

ANNUAL REPORT

2011 – 2012

INTRODUCTION

Since the inception, Bhumika Women's Collective has been a Resource Centre for the project "*Promoting Violence Free Lives for Women in A.P.*" with an objective to reduce social acceptance of violence against women through changing social practice and belief systems that perpetuate violence against women and enhance provision of appropriate support to women experiencing violence by State and non-State actors.

To achieve this activity the objectives we formulated is to support the survivors through Tele Helpline, advocacy activities with Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, Judiciary, State Legal Services Authority, Home Department and allocation and implementation of projects and Laws related to women. This year our activities have increased manifold like we were able to achieve a sense of sensitization in Judiciary wherein, they have started a Gender Training Week wherein, the Magistrates would be educated on the different aspects and issues which are prevailing in our society and the way NGOs are working to overcome these problems and helping the survivor to overcome it. We were able to get a release of GO by the Women Development and Child Welfare Department regarding the release of enhanced salaries of Counselors who work under the PWDV Act, 2005. We were able to facilitate the formation of alliances / networks at the state level on the issues of VAW for advocacy with various Departments like training to the Police at the national level to Sub-Inspectors and Assistant Sub-Inspectors, two day State Level Workshop with Social Workers and Legal Counselors' appointed by Women Development and Child Welfare Department, opening of a Legal Aid Clinic in our office premise, building awareness at the community level about the legal literacy aspects in coordination with AP Legal Services Authority, gender training to Rakshak Police and also a

Roundtable discussion was organized on the study we have undertaken on the Status of 498A in Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy Districts which has been shared with all the stakeholders representing from different Departments, Civil Society Organizations, Media and the report has been unveiled during the Press Conference . The details of the programs are underneath.

ACTIVITIES

Gender Training at A.P Judicial Academy

On 2nd of June 2011 Bhumika Women's Collective organized a one day Gender Training on 'Sensitization of Women, Child and Gender Issues with reference to Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005' and other relevant laws to the third batch of Junior Civil Judges at A.P. Judicial Academy, Secunderabad as part of their XVI Basic Course Part - II Mid Term Practical Training (Phase-II) for 49 Junior Civil Judges. Ms. K. Satyavati, Chief Functionary, Bhumika Women's Collective and Ms. Girija, Women Activist were the resource persons for the training.



The agenda was to discuss the issues related to gender and to sensitize them with reference to the PWDV Act, 2005. The meeting commenced with the introduction of the resource persons by Prof. Avadhani garu, Senior Faculty and followed by Ms. Satyavati who gave a brief introduction about the organization, its activities and the purpose of the training program.



Training started with a brief introduction on the concepts pertaining to gender and equality which preceded by formation of groups which were divided into seven groups comprising of 6-7 members in each group with a topic "What are the incidents which made you feel a boy or a girl? The group exercise was for half an hour and each representative from the respective groups did a presentation on the said topic about the group's opinion. The exercise was very interesting and it broke the ice wherein, the participants opened up and there was a very good interaction with all. Few are some of the responses:

- One judge felt very proud to be a woman due to the respect she got from her family for being a girl and feels very lucky to be a girl and a woman
- Another judge said that she was interested in wearing clothes of a boy but her family members did not allow her and at that point of time she was forced to realize that she is a girl and has to be like a girl
- Another judge shared his experience of childhood wherein he used to take care of his bed-ridden father and a sick mother by doing all household chores and seeing that his neighbors used to laugh at him for doing all chores which the girls are supposed to do and then at that point of time he felt that he is a boy
- Many felt that there is a discrimination among boys and girls whether it be related to physical strength, intellectual capacity or pertaining to work

Post lunch the session started with a presentation by Ms. Girija, on patriarchal society and the response was tremendous from the participants as the session has been very interactive. After the presentation a film was screened which focuses on the different types of problems women face within the four walls and when they socialize they give a different picture. The response from the participants was tremendous when their feedback was asked as many agreed about the role the actors portrayed and felt the same in their personal lives too.



