



Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society

(Mahila Samakhya Project of GOI)

Deepening the Movement for Equality



**Annual Report
2012-13**

Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society

(A MAHILA SAMAKHYA PROJECT OF G.O.I., REGD. NO. 3485/1992)

ANNUAL REPORT

2012-13

Deepening the Movement for Equality



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Still I Rise

- By Maya Angelou

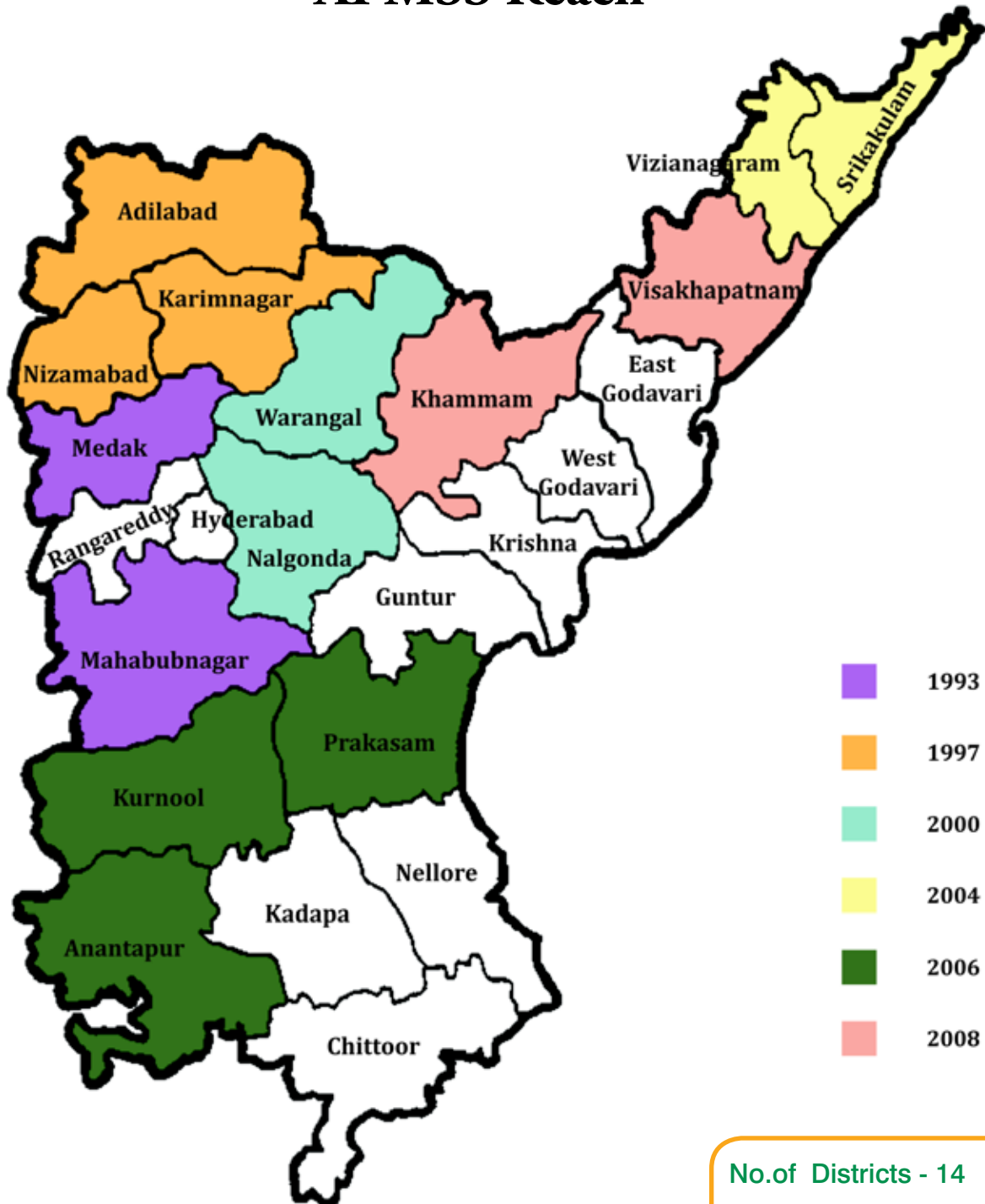
Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.
Leaving behind nights of terror and fear
I rise
Into a daybreak that's wondrously clear
I rise
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise.



Inside.....

APMSS Reach	.....	4
About MS	.....	5
Programme Information	.....	6
Abbreviations	.....	8
Reflections	.....	9
Institutional Processes	.....	14
Second Generation ... towards Equality	.....	25
Pathways to Education	.....	35
Building Capacities and Strengthening Networks	.....	48
Expanding Horizons of Community Sensitivity	.....	58
Samatha Gender Resource Centre	.....	66
Documentation	.....	71
Participation in Seminars & Workshops	.....	74
Visitors	.....	76
Audit Report	.....	77
Major Outcomes 2012-13	.....	80
Executive Committee Members	.....	81
Addresses of District Implementation Units	.....	83
Glossary	.....	84

APMSS Reach



No. of Districts - 14
No. of Mandals - 121
No. of Villages - 5013



About MS

The Programme

Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society is a part of the Mahila Samakhya Programme of the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. The programme was launched in 1993 in 2 districts covering 158 villages across 6 mandals and today it covers 5,013 villages across 121 mandals in 14 districts. The programme reaches out to 2,36,085 women and 88,420 adolescents.

Objectives

The Mahila Samakhya Project presupposes that education can be a decisive intervention towards women's equality. In this regard, its objectives are:

- ◆ To create an Environment where women demand knowledge and information
- ◆ Enhance the self-image and self-confidence of women
- ◆ To enable women to determine their own lives and influence their environment, thus empowering

them to play a positive role in their own development and the development of society

Key Principles

In endeavouring to generate this demand, the programme seeks guidance not for targets, but from certain inviolable principles, which have been kept in mind at all stages of implementation.

- ◆ The programme is not hurried and does not have “targets”, but is a self-paced process, built on existing knowledge and women's own priorities of learning
- ◆ Women participants determine the form, nature, content and timing of all activities in their villages
- ◆ Planning, decision-making and evaluative processes are accountable to the collective of village women
- ◆ Project functionaries and officials are facilitative and not directive

Programme Information 2012-13

Sl No	Particulars	MDK	MNR	KNR	NZB	ADB	WRL	NLG	VZM	SKLM	PSM	ATP	KNL	VSP	KMM	Total
1	No. of Mandals covered	7	8	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	7	8	8	6	6	90
	No. of autonomous mandals	7	7	7	3	4	2	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
	Total Mandals	14	15	14	10	10	8	6	5	4	7	8	8	6	6	121
2	Coverage of Villages	255	335	271	257	281	262	292	272	261	271	243	255	260	250	3,765
	Villages in autonomous mandals	199	259	279	132	234	99	55	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,257
	Re organized Villages	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	(9)	-	-	(9)
	Total Villages	454	594	550	389	515	361	347	272	261	271	243	246	260	250	5,013
3	No. of sanghams	489	419	274	770	276	288	291	398	452	326	336	333	254	263	5,169
	Sanghams in autonomous mandals	199	259	279	132	223	106	111	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,309
	Re organized sanghams	-	-	-	(277)	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	(277)
	Total sanghams	688	678	553	625	499	394	402	398	452	326	336	333	254	263	6,201
4	a) Sangham Membership in existing project mandals	17,039	13,584	10,196	17,981	6,880	13,102	13,595	17,094	16,894	9,528	11,613	12,874	7,487	7,457	175,324
	b) Membership in autonomous mandals	5,085	10,690	11,535	8,969	6,309	9,981	8,192	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,761
	Re organized membership	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total Membership	22,124	24,274	21,731	26,950	13,189	23,083	21,787	17,094	16,894	9,528	11,613	12,874	7,487	7,457	236,085
5	No. of Core Groups	2	16	21	11	42	-	21	-	51	24	21	39	-	-	248
	Membership in Core Groups	72	604	821	282	1,113	-	503	-	1,643	802	402	1,144	-	-	7,386
6	Total no. of literate sangham women	105	658	776	689	2,220	2,141	2,100	2,790	1,000	3,520	696	794	922	2,640	21,051
7 (a)	No. of women trained - Sangham women	1,092	1,031	691	2,285	2,104	1,284	1,783	2,494	779	298	5,756	880	1,512	1,145	23,134
(b)	No. of women trained - Federation members	161	48	144	644	28	331	162	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,518
8	No. of MSKs	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	15
	No. of learners at present	58	41	25	35	25	36	20	16	33	41	24	40	27	32	453
	No. of girls mainstreamed into Schools / Hostels / KGBVs	36	30	21	32	38	36	7	6	18	-	18	31	11	-	284
9	No. of Adult Learning Centres	69	590	330	145	105	121	140	109	64	239	322	334	226	282	3,206
	No. of Learners	1,035	8,498	5,668	2,896	1,685	1,936	2,100	1,554	1,176	3,918	3,240	4,689	4,145	4,253	46,793

10	No. of Bala Sanghas	166	198	89	112	114	174	194	225	188	232	211	197	120	147	2,367
	Girls	2,157	3,023	2,274	1,391	1,725	3,259	3,644	2,681	2,615	3,340	4,148	3,815	1,838	2,537	38,447
	Boys	1,700	2,310	1,633	840	1,051	3,704	3,267	2,532	2,143	2,418	3,294	3,701	1,044	1,810	31,447
	Total children	3,857	5,333	3,907	2,231	2,776	6,963	6,911	5,213	4,758	5,758	7,442	7,516	2,882	4,347	69,894
11	No. of Balasanghas in autonomous mandals	51	131	192	40	67	76	36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	593
	No. of Girls	610	2,210	3,181	445	1,039	2,773	824	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,082
	No. of Boys	386	1,472	1,656	235	481	2,224	990	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,444
	Total children	996	3,682	4,837	680	1,520	4,997	1,814	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18,526
12	No. of children enrolled*															
	Boys	156	426	27	127	716	49	82	1,126	79	53	601	-	52	2	3,496
	Girls	146	578	27	257	773	156	156	1,512	158	120	722	50	91	3	4,749
	Total children	302	1,004	54	384	1,489	205	238	2,638	237	173	1,323	50	143	5	8,245
13	No. of sanghas received Sangham fund	50	51	17	36	74	60	40	50	61	50	76	14	-	-	579
14	NPEGEL clusters	336	232	384	272	193	352	360	216	114	272	224	268	120	45	3,388
	No. of schools covered	2,727	1,646	3,072	1,095	2,048	4,663	2,432	2,099	1,057	2,902	1,475	1,574	1,376	352	28,518
15	Total No. of Women elected to PRIs	77	88	110	57	96	384	407	219	436	-	-	-	-	-	1,874
	ZPTC	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	8
	MPTC/MPP	2	2	5	2	7	34	25	14	32	-	-	-	-	-	123
	Sarpanch	4	13	7	-	12	43	35	32	46	-	-	-	-	-	192
	Ward members	70	72	98	55	77	307	345	173	354	-	-	-	-	-	1,551
15(a)	Total No. of EWRs joined in Sanghas	39	119	75	345	15	30	28	190	-	-	48	88	-	11	988
16	No. of Nari Adalats/ Nyaya Committees at Mandal / federation level	5	7	7	1	19	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	39
	No. of cases received	38	48	35	14	14	182	109	11	2	-	-	-	-	-	453
17	No. of cases resolved at Sangham level	26	24	25	8	6	132	56	11	2	-	-	-	-	-	290
18	No. of Early marriages postponed	33	5	16	38	1	10	16	24	38	3	19	16	4	3	226
19	Team Trainings:															
	(a) No. of trainings held for team	1	6	2	2	8	4	2	8	9	7	-	1	9	7	66
	(b) No. of Participants	13	117	88	93	94	119	26	46	76	58	51	88	72	54	995

Abbreviations

ALC	- Adult Learning Center	NGO	- Non Government Organization
APD	- Assistant Programme Director	NIOS	- National Institute of Open Schooling
APMSS	- Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society	NIPCCD	- National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development
APNA	- Andhra Pradesh NGOs Alliance	NRG	- National Resource Group
APOSS	- Andhra Pradesh Open School Society	NMEW	- National Mission for Empowerment of Women
AWC	- Angan Wadi Center	NPEGEL	- National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level
CRP	- Cluster Resource Person	NPO	- National Project Office
CRPCs	- Child Rights Protection Committees	NRHM	- National Rural Health Mission
DAE	- Director of Adult Education	OBC	- Other Backward Caste
DIU	- District implementation Unit	OBR	- One Billion Rising
DLSA	- District Legal Service authority	PCPNDT Act-	Pre Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Test
DPC	- District Programme Director	PEVAC	- Pre Election Voter Awareness Campaign
EC	- Executive Committee	PLA	- Participatory Learning and Action
EWR	- Elected Women Representative	RP	- Resource Person
FGD	- Focus Group Discussion	RSTC	- Residential Special Training Center
GIA	- Grant In Aid	RTE Act	- Right to Education Act
GP	- Grama Panchayat	RVM	- Rajiv Vidya Mission
HB	- Hemoglobin	SC	- Schedule Caste
HLERC	- Hemalatha Lavanam Educational Resource Center	SCERT	- State Council of Education and Research Training
ICDS	- Integrated Child Development Services	SGRC	- Samatha Gender Resource Center
ISL	- Individual Sanitary Latrines	SHG	- Self Help Group
JRM	- Joint Review Mission	SLMA	- State Literacy Mission Authority
JRP	- Junior Resource Person	SMC	- School Management Committee
KGBV	- Kasturiba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya	SPD	- State Programme Director
MCHRD	- Marri Chenna Reddy Human Resource Development	SRC	- State Resource Center
MCS	- Model Cluster School	SSA	- Sarva Siksha Abhiyan
MDM	- Mid Day Meals	SSS	- Srama Sakthi Sangham
MEO	- Mandal Education Officer	ST	- Schedule Tribe
MGNREGS	- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme	UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme
MIS	- Management Information System	UOH	- University of Hyderabad
MPDO	- Mandal Parishad Development Officer	VAW	- Violence Against Women
MRG	- Mandal Resource Group	WASSAN	- Watershed Support Services and Activities Network
MS	- Mahila Samakhya	WDC	- Watershed Development Committee
MSK	- Mahila Sikshana Kendram		
NABARD	- National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development		

Reflections

Building and Owning a Movement

The year 2012-13 is a milestone in the history of Mahila Samatha as the programme completed two decades of sustained movement towards empowerment of rural women. It is a wonderful and overwhelming feeling when we stop by and look back at the path that we passed through. The journey is filled with lot of learning experiences, both gratifying and challenging. However, the success of the programme stands tall on the whole, as we could set examples of autonomous institutions of rural poor women working with social agenda and of creating a niche for the programme in both government and non-government sectors. The hypothesis of building women's agency for social change has been a reality today.

Collective reflections on the trajectory of women, Sangham women and the facilitating team, was a heartwarming exercise. It is now evident that well informed rural women can break stereotypes and become change agents, and enabling environment facilitates empowerment of marginalized women.

We are happy to report here both our successes and the challenges we faced in the process of building rural women's movement and facilitating grassroots institutions towards autonomous functioning.



Compiling our experiences of working with rural women from marginalized sections into annual report always gives us immense pleasure. There are many accomplishments that encourage us to move ahead with sustained spirits while some not so successful interventions leaves us with learning experiences and drives us towards critical reflection for strategic planning in reaching the goal.

This year marks the completion of two decades of our work with women and adolescent girls from socially and economically marginalized groups. APMSS was launched in January 1993 with the belief that education can be a decisive intervention in promoting women's equality. Looking back, we find ourselves having traversed a path that has led us from education and economic development on to social empowerment which has churned up a hunger for equality, dignity and violence-free lives amongst the people we have been working with.

The learnings from the original interventions have formed the basis for venturing into newer areas of work. The periodic entry of newer districts into the Mahila Samatha family also made it imperative to adopt a strategy that accommodated diversity in priorities, capacities and interventions. The variation or unevenness in institutional development, scale and range of activities are a result of this diversity. However, the impact and outcomes in all districts are common though in varying degrees.

Organizational structures and institutional processes have evolved in the course of providing an empowering educational opportunity that has served the purpose of not only the development of the Sangham members, but also that of their families and have had a significant impact on their social environment. These interventions have helped to not only improve their socioeconomic development, but have also built their strengths and collective voice in order to improve their status in

the society. This has been possible due to deepening the reach of opportunities that have been offered especially to the most marginalized women in society. Our journey since then has seen significant trends and results in the implementation of project interventions.

The number of autonomous federations has risen to 31 with the joining of three federations, two from Warangal and one from Nalgonda districts, to the earlier 28. These are the first federations that have evolved from the mandals where MRG strategy has been tried for the first time in the context of SHG federations. Unlike the federations facilitated in the older districts the size of the membership is large at all levels of these federations bringing large number of women into the fold. It was a great learning experience to all of us at MS as the strategy was experimented in the midst of the most talked SHG movement in the State. This experience confirms that women's institutions from grassroots prioritise social intermediation to that of micro finance agenda to overcome the social barriers that hinder their development.



Samatha Dandu – an alternative structure evolved at mandal level to work as a watch committee and action force against all forms of violence against women, has made itself visible with its remarkable

work in Nellikuduru mandal of Warangal district. Its success and the reflection on the process ignited discussions towards taking it to much lower level, i.e., village, to prevent instances of violence by keeping an eye on the potential localities and homes. It has been adopted by other districts and formed part of the subsequent year's plan of actions.

Addressing child rights continued to be one of the APMSS priority areas. It has been a pioneer in establishing Child Rights Protection Committees at cluster level as a support system to the Bala Sanghams and the Bala Panchayats. Reflection on the process of facilitating CRPCs and the structural arrangement has helped in developing common understanding and evolving a suitable plan of action towards facilitating achievement of child rights.

One of the strengths of MS programme is connecting the field with that of the macro environment. The world conference on Bio-diversity that took place in the State capital and the continued field level discussions on the protection of fast disappearing species / natural resources encouraged us towards reviving the erstwhile initiative of maintaining bio-diversity registers in the villages. The positive response and support from the Bio-diversity board to our request for resource support further eased the process in building team capacities and setting up bio-diversity registers at village level. Through this initiative we could involve men and village heads to work along with the Sanghams and reach to the larger community.

Our experience of implementing UNDP-supported collective agriculture programme in 500 villages during 1999 – 2004 which is successfully being continued in about 220 villages even after winding up of the project has been noted by the Planning Commission. It has been recognized as an effective strategy and is included as part of the strategy for XII plan period which eventually evolved into policy on land leasing, land bank concept and collective

agriculture, in addition to the earlier Comprehensive Land Development Program.

As the programme is in a juncture where the federations in the older districts are functioning autonomously while the MRGs in the other districts are moving towards autonomy and yet newer districts are in the phase of strengthening the clusters, periodic capacity building of the team members has become pertinent. Frequent turnover of the team members and entry of new team members also prompted us towards organizing regular capacity building programmes. In the past year, in addition to the regular trainings, taking into account the field needs brainstorming session on Core Group strategy was organized with representatives from all levels of the programme team; and a workshop was organized on the concept and process of MRG for all the team members from Prakasam, Anantapur and Kurnool districts. These have helped in building conceptual understanding and evolve appropriate plan of actions for field level facilitation.



As a step towards strengthening the perspective and developing common understanding it was discussed and decided by all the MS States to have national workshops periodically on identified issues. Accordingly the first workshop was hosted by APMSS on the 'federations – autonomy & sustainability' in which federation members and MS team participated from across the States. Subsequently, national workshops were organized

by Gujarat and Assam on 'vision of MS in XII plan' and 'gender resource centre' respectively. These workshops formed best forums for cross learning, sharing and developing common perspective while understanding the diversities and making efforts to adopt the good practices with contextual modifications. These are well debated and dwelled upon along with subject experts and NRG members for its effective implementation and impact. This periodical exchange of learnings and views proved to be a good platform for exposure and capacity building of the team members.

There has been greater visibility to the programme and the federations during the past year with its wider reach, both in terms of issues and geographic area. It is reflected in agencies like NMEW approaching MS for collaborative action, Nirantar for implementation of a project on 'Gender Based Violence' and federations implementing RSTCs with the support of SSA. Similarly the quick assessment of learners on retention of their literacy skills under Saakshar Bharat programme taken up for DAE in collaboration with SRC in 13 MS project districts, including non-project mandals, also forms an example in this aspect.

One Billion Rising... a campaign towards demanding women's own spaces and mobilizing civil society members to respond to the issues of violence against women was taken up across the world on 14 February 2013. On this occasion APMSS partnered with other NGOs in organizing various events on the day in the State capital and in the Districts. In continuation to this it has now become a regular feature to organize various activities on 14th of every



month towards sensitizing communities towards responding and addressing issues of violence against women.

MS has become a platform for learning to many. With its successful facilitation of empowerment process among rural women various universities in the State identified MS as an institution for learning exposure to their students. Students of post-graduation and under graduation courses in social work, home-science and education are being placed by their respective universities for field observation, concurrent field work and block placement. In the past year 29 students were placed in the field and gained hands on experience of facilitating Sanghams on processes of empowerment and building grassroots institutions of women.



Reflective workshop on the roles and responsibilities of the team members was an exciting event where members from all levels of the organization came together for two days. This forum helped many new team members to understand not only their roles and responsibilities but also provided an opportunity to meet members from across the project area at one place. It allowed for cross learning, share their experiences, concerns, challenges and plans; and move ahead by taking inspiration from each other. The informal interactions amongst the members also generated a positive environment to build solidarity and fortitude.

Participation in the training course "Gender Equality: Issues and Way Forward for the SAARC Region" conducted at Islamabad by SAARC Human

Resource Development Centre, Pakistan was a good opportunity to share MS processes and achievements with the international participants. This week long programme has been a forum to share, discuss and learn while delving on the future steps on Gender Equality for the region.



A State level celebration – *Sannihitam* was held on the occasion of completing 20 years of APMSS where a collective critical reflection has taken place on the journey of two decades in achieving key milestones in women's empowerment. Remembering and sharing past events and experiences by Sangham women, former team members and the present team members of MS helped to inspire and imbue the newer generation with the ideology and practice of the Mahila Samatha family. It was felt by all that the programme initiated in a small scale has now grown as a large movement for equality. On the occasion a ballet: *Thiragar Rasina Katha*, was developed on the theme of women's empowerment taking the powerful mythological character of 'Renuka Yellamma'. It was performed by a trained team constituting members from Sanghams, Bala Sanghams and MS

functionaries. This was much appreciated and we plan to take it to the wider audience.



We are happy to report that for the first time a large contingent of 48 grassroots functionaries could climb the ladder to become Cluster Resource Persons and Junior Resource Persons at a time in the past year as they build their capacities and strengths.

As APMSS steps into the third decade, our focus is on issues concerning the sustainability of federations and thereby sustaining the movements for equality that they have begun. The Executive Committees of the Federations do require guidance and capacity building due to the internal institutional dynamics and the changing external environment, but the Federations manage their own processes and have also formed district-level networks for sustainability. However, the frequent turnover of the team members at various levels leaves us with many challenges in this process oriented and demanding programme.

The following sections explain the work of APMSS during 2012-13 in the areas of social issues and women's rights, child rights, health, education, natural resource and asset building.



Institutional Processes

Building institutions of grassroots women has always been the focus for the programme. Continued focus on the field processes and constant reflection at various levels gives us the direction towards next steps from time to time. The recommendations of the JRM also have been point of reference for internal retrospection on the programme as well as the processes. Accordingly, for the past couple of years we focused on the constitution of Sanghams and on reaching out to all the disadvantaged women in the project villages. Taking forward the intensive exercise we did last year, we continued analyzing the membership in the Sanghams and the women in leadership at Sangham, resource group and federation level; reviewing its habitation / Sangham wise taking each Karyakartha's / CRP's coverage as a unit.

