

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2006 to March 2007



SAKHI

Women's Resource Centre
Trivandrum 695 035
Kerala, India



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The context of our work in the last year

The year started with the change of government in the state. Elections were held in April and May 2006 for the State legislative assembly. The Left Democratic Front-LDF secured 98 out of 140 seats and came to power. Women's safety and security was a major issue during the campaign and after election many of the analysis stated that the new chief minister came to power on the vote of women! He promised immediate and stringent action on sex related crimes.

One of the noted event in Kerala during this period was the passing of the **Kerala Professional Colleges Bill, 2006** (*Prohibition of Capitation Fee, Regulation of Admission, Fixation of Non-Exploitative Fee and other Measures to ensure Equity and Excellence in Professional Education*) by the Kerala Legislative Assembly. The controversies, debates and problems continue even now as the private managements are a very strong force to content with as most of them are also religious groups and resist any control to limit profits, even from a noble gesture as education.

The public health system of Kerala also came under severe attack, because of the outbreak of new viral fevers. In 2006, nearly 61 people were reportedly dead and over 20,000 hospitalised following an outbreak of *Chikungunya*. It is to be noted that most of such epidemics are due to lack of proper vector control or waste management mechanisms and this is not the fault of just one minister who is in charge presently. Instead of undertaking a critical and objective analysis of the root causes of such problems, a section of media used the opportunity to attack the only women minister in the cabinet!

The seventh national conference of autonomous women's movement was held in Kolkata in the beginning of September 2006. The conference was titled '**Towards a Politics of Justice: Affirming Diversities, Resisting Divisiveness**' and the conference focused itself on globalization, fundamentalism, family and violence as well. It was attended by about 2,500 women from 22 different states of the country belonging to different formations / groups. About 15 women from Kerala attended the conference.

Aleyamma Vijayan



About SAKHI

Inited in 1996, after a long journey of 16 years with fish workers and self employed women, the work of Sakhi as a facilitating organization has competed ten years. The goal of mainstreaming gender in the discourses in the state of kerala , empowering and building perspectives of the grassroots level groups and organizations of women and building their leadership capabilities were our thrust areas.

A review of Sakhi as an organization and its activities were conducted by Ms.Renu Khanna from SAHAJ, Baroda. This process gave us insights for the future orientation of the organization.

The organization has been able to achieve what it set out as objective- that of bringing gender concerns into the mainstream social and political discourses in Kerala and into the governance process. We believe that Sakhi has been able to fulfill its role as a 'resource' center in its true sense. In the process several persons have also been capacitated to act as 'gender experts' at various levels of the society.

The following is a detailed report of the activities undertaken from April 2006 to March 2007.

Activities in 2006-07

The major activities in the reporting period was as follows:

- **Gender and Governance programme** took most of the time in the reporting year. The preparation of the **Manual, handbook and training manual** on Gender planning, budgeting and auditing as part of an initiative on Gender and development in Local self government institutions. Along with this a review **of the 10 years of Women's component plan (WCP)** in selected local governments; action research and other related activities were also undertaken. The DSP mission of the Dept. of Local Government supported these programmes.
- In one Panchayat we initiated **a resource center for women** and an anganwadi, with support from CapDeck.
- In partnership with Kerala institute of local administration (KILA) and CapDeck, a **study of status of women** was undertaken in 60 gram panchayats in Kerala.
- Several **capacity building programmes**, workshops and seminars on current issues of relevance were conducted.
- Newsletters and publications.

Background

Kerala is in the forefront of decentralization of powers to local governments and it became effective because of devolution of funds and staff. Of the 35% funds allocated from state plan budgets to local governments, at least 10% was mandatory to be spend for the 'Women Component Plan (WCP)'. Decentralization has thus provided wide opportunity for women to discover their potential. The approach of Women Component Plan (WCP) also indicates a clear shift away from women as clients and passive recipients of benefits to active participants in development process. This transformation which began with decentralization and WCP had to be taken forward. By strengthening WCP, local governments are expected to move forward to gender planning, gender budgeting and gender auditing.

