricate the history. Thus under the support of an alliance called 'People's alliance for social change' SPANDHANA initiated a district level protest against his demanding to take back the statement and cancel his member of council membership.



Nearly 500 people gathered for the protests from different villages and taluks of the Ramanagaram district and submitted a memorandum to the district commissioner.

Protest seeking justice and relief to Savithamma's Family

SPANDHANA actively participated in the State Level protest against Rape and Murder of Savithamma of upper caste man called felid and as she was Thus after doing a fact



participated in the State Level protest against Rape and Murder of Nelamakanahalli in Malavalli who belongs to a scheduled tribe by an Siddaih. Since Savithamma was self reliant thus refused to go to his protesting the sexual abuses of Siddaih, He had raped and killed her. finding on the same visiting Nelamakanahalli and talking to people, victims and respective officials we planned to organise the protest to bring out the truth and to bring it into the notice f government and to pressurize give proper relief and justice to the victims. The Secretary to minister f women and child welfare came and receive our memorandum and assured to implement the available schemes and relief to the victims family and also assured to give jobs to Savithamma's children. Nearly 50 women from SPANDHANA participated in the rally which was being organised from Bannappa Park to Town hall and in over all there were more than 1000 members.

Protest from Bisiyoota Federation in front of ISKON

On 15th of July 2009 Taluk Bisiyoota Workers Federation organised a state Level protest in front of ISKON temple against the Privatisation of Mid Day Meal project by the rightist state government by handing it over to the ISKON and ADHAMYA CHETANA private organisations. Latha Nirmla from Taluk Federation spoke addressing the workers from all over the state regarding the present crisis. Shivanna, the State Secretary of AITUC spoke on the hidden agenda of BJP government and rightist wing to privatise the arena and through which they plan to avoid Dalit women from enjoying the work of preparing food in schools and their other propagandas "in minting money from foreign funds in the name of poor children of India with out food" Nearly 2000 workers participated from all over the state and staged an effective protest.

Protest against the false case:

On December 11th, Malini Antharajanam the convener of SPANDHANA was being arrested on the false caste allegation complaint lodged by a woman named Vasanthamma backed by the local RSS and Mahila Morcha members. The background of the incident is on October 23rd, a young girl named Shobha approached SPANDHANA seeking support since her sister had cheated her taking Rs.50,000 from her. Thus as according to SPANDAHNA's usual procedure SPANDHANA dispatched a letter to Vasanthamma asking her to attend the counseling. But without any replay all of sudden Malini was taken being arrested according to the complaint given by Vasanthamma. On



December 11th she was produced in the court on the same day she was out on bail. Since the local Dalit organizations and pro-people movement came to know about the situation and realized as it as false compl aint which has been knitted by the local anti-people elements to curb the pro-Dalit movements they organized a Press conference and staged a district level protest and submitted a memorandum to District Commissioner seeking a judicial enquiry and decisive action.



Mid-day Meal Workers Rally – February 2nd:

Demanding several facilities, the Mid-Day meal workers organized a mass protest on Gandhinagar on 2nd of February to which our team marked an active participation. The programme included a mass protest and submission of memorandum to Chief Minister.

NETWORKING AND ADVOCACY

Networking and advocacy plays a chief role in strengthening the effort of movement at state, national and international level. Thus, we have good networking with organizations which shares same ideology and we will be a part of their programmes and activities to prop up their efforts and vice versa. . In this regard, we have networks at state, national and international level and more specific with the organizations working for women's rights. Here are some of the programmes and activities in which SPANDHANA had participated and marked the strong support and also have organized several programmes jointly.

Constitution Day – 21st of January:

SPANDHANA team participated in constitution Day preliminary meeting organized by 'Samajika Parivarthana Janandolana' which was being organized in Bangalore.

"Hale Beru Hosa Chiguru" – 25th of January

A unique programme was being organized by Karnataa Janapara Vedike under the title 'Hale Baru, Hosa Chiguru' which invited the old freedom fighters and freedom fighters under the same roof. The objective of the programme was to take the enormous experience of freedom fighters like Mr. Doreswamy, Mr. Ganapatiyappa and Mr. Ramu and share it to the younger generation who were ready to take up the freedom struggle further. The programme said showcased that still Indian has to get the original freedom from all aspects. We participated in the programmes and were also a part of the organizing team by joining in campaigns.

Awareness Camp for School Children 20th February:

The Government School of Managalawarapet organized an awareness programme to kids and our comrade Dhakshayini being invited as the chief guest and she spoke on gender issues in academics.

Protest against Harassment of Farmers in Bellary – 20th February:

We joined our hands with Samata Sainik Dal which organized protest against the state violence on farmers in Bellary district. Nearly 100 members participated in the protest and a memorandum was being submitted to District commissioner.

Inauguration of Samata Mahila Ranga –15th March.

A youth initiative in Ramanagaram started a new women's organization under the title 'Samatha Mahila Ranga' which was being inaugurated by Women Activist Mrs. Sunada Jayaram and our team took an active role.

Tamate Dance:

Navajagruthi Mahila Sangha organized International women Day in Tigulara Palya in Banagalore in which SPANDHANA team under Manavi Kalatanda gave a performance of '*Tamate Dance*'.

