

Annual Report of Bhumika Helpline 2007-2008

INTRODUCTION:

In recent years, there has been an alarming rise in atrocities against women in Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh with 16,000 cases of crimes against women is topping the list. Day after day, thousands of women are denied the opportunities they need to lead healthy and productive lives. (Add statistics of Andhra Pradesh for all the categories) domestic violence it is around 7,000. Thousands of women are absconded and abandoned by the families, in-laws committed suicides, rape and violence by the society. The objectives of Bhumika help line has been :

1. To provide/give space to women in distress by listening to them

Bhumika HELPLINE has been started for the women who are facing domestic violence and other forms of violence in life. Through the tele helpline they can call and their feelings and problems. The counselors listen to them emphatically and give alternatives to the problems being and help/guide the person in making choices. In this process, many women are able to make positive changes in their life. By listening effectively to the women's problem the counselors are able to provide alternatives. The counselors are accepting and are being non judgmental about the situation women is in and give guidance accordingly. The counselors try to understanding the socio-religious, cultural situation of the women and then give suggestions to the women in distress. The counselors need to give creative alternatives and not farfetched solution to the problems being told.

2. To provide link with formal justice system

Bhumika has developed linkage with police and judiciary, the formal justice system available to the women. To address problems of Women in crisis situation (physical security or risk of life) Police system help is being sought.

3. To provide referral services to women:

And the rest of case we will refer to Protection Officer, family courts, family counseling center, psychiatrics, short stay homes, legal services, protection cell, maintenance, child rehabilitation centers, lok adalaths, women police station, Mahila Pranganam, Jana Sikshana Samstan for vocational courses, Disabled

welfare department for challenged children, De-addiction centers, Educational guidance, Satyam health line for health problem, Child line, HIV-AIDS counseling, Advocates, District Collectorate, Women N.G.O's, other helplines, Mahila commission, Social activists, Personality Development, Muslim N.G.O's etc.

Most of the cases are related to Domestic Violence.

4. Impact of Bhumika Help line:

With the inspiration of Bhumika help line there are many people coming forward to start their own helplines in their districts. Ms. Priya bhandhavi started helpline in tenali. Mrs. Anuradha and Revathi started a counseling center and giving service voluntarily for the helpline. It is called as Harshini Family Counselling Center. Mr.R.K.Narayana murthy from Nuzuveedu also planning to start a helpline. Because of this helpline the women who are uneducated also coming to share their ideas and feelings. There are some women who are suffering from year's together also called bhumika helpline and get support from us.

The major success of bhumika helpline has been that tele helpline as a concept and as a tool it is supporting women in all the ways. With this helpline is getting good response from other groups of the society. They re like SERP, Women NGO's, Police Departments, Advocates; Minority Institutions etc. Media also played an important role for this development. They have taken special interest for the publicity of bhumika helpline toll free number.

In this fast life and because of globalization there are many changes taken place in the society. But this change brought positive and negative changes also. No doubt those women are developed and also developing. This is all one side of the coin but there are other side where violence also increasing on women. Either in professional sector or in villages. Because of all this violence society was changing women were suppressed by men. Bhumika helpline is the one, which raised its positive voice to help women who are facing this violence. With in one year it has shown its efficient results and also helped many women in different ways. It has become a platform for the women who are in distress.

Another major impact of Bhumika helpline has been that "Indira Kranthi Padam" (World Bank supported rural poverty project) has come forward to establish link with helpline and provided training and capacity building of their SHG leaders on the helpline concept and in general counseling. Different district women are coming to take trainings on helpline skills. We have completed 3 districts

karimnagar, West-Godavari and Krishna. They are all very much impressed by our good receiving, training, and way of explaining the violence related to women.

The impact of Bhumika helpline in the days of dwindling voluntarism, it is heartening to note that many people are coming forward to help bhumika helpline by volunteering. They want to help in any capacity by they want to get associated with bhumika helpline and bhumika is also thinking of involving them creatively. We want to involve volunteer by giving them effective training on helpline skills, counseling process, practical experiences, bring awareness about the women problems in the society.

Like this we want to involve volunteers in very step of helpline.

Media advocacy strategy:

Bhumika owing to its history has good linkages with media. They also responded positively and started giving advertisement in their channels. With the help of personal contacts of coordinator we have achieved good success. In TV9 Naveena programme was giving free scrolling to popularize our number. Most of the calls are referring this TV9 scrolling. In Etv2 also bhumika helpline scrolling was coming. Not only these but also through newspapers and magazines we are publicizing our number. Different calls are coming with this reference. There is one other important media FM radio that is very popular in these days. We gave an advertisement in FM rainbow 101.9. We got positive response. We publicize our helpline toll free number in the Hyderabad mirror mid day newspaper also. It builds credibility to bhumika helpline.

Linkages with other referral agencies:

Family counseling centers

Trainings and meetings:

Exposure visits:

- Family courts
- Women police stations
- Women protection cell
- Women organizations
- Family counseling centers
- Other helplines
- Volunteer's organizations like Roshni helpline and SEVA organization

Meeting on Domestic Violence Bill Implications-Relevance for Women at Sannihita.

Meeting on the “Collaborative role of Police and Civil Society in reducing Domestic Violence Against Women” at Hotel Ramada Manohar, Begumpet. Organized by OXFAM.

Attended as a Resource person for the “Training programme for the Operators and the Directors of the Women’s Helplines “located in southern states of India at Tirupathi.

Work shop on family counseling process and skills for police department, N.G.O’s at NISIT function hall, organized by SWARD in collaboration with OXFAM.

On the occasion of completion of one year of Bhumika helpline conducted a Review meeting at Celebrity Resorts. Many women writers, well-wishers attended for the review meeting and gave their valuable suggestions.

Popularize the toll free number (Material)

We use to distribute our helpline material in buses but it was not that much successful. So we planned to distribute and paste helpline stickers in public places like STD booths bus stations, temples, theaters, hospitals, N.G.O’s, apartments, general stores etc.

To popularize our number in rural areas we are posting our helpline material to all mandals, M.R.O’s, sarpanchs. So that the remote area women also approach our helpline and share their feelings.