Introduction

During the reporting period, (March 2005-April 2006) Kerala witnessed several significant events. The impact of globalization on the agriculture sector resulted in debt traps and in farmers committing suicide. The widows were left to pay back the debts as well as managing the family and look after the needs of the children. The failure of not being able to live up to the notion of being a provider as a key trait of masculinity must have led this men to kill themselves, leaving back their families, and especially the women to cope with life.

The ‘Kerala model of development’ gets increasingly demystified with the incidences of high level suicides, the increasing consumerism, high alcohol consumption, very high percentage of road accidents etc. The quality of life is getting deteriorated due to all these and with increasing unemployment and poverty.

Yet, the state speaks of development in terms of mega development projects like express highway, air ports, super specialty hospitals and the like. The poor have become indispensable in the scheme of things. Hence it is imperative to beget wider debates on what is sustainable, pro-people, gender sensitive development?

The fact that women in Kerala are facing severe forms of violence is acknowledged widely and it is ‘mainstreamed’ as most of the political parties have raised this as an issue in the election campaign. In the election manifesto, the left government clearly states that redressal mechanisms will be strengthened and police will be made gender sensitive. The regular campaigns and activities are having an impact and fight for gender justice has to be carried out more systematically.

Not only that more cases of gender based violence are being reported but also in newer manifestations. This year a young nursing student was gang raped under the guise of “ragging” and also cases of young girls being trafficked under the guise of employment and promise of roles in tele-serials and films were reported.

The most frustrating aspect is the delay in justice in the judicial systems. Some cases of gang rape which happened ten years back are still not brought to trial as the accused went up to Supreme court asking to be acquitted. In some instances where the trial had taken place and the accused who were punished by lower courts, have moved to High Court and got bail. Or in other cases the witnesses
have several times created situation where the main accused are acquitted. The whole issue raised by the Best Bakery case needs serious consideration.

The only consolation was in the two cases of sexual harassment at workplace of two top officers (IAS and IFS); the same person who was the accused (A minister then), was punished in both of these cases, but just with 3 months imprisonment, which allowed him to stand for elections.

But this positive verdict vindicated the stand of the women’s groups and the ‘victims’ who courageously fought for justice. The case of harassment which P.E.Usha experienced during travel also completed the trial and the accused was punished.

About Sakhi

Our journey as a resource center for women started in 1996 and we are happy that we have completed 9 years. When we started we were just two and now we are a 15 member team, besides, supporters, volunteers’ and friends.

Our focus on gender was clearly in the perspective of integrating it with class, caste and ecological concerns and we believe that all issues are women’s issues. A gender perspective has to inform all processes in society and we believe that our responsibility is in bringing the gender and human rights angle to all social and political discourses and processes. We consider it our responsibility to share information and strengthen the capacities and capabilities of grassroots level women’s groups and women so that the women’s movement is strengthened and becomes an integral part of the movements for social change.

Activities of Sakhi

Sakhi carried on several of our existing programmes and undertook new programes during March 2005-April 2006. Our project of networking elected women came to a close and we have started a new project on preparing manuals on gender planning, budgeting and auditing.
The following were our main activities during the reporting period:

1. **The power of knowledge**: The library, documentation center; information dissemination /publications.

2. **Building capacity/sharing knowledge**: Training programmes, courses, workshops and student placements.

3. **Gendering the governance process**: Networking elected women representatives, gender mainstreaming in local self Governments; Preparation of Manuals on gender planning, budgeting, auditing and Women’s component plan.

4. **Working with young women and men**: Project on Adolescent Reproductive Health and Reproductive Rights.

5. **In Solidarity and support**: Violence intervention programmes/Campaigns.

6. **Community based work**

7. **Networking for movement building/Advocacy**

A team of 15 staff carried out the programmes with support from several supporters, volunteers and friends.
One of the core activities of Sakhi is information collection and dissemination in local language and in easily accessible form to rural women. We have a library and documentation center through which we undertake these activities and bring out publications.

The library and documentation center is expanding with more books and resource materials. This year 517 books were added and now there are 4392 books, besides, a large collection of documents, journals, reports and paper clippings.

This year we focused on expanding our video collection, as this becomes very useful tool in grassroots level training programmes. Currently we have 62 CD’s of various documentaries related to gender and development issues.

The library membership is ever expanding. This year 32 new members joined and now a total of 220 persons are members of the library. More and more students are using the library, as even in the higher secondary school assignments related to gender issues are given. About 55 students from several colleges and universities from Indian and abroad had used the resource center of Sakhi in the last one year.

.................Students came to exposure visit to the resource center.

**Information dissemination.**

The focus of publishing local language materials continued this year too. Besides the newsletters, other publications like booklets and brochures on relevant issues were brought out.

- Newsletter

This year we published 4 issues of the newsletters.
The first one was a special issue on women workers and it was on the occasion of May Day. Articles on women in the unorganized sector, agriculture, women in fish processing, in cashew industry, issues of sales girls etc were highlighted. This newsletter also discussed the bill for unorganized sector workers which is discussed in the parliament and also the draft bill on Sexual harassment at workplace.