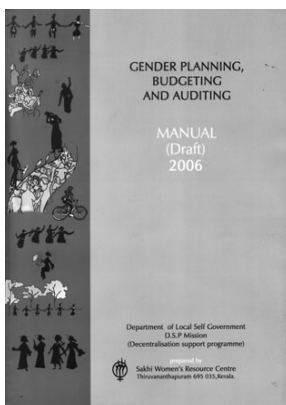
Under the 'Decentralization Support Programme (DSP) of the department of Local Government Institutions, one of the initiatives was to prepare **manuals** on gender planning, budgeting and auditing and to build capacities of officials. This task was entrusted to Sakhi.

The **Objectives** of the initiative were the following:-

- To prepare **training strategy, training plan, training module and training handbook** on Women Component Plan.
- To **create a pool of state level trainers in Gender and Development Issues.**



- To prepare a **comprehensive manual on Women Component Plan and gender planning , budgeting and auditing.**



Manual on
Gender Planning,
Budgeting and Auditing

- To identify a **shelf of project ideas** that can be adapted in the plan formulation of LSG's and in Women Component Plan.

The following activities were carried out by Sakhi as part of this initiative.

- **Review of literature on Gender and development and WCP.** The studies conducted by various institutions on the above theme were examined and a report prepared.
- **Analysis of reports on the study of Status of Women** prepared by the panchayats in the initial years was undertaken.
- **Critical examination of the WCP of seven selected LSGIs** (three Grama Panchayats, one Block Panchayat, one District Panchayat, one Municipality and one Corporation) with reference to approaches, guidelines, handbook, composition and functioning of Working Group on WCP, training programmes, nature and impact of the projects under WCP.

LSG's selected for Analysis of WCP

- **Grama Panchayats:** Thanur – Malappuram; Shooranad South – Kollam; Peelikkode – Kasargod
- **Block Panchayat:** Bharanikkavu –Alappuzha
- **District Panchayat :** Thrissur
- **Municipality :** Chittoor Municipality-Palakkad
- **Corporation:** Kozhikode.
- Two months of field work were done in the selected LSGs in 2005.
- Validation workshops were conducted based on the reports from the LSGs.

Validation of
manual,
handbook
and module
on Gender
Planning,
Budgeting
and Auditing



- **Manual and Handbook on gender planning, gender budgeting and gender auditing** was prepared.
- Action research on WCP was undertaken in 7 LSG's .



- A position paper on the status of women in these 7 LSG's was prepared and that was used for preparing the plans in the selected LSG's.
- Capacity building of women elected representatives was conducted in two blocks.
- Shelf of project ideas was prepared.

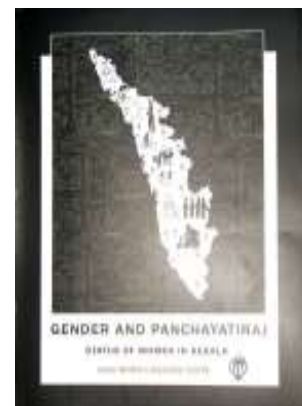
Training component

- A national expert was identified to train State level Master Trainers. Ms. Kalyani Menon, from Jagori, Delhi took time off from her busy schedule and helped us in training the master trainers.
- Fifteen Master Trainers were trained from Government Departments/ NGOs/ Training Institutions/Academic Institutions/Activists/ Practitioners .
- A two day consultation on training need assessment was organized



and a 5 day training of Master Trainers was conducted.

- Training module based on the manual is prepared .
- A pool of **106 trainers** at the State level from various Government Departments/ NGOs/ Training institutions etc were identified And 75 of them were trained initially for 3 days and then a follow up of two days. 25 activists from NGOs were also trained.
- 23 women presidents of district and block panchayats were trained on gender planning, budgeting and auditing.
- A district level dissemination workshop was conducted for women presidents at Trivandrum district level.