Overall the daylong session was very interactive and informative with the active participation from the participants and they all appreciated the way training went on as it helped in looking their inner self and realize the aspects pertaining to gender which they have gone through. The training ended with a positive note from all the participants who seek to have many more trainings which will help them to work on and this training helped us a lot in knowing the minute aspects pertaining to distressed women and will make sure that they will give judgments accordingly.

Rakshak Training

The training was held on June 14th 2011, City Police Training Centre, Petlaburju, Old City for the first batch of Rakshaks comprising 52 in number. Training commenced with

a brief note by Ms. K. Satyavati about the organization and its activities and the objective of conducting this program. The main aim is to aware them about the different types of support systems and services available for all the vulnerable sections in Hyderabad vicinity as they are the one who move in and around the City and with this training they can be acquainted with the information and can help the needy.

After the introduction there has been a brief introduction by all the Rakshaks who were surprised to hear about the existence of the toll free number as they were not aware of this type of service given to the vulnerable sections especially to women as they come across many cases for which they were not aware of what can be done. The main role of the Rakshaks was to do patrolling on the roads, maintain law and order, and if they see any women in distress they refer them to the women police station and if there has been any accident case then they call to 108 for an immediate help. If they see any clashes happening at any house they immediate visit the house and try to sort it out then and there.



Secondly they were not aware of the PWDV Act as they only knew about 498A and few expressed that there has been a misuse of it by few women for which Ms. K. Satyavati explained to them that whenever there is any crisis situation for any individual then they approach Police and due to lack of awareness they advise the women to file 498A which creates lot of problems and ultimately the sufferer would be the women as due to its bailable nature the person comes out and then a different type of harassment starts. There has been a brief explanation about the Act to them as they were given a booklet about this Act so that they can get a better understanding about it.

The Rakshaks who attended the training program were from few areas of the city like, Bolaram, Begum Bazar, Mangalghat, Musheerabad, Chandrayanagutta, Tukaramgate, Sultan Bazar, Chaderghat and Asif Nagar.

Ms. Padma, APMSS spoke about the basic concepts of gender for which there has been a good response for the participants who said that now - a- days family, relationships are taking a new form of definition as now the world has become more materialistic which is ruining the basic institution of family. In this regard few of the Rakshaks suggested and recommended few things which are:

Counseling should be a subject included in the curriculum in all the colleges as the adolescents should be made aware about the current issues prevailing in and around where they all are living.

Pre-Marital counseling should be there so that after marriage both the spouses can live a happy life without much unrest.

Thirdly, a series of training should be given to all the Police personnel at all cadres so that a certain amount of knowledge would be there among everyone on the aspects of counseling and also about the different support services available to the vulnerable sections and for this the best time would be to visit the zones as each zone would have a parade every week where all the concerned personnel would come and we can approach them.



Fourthly, the Helpline stickers should be pasted in all the ladies hostels, colleges so that each and everyone would have knowledge about it and can approach if they are in need of it.

Lastly, they asked us to give a representation regarding a mobile phone for each van so that the people can communicate to them so that if 100 would be busy then people can contact them on the mobile number and they can do the needful and also requested to get the permission for pasting the sticker on their vans so that many people will be aware of it.

The training ended with a vote of thanks and after that we met Mr. Raja Shekhar, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Training and kept the request in front of him for which he responded very positively and said that he will contact the Commissioner of Police and will let us know about it. They also requested us to be a part of the training program which they conduct periodically to the personnel on various topics for which we agreed.

Overall, the training has been very fruitful and a rapport has been built.

Refresher Training

The training was started with the basic introduction about the Counselors and the Centers they are representing. The session started with a feedback about the training the Counselors have undertaken at Mumbai which was very informative and fruitful. Few new initiatives were also shared by them which can be adapted at Centers in A.P.