The next newsletter focused on Panchayati Raj in Kerala and the gender mainstreaming process. It had a review of 10 years of PRI, review of women component plan, formation of panchayat level vigilance cells etc. It also featured some model projects in selected local bodies in Kerala.

The next one was more of a general nature with several issues of importance-anti women approach of Muslim personnel law board, impact of pesticides on women’s health, present status of various sex racket cases in Kerala etc.

The fourth issue published in connection with March 8th, International women’s day focused on ”Women in decision making” .It raised issues of women in micro credit and featured profiles of some elected women representatives.

✦ Other publications

Posters, books and pamphlets for various campaigns were prepared and published.

The following were the materials published:

- 4 posters during the campaign on violence against women
- Brochures. We had to reprint the brochures on domestic violence, child sexual abuse and sexual harassment at workplace as the different campaigns have a wide reach out since we are now associating with several local bodies in Kerala. New brochures brought out this year were on relevant laws for women and on vigilance cells(jagratha samithis) at panchayat level.

We translated the bill on domestic violence passed in the parliament and disseminated this.
The following books were prepared and is in the press and will be out by end May

- Gender training manual
- Profiles of courage (elected women)
- Methodology to conduct a status of women study in local bodies (CapDeck)
- A resource book for elected women (CapDeck)
- 4 posters on gender and Panchayati Raj
- Booklets on Jagratha Samithi and CEDAW

**Adolescent training manual**

About 700 copies of the adolescent training manual (Blooming buds) published last year were sold out. It shows the interest and need of such a manual.

**International Book Fair**

Sakhi participated in the International Book Fair conducted by National Book Trust of India in Thiruvananthapuram. It was from November 5th to 13th. Along with our own publications we displayed books published by other organizations like Jagori, Sahaj, Anweshi, Jananeethi etc. The total amount by selling books that are published by Sakhi is Rs.5260/-. But we felt that the small conversations took place with the people were more valuable that the monetary benefit.

2

Building Capacity
Sharing Knowledge

Capacity building programmes has been one of our strengths when we initiated Sakhi. Our work with the marginalized communities equipped us to be very sensitive to the methodologies and tools in sharing knowledge and building capabilities. We have done a number of trainings, workshops and courses with an ever-expanding constituency and a continually evolving feminist training methodology.
**Training programmes, Workshops/Seminars**

**a) Course on Gender, Health and Development**
This is the fifth course we are organizing on the topic and it was held from 6th to 19th August at Animation center, Kovalam and there were 23 participants.

The main objectives of the course are: -

- To be well acquainted with concepts used in gender analysis
- To locate gender based inequalities within the context of other social inequalities and a critique of development paradigms.
- To understand the political economy of health from a historical and gender perspective.
- To be able to apply concepts and tools on gender, health and development to critique health information, health policies and programmes.
- To learn how to advocate for gender sensitive research, policies and programmes.
- To learn how to plan for gender sensitive health interventions

We are compiling the experiences of all the 5 courses we had conducted so far with the help of Dr. Aarthi Kelkar Khambete and the curriculum which was followed and this will be published soon.

**b) Gender training of trainers**
This year we organized a training of trainers on gender and it was held from 12th to 17th October, 2005. There were 23 participants. It was held at Animation center, Kovalam. The objective was to enhance the skill of trainers, to give conceptual clarity, create a core group of
gender trainers in Kerala and network them and also to mainstream
gender in the political discourses of the state.
The following were the topics dealt in the training: Status of women in
Kerala/ causes of problems; Concepts of Gender, Patriarchy, Gender equality &
equity, Feminism Masculinity/Femininity; Gender Division of Labour, Social Analysis
Framework, Communication Skills, Women and Development Gender in
Decentralization/WCP/Role of NGO’s in this, Violence against Women: Case Studies,
Important Laws/What we need to know, Sexuality, Leadership Training, Training
Methods, Women’s Organizations & Women’s Movements

It was an intensive process and participatory training methods were
used. The group gave a very positive feedback and wants follow up
processes

c) leadership training for women
Several leadership training programmes were held this year for women
leaders from Self Help groups

**SHG leaders:**
*May 10-14th, 2005: Pulluvilla- 23 participants*
*May 27th and 28th : Sewa ,Vilappilsala- 28 participants*
*November 8th and 9th : Madona Hall, Pulluvilla-23 participants*

These three seminars were in Trivandrum district and were conducted
to empower grassroots level leadership. These women were leaders of
Self help Groups (SHG) and they are mainly involved in savings and
credit. The seminar focused on making them realize that beyond the
economic empowerment, there are gender issues which require their
attention. It emphasized the need to network with other women’s
groups and take up issues which affect women

*May 21st &22nd 2005: Shikshak sadan, Cochi- 23 participants*
This was a state level meeting of leadership of the network.
July 23rd: YWCA hall, Kottayam- 42 participants. This seminar focused on the need to make women to stand united in the emerging context of globalization and violence of development. It emphasized the need of women to be active participants in the local level political processes.

