



# ***Annual Report 2013***

***SPANDHANA***

***RAMANAGARAM, KARNATAKA, JNDJA***





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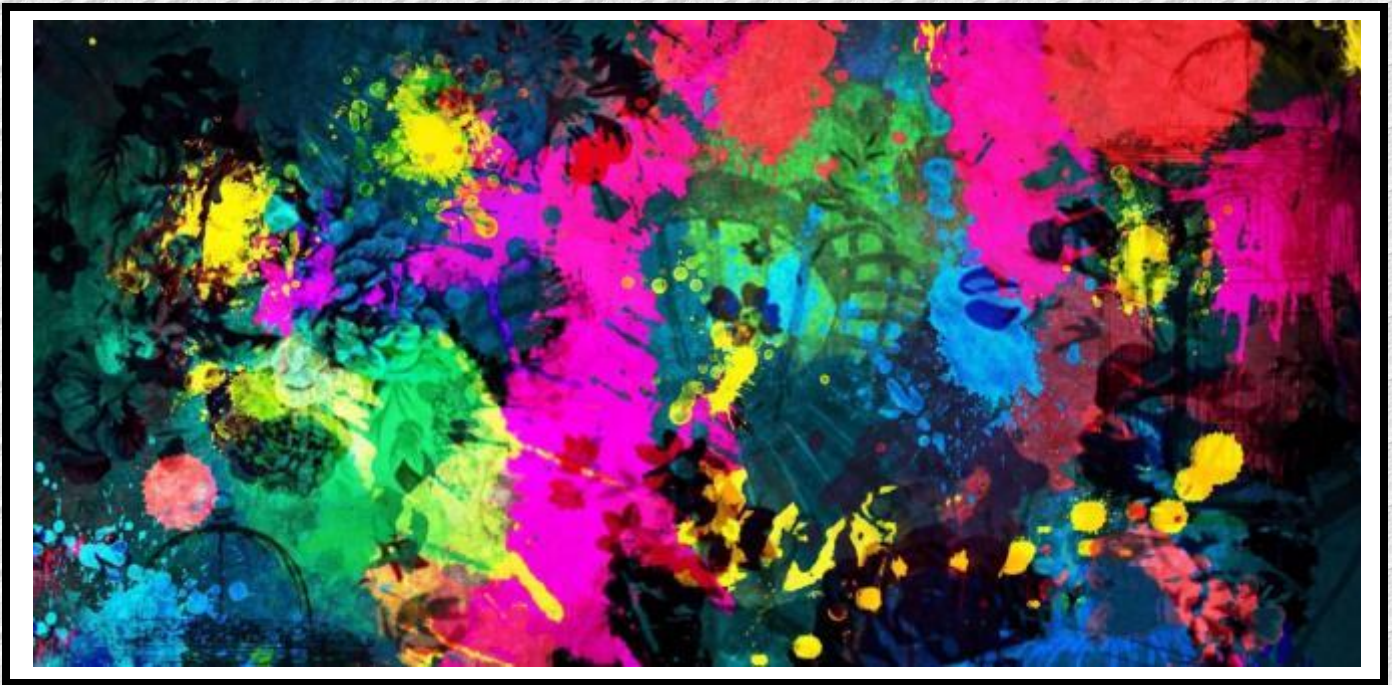
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## ***WHEN WE TURN BACK***

It was a period where our interventions in certain areas became more relevant and significant. This is mainly due to several national and state level governmental policy decisions that had a direct impact on the lives of the people at the grassroots. These changes made our work both valuable and challenging at the same time. The foremost areas that were greatly influenced by major policy decisions of the government are women, community development and unorganized sectors. The women empowerment policies implemented as an aftermath of the brutal rape of a young women that shook world, paved a new way to our approach towards handling the women right violation cases. We could readily feel a support and cooperation of the local administration and other government enforcement machineries. The pressure mounting on the authorities to implement women laws effectively due to active struggle from civil society movements is one of the major reasons for the change in the perception of authorities. The policies such as Protection of women against sexual harassment at workplace, Food Security Act, Guarantee of Services to Citizen Acts, The Whistleblowers Protection Act to strengthen anti-Corruption laws and Right to Information Acts and such other polices strengthened us with legal weapons to demand our rights in public offices while fighting for basic amenities and such other policies for public welfare.

On the other hand the economic decisions of the government both at the centre and state levels which rigorously stress on the transition of economy from primary sector to secondary and tertiary sectors adversely affected the agricultural sectors, where many opted out of agriculture as their primary occupation due to some agricultural policies that created an unfavorable situation for the farmers. As the landholding is primarily dominant among caste Hindus and upper classes in India naturally the agricultural laborers who largely constitute dalits and women are becoming unemployed. On the other hand the lack of employment generation in other sectors is leading to decreased engagement in the workforce. We encountered a serious problem while organizing agricultural laborers as due to this reactionary trend which can not only result in disguised unemployment and total unemployment but also it can pose serious challenge to the future food security of the country. Therefore, we organized agricultural laborers demanding alternative jobs for those who have been deprived of daily wage work and along with the union formation and strengthening we also focused on nurturing green for better tomorrow.