National Youth Foundation Youth Festival:

NYF organized National Youth fest in Nagpur, Maharashtra and our team member Dhakshayni participated in the programme. The fest focused two important issues one is 'communalism and Youth' and 'Gender equality and Youth'. The programme was informative and nearly 250 members from all over the country participated in the programme. The participants also visited 'DheekshaBhoomi' of Dr. B. R Ambedkar.

Lokasabha Elections:

Karnataka Komu Souhardha Vedike organized a preliminary meeting regarding the preparations for coming Loka Sabha election mainly to plan about how we can defeat the communalist fascist BJP and how to uphold the democratic parties

agendas. The discussions lead to a conclusion to organize seminars across the state focusing his topics and campaigning among the mass. Nearly 60 members participated from throughout the state.

Tamate Dance in Ranga Shankara:

Manavi Kalatanda presented Tamate Dance in Ranga Shakara on 2nd of March in Banagalore.

Bhagath Sigh Martyrs Day:

SPANDHANA participated in Bhagath Singh Martyr's day which was being organized by Karnataka Janapara Vedike in Mandya on 23rd of March. In we were also a part of college campaigning team. The programme was effectual in spreading our Bhagath's ideological perceptions to youth.

Gender Awareness Workshop for Milk Producers

On 20th of July, In Banagalli and Patlu The Bangalore dairy Association had organized a two day seminar for men and Women respectively on Gender Sensitization. Dhakshayini and Seetha were being invited as resources person and SPANDHANA cultural team also actively participated in the workshop. Nearly 100 men and women participated in the workshop.

SAMANE – Samanatha Mahila Nele Inauguration

SPANDHANA team had participated in the inaugural ceremony of girls Hostel SAMANE which being started by Samanatha Mahila Vedike in Bangalore. On 12th of September they had organized the inauguration and SPANDHANA also participated in the programme.

Programme of Samanatha Mahila Vedike

SPANDHANA team participated in the discussion on "Women's Reservation" in Bangalore organised by Samanatha Mahila Vedike on August 2nd 2009. Nearly 30 members participated in the programme an Dr.Sudha Sitaraman was the chief guest and addressed the participants in informative way.

CULTURAL APPROACH

SPANDHANA has fully fledged cultural group of 14 member girls which is a state level cultural troop MANAVI KALATANDA. The cultural team has staged many plays, skits and street play throughout the state on different issue relating to women rights, issues of farmers, Dalits and marginalized communities and on civic problems.



In its recent experiment it has also started practicing Tamate. Tamate is a



percussion instrument used by Dalit community of Karanataka and Tamil Nadu. It is usually played by dalit men as a symbol of their cultural revolt against caste discrimination and feudal exploitations. Tamate not only stands as a cultural icon of a particular community but it also stands as a revolutionary instrument. Therefore in this background MANAVI KALATANDA has planned to learn Tamate and in the past two quarters they have finished

two training on tamate. With this Manavi kalatanda has become the first of its kind women's Tamate troop in the state.

The cultural approach has become chief weapon of SPANDHANA special while entering a new village or empowering an enlightening the mass in simpler and effective means. Cultural approach has also led us path to sort out many social issues. In future days SPANDHANA is effectively building strategies to involve more youth and children to this path of social transformation through cultural approach.



BEMBALA - THE SUPPORT

(IN SOLIDARITY WITH VICTIMIZED WOMEN)



SPANDHANA has a counseling center under the name of "Bembala" (The support), which is working for the reduction of violence against women through participatory approaches. Through Bembala we are directly involving to fetch justice for the victim. Since the strategy of counseling is working effectually, the members who contact SPANDHANA for the mental and moral support are increasing. Most of the cases are being resolved in the stage of counseling, thus it is avoiding going to go to police station.

Below is the table which shows the number of cases dealt and settled.

Mode of Atrocities →	Dowry		Rape Attempt	Cheating	Domestic Violence	Property Rights	Acid Attack	Caste Clashes	Harassment at workplace	Settlement of cases through counseling
	D	H								
January		--	--	1	2	1	--	--		2 Settled
February			1							-
March		1	--	--	2	--	--	--		1 settled
April	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--		1 settled
May				1	5					1 settled 4 case registered
June		---	--	--	5	--	--	--		3 settled rest registered.
July		2			1	1		2		3 settled, 2 registered
August		1	---	--	3	--	--	--		1 settled
September		1			3					1 settled
October		1	1		2			1		2 settled, 2 registered
November					1					2 registered
December			2						1	1 registered
Total		6	4	2	25	2	--	3	1	15 cases settled

SPANDHANA will be in support with the victim throughout the judicial proceeding till the victim gets justice. In this regards the Police Station which always driven by the patriarchal values is against to the rights and wishes of the women and SPANDHANA has hard experience in negotiating with the police to lodge the complaint even if it is genuine. The Indian judiciary also is blind towards the women's right when it comes to the practical level of implementation.

FUTURE PLANS

- **Preparing a fully fledged strategic plan to further strengthen our implementations at the grass route level specially focusing on collective groups and their activities.**
- **Strengthening the existing collective and preparing 10 more cadres and extending the groups and membership.**
- **Initialing a SPANDHANA newsletter and state wide women's magazine.**
- **Starting up an income generative activity among unemployed young girls.**
- **Further strengthen the cultural team and special focus on children's collective.**