

# Annual Report



2021-2022



## Introduction

DEEDS has completed fruitful 40 years of its work as an NGO, Working with the most marginalised sections of society, understanding their plight and empowering them and standing with them all along. We fondly remember Dr. Desmond and Margaret who placed vision of the organisation of a Society which is just, participatory and sustainable. As years have rolled by, we have added gender justice and inclusiveness to emphasise our work with all sections on the issue of gender equity. We have kept alive the values of human rights, Democracy and people centered focus.

The year 2021-22 was difficult for all of us, with the second wave of the pandemic which brought much death and disaster, we all suffered personal and professional loss of life of living and working together. But the life of the women in the community we work with was worse. They had lost jobs overnight and fear and insecurity gripped them intensely. We quickly changed gear to work with those affected and intensified our intervention keeping all covid protocols in mind. Our paralegals stitched masks and distributed them among the community and food grains to the sex workers, sexual minorities, and information to the community women we work with. Our phones were kept busy

listening to the problems women faced including the escalating domestic violence day in and out. As soon as the lockdown was lifted, we continued with the capacitating of paralegals in the project districts to create awareness of laws and support those affected. The project was implemented in 4 new districts. About 119 Paralegal Facilitators are trained and they have created awareness on gender and laws to about 12259 persons in the community. Our systematic assessment data shows that about 65% of the targeted persons have reached 60% level of awareness on gender and 81% of the targeted persons have reached 60% level of awareness on laws. About 191 cases of rights violations are in different stages of redressal.

This is a mid project year and in Uttar Kannada and Dharwad, the Paralegals had already completed three phases of training and were conducting grassroots awareness programs and in Bagalkote and Bellary districts new set of paralegals had to be identified and trained. The following are the major activities that took place during the year.

## Highlights of the year 2021-2022

### **Activity1: Selection of Lead NGO and Local Contact Person**

In Bellary, Vimukti AIDS Prevention Women's Association assured support. Ms. Lakshmi Devi and in Bagalkot Ms. Bibijan were appointed as the local contact person offering their services as organisational professionals at the field level. Other NGOs SKRDP, workers from Anganwadi, ASHA workers, NRLM, Santhwana, and many self-help group members extended their support to DEEDS.

### **Activity 2: Selection of Paralegal Facilitators (PLFs) in Bellary and Bagalkot Districts:**

As the success of the project depends on the paralegal facilitators and their capacity to deliver, the selection of PLFs is considered as an important activity. Those who were prepared to be trained as Paralegal facilitators were identified. About 64 PLFs (58 Female 6 Male) were selected to be Paralegal facilitators in two districts. Many of them are NGO workers, SHG leaders and Santwan (women help line), Anganwadi and Asha workers. Being in touch with the grassroots people they knew the situation and help people in need. The PLFs were provided the orientation on their role and responsibilities, they identified about 50 grassroots beneficiaries they will work with and collected their baseline data. In Bellary district data was collected from 1025 persons and in Bagalkot district 767 beneficiaries participated in the study. The data also revealed important issues of women; Bellary and Bagalkot districts child marriage was rampant. Domestic violence/ sexual violence had increased during the pandemic in both districts.

### **Activity 3: Training of Trainers – TOT**

The best Paralegal facilitators were chosen for the Master Trainers program held, in house on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 at Matha Kripa, Gurupura, Mangaluru. Each of them conducted a session on women's Laws, handling issues and counselling. Performance was rated and Feedback was given to each participant. An input session was given by expert Mr. Shamsuddin on skills of Facilitators. The selected Trainers participated as resource persons in paralegal training on women's laws in their respective districts.

### **Activity 4: Paralegal Facilitators Training Program**

The selected Paralegal Facilitators from Bellary and Bagalkot districts underwent three phases of three days each training on Gender and women Laws.



Third phase training

About 64 persons have completed gender and 53 (51 Women and 2 men) persons have successfully completed second phase of the training. Third phase of Paralegal Facilitators program on Handling Women's issues was conducted at Uttara Kannada, Dharwad and Bellary districts. About 73 PLFs (71 women 2 Men) have participated and completed the course. All together 119 persons have become Paralegal facilitators from the four districts.