New Initiatives:

- Lok Adalat / Courts have allotted a special day to deal with the cases referred by the Support Centers at Mumbai which helps in the speedy judgment
- Every quarter a meeting is held for all the Counselors of the Support Centers so that there can be an update
- The Support Centers in Mumbai have the power to issue summons by post and if the other party does not come then the counselor goes for a visit but they do not practice any follow up of the cases
- There are display boards in the Centers which convey the messages like: *“Switch off your mobiles”* and *“We don’t charge any money for the services we render”*
- In the Centers they take the complaints from the male survivors also
- Within a month Orders especially residential, protection orders are given under the PWDV Act
- The Center works for four days as Saturday is a holiday and every Tuesday is a field visit for them wherein, they go to each and every police station to aware them about the Support Center so that if any case comes to the Police Station then it can be referred to the Center as **there is no jurisdiction problem** in Mumbai



After the sharing of experiences the Counselors were asked about the work they have been doing in the Centers and the Center at CCS, Basheerbagh shared about the proposal they got from the DCP for training their constables who are 60 in number (40 are male and 20 are female) on the basic counseling skills because the way they handle the clients is not very encouraging which might be due to lack of knowledge in dealing with the cases in a gender sensitized manner. Secondly, they also shared that there has been visit by Family Court

Magistrates (Sri. Vasant Kumar) for legal literacy campaigns at the Center and they would be doing it on a periodical basis. Thirdly they also shared that now-a-days the clients are coming with their advocates who is creating a problem for them and despite telling so many times to the clients they are not listening.

After the discussion a questionnaire was given to them which talks about the basic questions which the counselors need to know and after that few role plays were given to them and the counselors enacted.

Few other issues have cropped up which needs to be taken for serious consideration which are:

- Firstly, there should be inter Center visits by the Counselors so that a sharing can be developed and any new practice can be adapted if the Center has initiated any
- Secondly, there should be a day fixed for field visits for the counselors so that an awareness generation can be created about the Center and a networking can be developed
- Thirdly, some amount needs to be given to the Counselors which can be utilized for the victims / survivors support
- Fourthly, the travel amount needs to be reimbursed for the counselors when they go for field visits which is not being practiced
- Lastly, on a periodical basis a recreational activity needs to be planned for all the Counselors and uniformity needs to be practiced while giving salaries to the Counselors

Hence, the training has been very fruitful and informative.

Gender Training at A.P Judicial Academy



It was an interactive session with all the 67 Magistrates from all the districts of A.P and this is the same batch which had the training earlier. The session started with a brief introduction about the resource persons

and then a feedback from few participants about the previous training we had and the impact it has created on them.

The daylong session was very interactive as it had group work for the participants for whom we questions were given to them and they were supposed to present an answer to those questions. There were total 6 Groups and each group has been given 2 questions and one of the representatives gave a presentation about the discussion they had on the questions.



After that few one minute films on the concept of Bell Bajao which most of them were not aware of were screened and the response was not as appreciative as most of them said that till how many times we will be ringing the bell as they did not understand the meaning of the concept which the speakers have explained. The basic motto was to involve the boys and youth to aware them about the issue of Domestic Violence and the other meaning the movies conveyed is about the violence occurring in different segments of society.



A daylong session was quiet interactive and still there is lot of emphasis need to be made on sensitizing both men and women as the attitude and the way they perceive needs to be targeted.

One Day State Level Consultation on PCPNDT (Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Prohibition of Sex Determination) Act on 5th November 2011 at Minerva Grand, Secunderabad



A one day state level consultation on PCPNDT Act 1994 has been organized by Bhumika Women's Collective, sponsored by State Bank of Hyderabad (Modern Innovative Dependable) and supported by Oxfam India, at Minerva Grand, Secunderabad on 5th November 2011. There were around 90 representatives from various disciplines including Media (Radio & Television), Academia, NGOs, Homemakers, Advocates, Poets, Writers, Government Officials, and Banks, among others.