Action Research

Action research based on the draft manual on Gender planning was carried out in the following LSGs.

1. Panamaram gram panchayat, Wynad



2. Alappad gram panchayat, Kollam
3. Vilayoor, gram panchayat, Palaghat
4. Kodakara block panchayat, Thrissur
5. Alappuzha district Panchayat, Alappuzha
6. Nedumangad Municipality, Trivandrum
7. Kochi Corporation



The action research took place from January 2006- to June 2006. Since a detailed study of status of women was not possible within the short period, a position paper on the status of women and their

issues and problems were collected through Focus group discussions, analysis of existing literature like development reports and plan documents, analysis of WCP, gender analysis of institutions transferred to LSGs etc with the help of facilitators and investigators.



Three Days Orientation Workshop was conducted for all facilitators selected from the LSG's where the action research took place at Kovalam Animation Centre, Trivandrum from 18th March 2006 to 20th March 2006.



One day orientation programme for investigators was conducted in all LSG's in May. The sessions were about PRA and other research methodologies.

Two day training on Gender Planning, Budgeting & Auditing for Elected women Representatives of the Panchayats were organized in July, 2006.



After the action research and finalization of the manuals and handbook, a state level validation workshop was conducted. The manual, handbook and training manual was then printed and distributed.

A team of 7 staff and a master trainer and a coordinator were involved in the project. The DSP team led by Mr.Jithendran, the mission coordinator and the team were extremely helpful and we



owe them our sincere gratitude.

Although officially the project ended, and the team departed by October 06, the final printing of the manual, proof reading etc went on till end December 2006 and the dissemination took place in January 2007.

The DSP team members were the following persons

Mini Sukumar (April 05-Sept 05)

Jayasree S (Oct 05-Nov.06)

Daya.J (April 05-March 06 & Sep 06- Oct 06)

C.S.Chandrika (April 05-Aug 06)

Seena K. M. (April 05-Aug 06)

Rekha Raj. (April 05-Aug 06)

Sreedevi. P. (April 05-Aug 06)

Nandini K. (Oct 05 – June 06)

Seema Bhaskaran (Sep 06-Nov 06)

Sakhi continue to integrate the experiences gained from this process in our ongoing work with local governments. The manual was translated into English and also disseminated at the national level.

The Project on Gender Mainstreaming in Selected Panchayats



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This was the ongoing project which had started in August 2004 and was completed in March 2006.

During the reporting period the construction of the resource center in Alappad was completed and it was inaugurated on August 25th, 2006. We helped the purchase of necessary equipments, toys for the anganwadi, books for the library etc and helped them to set up the resource centre and anganwadi.

The inaugural function was well organized by the panchayat and the district collector inaugurated the building. A committee constituted with the panchayat president as chairperson, the ward member and representative of CDS& ADS, anganwadi teacher etc supervises the functioning of the resource center.

The library has a collection of more than 1000 books and is in the process of getting accreditation from the library council

As part of the project, books and cupboards were given to Vilayur and Olavanna Panchayat to start a women's library and resource center. This project was supported by CapDeck.

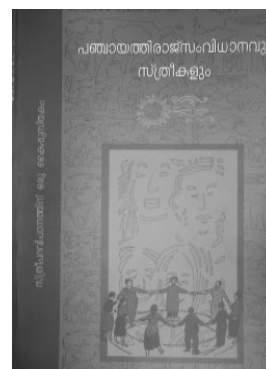


Three publications were finalized and printed during this period:

1. The resource book for elected women (Malayalam and English
2. The methodology of the study of status of women (English and Malayalam)
3. The profile of elected women (Mal)

Seema Bahskaran and Jayasree were the main facilitators of this programme.

Jayasree moved onto DSP project in October and Seema continued to finish the work. The follow up of the work in Alappad after the project ended was carried out by Mercy Alexander.





