

# Anweshi Women's Counselling Centre

## CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR PROMOTING LEADERSHIP AND GENDER RESPONSIVE APPROACH

### REPORT ON 5-DAY TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR RESOURCE GROUP MEMBERS

25TH TO 29TH AUGUST, 2014  
NAVAJYOTHIS RENEWAL CENTRE  
ERANJIPALAM, KOZHIKODE

Supported by

**National Mission for Empowerment of Women**



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## CONTEXT

“Recognizing that the achievement and maintenance of peace and security are a precondition for economic and social progress, women are increasingly establishing themselves as central actors in a variety of capacities in the movement of humanity for peace. Their full participation in decision-making, conflict prevention and resolution and all other peace initiatives is essential to the realization of lasting peace.”

### **- The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Mission Statement no. 23)**

Kerala, with its unique approach to development has proven that even an economically poor state could transform the lives of its people and attain high levels of social development. Moreover, women have played a major role in the success of “Kerala Model of Development” especially in the areas of health and education. Kerala boasts of high human development and gender development leading to women empowerment in contrast with their counterparts from other states. However, increasing incidents of violence against women inside family; rape, dowry deaths, and harassments at public places are some pestering issues faced by women in Kerala. Even though government and voluntary agencies are playing an important role in addressing the issue, the rate of crimes against women is still increasing. Every single day there are at least two to three such incidents which are reported in the newspaper.

In this context, it is extremely important to recognize the importance of women’s efforts and contribution in the process of development. Organizing women at grassroots level and adopting a collective approach in decision making and problem solving can help in addressing concerns of women in a great manner. Anweshi’s “Sound Alert” project aims to concentrate on this approach by creating women’s Resource groups at each Panchayat in Kozhikode district, which can play an important role in addressing women’s concerns in a collective manner. For this purpose, a 5-day capacity building programme starting from 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> August 2014 was organized for representatives from the selected panchayats of Kozhikode district.

# REPORT

**Day 1(25-8-14)**

## **Introduction**

The five-day training program titled “Capacity Building Programme for Resource Group Members” was held at Navajyothis Renewal Centre located in Kozhikode city area for easy accessibility to all participants and resource persons. There were representatives from all selected panchayats. Around 31 resource group members participated in the training program and all of them commuted on a daily basis to the training centre.



**First session: Welcome, Inauguration and Ice Breaking Session**

**Moderator: Sreeja P.**

The session started with a warm welcome by the co-ordinator of the project, Ms. Sreeja P who gave a brief introduction about the purpose of the project and the reason behind the training program. She later introduced Anweshi’s project head Ms. K. Ajitha to the participants who were extremely excited to see her. She started her speech by giving a background information about Anweshi and told that how stereotype notions of women and men exist in the society. She started by quoting Manu Smriti”

**“She (the woman) is protected by her father in her childhood and by her husband in her youth. She is protected by her son in her old age. A woman does not deserve to be independent.”**

She told that women’s upbringing is always suppressed as compared to men who grow naturally. It can often be observed that unconsciously we try to impose things or rules on young girls. She expressed the need to view things from a women’s point of view. In a society like ours, women are expected to suffer silently even when her husband beats and if she tries to retaliate, she is termed as immoral. When Anweshi started its activity 20 years, back it was termed as a “Home Breaker”. That was a time when violence against women especially inside the four walls was termed as a personal problem. It was to address this issue and to convey to the masses that VAW (Violence against Women) within home is a social problem and a political issue, Anweshi was established. Women approach Anweshi because they feel secure and confident of getting justice. She finally added that the participants belonged to the interior areas of Kozhikode district and so whenever they face an issue Anweshi will not be able to reach there every time. Hence, the training programme has been organized to develop their skill and equip them with necessary knowledge to deal with problems themselves and in a collective manner.

After the inauguration, an activity of introduction was held which was also participated by Anweshi staff members. Participants were encouraged to give their name, area/panchayat to which they belonged and past experience in the area of women empowerment.

### **Key observations**

- Almost all members were either part of Kudumbasree or the CDS, or held positions in panchayat, Anganwadi workers, Asha workers etc.
- Many of them also being a part of the MNREGA scheme had taken leave from their paid employment to attend the training programme.
- All of them shared that they were keen to attend the training program and be a part of Anweshi’s activities.

- Few of them shared their experiences of how they helped women who faced problems inspite of stiff opposition from their families and even politicians.
- Their experiences showed how even government machineries like police which are there to help women often do not tend to do enough for them.
- According to them alcoholism is one of the grave issue affecting women and a family.
- One of the participants expressed that often women face problems because they do not stand united when faced with a problem. Instead of supporting the victim many times, women accuse her of being the reason behind the problem.