During the meeting there have been many **recommendations made by the participants** which needs to be taken for consideration while curbing the social issue of female feticide which are as follows:

- Developing mechanisms to check and monitor medical practitioners' malpractices in this context by providing them with severe retribution
- Advocacy needs to be done on the census report and comparing Government and NGO data pertaining to sex selection abortions and undertaking a study on this aspect by collaborating with WCD and Health Department by the NGOs
- Using media as a medium for propagating the cause through jingles and interviews
- Politicians to include this issue in their manifesto and capacity building of MLAs, MPs, MPTCs, ZPTCs, ward members and other Panchayat representatives is required
- Empowering local governance bodies to take a lead role in addressing this issue
- Awareness generation strategies to be formulated basing on societal sections and educational institutions
- The university's women study centers should be part and parcel of this process and under the special education these types of topics need to be included in the syllabus
- Data relating to blacklisted centers and doctors to be disseminated effectively among the public through websites, face book, blogs, twitter, newspapers and other relevant media
- Appropriate reward procedure for any complainant and emphasis should be on maintaining confidentiality
- Promoting institutional delivery of children, imparting proper training to *daais* and maintaining birth records
- Support of government in at least catchy and thought-provoking campaigns and advertisements, with a coverage on the lines of Pulse Polio Program
- Social Action Committees (SACs) at district levels to be revived and activated and also formed at the mandal levels
- Newspapers to carry alert messages deterring such practices

Two Day State Level Workshop on Implementation of PWDV Act, 2005



was organized at Satyodayam Retreat House on December 15th and 16th 2011 by inviting all the Counselors appointed by the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, A.P, all the Service Providers from all the districts of the State, Project Directors of Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy Districts and few staff from the Department have participated in the Workshop. Resource persons from Judiciary have shared their experiences about the Act and also educated the Counselors on the different sections under the Act which many were not aware of while helping the victim. The Workshop has helped them in understanding the Act in a very better way and also has been a platform for sharing their grievances and meeting each and every person who plays a very pivotal role.



Counselors

- Release of pending salaries
- Issuing of Identity Cards
- Sanctioning travel amounts
- Implementation of GO MS no. 3, 2010 (Hike of salaries for the counselors on par with data entry operators)

Service Providers (SPs)

- Though the appointment of 72 Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as Service Providers which has been notified on 6.8.2007 (vide G.O.M. No.18) to assist the Project Directors (PDs). The said SPs have not received the copy of the GO from the

Department and also from the PD informing them about their roles and responsibilities, to work in coordination with the Department.

- Till now there has not been any convergence meeting held with all the PDs, Counselors and SPs who are supposed to work together to support the survivor as per the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDV) Act, 2005.



- All the SPs are enthusiastic to work but due to absence of financial support they are not in a position to help the survivor financially. Despite these problems they are helping the survivor to their best.

Suggestions:

- These are the main outcomes of this Workshop and being the organizers we also felt that there is a gap between the Department, Counselors and SPs and there is a need to fill the gap so that the implementation of the PWDV Act, 2005 can be further strengthened.



Secondly, there is a need to organize a Workshop on a larger scale by inviting representatives from AP State Legal Services Authority, Magistrates, PDs, Counselors and SPs who all play a very vital role in the implementation of the PWDV Act, 2005 for which our services will be available in gathering them.

Meeting with Mr. Amit Garg, IPS Additional Commissioner, Coordination on January 3rd 2012 regarding having Rakshak Training for the next batches for which he

suggested us to give training to the Constables and Sis who would be trained regularly at the Training Centre and he wants us to be part of the in-house training under the topic of Gender Sensitization.

Meeting with Ms. Amrapali, IAS trainee at Ranga Reddy Collectorate on 25th January 2012 for having a discussion on taking any action on the grave issue of declining girl child ratio for which we have proposed two initiatives which the Collector can think of among them the first one is to start a Helpline only on this issue as done by Maharashtra Government and secondly awarding the people for giving information on the sex determination tests at the scanning centres. Ms. Amrapali responded by stating that she will discuss it with the Joint Collector and Collector and will get back to us as starting a Helpline would not be a problem and she has also given the list of registered scanned centres in RR District which are 594 in number and requested our help in identifying whether there are any malpractices happening in these centres.