Analytical discussions and brainstorming sessions with the team members brought us to a consensus that our focus would be certainly on the women in disadvantaged conditions like single women, women living with HIV, sex workers. However, when it came to the women from most marginalised communities we are sure that our focus is on SC, ST, Muslim and few communities from OBC, viz., fisher-folk. But when we went back to the field and had an extremely intensive exercise of understanding the socio, cultural, economic and political situation of other groups under OBC we realized that there are many caste groups, viz., Budaga Jangaala, Gangireddula, Chaakali, etc are also living in most disadvantageous conditions, especially women from these sections. This gave us clarity on our reach and we are happy that these groups are already brought into the programme fold. This exercise resulted in inclusion of 43 habitations; and 2,360 women from existing villages, into the programme.

On the other hand it also gave scope to reflect on the number of women in the Sanghams and the unreached women in the project villages. It was a revelation to us to know that the concept of Waada Sanghams was misunderstood by few field team members resulting in bifurcation of the existing Sanghams. We had to immediately act upon it and take correction measures at two levels – at team level and at field level. It resulted in merger of some Sangham; though in a few villages, it hit us hard in many ways. It was a big learning for all of us at APMSS and we are happy that we could correct our deviations and settle on the track because of the intensive periodical reflections. With this, by the end of the year our coverage is 2,36,085 women from 6,201 Sanghams across 5,013 villages of 14 districts in the State.

Same time, our focus was equally strong on the sustainability of autonomous federations and, capacity building to Mandal Resource Groups and the federations in the consolidation mandals. MRGs in the consolidation process are moving swiftly towards autonomy with the support from the older federations. It is heartening to report that the autonomous federations are recognised by the government departments for partnership programmes like running Legal Aid Clinics, RSTCs and campaigning on child sex ratio, etc. These federations could create an identity for themselves as forums advocating for social change towards women's empowerment and equality.

The challenge now is to facilitate new generation of leadership in the older federations and building capacities of the newly joined team members in the consolidation phase mandals. Facilitating this process intensive programme with strategic shifts and multifarious activities is always a tight rope walk which we do passionately.

Mobilizing and organizing rural poor women from marginalized sections into collectives, build solidarity and support to examine the roots of their marginalization and try to remove it, have been the strategies for implementation of MS programme. Building women's agency and evolve grassroots institutions to enable them to become agents of social change in the process of women's empowerment is the core of the programme.

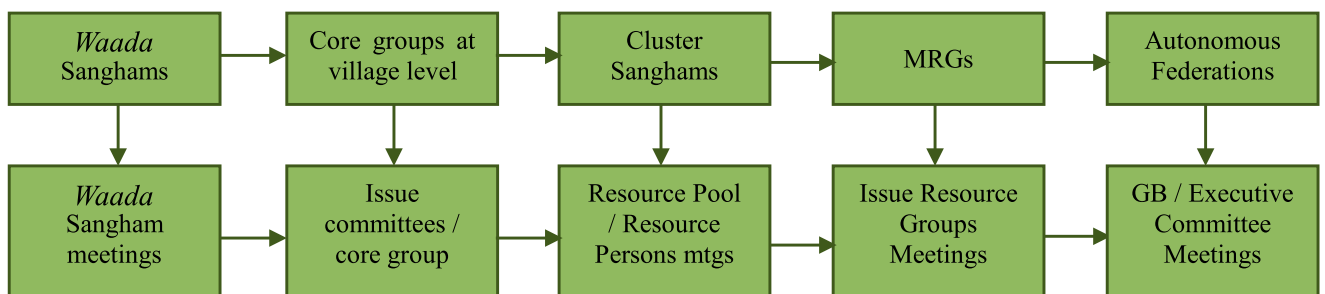
Continuous reflection process and constant engagement with Sanghams have always been steps towards understanding the efficacy of the strategies being implemented resulting in reviewing the existing strategies and evolving new and suitable strategies. It is a process of going back and forth on the strategies being followed and any need for change in it, thus making it vibrant and efficient.

In this process the earlier strategy of facilitating one Sangham at village level has later changed to *Waada* Sanghams in the year 2006 and formation of Core Group at village level connecting all the *Waada* Sanghams. It was a strategic shift to reach out to all the women in the village and bring them into the Sangham fold. However, realizing that there were gaps in the facilitation and varied understanding on the strategy at team level, it was extensively discussed, debated and could build a common understanding amongst all the team members.

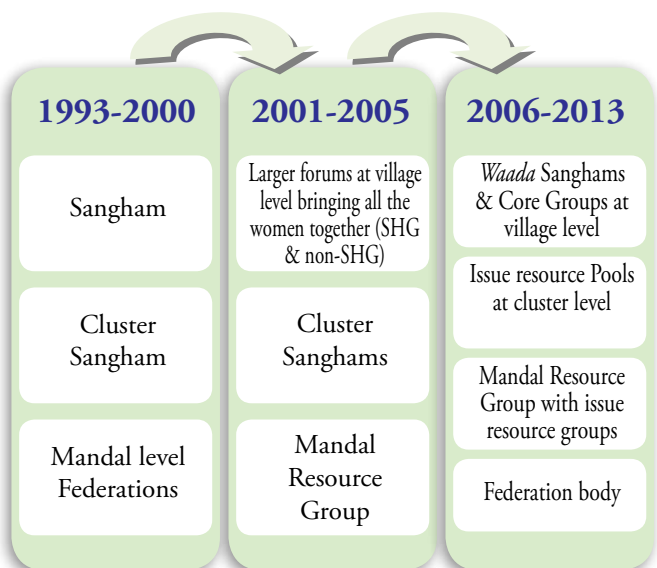
The later exercise resulted in reconstituting the Sanghams at field level, not to lose focus on the women from most marginalized sections. It was an extremely sensitive task and had to be handled very carefully. We took some time in critically examining the constitution of the Sanghams and finally come to a stage where the implementation in some Sanghams with membership only from forward castes had to be withdrawn. Same time it was also realized that in some villages the existing Sanghams were divided into two or three following the concept of *Waada* Sanghams, making the membership to less than 20 in each Sangham. It was a strange situation where the programme aims at building collective strength but in reality it was facilitated other wise and the Sanghams were bifurcated. Immediately we took up correction measures to restore the strength of the Sanghams and its cohesiveness. Though we lost some precious time in this entire process of moving back and forth it is definitely a learning experience to all of us. It prompted us to have a series of sessions on understanding the basic philosophy of MS, the core of collective strength and, on marginalization and exclusion. In a way we are happy that we are very much engaged in the process of education as defined in its larger perspective.....

Waada Sanghams and Core Groups

In accordance to the changed context of women being organized into SHGs and then into village



federations across the State, the earlier strategy of organizing women into one village level Sangham had to be revisited when the programme was expanded to new districts in the year 2000-2001. Thus evolved the strategy of facilitating a village level forum for all the women to come together as one big pressure group to address their concerns. This had to be revised subsequently, as it was not realistic to hold analytical discussions with women on their status and developing gender perspective among them without losing focus on the process. It was the time when the strategy of having more than one Sangham / *Waada* Sanghams at village level to bring all the women into Sangham fold and then facilitating Core Group with the representatives of the *Waada* Sanghams. The following chart is the concise form of the shift in strategies.



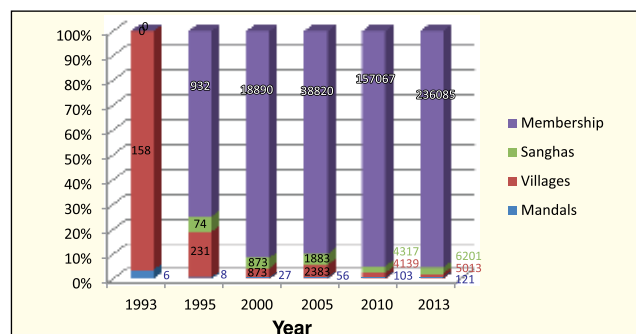
This learning by doing in a trial and error method gave us many learning experiences and a clear understanding on what will work and what will not. The uniqueness of the programme lies in this flexibility and scope for experiments allowing one to make mistakes and learn without compromising on the process and the quality.

For the past couple of years there has been a larger focus on the nature of the Sangham, its constitution, its course towards consolidation and on reaching out

to most marginalized women who are not part of the Sanghams. Thrust was on identifying such women and bringing them into Sangham fold across the project area. Besides, the focus was also on enabling women from these sections to come into leadership. In this regard, critical and analytical discussions were held to understand the situation of women in vulnerable conditions like single women, neglected women, women living with HIV, victims of abuse, survivors of sexual violence, etc, and continuous efforts were made towards bringing them into Sangham fold. Towards this, periodic review and reflection meetings, thematic meetings and core team meetings served as forums. As a result 2,360 women have joined Sanghams and 43 habitations were taken into coverage during the reporting year, after a careful analysis of all the project villages. In addition, these discussions also led to the need for clarity on the Core Group strategy and its application in the field.

Core Group is a village level forum where representatives of *Waada* Sanghams come together for collective action. This is seen as an inclusive strategy for addressing issues of discrimination and marginalization. The action that the Sangham women take up, whether to access their entitlements or to address issues of vulnerability or to act as a pressure group for women friendly planning at grassroots would build the collective strength. This further leads the Sangham to grow as an institution for its autonomous functioning in future.

Graph showing the trend in growth of Sanghams and the membership



The collective efforts of the Sanghams in addressing the infrastructural needs and accessing their entitlement, individuals' as well as village level facilities always proved to be rewarding. Some of the successes are quoted below:

- ◆ In Aaragidda village of Gattu mandal Madhavi and Vijayalakshmi are in the Sangham which formed in 2011. They applied for housing under 'Indiramma Illu' scheme along with others in the village. All the others got sanction but not these two. They pursued with the village secretary many times but in vain. Disappointed Vijayalakshmi and Madhavi shared it in one of the Sangham meetings. With the support of the Karyakartha the Sangham women met the concerned authority requesting to review the applications. They were told that the applications are stuck because they did not enclose photocopies of their identity cards. On resubmitting the required documents both of them got sanction for housing and are very happy now.

Nasrullabad village is located 10 kms away from the Birkur Mandal head quarter, Nizamabad district. Mahila Samatha Sangham was formed in SC colony in the year 2011 with 35 women. In the initial Sangham meetings, women raised that there is water scarcity in the SC Colony for past 4 years which was brought to the notice of the Sarpanch many times but in vain. Upon gathering information from the Karyakartha the Sangham women approached MPDO with a request to resolve the issue. MPDO instructed the VRO to resolve the issue without delay. Subsequently, a bore well was dug in the SC Colony giving much joy to the Sangham women. They shared that, "We feel proud... we got identity in the village..."

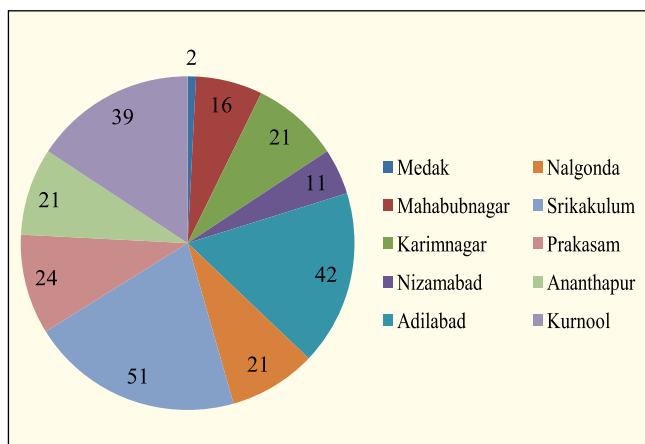
Such successes in the initial stages of Sanghams are contributing in sustaining their processes and move ahead towards the next level of the structure – resource pool at cluster and resource group at

mandal. The issue committees and the core-groups play greater role to this process. Cluster being a group of 4-6 villages coming together to take forward the issues of Sanghams and core-groups, it becomes a strong forum to discuss issues, gather support and take action with more vigor. At this stage, it was realized that the strategy of core-group is hazy and the issues of caste, village politics have become a challenge to the facilitating team. Therefore, a daylong brainstorming session was organized to have common understanding on the concept of core-group to the core team members of all the DIUs. Major discussions were on understanding the need for core-groups, its constitution and defining its role. The summary of the discussions is as under:

- ◆ Membership in the Sangham need to be limited to 60 or less for effective facilitation of the process of education and empowerment.
- ◆ In case there are more than 60 women in the village two Sanghams can be facilitated, otherwise there will be only one Sangham in the village
- ◆ Core Group shall be facilitated in the villages where there are more than one Sangham. It shall not be facilitated where only one Sangham exists and no possibility to form a second Sangham
- ◆ Representatives from each Sangham shall be carefully identified from the Sanghams to form as Core-Group, enabling women from most marginalized sections and in vulnerable conditions come into leadership
- ◆ Core Group can be facilitated among two or three small habitations with one Sangham each; and the distance between the habitations is less than a kilometer
- ◆ Sanghams shall not be split into two for any reason once the Sangham material and/or fund is given as it creates confusion among the members

With this clarity, critical analysis was done at village level across the project area. Consequently, there was a fall in the number of Core-Groups as Core-Groups were also being facilitated in the villages where there was only one Sangham. It was a challenging task for all of us at MS as it was an issue of recasting the already facilitated forums in some places. However, the inter district exposure visits have been helpful in enhancing understanding and capacities of new team members of the relatively new mandals and the districts. The two fold exercise of brainstorming and field observations helped team members to move ahead with great clarity and more confidence.

Core Groups – District wise



APMSS has started its work in Dharmaram mandal of Karimnagar District in the second half of 2011. PLAs were done in the villages for understanding the village situation, gathering data, identifying issues and evolving a plan of action along with the villagers in all the villages.

In one such exercise in Sayampeta village, it was noted that primary school was closed down for past 4 years as many children go to a private school in the neighbouring village and the enrolment dropped down, thus enlisting this school as “zero” attendance. This further contributed to drop out of those who could not afford the private schooling. The issue has been discussed widely with the villagers analyzing the impact of losing village

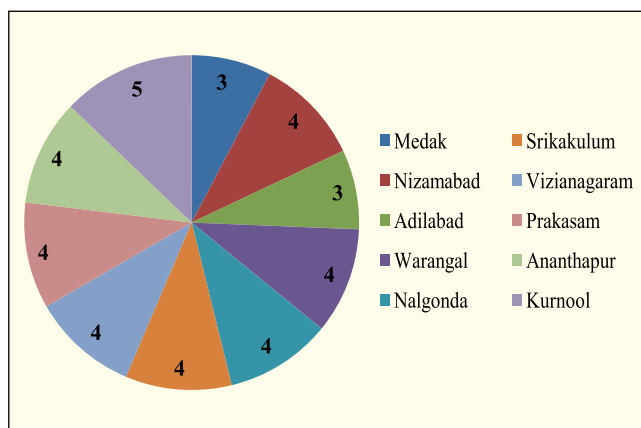
level resources. This led to a resolution by the entire village to pursue with the concerned to reopen the school and bring back their children to the village school. Subsequently, they put up a requisition to the educational officials through the village Secretary. These efforts resulted in reopening of the school with 43 children.

Mandal Resource Groups

A step towards enabling rural women to develop as trainers and resource persons on various issues with a strong gender perspective to take their learnings wider, Mandal Resource Group has proved to be an appropriate strategy. This is also seen as a strategy towards consolidation of the programme implementation and preparing the mandal level structure for autonomous functioning. Thus the focus was on strengthening the institutional processes at various levels and building capacities of the women in different layers.

Taking forward the previous year’s efforts with regard to the pace of the programme in the new districts, this year also we focused on strengthening the capacities of the team members thereby expediting the process of consolidation in these districts. During the reporting year there were 39 mandals in the consolidation phase across 10 districts. The intensive exercises took

Mandal Resource Groups - District wise



up towards drawing effective action plans keeping in view the capacities, both at field and team levels, resulted in more cluster level activities and also re-organising the clusters in some mandals. The next step was involving the resource group members as co-facilitators in the trainings and other activities where MS team members were the main facilitators. In addition, responsibility of organizing certain activities like campaigns and awareness programmes at village and cluster levels was delegated to them and they could prove their abilities by successfully completing the tasks.

Special plans were evolved in the 39 consolidation phase mandals across 10 districts, to strengthen the process. Activities like critical analysis on the status of the clusters, ensuring regularity of meetings on fixed dates, building capacities of resource pool members to form as mandal resource groups, discussions on the statutory requirements, etc are some to quote. The strong Sanghams in the clusters took up the responsibility of strengthening week Sanghams. Sangham women were involved as co-facilitators in the meetings, trainings and campaigns. All these efforts not only helped in building their confidence but also served as means for hands on experience to the women in leadership. Simultaneously, facilitating formation of alternative structures like Samatha Dandu, Nyaya Committees and herbal medicine centers also became crucial in the process of attaining autonomy.

Simultaneously, regular thematic meetings, periodic reflections and workshops were organized for building capacities of the team members. These forums helped in clarifying the dilemmas and questions cropping up during the consolidation process. Need based changes were made to the plans to synthesize the interventions with that of the field needs.

Consolidation Processes

The process of consolidation has been consciously made as an integral part of the facilitation process right from formation of Sangham and its journey towards autonomy. It is a continuous process at village, cluster and mandal levels till the withdrawal of the programme from direct implementation in a particular mandal.

Sangham Fund

Developing a small fund at Sangham level with regular contributions by the members to meet certain expenses of the Sanghams is encouraged. A small grant is given to the Sanghams for three years as a matching to their savings which can also be used for taking up small economic activities by the Sanghams. Certain material like durries, trunk box, musical equipment and library books are also given to the Sanghams. It is a strategic intervention towards sharing responsibilities, building ownership, accountability, decision making, managing finances and control over resources. On the other hand it is also seen as a step towards building knowledge on bank transactions, book keeping and asset management. Thus opening Bank account on Sangham name is facilitated.

In this regard, in the previous year it was facilitated to open accounts in Post Office in the places where there were no Banks but the Post Office did not have the facility of opening account on the name of the Sangham. Sanghams wanted to open account in the banks but the authorities were reluctant to open new accounts or demanding for all the Sangham members to be present while opening the account as they were facing problems with SHG accounts, which is incongruous to the nature of the Sanghams. Making the bankers understand and get convinced has been a tremendous challenge which we had to deal with.

No. of Sanghams received Sangham fund

District	Till 2012	2012-13
Medak	203	50
Mahabubnagar	210	51
Karimnagar	256	17
Nizamabad	88	36
Adilabad	46	74
Warangal	40	60
Nalgonda	32	40
Srikakulam	61	61
Vizianagaram	42	50
Anantapur	62	76
Kurnool	-	14
Prakasham	-	50
Total	1,040	579

Some of the activities taken with Sangham fund are:

- ◆ Agriculture & allied activities
- ◆ Collective farming
- ◆ Backyard gardening – horticulture
- ◆ Small business activities like tent house, Kiraana shop, hotel
- ◆ Herbal medicine centers
- ◆ Seed and vegetable vending etc.

Though the amount is small the Sanghams say that it is their own fund on which they have total control. It gives them identity as the decision is theirs and they are not compelled on the way it is to be utilized. They feel proud that they go to bank, talk to the manager, submit resolution and do bank transactions successfully. Despite all these, there are also challenges like dealing with Bank authorities who confine to the concept of SHG and do not understand the Sangham's activities. Many Sanghams reported that the fund given by MS is limited and are not able to take up large scale activities. They also inform that at times, when there are unseasonal rains or drought leading to crop loss they are not having sufficient fund to take up alternate economic activities before making repayment.

Cluster Huts

Keeping in view the lack of private space for women to have activities of their choice, privacy to have discussions on their issues and spend some time together; fund to construct Sangham huts was provided earlier. Later, in the process of decentralization cluster has become nodal point for all the activities and hence the concept of cluster hut was facilitated since the year 2000-01. The stipulated amounts for the villages in a cluster are pooled together for this purpose and the building is constructed with the participation of all the Sanghams of the cluster. For this purpose government land is accessed by the Sangham for free of cost by negotiating with the concerned. The Sanghams have decided to construct one cluster hut at mandal headquarter so that it can be used as office of the federation in the process of autonomous functioning. These cluster huts are not just a physical space for the Sanghams but an identity for their entity and their work. This has become a space for multiple activities like holding their meetings, trainings, literacy interventions, nyaya committee / counseling centre activities and a temporary shelter for the women in distress. By the year 2012 a total of 73 cluster huts were sanctioned, where 62 are completed and are in use. The remaining are also heading towards completion of the construction. During the reporting year 3 cluster huts were sanctioned across 3 districts.

However, there are many challenges in the process of construction of cluster huts. It starts with acquiring land on the name of the Sangham and then various environmental factors like water scarcity, non-availability of sand, rapid increase in material cost, etc. Another major challenge faced by Sangham women is mobilizing additional resources to complete the construction as the fund given by MS is not sufficient. Nevertheless, after successfully crossing all the hurdles women forget the pain and humiliation that they had to undergo and feel proud to have their own asset as an evident to their success in many aspects.

Status of Cluster Huts

District	No. of Cluster Huts sanctioned	No. of Huts completed construction	No. of Huts in the process of construction
Medak	7	7	-
Mahabubnagar	9	8	1
Karimnagar	31	29	2
Nizamabad	7	6	1
Adilabad	7	4	3
Warangal	10	7	3
Nalgonda	2	1	1
Total	73	62	11

All these interventions are periodically audited by APMSS team to ensure effective usage, to extend support in bridging the gaps, if found any; and to overcome the challenges.

Autonomous Federations

In all the seven districts where there are autonomous federations the field area has become a learning site for other federations that are in the process of attaining autonomy. They are also visited by federation members and team members from other MS States for understanding the processes of autonomy and learn from their experience on overcoming the challenges at various levels. These federations are also visited by other organizations working with economic empowerment agenda to learn strengths of the federations working with social agenda. Sharing their experiences is also contributing to more clarity on their role and their functioning towards sustainability, thus making it a learning process to both the parties. They have evolved as a model for social intermediation and sustainability.

Taking forward their previous years' activities and prioritizing the issues identified in the course of action all the 32 autonomous federations have taken up various activities towards addressing issues of girls and women's concern during the year 2012-13. In

line with their priorities our focus was on building their capacities, especially in the mandals where the federation bodies have changed and where the federations attained autonomy recently. In addition, their participation in the district review meetings also contributed in discussing their issues as and when they arise and for mutual support.



Following are some of the areas where federations have involved themselves during the past year:

- ◆ Participation in and contributing to the annual planning process of MS
- ◆ Extending support to MS in programme expansion to new mandals
- ◆ Pro-active participation in the government initiated school enrollment drives
- ◆ Implementation of short term projects to create awareness on identified issues
- ◆ Running of Legal Aid Clinics in 5 mandals of Medak district with the support of DLSA
- ◆ Participation as members in the Prajavani programme (government initiated grievance redressal forum) in Medak and Karimnagar districts and attending to cases
- ◆ Running RSTCs in 10 mandals with the support of MS, and in 6 mandals with the direct support from SSA

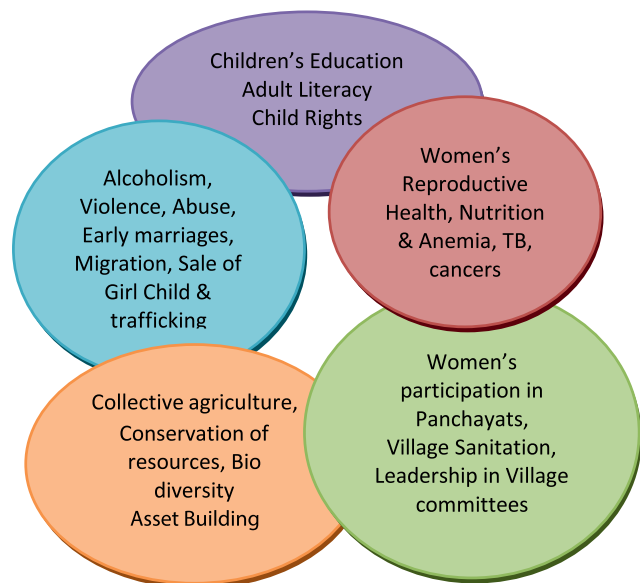
- ◆ Trainers and co-facilitators in various trainings to issue committees and resource pool members
- ◆ Participating in mandal level APNA meetings and raising issues with the officials
- ◆ Selection of Sumitras to be placed in KGBVs
- ◆ 10 federations organized general body meetings and changed their governing body and executive committees

Feeling great to be part of Prajavani...