### Some of the stories of change as narrated by the Paralegal Facilitators:

*"The paralegal program has changed my life, I have understood what gender discrimination is, learnt women's laws and can support women in trouble. Presently I am recognized as a Para Legal Volunteer and committed to working for women in violence. I handled 3 cases of violence and approached the District Legal Service Authority at Dharwad. I have stopped 3 child marriages during the lockdown in my village. I am planning to join an LLB course and work as a lawyer".*

**Jayalakshmi Gadagin a PLFs from Dharwad**

*"I am a homemaker, and in the beginning, I was not interested in the program. Later I got an opportunity to conduct a grassroots program that developed my confidence and knowledge. I spoke about my paralegal course with Shree Kshetra Dharmasthala Rural Development Officials and they appointed me as Assistant Trainer and my work is giving awareness to self-help group women in the field at Honnavar taluk"*

**Sangeetha a PLFs from Uttara Kannada**

### Activity 5: Awareness Program at Grassroots (GRP) Level by PLFs



Vedachalamma Genakehalu Village, GRP at Bellary

Immediately after each phase of the paralegal program the trained PLFs organised grassroots awareness programs to the beneficiaries from their districts. Program wise 222 grassroots awareness programs on gender, 154 GRP on women laws and 73 GRP on handling issues were conducted during the year. In the follow-up districts of Koppala, Gadag and Chitrdurga 61 grassroots programs were conducted. The direct reach is about 8664 grassroots women. The breakup of the figure is about 5533 persons on gender in four current project districts

namely Uttara Kannad, Dharwad, Bellary, Bagalkot. About 3131 persons through the follow-up programs in old four districts (Gadag, Koppala, Chitradurga and Dakshina Kannada).

### Feedback from grassroots participants:

*Padma, Navalagunda-Dharwad participated in the (18-8-2021) grassroots program organized by PLF Kusuma, she says- "After attending Gender Training I have educated my family members about gender discrimination, now my son aged 23 is regularly doing household works like preparing food, sweeping, mopping etc. and now my neighbour men are following him".*

### Activity 6: Convention of Paralegal Facilitators and Grassroots Participants

In Uttara Kannada and Dharwad Paralegal Facilitators along with four women from each group of grassroots participants took part in the convention organized at Uttara Kannada on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and at Dharwad 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022. About 32 PLFs, 104 grassroots participants attended the Conventions held at Uttara Kannada and Dharwad.



Convention at Dharwad on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022

The grassroots participants shared the changes in their behaviour after the programs on gender and preparedness to take action after learning the laws on Domestic Violence, POCSO and Child Marriage. Further, participants have shared the key aspects learnt with their neighbours and distributed handbills and wall hangings with them. Vice Chancellor-Karnataka State Law University-Hubli, Hubli Taluk Session Court Judge, President of Honnavar Town Panchayat attended these Conventions.

### Feedback from grassroots people:

**Veronica Lopes, from Manki, Uttara Kannada** proudly shared - *“I am a homemaker, my family is a male-dominated family and I was never allowed to leave the house. During grassroots training, my husband was gone to work. I attended the grassroots training on gender, women’s laws, and handling issues, which made me change my life. I decided to educate my family members. After that they started to respect me and reduced the violence. All my personal documents were handled by my husband. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of training, I took my documents from my husband. Now I am confident enough to speak and continuously give awareness to my neighbours and distribute campaign materials to them”.*

### Activity 7: District and State PLFs Network

After completing the paralegal course, in Uttara Kannada, Dharwad, Bellary, and Bagalkot districts



PLF collective Meeting at Chitradurga

PLFs collectives are formed. Every alternate months district meetings are held, presentation and study of laws, inputs on case handling and success stories are narrated during this time.

The office bearers of the district collective participate in the state collective meeting. Two State collective meets were organized this year, one at Mangalore and other at Dharwad. In these

meeting need and importance of district and state PLF Network, role and responsibilities of district and state networks were discussed. Seven Online monthly meetings and presentation on issues at State PLF Collective.

Collectives have handled nearly 64 cases of domestic violence and property claims. In all districts, PLFs are in contact with District Legal Authorities (DLSA/TLSA) Saki centre, helpline, in connection with the cases.



State PLFs meet at Dharwad on 04-12-2021

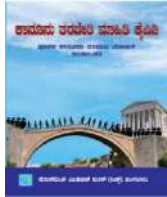
In Koppal, PLF collectives have collaborated with KHPT for its awareness programs to adolescent, men and women. 10 PLFs have conducted 180 GRP programs on gender, domestic violence, child marriage and POCSO and reached 4500 people. With the support of DEEDS, Koppala PLFs have conducted 17 GRP programs on gender, domestic violence child marriage and POCSO and reached

450. Member Secretary of Dharwad DLSA contacted DEEDS and requested support of Dharwad PLFs to conduct awareness program on domestic violence, child marriage and POCSO to students and parents as part of their month-long Campaign. 10 PLFs have conducted 35 programs to Pre University and high school students, men and women and reached around 1500 members. Dakshina Kannada PLF Vatsala has mobilized 25 food kits through donors and given it to local poor families and PLF Surekha has helped in registering 60 unorganized workers under Government scheme for family benefits. PLF Ashalatha Suvarna conducted an awareness program on cybercrime and protection of children on 28-12-2021 at Ujre panchayath where ASHA workers and panchayath members in total 40 members participated.

