

Annual Report

2020-2021



Promoting Para Legal Force to address gender-based discrimination and violence against women and networking at State level, Karnataka

Introduction

DEEDS has completed 39 years of its successful work as an NGO, with its immense experience it strives to work with the marginalised community especially women, with various strategies empowering them through legal education and helping them enforce their rights and making the law work for them. Presently a team of professionals led by advocate Merlyn Martis is reaching out to the most needy and vulnerable in seven districts of Karnataka.

DEEDS focusses on Promoting Para Legal Force to address gender-based discrimination and violence against women and networking at State level in Karnataka. During the year 20-21, DEEDS has extended its paralegal activities to two more districts of Karnataka, namely; Uttara Kannada and Dharwad. The focus of the present project is to create legal awareness among women at the grassroots, create and strengthen the Para Legal force at the district and state level with the support and coordination of Legal Services Authority.

In the past few years, DEEDS has promoted a collective of PLF's (Paralegal Facilitators) in the districts of Gadag, Koppal, Chitradurga, Mandya and Dakshina Kannada and worked towards networking at the State level. Thus, creating a platform for the women to have larger access to legal knowledge and empowering them to enforce their rights.

DEEDS has capacitated itself during the year and reframed its own vision, mission and strategies to suit the changing times, to make themselves effective, transparent and thereby increase its accountability to its stakeholders.

Vision: A Just, humane, participatory and sustainable society.

Mission: Sustainable process of human development based on Gender Equality and human rights, through education, empowerment, organization, advocacy and promoting people's initiatives.

Highlights of the year 2020-2021

The year 2021 became infamous with pandemic, with repeated lockdowns, restrictions on movement and new covid norms to be followed, DEEDS project planned activities got delayed by two months. During that time, DEEDS focussed on working with Covid related issues with the community around them like health awareness, Sanitation; mask preparation, distribution of food kits and mainly helping women in violence. The project activities that started around June 2020 are given briefly below.

Activity1: Selection of Lead NGO and Local Contact Person



In order to maintain sustainability of its efforts, DEEDS takes along NGOs with similar mandate in its initiatives. In the two new project districts it started its work with identifying lead NGOs through contacts and communication.

In Dharwad District, the Dharwad Salesian Society an NGO working for street children, women and

youths joined hands with it as Lead NGO. The Lead NGOs assisted in identifying the local contact person to assist in the project implementation. In Uttara Kannada Ms Ermiline Rodrigues and in Dharwad Ms Nashreen are offering their services as organisational professionals at the field level. Other NGOs Deeksha, Jagrathi, MahilaSamakhya, SKRDP and in Uttara Kannada Santhwana, AVP Samstehaveextended their support to DEEDS. They have deputed personnel to be trained as PLFs, have assisted in grassroots education programs for the community and helped in monitoring the activities at the local level.

Activity 2: Selection of Paralegal Facilitators (PLFs)

The success of the project depends on the paralegal facilitators and their capacity to deliver, therefore the selection of PLFs is considered as an important activity. Hence persons who are motivated to work with the grassroots, interested to be facilitators, with minimum literacy level and preferably young are selected and oriented into the project. Fifty persons (Forty-five women and Five men) are selected from two districts as PLFs. They are mainly social workers from NGOs, members of Santwan (women help line), MahilaSamakya field staff and anganwadi and Asha workers. Being in touch with the grassroots people is an advantage that they knew the situation and help people in need.

The paralegal facilitators collected baseline data from the grassroots beneficiaries from two project districts. In Uttara Kannada district 916 and in Dharwad district 818 beneficiaries participated in the study. The data revealed that about 35% of the grassroots women are daily wage earners, 38% are homemakers, about 89% are from below poverty line and 75% had not attended any awareness programs. The data revealed important issues of women; Uttara Kannada women felt deprived of share in the property and were keen to know their right to property and in Dharwad, child marriage was still rampant. Domestic violence was of concern in both districts.

