



ANNUAL REPORT 2014

SPANDHANA, Ramanagar

ABOUT US



SPANDHANA is a grassroots organization established in 2001 in Ramanagaram district by a bunch of women activists.

SPANDHANA works for the labor rights and human rights of women workers in unorganized sectors. At present SPANDHANA has formed unions among mid-day meal workers, Beedi rollers, construction workers and agricultural laborers.

OUR VISION

Eradicate discrimination and exploitation of women laborers in unorganized sector and establish a society which treats both men's and women's labor with equal respect, dignity and equal value.



OUR MISSION

Organizing unorganized sector women laborers and sensitizing them regarding their labor rights and human rights. Bringing awareness on their identity, social-political and economic rights and enabling them to ascertain their rights by forming a progressive women's movement.

OUR OBJECTIVES



- Organizing unorganized sector women laborers and making their labor recognized under law.
- Bringing up the standard of living of marginalized and alleviating poverty and eradicating gender discrimination by awakening women laborers.
- Forming strong and awakened grassroots movements led by women laborers to bring social change, community development and national progress.

FROM THE DESK OF SECRETARY



Dear Friends,

It was year of encouragement. The government of Karnataka recognized SPANDHANA as one of the leading organizations working for the cause of women and child rights by awarding the best NGO award. This has humbled us and has entrusted on us more responsibility.

The year unfolded with a plan to expand our intervention among women laborers in agricultural sector. Agriculture being the primary occupation of more than 60% of the population its share to GDP is just 14%. That shows the grave reality of the non-productivity of the sector despite the struggle from farming community. Agriculture not being an encouraging source of livelihood it is natural that there is large amount of migration from primary sector to other sectors and from rural to urban areas. Our concern in this field was in the wake of withdrawal from people engaging in agriculture and its impact on women's employment. In India about 40% of the rural women engage in agriculture and allied activities largely as agricultural laborers as rarely they are land owners. Therefore this recent trend in the agricultural sector is leaving women unemployed, when men choose to migrate to urban areas in search of jobs. In addition despite large amount of labor share of women in agriculture they are paid way less. Therefore to address such vital issues SPANDHANA planned to expand the unionization among agricultural women laborers. On the longer run this union also aims at addressing larger issues like land rights of women.

We also derive immense pleasure to share an inspiring story with you. It was a moment when we patted our own back. When there was a scarce in the fund to open a new office at Magadi Taluk for the newly started union of mid-day meal workers, their seniors at Channapattana and Ramanagara Taluk with the strong leadership of Ms. Nirmala and Ms. Latha, who are respectively the president and secretary of Mid-day meal workers association, came out with a reassuring idea. Without the help or inputs from the core SPANDHANA staff they planned, discussed and implemented a mass donation drive! They not only printed the pamphlets with profound thought on the emergency of creating a platform to raise their demands as women laborers at mainstream but also appealed to the civil society to contribute to their cause wholeheartedly for holistic social change.

A drive which they enthusiastically implemented for more than two weeks without any external support reaped a whopping yield. They collected donation which was decent enough to lease out a house in Magadi. Though we had foreseen and wished for this kind of empowerment of our members of laborers union, it was enthralling to witness the change sooner than expected. Moreover, the most striking feature of this initiative which astonished SPANDHANA is the background of those women who participated in the drive. These rural women are mainly from the Dalit and marginalized communities with minimal literacy and limited exposure. Their world was mainly confined to their villages and sub-urban areas and their only contact with the capital city was the mass protests that SPANDHANA used to organize under the auspices of state level confederation of laborers unions. More than the collection of donation, we are really thrilled by the thoughts, understanding and vision of our union members which was the chief driving force behind such an initiative. Witnessing the fruition of our efforts at its heights has left us encouraged to take up new missions. We expect your support as you have always rendered.

Warm Regards,
Malini Antharjanam
Founder-Secretary

Thank You!