## Activity 8: Resource Centre

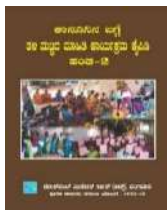
### Publication of Newsletter Samvada and IEC Materials

#### A. Training Manuals



This year three training manuals were prepared based on the specific requirements of individual districts. About 125 copies of Gender and 100 copies of legal manuals printed and distributed to Bellary and Bagalkot PLFs. About 160 copies of the Manual on handling women's rights issues were printed and distributed to Uttara Kannada, Dharwad, and Bellary districts and resource persons.

#### B. Grassroots Manual



Separate manuals with visuals are prepared for grassroots awareness programs on gender and legal subjects for Bellary and Bagalkot districts. In the first phase, 100 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, 100 copies of legal awareness manual containing laws on domestic Violence, POCSO and Child Marriage were printed and given to PLFs for grassroots programs..

*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 training sessions. The information was updated and it helped us to deliver the message to the grassroots people. I received an invite from Jeevoudara in Yellapura, a social work center as a resource person to talk about Sex and Gender for 25 health workers. I explained about equality in work, property, love, and education as the pictures given in the grassroots manual and handbill. After a few days of training, a woman who is a health worker said that she implemented what was learned from the training and presently she could see the changes in her son too. Others also promised that they will teach their male children to sweep, mope, and assist in the kitchen.*

## Activity 9. Preparation of Take-Home Materials



Wall hanging on domestic violence and Child marriage, Handbills on POCSO, Domestic violence, document based evidence, District helpline and contacts of duty bearers are printed for large scale distributed to grassroots participants and each grassroots participant is given charge of further distribution in their area Phase wise first on gender equality, second Phase on POCSO and Domestic Violence, third phase on the Importance of documents for four districts, and walls hanging on child marriage for three districts. Helpline Phone directory was prepared for four districts and printed and was distributed. **About 50,000 household have received information directly from the participants.**

*. Vasanthi PLF from Uttara Kannada said, near to our Anganwadi one tea shop is there where men are gathering in big numbers. I placed a wall hanging on Domestic violence there, after seeing that they started discussing and saying to their friends that are you hitting your wife? if you do so you will be punished under the act*

**Samvada**



DEEDS newsletter Samvada 12000 copies of Samvada 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> editions were brought out and distributed among stake holders. All our stakeholders are kept in touch through this newsletter and our activities and change stories reach them regularly. E-copies are sent through electronic media to all our contacts.

**Books**

This year DEEDS has brought out two books to update our Paralegals to the recent developments. The book on the recent amended Mental health Act speaks about the rights of mentally ill persons and aims at reducing the taboos that are prevalent in the Society. and the one on Domestic Violence makes an analysis of the myths around the problem which hinders the mind set of people addressing it. These books are edited by our ex colleagues Dr. Shoha Devi and Ms. Gulabi Bilimale respectively.

**Activity 10 Seminar on Mental Health**

A seminar on Mental Health was organized in collaboration with District Health and Family Welfare Department, D.K, Women and Child Development Department, D.K, **Lead India** on 18 December 2021 at COPD, Nanthoor, Mangaluru. Dr. Rajesh DHO, Dr. Srinivas Bhat, Psychiatrists and Dr. Anirudh from the mental health department of District Hospital, Dakshina Kannada spoke about various facets of the issue like the Mental Health Care Act- 2017, Understanding Mental Health, and rights of people affected etc. About 70 ASHA workers, Anganwadi Teachers, NGOs, and representatives from the Women and Children Welfare Dept participated and benefited from the seminar.



**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, Dharwad Districts, Bellary and Bagalkot (Udupi Bulletin and AJ 24X7 NEWS TV, Kannada local news and many other channels have started media coverage of our programs and also started panel discussions on the issues around violence

against women.

**Activity 11. Provision of Legal Aid**

About 86 have approached physically and through telephone seeking help this year alone. Deeds has provided an empathic listening and supported them in their quest for justice. About 95% of the cases are of married women experiencing domestic violence.