March 13th & 14th 2006: Madona Social center, Pulluvila: This was a convention of 115 men and women and had the theme “Understanding Kerala’s development from a gender perspective” It also discussed the proposed harbour in the nearby village and what impact it will make ecologically.

Feb 22nd to 24th 2006: Kovalam animation center- 30 participants. This 3 day workshop was a follow up of the gender training.

d) Women’s day programme
This year, Women’s day was celebrated with several programmes like seminars, film festivals and dissemination of the bill on domestic violence.

March 1st, 2006: Convention: “Violence of development:” This was a very important convention in the context of the evolving scenario in Kerala, where the development debate is following a path of lack of any concern to the nature and environment. The poetess Ms. Sugathakumari inaugurated the workshop and Mr. C.R. Neelakandan and Tony Thomas, famous environment activists presented papers. Mr. Tony Thomas used a multi media presentation of the various problems, like sand minding, destruction of rivers, mountains, killing of wild animas, cultivation of ganja and smuggling of sandalwood, all of
which leads to forests being denuded. There were 310 Participants in this programme.
On March 4th, Saturday, we organized a film festival which was well attended too. The films that were screened are: “Dvitheeya Paksha” (Bangali, Ananya Chatergee, 96 minutes), “Unkalil Oruthi” (Tamil, R.Revathy,36 minutes), “The Shels” (Malayalam, Shimna, 32 minutes), “Sancharam” (Malayalam, Liji Pulleppally, 107 minutes), “Cast ‘e’ away” (English, 25 minutes), “She Writes” (Tamil, Anjali Monteiro, 55 minutes), “Monsoon Wedding” (English, Meera Nair, 100 minutes).

Women of Kerala Stree Vedi decided to celebrate March 8th and not to have rallies etc. Instead, we all got together in a park and had cultural programmes put up by various groups
In the following week, there were seminars in the villages
March 15th: Kunnathukal gram panchayt: Participants 65
March 16th to 18th: Kollayil - Participants 56
March 20-22nd SNDP hall, Dhanuvachapuram- Participants 51
March 27 to 29th: Malayilkada - Participants 42

In these seminars, the themes were ‘Women and violence of development’.

**e) Occasional seminar on current issues**

**April 9th 2005: KGMOA Hall:** This one day colloquium was on the

**New challenges for women in Kerala.** 48 persons participated. The sex racket cases, dowry murders, difficulties faced in the court proceedings, loopholes in the law, issues involved in the micro credit etc were discussed. Some women shared their experiences with banks and financial institutions and how gender insensitive the systems are.

December 30th 2005: A gathering of friends of Sakhi was organized to reflect on the work of the past year and to welcome the new year. This
was a time of solidarity and friendship and some partying too. 75 Participants attended

16th Feb, 2006: AICUF center, Trivandrum: One day seminar: 74 Participants; the topic was impact of globalization and today’s economic crisis in Kerala. In the context of increasing suicides in Kerala, especially of farmers, the need to analyze how globalization is impacting on the poor and especially women was achieved through this seminar

**f) Study group meetings** were held at Sakhi on the first Saturday of every month. We invited authors of certain books and had discussion on the book or had new feminist films screened. As a starting session, we had Dr.J.Devika who has translated and edited a book called “Her-Self: Gender and early writing of malayalee women’ sharing with us the insights and thoughts from the book. This session was held on 2nd July. The 2nd session was also held at Sakhi on 6th August. Dr.Praveena Kodoth shared with us theoretical and conceptual aspects from her study on dowry and property rights.

We had the documentary film show “She Writes” and discussion on September 3rd, 2005.

Another study group meeting on ‘feminist spirituality’ had on February, 2006. The speakers were Dianne and friends from San Francisco.

**g) Adolescent Training of trainers: October 18th to 22nd, 2005**

21 persons from various organizations in Kerala participated in the five-day programme, which was conducted from October 18th to 22nd, 2005 at Kovalam Animation Centre.

**h) As resource persons on gender training to other groups**

Aleyamma Vijayan as a key resource person organized a training of trainers for 23 staff of various NGO’s under the IC/NGO programme . It was a 17-day training, in 5 different modules in intervals.

Sakhi along with SEWA also undertook gender sensitization of partners in the Capdeck project of the Panchayati Raj.

**j) International women’s health meeting (IWHM process)**

Sakhi give leadership to the process in Kerala and organized the health activists in Kerala to participate in the south Zone meeting held at Banglore in April 2005 and later on also mobilized participation for the IWHM held at Delhi.

This preparation activity and the process has helped to mobilize a group of NGO’s and doctors who are interested in women’s health issues to come together and we have planed a two day workshop on 5th and 6th of May 2006 on “Women’s health in Kerala-Issues and challenges”. The specific issues and concerns of women’s sexual and reproductive rights in the context of Kerala will be high lighted and focused in this programme.