A BRIEF BACKGROUND

SPANDHANA has an anecdote behind its emergence. On February 5th 2001, at 11 pm Ms. Malini Antharjanam, The founding secretary of SPANDHANA being informed regarding a suspicious death of a Muslim woman named Haseena Banu. Ms. Malini along with her colleague-friend reached the spot and they found out that it was murder demanding dowry. Parents of the victims threatened by the accused refused to lodge the complaint. At this moment the duo lodged the complaint on public interest. However as the incident came to the light of the chief functionary of the organization to which they were associated with, the organization objected as the issue was out of purview of the organizations' core objective. Therefore the duo resigned and started an organization that works for Gender Justice. Hence in on 2001 October 3rd SPANDHANA legally came into existence.

EVOLUTION

SPANDHANA initially started to address individual cases of human right violation of women victims. It had a counselling centre to empower victims and an activist group for the legal follow-up of cases to ensure justice to victims and bring awareness in general public on women's human rights. However gradually we broadened our understanding on gender issues and focused on social justice along with gender equality and realised the need to address gender issues with a holistic approach. Therefore we streamlined our work among women workers in unorganised sectors which largely constitute marginalised women.

At present with the broad objective of 'Gender Equality and Social Justice' SPANDHANA specifically works for the human rights and labour rights of women workers in unorganised sectors.



The work of SPANDHANA is spread in 4 Taluks of Ramnagaram districts covering more than 30000 population. SPANDHANA has formed unions among Mid-day meal workers, Beedi rollers, construction workers and agricultural labourers. The mid-day meal workers union containing nearly 2000 members is the strong and successful union which has become a full-fledged women's movement and achieved their demand of work permanency, increment, social security schemes, and accident relief funds. The union functions with strong cadres at the central level and at the grassroots.



OUR FOCUS

Gender Equality

Women and girl children in slums and villages are the major target groups under the concept of gender equality. They are organized in groups and activities are conducted focusing on socio-economic and political empowerment. Small savings and income generative activities for financial empowerment are implemented along with social awareness programmes. The human right violations of women are being addressed through 'Bembala', the counseling center initiated by SPANDHANA



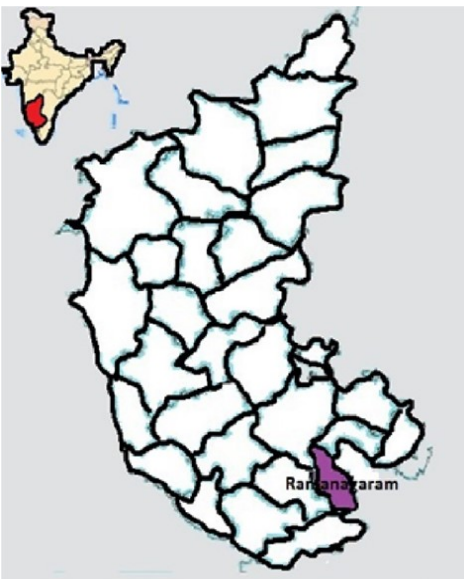
Social Justice

Dalit communities and unorganized sector laborers are the major target groups under the concept of social justice. Dalit communities are chiefly organized at the village level and unorganized sector laborers are organized both in village and urban areas. Organizing and orienting laborers to avail their labor rights and eradicating gender, caste and religious differences among laborers to unite for common cause and community development is the major objective of all programmes implemented among unorganized sector laborers. At present SPANDHANA have formed unions among mid-day meal workers, construction laborers, beedi rollers and agricultural laborers.

Community Development

Change without development is a reactionary change. Hence SPANDHANA always focuses on progressive change stressing social change towards development. Therefore, community development is a fundamental and inevitable aspect of all activities of SPANDHANA and the initial task of group members of the community groups is nothing but focusing on personal emancipation only through community development and ensuring good governance. Therefore SPANDHANA works with local self-government and empower women and youth to be active participant in the process of decision making and community development programmes.