## ***OUR THOUGHTS***

### **GENDER EQUALITY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The project titled 'Dalit Activism towards Social Justice and Community Development' is an exclusively impact based approach with specific objectives to attain certain goals by the end of the year. Under this project SPANDHANA works in 10 selected villages where there is highest population of Dalit and Marginalized communities. This intervention involves stages of impact based activities as the following.

**Stage: 1:** Formation of Groups and Organizing Dalit and marginalized communities in groups especially women.

**Stage: 2:** Awakening them about the issues that directly impact their socio-economic status and standard of living under the setup of local self-Government and Ensuring the implementation of all schemes and programmes entitled to them for their upward mobility.

**Stage: 3:** Ideological training for the groups and exposure to different socio-political ideologies to change system understanding the grass-roots reasons for discrimination and bring social change with a systematic approach.

**Stage: 4:** Creation of ideologically and intellectually strong independent groups in villages which owns collective responsibility towards development and change.

Each stage of implementation of above stages includes several procedures and these procedures like visiting working areas, contacting the target group, organizing Dalit women in groups, understanding the level of implementation of different schemes in the villages, understanding the local administrative set up and socio-political and economic situation, making women understanding about different schemes available for their development and organizing them to act as pressure groups in making the schemes to get implemented and others. Staff also needs to be constantly trained to keep them aware and updated on the set up of local self-governments, available development schemes and amendments taking place to existing schemes and introduction of new schemes from state and central government. The ultimate objective of the



'Stage-1 and Stage 2' is ensuring a corruption free implementation of schemes and effective utilization of the same by proper entitled beneficiaries and indulging a sense of community responsibility and collective action among Dalit women to achieve community development through energizing the local administration. 'Stage 3' and 'Stage 4' are higher scale of development and social change, where these groups are ideologically empowered and they take up the social struggle as a voluntary action without the presence of SPANDHANA. Creating an awakened rural mass specially the deprived communities to fight against any injustice in the socio-economic and political set up in the local community including their human right violation and Dalit atrocities.

The Following Work plan explains the entire objectives, activities to achieve the objectives and the developmental parameters to indicate the stage of progress of each activity with a stipulated timeline.

STAGES	OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOME AND DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS
<b>Stage: 1:</b> Formation of Groups and Organizing Dalit and marginalized communities in groups.	Identifying 10 villages with highest number of Dalit and backward communities  Formation of 20 Groups in 10 villages as 2 groups in each villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting a base line study to understand the socio-economic situation of the target group</li> <li>• Conducting a survey to check the level of implementation of government schemes and to understand the functioning of local self governments</li> <li>• Backed with the study report, facts and our understanding, reaching the target group and discussing with them about the objective of group formations</li> <li>• Formation of 2 groups in each village forming 20 groups in a duration of 3 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base line study report</li> <li>• Compiled Survey Report</li> <li>• Number of people contacted in the village</li> <li>• Number of groups formed and the detailed list of the members of the groups</li> </ul>



<p><b>Stage: 2:</b> Awaking them about the issues that directly impact their socio-economic status and standard of living under the set up of local self Government and Ensuring the implementation of all schemes and programmes entitled to them for their upward mobility.</p>	<p>Periodic discussion on developmental schemes and projects under the local self government within the group</p> <p>Train the groups to work as pressure groups to get the schemes and project implemented in a fair manner to the deserving beneficiaries</p> <p>Groups working as watchdogs on the functioning of local self government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly meetings in every group. Hence 8 meetings in one village in a month and total 80 meetings in one month including all ten villages.</li> <li>• Conducting workshops to groups and staffs on the major developmental schemes in villages, under state and central government projects and functioning of local administrative set up.</li> <li>• Major focus areas of training and associated work (Short Term )</li> <li>• Functioning of Local Self Government</li> <li>• Major Administrative set ups in the village and their functioning</li> <li>• Functioning of village Primary Health Centers and health related schemes</li> <li>• Functioning of Anganawadi and schemes related to women and children</li> <li>• Functioning of Public Distribution System</li> <li>• Functioning of School and SDMC and available educational schemes</li> <li>• Public Amenities programmes taken up by Gram panchayath</li> <li>• Major schemes SPANDHANA is focusing (Long term):</li> <li>• Swarna Jayathi Gram Swarozgar Yojana</li> <li>• Mahatma Gandhi National rural Employment guarantee Act</li> <li>• National Social Assistance Programme</li> <li>• Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana</li> <li>• Housing Schemes : Rajiv Gandhi Rural Housing Coporation Limited – (Ashraya Scheme - State Governmnet Initiative)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of meetings conducted and track record of issues conducted</li> <li>• Number of workshop conducted. Initial 3 workshops for SPANDHANA team and Monthly 1 workshop with well defined study material on different schemes for groups.</li> <li>• Implementing at least 5 short term programmes in a month and 1 long term scheme.</li> </ul>
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<b>Stage 3:</b>			
<p>Ideological training for the groups and exposure to different socio-political ideologies to change system understanding the grass-roots reasons for discrimination and bring social change with a systematic approach.</p>	<p>Ideological and intellectual orientation for Dalit women to understand their identity.</p> <p>Provide orientation camps and conducting meetings to make them understand on the role of patriarchal and feudal values acting upon caste, class and gender issues</p> <p>Orientation camps on news economic policies like, globalization privatization, liberalization and foreign direct investments in the life of rural mass</p>	<p>Weekly meetings among the group members relating to the concepts 'Identity' as a 'Dalit' and 'Woman' and its representations and status in society and their role in determining their standard of living, rights and developments.</p> <p>Weekly meetings among the group members on the role of 'feudal' and 'patriarchal' values playing in the socio-economic and political life of the rural set up.</p> <p>Weekly meetings among the group members on the role of new economic policies and changes at the central public decisive authorities at the union government ad their shift of focus from socialist principles to capitalist principles and how these changes affects the lives of people in rural areas specially women and marginal communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of weekly meetings conducted and Monthly once a workshop for the groups on identity. 3 Workshop will be conducted in a year. The other developmental approaches and programmes of preceding year will be in process. – First Quarter - First Stage</li> <li>• Number of weekly meetings conducted and Monthly once a workshop on the concepts for 3 months – 3 workshop – Second Quarter - Second Stage</li> <li>• Number of weekly meetings conducted and Monthly once a workshop for 3 months on the modern economic policies and changing trend in the socio-economic perception of the government – Third Quarter – Last Stage</li> </ul>