Work with young people and children

Three camps of three days duration was conducted for children from fishing families in the tsunami affected village of Alappad in Kollam and it was greatly appreciated. (April 24-26th; May 3rd to 6th and May 11th to 13th 2006) The children are now planning to organize a children's *gramsabha* in Alappad. Ms. Anitha.S with support from 'mediact' and other staff from Sakhi organized the programme. In the three camps 102 children participated. We had

to strictly limit participation for meaningful interaction and learning process.



Three one day camps were organized at Vilayur, a rural village in Palghat . 76 children participated. Several follow up activities are planed in the area with the help of the panchayats.

Several classes for children were conducted in various schools in Trivandrum district.

Study of Status of women in 60 panchayats in Kerala- a KILA, Capdeck & Sakhi joint initiative

The experience of conducting the study of status of women in 4 panchayats, the methodology thus developed and the experience gained was found to be important to be disseminated to other panchayats and up scaled. So the above mentioned joint initiative was proposed.

KILA send a letter to all panchayats regarding the initiative and asked those who are interested to write back and 300 panchayats expressed interest. Out of this 50 panchayats who responded first were selected; geographical representation and other factors were also taken into consideration .

The committees of these panchayats were given a one day orientation regarding the proposed study and the process involved; a state level faculty was formed to assist the study;



Panchayat level resource teams were trained; clinics were conducted regionally so that the teams could clarify doubts. Finally about 43 panchayats have completed the study and are preparing the final report. It is expected the findings and data gathered will

be used in integrating gender concerns in the 11th plan formulation.

Seema Bhaskaran and Jaysree S are responsible for implementing this programme from the part of Sakhi. The stat level faculty of 15 women and the staff of CapDecek extended all support. To facilitate the study in so many places spread all over the state in such a short time of few months was a very intensive process. It is expected to publish the abstracts of the reports and a state level workshop will be conducted in July 07.

Training of elected members

From January 07, we resumed the training for elected members and one day seminars were conducted for standing committee chairpersons of the various panchayats in Trivandrum in three batches. Most of the standing committee chairpersons were men



and these training were on gender planning and budgeting. In order to effectively carry out the intervention of gender mainstreaming, it was decided to select a few LSG's who are willing to cooperate and work closely with them. This process is started now.

3 Ongoing Programmes

1. Information dissemination

Newsletter

Two issues of the newsletter were published in 2006. The first issue was in January.

The second was a special issue related to women's day, in March. We could not publish anymore newsletters this year due to the intense work of preparing the manuals and handbooks on Gender planning.



Library and documentation centre

Sakhi library is widely used in last year also. At present there are



234 members in the library, in which 19 were new memberships. Besides the members more than 200 persons including students, research scholars and Foreigners visited the library for reading and references during the year.

Books and 62 CD's on different issues. During this year 405 books issued and almost all the books returned.



We are subscribing both English and Malayalam journals like Combat Law, Women's link, Frontline, Samyukta, Communalism Combat, Economic and Political weekly, Health Action, Down to Earth, Panchayatiraj Update, India today, Mathrubhumi, Sasthragathy, Pachakkuthira, Keraleeyam, Streesabdam, Yuvadhara etc. We received 528 journals this year.

2. Women's day celebrations

In 2007, the occasion of women's day was used to disseminate the new law on the "Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005".

The act and rules were translated into Malayalam and widely disseminated. Three posters on the theme were also prepared and used for the campaign.

Notices on the act including phone numbers of the protection officers was prepared and 15000 of such notices were



disseminated to women who came to offer Pongala (a hindu festival of women offering cooked food to female deity) at Attukal on 3rd March.

Seminars on the act and rules were conducted at Pulluvilla & Kilimanur on 7th of March and at Alappad & Manamboor panchayats on 8th of March.

Aleyamma spoke on the PWDVA on the International Women's day celebrations organized by social welfare board at Sri Chitra home; at the Police headquarters and at the CRPF women welfare association. On March 17th, a class on the same was conducted for



all women police CI's and SI's of women police cells of the state, in a training organized by the Police Training Coleege.

A state level monitoring committee on the implementation of PWDV act is Convened by Mridul Eapen, member, state planning board and we actively participated in this process.