OUR REACH



Being stationed in the district Headquarters of Ramanagaram SPANDHANA has regional taluk offices at Channapattana and Magadi (Both are unit of SPANDHANA mid-day meal workers union and they are completely run by the union members). However SPANDHANA has a reach in all 4 taluks of the district with its union members in different unorganized sectors spreading all over the taluks.

In the year 2012 we extended our work to 25 more villages and 15 more slums in Ramanagaram Taluk, and in the year 2013 we extended our work to another two taluks Magadi and Kanakapura, making our total area to 115 Villages and 45 slums in urban Ramanagaram district.

ACTION PLAN

Activities	Focus	Outcome	Long Term Objectives
<p>Basic Study regarding the Demography, Socio-economic state of Agricultural Women Labourers and state of agriculture in Ramanagaram District</p> <p>Functionary Activities: Printing of BLD formats to carry out formal study for basic understanding of Agricultural labourers and state of agriculture</p>	Women Agricultural Labourers	Understanding the socio-economic and demographic state of agricultural women labourers	Publishing a study report on the status of unorganised sector women workers in the district of Ramanagaram district. Combining the earlier base line data and research reports of other unorganised sector women workers
<p>Organising Agricultural labourers in groups and advocating their rights and welfare policies. Involving new members of the old unions in the process. (New 300 members in agricultural labourers union) and strengthening them</p> <p>Functionary Activities: Village campaigns to organise agricultural women labourers Organising Awareness meetings on role of feudalism and patriarchy in agriculture, Leadership, Personality Development, legal aid and policies and welfare programmes available for agricultural women labourers Films and Documentary Screenings regarding women leaders, patriarchy and different socio-cultural issues that subjugates women's rights</p>	Women Agricultural Labourers	<p>Formation of agricultural labourers' union. Unionisation to give an organised structure for availing legal rights and benefits from the government.</p> <p>Awakening women labourers about their rights by giving ideological and intellectual programmes based on the concept of 'Labour' and 'Gender' and role of feudalism and patriarchy in agriculture</p>	<p>Strong and strengthened labour union among agricultural women workers Equal pay and dignity of labour for women in agricultural sector Strong union of women cadres who are ready to take the social movements and bring about an ideologically driven social and women's movement</p>
<p>Networking and Advocacy</p> <p>Functionary Activities: Meeting with local level organization and groups associated with unorganised sector women labourers like KrishiBhavan and farmers</p>	Agricultural labour Unions, Organisation working for agriculture and agricultural labourers and Government institution related to agriculture	Networking these local level unions to state and national level to get represented at higher levels and put a mass pressure for policy implementations	<p>Implementation of women friendly policies Implementation of welfare programmes for women in unorganised sectors</p>
<p>Involving new members to the existing unions and strengthening them, retaining present implementations.</p> <p>Functionary Activities: Organising meetings, discussions and awareness camps at cluster levels and Taluk level to awake the unorganised workers regarding their rights and their role in society through unions. Organising district level and state level conferences on 'Labour and Gender Issues'. Protests to Demand the Laborer's Rights against Government, Protests against the sexual, mental and physical harassment of women workers Printing a monthly periodical (tabloid size) for private circulation among our target groups and network organizations. The subject focuses on issues relating women rights, women development policies and schemes, Gender issues and intellectual write up.</p>	Mid-day meal workers, Beedi-rollers, and Construction Labourers	<p>New members to the union existing unions. Continuation and effective implementation of the present work Organising more workshops to build cadres and leaders Unorganised sector women labourers writing on socio-economic and women related issues in the house journal</p>	More effective and strong women labourers Movement at state level.

IMPACT AND HIGHLIGHTS

Work of the organisation is yielding more promising results but at the same time becoming challenging compared to earlier years. As the movement is extending; more number of workers are joining SPANDHANA which is increasing the capacity of the movement. The extension to new areas has not only given a new plethora to us but also we witnessed several socio-economic problems prevailing in the villages, in which some were general and some were specific. General problems were related with the basic amenities issues of workers and specific issues were certain cultural practice against women.