<p><b>Stage: 4</b></p> <p>Community owning social responsibility volunteering towards the cause.</p>	<p>The activities will be organized to filter the effective volunteers and they will be declared as activists of SPANDHANA. Under the guidance of SPANDHANA they will take over the implementation with the same spirit and outcome as of SPANDHANA activists.</p> <p>SPANDHANA launches a periodical to which each activists from the village submits report on the activities they have conducted in the villages and</p>	<p>SPANDHANA guides activists to take up the initiatives and gives a back end support to attain the desired results.</p> <p>The group of activists in the village also work as sudden action committee at the time of any atrocities and takes up required legal decisions with the help of SPANDHANA</p> <p>Activists and volunteers in the village contribute to the paper. Hence SPANDHANA gets an idea about the issues that are being addressed by the activists in the villages and the development taking place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of activities conducted by the activists and volunteers</li> <li>• Number of issues taken up by the activists and addressed by them.</li> <li>• Number of articles and reports contributed by the activists and all 12 editions of the paper in one year.</li> </ul>
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## SOCIAL JUSTICE

In ensuring the right implementation of social justice enshrined in the constitution of India, SPANDHANA is actively involved directly among dalit communities and unorganised sector labourers in organising and strengthening them to demand their rights and also indirectly we work with all other marginalised sections of the society. The following is our thoughts that we gathered and planned to implement during 2013.

ACTIVITIES	FOCUS GROUPS	OUTPUT	LONG TERM CHANGES
<p>Basic Study regarding the Demography, Socio-economic state of Agricultural Women Labourers and state of agriculture in Ramanagaram District</p> <p><b>Functionary Activities:</b> Printing of BLD formats to carry out formal study for basic understanding of Agricultural labourers and state of agriculture</p>	Women Agricultural Labourers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the socio-economic and demographic state of agricultural women labourers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publishing a study report on the status of unorganised sector women workers in the district of Ramanagaram district.</li> <li>Combining the earlier base line data and research reports of other unorganised sector women workers</li> </ul>
<p>Organising Agricultural labourers in groups and advocating their rights and welfare policies. Involving new members of the old unions in the process. (New 300 members in agricultural labourers union) and strengthening them</p> <p><b>Functionary Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Village campaigns to organise agricultural women labourers</li> <li>Organising Awareness meetings on role of feudalism and patriarchy in agriculture, Leadership, Personality Development, legal aid and policies</li> </ul>	Women Agricultural Labourers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formation of agricultural labourers' union. Unionisation to give an organised structure for availing legal rights and benefits from the government.</li> <li>Awakening women labourers about their rights by giving ideological and intellectual programmes based</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong and strengthened labour union among agricultural women workers</li> <li>Equal pay and dignity of labour for women in agricultural sector</li> <li>Strong union of women cadres who are ready to take the social movements and bring about an ideologically driven</li> </ul>



<p>and welfare programmes available for agricultural women labourers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Films and Documentary Screenings regarding women leaders, patriarchy and different socio-cultural issues that subjugates women's rights</li> </ul>		<p>on the concept of 'Labour' and 'Gender' and role of feudalism and patriarchy in agriculture</p>	<p>social and women's movement</p>
<p>Networking and Advocacy</p> <p><b>Functionary Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with local level organization and groups associated with unorganised sector women labourers like KrishiBhavan and farmers</li> </ul>	<p>Agricultural labour Unions, Organisation working for agriculture and agricultural labourers and Government institution related to agriculture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Networking these local level unions to state and national level to get represented at higher levels and put a mass pressure for policy implementations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of women friendly policies</li> <li>Implementation of welfare programmes for women in unorganised sectors</li> </ul>
<p>Involving new members to the existing unions and strengthening them, retaining present implementations.</p> <p><b>Functionary Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organising meetings, discussions and awareness camps at cluster levels and Taluk level to awake the unorganised workers regarding their rights and their role in society through unions.</li> <li>Organising district level and state level conferences on 'Labour and Gender Issues'.</li> </ul>	<p>Mid-day meal workers, Beedi-rollers, and Construction Labourers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New members to the union existing unions</li> <li>Continuation and effective implementation of the present work</li> <li>Organising more workshops to build cadres and leaders</li> <li>Unorganised sector women labourers writing on socio-economic and women related</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More effective and strong women labourers Movement at state level.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protests to Demand the Laborer's Rights against Government, Protests against the sexual, mental and physical harassment of women workers</li> <li>• Printing a monthly periodical (tabloid size) for private circulation among our target groups and network organizations. The subject focuses on issues relating women rights, women development policies and schemes, Gender issues and intellectual write up.</li> </ul>		<p>issues in the house journal</p>	
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## ***SHAPING OUR THOUGHTS***