Bhagya is the President of Sri Sri Mahila Margadarsi Federation, Bejjanki mandal, Karimnagar district. She got an opportunity to participate in Prajavani program run by government to raise awareness among people on various issues as she was very active in resolving issues and discussions. The government functionaries recognized her skill of conflict resolution management and handed over the responsibility of handling women and land issues. She took assistance from federation members and successfully fulfilled her role and responsibility. Like Bhagya many women developed leadership

In Nalgonda district Swasakhti Mahila Federation, Nampally mandal was heading towards autonomy. In this process, we ensured conduct of cluster meetings on fixed dates, strengthening resource pools at cluster level and resource groups at mandal level, building capacities of the office bearers and the newly formed nyaya committee. Intensive discussions and brainstorming sessions were held in the all Sanghams' cluster meetings towards building understanding on the role of Sanghams, clusters and other structures in the process of autonomy and sustainability of the federation. Audit of all the Sanghams was completed with the support of accounts team and the field team. With all these, at the time of writing this report, it has attained autonomy and started functioning independently.

Areas of focus for the federations



Projects taken up by Federations

In addition to the regular activities, federations identified major issues to be taken up for building awareness on a large scale in their mandals that are affecting the lives of women and girls. 28 federations applied for Grant-in-Aid support from APMSS. After careful scrutiny of all the proposals the GIA committee considered 21 proposals for giving grants. In the implementation of the respective projects they sought support from the DIU and related government departments in terms of material, orientation to the identified resource persons, strengthening the module and also in documentation.



The details of the projects taken up by federations are given in the below table:

Issue	No. of Federations	Villages covered	Reach
Violence Against Women	3	58	27,827
HIV/AIDS	2	46	21,663
Migration	1	25	11,483
Cancer	1	30	8,690
TB	1	23	6,508
Anemia & Nutrition	8	121	56,708
Child Marriages	1	45	9,072
Reproductive Health	2	41	8,975
Female feticides	1	25	6,260
Prejudices & Blind beliefs	1	26	8,560
Total	21	440	1,65,746

Mahasangham – Network of federations

As reported last year, Mahasangham – the district level network of federations has become a forum for addressing women’s issues by building convergent relations with various government and non-government agencies at district level. This initiative by federations of Mahabubnagar district has been adopted and adapted by four other districts. In addition to the regular sharing, review and reflections, they are using this forum to build their information levels on various issues, discuss on issues coming up at macro level, and pursue the departments to meet the demands coming up in the field. These forums are also being used by the federations towards building their capacities in literacy, documentation, etc, and develop convergence and networking with various departments at district level.

The Mahasangham of Karimnagar federations identified issues of TB and cancers in Koheda mandal. It was discussed in the Mahasangham meeting and the federation members approached ‘Sushruta Cancer Hospital’ seeking support to conduct awareness campaigns. Their successful negotiation with the hospital authorities resulted

in holding a camp to test the women with cancer symptoms. None of the women were tested positive but many of them were highly undernourished. Doctors suggested local nutritional food to overcome it.

Similarly, Sthree Shakhti Samatha Mahila Mahasangham, Karimnagar, was identified by RVM (SSA) to conduct trainings to School Management Committees and assigned to do it in four mandals of the district.

National workshop

A three day National Workshop on federations’ autonomy and sustainability was held in Hyderabad where federation women and team members from all the MS States participated. Prior to this, regional workshops were held with the federations within the States to understand the views of the federations on the aspects of autonomy, sustainability and empowerment. This national workshop served as a forum to share the experiences of the federations and the programme, in the process of facilitating federations attaining autonomy. The sessions were thought provoking and stimulating. Inputs provided by the NRG members and the resource persons helped in broadening the perspective, setting future directions and devise plan of actions both for the programme team and the federations.



Major Challenges

- ◆ Building conceptual understanding and the capacities of the new team members as per the need of the programme
- ◆ Maintaining the pace of the programme has been a challenge in the mandals where old team members left the programme, particularly in the consolidation phase
- ◆ Ensuring literate women into leadership at federation level since such women get employment opportunities in other programmes
- ◆ Regularity in maintenance of registers and records at Sangham and federation levels

Future Steps

- ◆ Facilitating more women from most disadvantaged situation to come into leadership

- ◆ Strengthening of Mandal Resource Groups in the consolidation mandals and the new autonomous mandals
- ◆ Formation and strengthening of District Resource Groups
- ◆ Consolidation of the programme in 20 mandals across 6 districts and building momentum in the remaining mandals to head towards consolidation
- ◆ Emphasis on sustainability of autonomous federations
- ◆ Strategic interventions to bring visibility to the federations as women's agency working towards social empowerment
- ◆ Facilitating and building networks for the federations to move towards economic sustainability



Second Generation... Towards Equality

The close engagement with rural women, in the initial years, informed us the need for bringing girls in to the process of empowerment from the young age itself to enable them to tackle with the issues of discrimination and marginalization. Over the years, various interventions are designed and implemented at different levels. Our work in the area of child rights gradually took the shape of Bala Sanghams, Bala Panchayats, Child Rights Protection Committees and the Youth Sanghams. Focused intervention with adolescent girls in addressing their special needs, viz., infatuation, sexuality, child marriages and menstrual health, etc could evolve a cadre of informed change agents. Simultaneously our intervention at school level under the NPEGEL programme, within the project area and outside, also resulted in extending the concept and formulation of Bala Sanghams to the schools. The success of these interventions reflected in significant increase in the number of Bala Sanghams, the membership and the number of peer educators. The role of Sanghams, MRGs and the federations in achieving it is noteworthy.

It is heartening to report that this cadre of second generation is making a mark as change agents and able to bring visibility through their successful interventions. Mobilizing school dropouts to join schools, negotiating for better facilities in the schools are a few to quote. Influencing change at family level on the issues of discrimination, child marriages, abuse and vulnerability of girls and work towards equality are the other successes of these second generation forums. For instance, they could successfully negotiate and stop 202 child marriages during the reporting year. In this context our focus will be on addressing external factors that are coming in the way of their growth and development. Our focus shall also be on building capacities of the team members towards addressing these new trends in the changing context

Building a sensitized and informed second generation would greatly contribute to build gender just and violence free society – with this belief MS started working with children and adolescents after a short period of the programme's inception. Analytical discussions with the Sangham women on the issues of gender equality and citizenship in the early years also informed us the need to involve younger generation in the process of empowerment. However, inclusion of boys in the process formally has evolved only with the demand that they articulated during the year 1999-2000. This contributed to transformation of *Cheli Sanghams* – adolescent girls' forums into *Bala Sanghams* – collectives of boys and girls. The interventions with this group are manifold – analytical discussions on adolescent issues, capacity building, strategic interventions, institutional building, etc are few to mention. Simultaneously, the interventions with the parents and the Sanghams on child rights and adolescent issues created an enabling environment at family and community level. Besides, linking the Bala Sanghams with the Sanghams and the village level institutions has paved way for mutual support mechanisms. The result is visible in terms of attitudinal change among the parents, work sharing by boys, reduced discrimination, increased participation of girls and effective access to child rights.

As the Bala Sanghams started addressing the issues of child rights, girls' education, early marriages and child labour, the need for evolving a pressure group at cluster level has been realized and thus Bala Panchayats emerged. These Bala Panchayats are the cluster level forums which address larger social issues that need intensive interventions at a wider level. Further, the need felt for creating a support system

with the representation from different sections like the GP, School, Sangham and the youth groups, thus facilitated formation of Child Rights Protection Committee at cluster level.

The membership of the Bala Sanghams being both school going and out of school, it influenced the out of school children, particularly girls to join the education stream. It also created an opportunity for formation of Bala Sanghams within the Schools under NPEGEL programme and to address their concerns towards accessing their right to education. It is envisaged that these Bala Sangham members, largely girls, develop as peer group educators, come in to leadership roles and grow as sensitized second generation. The fruits of this intervention are already visible in the actions of Bala Sanghams and Bala Panchayats across the project districts as reported in the following pages.

BALA SANGHAMS

The very fact that the number of Bala Sanghams reached the mark of 2,960 with about 88,420 members, this intervention is now qualify to be another major model for replication by government and non-government agencies to address issues of child rights. At this juncture, when we reflect upon our experiences of facilitating Bala Sanghams for more than a decade now, bring us a lot of satisfaction in claiming that they emerged as village level platforms for the girls and the boys to raise their concerns and resolve them. At the same time we admit that there were many challenges and learnings that required constant persuasion and negotiation at different levels. However, there is a need to evolve innovative strategies towards strengthening these Bala Sanghams to become change agents to influence social change on a large scale.

Vision of Bala Sanghams

“Advocating for Gender Equity and Equality through a cadre of informed and empowered second generation change agents”

During the year gone by the major thrust of the programme was on building capacities of Bala Sanghams and evolve layers of leadership at village as well as at cluster level. This has become more pertinent in the changing contexts and the trends in the larger society. In addition to village level meetings and cluster meetings; cluster and mandal level trainings on gender issues, reproductive health, menstrual hygiene, leadership and communication, and life skills served the basis for building capacities of the members. Orientation meetings with CRPC members helped in strengthening their role in supporting the Bala Panchayats.

The strategic decision of age limit to the members in Bala Sanghams, 11-18 for girls and 11-16 for boys; raised a critical question of sustaining the change and the momentum created. After lot of discussion, debate and brainstorming it was decided that these members who pass out from Bala Sanghams would evolve into Youth Sanghams and MS would provide handholding support to these Sanghams. It is being implementation for past few years and the outcome is encouraging. These youth Sanghams have evolved into a support structure to the Bala Sanghams as well as Mahila



Sanghams at village level. The issues taken up by the youth Sanghams for intervention are focused on breaking the deep rooted patriarchal system, such as gender equality, fight against abuse, gender based violence, declining child sex ratio and other critical social issues that are inhibiting the girls' and women's development.

As this intervention for a sensitized and empowered second generation crossed the milestone of a decade now, a quick study was taken up to understand the impact of Bala Sanghams and the critical areas that need further intervention. It was done in 5 selected districts covering 11 mandals with a sample of 98 Bala Sangham members and 21 Adults (parents and teachers). A scholar from United States came to Hyderabad on a project supported us in designing and administering this study. Schedules were developed keeping in view the various aspects of the Bala Sanghams intervention.

It includes, questionnaires, individual and group interviews with Bala Sangham children, children passed out from Bala Sanghams, parents, teachers, community and team members. The findings of this study were encouraging and also thought provoking in order to evolve direction towards strengthening the Bala Sanghams.

Nutrition Centers

The issue of severe anaemia and malnutrition among adolescent girls was raised in the discussions on adolescents' health at Bala Sangham cluster meetings. The critical and analytical discussions revealed that the nutritional status is equally alarming among the boys in the project area. Subsequent to this the Bala Sanghams came up with an idea of creating an opportunity to the members to access nutritious food, though in a small way. It took the shape of nutrition center in Nizamabad District which was later adopted by few more districts. Thus, running nutrition center has become one of the interventions of Bala Sanghams.



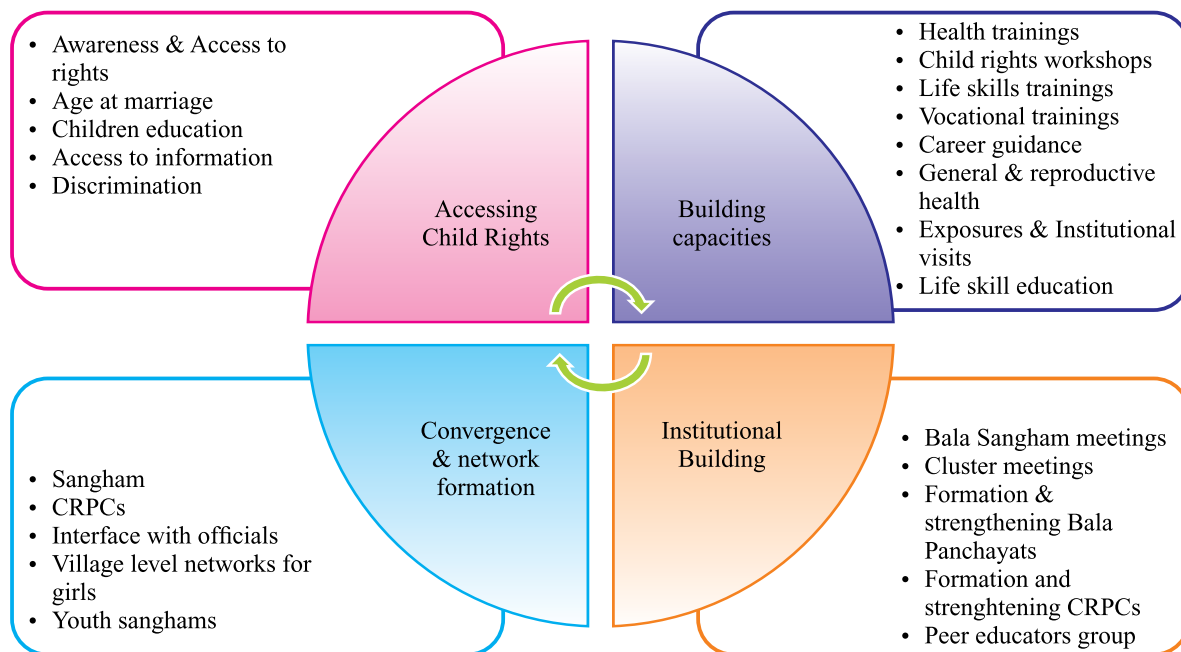
In addition, creating awareness on nutritional diet, enhancing knowledge on local food varieties with nutrients, organizing periodic checkups to track growth by measuring height, weight and HB count as per the age, etc were also taken up for implementation. Mothers and Sangham women are also involved along with boys and girls of Bala Sanghams in preparation of nutritional items for the center, as a strategy towards inculcating better food and health practices at home level and for sustaining the effort.

As part of the national initiative under NRHM towards addressing the issue of anaemia and malnourishment among adolescent girls, ICDS provides supplementary nutrition and IFA tablets. Bala Sangham members are taking proactive role in ensuring that it is provided properly and all the adolescent girls access it. The result is evident in the increased number of nutrition centers during the year from 6 to 21 across 3 districts. In addition, the intervention of Akshaya Paatra is being continued in 48 schools in Nalgonda district, for the same purpose.

Capacity Building

One of the thrust areas in the past year was building capacities of the Bala Sangham and Bala Panchayat members in order to enhance their knowledge levels and build capacities and skills. Based on the changing contexts and existing needs of the children from grassroots the focus was on the issues of gender discrimination, social equity, girl child abuse and vulnerabilities, reproductive health of adolescents. Training on life skills, vocational skills and Child Rights are also part of regular capacity building. Trainings were organized

Focus of Bala Sanghams ...



at different levels using participatory methods. These included project works, institutional visits and interactions with experts and officials. Educational tours and exposure visits are also organized to other districts for sharing and cross learning with other Bala Sanghams.

MS started working in Puduru village, Kodimyal mandal of Karimnagar, since 2008. Bala Sangham was formed in 2010 and Bala Panchayat in 2011. They are very active and have addressed issues like discrimination, abuse, early marriages, child labour, etc. In the process of resolving these issues, Child Protection Committee is facilitated as support structure for Bala Sanghams in that cluster. The members of Bala Panchayats disseminate information and share their learnings with their friends in the school also.

B. Anusha, student of class-X, came to know about the Bala Panchayat's activities. Her parents fixed marriage without taking consent from her. She sought support from Bala Panchayat to convince the parents to postpone the marriage. Bala Panchayat and CRPC together intervened and sensitized parents on the consequences of early marriage, importance of girl child education, RTE Act and also about the Child Marriage Prohibition Act. Finally parents got convinced and promised that they will stop their marriage trails and allow her to continue her education.

Peer Educators

The active and sensitized members of the Bala Sanghams are identified for further capacity building to enable them to evolve as peer educators. They are seen as the agents of social change and would transact the learnings and capacities to the other children in their villages. This has been adopted basing on the philosophy that quick acceptance and change is possible if the facilitator is of same age. Our notion proved to be right as the reports from the field inform us of positive change among

the children and the peer educators are greatly contributing to this. However, our efforts have to be continuous in terms of identifying persons to act as peer educator as they move out of Bala Sanghams after certain period.



Our biggest challenge is sustaining the interests and the change among the adolescents since the external factors are strongly influencing this age group including media, cyber technology and social stress. This remains one of our focal areas for future interventions in dealing with adolescents and their issues. The following table gives an overview of the capacity building programmes taken up during the past year.

Details of the Trainings to Bala Sanghams

Issue	No. of trainings	No. of children
Adolescent Health	125	4,520
Education	7	322
Gender	149	4,582
Peer Educators	89	1,723
Life Skill education	34	1,091
Natural Resources	3	103
Vocational training	1	62
Total	408	12,403

In Subledu village, Tirumalaya Palem mandal, Khammam district, APMSS started its intervention in 2009. Bala Sangham was formed in the year 2010

with 25 children and they named the Sangham as “Nethaji Bala Sangham”. They participate actively in the regular meetings and raise their issues. Some of these children have undergone life skills education training and gender training. Back at home the girls continued the discussions among themselves. This has built strong intimacy among the children and they started sharing their problems with each other.

One day, Sowmya, 8th class, shared that she has been facing sexual abuse everyday by her father and was threatened not to disclose this matter and that her mother and younger sister were also threatened to keep silent. Though shocked by this the other girls gave emotional support to Sowmya to overcome from the trauma. Children approached MS team for support in tackling the issue. At this juncture, MS team intervened and could convince the mother to file a case. Finally he was arrested and sent to jail on remand and the case is under process. Meanwhile Sowmya and her sister were joined in KGBVs. Now they are studying happily

Bala Panchayats, Child Rights Protection Committees

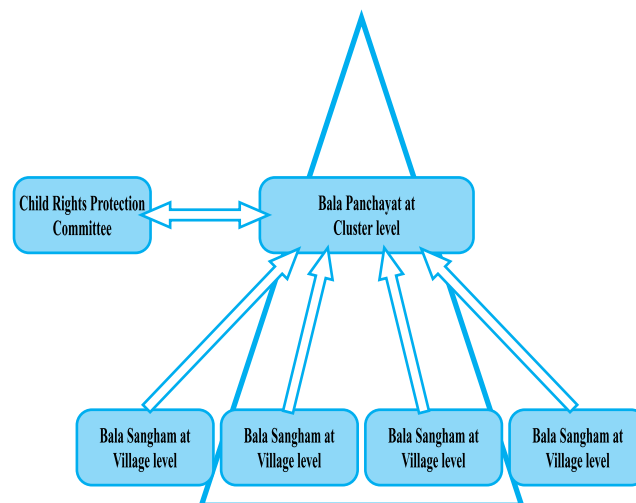
As reported in the beginning of this section, Bala Panchayats are the cluster level forums formed to address larger and critical issues that could not be resolved at village level. Bala Sanghams from 4-6 villages come together as a pressure group to address the identified issues. All the members of the Bala Sanghams in the respective cluster become natural members of Bala Panchayat of that cluster.

Vision of Bala Panchayat

“Bringing common concerns of Children and Adolescents to forefront, setting up support structures and demanding accountability of the institutions and systems towards realizing their rights”

In the process of addressing larger issues like abuse, atrocities on girls, etc Bala Sanghams and Bala Panchayats would require support from elders as they are treated as inexperienced. In this context Child Rights Protection Committee, formed with the representation from parents, Sanghams, Youth Sanghams, GP, school teachers and Bala Sanghams, extend necessary support. CRPC functions in accordance to the needs of the Bala Panchayats in the process of influencing social change.

Structure of Bala Panchayat & CRPC



At the team level in some districts, it was noticed that there was a confusion on the structure, constitution and functioning of these structures. To get clarity on these aspects it was taken up for discussion in the State level reflection forums and district review meetings. It helped in developing a common understanding across the team members, especially those who joined recently. The exposure visits organized in this regard also helped the team and the Bala Sanghams in taking forward their learnings.

Towards this, Warangal – the pioneer in facilitating Bala Sanghams, Bala Panchayats and the CRPCs was the most visited by the members from various districts, thus making it a learning platform. This in turn contributed to critical reflection on their processes and to strengthen the weak areas. On

the other hand, Bala Sangham members who strengthened their learnings from these exposure visits could formulate plans to start the process of evolving Bala Panchayats and CRPCs in their places. Consequently, during this year 67 Bala Panchayats and 31 CRPCs were formed in 12 districts. A glimpse of the status of these forums is given below –

District	B.S*	Membership			B.P**	CRPC
		Girls	Boys	Total		
MDK	217	2,767	2,086	4,853	2	-
MBNR	329	5,233	3,782	9,015	4	4
KNR	281	5,455	3,289	8,744	9	7
NZB	152	1,836	1,075	2,911	8	-
ADB	181	2,764	1,532	4,296	5	1
WGL	250	6,032	5,928	11,960	8	6
NLG	230	4,468	4,257	8,725	8	11
SKLM	188	2,615	2,143	4,758	13	9
VZM	225	2,681	2,532	5,213	-	12
PKSM	232	3,340	2,418	5,758	2	-
ATP	211	4,148	3,294	7,442	-	-
KNL	197	3,815	3,701	7,516	22	7
VSKP	120	1,838	1,044	2,882	-	-
KMM	147	2,537	1,810	4,347	-	-
Total	2,960	49,529	38,891	88,420	81	57

*Bala Sangham, **Bala Panchayat

Major Achievements of Bala Sanghams and Bala Panchayats

- ◆ 25 members of Mother Theresa Mahila Samatha Bala Sangham of Jaithavaram, Cheedikada mandal, Visakhapatnam ensured that all the children attend school. They resolved to teach literacy to their mothers as majority of their mothers are non-literates and do not attend the parents meetings. They started showing their class books and explaining what they learnt, everyday. Slowly mothers got interest in what their children are learning. Taking this as a chance children started teaching their mothers to read and write. It was a proud movement for the children when their mothers signed in their note books. Now, about 15 mothers attend parents meetings and take active role in school management while continue improving their literacy.
- ◆ The school and college going children of Venkatarao peta, Konaraopeta mandal, Karimangar were facing transportation problem as there is no bus facility to the village. They all discussed and submitted application to RTC Depot Manager. They pursued this issue till they got the bus facility according to their timings.
- ◆ 16 years old Sobharani hails from Balya Thanda, Nellikuduru mandal, Warangal. She joined Bala Sangham in 2009 and received trainings on child rights, gender equality, adolescents' health, leadership. This helped her to understand her status and be clear on her future. Meanwhile parents fixed her marriage with her divorced maternal cosine which she resisted, but in vain. Dejected Sobha approached Bala Sangham. They took the support of Sangham and could successfully convince her parents by explaining the ill effects of early marriage, consanguinous marriage and especially a disliked match. Realized parents continued her studies
- ◆ In Rangapuram, Peddakaduburumandal, Kurnool, Mid-day meals was not served for 3 months due to political conflicts. It was discussed and taken up for action by the Bala Sangham. They gathered RTE cell number and reported the issue. With in short period MEO took initiation in sorting out the issue and the children were appreciated for their action.
- ◆ Lakshmi hails from a poor family of Aglaspur village, Konaraopeta mandal. She is studying 9th class and used to go to school by bicycle. She did not attend school for 15 days due to bicycle repair. Bala Sangham came to know about it and extended financial support to Lakshmi from their contributions to repair the bicycle. Finally

Bala Sangham succeeded in making Lakshmi to continue her schooling.