Some of the major impacts during the last year are;

- The members of union are responding effectively to all our activities and programmes. The increasing participation of Muslim women is giving a new hope. Construction labourers and mid-day meal workers are also enthusiastic in joining hands with SPANDHANA's team in going to villages and slums part of campaigning, this process is giving a hope of new cadre building processes and SPANDHANA has also identified and trained 16 cadres among whom ten are active in SPANDHANA's activities.
- The mid-day meal workers union witnessed a steep progress in the membership with the new branch being opened at Magadi Taluk. This initiative has made the total membership to reach 872 members at the district level.
- The beedi rollers union has expanded with 23 more groups at the grassroots with 360 members making the total membership to 783.
- More than 40 groups have been formed among agricultural labourers' making the total membership to 543 including 197 men. All the groups have been formed through effective village campaigns in more than 30 villages of Ramanagaram.
- The total membership of construction labourers rose from 560 to 689 including more participation from women labourers.
- 234 newly added members to mid day meal union from Magadi received the identify cards, permanency in job and the stipulated payment under Mid-day Meals Scheme of Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- More than 400 agricultural labourers mainly women labourers were linked to MGNREGA schemes that ensures 100 days of employment with assured minimum wage. In the wake of increasing attrition rate in the farming sector this initiative came as a primary source of livelihood for the women in marginalised sections.
- Positive and active involvement of male members of Construction Labourers union and Agricultural labourers union in designing and executing programmes and policies exclusively intended towards the empowerment of women labourers like equal-wage campaigns and observig International women's day.
- Mid-day Meal Workers' Union has been successful in creating a distinctive identity as a labourer's union with independent decision making board which not only executing the programmes but also engage in policy formations and programme designing. Focusing on the strengthening of the union from the grassroots the Union is not only emphasising on programme part but also executing strong fundraising initiative for the sustainability of the movement.

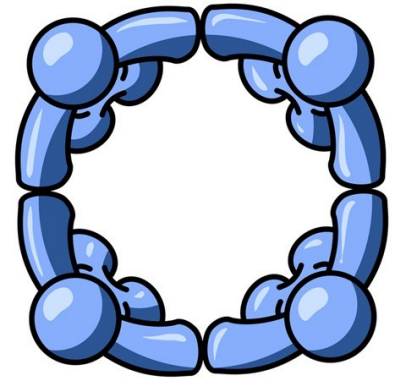


OUR FOOTPRINTS

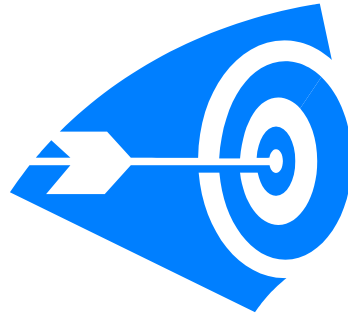


68% growth in the total membership including all unions.

Execution of all activities as per the Action plan and reached beyond the intended target.

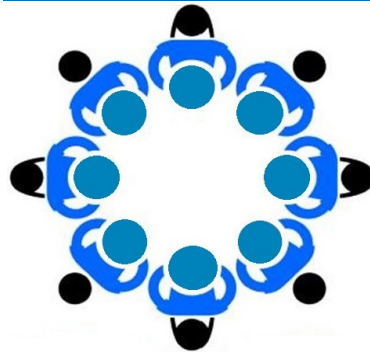


Membership of Beedi rollers union rose from 423 to 783. A rise of 54%.



Membership of Mid-day meal workers rose from 682 to 872

Membership of Construction laborers rose from 560 to 689



52% of the members in the union are linked to the mainstream workforce through government recognized identity cards and all other social security schemes

Membership of Agricultural laborers rose from 324 to 543

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

SPANDHANA initially started as a people's movement which had chiefly depended only on public donations to carry out the activities. However due to lack of sufficient funds and geographical limitations for donations, the board of SPANDHANA decided to accept the institutional grants which supports the aspirations of SPANDHANA without distorting our ideological and socio-economic objectives. Therefore from the year 2008 SPANDHANA started accepting institutional grants along with public donations.