### **Gender Equality and Community Development**

SPANDHANA implemented the project Dalit Activism towards social justice and community development in Lakshmipura Gram Panchayat of Ramanagaram district selecting 10 villages of the panchayat. The major thrust area of the project was the empowerment of the Dalit community to ascertain their rights. The objective of empowerment involved two different stages that were implemented simultaneously. The first stage routed through the process of organizing and strengthening the community to avail socio-economic welfare programs which they are legally entitled. The second stage involved the ideological orientation and awareness generation which plays a vital role in the process of empowering the community members in demanding their rights from the respective authorities. Though the project involved all members of the Dalit community in general, a special emphasis was given towards organizing women and youth.

#### **Stage: 1:**

**Formation of Groups and Organizing Dalit and marginalized communities in groups**

#### **Base line Data Survey:**

SPANDHANA has selected Lakshmipura Gram Panchayath to implement the project 'Dalit Activism towards Social Justice and Community Development'. Lakshmipura gram panchayat is comprised of majority population belonging to Dalit and backward castes compared to other Gram Panchayaths in the Taluk. Lakshmipura Gramapachayat is comprised of 27





villages and SPANDHANA opted to work in 10 villages which are comparatively most backward and inhabited largely by Dalit communities.

With the above background, work of SPANDHANA has concentrated in the below mentioned villages. Following table gives the list of selected villages, fundamental details of the villages along with the findings of base line data survey.

Sl No	Name of the Villages	Total Population		SC/ST		Socio-Economic-Political and Cultural Status and Status of Basic Amenities
		M	F	M	F	
1.	Lakshmpura	1031	693	131	128	Village consists of people of mainly from Vokkaliga, Banjara, Eediga and some portion Holeya and Madiga. The major occupations in the village are agriculture, agriculture allied works, and construction works and some portion of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.
2.	Matakayana Doddi	82	78	82	78	Village mainly consists of Holeya and Madiga community and their major occupation is daily wage work in agricultural fields and constructions. Some portions of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.
3.	Melehalli	254	260	20/4	22/2	Village consists of people of mainly from Vokkaliga, Kuruba, and some portion Holeya and Madiga. The major occupations in the village are agriculture, agriculture allied works, and construction works and some portion of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.
4.	Timmasandra	410	350	105	78	Village consists of people of mainly from Vokkaliga, Banjara, Eediga and some portion Holeya and Madiga. The major occupations in the village are agriculture, agriculture allied works, and construction works and some portion of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.
5.	Gungara Halli	495	440	40	39	Village consists of people of mainly from Vokkaliga, Banjara, Eediga and some portion Holeya and Madiga. The major occupations in the village are agriculture, agriculture allied works, construction works and some portion of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.
6.	Kempodara Halli	125	126	125	126	Village mainly consists of Holeya and Madiga community and their major occupation is daily wage work in agricultural fields and constructions. Some portions of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.



7.	Indra Colony	139	154	139	154	Village mainly consists of Vadda, Holeya and Madiga community and their major occupation is daily wage work in agricultural fields and constructions. Some portions of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.
8.	Vaddara Doddi	123	128	48	46	Village consists of people of mainly from Vokkaliga, Eediga and some portion Holeya and Madiga. The major occupation in the village are agriculture, agriculture allied works, construction works and some portion of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.
9.	Katukana Palya	234	238	49	51	Village consists of people of mainly from Vokkaliga, banjara, Eediga, Kumbara and some portion Holeya and Madiga. The major occupation in the village are agriculture, agriculture allied works, construction works and some portion of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.
10.	Doddasulikere	134	131	58	51	Village consists of people of mainly from Vokkaliga, Eediga, Ganiga and some portion Holeya and Madiga. The major occupation in the village are agriculture, agriculture allied works, construction works and some portion of young women also go to nearby garments situated at Taluk headquarters.





### **Brief Study on Government Schemes and their Implementation:**

It is a fact that the local government in most of the villages in the country is not completely effective and genuinely serving the core objectives while implementing the schemes.

Lakshmi pura gram panchayat is also no exception. The flagship programs of government like MGNREGA and PDS systems are a failure to a large extent as many dalit families are not yet enrolled, Job cards are yet not issued and many developmental activities are not yet undertaken and still a large scale temporary migration is taking place in these villages in search of jobs. The PDS shops are not open as per stipulated six days and the card holders are not adequately provided with stipulated quantity of ration. The respective authorities are opaque in management and also completely unapproachable.

The local Panchayat elected members as well as officers are less cooperative to public. However through RTI SPANDHANA could gather the required information to understand the available schemes from different departments and its current status of implementation. Later we utilized this information to demand the proper implementation of the basic amenities and public welfare schemes by organizing the community group members as pressure groups.