Activity 3: Training of Trainers – TOT

A Trainers Training was organised for the members of the State level Paralegal facilitators collective from earlier districts namely; Koppal, Gadag, Chitradurga, Dakshina Kannada and Udupi. Prior to the program PLFs were asked to send a video presentation of any program they had facilitated. Twenty-Six Master Trainers have participated in the Trainers (MT's) program from six project districts. In depth information on Women's situation, Gender, Socialization, Patriarchy, gender sensitization indicators, preparedness and facilitation skills were taken as subjects. These Trainers participated as resource persons in the Paralegal Training held in Uttara Kannada and Dharwad districts. Others conducted gender trainings in their district to selected new PLFs.

Activity 4: Paralegal Training

Two phases of Paralegal Facilitators (PLF) Training Program in two districts is completed. Forty-Five persons from two districts have become PLFs. First phase of Training of Paralegal Facilitators on Gender was organized at Uttara Kannada (12-13 & 27-28 January 2021) and Dharwad (21-24 January 2021) districts. From the feedback received, we understand that the participants have internalised the concept of gender and gained insight into the inequality and discrimination. They have gained skills to disseminate legal information to the target groups and have started grassroots programs.



Second phase of Training of Paralegal Facilitators program on Laws was conducted at Uttara Kannada (15-18 March 2021) and Dharwad (25-27 March 2021) districts. The same forty-five Persons have participated and successfully completed second phase of the training. They have felt the course very useful and are very appreciative of the opportunity they have. Various facilitation

techniques, stimulation exercises, visual and Manuals were used to make the program fruitful. Additional experts were called in wherever needed.

Involvement of Duty bearers in the project activities



Dr P. Ishwara Bhat, Vice Chancellor, Karnataka State Law University, Hubli inaugurated the first phase by releasing DEEDS Tagline – “Making Law Work for Women” and Member Secretary, District Legal Service Authority, at Dharwad, (DLSA) Department of Women and Child Development. In Dharwad DLSA has provided its own training hall and lawyers as resource persons for legal training. The duty bearers have given information on

services available for women under their department. In both the districts the above departments have shown exceptional support at the time of exposure to the court, One Stop Centre helpline and have gone out of the way to show the child friendly court functioning for POCSO.

Feedback from Paralegal trainees...

- Santani a PLF from Dharwad said that she wanted to become a Lawyer, but due to lack of financial support it was not possible, now she is happy that she got an opportunity to work as paralegal facilitator.

- Reshma a PLF from Dharwad district in the sharing held on March 25th, 2021 said –“ I am working as a Tailor, this is my first training. I had low self-confidence to conduct grassroots awareness program. In 1st grassroots I prepared the talk but was nervous because this was my first training in my life. In second training, I felt confident and conducted effective training on gender. I thank DEEDS for giving me an opportunity to become a facilitator. At grassroots program women listen to me earnestly, I am happy, I think many are in need and I should help them.”
- Maruthi Gowda, a PLF from Uttara Kannada District said –“ I never had any experience in speaking in public. In the first program, thirty one Grassroots beneficiaries had participated, I took the help of local contact person and subsequently I was able to deliver the subjects on Gender. In second program, I was confident to speak. At present people are recognizing me as a gender resource person and I thank DEEDS for this opportunity”.
- On March 25th, 2021, Robert a PLF from Dharwad shared that he has facilitated the first program to speech and hearing-impaired male children by using technology and visual signs. They said it is good to know that they need to treat their sisters as equals.

Activity 5: Gender awareness Program at Grassroots Level by PLFs



Immediately after each phase of the paralegal program the trained PLFs organised grassroots awareness programs on gender-based discrimination to the key beneficiaries from their districts. During the program, the participants shared their own practices, which often they did not realise as discriminatory like sharing food, education, domestic work and share in property. They expressed that through the awareness programs they came to know that they are discriminating among their children and have taken an oath to treat them with

equality. About 2676 people were covered in 108 programs. Further participants have shared the key aspects learnt with their neighbours and distributed handbills and wall hangings with them.