Through the above training programmes we have reached out to more than 700 people.
Gendering Governance

Our involvement with the local self governments started with the close association with the decentralization programmes initiated by the state government in Kerala in 1996. This innovative process offered an opportunity to mainstream gender in the political discourse in Kerala and to build capacities of women who were elected to represent people. The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments brought many women into the social and political realm. We perceived this as our opportunity and responsibility, to build the capacity of these women to critique the ongoing development from a gender perspective and be proactive to bring about a gender just society in whichever party they belong to.

This process of networking of elected women also brought out the reality that even when women get empowered to a certain degree when they are in power, due to rotation of seats, they soon slide back to their former lives and loose the opportunity to grow and be proactive.

1. Networking Elected Women:

The process of networking elected women representatives continued in the reporting period. This was ongoing project in collaboration with the Singamma Srinivas Foundation (SSF), Bangalore and with three other partners from the four southern states in India. The objective of Sakhi in this phase of the project was to create a forum of elected women for strengthening the gender equality in society, to enable women to voice their ideas, concerns and priorities in the local panchayat meetings.
with efficiency, to use the strength of women collectives to improve gender relations in family and society.

In second phase we extended the networking to the neighboring district Kollam. Before launching the second phase we convened the advisory committee along with a few active network members to discuss the needs and priorities of the next phase of the programme. We restarted the networking process after a long break. Even if we try to ensure the participation of EWR’s in all other programmes conducted by Sakhi, the long interval of the project from first phase to second phase created some problems.

While the project was coming to an end, we wanted to sustain the process through enhancing the capabilities of elected women as gender trainers. Hence two residential training of trainers was conducted for elected women

- **Residential Training Programmes for Elected women representatives**

  This programme was in response to a long felt need to train selected EWR’s to be gender trainers. Two batches of EWR’s selected from Kollam and Trivandrum had separate three days session, one in May, 2005 and another in July 2005. A total of 45 EWR’s thus got trained.

  The topics covered were the following

  *Status of Women in Kerala; Gender analysis; Practical and strategic gender needs; How to prepare a gender sensitive plan and budget; Women’s Component Plan: Empowerment of women through SHG’s; importance of Vigilance cells etc. A study visit to a neighboring gram panchyat was undertaken which demonstrated the possibilities of integration with centrally sponsored schemes.*
This process was very much appreciated as the EWR’s capacity as trainers to help and support the networking process of new members can lead to significant impact. Moreover the confidence they have gained and the analytical skills being developed will also help their abilities as women political actors in their own parties

- **One day seminar of former EWR’s, to review election**

This programme was conducted on Oct.28th (soon after elections to local bodies in Kerala) with the members of the network to review and share their experiences in the process of selection of candidates, election campaigns and in contesting. 40 EWR’s took part. Most of them had contested but only one person was elected. The sharing revealed the pains experienced by many from their own parties after their term was over and their struggles to survive that. Ms.Suman Kolhar (SSF) who had come to participate in a conference in Trivandrum at that time participated in the meeting and addressed the gathering. The members generally welcome the idea of Suman that women should stay and find a space in politics and create a difference.

- **One day seminar with Newly elected members and former network members**

On Nov 26, 2005, a historic meeting of the newly elected members took place in which 300 elected women from Trivandrum district took part.

The new members were eager to learn how they can be efficient political actors at the local body level and keenly listened to all the talks. Ms. Sugatha kumari, former chair person of the women’s
commission chaired the gathering and addressed the EWR’s. Ms.Aleyamma Vijayan and Mr. Madan Mohan explained the decentralized planning process and the possibilities of action through the Local Self Governments. Some of the former network members shared the advantage of being in the network.

In this period we collected secondary data related to the Panchayati Raj institutions. Especially we collected data on the gender related programmes taking place in panchayats, data on gender budgeting etc. We attended and observed a number of gramasabhas and panchayat committees. Two Inter-Agency meetings took place during this period.

In this period the elected women representatives participated in all the campaigns and programmes that were organized by Sakhi. For example the programmes that we conducted as part of the women’s day celebration, the campaign for water, the campaign against violence against women etc.

We have completed writing the profile of 17 elected women members. This project came to end in September, 2005.

2. Empowering Local Self Government Institutions by mainstreaming Gender in Governance

The objective of the process was to strengthen Panchayati Raj through mainstreaming gender in the planning process. This was expected to be achieved through a process of gender sensitization at wider level and also by engendering the planning process at the local level. The project started in June 2004 and in the first phase the 4
gram panchayats were identified and necessary personnel were selected and trained.

The study and the process of gender sensitization was carried out in the panchayats of Vilayur in Palakad district, Olavannna in Kozhikode district, Kollayil in Trivandrum district and Alappad in Kollam district.

The process of working with the 4 panchayats which are different in terms of geography, resources, political affiliations, skills etc was very challenging and the results also vary in each LSG. The strategy of working through the selected core group of six women from each of the LSG’s worked very well. It kept the process very grounded in local realities and offered sustainability.

The gender mainstreaming process was achieved though undertaking the study of the status of women, a gender analysis of institutions, a review of WCP process and Self help groups and then based on that, to move to the next step of gender planning. The entire process was also geared to gender sensitizing the functionaries and general population. The panchayath board was assisted in incorporating gender into its entire planning and project formulation.