### **Formation of Groups:**

Formation of groups is mainly focused among families, women and youth. Many focus group interventions among these groups help in awakening group members about the status of their village and its direct impact on their personal socio-economic status in society. They are also awakened about their rights and privileges in the constitution which are materialized through several government schemes and programmes.

Focusing on the above objective, SPANDHANA could organize 32 groups in the villages among these 7 groups among children. SPANDHANA is also focusing forming YUVAS PANDHANA youth units in every village which are oriented as action groups. SPANDHANA has thus far organized 8 such youth units in 5 villages.



## **Welfare Programs implemented in villages during the project Period**

### ***Job Card under MGNREGA***

Agriculture which employs 58% of the population, has only 14% output to the GDP. This explains the plight of present agricultural sector which is not only performing badly but also a haven of disguised unemployment. This recent agricultural shift is indirectly compelling farmers to opt out of agriculture as it is becoming a non-profitable venture and this has chiefly affected the employment of agricultural laborers resulting in migration. The Dalit community being traditionally deprived of agricultural land, they are mainly employed as agricultural laborers, hence this trend is gravely affecting on their livelihood. Lakshmipura gram Panchayat is also not an exception to this trend and it is witnessing a massive migration. In this background SPANDHANA decided to implement MGNREGA effectively not just to stop migration but also to ensure job security and assured wage supply to the marginalized.

The process started by making all households aware about MGNREGA scheme and about the process of application. At present, 80 families in Lakshmipura Grama Panchayth have been provided with job cards and they are availing the benefits of the scheme.

### ***Education and Health:***

- In Melehalli the anganawadi has been renovated on request which was under poor condition and an anganwadi has been requested in Thimmasandra and its implementation is being monitored.
- In Indira colony Dalit children were being discriminated against other children as they were asked to sit separately and being served food separately. This is being noted and protested by the SPANDHANA team for which later our groups were also involved and the practice has been stopped. The teacher has been penalized by the CDPO and instructed to take extra care not to repeat and also being made aware of the rights of children and legal provisions available against violation of rights.
- To keep a check on the level of anemia and malnutrition among Dalit community and to take essential measure, a blood test has been conducted in the Lakshmipura Grama Panchayath. Among 62 people who were subjected to test only 16 crossed the required hemoglobin count, among only 4 were women.



After the test, a small health camp was also organized to awake the masses about the need of intake of nutritious food and its direct impact of health and enhanced living standards. The need of strengthening PDS and the need of demanding sufficient nutritious food through fair price shops were also being stressed. The gender disparity in access to nutritious food was also being discussed. The results of the tests were presented to the district hospital and health department and they were linked to the WIFS (Weekly Iron- Folic Acid Supplements) programme.

- As a follow-up to the blood test, a small initiative also was taken to promote kitchen gardening in the backyards of their houses, to encourage growing iron rich and easily accessible local resources like leafy vegetables and papaya.

### ***Housing***

- Two kutcha houses were being replaced with pucca houses under the Ashraya scheme in Lakshmipura.
- Another 12 applications have been filed under different housing schemes including both central and state schemes.

### **Stage: 2:**

### **Community Development and Enhancing Socio-Economic Status through Social Mobilization**

- Conducting study classes in the groups and organizing taluk level awareness meetings and monthly awareness programs are the major awareness generation activities conducted among the group members to make them aware of their rights and the available socio-economic empowerment schemes in the villages. The distribution of booklets on different government schemes, documentary screenings and street plays also worked as effective tools in awakening community members.





## Major Programmes Organized in Six Months are as Follows

### March:

- **International Women's Day:**

In the wake of increasing crimes against women despite several laws and stringent measures all the women organizations and people's movements of Karnataka planned to organize International Women's day in Mangalore demanding to create more women friendly society and pro-women enforcement machineries. Hence SPANDHANA was also one of the active participants and as per the resolution in the mass meeting all women's organizations decided to organize series of programmes in their respective district. Bhanwari Devi, Crusader against Child Marriage was also one of the chief guests to the program.

SPANDHANA organized in Ramanagaram on March 27<sup>th</sup> organizing around 200 women and men from our working areas including both villages and urban slums.

- **Starting of Manavi Edition:**

SPANDHANA launched the new edition of 'Manavi', the publication of SPANDHANA starting January 2013. The paper circulated among all the stakeholders of SPANDHANA received a good response.

### April:

- **Issuing Job Cards under MGNREGA**

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is one of the ambitious flagship programmes of the government which is making much news unfortunately for the massive corruption rather than its effective yield. The corruptive practices in implementing MGNREGA is





also seen in Lakshmipura Grama Panchayat, regarding which we could gather information during base line data collection and also on the later stage when we approached the local authorities. We found that majority of households from Dalit and marginalized communities have not received their job cards and also not much developmental activities related to infrastructural development and sanitation drives have taken place in Panchayat limits under MGNREGA. Moreover the migration is still taking place at a larger rate in these villages.