## **Session 2**

### **Topic: Laws related to Domestic Violence**

#### **Resource Person: Ashraf Kavil (Calicut district Probation Officer)**

The session started with a brief introduction on the PWDVAct (Protection of women from Domestic Violence) 2005, and its basic provisions. Most of the participants informed that they had heard about the law but were not aware of the provisions in it. He started with the definition of violence and the various types of violence against women. Some of the participants shared that they were not aware of the fact that any act of mental violence in the form of verbal or emotional ill-treatment can also termed as harassment. He also briefed on the definition of the victim as well as the perpetrator. He added that if any case of violence against women happens, anyone could approach service providers, probationary officers, bhoomika centres as well as police stations to register a complaint. Anweshi, which is one such service provider in Kozhikode district, has been dealing with such cases since a long time. He further detailed on the roles and responsibilities of the district probation officer and informed that all 14 districts have a probation officer.

According to him, there are many laws aimed at protecting women but for effective implementation, women have to co-operate. Many a time even after an episode of acute violence, the victim/women later withdraws her complaint after reconciliation with the perpetrator who is often her husband. Even after repeated episodes of violence the women/victims tends to reunite with the perpetrator. He then asked the participants if any of them did not experience any act of

violence in their lives to which only two raised hands. In other words, it was evident that almost all women are subjected to some form of violence in the lives and it should be our duty to stand up against any act of violence.

## **Day 2 (26-8-14)**

### **Session 1**

#### **Topic: Personality Development**

##### **Resource Person: Geeta (Social Worker, Sakhi)**

Ms. Geeta started the session with a group folk song, which made the participants extremely lively. She then asked the participants to answer the question “Who am I? one by one. Most of them responded by giving their name or even remained silent. However, very few told that they were women. She informed that it is important to realize that “I am a woman” and that we should be proud of it. Next, they were told to write about five positives and five negatives about their character in a piece of paper. Most of them were able to write negatives quickly but were not able to write positives about them. However, when further discussions took place many of the participants realized that they had many more good qualities in them. Ms Geeta specified that it is crucial to be more aware about oneself, reflect upon the self more first, and then look at others.

#### **Topic: Communication**

Communication is an essential component for developing interpersonal skills and conflict resolution. Moreover, being resource group persons, who have a major role in managing resource groups and dealing cases effective communication skill is necessary. Ms Geeta informed the participants about the concept “ABC”, in other words good communication should be attractive, brief and creative in nature. Good communication is a prerequisite to a good relation and that there should be mutual respect. She then detailed about the concept of “Transactional Analysis” where the three stages of ego is reflected when we deal with another person. Often when we deal with the other person “child ego” or the “parent ego” takes over, but it is important to communicate with the “adult ego” which will help to make mature decisions. Hence, when we deal with a group these things should be considered. The next activity was a group exercise

where in the participants were told to go outside and pick two favorite objects. Two chairs were placed back to back where participants were told to place the objects in each of the chair. Two of the participants were told to make something out of those objects after sitting facing their backs. After making, something both the participants were told to describe it to the other person. It was clear that both of them were not able to communicate properly and the exercise clearly pointed out the fact that if proper communication does not take place, it could lead to misunderstandings.

## **Session 2**

### **Topic: Leadership**

#### **Resource Person: Geeta (Social Worker, Sakhi)**

The session began with a group song that was participated by all the participants. All the participants were encouraged to share their desired leader at local level, district level, state level and at national level. They were told to write it in paper and read it aloud. Then Ms. Geeta explained the concept of “Leader”. She then told the participants to reflect upon whether their chosen leaders fit in the purview of the definition. She then covered the types of leadership wherein she also mentioned the leadership skills of Ms. Medha Patkar. Excellent leaders should have qualities like awareness, decision-making skills, ability to face challenges, clarity etc. Next, the participants were told to stand up for a minute and sit down when they felt that one minute was over. Most of them sat down before a minute was over apart from one. Ms. Geeta pointed out that a good leader should also know the value of time.

## **Day 3 (27-8-14)**

### **Session 1**

#### **Topic: Gender based violence**

#### **Resource Person: Ms. Geeta (Social Worker, Sakhi)**

Ms. Geeta started the session with the quote previously mentioned by Ms. Ajitha from the Manu Smriti

**“She (the woman) is protected by her father in her childhood and by her husband in her youth. She is protected by her son in her old age. A woman does not deserve to be independent.”**

She began that since time immemorial ancient scriptures have written that women are only to be protected. Hence, woman was always considered a responsibility rather than a contributor to the family. She then asked the participants about the concept gender. However, no one was able to respond to it. Ms Geeta responded that “Gender refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex where as sex refers to a person’s biological status and is typically categorized as male, female, or intersex”. She then told the participants to write good qualities that a man and a woman should possess. After each participant read out their papers, Ms.Geeta responded that the mentioned qualities both man as well as a woman should possess.