- ◆ In Medak district the Bala Sanghams from 4 mandals brought up the issue that in 40 schools toilets were not accessible to the children as they are used by the teachers and are locked. It was discussed at length and the Bala Sanghams taken up the issue with the teachers and succeeded in availing the toilets.
- ◆ During the Bala Panchayat meetings, the issue of poor quality in MDM has been raised by the children in many villages in Kurnool district. It was discussed in Bala Panchayat meetings and later taken up with teachers and Mandal Education Officer. As a result, in 98 schools there has been substantial change in the quality of MDM.

Adolescence Issues

The very definition of the adolescent group is hazy. Different national and international agencies defined adolescence differently. This group is neither considered as children nor given value as adults by the family and the community. This situation makes the adolescents more confused and vulnerable in various spaces. Keeping this in view, MS has started working with adolescent children since 1995, though inclusion of boys in to the formal facilitation started only in the year 2000.

During the discussions with adolescents the issues like child marriages, infatuation, incest, sexual abuse and trafficking have come up as major areas of concern and require immediate action. Given the fact that in the rural areas the children are exposed to active sexual life at a very early age thereby making them more vulnerable, we focused on facilitating Bala Sanghams as forums for adolescents to learn, act and change. The interventions included awareness on physical and emotional changes that take place during this age, inputs on child rights, providing life skills education, and building capacities.

In the areas where Bala Sanghams are not strong enough to address these issues exclusive meetings and workshops were organized with adolescent girls to create an enabling environment to speak out their concerns, build solidarity and gather support in raising their voice against the issues. Short term camps are also organized in 7 districts where 971 girls participated. Out of these girls 184 are mainstreamed into schools, KGBVs and 48 have joined MSKs. Besides, 43 dropout girls have taken admission into 10th class through APOSS. It also resulted in girls taking oath not to get married before the legal age of marriage.

Child Rights Week

From the beginning of the programme there has been a focus on addressing child rights, educating Sanghams and the community on child rights; and facilitating access to the programmes and services provided in accordance with the international convention of child rights. For past almost two decades it has become a tradition in MS to observe child rights week and celebrate the child rights day. In the course of action Sanghams, Bala Sanghams and federations started taking up activities on the occasion. Celebration of child rights week always provide a platform to discuss the issues, evolve strategic plans and build networks and convergence with other agencies working on child rights issues.

This year also there has been various activities organized at different levels. The thrust was on creating awareness and capacity building to Bala Sanghams on issues of accessing child rights, life skills education, girl child education, child abuse and early marriages. Towards this various activities like debates, discussions, rallies, and workshops are organized at different levels. Sessions and debates were conducted in 151 schools and 32 colleges across 3 districts. The posters on 'good touch and bad touch' are used in all the activities which was centric for the discussions. Information was disseminated on provisions of RTE Act to enable the children

access facilities at school level. In Anantapur, district level mela was organized in which 1,223 children participated. All these forums served as platforms for interface for children with officials. Plan of actions were evolved for the coming one year with regard to accessing child rights.

In Vizianagarm district, Sanghamtitha Balala Sammelanam, a mela was conducted with 300 children from 5 mandals. Children were divided into groups and discussed the issues and challenges occurring while addressing children and adolescent issues and Support required for them. Children raised their issues such as no sufficient utensils in the school to prepare MDM and poor quality of MDM in 105 schools, toilets were not constructed, no compound walls in 45 schools, ANM is not doing health checkups regularly and also not recording properly in register in 33 schools. In addition, children requested the authorities to extend support in stopping child marriages at village level.

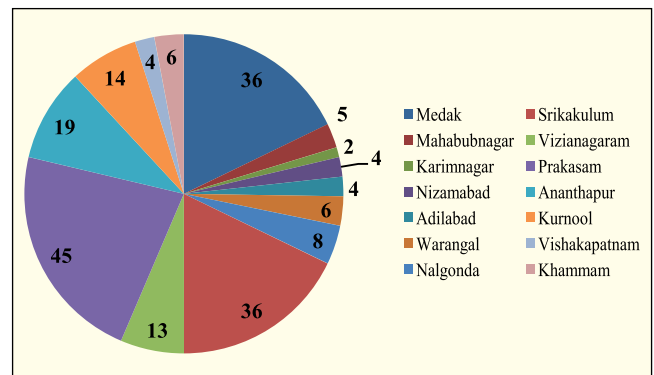
The education officials responded saying that due to fund problem the construction got delayed and ensured that as soon as the grant is received, work will be initiated. Subsequently, MDM is improved in 25 schools, compound wall construction is under process in 18 schools and first aid kit and health checkups are improved in 15 schools.

Challenging Child Marriages

In the process of facilitating Girls empowerment child marriage has always been a barrier. Therefore, from the beginning MS and the Sanghams have been taking up this issue at various levels with multiple strategies and activities. Bala Sanghams being the forums of children they also have been addressing the issue of child marriages from the beginning, realizing that girls are lagging behind in accessing opportunities and move ahead in the development ladder, and facing marital violence due to their early marriage. Since the issue is wide spread

and is deeply connected to the social norms and customs, concerted efforts were made involving local communities, government institutions, opinion makers and the children in bringing attitudinal change among the communities.

Child Marriages Postponed - District wise



The Bala Sanghams, Bala panchayats, CRPCs and the Sanghams together made a positive mark in successfully convincing the families to postpone the marriage trails. In this process, theater has been an effective medium to create awareness and sensitization among the communities. There were instances where the families cancelled the fixed marriage after watching the performance by Bala Sangham members. Maintaining marriage registers at GP level has been one of the successful strategies in addressing the issue and is reflected in the decrease of child marriages in the villages where they are maintained properly. With all these efforts, this year a total of 202 child marriages could be stopped across the project area. However, there have been many challenges faced by the Bala Sanghams, Sanghams and MS team in the process of addressing the issue. MS had to play a key role in addressing the issue where Sanghams and Bala Sanghams are still not strong enough to take up this issue. In such cases support was taken from different departments in addition to village level awareness programmes and focus group discussions. It is also observed that, there is a general increase in the age at marriage. However, this remains as a focal issue in our coming years plan for continued efforts to bring in the desired change.

MS has been launched in Kurnool district in the year 2006. Given the socio political conditions of the district, retaining the team has always been a problem. It impacted the programme in a big way. In some villages the Sanghams could not progress in accordance to the age of the programme. In P. Kotakonda village, Devanakonda mandal, though the Sangham is 3 year old it is not active in addressing girls' and women's issues.

During the regular Sangham meetings the team realized that four child marriages are fixed and are going to be performed shortly. Immediately it was taken for discussion with the Sangham and during the course all the details were gathered about the proposed marriages. Failed to convince the families, support was taken from the police, priest of the local Church and ICDS department to address the issue. Various activities were conducted at village level and discussed at length with the families and community members. As a result 3 marriages could be cancelled / postponed but could not convince one family including the girl. However, we could succeed in counseling them to continue the girl's education and the newlywed to strictly follow family planning.

Major Challenges

- ◆ As the manifestation of issues vary from time to time, understanding the nuances and evolving strategic plans towards addressing the issues of adolescents has been a challenge for the team members at all levels
- ◆ Another challenge is the fast changing priorities in the society and the life style. Negative influence of media on the children and erroneous usage of

cyber technology are making the young minds more vulnerable

- ◆ Building capacities of the members of Bala Sanghams, Bala Panchayats and developing strong adolescent peer educators remain as a challenge given the scale of these forums
- ◆ Breaking the deep rooted patriarchal norms still remain as a challenge though continuous efforts are being made over the years

Future plan

- ◆ Creating an enabling environment for the children and adolescents to voice their concerns and address their issues
- ◆ Increasing membership in Bala Sanghams
- ◆ Creating forums for Bala Sanghams to demonstrate their skills and to improve their abilities so that they get identity and recognition as a forum addressing child rights
- ◆ Building capacities of Bala Panchayats, Youth Sanghams and of CRPCs to evolve as a support structure to the Bala Sanghams
- ◆ Developing strong contingent of peer educators to make them effective change agents in the present social context
- ◆ Bringing attitudinal change in the communities towards adolescents and their special needs
- ◆ Evolving child journalists for articulating their needs, challenges and achievements through their writings



Pathways to Education

The momentum created last year towards women's literacy brought about 86,000 women into the fold of education. Continuing this, various efforts were made to sustain their interest on literacy and continue their education through Open Schooling. As always, the short term MSKs and the motivational camps resulted in mobilizing adolescent girls and women in large numbers to acquire literacy. Adult Learning Centers have always played key role in sustaining the interest of these mobilized women and girls, in literacy. This year also we could reach 46,793 women through ALCs and various other interventions.

Number of women appearing for basic literacy test conducted by NIOS is constantly increasing year by year, making it to 72,065 in this year. The successful completion of this test is encouraging these women to take admission into 10th class and thereafter into intermediate course through APOSS. A total of 1,590 women took admission to various classes and 1,188 appeared for 10th class exams and 739 could clear it successfully.

Equal focus was kept on total enrolment and retention of school age children through various intensive interventions at village level. Active participation of team members, Sangham women and federations in the State initiative to bring out of school children into schools has brought recognition with their achievement in mobilization and retention. All together a total of 8,245 out of school children are brought back to the formal schools. Same time total enrolment could be achieved in 671 villages and total retention is ensured in 407 villages during the year. This year NPEGEL implementation remained as a major challenge with the delay in release of funds and the short time left for taking up any activity.

However, the convergent actions taken up with SLMA, SSA and SRC have been enriching and enabled us to advocate for mainstreaming MS experiences in terms of life skills education with gender focus. We tried to pursue SCERT to incorporate the social learning methodology into teachers' training modules and thereby to implement in the classroom, but could not succeed with the change in leadership. There is a need to pursue it further.

APMSS being an education programme for women's equality the main focus remains on addressing the educational needs of the women and the girls. Education in MS is process oriented and flexible in nature giving weightage to women's time and space, their priorities and their existing knowledge. Towards achieving this goal many educational interventions are being implemented at different levels. All the interventions are carefully designed providing scope for women's participation right from developing content to its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. However, given the fact that women's traditional roles are demanding and gendered, motivating women towards acquiring literacy remain as a challenge. Thus, the literacy component is consciously built into other activities viz., meetings, trainings and capacity building sessions.

Initially women's interest was their children's education. It slowly moved on to their own functional literacy as the demand has been created through different forums of Sangham women. Maintaining their records and registers, submission of applications for various requirements and transacting the modules as trainers are a few to quote. It was a big challenge when it comes to adolescent girls' education as many social and cultural factors are attached to it, in addition to the issue of accessibility. Nevertheless, it could be addressed to some extent through MSK – residential programme for adolescent girls, strategic partnership in implementation of NPEGEL; and the realization by the women on the importance of girls' education.

In the process of decentralization and autonomy also there has been much demand for literacy of women in leadership resulting in initiating suitable literacy interventions. These led to the initiation

of short term MSKs, residential camps, MSKs and ALCs, etc. Subsequently, women started acquiring literacy through different interventions and moved on to getting certification for their newly acquired skills leading to linking them to NIOS or APOSS to continue their education. Many of the Sangham women are now appearing for graduation courses through Open Universities. This is a remarkable progress in the field of education where the rural women from most marginalized sections of the community are steadily climbing up on the ladder of education. Our continuous efforts in addressing girls' and women's educational needs could be successful with the convergent relations built with SSA, KGBV, SLMA, Saakshara Bharat, APOSS, etc.

Over the years, there has been an increased interest among women on acquiring literacy and continuing girls in education. It is reflected in the increasing number of women attaining literacy and also the decrease in the number of dropout girls. These women in turn are playing key role in ensuring total enrolment and retention of children in schools, girls continue their higher education and also in ensuring effective implementation of the provisions under RTE Act. All this has been possible through concerted efforts by the MS team and the Sangham women with various educational programmes at different levels.

A detailed description of our efforts in the area of girls and women's education is given in the following sections...

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

This year being the third and the last year for the States to fulfill all the provisions provided under the RTE Act it becomes imperative to the government to

expedite its efforts towards realizing the goals of the Act. In this connection APMSS and the federations partnered with the department in creating awareness among the communities, mobilizing left out children to join the schools, facilitating community participation in the school management, and ensuring all the children attend schools. In this regard, in continuation to the intensive campaign taken up last year, this year also campaign activities were taken up in the districts, with a special focus on the villages and mandals where dropout rate is high. Simultaneously discussions were held with Sanghams, Bala Sanghams, parents and school children on issues like facilities in the school, children's attendance, teachers' regularity, school management and the role of SMC members, etc. In addition, training on RTE Act was conducted to 12,246 members in 7 districts.

Educational Fortnight

Every year during the month of June the State government holds a drive across the State to identify out of school children and join them in schools. This year it became more pertinent in view of third year of the RTE Act implementation. In all the project districts MS has been invited to take part in the drive evolving specific plans for the mandals with high dropouts. Sanghams, Bala Sanghams, federations and youth groups facilitated by MS also involved actively in the activities held by RVM (SSA) throughout the fortnight. Different participatory exercises were used to identify out of school children and to understand the reasons for dropout, viz., literacy mapping, resource mapping, etc. *It is noteworthy to report here that the autonomous federations were also invited by RVM (SSA), independent of MS, to partner with the department in the special drive for enrollment.* With these efforts we could bring back 7,181 drop out children to schools and ensure 2,939 children transit from Anganwadi Centers to the Primary Schools. Focus was also on the potential drop outs, seasonal drop outs and accessing provisions under RTE Act.

In Dandumitta thanda, Joolurupadu mandal, Khammam district, Bala Sangham was formed in 2012 with 32 children. The children are very active and take part in all village level activities. During the discussions in the Bala Sangham, it was noted that primary school is not having minimum facilities such as toilets and water which are major reasons for dropout of girls. Children discussed this issue with Head Teacher and demanded to solve the problem. HM responded positively and initiated toilet repair and made arrangements for drinking water

Vidyasadassulu

Motivating the learner is one aspect, while sensitizing the family, the community and creating an enabling environment for the learner to continue with education is another important feature. Towards this, *Vidyasadassu* is one of the forums where the evidential information collected through literacy maps and surveys is presented, discussed and analyzed at village level. All the stake holders – parents, children, teachers, village elders, Panchayat members and school management committees are invited to these forums so as to create a sense of joint responsibility among them. This provides scope to take collective decision and action towards ensuring enrolment, retention of children in schools and access to quality education. During the past year 100 such *Vidyasadassulu* were organized in 5 districts.

Short Term Motivational Camps

Despite of many efforts some children remain out of school for various reasons like disinterest in education, low performance in the class room, etc. Yet in some cases the children dropped out for long period remain out of school as they fail to cope up in the age appropriate class. Keeping such children in view, short term motivational camps are organized to create interest in education, building their confidence levels and mobilize them to join the schools. These are generally organized for a period of 15 to 30 days either residential or non-residential



basing on the group identified. Life skills, vocational skills, health education, career guidance combined with literacy skills are provided in these camps. Institutional visits, games, yoga and art are also included in the curriculum of these camps to sustain interest and enable quick learning. After the camp the girls will be joined in school/KGBV/MSK/RSTC basing on their educational level and age. However, it is always a challenge to mainstream all the girls from these camps because of various reasons, known and unknown.

38 such camps were organized across 7 project districts covering 971 girls this year. Out of these, 184 were mainstreamed into regular schools and 48 joined in MSKs. 43 girls took admission into 10th class of APOSS and continuing their education. Remaining children need more time and focused inputs to bring them into education stream.

Enrollment and Retention

It is realized that despite of many efforts, in some villages the enrollment and retention rate in government schools has been poor. 183 such villages are identified for focused intervention during the past year. Activities were taken up to collect data of out of school children, conduct surveys to identify the reasons, negotiate with the parents and the community, and ensure total enrollment and retention in these villages. Sanghams, Bala Sanghams

and school teachers were involved in developing village level plans basing on the ground realities. As a result, in 671 villages total enrolment and in 407 villages total retention has been ensured during the year.

As a result of all the above initiatives we could see a leap in enrolment. The details are as following:

District	Boys	Girls	Total
Medak	156	146	302
Mahabubnagar	426	578	1,004
Karimnagar	27	27	54
Nizamabad	127	257	384
Adilabad	716	773	1,489
Warangal	49	156	205
Nalgonda	82	156	238
Srikakulum	79	158	237
Vizianagaram	1,126	1,512	2,638
Prakasam	53	120	173
Anantapur	601	722	1,323
Kurnool	0	50	50
Visakhapatnam	52	91	143
Khammam	2	3	5
Total	3,496	4,749	8,245

Mahila Shikshana Kendram (MSK):

As reported in the previous years the processes, outcomes and challenges always leave us with varied experiences due to the diverse issues and needs of adolescent girls. It is always challenging to deal with the adolescents in terms of their inquisitive nature and explorative behavior. Mahila Shikshana Kendram is a unique educational intervention of MS towards addressing these specific issues of adolescent girls, largely in the age group of 12-18 years, through life skill based education. At present there are 15 MSKs across 14 districts.

The curriculum has been developed in line with the special needs of the adolescent girls keeping in view their socio, economic, cultural and political conditions. The core themes of MS form the basis

for this curriculum with gender as a running thread. This is basically a framework that leaves enough space for the learner as well as the teacher to incorporate content according to the context and the need. Special focus is given to develop non-stereotypical attitude and to inculcate responsive behaviour among the girls. The participatory approach of teaching-learning allows the girls to experiment, question and gain experiential learning. Educational tours and exposure visits also form part of the learning process. Accordingly the teachers' training modules are also developed. Based on the changing needs of the adolescent girls in the larger context and the changing trends in the society the curriculum and the teachers' training modules are reviewed and revived periodically.

MSK has always been a creative forum for the girls to experiment and explore their hidden skills apart from academics. This year, 305 girls from 12 MSKs visited Bio-diversity train which was placed in Hyderabad and Warangal during the International Bio-diversity Conference held at Hyderabad. This helped them in understanding the biodiversity and its importance. It continued to be a discussion area for the girls as well as the teachers to increase their knowledge on the bio-diversity that is present around them and to take up related projects during holidays. MSK girls have also participated actively in various competitions like singing, drawing, Taekwando, Karate and other co-curricular activities at mandal, district and State level.

78 girls from 7 MSKs took part in the martial arts competitions at District and State levels and won 16 Gold, 17 Silver and 34 Bronze medals.



For the first time, 7 MSK girls had an opportunity to visit MSKs in Uttarakhand. It was a very exciting experience for the girls when they could interact with each other, sharing their experiences, activities in MSK. Though language was a barrier, girls could try their best to communicate in Hindi. MSK girls of Uttarakhand were also excited to learn few Telugu words from their friends from AP. It was all the most exciting to our girls when they got to see the Himalayan Mountains filled with snow. They also visited historical monuments and places of prominence in Delhi on the way back home. Some of them got emotional when they could see the places where Mahatma Gandhi lived and Indira Gandhi assassinated. In fact, during the entire journey to Uttarakhand girls were exposed to many things such as traveling in the train for such long, sleeping on the train berth, different languages, cultures, gigantic Himalayas and the life in the mountains, etc.



Participation of teachers in the field team's review meetings gives them an exposure to the MS programme and the processes thus would help them to transact the curriculum in line with the MS ideology. In addition, the programme team members also visit MSK once in a week to support the teachers, to interact with girls and impart issue based knowledge. However, teachers' retention has been ever challenging for us as there are wider opportunities outside.

Ch. Raobai, Rajulguda, Wankhidhi, Adilabad district studied up to 5th class, dropped out from the school due to ill health. She had the habit of chewing tobacco and used to be in drowsy condition always. She was not having interest in studies though her father is a school teacher and tried to push her towards education. She was reluctant to attend school. JRP came to know about this during the field visit. She could successfully motivate Raobai to join in MSK.

MSK teacher noticed her habit of chewing Gutka. She was given special attention and was continuously engaged in various activities not to let her find time to think about Gutka. She was also given individual counseling and was exposed to a demonstration on how it destroys the muscle cells. Though it took some time, persistent efforts brought positive behavioral change in Raobai. She tried and stopped eating Gutka gradually. Now she has become very active in studies and won many prizes in several competitions.

MSK Alumni Forum

Interaction with the girls passed out from MSK has always been inspiring. It gives encouragement to the present MSK girls. This enables us to look back critically and to quest for innovative strategies for MSKs. MSK alumni forum is always a platform for the girls to come back and share their experiences and obstacles faced by them in continuing their education. These forums also serve as a cross learning platform, build comradeship and ensure mutual support for the girls. Related government officials are invited to these forums so as to give scope to the girls to have interface with the officials and discuss their problems. These proved to be very effective in overcoming the challenges faced by the girls, gaining confidence and spirit to continue their education even in the odd situations. This year, in 9 districts MSK alumni forums were conducted with about 855 girls.

ADULT EDUCATION

MS has been implementing variety of activities for women's literacy. These range from awareness generation to imparting literacy skills, to sensitizing women to access opportunities for continuing education. MS strongly believes that participatory approach in education yield good results and sustain the impact. Thus all the activities are designed in such a way where women become active participants in the entire process. These activities include Literacy camps, literacy sessions in meetings and trainings, campaigns using local cultural forms and reading and writing camps. In the previous year literacy centers have been initiated in a large number in collaboration with SLMA with the launch of Saakshara Bharath programme. Continuing those efforts in this year, new centers were started while closing some of the old centers. Besides, efforts were made to compile and consolidate learnings and the impact of literacy centers by assessing the centers' status through internal assessment. Subsequently,

Details of Literacy Centers

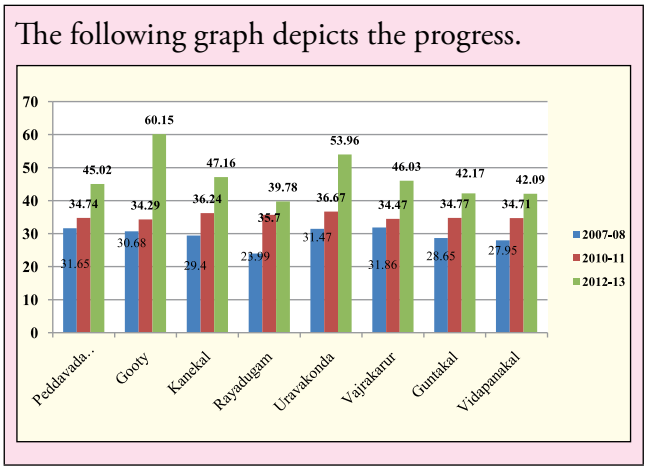
S.No	District	No of ALCs	No of Learners (Female)
1	Medak	69	1,035
2	Mahabubnagar	540	8,498
3	Karimnagar	330	5,668
4	Nizamabad	145	2,896
5	Adilabad	105	1,685
6	Warangal	121	1,936
7	Nalgonda	140	2,100
8	Srikakulam	64	1,176
9	Vizianagaram	109	1,554
10	Prakasham	239	3,918
11	Anantapur	322	3,240
12	Kurnool	334	4,689
13	Visakhapatnam	226	4,145
14	Khammam	282	4,253
Total		3,026	46,793

literacy centers were closed where the learners attained functional literacy and were motivated to continue the education through AP Open Schooling System.

In order to improve the literacy levels of Sanghams, resource pool, resource group and federation members, thrust was on organizing literacy camps, short term MSKs and using every forum as a literacy session. In all, during the past year, 353 literacy camps were conducted with 12,314 participants across 12 districts, and 25 Short term MSKs with 703 participants across 7 districts.