Therefore, soon after the Base Line Data collection we started forming community groups and initiated awareness generation by throwing light on MGNREGA and role of Gram Panchayath institutions and their roles and responsibilities in implementing the government schemes. Soon after an initial phase of acquainting people with different government programmes we were successful in putting people into action. A letter requesting to issue job card was sent local panchayat demanding to issue job cards for 50 households. However the local panchayat officials did not respond and our request letter was ignored. We organized pocket wise meetings in Lakshmipura, Melehalli, Chikkasulikere and Kempodarahalli and brought the behavior of officials to the notice of people and awakened them about their rights and privileges. After a series of meetings in all these villages, people decided unanimously to stage a protest, hence a protest was organized in front of the local panchayat office due to which the officials and people's representatives agreed to organize an emergency Gramasabha and make arrangements to issue job cards. At present all the applications have being processed and everybody have been given with the receipt of acknowledgment on application and people have been assured to receive job cards by the end of September.

## **May:**

### **Health Camps and Health Programmes**

The base line data survey also exposed us to another vital issue which is under great threat; Health. The community health is poor; especially women and children are at a great risk with high malnutrition and under nutrition. Along with the social factor such as gender based discrimination that is directly impacting on the nutrition intake among women and girl children, the social infrastructures such as hospitals, Health and Sanitation Committees, Anganawadis and PDS system are lacking adequate facilities and also corrupt. Therefore to bring a transformation in these system and to bring awareness among people about the



significance of women's health and impact of malnutrition on the future generations, SPANDHANA organized a series of programs.

### **Blood Test and Health Camp:**

SPANDHANA conducted a health camp and blood checkup in Lakshmipura village to understand the level of anemia and consequently to understand the level of malnutrition with the assistance of local PHC. As we had presumed we got shocking results. Among 62 people who were subjected to test only 16 crossed the required hemoglobin count, among only 4 were women. All people subjected to test were from Dalit Community.





### **Health Camps and Health Awareness Programme**

After the result SPANDHANA conducted a series of health camps in Lakshmipura Gram Panchayat to educate people on Anemia, its causes and implications. Focusing on the need of nutritional intake we also distributed seeds to promote household food security. Call was also given to strengthen the PDS system. People were also made aware of the new program by the Government ‘Weekly Supplements of iron and Folic Acid’ (WIFA), which is available through local PHCs and Anganawadis and WCD.

### **Campaign to Strengthen Anganawadi:**

Anganawadis which is present in most of the villages are definitely the first local nodal agency for all government programmes. Therefore SPANDHANA maintains a constant and healthy relationship with the anganawadis. However the sad part is that, with the massive commercialization of education many rural children are opting to private schools. Having adequate transportation facilities travelling has not deterred the rural children and their parents to get ‘convent education’. Therefore not to mention the fact that Anganwadis and Government schools are being utilized by only children from Dalit and marginalized communities who generally cannot afford private education. At this moment we learnt that anganwadis are not only functioning properly but also the anganwadi teacher who is very casteist in her approach is discriminating children from Dalit communities and totally negligent in her work. Therefore after having a one to one meeting with the teacher we organized a parents meeting and made them aware about their responsibility in ensuring their children are getting quality education. To strengthen local government school a meeting was also being organized among school authorities and SDMC. The teachers of local schools have also been organized in group to discuss on progressive issues that can be translated into action within their limits.

### **Workshop to Staff and Volunteers:**

To get the team updated with the entire constitutional standing of Local Self-Government and to provide a thorough understanding on their structures, functions, budgetary allocations, election process, roles and responsibilities and also to throw light on all recent government schemes, SPANDHANA organized a 3 days of workshop from 27th and 28th at SPANDHANA office. Ms Chaya, resource person on MGNRGEA and Siddaraju, expert in Leadership training took sessions on different aspects related to the focused areas. Along with team member the young volunteers of SPANDHANA from different villagers were also participated in the workshop. Around 70 members participated in the workshop including staffs and volunteers.



### **Exposure to Kerala to Learn about the Leadership in Kutumbashree**

An exposure trip was organized from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> for 32 members to study the successful Kutumbashree units of Kerala especially in Wayanad, Chalakkudi and Thrissur. The team members were guided through various experiences and expertise of the Kutumbashree. We also learnt the structure and functioning of Kutumbashree and their effective leadership strategies to empower Kutumbashree members.

### **June:**

#### **'Role of Youth in Social Change' – Workshop for Youth.**

The YUVASPANDHANA groups are more active compared to other community groups and actively participating in mounting pressure on public authorities in implementing the stipulated programs. Therefore SPANDHANA planned to invest added resources in enhancing their capacities and to promote leadership training among these young Dalit men and women to make them more empowered. Therefore an activity based informative workshop was being organized for 15 members from villages for 3 days starting from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> of June. The workshop was conducted based on well structure syllabus that focused on the origin of caste, class and gender discrimination in Indian society and its implication on the status of people and ways to eradicate them.

The workshop was a successful event by youth actively participating in all the activities and assuring to extent their efforts towards social change. In fact, 4 young women who were illiterates expressed their wish to continue education and agreed to take up crash course.