3. Violence intervention programmes

Sakhi being a dropping place for women, many women approach us with problems and issues faced in the family, workplace and public places. We listen and help to address such issues .Some of these are through telephone.

Legal assistance : This year 7 cases were filed in the family court and 5 were settled through police stations and 2 were referred for professional counseling.

4. Capacity building programmes and Workshops

Gender training for university dalit students in Kottayam

A three day gender and sexuality workshop was conducted or university students belonging to *dalit* communities. This was an initiative of Rekha raj and we encouraged and facilitated the process. 29 students were part of this process of understanding gender and feminism and its intersection with *dalit* issues.

Seminars for elected Women (leadership training)

This year after the elections to the local bodies, we organized three seminars for elected women representatives regionally

- 4th Feb,2006-Nedumanad- 76 elected women took part



- 21st Feb. Neyyattinkara-77 elected women
- 24th February-Kallambalam 70 elected women

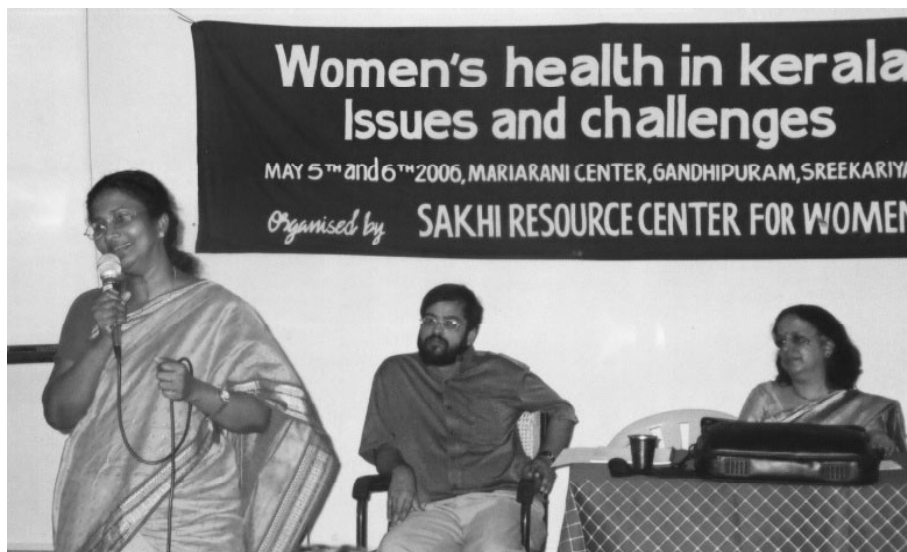


These three seminars were organized to orient the newly elected women to the panchayati raj system and also to the possibilities of working with a gender concern. Besides an input session, video films were used to create discussion. Former members also shared their experiences. There is a strong request to continue this programme as this possibility of capacity building and exposure greatly enhances the leadership skills of this women and make them political actors on their own right.

Workshop on "Women's health in Kerala-Issues and challenges"

A two day workshop on **"Women's health in Kerala-Issues and challenges"** was conducted on 5th and 6th of May 2006. The specific issues and concerns of women's sexual and reproductive rights in the context of Kerala was high

lighted and focused in this programme. Ms Aleyamma Vijayan, Dr. Manju Nair, Dr. Sheela Shenoy, Dr. Devika, Dr U. S. Mishra, Dr. Sowmini C.V, Dr. Nirmala Sudhakaran, Dr. Balaraman Nair, Ms. Usha, Dr. Kalavathi, Dr. Indu, Dr. C.R. Soman, Dr. Aarti Kelkar-Khambete, Dr. Mini G.K, Dr. Sajitha, Dr. Rani, Dr. Thresia C.U, Dr.



Sundari Ravindran conducted various sessions.

Sharing of experiences from the field was also done by Maya from AHADS about tribal women, Sr. Philo of coastal women, Sinimol presented her experience of childbirth, Aniamma, Mani talked about the issues of tea estate workers in Idukki, Anjana talked about her experiences as an HIV positive person.