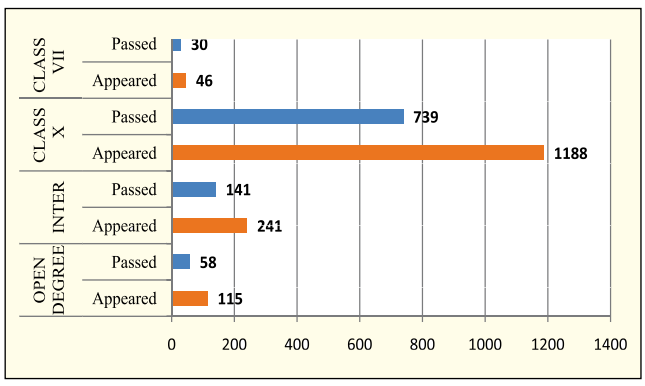
Education cluster meetings are regular forums to have discussions on both adult and children's education. In addition, capacity building is also done to the education issue committee members to enable them to involve actively in all the village level activities and campaigns. As a step towards creating scope for Sangham women to sustain their literacy skills they are encouraged to maintain their registers and books at Sangham as well as federation levels. With all these multiple efforts, 926 Sanghams are maintaining registers on their own. Besides, the village libraries initiated by MS also play a key role in sustaining the women's acquired literacy skill as these books are consciously selected to provide required information to improve their knowledge as well as lifestyle. Most of these books are neo-literate friendly in terms of its size, content and information that is required in their day to day chores.

In Anantapur district, MS started working since 2006. From the beginning adult education has been one of the focal issues. In addition to MS interventions, initiating literacy centers in collaboration with SLMA under Saakshara Bharath programme together brought a significant change in literacy rates of MS working mandals. This data is collected from District Adult Education Department.



With all these efforts there is a visible progress in the literacy status of Sangham women. These women are encouraged to write basic literacy test conducted by NIOS through SLMA. In the reporting year 72,065 women appeared for this test and are waiting for the certificates. This gave them a spirit to continue their education and 1,590 of them took admission into APOSS. In the past couple of years this has picked up momentum and we proudly report that till now 907 Sangham women cleared their 10th class exams and now 1,650 women are preparing for exams. For the first time, 241 women appeared for intermediate course introduced by APOSS recently and 141 could clear the exam. It gives us immense satisfaction when we see the trajectory of women's education where many of them were first generation learners and could get educated.

The Graph below shows the number of women appeared and passed various classes through APOSS



I am Salma, resident of Turkashinagar, Kodimiyala mandal of Karimnagar district. I studied up to 7th class when I was a girl. After joining Sangham, MS team motivated me to pursue my education through Open School. I was excited but little apprehensive as there was long gap after my schooling. I took this opportunity as a challenge and successfully completed 10th class. I also worked as volunteer for summer camps. It brought me recognition at village level. I feel proud when someone refers me as an educated person and inform me of job opportunities. It was all possible because I am a member in the Sangham.

International Literacy Day

Celebrating the achievement of the first generation learners in the Sanghams the International Literacy Day was observed across all the districts. This year the State level event on the occasion of International Literacy Day was organized by the DAE in Gattu mandal of Mahabubnagar district which is ranked as the mandal with lowest literacy in the State as per the census. DAE collaborated with MS in organizing the event in Gattu as MS started working in this mandal for past one year. 500 Sangham women attended from MS field area along with district team and the State office team. Officials from all the line departments and NGOs working in the area of women's literacy also attended this programme. Minister for Tourism attended as chief guest on the occasion.



Besides, in other districts International Literacy Day was celebrated at different levels, viz., Sangham, cluster, mandal and district levels. Various activities were planned strategically to ensure active participation of women by conducting various literacy games and organizing literacy stalls. The main emphasis was on mobilizing women on a large scale to come into literacy fold. Focus was also on building capacities of education issue committee members to play vital role in organizing literacy activities at village level; and demanding and accessing educational opportunities for women and children.

Quick Assessment on Retention of Literacy Skills among the learners

Former chairperson suggested taking up the assessment of retention of literacy skills among the first phase learners of Saakshara Bharat programme across the state. DAE collaborated with MS and SRC to conduct this activity. DAE, MS and SRC together developed assessment sample criteria and tools. MS has taken up this in 66 mandals of 13 districts covering both MS and non MS mandals. More details are reported in the section on Building Capacities and Strengthening Networks.

Samatha Nilayam – “A Commune for the Children in special need”

With the initiation of the then Chairperson of MS, Samatha Nilayam is launched in August 2011 in the campus of Hemalatha Lavanam Educational Resource Centre at Varni, Nizamabad district, as reported last year. This is a commune for the disadvantaged children with single or no parents, run with the financial support from RVM (SSA). It is a unique set up, designed in the lines of SOS village, grouped children into families with foster mothers, and having common kitchen and dining. All the children attend government schools according to their age. Academic support doubled with life skills training and strategic extracurricular

activities is being given to all the children after and before school hours.

It was a big challenge in the initial months to handle the children coming from different backgrounds having different problems. Many of them had behavioural problems and it was an uphill task to address it. However, as we complete more than a year's journey now we proudly report that there has been a visible change in the children – their appearance, behaviour, approach and personality. All the children are excelling in their academics and performing well in co-curricular activities at school. It is heartening to report that most of the children came in top 3 ranks in their respective classes as reported by the school teachers.



They have also shown remarkable performance in co-curricular activities. For instance, an assignment was given to the group of children on different social issues such as collecting varieties of stones, plants, herbs, seeds and to do small surveys on village conditions of Varni. Besides, these children were given child journalist training during summer vacation. They were also engaged in writing stories, paintings during the summer holidays. *Some of their works were sent to North America Telugu Sangham Sravanthi souvenir. We are proud to report that all stories and poems sent were selected for printing in the souvenir. Moreover, one of the stories got selected for cash prize of \$116.* Exposure to the different places filled them with positive energy and joyful experiences in addition to gaining historical and scientific knowledge. Past year two girls appeared for class-X and passed. The first anniversary of Samatha Nilayam

was celebrated with much joy. Chairperson, District Collector, Sub collector - Bodhan took part in this event and inspired with the progress seen among children. They appreciated MS efforts and ensured their support in all kinds.

Sumitra - the friend of KGBV girls

As an innovation under girls' education *Sumitras* – counselor cum life-skills educator, were placed in KGBVs after providing necessary inputs. These *Sumitras* main role is to address the special needs and issues of adolescent girls by providing individual counseling. It was first implemented in the autonomous federations' mandals in 7 project districts last year. Seeing the positive results during the previous year it was scaled up to all the project districts reaching out to non-MS mandals also. The federations and the MRGs played key role in identifying suitable women to work as *Sumitras*. These women were given thorough orientation for three days at State level. Care was taken in selecting women who can write their reports on their own as they are supposed to submit their reports to the concerned officials and to MS. During the reporting year 174 *Sumitras* were trained but 166 could join the KGBVs since 8 members from *Anantapur* district did not get permission of the Project Officer, RVM (SSA) to join their duties. Training support was taken from Bhumika helpline. KGBV officials extended support by providing necessary inputs.

Sumitras could establish good relationship with girls as well as staff of KGBVs. They took this as an opportunity to expand their reach and educate the girls on child rights and adolescent concerns. They fulfilled their responsibilities with great passion and commitment. They in fact delivered more than the assigned duties. It is inspiring to report that the girls used to eagerly wait for the *Sumitras* to visit them so that they can discuss their personal issues which they could not share with others in the KGBV, and get proper advice with much affection. The girls shared that they used to miss their mothers when

they come across certain problems but now with Sumitra coming to them they feel at home and share everything with complete confidence. Following are a glimpse of the issues addressed by Sumitras in KGBVs –

- ◆ *Pochamma, Sumitra of Tadwai mandal, established good relationship with girls. Girls started sharing their problems and needs with her. During the interactions with girls, Pochamma came to know that poor quality food in less quantity is being served to them. She also noticed the same. She brought it to the notice of the KGBV Special Officer and the same was reported in her monthly report. Though the Special Officer got angry in the beginning, later he realized and accepted the reality. With this, there was significant change in providing sufficient quantity with good quality. This also led to healthy relation between them.*
- ◆ *V. Venkatalaxmi worked as Sumitra in V. Madugula KGBV. She used to discuss with girls on various issues. When she was discussing about menstrual health and hygiene, girls hesitated to speak. She shared her own and her daughter's experiences during menstruation which created an enabling environment for the girls to open up. Girls then shared that many of them have problems like over bleeding, white discharge, etc. Subsequently they could overcome those problems and became healthy. Through this girls realized the importance of breaking silence.*
- ◆ *K. Rajitha, Sumitra in Narsimhulapeta KGBV observed that the sanitary napkins are being disposed behind the KGBV and they were spread all over. She created awareness among girls on usage and disposal of sanitary napkins and also discussed on the misconceptions during menstruation. She brought it to the notice of the Special Officer and took help in clearing it. Realizing the mistake the Special Officer and the*

Girls took steps for proper disposal of the used sanitary napkins.

- ◆ *Narsamma was the Sumitra of Regode mandal KGBV. During her visits, she observed that most of the girls were suffering with scabies and were hiding it as they feel shame. She explained the girls on the reasons for skin diseases and the care to be taken. She prepared ointment with neem leaves, salt and turmeric powder involving the girls and applied to them. She asked the girls to continue applying it for one week and its gone! It was a great relief to the girls and could concentrate on their studies.*

National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL)

As reported elsewhere in this report, APMSS has been implementing NPEGEL programme for past three years. During the reporting year it was implemented in 3388 Model Cluster Schools across 455 mandals of 14 MS districts with the financial support from RVM (SSA). Though the components under the programme are similar to that of the previous year, the activities, strategies and implementation were customized to the needs and interests of the girls at cluster level. Orientations were held to the Head Teachers on the components and the strategies designed. They were requested to evolve school specific plans and bring along to the orientations to discuss and finalise it for implementation. Those plans were analysed, debated and consolidated with the participation of the Head Teachers. This has built a sense of ownership among the teachers on the implementation of the programme.

After completion of two years of implementation of the programme by APMSS, significant change is observed in terms of creating girl friendly environment in schools, gender sensitivity among the teachers, improved participation of girls in school level activities, improved knowledge on functions of local institutions, breaking gender

stereotypes among girls and boys – within and outside the class room, etc. Balika Sanghams were formed with in the schools and trainings were provided to the girl friendly teachers to transact Balika Chetana module developed for strengthening the Balika Sanghams.

Coverage of NPEGEL Programme

S. No	Name of the district	No. of mandals	No. of MCS
1	Medak	43	330
2	Mahabubnagar	29	232
3	Karimnagar	58	384
4	Nizamabad	34	272
5	Adilabad	25	193
6	Warangal	50	352
7	Nalgonda	45	300
8	Srikakulum	15	114
9	Vizianagaram	28	210
10	Prakasam	50	272
11	Anantapur	28	224
12	Kurnool	33	208
13	Vishakapatnam	10	120
14	Khammam	5	45
	Total	455	3,388

Major activities conducted during the year 2012-13

- ◆ Sessions on adolescents’ health and hygiene is a regular activity done by the team members, Sangham and federation women in order to inculcate good health practices among the girls. In these sessions they raised their concerns such as lack of usable toilets, drinking water, MDM and the issues of adolescence for discussion.
- ◆ Height and weight charts were painted on the walls of the school. Weighing machines and health registers were provided to record the growth of the girls. It was learning cum fun exercise to the girls where they used to measure

each others’ height and weight and discuss on their physical growth.

- ◆ One of the most prominent elements in the programme is 100% enrollment and retention of the girl children. In this regard activities like FGDs with OSC parents, Kalajathas, rallies, *Grama samvesalu*, PLAs, wall writings, *vidyasadassulu*, etc, were conducted to mobilize the out of school girls to join the schools and attend regularly. During the year we could achieve total enrolment in 1,177 schools and total retention in 979 schools.
- ◆ Trainings were conducted for 10 days to the girls to build their perspective and concepts on issues of child marriage, abuse, gender discrimination, etc using theater as medium. In turn, these girls gave performances in their schools, villages and other forums. They also imparted trainings to other girls in their cluster schools. All together 2,947 girls participated in these trainings



- ◆ Conducted trainings to teachers on ‘Balika Chetana’ module which was developed to build the capacities of teaches on specified themes such as Child Rights, Health, Media, social issues, Leadership qualities and Balika Sanghams. These teachers are supposed to disseminate this knowledge while dealing issues of girls through formation of Balika Sanghams

- ◆ Trainings on Gender sensitization and equality have been conducted for the teachers. There was gradual improvement in the attitude and acceptance among the teachers on gender sensitive issues when compared to the previous year. This helped in discussing gender issues in detail and evolving a clear plan of action with the teachers towards facilitating desired change among the children
- ◆ Focus was put on reviving local traditional art forms like *Cheriyal painting, bamboo products, etc.* by imparting vocational skills to the girls
- ◆ In addition to this, trainings on martial arts/ Karate/Yoga/Taekwondo, etc was also conducted to the girls. With these new skills girls participated in intra and inter district competitions as well as in the State and National level competitions. These helped the girls to improve self esteem, confidence and competitive spirit.
- ◆ Sports meets were conducted for girls at different levels across the districts to inculcate healthy competitive spirit and also to enhance confidence and self esteem among the girls. This also served as forums to break gender stereotypes by providing equal opportunities for both boys and girls in playing common games and sports.
- ◆ Melas were organized at different levels on various themes such as Child Rights, Science fairs to create forum for exposure, exhibit their hidden talents and to improve communication



and presentation skills. Stalls displaying their learning in vocations were also organized. In all these melas, girls participated actively, gave performances on the learnt skills. These events were also seen as capacity building forums for the girls in the process of empowerment.

Number of Events / Activities conducted

S. No	Name of the Activity	No. of Activities conducted	No. of Participants
1	Folk and Fine Arts training	17	4,975
2	Institutional visits	4,794	82,077
3	Agri-based Activities	1,221	2,099
4	Yoga & Martial Arts	2,068	76,262
5	Bala Sanghams	1,795	50,262
6	Sessions at School level	1,158	37,612
7	Special days celebrations	1,107	1,58,248
8	Wall writings	4,103	4,103
9	Health & Hygiene activities	2,983	58,123
10	Community Mobilization Activities	3,808	1,11,424
11	Skill based trainings	2,625	53,254
12	Sports meets	1,772	13,312
13	Balika Chetana trainings	5	1,285

Challenges

Signing of MoU got delayed with confusion in fund release to APMSS which impacted the programme implementation to a great extent at all levels. Almost half the year was lost in the dilemma whether to initiate the activities or not. The mode of fund release to APMSS further delayed the funds to reach MCS. Many planned activities could not be completed due to time constraint and paucity of funds. On the other hand there was opposition from the teacher unions in Vizianagaram district in implementation of NPEGEL which affected the programme negatively.

However, it was a great learning experience for us at APMSS. Working with thousands of school teachers and children, facilitating empowerment processes with the girls, sensitizing boys on issues of gender equality and mobilizing teachers to respond to the needs of the girls were few of the good things that gave us satisfaction in the entire process.

Major Challenges

- ◆ Ensuring all girls go to school and continue their education has still remained as a challenge
- ◆ Pro active participation of parents in the SMCs and for effective implementation of provisions under RTE Act
- ◆ Sustaining the interest in literacy among adult women given their work load and changing social context
- ◆ Continuing convergent efforts with the same spirit is still a challenge

Future plan

- ◆ Advocating with SCERT to incorporate social learning methods in the teachers' training programmes
- ◆ Organizing more exposure visits to MSK girls and Bala Sangham children to outside State programmes to enable them to widen their perspective and build a cadre of sensitized and responsible citizens
- ◆ Facilitating more women from Sanghams, resource pool, resource groups and federations to come into the literacy fold, encourage neo-literates to continue their education and move towards certification
- ◆ Capacity building to team in accordance to the changing field needs
- ◆ Building the capacities to MSK teachers to plan for innovative strategies in MSKs

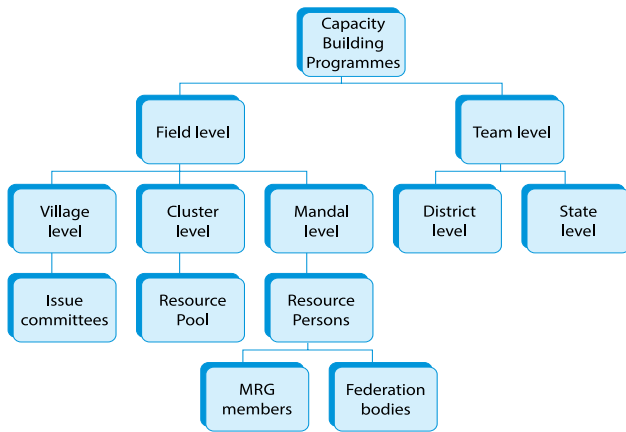


Building Capacities and Strengthening Networks

Field level facilitation in a process oriented and demand driven programme like MS require periodical capacity building. Timely intervention forms the key in social intermediation and empowerment process, thus generating a need for strong networks and frequent reflection on the processes. Simultaneously, creating awareness on various issues, sensitizing communities on issues of gender equality and women's concerns also becomes important in the process of creating enabling environment to women in moving towards equality. These inform us on the issues for capacity building programmes; and strategies for building convergence and networking.

Gender, legal literacy, anaemia, nutrition and women's health, sexuality and gender based violence, women's land rights, bio-diversity and issues of adolescents formed the core for organizing trainings, workshops and capacity building programmes to the members of Sanghams, issue committees, federations, resource groups, Bala Sanghams, youth and the MS team. Establishing convergent relations and networking with government and non-government agencies at various levels also becomes pertinent in the process of sustainability. Thus, in the past year the capacity building programmes were organized around these issues and a total of 24,652 women, 12,403 Bala Sangham children and 995 team members were trained.

Field level needs articulated by the Sanghams, Bala Sanghams and federations; mandal focus issues identified for strategic action, institutional processes; the concept of decentralization and autonomy forms the basis for designing capacity building programmes in MS for taking forward the processes of empowerment. These are essentially at two levels – field level and team level.



The continuous thrust of the programme on building capacities of women and adolescents through various modes resulted in the once non-literate rural women from marginalized sections becoming trainers at District level. In achieving this, the first step has been building capacities of the team members so that in turn they build that of the women at grassroots. Frequent review and reflection meetings at district and State level also serve as basis for team capacity building. Developing capacities of the federations and the resource groups is another key area in facilitating independent functioning of the structures and their sustainability in addition to that of the women in leadership. Same time the focus is also on building linkages and networks with various government and non-government agencies as a step towards sustainability. These steps also prompted us to build capacities of the facilitating team in tune with the changing roles at different levels. A summary of these activities are given below...

FIELD LEVEL CAPACITY BUILDING

Sangham meetings are the first forums for enhancing the capacities of women through critical analysis,

deeper discussions on their status; and the process of collective action and reflection on the issues of their concern. Moving from here to the more strategic areas like legal literacy, bio-diversity, sexuality and gender based violence are based on the age and stage of the Sanghams and federations / resource groups. Further, cluster meetings and mandal level meetings serve as forums for cross learning and mutual support in building the movement. Besides, trainings on the core issues and the mandal focus issues also took place during the past year. The common thread that runs through all the capacity building programmes is the gender perspective, understanding issues from women's angle and addressing strategic gender interests of women.



The following table gives a quick overview of various trainings and capacity building programmes organized during the year and the number of women attended.

Issue	No. of Sangham women trained
Health	8,924
Education	2,002
Legal literacy	1,138
Panchayati Raj	1,979
Natural Resources	3,538
Gender	1,473
Livelihood activities	42
Leadership qualities	52
Right to Information	92



Land Rights	26
Sexuality & Gender based violence	169
KGBV counselors	54
Others	3,699
Total	23,134

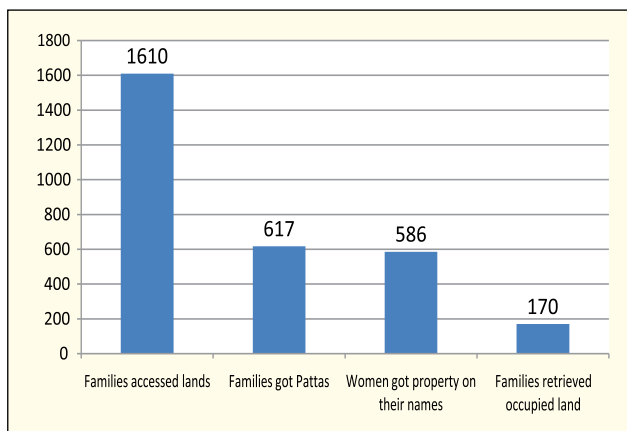
The outcomes of these trainings are reflected in the subsequent actions of the Sanghams and federations. The issue committees, resource pools and the resource groups are moving swiftly towards the goal. 4,320 of them have become trainers and are now extending resource support to the federations, MS and various outside agencies, both government and non-government. The knowledge that is built has been put to practice and the change is evident in their practices, life style and attitudes. For instance the training on sexuality and gender based violence to the issue committee members led to deeper understanding on the issue, changed perspective towards various sexual orientations and Sanghams taking decision to work with transgender community. Trainings on land rights benefitted Sangham women and the functionaries equally in learning about their rights and making use of the knowledge in accessing their rights.

35 members from SC colony formed Vennela Mahila Sangham in Nagireddypalli village, Madduru mandal, Mahabubnagar district. 15 SC families of the village were given land for housing by the Government, but the land was under the possession of upper caste families for past 2 years.

After attending the training on land rights Sangham women decided to pursue it to get the land on their names. They appealed to MRO for redressal of the issue. Subsequently, survey was done by the department and pattas were given to the concerned SC families after demarcating the boundaries of the land. With this success the Sangham got identity.

Similar is the experience of Mery Maatha Mahila Sangham members of Paata Annasamudram village, Tripurantakam mandal, Prakasam district. 15 families from SC community got 1 acre land each which was occupied by upper caste families. They are now cultivating their lands and are happy to have livelihood security.

The below graph provides a glimpse of the successes in accessing land rights during the year



Health Trainings

In continuation to the previous year's efforts, trainings are organized to Sangham women, resource pool and resource group members on various aspects of women's health in lifecycle approach. In addition, realizing the need for addressing the alarming situation of anaemia among women and adolescent girls, this year the focus was on building awareness among women on the issues of anaemia and mal-nutrition across the project area. Village level trainings, food demonstrations, exhibitions and stalls, focused group discussions with pregnant women and lactating mothers were some of the activities taken up as part of the intervention. Analytical discussions on the availability of and access to food, changing priorities in agriculture from food crops to commercial crops and the subsequent impact on the general health and environment formed core content of all these programmes, in particular the trainings. This led to

taking resolutions on growing food crops to ensure nutrition and household food security. As detailed in the previous chapter Federations took up projects to create awareness and educate communities, especially women and adolescent girls, on anaemia and importance of nutritional diet.

Going by the increasing number of cancer cases among women in the recent times, the issue was taken up for creating awareness in Karimnagar and Adilabad districts during the past year. The identified cases ranged from throat cancer to breast cancer, to cervical cancer. Chewing tobacco products, unhygienic menstrual practices, stress and hormone related factors being the general reasons identified. Various awareness activities were taken up in 8 villages along with demonstrations and medical check-ups for preliminary screening for cancer. A total of 60 women have undergone this test.

Training of trainers programmes were also organized to the resource persons who in turn did the trainings to all the Sangham women in the villages and organize village level events on the issue. They also participated as co-facilitators in the cluster level trainings. Anganwadi Workers were also involved in the village level trainings.