#### **Public Meeting and Formation of 'Convergence Committee'**

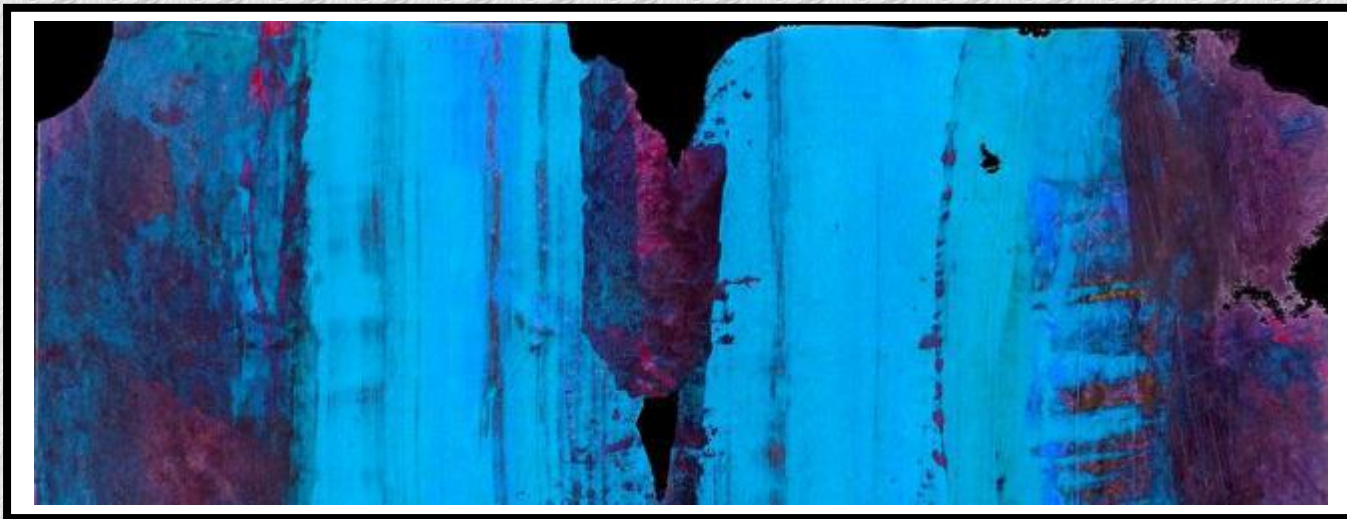
SPANDHANA organized a unique programme inviting the heads of different government department and connecting them directly with the people to explain about different welfare schemes and programmes available from their department towards the development of marginalized communities on 22<sup>nd</sup> of June in which 300 members participated. To get the complete yield of the programme SPANDHANA initiated to create a 'convergence Committee' with the representation of local educated youth who are assigned to be



in constant touch with officials and get the information and updating on different schemes and they were also assigned to pass these information to the beneficiaries.

During this programme the youth of Lakshmipura and Vaddaradoddi attracted the attention of all official and especially demanded Social Welfare Officer on grave realities in the villages based on caste. The people from Dalit communities are barred from entering local hotels and barber shops are it is boycotted for them. The untouchability and double tumbler system is still being practiced in these villages and youth demanded to implement their rights to be treated as equal humans as per constitution.





## **July:**

### **Second Phase of Workshop for Staff and Volunteers**

The second phase of the workshop focused on awaking the participants on Indian Constitution and different organs of the constitution with a special emphasis on political and permanent executive. The workshop was being organized on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of July and Prabha N and Siddaraju came as resource persons.

## **August:**

**Youth Camp:** A youth camp has been organized on 25<sup>th</sup> of August at SPANDHANA office to the youth of Lakshmipura Grama Panchayat and students representing from local college on the major prevailing social problems and the ways to find constitutional solutions and their contributions. JC Bayyareddy the president of Prantha Raitha Sangha came as resource person and threw light on several social issues both at micro and macro level. He also explained the provisions available in Indian Constitution and in several governmental programs for the prevailing problem and simultaneously threw light on the hurdles to implement constitution and access the facilities under several provisions. A group was also formed at the taluk level to follow up the resolutions taken in the camp.

## **September:**

**Workshop on “Dalits and Democracy”:** A workshop was organized on ‘Dalits and Democracy’ chiefly to make the community group members aware of their electoral rights, electoral policies and how the social change can be brought through democratizing electoral process. Leader from Democratic Youth Federation of India, Mr. Prakash addressed the participants.

## **November:**

**Awareness Programme on Health:** Addressing the issue of anemia and malnutrition we organized a programme to YUVASPANDHANA members and anganawadi teachers. Dr. Prakash Rao came as resource person.



## December:

**Women and Science:** To eradicate the superstition prevailing among women and to promote scientific temperament among women to address several health and social problems they are facing, we organized a workshop on women and superstition. Resource persons from National People's Science Network took classes and conducted several activities.

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

In the year 2013 SPANDHANA started along with working among mid-day meal workers, Beedi rollers and construction laborers SPANDHANA started organizing The agricultural sector and especially agricultural laborers who largely constitutes women are neglected community despite being largely employed. Though there are several farmer movements, they rarely focus on the rights of women laborers. From this perception, this project gave an opportunity for SPANDHANA to organize laborers in agricultural sector, especially women laborers.

The project assisted us to understand the current socio-economic and cultural conditions of the agricultural women in our target areas, specially the conditions of women laborers. Other than the wage crisis, wage disparity and sexual exploitation of women in the agricultural sector there is a large number of attrition happening in the industry due to withdrawal of farmers from agriculture and also due to migration. Women who have been withdrawn from agriculture are either opting to enter construction or are migrating to suburban areas in search of jobs. However a majority population of women is still are victims of disguised unemployment or unemployment.