Often in our daily lives, we can point out clear disparity in roles and responsibilities for man and woman. For e.g. a teachers job is considered ideal for a woman where as a drivers job is considered ideal for a man. Even when we buy gifts for small boys and girls there is a clear distinction. Hence gender is a socially constructed phenomenon because e of which often women have to suffer gender inequality and discrimination. Later the participants were given a handout, which had a set of statements. They were told to write which was gender and which was sex.

## **Session 2**

**Resource Person: Dr. Jancy Jose**

**Topic: Women and Health**

The session was more experience sharing where in participants were encouraged to share the health problems faced by them especially during pregnancy and menstruation. Later on Ms. Jancy added how the gender socialization process often restricts women from taking care of the needs and problems of their physical body. She pointed out that the existing patriarchal system often suppresses women’s needs and discourage them from voicing their problems. Key issues were discussed on not ignoring their health needs, how women can care for their reproductive health and educate themselves both informal and formal way.

**Day 4 (28-8-14)****Session: 1****Resource Person: Dr. Jancy Jose****Topic: Women and Sexuality**

The session was started with a group exercise where all the participants were divided into four groups and two of the groups were told to draw a female with the parts of the body and the other two groups were told to draw a man with the body parts. All the groups were told to name the parts and also include sexual and reproductive ones as well. The process was extremely lively and energetic where in all the participants actively got involved in the body mapping exercise. After drawing each group displayed their chart and discussion followed on topics like did the participants feel power, pleasure, pain or shame in each of the marked areas, different attitudes and judgments related to different body parts, which are the parts of the body that lead to a feeling of shame or the parts which lead to the feeling of power etc. Post the discussion participants shared that they felt liberated and proud of their body after doing the exercise.

**Session 2****Resource person: Adv. Preetha K.K.****Topic: Laws related to Women**

Adv Preetha started the session with a brief on Indian Constitution which specifies equality to women and that everybody is equal in the eyes of law. Article 14, 15 and 51 of the constitution throws light on the fact that men and women are equal and its means women have to be given the same status as that of a man in case jobs as well as salaries. She added that the recent Criminal Law Amendment Act of 2013 has brought about some major changes in the laws related to sexual offences where in the definition of rape has been broadened and use of the word sexual assault in place of rape has been mentioned. She further covered sections 166 B, 354A, 375 as well as punishments related to sexual assault.

Later on she threw light on the major provisions in 1961 Dowry Prohibition act 1961, PWDV Act of 2005 and the Sexual Harassment at workplace act of 2013. She then mentioned the importance of setting up a redressal cell at workplace to address the concerns of employees. She then asked the participants if they had observed any instance where the rights of women were protected and considered. To which there was no response from the participants. Adv. Preetha then told that the provision of reserved seat for women in busses was an example where the rights of women were taken into consideration. She further added that in case of any violation of this law a formal complaint could be registered with police station or the city transport commissioner. Later on she covered major provisions in Hindu, Muslim and Christian marriage acts as well as the Special marriage Act.

## **Day: 5 (29-8-14)**

### **Session 1**

#### **Topic: How to deal with violence against women?**

The session started with a group exercise where in the participants were divided into four groups and they were given four different situations where in a woman is faced with a problem and the aim is demonstrate how participants provide a solution to overcome the issue. Each group had to do a role-play for each of the situations.

Group1: Schoolgirl gets pregnant

Group 2: Woman getting harassed at workplace

Group 3: Woman having problems at family

Group 4: Violence at public place (during travel)

Each group was given 20 minutes to prepare the skit. After the prescribed time, each group performed their skits with a message where in the problem faced by the woman was clearly shown along with the manner in which women came together to provide a solution to the problem was also addressed.

## **Session: 2**

### **Evaluation**

#### **Moderator: Ms. Sreeja P.**

The concluding session was taken up by Ms. Sreeja P, Project co-ordinator who explained to the participants about the next step in the project. She informed that Anweshi's staff members will accompany the resource group members to meet various stakeholders like police stations, health centres, schools etc in their areas with an aim to create awareness regarding the role of resource group members and to extend any kind of help or support to a woman facing distress. Another important activity is also to introduce resource group members to jagritha samiti members where in they can play an important role in reviving the jagritha samitis in their areas. Eventually any woman who needs help can contact the resource group members in their areas who can either provide support with the existing mechanisms or can approach Anweshi for further help. Ms Sreeja clearly pointed out the fact that the main aim of the project is to create Violence free zone.