Sexuality and Gender Based Violence

Taking forward the training organized to the team members in the previous year, field level trainings were organized on the issue during the reporting year. The prime focus of these trainings was on understanding the term 'sexuality' in a wider perspective and the fact that there are different sexual orientations among different groups and whole lot of silence around it. The perspective of positive power involved in one's sexuality which has been controlled by the deep rooted patriarchal norms for ages converting it into weakness of women, thereby bringing the element of silence around it has been clearly articulated with relevant examples. The module also covered aspects of gender based violence, its relation to sexuality,

and how to transact it to different audience with different contexts.

The trainings opened up a whole world of hidden issues around women's sexuality, the experiences of women with regard to their bodily rights and the systematic oppression that took place over generations. After these trainings women seemed to be more confident of handling issues related to sexuality, gender based violence and on the support that can be extended mutually amongst various groups. They resolved to reach out to the communities of transgenders, sex workers, etc, by involving them in the Sangham activities and bringing them into the fold of Sangham.

TEAM LEVEL CAPACITY BUILDING

Regular input to the facilitating team members is the only way to maintain their spirits and enthusiasm towards the ever demanding and dynamic field situations. Periodic review reflection meetings at district and state levels, refreshers meetings to the issue core team members, subsequent knowledge building on the core areas of work; and trainings on the current issues and needs arising from the field formed basis for building capacities of the team members.

Induction training to the new team members and the subsequent phase trainings on MS philosophy, objectives and strategies allows a twofold learning process – among the trainees, and between the trainees and the facilitator. In addition, issue trainings, brainstorming sessions, workshops and refreshers meetings were organized to build perspective and in-depth understanding on the issues so as to equip them with required capacities to facilitate the processes at grassroots. For example, it was observed in the reflection meetings that there is varied understanding and dichotomy on the relevance of the strategy of core-group, thus a brainstorming session was organized where it was discussed, debated and analyzed at length. This helped us in coming to a consensus with greater





clarity on its implementation as an inclusive strategy to address issues of discrimination.

The below table gives an overview of the trainings organized during the year

Issue	No. of team members
Health	128
Education	169
Legal Literacy	45
Panchayat Raj	71
Natural Resources	193
Gender	115
Induction trainings	104
Balika Chetana	38
Sexuality & Gender based	38
MRG/Core group	87
Others	7
Total	995

Many a times capacity building programmes are conducted combining three to four districts together as one batch, those having similar issues, strategies and the stage of the programme, so that there will be a scope for sharing, cross learning and new ideas cropping up from the discussions. For instance, workshops on the institutional building, autonomy and sustainability of the federations were organized in the past year, combining districts with different strategies and stages of the programme. From these evolved the need for building second

line leadership by involving younger generation, reaching out to most marginalized women like single women, sex workers, etc; allowing new members to join the Sanghams, and regularizing the statutory requirements of the federations.

Participation in outside programmes is also ensured for widening the outlook, build leadership qualities and to bring in fresh ideas from outside. This is also seen as a strategy towards building networks with other agencies and plan convergent programmes aiming at empowerment of women.

In Kuravi mandal of Warnagal district the team realized that many pregnant women are going for ultrasound scanning and the centers are revealing the sex of the foetus. They conducted a quick survey and found that it is taking place at one specific center which was earlier ceased twice for illegal operations but again started its business. Taking cue from this, intensive village level trainings were organized on the issue providing information on PCPNDT Act along with campaigning on save girl child in all fifty villages of the mandal. Village level vigilance cum development committees were formed in 10 identified villages where very poor sex ratio and cases of many abortions were observed. The field reports suggest that there is a decrease in the abortion cases and increased awareness among the communities. In this direction, our efforts would continue in the coming year also.

Education Training

Education being the core for all the interventions in MS perspective building and enhancing capacities of the team becomes important in the process of designing various education interventions – both for children and for women. There was a long gap in conducting a common training bringing all the districts together at State level. Thus this year it was planned to do a training of trainers clubbed with re-orientation on the issue. It was organized for a batch of 42 education issue core team members from 14

districts. Mrs. Gurveen Kaur of Center For Learning (CFL), Hyderabad, an expert in alternate education system was the main facilitator for the training. The themes of education, gender, mental health and disability, relationships, TV and advertisements; and the methods of teaching – learning were taken for building perspective of the participants.

The 8 day training programme was planned allocating sufficient time for every participant to think, relate and internalize the discussions. Short films were used as a medium for effective and thoughtful process. The entire training was designed to raise critical questions, analyse it and find answers with a perspective. In this process the questions raised by the facilitator mooted lot of discussion on many issues, to quote a few – With what expectation you send your child to school? Can schools be useful / harmful? Why school is important? How to get, what we supposed to get from schools?

It was refreshing to the participants and created an opportunity to reflect on the processes that are being followed in various interventions. At the end of the training a broad plan was evolved for the coming years, which was later developed into district specific plans.

Training on Financial Management and Procurement

In continuation to the regional workshops held by NPO in the previous year to discuss the manual on financial management and procurement for



MS programme, training was organized to the accounts team from all the project districts along with District Programme Coordinators. It aimed at gaining common understanding on the provisions, systems and procedures to be followed in terms of procurement, maintaining accounts and auditing. With this increased information and clarity the accounts team is confident of executing the systems as specified in the manual and are using it as reference in streamlining the accounting procedures.

Exposure visits

We believe that exposure to different situations, places and cultures helps in widening perspectives and expand the outlook. Moreover, it contributes to increased mobility, interaction with different people and greater learning by seeing. Thus, exposure visits form one of the key strategies towards building capacities and taking forward the process of empowerment and have been consciously made part of trainings and other capacity building activities. Accordingly visits to various institutions and organizations were organized during the reporting year.

- ◆ A team of 16 members including 7 MSK girls, 2 Bala Sangham girls and 7 team members visited Nainital and Ramnagar of Uttarakhand MS programme. They interacted with MSK girls and Sangham women, learned about the life in this region in addition to the programme interventions. It was the most exciting moment for the entire team, to see Himalayan Mountains filled with snow. They thoroughly enjoyed the chilly climate and the fresh environment in the hills.
- ◆ Another team of 8 Sangham women and 6 MS team members visited Saharanpur and Muzzafarnagar districts of Uttar Pradesh MS programme. They visited Naari Sanjeevani Kendras and had interactions with federation women. They also had an opportunity to see river Ganga flowing from the Himalayan ranges at Haridwar.

- ◆ Both the teams visited historical places in Delhi on the way back home which they shared as a proud moment to visit the Country capital and the places like Red fort and Mahatma Gandhi memorial.



Besides, inter district exposures were also organized to the MRG members, Bala Sangham members, MSK girls and MS team within the State. These created platform for sharing and cross learning. As always, the learnings from these visits were taken into their plan of action for the following year.

CONVERGENCE AND NETWORKING

In facilitating the rural women from marginalized sections to access their rights and entitlements, convergence and networking with government departments and programmes become important. In this direction, for past many years, Sanghams have been playing a key role in influencing the local governance and demand their accountability towards effective delivery of services. However, there was a need to develop strong convergent relation with the Mandal officials in addressing larger issues like housing, access to land, etc. Towards this MS has facilitated convergence meetings with mandal officials and district officials where Sangham women participated and had interface with the officials present. These proved to be good forums for disseminating information on new schemes and

Sanghams taking responsibility of identifying right beneficiaries back home. Many times, recognizing the commitment of the Sanghams the officials give the responsibility of disseminating information to the communities and campaigning activities as an assignment extending financial and material support.

One Billion Rising

A campaign towards demanding women's own spaces and mobilizing civil society members to respond to the issues of violence against women was taken up across the world on 14 February 2013. In the State, the campaign is taken up with partnership of NGOs, civil society organizations and individual activists under the caption *Hyderabad Rising* as part of the larger campaign. Government departments were also invited to participate in the huge rally organized on this occasion. Responding positively a large number of women and young girls came on to the streets and rallied against sexual abuse, violence and discrimination of women. DIUs took lead role in organizing programmes in the Districts where Sangham women, Bala Sangham member, MSK girls and team members in large numbers actively participated in mobilizing schools children, college students, employees and individuals. A total of 18,219 members participated in this event in the State capital and in the districts. Sustaining the momentum created various activities are being taken up on 14th of every month taking a different theme each time for campaign for sensitizing communities



towards responding and addressing issues of violence against women. The uniqueness in it is that the activities are organized on the same theme and at the same time across all the 121 project mandals of APMSS across 14 districts. Sangham women, Bala Sangham members and the functionaries of APMSS also participated pro-actively in the marches, including the midnight march in the Capital city, protesting the heinous gang rape took place in Delhi and the subsequent instances of sexual violence within and outside State.

Survey of Anganwadi Centers

Help, an NGO working on child rights approached APMSS for partnering in conducting a survey on the functioning of Anganwadi Centers in terms of delivery of services. It was taken up in 20 AWCs per district in 14 project districts interviewing 100 parents on the regularity of the centre, their information levels on the services available from the centre, effectiveness of the services and their suggestions on improving the performance of the centre. It was submitted to Help for further compilation and analysis.

Naandi Foundation – an NGO working for promoting girls’ education approached DIU, Mahabubnagar, with a proposal for a collaborative vocational training programme to adolescent girls. Subsequently, a total of 115 members from our project villages were trained in hand embroidery, preparation of surf, phenol, pain balm and Vaseline, sari rolling, fabric painting, etc for 5 days. Functional literacy and numeracy were also part of the training module. At the end of the training, certificates were given to the girls by Naandi Foundation in a District level convention.

Back home, many of the girls are able to utilize these new skills and are getting decent income. They are encouraged to continue their education through ALCs / APOSS.

Education Department

Being an education programme from the beginning the focus of MS has been on promoting girls’ education and women’s literacy. Towards this many interventions are initiated at various levels. Besides, collaborative programmes were taken up with Department of Adult Education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and AP Open School System. Amongst these the important are implementation of NPEGEL, placement of *Sumitras* in KGBVs, running of RSTCs by federations and Samatha Nilayam – a commune for children with the support of SSA; and in accessing learning material for adult learners and training support to the ALC teachers from DAE. The convergence with APOSS is towards establishing new centers to hold classes for the learners took admission into different classes. More details are already reported in the corresponding chapter – Pathways to Education.

Quick Assessment on Retention of Learners’ Literacy Skills among the Saakshara Bharath programme

In one of the review meetings of Department of Adult Education the Special Chief Secretary, Department of Primary Education, proposed third party assessment of the efficacy of the Saakshara Bharat programme. APMSS has been identified along with SRC to do a quick survey of the retention of literacy among first phase learners of Saakshara Bharat programme. The modalities of the survey were developed jointly by APMSS and SRC. The sample was selected in a joint workshop. Subsequently, survey was taken up in 85 mandals across all 18 districts of first phase Saakshara Bharat programme, covering 1,754 Gram Panchayats conducting test to 34,846 learners.

Subsequently, APMSS took it up in 13 districts covering 1,278 Gram Panchayats across 66 mandals. A total of 27,836 learners were tested for their literacy skills. The entire exercise helped in working closely with DAE, SRC and reaching out to non-MS mandals.

MGNREGS

Right from the introduction of the employment guarantee scheme APMSS has been involved at various levels towards effective implementation of the scheme with rights based approach. The convergent action with WASSAN in piloting for innovations in the scheme resulted in inclusion of certain provisions into the scheme. This has been possible with extensive discussions at Sangham and village level and close monitoring of implementation of the scheme at field level. It prompted the department to take quick decisions on certain aspects and pass new G.O.s for implementation.

In this direction, APNA has been initiated by the State Government with the partnership of NGOs and government departments. APMSS has been an active member in this network right from its inception. Taking advantage of the position we could bring in the voices and concerns of women wage seekers to the forum for discussion and taking necessary action by the department. Our focus was on encouraging women to become mates and facilitating Srama Shakti Sanghams (SSS) to access their rights and demand for accountability from the functionaries. The Sangham women are encouraged to be part of the social audit process. In this regard the major outcomes during the reporting year are as following:

- ◆ Land development was taken up in 196 acres across 85 villages in Nalgonda
- ◆ Claiming medical bills successfully by the effected wage seekers
- ◆ Discussions on institutional building by facilitating formation of federations of SSS at village level
- ◆ Earlier the G.O.s used to be circulated in English only. But with the intervention of APNA, now the circulars and the G.O.s are being issued in Telugu
- ◆ The toll free helpline is being used by the wage seekers, mates or general public with the wider

dissemination of the information for resolving all kinds of issues and concerns

- ◆ The concept of temporary groups has been introduced for the benefit of those who are not part of the fixed groups, and left out from the earlier matching – batching process
- ◆ Taking up issues for discussion in the fixed day meetings at mandal and district levels and for further action
- ◆ Weekly assessment of demand for work by wage seekers is introduced

It is a successful initiative by the government for partnership with civil society towards effective implementation of the dynamic Act. In spite of these interventions from both government and non-government agencies there are still many challenges coming in the way in terms of indifferent approach of the officials towards the needs of the wage seekers, addressing issues of malpractices in uploading the factual information, and not providing implements required for single women and persons with physical disabilities. Relentless efforts are being made to raise these issues and bring it to the notice of the higher authorities. Thus, this partnership has been positive and successful in taking forward the issues of women and disadvantaged for timely and suitable intervention.

Watershed Programme

As reported earlier APMSS has been facilitating Watershed Programme with the technical support from WASSAN – a network organization, and the funding support from NABARD, in three clusters of Asifabad mandal, Adilabad district since 2007, covering 2,627.07 hectares. The programme in all three clusters reached second stage of Final Implementation Phase completing FIP – I stage. Works are in progress in accordance with the approved plan. The efforts of all three watersheds are appreciated by the NABARD and WASSAN as the WDC members are taking up activities with great commitment and benefitting from the programme interventions. Pro-active participation

of women in all aspects at all stages of the programme also received applause from the officials.

The exposure visits to other major watersheds and popular places like Hiwrebazar and Jalgoan in Sholapur district of Maharashtra helped them in terms of new learnings on the agricultural practices, irrigation systems, maintaining the structures constructed and the non-farm activities for economic development and sustainability of the beneficiaries. The farmers are now mostly following non-pesticide methods and organic farming. Trainings provided on maintaining records and accounts to the Village level watershed committee members, and support is being given by social mobilisers and the supervisors in following the norms.

Its impact is visible not only in terms of increased ground water table and livestock but also in the agriculture practices and village development. Farmers' families have started using smokeless chulhas and the community is focusing on developing commons in the village. Non farming families are also taking benefits of the programme by accessing loans towards economic activities at village level.



I am Kamala, resident of Dadpapur village, Asifabad mandal. I am the only bread winner of my family. Our village falls in Kowtaguda Watershed. I don't have agricultural land. I used to work as daily wage labour in the field. During the village level

watershed committee meeting I came to know that there is provision for livelihood activities. I thought that this would help me to take up income generation activity. I gave a requisition to the Village Watershed Committee for the financial support. They accepted it and sanctioned Rs.27,000/-. I decided to set up flour mill as it is not there in my village. My villagers travel all the way to Asifabad as most of us have the habit of eating Jowar roti. This prompted me to start this activity. Now I earn Rs.4000/- to 5000/- per month and feel secured and confident to look after my family.

I am Godem Anasurya belong to Kowtaguda village. We do not have own agriculture lands, we work in fields as labor. We came to know that, financial support is being given for the livelihood activities under Watershed programme. My husband has good skill in making cement bricks so we applied to Village Watershed committee for financial support under livelihood activities. Rs.9000/- was sanctioned to us. With this amount we bought the raw material and started making cement bricks. The bricks are being sold within the village. We are repaying the loan on installments. Now I started general store in my house. We are also clearing our debts gradually. Now we spend money with proper plan, so that we overcome financial problems. Watershed programme gave support to lot of families in our village.

The many struggles faced in the initial phase yielded in good results now. These watersheds have been identified as best performing by NABARD and are now serving as the learning sites for other watershed committees as well as facilitating agencies. Bala Sangham and School children were also taken to the watershed area for understanding on land, soil, water, crops, etc and their responsibility to conserve natural resources. This success gave us inspiration to take certain practices on scale to the other project districts also in terms of soil and water conservation, nurturing livestock and promoting organic farming methods, thus included into the action plan for the following year.

Participation in the Committees

MS being a large programme working with social agenda for women's empowerment it is recognised by various departments and included as a member in different district and state level committees. MS has been making continuous efforts to take up issues in these forums and share the process and experiences in mobilization, sensitization and educating girls and women towards empowerment.

Federation members in Medak and Karimnagar continued to be members in Prajavani programme initiated by the district administration for grievance redressal and speedy clearance of cases through arbitration. Nyaya Committee members of 18 federations who are identified as para legal volunteers to handle cases related to issues of women are attending this forum on every Monday and are addressing the cases.

DIU – Medak is identified as a member in the district level PCPNDT Advocacy committee set up to review the status and functioning of existing ultrasound scanning centers. As a member of this committee MS has taken up responsibility of conducting awareness programmes to the communities in its project area on the provisions of PCPNDT Act.

MS has continued to be an active member in the United Forum for Right to Information. Trainings were given to the Sanghams and village youth on the provisions under the Act, how to apply for information under this Act and its utility in the public interest.

Major Challenges

- ◆ Frequent turnover of the grassroots team members and placing new team members with

required capacities in the older Sanghams are continued to be challenges

- ◆ Upgrading the capacities of the members of MRGs and the federation bodies, so as to make them as trainers in accordance to the changing contexts, especially in the mandals of autonomous federations
- ◆ Playing advocacy role for effective mainstreaming of Gender perspective into various programmes has been a challenge

Future Steps

All the initiatives taken up during the reporting year towards capacity building of various sections, within the programme and outside, have yielded positive results. Also the efforts towards building Convergence and Networking brought visibility to both the programme and the federations/Sanghams. The outcomes in these areas also informed us of the action points for the programme and the federations. Thus the focus for the coming year would be as following:

- ◆ Building capacities of the federations – old and the new, MRGs and the team members in accordance of the changing needs of the programme and the contexts
- ◆ Facilitating formation and strengthening of village level 'Samatha Dandu's as watch committees and pressure groups to prevent violence and address cases of violence
- ◆ Reaching out to most marginalized sections of the community and helping them build their life skills and evolving peer educators
- ◆ Greater visibility to the programme and the federations through networking and strong advocacy strategy at District and State levels



Expanding Horizons of Community Sensitivity

Engaging larger community and initiating critical discussions on the position and condition of women has always been one of the core strategic moves of the programme in order to create an enabling environment for women to access their rights and for equal participation. The forums are many – right from family events to the community activities.

The mandal focus issues identified by the Sanghams form the basis for taking up these activities. Awareness generation and sensitization programmes are organized to spread the message through campaigns, exhibitions, village level meetings, mahila sadassulu, etc. Most times specific issue based campaigns are designed in tune with the special days or weeks such as World Environment Day, nutrition week, child rights week, anti violence fortnight, etc. In addition, information dissemination and sensitization is done to the larger community on common issues like MG-NREGS, age at marriage, family entitlements, etc. Though the activities seems to be the same every year the implementation strategy may vary in line with the expected outcomes basing on the context. These platforms are also utilized to engage larger and diverse sections of the society, viz., elected representatives, officials, community leaders and other general public. This strategy proved to be effective in building community ownership and support to the Sanghams and Bala Sanghams in their voice against inequalities. In the process, the programme is also able to spread the messages wider as well as ensure convergent and collective efforts in working towards women's empowerment.

Two of the important activities taken up this year gave us new insights and also visibility to the Sanghams and the programme. They are – one, reinitiating the maintenance of bio-diversity registers in identified villages with the support of A. P. Bio-diversity Board and; two, conducting pre election voter awareness campaign in a massive scale. While the former initiative brought in men and panchayat members into the inner circle of the Sanghams' activities, the later resulted in 6,248 Sangham women coming forward to contest in the forth coming Grama Panchayat elections.

*M*ahila Samatha being a unique programme facilitating empowerment of rural poor women, its journey for the past two decades has assumed great importance in expanding the programme philosophy to a wider reach both physically and ideologically. The Sanghams have become grassroots institutions working with social agenda and emerged as pressure groups to bring in women's issues to the forefront for governance and other systemic interventions. In the process, they gained identity as a forum where the other villagers can seek information, knowledge and support in accessing their rights and entitlements. The Federations have further contributed to reach out to non MS areas also through their campaigns, dissemination activities and awareness programmes.

In the initial phase, women's priorities were the basic needs – primary health, children's education, infrastructure facilities, access to schemes and services, minimum wages, etc. Articulating these in the Sanghams widened the boundary of each issue to include strategic gender interests; rights based access and influence women friendly policies and programmes. In this context, the contemporary social situation, development trends, changing legal provisions, new Acts and schemes informed the knowledge building and information dissemination activities. Simultaneously, the programme began involving the larger village level community – men, grama panchayat, village level institutions, youth and other grassroots social institutions. This enabled creation of a positive environment for women to enter into leadership roles, raise and address their concerns and advocate for effective access to rights and entitlements. The result is visible at the family level as well as at village level.

The strategies of *Waada Sanghams*, village level Core Groups, issue committees, resource groups paved way for focused capacity building and creation of action groups at village, cluster and mandal levels. This way the Sanghams could establish themselves as resource base at various levels besides creating

support structures for further advocacy towards women friendly planning and programmes.

Working on specific social issues with mandal focus like HIV/AIDS, migration, sanitation, reproductive health, anaemia, child marriages, etc. and forming village level committees for convergent action is one key strategy followed by the programme in the past few years for focused outcomes. Simultaneously taking up awareness campaigns on the larger women's issues like women's literacy, girls' education, violence against women and girls, participation of women in governance are the common strategic areas across all the project districts for mobilizing the community in large numbers and sensitizing them on the need for working towards women's empowerment.

The past year's activities under this theme are largely a continuum to the above processes. Additionally, situation analysis was taken up on identified mandal focus issues and efforts were made to present the same to a wider audience and to the stake holders for strategic interventions.

Details are reported in the following pages –

MANDAL FOCAL ISSUES

As stated above, targeted interventions were planned on specific issues that are identified at field level. The reasons are – diverse dimensions of the issue raised in the Sanghams, its localized effect on the families, larger impact on the overall women's development and the need to get concrete results by implementing short term and multiple strategies.

HIV&AIDS

HIV&AIDS continued to be one of the focal issues for the programme for the past many years, keeping in view the rate of prevalence in some of the project mandals. We could claim that awareness on the causes, spread and prevention was increased and many people including women were coming forward to test their HIV status as a result of the multifarious programmes taken up at different levels across the project districts. Thus

the present need has been on specific areas where there are issues of stigma, gender based violence and lack of care and support. In this direction, comprehensive programmes were designed and implemented throughout the year targeting the most vulnerable community.

These activities were organized across 664 villages of 6 project districts in the past year reaching to 15,102 members. A total of 2,264 persons have undergone test for HIV.

HIV/AIDS has been identified as mandal focus issue in Gajapathinagaram mandal, Vizianagaram district. Thus various activities were planned in all 46 villages for the entire year. Sangham and cluster meetings, village level trainings, youth meetings and rallies are to quote some among them. The stigma attached to the persons having HIV/AIDS, the resultant violence faced by women, need for continuous care and support for the people living with HIV/AIDS, sensitization of the families and rural medical practitioners formed the core content of all these. As a result, within one year, 509 persons got tested for HIV/AIDS and 32 persons living with HIV/AIDS are able to take medicines regularly. Now the village community is able to take the initiative forward and support the Sanghams in planning necessary and timely steps whenever a concern emerges.

Working on specific issues at mandal level by integrating it to the larger programmatic agenda was not new to us but in the past year it assumed significance in building momentum and bringing the issue to the forefront for everybody's attention. Thereby we could make the community feel the responsibility and accountable. The previous year's experiences and outcomes formed the base for fresh planning and incorporating the new dimensions of the issue.