Feedback from grassroots people

- Jyothi Kharva from Kadegeri who participated in the grassroots program held on 18-2-2021 organized by Narayana Bhat PLF from Uttara Kannada expressed that there is no space for women in either family or village to express their problems. The grassroots programs are helping them to share their issues and get information to address them.
- Akshatha from Kotagonda Hunasi participated in the grassroots program dated 6-3-2021 organised by PLF Kalavathi from Dharwad District expressed that she realised that she is discriminating between her male and female children by loading the girl child with domestic work. Now onwards she will give equal work to boy and the girl.

Activity 6: District Network Building process at previous PLF districts

In the older districts i.e. Gadag, Koppala, Chitradurga and Dakshina Kannada, cases of violence against women are reported to the PLFs, the networks have started addressing them.



During the lockdown Paralegal Facilitators from D.K, Gadag, Chitradurga and Koppala districts were involved in helping women to cope with difficulties with supportive activities; some have stitched and distributed masks and stepped forward to support the most vulnerable with essential food and hygiene items.

Paralegal Facilitators from DK District have provided masks, vegetables, food and medicines to migrant labourers, sanitation workers and drivers. Koppala Paralegal Facilitators also stitched and distributed masks, food, sanitizers to the local needy people. Recently Chitradurga PLFs have organized awareness programmes on COVID19 to local women and children, they have also conducted a quiz to assess their knowledge on COVID 19 and create awareness on health, cleanliness and distributed biscuits, fruits and sanitary pads.

During the lockdown PLFs Koppala and Gadag and DK district Collective have helped women in violence like domestic violence, sexual harassment and getting wages from their employers. PLFs referred two cases to DLSA and one case was referred to women help line.

Activity 7: State PLFs Network

State level PLF Network meet was organized at Mangalore on 27 November, 2020,



representatives from 4 districts participated. Need and importance of district and state PLF Network, Membership criteria of PLFs, role and responsibilities of district and state networks were discussed. PLFs found the importance of PLF Network, they planned to strengthen their network at the district. In addition, four meetings were conducted through google meet.

Our plan of sustaining legal awareness program and increase Paralegal Facilitators was in process, for which Karnataka State

Law University agreed to conduct Certificate Course in Karnataka. They included our Paralegal contents in their certificate course. The Retired Supreme Court Judge expressed with Vice Chancellor that it is the first University that has started Certificate Course on Legal aspects in India.

Activity 8: Resource Centre

Publication of Newsletter Samvada and IEC Materials

A. Training Manuals



This year two training manuals were prepared. First manual on Gender, and a second one on laws for Women based on the specific requirements of individual districts. The contents of the Legal Manual were Domestic Violence Prohibition Act, POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act (POSH) and Rules of the Marriages and its Registration and Property Act. About 110 copies of Gender and 85 copies of Legal manual were printed and distributed to PLFs and resource persons and consortium partners.

B. Grassroots Manual



Prepared two grassroots manuals for conducting grassroots awareness programs on Gender and Legal. In the first phase, 110 copies of Gender manual containing visuals pictures and explanation on Gender discrimination in food, gender, love, education, property rights for women. In the second phase, 85 copies of legal awareness manual containing Domestic Violence, POCSO and Child Marriage were printed and given to PLFs for grassroots programs.

c. Preparation of Take-Home Materials



Prepared handbills to create awareness at grassroots level on gender sensitivity, Domestic Violence and POCSO issues in each phases. Take Home materials are printed and distributed. In the first phase, 35,000 handbills on Gender equality and in the second phase, 35,000 handbills on Domestic Violence and on POCSO printed and distributed to grassroots participants and 10 each for each participant

for further distribution in their area. A Wall Hanging on Domestic Violence is printed, 35,000 copies were distributed in the field area.