It is the first time that such a workshop where medical doctors interacted with women and activists on women's health concerns is conducted. Follow up sessions are planned in the coming months.

Workshop on 'Women's studies in Kerala'

Sakhi, in collaboration with Indian association of women's studies (IAWS) organized a 2 day state level workshop on **'Women's studies in Kerala'**, on May 19th and 20th 2006. The programme was inaugurated by Dr. Jancy James. Hon. Vice Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University. In her speech, she talked about the issues and concerns in introducing women's studies as an academic discipline in the University system. Ms. Sumi Krishna, National President of IAWS, Dr. S. Anandi from Madras Institute of development studies



Ms.T.Radhamani., Dr. Manu Bhaskar, Mini Sukumar, Dr.A.KRamakrishnan, Dr.G.S.Jayasree, Dr.Mala Ramanathan and Dr.J.Devika were the resource persons. Professors, lecturers activists and students interested in the women's studies participated. The aim is to gender the education process in the state and inform the public and academic community on issues of gender justice.

By June 2006, the Financial support for such programmes from the FORD foundation was over. The funding for continuation of such ongoing work resumed only in January 2007.

Gender and Media

A two day gender sensitization workshop was conducted for students of the Trivandrum press club journalism institute in Feb16th and17th.

Sharing of Irene Fernandez

Irene Fernandez is from Thope, a coastal village in Kerala and is well known activist in Malaysia. She takes up human rights issues and migrant workers' issues through the organization **Tanagnita**, which she had started in the late 90s. Sakhi had invited her on November

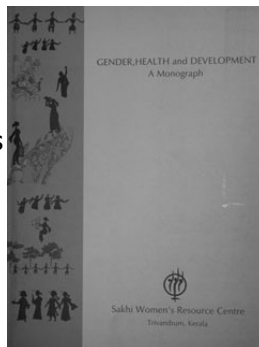


4th to share her experience to our friends at the press club hall. It was a very enriching experience for each of the participants that a person who has her roots in this state is doing great service in another country for the people world wide.



5. Publications

- A **handbook on Gender, health and development** was prepared which is a compilation of the training methodology of the five courses conducted by Sakhi. Aarathi Kelkar assisted to prepare the publication.
- Two CD's were prepared on Sakhi and streevedi. Santhoshkumar K.C helped in this documentation.
- Gender training manual: A comprehensive gender training manual is being prepared. It is still not published. We hope to complete the work and publish it in 2007.
- The PWDVA Act and rules were translated and published. They were widely disseminated.





Community Based Works

Besides the work with various Local governments, we are also working with certain community based women's groups in coastal areas and in the cashew sector.

1. Cashew project

Anna Lindburg, a Swedish lady, who did her study in the cashew sector of Kollam district, approached Sakhi with a project. She wanted to assist girl children of women cashew workers to pursue their studies as they usually drop out because of financial difficulty.



The women panchayat president of Yeroor Panchayat in Kollam is an active member of Sakhi's network of Elected women representatives. Therefore we got generous support from the panchayat towards our proposal to give educational assistance to girl children of women cashew workers at Yeroor Panchayat.

We visited the panchayat and the cashew factories in the area several time and met the women and had discussions with them. This was to identify the eligible students. With the consent of the Panchayat committee, on May 2nd, we took the final decision to give education assistance to girl children, who are studying in 10th, 11th, 12th and for graduation. Thus, on May 8th we convened the



girls at the Panchayat hall and asked their requirements. According to these interactions we prepared a list of girls who are eligible for the aid. On May 30th, in a formal function conducted at the panchayat hall the president inaugurated the distribution of the educational aid. On that day we distributed financial aid to 46 girl students, among which the 10th standard students were given text books and note books also. On the basis of the requirements from the ward members we had selected 56 girls and distributed the financial aid on June 17th. Then we got yet another list and on June 25th we distributed the money to 32 girls The details:



Class 10	38 students	Rs. 26160 + text books and note books
Class 11 & 12	61 students	Rs. 61000
Graduation	33 students	Rs. 41250
Fee for TTC	1 student	Rs. 3600

So total **Rs.1,40,770/-** had been distributed among the girl students.