The study of status of women was an extensive process of gender sensitization, not only to the panchayat committee, but also to the CBO’s, and experts who helped in designing the questionnaire and extended other support. The report was printed and disseminated through the special gramasabha held in 2 panchayats. (Vilayr and Olavanna) The process was delayed in Kollayil due to political
instability in the board. The study was not undertaken in Alappad due to the natural calamity.

Women’s active and creative participation in the special gramsabha helped in bringing up issues which were never before addressed in grama sabha. In Vilayur, a follow up review meeting could be held of with the board and an attempt was made to link up the suggestions that came up in the grama sabha and utilization of WCP for the past 10 years. Social audit again brought together the board, officials of transferred institutions and CDS. The discussions clearly revealed that the board had become sensitive to gender issues. They were keen about setting up of jagratha samithy and having life-skill education classes for adolescents and youth and strengthening of ADS and CDS bodies. The President talked in detail about enhancing the status of women; reduce gender inequality and women becoming equal partners in Panchayati Raj. Following the suggestion of the board, we facilitated a Training of trainers (TOT) workshop for anganwadi teachers on how to facilitate life-skill education for adolescents and the methods of having friendly interaction with adolescents.

As water-shortage was the main issue raised by women groups engaged in agriculture, we arranged an exposure trip for them to visit places where organic farming was done. It was an exciting journey for women who were going on such a trip for the first time. Women from Harita Mitram of Kollayil were also taken on a similar tour to learn about organic farming. The women, despite scarcity of land of their own are engaged in organic farming and the propagation of
organic farming successfully. The exposure visit was a learning experience for them.

Through focused group discussions (FGD), we have reached certain untouched and marginalized sections of the community. To cite an instance, in one of the FGD’s, a group of Muslim women who participated had never attended a meeting and this was for the first time in their lives that they participated in a meeting and crossed the road in their own village!

There were several cases of violence towards women which came up which we could deal with counseling; for instance there was a case in which a woman who was being physically and mentally harassed by her husband stopped alcoholism after being spoken to and taken for de addiction treatment. He did not have to receive the treatment but through the intervention, he stopped alcoholism!

This process of gender mainstreaming has been a source of learning and feeds into the next project we are doing with the Department of Local self government on preparation of guidelines and manuals for strengthening the gender and development initiative.

**Methodology:**

The main methods used in gender mainstreaming were the following:

- Equip a core team of young women from the panchayat
- Conduct study of status of women using participatory methods and through wider consultation
- Gender analysis of transferred institution
- Study of community based organizations (CBO’s)
- Study and review of the self help groups (SHG’s)
- Review of Women’s component plan (WCP) of previous years
- Assessment of transferred institutions of its gender friendliness
➢ **Special gramsabaha** to disseminate the report of the status study
➢ **Gender sensitization** of all sections of society through the various process of the study and gender analysis
➢ **Capacity building of women leaders** (ADS/CDS) and exposure trips/exchange visits

The process of gender mainstreaming requires time and constant interaction and wider gender sensitization. The strong patriarchal power dynamics in political parties is the formidable force to contend with. Even the political decentralization, the importance of gram sabha as a constitutional body etc is not taken seriously by political parties and there have not been serious efforts to involve party based youth or women’s organizations to get involved.

At each Local government level, the dynamics is influenced by the capability of the elected leadership, their position within parties, the presence of strong, committed and motivated persons in the panchayat etc. Elected Women seems to be at a disadvantage, as they cannot build on their experience due to rotation of reserved seats. Most of the elected members seem to lack exposure and training. Just one centralized training facility cannot meet the demands and needs of elected men and women.

A holistic perspective of development is lacking and such debates also do not take place. In many LSG’s, resource mapping is done but this is not used in planning. The vision and systems of planning need to be revamped

Even after 10 years of decentralized planning, the LSG’s do not have a data base of the entire local body and filing system, archives etc are poorly maintained. Although staff devolution has taken place, it is not
sufficient and much more attention has to be paid to the administration of LSG’s

The process of gender mainstreaming is possible, if focused intervention is made and sufficient exposure and capacity building is undertaken. There is need to build up systems and support mechanisms at each local body level to carry on the process and the elected women representatives can become the key actors. There is also the need to move from addressing practical needs to strategic interests and this needs methodologies to be developed and disseminated.

Post tsunami work in Alappad

In Alappad, Sakhi was involved in mainstreaming gender in Panchayati Raj as part of the above project when Tsunmai struck. As mentioned in the last report, our local animators immediately responded by being available to help through trauma counseling and to help women who lost children during the calamity.

The resource center planned for Alappad is under construction and it is hoped to start the new center by July. There will be an anganwadi at the ground floor and a resource center for women at the first floor. It will have all facilities for a variety of activities for women. This project is supported by SDC/CapDeck.

3. Strengthening the gender and development/ Women Component Plan of LSG’s and preparing gender planning, budgeting and auditing manuals; Capacity building

This is a project undertaken with support from the Dept of Local Self Government, Government of Kerala, under the Decentralization
Support Programme (DSP). This was initiated from March 2005 and will be complete by July 2006.