Anaemia

Anaemia among women and girls is another major issue identified for focal action in many project mandals. While continuing the earlier efforts, thrust was on availability and access to nutritious food;

addressing susceptibility to anaemia due to the gender based family norms, workload and superstitions, myths and misconceptions around food intake during certain stages of a woman's life. Critical analysis of correlation between food consumption and the workload, nutritional requirements throughout the life cycle of a woman particularly during the stages of adolescence, pregnancy, lactating and menopause stages helped in building the knowledge levels and influence the thought processes. Besides, information dissemination on the locally available food items, its accessibility, the myths and taboos associated with them contributed to change in the food practices and inclusion of certain food items in the daily diet like pumpkin, cucumber, papaya, drumstick leaves, greens, gourds of different varieties.

Activities such as food stalls, demonstrations, meetings, village level trainings aimed at the wider community while focused sessions and training programmes were held in the Sanghams, Bala Sanghams and issue committees for strengthening the resource base. Additionally HB tests were conducted to adolescents and women in identified villages with support from the mandal and district health departments. As it was observed that many women and girls had lower HB levels and vulnerable to severe anaemia, intensive programmes are planned in such villages. Support in growing kitchen gardens, initiating nutrition centers, nutritional food demonstrations, campaigning for food crops, accessing anganwadi services, etc are some of these focused activities. Health registers are also maintained in these villages to track the improvement of nutritional status of women.

In all, 897 programmes were held in 299 villages across 8 districts in the past year.



Migration

Migration is identified as one of the focus issues in certain mandals of Anantapur, Kurnool, Srikakulam, Karimnagar and Mahabubnagar districts. Despite large scale awareness and increased access to MGNREGS, this issue remained a challenge for us. Thus the main emphasis was on sensitizing the families on consequences of migration both at their native village and the place to which they migrate and care to be taken before and during migration. Information was disseminated on the livelihood resources that can be utilized locally in addition to facilitating them to resolve their concerns in accessing MGNREGS.

In Anantapur and Kurnool districts small studies were conducted to analyze the situation of migration in identified mandals. A simple tool was developed and executed along with FGDs in 87 villages of both the districts. After analyzing the results, focused interventions were taken up in both the districts to address the situation. This mode of planning after detailed situational analysis has actually helped in critical analysis of the factors, identifying comprehensive plan of action.

In Anantapur district, a study was conducted on migration in 5 mandals covering 35 villages to understand the severity of the issue and to critically analyze the situation at grass roots level. A simple format was developed to collect the information on the reasons for migration, nature of work, duration, problems in availing the schemes and services. In addition, FGDs were also conducted to have in depth discussions on consequences of migration. The data collected was compiled, consolidated and critically analyzed. The findings were a surprise – in 6 villages most of the villagers did not know about or aware of the EGS for 100 days in a year, in another 6 villages, 9 people died at work place, 27 people who went on migration got infected with HIV&AIDS but there was no knowledge of compensation or medical facilities.

Subsequent to the targeted interventions, 400 families were motivated to avail EGS, 27 people availed pension scheme, 53 families got job cards and 87 children were mainstreamed into formal education. It also gave us a direction for the coming year's work in this area.

In Ranastalam mandal, Srikakulam district, Migration and the related problems were raised frequently in the Sangham and village level discussions. It was revealed that many families go on migration to long distance places such as Chennai, Guntur, Hyderabad, etc, on seasonal and long term basis. Taking cue from this, trainings and FGDs with the migrating families were specifically held besides utilizing all the regular forums for critical analysis on the consequences of migration. Issue committee members and Resource pool members of the Sanghams are sensitized to take the responsibility of identifying and addressing specific cases.

With all these efforts, it can be claimed that significant changes were noticed. A total of 700 families could access the EGS during the reporting year and also availing locally available livelihoods. In 15 villages, information in GP records in order to not to lose benefits at their native villages. In 20 villages, the families were motivated to cultivate their lands which otherwise were left fallow. The fresh challenge is to ensure sustainability of the change initiated.

In the past year, such targeted action in respect of identified mandal focus issues yielded concrete results across different project districts. A brief report of the same is given below:

- ♦ Village Development committee of Yengal village, Chandurthi mandal, Karimnagar, was very active since its formation last year. After an exposure visit to model villages in the same district, they immediately took up sanitation as a priority in their village. Surveyed and facilitated

157 families who do not have toilets, and caused for sanction of ISLs to all the 157 families.

- ◆ In Warangal district, 592 families among 8 villages applied for ISLs as a result of intensive campaign on village sanitation, and 329 families got the sanction.
- ◆ During Sangham meetings, the issue of single women was raised frequently in all 8 mandals of Kurnool district. To further understand the severity of the issue, the team did a quick situational analysis and identified that 1,481 women from 69 villages are living alone and are in vulnerable situation. Further efforts resulted in most of them joining SHGs and avail benefits of SHG. During this process 328 of them joined MS Sanghams and resolved to deal with their issues with the support of the Sanghams.
- ◆ Superstitions are prominent in Srikakulam, particularly in Laveru mandal thus making it a mandal focus issue for strategic intervention. Various awareness activities were conducted to break these and could succeed in creating a positive environment towards attitudinal change among the villagers. Similarly, certain superstitions relating to menstrual practices were also observed and addressed.
- ◆ In 3 mandals – Kotapalli, Narnur and Tiryani of Adilabad district, many myths and misconceptions were noticed with regard to food practices among pregnant and lactating women. Taking this as a campaign issue Kalajathas were conducted in 30 villages of these three mandals reaching out to 6,129 members. As a result, institutional deliveries are increased and ensuring greens in their diet is noticed.

CAMPAIGNS FOR AWARENESS AND SENSITIZATION

Information dissemination and sensitization of the general public, particularly village community is an integral part of the programmatic activities every year. The major objective being awareness generation and knowledge building, most times

the issues are carefully picked up. Conservation of resources, alcoholism and related violence against women and girls, sanitation and communicable diseases, reproductive health and gender issues, proactive participation of women in governance, immunization, chronic diseases like Tuberculosis and Cancer, livelihood opportunities, MGNREGS, etc. are to quote among such.

Also, while planning the campaign the relation of the issue to women's status, community's responsibility in addressing are woven into the modules. Same time, information on related Acts, legal provisions, government programmes and schemes is made available to the participants in various forms – posters, pamphlets, brochures, banners, etc. In this regard, observation of special days has also been another regular feature to mark the occasion and sensitize diverse sections of the society.

Creating awareness on environmental issues like forest conservation, plantation, reducing usage of plastic, water harvesting, etc. has been on the agenda for past few years. Continuing this there were demonstrations and further facilitation to dig soakage pits across the project area. Consequently, 642 soakage pits were dug across 111 villages of 9 districts. The focus has been continued for the next years in order to increase ground water levels.

All together a total of 1,721 events were organized on various special days across 679 villages for information dissemination and creating awareness. A total of 18,658 persons have participated in these events.

International Women's Day

In the process of empowering women, MS always utilizes International women's day as a forum to showcase the glimpses of women's achievements and also to build solidarity among women. The activities conducted ranges from village to district level. The theme identified for the year by UNO will be disseminated along with the background information.

In line with this, in the past year too, various activities were conducted on International women's day across the project districts. On this occasion, we proudly report that, Samatha Dandu, one of our interventions in Nellikuduru mandal, Warangal district was chosen for Naveena Award of TV9 channel under organization category. The Award was presented by the popular Social worker Ms. Medha Patkar, in a big event organized at State level. The inspiration received from this achievement was so immense that all the districts' teams immediately resolved to facilitate it in each of the project mandals. Thus on the occasion of the International Women's Day, it was discussed thoroughly with Sangham women and developed action plan to take forward this concept. In addition, importance of women's education and enhancing literacy skills by accessing existing opportunities were also discussed.

Bio-diversity Registers

APMSS has been facilitating the Sangham women towards conserving natural resources. In this regard, in the past, trainings were given to the issue committees and large scale awareness programmes were organized at community level. As a result the Sangham women negotiated and became active members of water users committees, joint forest management committees, Rythu Mitra committees, etc. The changing patterns in agriculture and the natural resources has been an issue of concern and relevant strategies were evolved and implemented towards promoting food crops, livestock management and organic farming, etc. All these, prompted us to observe the diversity in the nature and the changes taking place in the environment around us. This led to an initiative of maintaining community bio-diversity registers in Medak district, almost a decade back. It was discontinued after a brief period for various reasons at macro level.

The world conference that took place in Hyderabad prompted us again towards reviving the erstwhile

initiative of maintaining community based bio-diversity registers. The continued field discussions on the protection of fast disappearing species / natural resources also encouraged us in this direction. A.P. Bio-diversity board officials extended support in taking forward the issue. An orientation was conducted to the issue core team members who in turn did the village level intervention in the identified villages.

It was decided to identify two villages per mandal covering 5 mandals in each of the project districts. Accordingly, meetings were organized in these villages with the participation of people from various sections of the village, officials from agriculture department and the Sanghams. Subsequently, the bio-diversity management committees (BMCs) were formed with 7 persons as members representing different fields – farmers, Sangham women, youth and the GP members and are notified to maintain the registers

in 11 villages of 3 districts. Subsequently these committees are oriented on the issue and on maintenance

Here on wards we will think about the birds and animals around us and we would try to conserve the natural resources

of bio-diversity registers and the registers are provided for recording the basic information initially. It helped us in widening the reach of the programme and involving the entire village along with the concerned mandal officials. This has to be taken forward in the coming years.

Pre Election Voter Awareness Campaigns (PEVAC)

Campaigning and emphasizing for women's proactive role in local governance institutions has been one of the core areas for the programme from the beginning. Need for getting voter identity card, exercising the right to vote, knowing about the nomination and election procedures, need to choose the right candidate, mobilizing and motivating women to contest in large numbers to enable them enter into leadership roles are part of the content for this campaign. With the result, we proudly claim

that the number of Sangham women contesting and entering into political arena has been steadily increasing, term after term. After the elections, capacity building of the women representatives and evolving EWR networks has been regular and strategic interventions for their effective role in politics.



In this context, as Panchayat elections were presumed to be held in June 2013, PEVAC campaigns were held in all project districts. Specific plan was made to ensure that all the necessary information to be reached to the community is included in the campaign. Each district chose the appropriate form of campaign according to the local situation. These include role plays, Kalajathas using regional folk forms, wall writings, rallies, Focus Group discussions, village level meetings, melas, workshops, etc. In all, through various activities across 1,109 villages we could reach to a total of 1,41,465 persons.

The impact is again an interesting phenomenon and was immediately visible in some districts. To quote few –

- ◆ 4,890 persons got voter identity cards for the first time after the campaign in Mahabubnagar, Karimnagar, Anantapur and Visakhapatnam districts
- ◆ 6,248 women came forward to contest in the elections for different positions

- ◆ 452 women decided to contest from general seats

Major Challenges

- ◆ Reaching out to non-MS areas on a large scale, where there are few agencies working on social empowerment of women in a comprehensive manner, has been one of the challenges
- ◆ Facilitating forums with the participation of various NGOs and CBOs to address the larger issues of women's empowerment in the changing social contexts
- ◆ Building necessary capacities of the new team members to keep pace with the field needs for creating awareness, sensitization and building networks

Future Steps

Going by the successes, learnings, needs identified and the concerns articulated by the Sanghams during this year, the plan for next year has evolved. Some of the focus areas for the coming year are as following –

- ◆ Facilitating formation of village development committees in the villages identified for specific and focused interventions for overall village development
- ◆ Expanding the reach to the neighbouring mandals of the project area through the MRGs and the federations by building networks with other agencies for addressing critical issues of women's concern
- ◆ Sensitizing families of elected women representatives towards creating an enabling environment for their effective functioning
- ◆ Providing trainings to elected women representatives and building EWR networks



Samatha Gender Resource Centre

Samatha Gender Resource Centre is envisaged to be a resource unit of the programme to reach a wider audience through ideological expansion to non-MS areas. It evolved in 2001 as an external wing of APMSS with the major objective of mainstreaming the learnings in facilitating women's empowerment into policies and programmes. Same time, the purpose is also to bring in contemporary developmental trends, perspectives into the programme and linking the processes to the contextual needs. Thus its role has been critical for strengthening programme's processes and interventions in different issues.

Apart from capacity building initiatives, from the beginning SGRC ventured into diverse activities including campaigns, research and documentation. These have formed good base for establishing the Centre and strengthen it further. Over the years SGRC has further widened its sphere by entering into partnerships and collaborative initiatives with different agencies, both government and non government, and took up research studies, advocacy programmes, etc. With this marked recognition, many organizations and departments are looking up for SGRC for resource support and for partnership programmes.

The past year activities of the SGRC are largely a continuum of the previous year's programmes. Running Samatha Nilayam (commune for children with single or no parent), gender perspective building to various groups / departments, documentation and research studies are to quote some. In addition, APMSS joined the larger global campaign on violence against women – One Billion Rising. Also, there has been national level intense brainstorming on Resource Centers in MS programme in view of the envisaged role change of MS programme during 12th five year plan.

The details are given in the following paragraphs...

Samatha Nilayam

Samatha Nilayam, set up in August, 2011 in the HLERC campus, Varni mandal, Nizamabad is now two year old. Entering second year, we were confident by now to deal with the challenges of handling children of all ages, both boys and girls, lack of foster mothers, and shortage of support team at Samatha Nilayam. The children increased to 52 and were placed in all the eight homes. We tried our best to facilitate single women come and stay at Samatha Nilayam as foster mothers. But their practical concerns of getting pension, ration cards, property issues became real challenges for them to leave their homes and stay in the commune. Many of them came and then left in a very short span. To address this we identified college girls willing to work as care takers. Thus, one residential teacher and the campus in-charge could manage the situation with one mother, 3 care takers and support staff. The older children also shared the responsibility of taking care of the youngest children.

Nevertheless, it is overwhelming to report that the progress of the children – both academics and extra-curricular, continued to be on the rise. They stood in first few ranks in their classes and bagged many prizes in sports and other activities. Two girls passed 10th class and are now pursuing college education.

The first anniversary held in the campus in August 2012 was actually an event to recollect all the experiences of the children before and after joining the Samatha Nilayam. On the occasion Ms. Chandana Khan, IAS, Special Chief Secretary, Primary Education, GoAP was the chief guest. The District Collector, Nizamabad and the sub-collector, Bodhan division were the special invitees. All the dignitaries appreciated the efforts of the team in maintaining Samatha Nilayam according to the preset objectives and assured all their support.



In this context, it is worth reporting that Rajiv Vidya Mission, besides extending financial grant to run Samatha Nilayam, also took up repairs to the homes, existing infrastructure and thus making them comfortable for living. Simultaneously, philanthropists and charitable organizations are extending helping hand by providing support in kind like play material, clothes, stationary etc. All these add to the collective spirit built in the Commune.

HLERC Campus

The idea that the vast campus situated in Varni mandal, Nizamabad can be utilized for capacity building programmes was always in our mind whenever we planned any such programmes. However, the distance from Hyderabad and the

project districts; need for repairs to most of the existing structures particularly availability of usable toilets are certain issues that demanded attention before such planning. Thus last year we put focus on it and took up some repairs. Yet lot more needs to be done to fully utilize the campus infrastructure.

Perspective Building

As ever, SGRC continued to put its mark on the different capacity building programmes ranging from perspective building on gender to gender budgeting and to women's Empowerment. SGRC is identified as resource agency by MCR-HRD institute to provide trainings to the employees of various State Government departments. This experience was always refreshing and reminds us to upgrade the trainers' skills while adapting to the changing contemporary social scenario.

Additionally, there have been proposals for SGRC to work with RVM (SSA) on the RTE and equality issues. In this regard few meetings were held and working groups were formed wherein SGRC was made part of the group on girls' education. Developing gender sensitive curriculum, capacity building to the teachers, etc. were part of this group's agenda. However, it did not continue further due to various functional reasons as informed by RVM (SSA) authorities.

Campaign - OBR

In the past year, SGRC joined the global campaign to end violence against women – One Billion Rising on 14th February, 2013. It was founded by Eve Ensler, US based Playwright and is a dance form of revolution, wherein the participants congregate at one place, rise to the occasion in any form – dance, song or any other form of communication to say boldly - ***“Enough! Violence Ends Now!”***. It marks the collective strength and solidarity in the efforts to end all forms of violence against women across the world. More details are already given in the related section of this report.



In this effort SGRC extended financial support in organizing the event at State level and also by taking pro-active role in the Districts in organizing activities. It helped in building thematic advocacy forums at state and district levels on the issue of VAW. This effort also contributed to growing visibility for SGRC.

Research Study on Group farming

As part of research initiatives, in the past year SGRC entered into partnership with Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi for a research study on collective agriculture by women farmers. The idea of taking up this research came while articulating group farming as one of the policy recommendations for twelfth five year plan. When we shared that Sangham women are still continuing the collective agriculture project supported for five years by UNDP from 2000-2005 in almost 50% of the villages, it was appreciated greatly by the working group members. Subsequently, the proposal came up for a comparative study of the cost of cultivation with respect to group farming, individual farming by non Sangham members and Sangham members. This study is taken up for two crop seasons – Kharif and Rabi. Field level data has been collected in select villages across three APMSS project districts identified for the study. Presently, data scrutiny and entry are being done for final analysis.

The whole project has brought many learning experiences for APMSS. Working with technical

research institutes and fixed research parameters versus data collection by field level team – amateur farmers not well versed with technicalities of data collection has been the contrast and gave challenging time to the coordinating team in streamlining data while retaining space for the diversity of crop situations across the districts/mandals.

Internship and student learning programs

APMSS has become learning base for the student exchange programmes, internships and for field placements. Every year many students from various regional, national and international Universities and institutions approach MS for studying the processes of facilitating women's empowerment. SGRC provides the platform for them to plan, take up appropriate issue for study and prepare reports.

In line with this, in the past year too, 29 students of graduation and post graduation courses were associated with SGRC/APMSS.

◆ Important among these initiatives has been the study taken up by Ms. Sarah Holcman, US based student scholar on the Bala Sanghams. Sponsored by LIFE – Indian NGO project, under an international student exchange programme – the International leadership development and social change in Israel and India, she took it up as part of her programme in India. She



visited Kurnool, Warangal, Nizamabad districts, interviewed Bala Sangham children, Bala Panchayat members, teachers and parents. She also conducted FGDs and interacted with the MS functionaries to gain further understanding on the strategy. Later she brought out a detailed report on the learnings.

- ◆ During the first half of the year Ms.Srujana, research scholar from University of Hyderabad approached APMSS for summer internship programme. She did a small study on the status of single women in the districts of Nizamabad, Kurnool and Prakasam. She came up with a collection of case studies by interviewing 10 single women. Her work brought out specific issues of single women like insufficient access to entitlements, lack of social security, vulnerability to sexual abuse and violence against them.
- ◆ Four batches of students of Graduation and Post Graduation of Social Work course from KIMS, Vivekananda Degree & PG College and Shatavahana University were placed in the field for concurrent field work and block placement as part of their course training. A total of 21 students were trained on MS Philosophy, objectives, strategies, addressing women's issues and conducting activities at field level
- ◆ 6 Post Graduation students of Social Work from Telangana University were placed in the field from 1.9.2012 to 6.11.2012 to learn about the Sanghams, collective strength and the activities of APMSS as a part of their field training

Major Challenges

The biggest strength of SGRC is that all the functionaries of APMSS and the grassroots women from Sanghams, MRGs and federations are part of the resource group under the centre. In addition, representatives of various NGOs working on issues

similar to that of APMSS, subject experts and few educationists are also part of the resource group. However, there are some challenges that need to be addressed for effective functioning of the SGRC. Some of the challenges are listed here.

- ◆ There has been a lot to do from resource centre but getting suitable members to work for SGRC on short term and full time has been a challenge
- ◆ Lack of technical knowledge with the existing team in terms of designing research studies and data analysis
- ◆ Retaining the trained field functionaries to continue the strength of the centre

Future steps

In the context of MS entering into another five year plan, there has been lot of brainstorming on the role of the Resource Centers at all MS states. The national workshop held in Assam during February 2013 has been significant effort in this direction. In this light it is interesting to watch the next steps.

- ◆ SGRC needs to build its team – develop a strong resource pool that can contribute to strengthening of the Centre
- ◆ Taking up multifarious activities and advocate for mainstreaming MS learnings
- ◆ Material preparation is another area that requires attention and is made part of the subsequent year's plan



Documentation

As MS is a process oriented programme documentation becomes vital for review, reflection and evolving innovative strategies towards effective facilitation of the process of women's empowerment. It is also important to disseminate the achievements, experiences, learnings and challenges involved in this process to the larger society, so as to explore steps to mainstream these experiences into various other programme. It is an interesting as well as challenging exercise to present the content creatively and without compromising on the processes.

Two major forms of documentation are in practice at APMSS. One is recording and reporting the programme progress and the processes at different levels. Towards this, periodical reporting systems were developed internally and being followed along with administration of Revised Results Framework. Two, bringing out reports on good practices, strategies and interventions for the purpose of ideological expansion of the programme and for advocacy towards women friendly policies and programmes. Taking up internal surveys, studies on a small scale, developing case studies, preparation of dissemination material depicting the experiences gained through the programme form part of the latter.

Realizing the importance of documentation in programmes like MS, continuous efforts are made towards building capacities of the functionaries on different tools and techniques of documentation.

The following pages give details of various activities taken up under this theme...

Data base Management & Maintenance

Efforts to standardize basic programmatic data through MIS in line with RRF have been made since last three years. Reflection meetings and thematic meetings served as forums to discuss; rectify and

bridge the gaps in this process. This helped us to largely overcome the data errors, streamline the data collection and reporting system. However, standardizing the data mechanisms at all levels, given its varied and diverse nature, still remain as a challenge.

Material Development & Documentation

Keeping in view the changing social situation and the forms of violence against women and girls, the need for fresh material preparation was realized and incorporated in the annual plan. Same time, up-dating of the earlier documents and materials with the current information was also identified as another focal area under the documentation theme.

Accordingly during the past year the following documents/material was brought out. Enough care was taken to ensure correctness of the information and inclusion of the latest Acts / amendments relevant to the issue.

Information Material

- ◆ A flip book on "**Child Rights**" was developed and printed to disseminate information and for facilitating discussions among the children of Bala Sanghams and MSKs on their rights.
- ◆ As planned in the Annual Plan 2012-13, **People's Biodiversity Register** was prepared with the support of A.P. Biodiversity Board and printed to record the bio diversity in identified villages where the Biodiversity Committees are being facilitated.
- ◆ Keeping in view the rapid decline in child sex ratio as per 2011 census, a poster was developed on consequences of declining sex ratio for use in the field level discussions.

- ◆ Taking cue from the increasing incidents of violence against women and girls, a poster was developed depicting different forms of violence against women and girls in life cycle approach. This would help in facilitating discussions at field and team levels on the patterns and trends of violence against women and the patriarchal values that are influencing the status of women.
- ◆ Many new songs have been developed as part of the Sangham/team discussions in the recent times. A book of Songs was brought out compiling these songs and including some more songs gathered from different sources.
- ◆ An audio DVD is also brought out with 20 songs sung by Sangham women and team members for wider use.
- ◆ Need based materials were developed at district level in the form of banners, pamphlets, brochures, etc., to meet the field needs and demands.
- ◆ Bringing out quarterly Newsletters at State and district levels is another regular feature of the documentation processes. These serve as important tools for dissemination of information in addition to reporting the major events organized during the period.
- ◆ An analytical study was taken up to understand the cost effectiveness of the Literacy interventions in the programme – “*Cost Effective Analysis of the Adult Learning Centers in APMSS*”. Towards this technical support is taken from Administrative Staff College of India for developing the tools and support in analysis. The final report is yet to come.
- ◆ The glimpses of empowerment processes among the Sangham women and team members associated with MS over a period of time were recorded in the form of a video film ‘*Sannibhitam – 20 years of APMSS journey*’.
- ◆ *Saakshi*, leading Telugu daily conducted interviews with Sangham women, who are single and published them as an article to bring to surface the bitter experiences of single women, their struggles and concerns.
- ◆ A small study was done to assess the impact of the intervention on the issue of early marriages in Vizianagaram district. It was done in 26 villages. It is observed from the study that the age at marriage has increased to 18 years among girls, there is a decrease in the number of consanguineous marriages, decline in natural abortions and girls are able to continue their education.