C. Samvada

DEEDS newsletter Samvada issue number 1 and 2 were brought out, first issue of Samvada, the DEEDS newsletter was prepared on DEEDS present project activities, District PLF collective Meetings, COVID-19 effects on women and activities initiated by District Collectives during COVID-19 lockdown etc. They were distributed to Lead NGOs, District/State PLF Collectives, around 600 E-copies were emailed, and WhatsApp to Project district DLSAs, Women and Child Department, local NGOs etc. The second issue newsletter contains information on local issues, trainings, and articles on women's situation. The newsletter carries Deeds work on women's rights and reaches to all stake holders. 3150 copies are being printed and distributed in field areas, Departments, Local NGOs and updated on Deeds Website and Facebook.



E. Media Coverage



The Media coverage received for the paralegal program has helped to increase the visibility to the issues of gender discrimination & increase in violence against women prevalent in Uttara Kannada and Dharwad Districts especially during covid time. (Vishmaya TV gave a wide coverage of the program in UttaraKannada district). It has helped to introduce the paralegal concept to wider public.

Feedback from PLFs and grassroots people

- Santani, a PLF from the district of Dharwad had expressed that 'I am grateful to DEEDS for the training manual and handbill, which was good and useful to conduct the awareness program, training sessions. The information was up to date, and it helped us to deliver the message to the grassroots. I received an invitation from Jeevoudara in Yellapura, a social work centre as a resource person to talk on Sex and Gender for 25 health workers. Manual and hand bills have helped to conduct effective awareness programs. I have been able to explain about equality in work, property, love, education to the grassroots people with ease'.
- Shashikala from Hosapatna, UttaraKannada district expressed that her mother attended a grassroots program, and she brought a handbill on Gender, I read it, showed to my father, and told him to treat my brother and me equally and share our property equally.
- Chinnamma a PLF from Dharwad expressed that her husband and her family members started respecting her and her girl child after reading the manual and handbills. The information was relevant and it helped them to deliver the message to the people.

DEEDS Response to COVID19 Lockdown

• Food Kit Distribution

DEEDS was continuously in touch with PLFs and women survivors of domestic violence, made a study about 280 houses of their urgent needs during pandemic mainly of single parents, elderly people and arranged for food kits, masks to about 50 households.

• Shramadan

A team of 11 people of KudupuNadumane neighbours also joined their hands with DEEDS for Shramadaan. From March 20 to April 22, 2020, everyday morning they spent one hour for cleaning in various places around Kudupu, Paldane, Pilikumeri, Nekare and surrounding areas of Padre colony around 5 to 6 kilometres. They have taken necessary hygienic precautions by wearing gloves and facemasks and using hand sanitizer and by maintaining physical distance.

• Awareness on Covid-19

Around 280 families were visited and given information on COVID 19 to create awareness of the Coronavirus Pandemic. During the lockdown, everyone has been

told to stay home. Meanwhile, DEEDS conducted a survey-covering people about family status and COVID 19 situations.

Provision of Legal Aid

On an average 3 to 5 aggrieved women approached DEEDS with their problems every month. About 95% of the cases are of married women experiencing domestic violence.

Total 37 cases have been received, legal opinion given in all the above cases. Out of these 37 cases, 32 cases are related to domestic violence alone. In 25 cases, people have undergone counselling and in five cases, legal opinion was provided to the victims over the phone.

Five cases are in the court for legal action.

- In two cases, domestic violence survivors have been provided with financial support as they faced health issues also.
- One case settled before DLSA. Out of the settlement, the victim received Rs.2 Lakhs towards balance payment.
- Three cases settled before the police station.



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about 20 women.

- In two cases FIR has been registered and are pending before the court for disposal.

- On 17.12.2020 in collaboration with DLSA, we conducted workshop on Domestic Violence Act, Posh Act and POSCO Act for Sanchalana and PLF collective members.

Get-together was organised for domestic violence survivors during the year which was attended by

DEEDS Team and Capacity Building Programme

During the year five new members have joined the DEEDS team, the new staff members have gone through a series of capacity building programs of understanding DEEDS ideology, organization's goals, vision, mission, strategies, structure and policies, using Helix model initially through webinars during lockdown time and later through in-house programs.