The following activities were undertaken to achieve the objectives of the project:

- A literature review of women in development planning in Kerala and the review of Women’s component plan (WCP).
- Analysis of studies on status of women conducted by 5 panchayats (Stree Padhavi Padhanom). 5 status study reports were analyzed and report prepared.
- Critical examination of the WCP of seven selected LSGIs (three village Panchayats, one Block 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. This was done and a report prepared.
- Validation workshops were conducted on the above reports.

**Training component**

- One national expert was identified to train State level Master Trainers.
- Sixteen (16) Master Trainers from Government Departments/NGOs/Training Institutions/Academic Institutions/Activists/Practitioners were identified.
- Training of Master Trainers: Initially a 2 day consultation (Nov 7-9, 2005) to identify training needs were held and then a 5 day training of master trainers (Feb 2-9th, 2006) was conducted with the help of the national expert.
- Preparation of draft manuals on WCP, gender planning, gender budgeting and gender auditing is competed. This is send for peer review and it will be reworked and finalized with the inputs and suggestions.
- Action research on the draft manuals is undertaken in seven local bodies to verify the methodology and finalize the manuals.
- Two papers were presented at the International congress organized by AKG center and the Institute of social sciences.
Action research on the above manuals in the following 7 LSGI’s is going on

1. Cochin Corporation, 2. Jilla Panchayat, Alapuzha
3. Nedumangad Municipality, Thiruvananthpuram
5. Vilayoor gram panchayat, Palakkad
6. Panamaram Gram panchayat, Wyand
7. Alappad Gram panchayat, Kollam dt

- Tools are being developed for gender sensitive planning, budgeting and auditing in the selected LSGIs
- Capacity building of selected facilitators (14) and supporters was done. They are engaged for 4 months starting from March
- Investigators are selected and they were given training. Focus group discussions using the facilitators and investigators has started
- The LSG’s were helped to draft shelf of projects in the time of the last plan preparation
- Training Modules and Handbook for mainstreaming gender and strengthening WCP is under preparation
- Besides, responding to local demands, camps for children are carried out in Panamaram, Vilayoor and Alappad. 30 Children from the tribal communities in Panamaram were brought to Trivandrum for a study tour. They were accompanied by 2 panchayat members, CDS president and the 2 facilitators. 3 camps of 3 days duration each will be conducted at Alapapd from 24th April. One camp is completed at Vilayoor and the children have decided to form a teen club in the panchayat.
4

Working with young People

Work with men and masculinities

The booklet on body awareness for boys; The work which started in the last financial year was completed and this is very much used now in camps and training sessions. Another booklet exploring the formation of masculinities is under preparation.

Work with young women-assist ongoing programmes of local bodies

The Vizhinjam panchayat was assisted to start a resource centre for young women and two teen clubs are functioning here. One is of school going children and another of drop outs. The informal sessions once in a week is really appreciated by the children and their parents. The children from the teen clubs were taken for a study tour

Training of trainers on life skill education is carried out for anaganwadi workers in the panchayats we work and also one such training was conducted at the state level

5

In Solidarity and support: Violence intervention programmes/Campaigns

Violence intervention through legal aid

During this year we offered legal aid to 36 women, who were poor and could not afford to go to court. Most of them are dowry related and domestic violence cases. Few other women were directed to relevant places like women’s cells of police, state women’s commission etc.
Out of these, we filed 22 cases before the Family court Trivandrum and 6 cases before the Family court Nedumangadu. We morally and financially supported a lady to contest a case before the Honorable High Court of Kerala. Another 9 cases are pending before the court which we had filed earlier. From the fore said cases 3 couples reunited and residing together. After 4 months monitoring those cases were closed.

In 8 cases final verdict was in favour of us. The final verdict of one petition for the custody of the child was against our client and the permanent custody of the child was given to the father, who is drunkard and keeping another wife and child. Aggrieved by this order we have helped the woman to approach the Honorable High Court of Kerala.

In several cases court allowed the petitioners to recover maintenance, compensation, value of gold ornaments misappropriated by the husband etc from the opposite party. But we find it very difficult to realize the sum awarded from the opposite party due to the lack of property and income. Only in rarest and rare cases we are able to recover money by way of salary attachment and attachment of property. One of our clients, who is working with SEWA could recover the maintenance through attachment and sale of the property of the respondent.

In all the contesting cases we had to follow all the procedural formalities in the traditional way and it would take years for a better result. In the meantime the victims will get only a meager amount as interim alimony and that will also once in three or four months. So some of our clients loose interest in litigation after a case is filed, due to the long delay. So in the light of past experiences we are now vigilant and we will file cases before the court only after revealing the entire consequences and the pain in conducting a case.