Institutional Grants

Mama Cash: Mama Cash is the oldest international women's fund - established in the Netherlands in 1983. She supports pioneering and innovative women's initiatives around the world. SPANDHANA is being supported by MAMACASH from 2008 to achieve our core objective of 'Gender Equality and Social Justice' by organizing women laborers of unorganized sector and fight for a legal and social justice and women's human rights. We are more than happy to be associated with Mama Cash as she believes that social change starts with women and girls in which SPANDHANA has strong conviction and our inception and fight has been based chiefly on this idea.

Sir Dorabji Tata Fund: SDTT started in 1932 by Sir Dorabji Tata who donated his worldly possessions to the trust. It supports grassroots level people's movements and Non-governmental organizations aimed at a larger nation building activities. SPANDHANA is being receiving funds from SDTT under Small Grants Programme from 2010 and with this support; we are able to effectively implement our programs in villages among women youth and Dalit communities towards community development and socioeconomic empowerment.



Public Donations

Public donations are the vital and enduring source of support and inspiration for SPANDHANA. The aim of collecting public donations is not only aimed at meeting the financial needs of but also ensuring public's indirect participation towards social change, which public need to understand that it is part of their social responsibility and need of the hour to foresee a better tomorrow. SPANDHANA receives public donation through two ways i.e. through memberships and direct donations. SPANDHANA also submits the accounts and audited reports in the general body meeting.

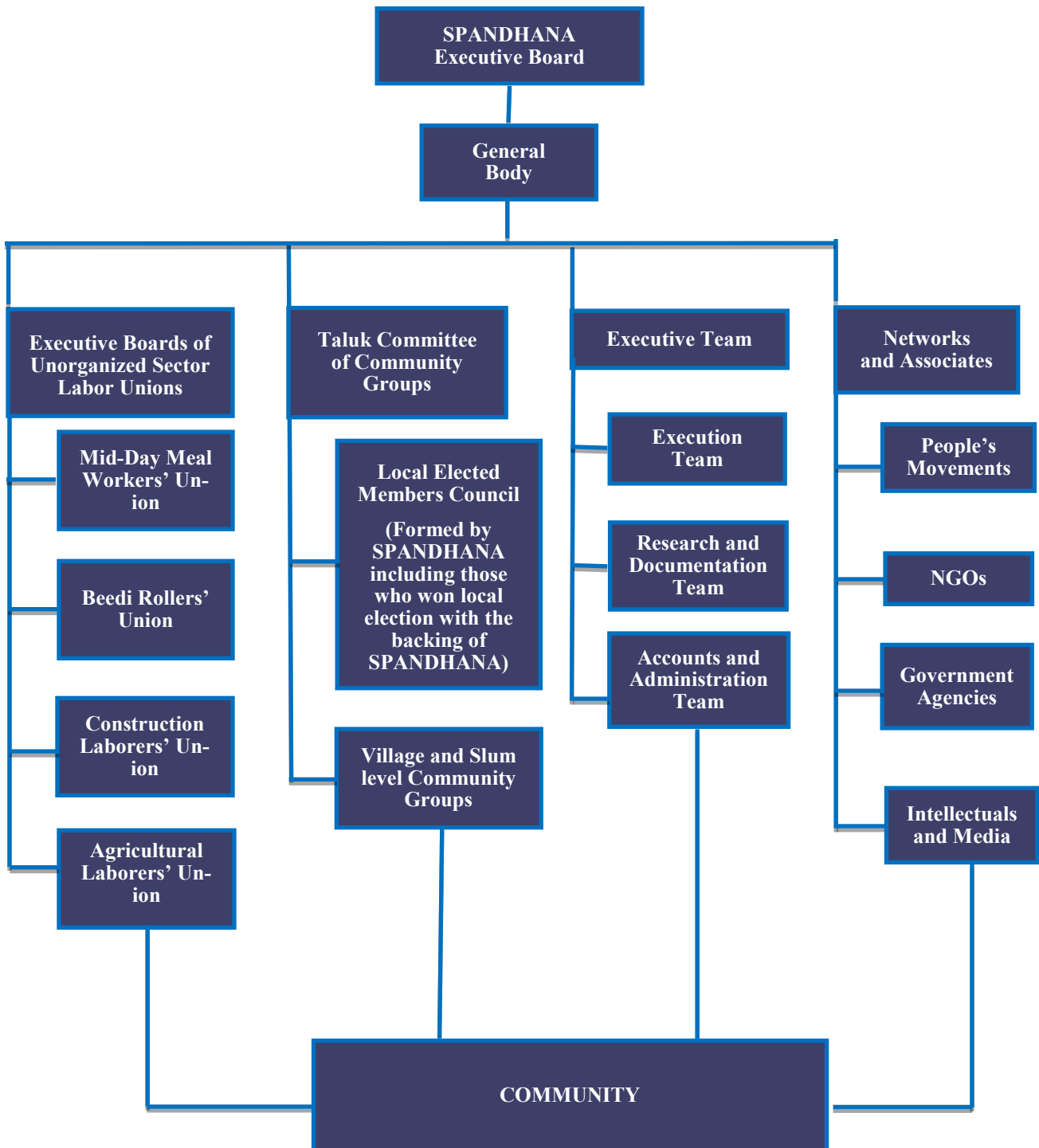
The Story of Creating an Entity!