In the second stage SPANDHANA could organize all agricultural laborers together under one union and effective form group in villages. They are constantly being given awareness classes on the current situation of agricultural sector, role of women, their rights, benefits for unorganized sector laborers and the means to ascertain and avail their rights. After the formation of groups they have also been linked under the government project of Swarna Jayanthi Swa Rozgar Yojana which encourages self-employment.

In the future days SPANDHANA is also aiming at policy-level intervention to ensure the employment of women of agricultural sector who are being affected by unemployment.



The unions are growing with more members, new branches and effective activities creating an optimistic environment towards the intended results. However, after the first quarter we shifted our focus from core unification activities to effectual strengthening activities of existing members focusing a shift from quantitative to qualitative approach. This helped us in balanced implementation of the work without compromising with any areas as per the plan.

The initial one year entirely focused on organizing and strengthening women in agricultural sector. With the limited prior experience in the sector SPANDHANA entered to the field with many preconceptions about the present agricultural sector and the role of women. Though our understanding about the field was partially true about underpayment, disparity in wages, non-availability of proper work, wage and welfare schemes, the BLD data collection and regular visits to the field in organizing agricultural women workers made us to realize that this sector is not only becoming highly volatile due to which there is a large attrition rate of agricultural laborers but also farmers themselves are withdrawing from agriculture and shifting to other economic sectors. The technological advancements in agricultural sectors is also impacting on the number of jobs which was required for traditional tasks in agriculture like sowing, weed segregation and harvesting, which are being done by seed drillers, weedicides and harvesters. When large and rich farmers are opting for this technologies small farmers are withdrawing from agriculture. The disguised unemployment and underemployment is also a major factor in agricultural sector of all the villages and women are largely victims of this scenario, which is directly affecting on their wage patters. India as a transitional economy the government policies are focused at compelling people to shift from primary sector to secondary and tertiary sectors and this is being reflected in the government policies which is making agriculture no more a profitable economic activity. However, this is grossly impacting on the life of the people in rural sectors mainly farmers but largely agricultural laborers who are chiefly women. Therefore the number of women agricultural laborers is reducing and volatile in villages. This also reflected on our capabilities of organizing more agricultural women laborers.

‘Daughters of Green’ which was initiated along with the unification of agricultural workers could reap good results since we could gather more players and beneficiaries beyond our intended target groups.



## ***Imprints***

### **Case Study:**

Gramasabha, the fundamental and chief decision making unit of the decentralized democracy often fails to retain its meaning in involving all stakeholders in the decision making process. This is evident at the grassroots, where it has just turned as a formal meeting in which those can participate who are either a beneficiary of a scheme or willing to be one. The active intervention of SPANDHANA and regular awareness building activities and programmes among women and youth groups have made them realize about the significance of Gramasabha and importance of their participation in making it more effective, transparent and efficient. No wonder the 'Shakti' Women's group exclaimed this statement after all of them effectively participated in the Lakshmipura Gram Panchayat Gramasabha and demanded to show the annual account statements, audit reports and activity reports. They also recommended the beneficiaries and demanded 15 job cards and 1 pucca house and more than 10 pension schemes and got them implemented with gradual follow up with the help of SPANDHANA staff.





## ***Our Inspiration***

## **Our Supporters**

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

### **Institutional Grants**

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

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

### **Public Donations**

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



## ***OUR FRIENDS***

### **Networking and Advocacy**

SPANDHANA maintains a strong network with other women's organizations, NGOs, People's Movements and government agencies. The major thrust for maintaining an effective networking is mainly since SPANDHANA understands that it is difficult for any organization or movement to focus on all social issues at all levels hence it is imperative for movements to unite together not only to fight for all issues holistically but also to have strong collective bargaining ability at different levels.

Beyond these reasons, a strong network is also a reliable platform for sharing knowledge and resources. Hence SPANDHANA is part of several national and state networks such as All Karnataka Women's Organizations' Network, State Communal harmony Forum, All India People Science Network and associated with several women's organisations and people's movement. Below are some of them with whom SPANDHANA was more active during 2012.

**SAMATHA:** Samatha is a state level women's organization which has embraced the scientist approach towards women's liberation and gender justice. As a well-known organization it has more than 3 decades of experience in working with women at the grassroots chiefly focusing on education of gender justice to marginalized and underprivileged women. SPANDHANA has associated through active participation in all programmes and through resource sharing.

**BGVS:** Bharathiya Jnan Vijan Samiti is the state level outfit of national movement 'All India People's Science Network', which is actively involved in promoting scientific temperament among rural mass and marginalized communities from several decades now. As superstitions and blind thoughts are the major threat to the intellectual growth and development of the nation fighting against this is need of the hour. SPANDHANA involves active participation of BGVS in awareness building activities in our areas

**VIKASANA:** Vikasana is an organization working in the district of Mandya, focusing on integrated rural development. They have also have effectively implemented economic empowerment programs through several income generative ventures. SPANDHANA is closely associated in implementing certain activities which demands a programmatic collaboration.



### ***Future Plans***

- **Income Generative Activity for Economic Empowerment and Social Strengthening:**

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

- **Empowerment of young Muslim girls' who are victims of Child Marriage:** The work among Beedi rollers has exposed us to grave reality of child marriages among this community hence SPANDHANA is planning ahead to work focusing on this chief issue.