*We have success stories to share too, one cheque dishonour case settled before Kadri Police Station. Out of the settlement, the complainant received Rs.37, 000/- from the accused. One case settled before 1<sup>st</sup> Addl. Family court. Out of the settlement the Petitioners received Rs.9,00,000/- from the Respondent and one case disposed before 1<sup>st</sup> Addl. Family court after receiving maintenance of Rs.30,250/- from the Respondent for the year 2017. Two cases settled before the police station. Out of this, in one case the custody of the children was given to the mother. In one case the Senior Citizen was admitted to “Hiriy Nagarikara Mane” at Porkodi and in one case (Senior Citizen) referred to AC court Mangaluru to seek maintenance from children. In one (POCSO) case FIR has been registered against the accused and the pending before the Sessions court for disposal. Three family disputes were settled after Mediation between both family members.*

### **Activity 12. Consultation with Duty bearers:**

Two legal consultations (15.12.2021 & 30-03-2022) were organized in collaboration with DLSA, The Women and Child Welfare Department and the Police. In the first program 33 and in second 25 representatives from Sakhi, Santhwana, Swadaara, and NGOs, District DLSA member secretary, bar council president participated in the discussions and shared their role and challenges in handling cases. An input on Domestic violence law was given by the lawyer and it was interesting to note that many didn't know the acts and its operation. Some women survivors narrated their experience of claiming justice. Some harsh realities sensitised the participants and offered useful learning.

### **DEEDS Updating Strategies**



In order to be relevant, DEEDS went through a strategic workshop, using Appreciative inquiry from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022 to relook at the old strategy and have a Strategy Plan Document for the year 2022-2025. The Facilitator of the workshop was Ms Marita Eswaran, Mumbai. DEEDS Board Members, staff and Paralegal state body, Sanchalana Members, partner NGOs and Mrs Anitha Ravi Shankar, Director of Centre for Women's Studies at Mangalore University, participated in these three days of workshop. A draft document is prepared which will be

finalised.

### **Other programs:**

#### **1.Small grant from Women Fund Asia to develop women leaders for Strengthening Feminist Movements**

Women Fund Asia has granted a small grant to develop women leaders in Ullal and Vamanjoor areas in Mangalore Taluk to support women in violence. This is a one year project starting from Jan 2022 to December 2022. The PLFs from Mangalore will implement the project with the help of a five member core group of volunteers. The selection of women leaders and orientation on their role is done. About 51 women participated out of them 36 women (23 Ullal and 13 Vamanjoor) were selected for training. Among them 6 are from Dalit, 12 minority communities, 18 are from other backward casts. In Vamanjoor on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Leadership training conducted about 17 women were participated. On March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Gender Training was conducted, about 20 women were participated.

#### **2.Sun support Program**

During this year, three students were helped to get financial support for higher education from Sun support trust, Mumbai.

### **3. 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 gender committees of Government, private and corporate entities.

### **4. Resource persons to Programs**

Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL) has invited DEEDS to conduct gender sensitization for their entire staff. Five trainings were conducted and 312 staff took part. Women Study Centre of Mangalore University has invited DEEDS to conduct gender sensitization programs for about 65 college students of Mangalore university.

### **5. Student Internship**

During this year Vishesh Goel from NMIM College Mumbai spent one month of internship with DEEDS. He has prepared the documentary about DEEDS. MSW students Gethu and Anagha from Srinivas Social Work College, Mangaluru, did their internship from DEEDS to learn from its activities.

### **6. Executive Committee and Board Compliances**



Two Executive and a General Body Meeting was conducted. One member retired from the Board due to old age this year. At the executive meetings all compliances were verified like statutory audit, Income tax, FCRA renewal of registration, Society renewal and registration under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs for receiving CSR grants.

### **7. Website and social media updated**

Website has been updated with new slides photos and Samvada newsletter 3, 4, 5 editions. Facebook updated with recent activities of training, grassroots program and district collective meeting photos on a weekly basis. About 1021 are following Facebook.

### **Building the team and Study Program**

The project has full nine members Four in the program and five in the administration including the director. Regular meetings, study programs, reviews and capacity building in house and external activities keeps the team updated and motivated. Webinars and different courses are attended by the team. MIS person joined for one-year PG Diploma evening course (August 2021 to May 2022) on Guidance and Counselling at St Agnes PG Department, Mangaluru as per her interest.

### **Conclusion**

We are happy to state that DEEDS has completed all major activities as planned. We thank all stakeholders especially MISEREOR for trusting us and cooperating with us to help the women through our project. We further thank our board members for their guidance, the team members for their commitment and hard work and all the stake holders.