Non-Official Member of the Advisory Board Bhumika Women's Collective has been appointed at Chanchalguda Prison as one of the member. The other two members are Ms. M. Santi Kumari (Advocate), Ms. Sita Balaiah (Retired Teacher) who will be visiting the jail on regular intervals and are allowed to interact with the prisoners privately without the presence of jail staff. They can also take up any matter with the authorities be it food or legal aid. If it is a problem of facilities or the food provided, the non-official visitors can take it up with the superintendent to get it rectified.

Gender Justice Learning Event organized by Oxfam India an annual thematic learning session at New Delhi from February 27th - 29th 2012 with an objective to cross learn from the diverse experiences and to deepen the thematic understanding on certain contemporary issues pertaining to women rights.

Advocacy with Women Development and Child Welfare for releasing the enhanced salaries of the counselors under PWDV Act, 2005 as they were not getting salaries since few months for which we have given representation to the Principal Secretary and a G.O (Ms. No. 3, Fin (SMPC-II), Department, dt: 12-1-2011 also got released about the release of salaries with an enhancement Rs. 19000/-pm is the salary of the counselor.

Visit by International Delegates of Oxfam GB to Bhumika wherein a brief presentation has been made regarding the activities undertaken which followed by an interaction with all the participants who have been invited who cherished their experiences while getting associated with Bhumika.



Roundtable Discussion on Status of 498A in Hyderabad & Ranga Reddy District was organized in collaboration with Oxfam India at Minerva Grand on March 20th 2012 where participants from all the departments have been gathered for a participative session. The meeting concluded with few suggestions. Firstly, there should not be any amendment in the section 498A of IPC, secondly, integration among the Departments i.e., Judiciary, Home and WCD so that the outcome would be beneficial to the women who are seeking for justice. Thirdly, a mechanism needs to be in place which will help in better implementation and supervision.



Press Conference was held on March 20th 2012 followed by the Roundtable Discussion where the Report on Status of 498A in Hyderabad and RR Districts has been unveiled to the media which highlighted more on the aspect of myth regarding misuse of this section by women wherein it has been disclosed that there is an under usage if this Section as women are not aware of it so there will not be any question of misuse.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Inauguration of Legal Aid Clinic

Sri. B.B. Nagendra Rao, (9440901065) Senior Civil Judge-cum-Secretary, City Civil Court Legal Services Authority, Nampally along with Smt. Abburi Chaya Devi garu has inaugurated the Legal Aid Clinic. The other participants who were present during the inaugural were two Advocates from District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), few of our panel Advocates Ms. Vidya Reddy, Ms. Durga Bhavani, Ms. Vennela were present.

After the inaugural the Secretary appreciated Bhumika for showing interest and starting a Legal Aid Clinic for which he assured a total cooperation from DLSA. He stated that, in a Clinic there should be 2 Para Legal Volunteers who would be paid Rs. 250/- daily and there would be one visiting Advocate who would be paid Rs. 500/- per visit. The timings as well as the sitting of the volunteers are flexible and it can be done according to the convenience of the organization as well as the availability of the personnel for the clinic.



The Clinic acts as a primary information center for providing basic legal aid for the people who are in need of it and counseling service would be rendered to them and also they would be referred to DLSA depending upon the case. The Para Legal Volunteers would be given training for 3 months on the basic legal literacy and also in maintaining the registers, taking information about the issue, what type of help is being given to them and if the cases get resolved at the Clinic itself then the certificate is given by the DLSA.

We informed him about the first legal literacy camp we are planning to have at first lancer community located at Banjara Hills with a Muslim population for which the information needs to be in Urdu language for which he has given assurance of sending us information at the earliest. The conversation was very informative and now our task is to identify the Para legal volunteers as well as to send the list of panel advocates we

have to DLSA so that once we get approval from them then we can appoint them as a visiting Advocate.

Legal Literacy Camp

Our first legal literacy camp was organized in the Bada Bazaar community hall at First Lancer community located at Masab Tank with the help of SAFA, NGO which works in that area on empowerment of Muslim women through livelihood activities. They have mobilized the women and nearly more than 100 women have participated in the awareness program and there were few men who attended the program.