During the discussions, an important issue was discussed that often there are many funds allocated under the schemes for women but most of the time it gets lapsed or unutilized. It is important to be aware of such unutilized amount which can be used to appoint a counselor for jagritha Samiti who can professionally deal and address an issue. All the participants agreed that if Anweshi members approach Panchayat body, it would be easier to convince its members to appoint a full-time counselor.

Finally Ms. Sreeja added that the resource group members should try to intervene in issues even if Jagritha Samiti's are not active. Moreover every month or once in two months a small meeting of all the resource group members along with Anweshi staff members should be convened to evaluate and monitor the activities. All the members were also directed to maintain a book of records of all the activities or visits conducted by them.

Later, participants were encouraged to share their experiences about the 5-day training program. It was inspiring to see many of them sharing positive experiences and how they were keen to be part of Anweshi's activities. Lastly all participants were asked to render the names of the participants starting from the person who spoke first and ending with their own name.

## ANNEXURES

### Program schedule

#### Capacity Building Program for Resource Group Members

Jointly organized by Anweshi and NMEW

5-day workshop from 25<sup>th</sup> August to 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2014  
Navajyothis Renewal Centre, Ernjipalam, Kozhikode

<b>25-8-14</b> <b>Registration</b> <b>Welcome speech</b> <b>Inauguration</b> <b>12-1 P.M.</b> <b>1-2 P.M.</b> <b>2-4 P.M.</b>	<b>10 onwards</b> <b>Sreeja P (Anweshi)</b> <b>K. Ajitha (Anweshi President)</b> <b>Ice-Breaking session of Resource Group Members</b> <b>LUNCH</b> <b>Laws related to Domestic Violence</b> <b>(Shri. Ashraf Kavil District Probation Officer)</b>
<b>26-8-14</b> <b>10-11:15 A.M.</b> <b>11:15-11:30 A.M.</b> <b>11:30-1 PM.</b> <b>1-2 P.M.</b> <b>2-4:30 P.M.</b>	<b>Personality Development (Geeta, Sakhi)</b> <b>TEA</b> <b>Leadership (Geeta, Sakhi)</b> <b>LUNCH</b> <b>Gender (Geeta, Sakhi)</b>
<b>27-8-14</b> <b>10-11:15 A.M.</b> <b>11:15-11:30 A.M.</b> <b>11:30-1 PM.</b> <b>1-2 P.M.</b> <b>2-4:30 P.M.</b>	<b>Violence against women (Geeta, Sakhi)</b> <b>TEA</b> <b>Violence against women (Geeta, Sakhi)</b> <b>LUNCH</b> <b>Women and Health (Dr. jancy jose)</b>
<b>28-8-14</b> <b>10-11:15 A.M.</b> <b>11:15-11:30 A.M.</b> <b>11:30-1 PM.</b> <b>1-2 P.M.</b> <b>2-4:30 P.M.</b>	<b>Women and law (Adv. Preetha K. K.)</b> <b>TEA</b> <b>Women and law (Adv. Preetha K. K.)</b> <b>LUNCH</b> <b>How can you deal with Violence against women? Discussion</b>
<b>29-8-14</b> <b>10-11:15 A.M.</b> <b>11:15-11:30 A.M.</b> <b>11:30-1 PM.</b> <b>1-2 P.M.</b> <b>2-4:30 P.M.</b>	<b>Women and Sexuality (D. Jancy Jose)</b> <b>TEA</b> <b>Women and Sexuality (D. Jancy Jose)</b> <b>LUNCH</b> <b>Evaluation</b>

## FEEDBACK OF PARTICIPANTS

*“Became more aware about the laws related to Violence against women. The concepts of gender and rights of women have also become clear. However I would like to get in-depth information on communication and leadership in the next class”.*

*“All the sessions were very informative. I have attended such classes before but I have found this training program to be more informative and in-depth. I am seeking Anweshi’s help in supporting more women and spreading the knowledge in the society.”*

*“I have attended gender classes before but I was never clear as to how to deal with a problem or whom to approach. However, now it is very clear and I am now motivated to intervene in more issues and provide more support to women wherever possible”.*

*“I really like Ashraf Sir’s, Geetha mam and Preetha mam’s class. I would have liked to receive such classes before. In the last 17 years experience of working actively in the area of women empowerment I have not attended such a training program”.*

*“The classes were extremely beneficial for starters in the field of activism. The sessions on gender, laws related to women as well as women and her health problems were especially good. However I would like to get a class on counseling and public speaking as well”.*