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ORGANOGRAM



SPANDHANA BOARD

SL NO	NAME	DESIGNATION	OCCUPATION
1	Ishrat Nissar	President	Journalist
2	Malini Antharjanam	Secretary	Social Activist
3	M Latha	Treasurer	President, District Mid-day Meal Workers' Federation
4	N Prabha	Member	Advocate
5	Reehana Parveen	Member	President, District Beedi Rollers' Federation
6	Gopal M C	Member	Block Resource Person, Karnataka State Education Department
7	S N Roopa	Member	Employee at Reserve Bank of India



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FINANCIAL INFORMATION

INCOME SOURCES	2013	2014	Total Income
	Year 1 (A)	Year 2 (B)	(A+B)
SIR DORABJI TATA TRUST	958000		958000
MAMA CASH	1227654	14336500	2664154
LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS		411500	411500
Total Overall Income	2,185,654	1,848,000	4033654
Total Expenditures (see the table below)	2,185,654	1,848,000	4033654
Balance	Nil	Nil	Nil



OUR CHALLENGES AND DREAMS

Challenges

Cadre Building and Sustainability:

Cadre building is an essential part of sustaining the impacts of SPANDHANA activities at the grassroots. Though we are aiming at cadre building through a set syllabus and effective module, we believe that it has to be more effectual. The consumerist attitude and individualistic ideologies spreading among the people at grassroots is a major challenge in instilling social responsibility among the cadres.

Involving stakeholders of the other end of the coin!

The work of SPANDHANA is mainly concentrated among women, Dalit, marginalized communities and un-organized sector laborers. However it is essential to have dialogues and negotiations with caste-Hindus, Jamate heads, Local political representatives, Beedi Owners and Men who are also significant stakeholders who play a vital role in the path of social change and effectual implementation of SPANDHANA's objectives.

Future Plans

Income Generative Activity for Economic Empowerment and social Strengthening

We have planned to extend our unification process to agricultural sector workers. Hence along with policy level work SPANDHANA is also aiming at providing an alternative employment to women through an income generative program.

Empowerment of young Muslim girls' who are victims of Child Marriage

The work among Beedi rollers has exposed us to grave reality of child marriages among this community hence SPANDHANA is planning ahead to work focusing on this chief issue.