Documentation

- ◆ *Mana Jaaga*, the process document of the Sangham Kutir has been revised to bring in more details, viz., Cluster Kutirs – purpose, process, challenges faced in facilitation as well as in construction, the successes and usage of the Kutir as the office of the federations, etc.
- ◆ A 30 minute duration film was developed on “*Samatha Nilayam*” – the commune documenting the progress among the children after joining the commune.

- ◆ *Thiraga Raasina Katha* – a ballet, developed on the basis of an epic story of Renuka Ellamma, who braved the oppressive patriarchal system, clubbed with the present context.

Capacity building to the team

The regular thematic reflection meetings served as forums for building capacities of the documentation thematic group on various types and processes of documentation and the necessary steps involved besides reflecting on the already existing processes. In this regard, it is worth reporting that almost all

project districts came up with an idea of taking up process documentation, surveys, and situational analysis of the mandal focus issues identified in their district. To quote a few – Child marriages in Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts, Child sex ratio in Warangal, migration Anantapur and Kurnool. The way the questionnaires / FGD tools were prepared, the study teams were formed and conducted the survey are worth reporting and indicate the growing interest among the team to strengthen their documenting processes. However, there is a need to help the team to fine tune their thoughts, equip them with the techniques of documentation and research.

Major Challenges

- ◆ Lot of data is being generated at field level but there is a gap in managing and effective utilization of the same which need to be addressed.
- ◆ Building documentation capacities of the team members in accordance to the changing needs remained as a challenge.
- ◆ Finding suitable external resource team for technical support in designing and administering the surveys and studies.

Future Steps

Considering the long journey of APMSS in facilitating empowerment processes it is important to strengthen our documentation further. It is the need of the hour to showcase the success of MS processes and its impact on women's lives. In line with this our next year's directions are:

- ◆ Emphasis on timely documentation of the midterm and end-line of the programme, prepare critical and analytical reports to reflect and retrospect on the empowerment processes and for strategic planning
- ◆ Developing small booklets with details of the processes, outcomes and challenges of working on identified mandal focus issues over a period of time basing on the impact studies conducted.
- ◆ An impact study on different health interventions implemented over a period of time across MS project districts
- ◆ Building capacities of team on tools and techniques of documentation in order to enable them to document the processes and success stories more effectively and to disseminate them at wider level – including MS and non MS mandals.



Seminars & Workshops

- ◆ Two days workshop on Land Rights held by ILC India on 3 & 4 July 2012 at Tirupathi was attended by DPC, Ananthapur
- ◆ Consultation on “Child Sex ratio” was conducted from 10-12 April 2012 by Action Aid, SPD and RC Coordinator attended as resource persons
- ◆ Quarterly review meeting of State Gender Coordinators was organized in Luknow, U.P on 5 & 6 July 2012. APD, DPCs of Anantapur and Karimnagar attended the meeting
- ◆ SRP attended State level workshop on Rights of Children with Disability, with a focus on RTE Act, on 27th June 2012 conducted by NPdO at Hyderabad
- ◆ SRP attended state level workshop on Right to Education, conducted by MVF on 27th June 2012
- ◆ RC Coordinator attended consultation on ‘Strengthening existing systems for prevention of child marriages’ conducted by M. V. Foundation on 9th July 2012
- ◆ SRP and DRP attended Annual Network meeting of WASSAN on 27&28th July at Tarnaka, Hyderabad
- ◆ A Brainstorming session on Nutrition was organized by CESS on 13th August 2012 and DPC, Nizamabad attended it
- ◆ Consultant, State office attended Nutrition Orientation programme for Non Government Organizations conducted by National Institute of Nutrition on 04th September 2012
- ◆ One day Consultation on RTE Act was conducted by M.V. Foundation on 14th September 2012 at Hyderabad. APD and DPC, Adilabad attended it
- ◆ RC Coordinator attended a consultation on PWDV Act 2005 held by Bhumika Women’s Collective on 21st September 2012
- ◆ NMEW organized consultation on “Designing Social inclusion plan for Marginal and Vulnerable Communities” on 01st October 2012. SPD, SRP and Consultant attended it
- ◆ SRP, DRP and two JRPs attended a seminar on “Right to education Act, 2009 : The Way Forward” at Nandyal on 8&9th October 2012
- ◆ SRP attended State level consultation on “Effective Functioning of Safe Shelters & Challenges” on 15th October 2012
- ◆ SPD, SRP and two DPCs attended Vision workshop from 16-18th October 2012, organized by Mahila Samakhya, Gujarat at Ahmedabad
- ◆ Workshop on “Child Marriages and Role of Civil Societies” organized by Asmita Resource Centre for Women on 17&18 October 2012. APD and RC Coordinator participated in this workshop
- ◆ SPD participated in the state level meeting of GO-NGO collaboration with Minister for Rural Development on 05th November 2012 conducted by AMR-APARD at Rajendranagar
- ◆ SPD and SRP attended ‘State level program on Capacity building of School Development and Monitoring Committees’ conducted by AP Women’s network on 22nd November 2012

- ◆ SPD attended the launch of a campaign on Declining Child Sex ratio on 10th December 2012 conducted by Action aid at Haryana Bhavan, Hyderabad
- ◆ A state level consultation on Menstrual Hygiene Management was organized by APRC-CWS at Hyderabad on 26th December 2012. Consultant from State office attended it
- ◆ SPD, APD, Consultant and Accounts Assistant participated in “The first Hyderabad queer pride –the day of mid night march” initiated by Suraksha Society and Asmitha Resource Centre for Women on 05th January 2013
- ◆ National Workshop on Gender Resource Center was organized by Assam Mahila Samatha Society from 29-31st January 2013. SPD, APD and DPC, Karimnagar attended the Workshop
- ◆ RC Coordinator attended state level workshop on “Reviewing the role of NGOs in Effective Implementation of Domestic Violence Act” at Hyderabad on 30th January 2013 conducted by CWS
- ◆ State office Consultant participated in a workshop organized by MCR-HRD on “Gender Budgeting: Concepts, tools and techniques” from 22-24th January 2013
- ◆ SPD and a group of 120 MS team members and Adolescent girls participated in the campaign – ‘One Billion Raising’ on 14th February, 2013. APMSS partnered with Asmitha Resource Centre for Women in organizing the event at Hyderabad
- ◆ SRP, Adilabad DPC and Srikakulam DRP attended an Orientation Course on “Methods and Techniques of Inculcating Leadership Qualities among Children” conducted by NIPCCD, Bangaluru from 18-22nd February 2013
- ◆ SPD, consultant and two DRPs from Mahabubnagar, Nizamabad attended a State level programme conducted by Bhumika Women’s Collective on the occasion of International Women’s Day on 12th March 2013 in Hyderabad



Visitors

- ◆ Two members from NMEW and National office Consultant accompanied by SPD, APMSS visited MSK and autonomous federations of Andole and Pulkal mandals of Medak district on 20.06.2012. They learned about MSK by interacting with the girls. Also interacted with federation members on their functioning and the issues they address
- ◆ On 26 & 27.07.2013 SPD, APD & Accountant from MS-Karnataka visited Chaitanya Mahila Federation of Devarakadra mandal, Mahabubnagar, interacted with federation women regarding autonomous functioning, strategies, issues, visited Residential Special Training Center run by the federation. They also visited DIU to learn about the systems and procedures followed in maintaining accounts at DIU
- ◆ Sangham women, SPD, DPC and DRP of MS-UP visited autonomous federations in Medak on 7.12.2012 to learn about their functioning towards women's empowerment and issues of sustainability
- ◆ Federation members from Mahila Samakhya, Karnataka visited autonomous federation at Maganur mandal, Mahabubnagar on 29.01.2013. They interacted with the members to understand the process of autonomous functioning and issues of sustainability. They also visited the RSTC run by the federation
- ◆ On 26.02.2013 Students from Tata Institute of Social Sciences visited Swechcha Mahila Sangham of Utkoor mandal. They attended Sangham and Federation meetings, interacted with the women to understand women's issues, how the Sangham women deal the cases, autonomous functioning of federation, etc. They also visited RSTC run by the federation
- ◆ A team of 10 CRPs from Mahila Samakhya, Kerala visited Rakshana Mahila Federation, Papannapeta and Pragathi Mahila Federation, Regode on 25 & 26.2.2013 to understand the process of autonomy and the strategies for sustainability of the federations
- ◆ Another team of 9 members from MS, Kerala visited Sri Chaitanya Mahila Federation, Koheda mandal of Karimnagar District on 25 & 26.02.2013 to understand the process of autonomy. They also observed the functioning of Nyaya committee of the federation. They also visited the MSK to learn about the curriculum, committees and maintenance of records, particularly the system followed to track the girls passed out.
- ◆ Sangham Women and MS team members from Gujarat visited Samanthara Mahila Federation, Nagireddipet mandal, Nizamabad, on 12.8.2012 to understand the process of autonomous functioning of the federation and the support structures they established
- ◆ On 26.3.2013 Sangham Women and team members from MS, Kerala visited Samaikyata Mahila Federation, Yellareddy mandal, Nizamabad, to understand the autonomous functioning of autonomous federation, support structures and the strategies followed for sustainability. They also visited the counseling center run by the federation

Audit Report - 2012-13



BALAJINAIDU & Co.,
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

H. No. 6-1-85/4, Saifabad,
Hyderabad - 500 004.
Ph : 040-2324 1533, 2323 1533

AUDITOR'S REPORT

1. We have audited the attached Balance Sheet of the Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society, Secunderabad as at 31st March, 2013 and Income and Expenditure Account and Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended on that date annexed thereto, and report that :

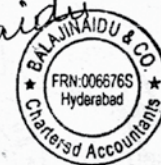
These financial statements are the responsibility of the Society's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in India. These standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

2. (a) We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief, were necessary for the purpose of our audit.
- (b) Proper books of accounts have been kept by the Society, so far as it appears from our examination of the books.
- (c) The Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account and Receipts and Payments Account referred to in this Report are in agreement with the books of accounts.
- (d) In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the said accounts subject to the notes, give a true and fair view :
- i) in the case of Balance Sheet, of the state of affairs of the society as at 31st March, 2013 and
- ii) in the case of Income and Expenditure Account of the society, the excess of Expenditure over Income for the year ended on that date.

for **BALAJINAIDU & CO.,**
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Firm Regn. No. 006676S

G. Balajinaidu
G. BALAJI NAIDU
PARTNER



PLACE : HYDERABAD
DATE : 22.07.2013

Membership No. 022245

**ANDHRA PRADESH MAHILA SAMATHA SOCIETY
HYDERABAD**

BALANCE SHEET AS ON 31.03.2013

LIABILITIES	SCH.	AMOUNT		ASSETS	SCH.	AMOUNT	
		Rs.	Ps.			Rs.	Ps.
CAPITAL FUND		653436.01		Fixed Assets	1	5515335.00	
Less : Excess of Expenditure over Income for the year		710707.05		Deposits & Advances	2	512617.00	
			<u>-57271.04</u>	Cash & Bank balances	3	1074311.96	
Payables	5	7529769.00		Cash & Bank balances - FCRA	4	146079.00	
				Receivables		224155.00	
TOTAL			<u>7472497.96</u>	TOTAL		<u>7472497.96</u>	

Notes on accounts and schedules annexed hereto form part of the accounts

for BALAJINAIDU & CO.,
Chartered Accountants
Firm Regn. No. 006676S

G. Balajinaidu
G. BALAJI NAIDU
Partner
Membership No. 022245



for ANDHRA PRADESH MAHILA SAMATHA SOCIETY

P. Prasanthi
P. PRASANTHI
State Programme Director

Place : Hyderabad
Date : 22.07.2013

ANDHRA PRADESH MAHILA SAMATHA SOCIETY
HYDERABAD
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR FROM 01.04.2012 TO 31.03.2013

EXPENDITURE	SCH.	AMOUNT		INCOME	AMOUNT	
		Rs.	Ps.		Rs.	Ps.
MANAGEMENT COST :						
State Office	6	5154697.50		Funds received from GOI		90370000.00
DIU - Medak	7	1148497.50				
DIU - Mahabubnagar	8	1283227.00		Funds received from NABARD		917100.00
DIU - Karimnagar	9	1478366.05				
DIU - Nizamabad	10	1338239.00		Funds Received from KGBV		425000.00
DIU - Adilabad	11	1365196.00				
DIU - Warangal	12	1346099.50		Interest on Savings Bank Accounts		1230125.00
DIU - Nalgonda	13	1180456.00				
DIU - Vizianagaram	14	1123240.50		Interest on SB - FCRA		8403.00
DIU - Srikakulam	15	1249544.00				
DIU - Prakasam	16	1198139.00		Excess of Expenditure over Income		710707.05
DIU - Anantapur	17	1181515.50		for the year		
DIU - Kurnool	18	1188063.00				
DIU - Visakhapatnam	19	1227653.00				
DIU - Khammam	20	959971.00				
TOTAL - A		22422904.55				
PROGRAMME COST :						
State Office	21	13420853.50				
DIU - Medak	22	4865962.00				
DIU - Mahabubnagar	23	4366328.50				
DIU - Karimnagar	24	4973825.50				
DIU - Nizamabad	25	4009928.50				
DIU - Adilabad	26	4264831.50				
DIU - Warangal	27	4537722.00				
DIU - Nalgonda	28	3961913.00				
DIU - Vizianagaram	29	3687133.00				
DIU - Srikakulam	30	3779760.50				
DIU - Prakasam	31	3451803.00				
DIU - Anantapur	32	3711753.50				
DIU - Kurnool	33	3702602.50				
DIU - Visakhapatnam	34	3296565.50				
DIU - Khammam	35	3456124.00				
NABARD Watershed Exp.		1199552.00				
Sakshara Bharath Exp.		123943.00				
KGBV Expenditure		415000.00				
Write off of Fixed Assets		12829.00				
TOTAL - B		71238430.50				
TOTAL		93661335.05		TOTAL		93661335.05

Notes on accounts and schedules annexed hereto form part of the accounts

for BALAJINAIDU & CO.,
Chartered Accountants
Firm Regn. No. 006676S

G. Balaji Naidu
G. BALAJI NAIDU
Partner
Membership No. 022245



for ANDHRA PRADESH MAHILA SAMATHA SOCIETY

P. Prasanthy
P. PRASANTHI
State Programme Director

Place : Hyderabad
Date : 22.07.2013

Major Outcomes 2012-13

- ◆ 2,36,085 women across 5013 villages of 14 districts are part of the 6,201 Sanghams facilitated by MS Programme in the State. This includes expansion to 43 more habitations during the year covering 2,360 women from most marginalized sections.
- ◆ 1 more federation became autonomous taking the total to 32 by the end of the year. 39 more mandals across 10 districts are in consolidation phase.
- ◆ The number and membership of Balasanghams grew to 2,960 with 88,420 adolescent boys and girls as members and are part of the change process. 202 early marriages were either stopped or postponed by Bala Sanghams.
- ◆ 46,793 more women were brought into literacy fold with continued and renewed thrust on women's literacy. 72,605 women appeared for basic literacy test of NIOS.
- ◆ 1,590 Sangham women accessed APOSS at different classes. 1,188 appeared for class X and 739 cleared in first attempt. 241 wrote Intermediate examination and 141 passed.
- ◆ In 671 villages total enrollment and in 407 villages total retention is ensured. A total of 8,245 children were mainstreamed as part of the government initiated enrollment drive.
- ◆ NPEGEL programme was implemented in 3,388 MCS across 455 mandals of 14 MS districts. With various interventions under this programme total enrollment is achieved in 1,177 villages and total retention in 979 schools, including non-MS mandals.
- ◆ Samatha Dandu, an alternative structure evolved on the model of Gulabi gang at Nellikuduru mandal, Warangal won Naveena Mahila Award for 2012-13 sponsored by TV 9 channel for its outstanding efforts in addressing issues of violence against women and girls.
- ◆ 21 federations took up various awareness and campaign activities on identified issues of women and girl's covering 306 villages with grant-in-aid from MS. Mahasangham – network of autonomous federations of Karimnagar was identified as Resource Agency by the RVM (SSA) to train SMC members across 4 mandals.
- ◆ As part of convergent efforts to impart life skills education and counseling to KGBV girls, 174 Sangham women were trained and placed as Sumitras in different KGBVs across 12 project districts.
- ◆ APMSS took up quick assessment of literacy skills among the first phase Saakshar Bharat learners across 66 mandals of 13 districts along with SRC. The study was initiated by DAE.
- ◆ 5 federations of Medak are running Legal Aid Clinics with support from the District Legal Services Authority. The autonomous federations of Medak and Karimnagar continued to be members of Prajavani, public grievance redress system at district level.
- ◆ APMSS team and Sangham women participated in the world wide OBR campaign against violence on women in Hyderabad and in all the project districts.
- ◆ SPD, APMSS was nominated for the training programme, "Gender Equality: Issues and Way Forward for the SAARC Region" conducted at Islamabad by SAARC Human Resource Development Centre, Pakistan
- ◆ SGRC further strengthened as Resource agency to build capacities of diverse groups including student interns – national and international.
- ◆ Ballet on the theme of women's empowerment "Thiraga Rasina Katha" developed on the basis of mythological Renuka Yellamma story and performed on the eve of 20 years of MS project in AP – a forum for collective reflections and way forward.
- ◆ 52 children in Samatha Nilayam – Commune for orphan and single parent children. 7 children wrote poems and stories and sent to North America Telugu Sangham. One of the stories won \$116 as cash prize from. Stories published in the Souvenir.
- ◆ 67 MSK girls won Gold, Silver, Bronze medals for their skills in Martial arts at District and State level competitions.
- ◆ Peoples Biodiversity registers were initiated in 11 villages of 3 districts.
- ◆ Intensive PEVAC programmes, reaching 1,41,465 people across the project districts, prompted 6,248 women opting to contest in the Panchayat elections held in July 2013.

Executive Committee Members

S.No.	Name & Designation	Membership Status
01.	Sri. Indrajith Pal, IAS, Secretary to Government, Dept. of Education, Government of A.P	Chairperson
02.	Dr. Meenakshi Jolly, National Project Director, Mahila Samakhya	Nominee of Dept. of Education, GOI, Ministry of HRD
03.	Sri. N. Siva Shanker, IAS, Commissioner & Director, School Education, Government of A.P	Member
04.	Sri. Sivakumarappa, Director Adult Education, Government of A.P	Member
05.	Smt.M. Kavita, Deputy Secretary, Dept. of Panchayat Raj & Rural Development, Government of A.P.	Member
06.	Sri. Chiranjiv Choudhary, IAS, Director, Dept. of Women Development, Disabled Welfare & Child Welfare, Government of A.P.	Member
07.	Sri. Sambasiva Rao, IAS, Special Secretary to Govt., Department of Finance, Government of A.P.	Member
08.	Sri.S.K. Ray, IAS, Financial Advisor, Department of Education, New Delhi	Member
09.	Ms. Deepa Dhanraj, 268, 5 th Cross, 3 rd main, Ist Block, Koramangala, Bangalore – 560 034	Member
10.	Smt. Annie Namala, 26/131, Ist Floor, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi – 110 003	Member
11.	Smt. Lakshmi Krishnamurthy, 3 Savoy, 3 Coles Road, Frazer Town, Bangalore	Member
12.	Prof. Fatima Alikhan, 8-2-580, Road No.8, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad	GOI Nominee
13.	Smt. Sunitha Krishnan, Prajwala, 20-4-34, III Floor, Behind Charminar, Hyderabad – 002	Member
14.	Smt. Rashmi, Vasavya Mahila Mandali, Benz Circle, Vijayawada, Krishna (Dt)	Member

S.No.	Name & Designation	Membership Status
15.	Smt. S. Vijaya Rekha, DRP, APMSS, DIU-Medak	Member
16.	Smt. K. Venkatamma, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Mahabubnagar	Member
17.	Smt. D. Laxmi, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Karimnagar	Member
18.	Smt. G.Sarita, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Nizamabad	Member
19.	Smt. V. Suvarna, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Adilabad	Member
20.	Smt. G. Jayasree, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Warangal.	Member
21.	Kum. Mumtaz Begum, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Nalgonda	Member
22.	Kum. S. Satyaveni, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Srikakulam	Member
23.	Kum. D. Ratna Jyothi, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Vizianagaram	Member
24.	Smt. K. Anuradha, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Prakasam	Member
25.	Smt. B. Kullayamma, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Anantapur	Member
26.	Smt. T. Rajeshwari, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Kurnool	Member
27.	Smt. M. Nirupama, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Vishakapatnam	Member
28.	Smt. P. Sowjanya Samuel, DPC, APMSS, DIU-Khammam	Member
29.	Mahila Karyakartha, APMSS	Member
30.	Mahila Karyakartha, APMSS	Member
30.	Smt. P. Prasanthi, SPD, APMSS	Member Secretary

Dates of Executive Committee Meetings

**5th July, 2012
12th October, 2012**

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Glossary

Waada Sangham: A collective of all women in the *Waada* (colony) generally formed with homogeneous caste groups

Core Group: A village level pressure group formed with representation from issue committees of the *Waada* Sanghams in the village. 2 to 3 women representing from each issue committee of the *Waada* Sanghams in the village come to Core Group

Bala Sangham: Village level collectives of boys and girls, both school going and out of school in the age group of 11-16 for boys and 11-18 for girls

Bala Panchayat: Cluster level forum represented by 5 to 7 members from each Bala Sangham of the cluster villages, both boys and girls

EWRs Network: A network of elected women representatives to build solidarity among the members and strengthen the

HLERC: An educational resource center to provide trainings and need based capacity building especially for women and girls

Mahasangham: District level network of autonomous federations

Nutrition Centre: A village level centre where supplementary food items are prepared and distributed to address anaemia among adolescents with the participation of the community

Samatha Nilayam: A commune having group of homes set up on SOS model to provide home based care and support for the vulnerable children and women

Sumitra: Sensitized and trained Sangham women appointed as counselors at the KGBV to identify concerns of the girls and extend emotional care and support

Nyaya committee: A group of women trained on gender, social issues and legal literacy formed into a committee at mandal level to act as pressure group in addressing and resolving cases with gender sensitivity

Mahila Sadassu: A platform to discuss and plan action on women's issues and concerns of all the women in the village aimed at building solidarity among women

Cluster Resource Pool: A group of trained women nominated / identified from the issue committees of the Sanghams at village level

Mandal Resource Group: A group of issue wise resource persons nominated / identified from the cluster resource pool to address issues, to build capacities of issue committees and to plan and implement programmes through mandal level federation

Vidya Sadassu: Village level forum on the issue of education held to take stock of the educational scenario of the village, identify issues and draw action plans. Education department, PRI members, Community and Sangham members are the key participants

Prajavani: District level redressal forum set up by the district administration for speedy redressal of cases, meets every Monday, comprises of officials from different departments and NGO representatives

Shrama Shakti Sangham: Fixed wage labour groups comprising of 20 per unit for allotment of works under MG NREGS

APNA: A state level alliance formed by Government of A.P. in collaboration with NGOs for effective implementation of MG NREGA through GO, NGO participation.

Autonomous Federation: Mandal level federation of village level Sanghams registered as a Society to work for women's empowerment. It functions independently without the physical presence of MS team functionaries. Such federation retains only organic linkage with MS which extends need based support

Village level development committees: A committee formed at village level with representation from village administration, PRI, youth and Sanghams for focused village development activities

Bio-diversity Management Committee: is a village level committee of 7 members formed with the representation of Sangham women, farmers, youth and GP members, to maintain community based bio-diversity registers



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