As part of the violence intervention programme our members personally went to the police station and directly contacted the police personals to help the aggrieved women. With our initiatives some of the criminal cases were registered. During this time also we could not take up some cases due to inadequate legal merit and non-availability of documents. Most of our women are unaware of the transactions of their own property made by the male member of the family. Without getting adequate data and document we cant proceed with civil cases involving property issues.
Sexual harassment at Workplace

This year we were approached by the Sree Chitra Medical center for Health sciences and the Hindustan Latex a public limited company, to conduct classes on Sexual harassment at workplace for their employees. 4 classes were held at the Sri Chitra Medical center and altogether about 350 employees participated. At Hindustan Latex, it was organised as one day seminars and 3 such seminars were held where about 300 employees actively participated.

Campaigns; International Campaign on Violence against women

This year, the campaign focused on burden of triple work of women and how it prevents women’s participation in public space; the harassment during travel and a poster on rights of children.

The inauguration of the programme was on 25\textsuperscript{th} November with poster exhibition and paying homage to women who died in violence in the previous year. After that there was a rally and public meeting.

From 27\textsuperscript{th} onwards, poster exhibition was taken to about 10 villages where meetings were organized. On 3\textsuperscript{rd} December, Bhopal day was observed, in association with SEWA Kerala, and Thanal, an NGO. On December 6\textsuperscript{th}, a round table was organized with the minister for transport, the commissioner and various trade union leaders on the harassment faced by women while traveling. There was a concluding seminar on 10\textsuperscript{th} Dec, the Human Rights day.

The campaigning programmes were organized in other districts like Wyanad, Kottayam, Alappuzha etc and Sakhi send the posters and materials and networked with various NGO’s.
Community based work

All our activities are moulded and shaped by our interaction at the grassroots level, like the interactions at the many panchayats we work and also in some coastal villages through the women and children

**Pulluvila Sthree Aikya Vedi (Women’s Joint forum at Pulluvilla)**

This is a forum of several small women's groups including some self help groups and the forum was formed to act on issues affecting women in the area. Following are some of the activities undertaken by the forum:-

The forum is very active in cases of atrocities against women and girls in the area. They assist victims emotionally and to file cases, to arrange shelter etc. In Karmkulam when a 10 year old girl was sexually abused the Sthree Aikya Vedi members interacted with other women in the area and took up the issue. Besides filing a complaint to the police, they organized protest march to raise public awareness regarding the issue of child sexual abuse. More than 100 women and children participated. Posters were put up through out the village. When the protest of the women became very strong, the police arrested the guilty person but he was bailed out later.

Sthree Aikya Vedi is also involved in many domestic violence issues.

One of the major events was Campaign undertaken by the group against Container Transshipment Port planned at Vizhinjam. The Vizhinjam- Poovar Coastal protection committee along with Sthree Aikya Vedi group of women became active to campaign against coming of the port. The main fears were regarding the environmental impact, displacement of traditional fishing activities and of the community.

A group of students came from Mahindra College, Pune and taught the women in the area candle making and block printing also.

Karimkulam Vanitha Cooperative Society also is active and Mercy Alexander assists both these organizations.

In Vizhinajm, another fishing village, the women's groups are also active and vigilant against atrocities on women and extends all support to any women who need their assistance. But often they have to across strong opposition from local church and other patriarchal forces.
Networking for movement building/ Collaboration

Networking with organizations working on similar issues

In the gender training of trainers, violence campaign and all other activities, which Sakhi is undertaking, networking becomes an important concern. The main idea is to integrate gender concerns and perspectives in the work of various NGO’s in Kerala.

The networking also extends to the national level. Sakhi is part of the national network of autonomous groups, the national processes on women’s health concerns, the Indian association of women’s studies etc. In most of these forums, Sakhi is the only women’s group who represents Kerala and we want to change this pattern and attempting to bring more young women’s leadership.

Sakhi is also a member of Kerala Streevedi, which is a network of women’s groups in the state. The forum has been active in taking up several issues which affect women in Kerala and able to mainstream the gender discourse in the state.

The Indian Association of women’s studies

Sakhi as a focal point of gender concerns in the state also gave leadership to facilitate participation of some young women activists to participate in the national conference of the Indian association of women’s studies (IAWS). This has created enthusiasm and closer interaction among academics and activists. Sakhi is planning a 2 day state level workshop on women’s studies in Kerala, which we hope will create a group interested in women’s studies in Kerala. The aim is to gender the education process in the state and inform the public and academic community on issues of gender justice.
The team at Sakhi

Sakhi is registered as a charitable trust and the three member trust board administers the policy and financial matters.

At present we are 9 full time staff members and a project team of 6 persons. Regular staff meetings are held once a month to plan and monitor the work. As part of the capacity building of the staff members they have participated in various seminars, workshops and training programmes. The staff also went on a tour to Pondicherry in March.