In addition to this, special training was given to staff members as per their roles and responsibilities. The MIS and Administrative Secretary attended a webinar on Problem Tree Analysis, preparation of concept note and project proposal organised by Karl Kübel Institute for Development Education [KKID], at Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu and also a one day training on Objectives & Monitoring Tools from Padi, Mangaluru and understanding the requirements to prepare different reports. The Finance Manager attended a three phase (21 day) course on FCRA and compliances organised by Financial Management & Service Foundation (FMSF), New Delhi.

The Legal Coordinator went through Legal Aid Policy and functioning of Legal Services Authorities and updated herself with case handling, documentation, medical service for survivors of sexual Violence and counselling skills. In order to use the lockdown time for skill and knowledge building, members were encouraged to participate in webinars.

Board Meetings



General Body Meeting on 3rd September 2020, Two more members were added to the Board and the board meeting was held thrice this year. At the executive meetings all compliances were verified like statutory audit, Income tax, FCRA, opening designated bank account at state bank of India, New Delhi, CSR Registration and 12A, 80G, FCRA renewal, selection of staff.

Income Tax and FCRA Amendments

FCRA designated bank account is open in SBI, New Delhi. The approval from Home Ministry is awaited for operationalising the account. FCRA renewal is submitted. Income tax and 80G renewals yet to be initiated. The society renewal is done as per the schedule.

Core committee Meeting

Core Committee was formed to strengthen project functioning. Legal, Gender and Media experts were included in the committee. Ms. Vani Periodi, Dr. Anita Ravishanker- Prof. Mangalore University and Advocate Fr. Francis- Director of Sandesh and Reni D'Souza from Padi are core team members.

Website and Social media

DEEDS Facebook and Instagram are being updated with activities of our organization and news related to women.

Training Manual

DEEDS prepared a training manual on Human rights and Law for Solidarity Foundation- for Transgender.

Student Internship

During this year Harshil Shah and Jishnu Munnurpal Ravindra from NMIM College Mumbai spent three months of virtual internship with DEEDS. The interns contributed on fund raising, created DEEDS account at fundraising platforms such as Give India, Donate cart and Milaap. They also worked on project proposal Writing and contacting the Corporates through mails for funds and also on Deeds Social Media handles. MSW students Alphonsa Vinay, Nishmitha from SDM Social Work College, Ujire, and Ashmitha and Priyanka from School of Social work, Roshni Nilayadid their internship from DEEDS to learn from its activities.

Participation in Women's Day programme at Kolar



Four members of Deeds and eight Sanchalana members participated in the two days Women's day program organized by Federation on Violence against Women at Kolar.

External Member of Complaints Committee

DEEDS member has served as the external member for the Internal Committees under Prevention of Sexual Harassment Law (POSH) at KIOCL, MRPL and St Aloysius and St. Agnes College, Mangalore.

Resource persons to Programs

DEEDS director has gone as resource person to programs organized to Mangalore University for gender champions, and for MahilaSamakya's staff and members of NariAdalath on Counselling.

Fund Raising

DEEDS has put its energy in building its capacity for fund raising. DEEDS has signed an MOU with India Donates with the common objective of continuing a 3-year partnership with the goal of raising funds, undergo intensive capacity building training & support in implementation of the development programs. DEEDS recruited two interns from NMIMS institute Mumbai virtually for the period of 3 months. They worked on Social Media handles of Deeds, registered in few Crowdfunding Platforms like Give India, India donates, Donate Kart and through it they approached for corporate donations.

Conclusion

Keeping up with all restrictions imposed due to the lockdown and the delay in the commencement of the new project, the DEEDS team has moved forward in keeping up with most of the project deadlines. We are happy to state that DEEDS has completed all major activities as planned. We believe that DEEDS has made a difference to the life of many, yet there is lot more to achieve. We thank all those people who continue to support us and thank MISEREOR for keeping its trust on us.