A small introduction has been given by Ms. Rubina, SAFA about the camp and then we gave very detailed information about the activities undertaken by Bhumika Women's Collective and also about the Helpline for which the Helpline cards have been distributed and the women responded very well by asking many questions and have appreciated the information given by us and also explained about the establishing of legal aid clinics for which there would be two Para legal volunteers as well as one Advocate would be allotted by the DLSA to the Clinic and the finances are borne by the DLSA.

Later on, Ms. Mumtaz Sultana, Advocate District Civil Court Legal Services Authority spoke about the legal rights pertaining to women and also explained about the free legal aid which they all can avail from the DLSA.

Other people who participated in the program are Mr. Nagendra Rao, Senior Civil Judge cum Secretary, DLSA. After the discussion few women have given a written representation to the DLSA personnel about the legal grievances they are facing which DLSA would take into consideration for further action.

On the whole the program has been very fruitful.

Prize Distribution Function



Every year Stree Vaada Patrika Bhumika conducts literary competitions in Essay, Poetry and Story Writing for which winners will be selected by the jury members and this year the function was held at AP Hindi Academy on 20th January 2012 and the Chief Guests were Ms. Anuradha, IAS, Director Census Operation, AP and Ms. Sarala Rajyalakshmi, Secretary, AP Women's Commission to give away the prizes to the winners.

Training to Sangha Women



On 24th January 2012 on the Counselling skills at St. Anns Generalate, Tarnaka for adolescent girls as these women have been appointed as Counsellors in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) a residential institution located at each mandal for the adolescent girls for whom counselling needs to be given and these women will help the government in giving first hand information about the status of KGBVs and on the development of these girls. The training was very participative and interactive.

Participation in 2K Run



On January 24th 2012 which was organized by District Women and Child Development Agency, Hyderabad on the eve of *National Girl Child Day* at Necklace Road where many NGOs have participated along with the Department personnel.



Visit by Ms. Elca Grobler, Founder of 'My Choices' and Ms. Pearl, Family Counsellor on 25th January as well as on 9th February 2012. 'My Choices' is about the choices that women in India have: Choices about education, their rights and is focused on the social epidemic of Domestic Violence. The visit was made to understand the activities undertaken by us as is planning to take up training sessions to women on DV Act, about counselling who would be called as Peacemakers for which she wants our help in developing the module as well as in identifying women for the training so as to stop domestic violence.

State Level Stakeholder's Consultation on developing strategies for effective implementation of PWDV Act 2005 at Belsons Taj on January 31st 2012 which was organized by AP Women's Network wherein, few recommendations have been put forth and were submitted to Smt. Sunita Laxma Reddy, Minister of WCD.

Roundtable Meeting at Basheerbagh Press Club on 3rd February 2012 on the issue of *Missing Children & Women* where NGO representatives have participated in the meeting to share their experiences and an action plan has been prepared wherein on February 6th 2012 a representation would be submitted to the Home Minister and on the third week of February a Dharna or rally needs to be finalized.

Two Day State Level Seminar on "New Forms of Violence against Women & Girls" by APMSS on March 6th - 7th 2012 which has presentations on the different types of violence occurring in different places whether it be in educational institutions, workplace etc., which were penetrating and causing lot of unrest in the society and both Government as well as Civil Society Organizations have a very vital role to play to address these issues.

Invitation from Ministry of Women & Child Development, New Delhi for celebration of International Women's Day on 7th March, 2012 to renew the pledge and commitment for holistic development and realization of full potential of women. Six National Awards called "Stree Shakti Puruskar" have been distributed for the year 2011 at Vigyan Bhawan and followed by a panel discussion on "Women and Law".



Awareness program at Hamali Basthi on the eve of International Women's Day on March 13th 2012 in collaboration with APSA, NGO which works with the communities in and around the twin cities where all the residents of the community were educated about the rights of women and the different support systems available for them. The meeting was very participative and fruitful.