Following are the staff members:

- Aleyamma Vijayan - Coordinator and in charge of the training programmes
- Mercy Alexander: community work; Violence intervention programmes along with Adv. Geenakuamri (Consultant)
- Remadevi: In charge of Library and documentation center
- Jayasree S.: Gender and governance
- Daya J.: Gender and governance
- Rejitha: Publications officer
- Dr. Seema Bhaskaran: Gender and governance
- Mini Rajkumar: Administrative officer
- Joseph Xavier: Financial officer

Besides the above-mentioned responsibilities, most of the staff is equipped as gender trainers and to conduct adolescent life skill education.
Adv. Geena Kumari - Legal consultant

The Decentralization support Project (DSP) assisted project staff are

C.S. Chandrika
Seena K.M.
Sreedevi
Rekharaj
Nandini

Besides these five, Jayasree s and Daya J from Sakhi core team are also working in this project now

Saraswathi offers the secretarial assistance and Salomi is the office assistant

In the reporting period, we had several part time project staff at the various panchayats working as facilitators, investigators and volunteers. It is their cooperation and hard work which made many of the programmes a success.

Several of our friends and sister organizations have always collaborated and supported us in all our programmes and activities.

Meetings/workshops attended by Sakhi staff

April 1-3 IWHM prep.meeting in Banglore South Zone
May 1 – 7 IAWS meeting in GOA
June 1 – 4 NCC meeting in Mumbai
Silver Jubily celebration of FAOW
Keral Padana Kongress at AKG Centre
Seminar at MG university-paper presentation
Decade of decentralization-Issues and Options (workshop

Talks/Sessions conducted by us

7th March Kothamangalam Athnasious college
8th  Kanjirapallay, Malanadu development society-women’s day
13th  Kadinamkulam -Women’s day celebrations-Changing
development scenario-a gender perspective
17th  CDS class for ISS Hague &CDSS course participants on
gender based violence and coping strategies
15th April  Sree chitra- Sexual Harassment at workplace
29th  ”
29th May  meeting of Indian association of Gynecologists-Panelist
14th July  Swaraj India - talk on status of women in Kerala
25th July  Thalassery social service society- class
27th July  Hindustan Latex limited- Sexual Harassment at workplace
28th January, 2006 CRI meeting in Ernakulam
28th February Paper presented at Kozhikode university-dept. of
philosophy; “Feminism-contemporary challenges”

Interns at Sakhi
Melanie
.............and............. From Kalady Sanskrit College

Visitors

Caroline Wilson-Researcher- study on self-medication
Anna Lindburg
Cornelie Quist
Janet Lawry and a group of students
Students from St.Joseph’s college, Irinjalakkuda
Group of women from Tezpur Mahila Samithi
United Mahindra School-Pune
Swedish students
TISS students
Nasik-school of Social work students
Population Council Students
Mala MSW College Students
Conclusion

We have tried our best to approach concerns, issues and problems in an integrated manner and with a human rights and gender perspective. This has often resulted in conflict with a patriarchal forces, with extreme right and extreme left!

Since the government is organizing the women under micro credit initiatives in a large way with the aim of for poverty eradication, there is an awakening in women and a great potential to orient them beyond just micro credit to a more gender sensitive and conscious citizens. This is a big challenge.

The various opportunities we had in the last few years to work on the gender and governance issues has strengthened our capacity to be involved in the process and to advocate for gender based planning and budgeting initiatives. We have been able to interact with a large number of women in politics and have realized how deep the patriarchal holds in society which sees these women as tools and prevent their full blossoming as capable women leaders. Besides capacity building programmes for women, it also calls for awareness building activities among men. Work with men assumes greater significance in the context of various issues facing women like violence and atrocities at home, while traveling and in the workplaces.

We are grateful to all our friends, supporters and well wishers. We especially thank Dr.Sundari Ravindran, who is a member of our board of trustees, Ms.kalyani Menon of Jagori,Delhi, Dr.L.C.Jain and Dr. Devaki Jain, Ms.Nalini Nayak, Mr.A.J.Vijayan, Mr.K.C.Santhoshkumar, Dr.K.Saradamoni, Dr.Manju Nair, Mr.N Jagajeeven, Dr.Neena Joseph, Ms. Parvathi Devi, Ms. Aarthise Khambete and many others who
were always available to support us, give us new ideas and challenge us if and when needed.

We also salute the many women from the communities where we work whose courage and steadfastness in the face of very adverse circumstances has strengthened our resolve to carry on in spite of criticisms and vicious attacks.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to FORD foundation, Delhi, to Singamma Srinivas Foundation, Bangalore, the SDC/CapDeck programme and DSP programme of department of Local self government, Government of Kerala. Thank you for the trust placed on us and for the true spirit of partnership which we enjoyed from each of our funding partners.

Janet Lawry from Austin college, Texas raises funds from students during V day and contributes a sum towards our violence intervention programmes. Ms.Anna Lindburg raised some funds for the education programmes of children of cashew workers. Ms.Cornelie Quest, Vinvis supported the Stree Aikya Vedi at Pulluvila. We are grateful to all of them and the amount though small has been decisive in the life of many poor women. We also thank all our friends and benefactors for their contributions and donations.

We also like to place on record the valuable services of our auditor Mr. Thomas Mathew, our bankers, the Central Bank of India and M/s tech-vendors who give us technical assistance and Word pecker and Caxton press for the various printing jobs undertaken and efficiently executed.