As a follow up of this programme we are conducting sessions for these girls once in a month.

2 . Vin Vis Project in Pulluvilla

This is a project supported by the fisherwomen of Netherlands through a friend Cornelia Quist. This amount is utilized for the programmes organized by Stree Aikya Vedi at Pulluvilla.



The Stree Aikya Vedi had been taking up several issues of violence against women in the area. In the rape case of a seven year old girl at Pulluvilla which happened on 25th December 2004, the accused was sentenced for life imprisonment.

After Tsunami the fishing sector is facing a big crisis. The decreasing fish resources, hike in the price of petrol and kerosene which is needed for the mechanized fishing crafts, import of fish etc. are driving the fish workers to utter debt. Actually the negative impacts of tsunami affected mostly women in the community. Their work load has doubled because they have the sole responsibility of their families.

The economic help from **Vinvis** supports a women's group of 10 as an occupational unit. They buy fish and vend it after a process of drying it under sunlight. They also buy clothes in bulk and sell it at their own village. Selling of provisions are also included in their undertakings.

The curry powder unit of Karumkulam women cooperative society is working actively. They started the unit at the new building in August, 2005. They bought some new machines for it and three women are working full time at the unit. Stree Aikya Vedi has shifted to a new rental building. They are making Candles and soaps seasonally. They are planning to start a tailoring unit and fabric painting unit in the near future. The necessary training for this is given to the women.

Women's day was celebrated and the occasion was used to disseminate information on the PWDV act. Poster exhibition was also conducted.

4. Alappad

The work through the women's resource center at Alappad continues. Various training programmes and health programmes are carried out. A cancer detection camp was conducted in March with the help of the regional Cancer center and the panchayat. 103 women participated and one was detected with cervical cancer. Several others were asked to conduct further tests.



Selected women from different groups were given training in Fabric painting and screen printing. They will form occupational units. All the *anganwadi* workers were trained in new pedagogical methods.

On March 8th women's day was celebrated and the focus was on the new PWDV act and rules. Another seminar on Right to Information Act was also conducted.



1. July 5-9th Organizational evaluation by Renu Khanna

As SAKHI had completed 10 years, the team felt a need to reflect on what we had been doing in the changing context in Kerala. After 10 years, the organisation is being pulled in various directions and would like to consciously determine its own trajectory based on a realistic assessment of its strengths and limitations. The Review was also seen as an opportunity to begin the transition of handing over leadership to a second line within the organization. The expected outcome of the review was a report that would help clarify SAKHI's direction and agenda for the next 10 years. Based on an analysis that would be undertaken as part of the review, the core team felt that could define the possible role of the organisation, the scope of its work, the focus Areas, an Organizational Structure and the need for other resources.

Renu Khanna used the following methodology for the Review:- meetings with the SAKHI team members (including members of various project teams, the 'Core Group'), individual interventions with 'Friends of SAKHI'- persons who have been associated with the organisation over the years, in various capacities; interviews with seven elected women representatives; field visits to two locations and reading of various documents and reports.

A report is prepared and she was scheduled to come for a second visit for an organizational development-OD process which could not take place due to the sudden demise of her mother. A fresh date will be set and this process will be taken forward.

In the trust board meeting the recommendations were discussed and follow up process was undertaken. A personnel policy is prepared and adopted.

2. Internal Evaluation:

In January the team had a two day meeting to take stock of last years work and plan the future programmes. Besides this bimonthly staff meetings are held regularly.

3. Changes in the team

Mr. Joseph Xavier who was the financial officer of Sakhi since January 2001 took his retirement this year. We wish to place on record our gratitude for his sincere and committed work at Sakhi for the last 6 years.

The five new staff recruited for the DSP project left at the end of the project period.