

# SPANDHANA

## Activity Report 2023

### Introduction

The year **2023** marked another significant step in SPANDHANA's continuous journey towards **empowering women workers** in the unorganized sectors of Ramanagara and Channapatna. Through a diverse range of activities—including awareness workshops, study circles, livelihood training, cultural performances, and advocacy meetings—SPANDHANA deepened its engagement with **beedi workers, construction laborers, agricultural workers, and self-help groups**.

This year's programs focused on strengthening women's leadership, expanding access to government schemes, building health awareness, and promoting alternative livelihoods. Working hand-in-hand with community leaders, local government bodies, and allied organizations, SPANDHANA continues to uphold its vision of a **just, equitable, and gender-sensitive society**, where women workers stand united in their struggle for dignity, equality, and social security.

### Highlights of the Programs – 2023

- **Women's Rights and Legal Literacy Workshops:**  
Conducted multiple sessions with advocates and social workers on **domestic violence, legal provisions, and labor laws**, improving women's legal awareness and confidence.
- **Formation of the Beedi Workers' collective :**  
A historic step toward organizing informal women workers. Over **100 beedi workers** participated, and **10 women leaders** were elected to represent their wards.
- **Health Awareness and Social Security Access:**  
Organized **Ayushman Card registration workshops**, mental health awareness sessions, and training on women's reproductive and general health.
- **Women's Day Celebration 2023:**  
A district-wide event combining cultural expression, human chain demonstrations, and community dialogue under the theme "**Equality, Justice, and Solidarity.**"
- **Cadre and Leadership Meetings:**  
Regular cadre meetings were held to strengthen grassroots leadership and encourage women to address local issues like water, housing, and welfare access.

- **Study Circles and Thematic Discussions:**  
Conducted over **10 study circles** on topics including **patriarchy, food politics, and mental health**, fostering awareness and unity among workers.
- **Workshops for Agricultural and Construction Workers:**  
Awareness programs on **NREGA**, government schemes, and gender equality in workplaces enhanced knowledge and mobilization of rural women laborers.

## Major Activities and impact

| Activities & Date   | Sub-Activities  | Impact and Outcomes  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>1. Workshop on Poverty Eradication – 04/01/2023</b>                          | Session by Program Coordinator <b>Siddaraju</b> on self-employment and minimizing expenditure; promoted vegetable planting and home gardening. Distributed seeds to Hallimala group; organized 5-member self-employment group for silk thread making. | Encouraged women toward self-reliance; initiated “ <i>Mane Mane Tharakari</i> ” kitchen garden program reducing household expenses; silk-thread group generated income and developed savings habits. |
| <b>2. Workshop on How to Become a Strong Leader – 14/01/2023</b>                | Sessions by <b>Malini, Siddaraju</b> , and leaders <i>Latha, Manjula</i> , and <i>Jayalakshmi</i> on leadership skills and overcoming challenges.   | Improved confidence and leadership abilities among members; women began taking initiative within SHGs and local decision-making spaces.  |
| <b>3. Awareness Program on Women in Panchayat Raj Institutions – 26/01/2023</b> | Session by <b>Siddaraju</b> on the role and challenges of women in Panchayat Raj; motivated participation in local governance.  | Inspired women to enter politics; <i>Vasantha</i> from Santhe Mohanadoddi elected as Panchayat President; <i>Malavamma</i> contested from  |

Channamanahalli.

**4. Case Work –  
Family Counselling  
– 06/02/2023**

Counselling by **Padma Rekha** and **Malini** for couples (names changed). Guided through family and individual sessions on mutual respect and equality.

Conflict resolved successfully; couple reunited with better communication and understanding; commitment letter given to prevent recurrence.

**5. Workshop on  
Utilizing Law and  
Legal Process for  
Women’s  
Development – 12–  
13/03/2023**

Session by **Malini** explaining legal rights, identifying violations, and using the law effectively.

Women gained knowledge on legal protection mechanisms; overcame fear and stigma around accessing legal aid; developed confidence to assert rights.

**6. Family Education  
Program –  
15/04/2023**

Visits to families of group members; discussions on education, women’s health, hygiene, and rights.

Enhanced family awareness on gender equality; encouraged girl child education and protection from abuse; built stronger family relationships.

**7. Session on  
Women’s Education  
– 17/05/2023**

Session by **Malini** and **Siddaraju** for collective members; discussions with parents on girls’ education and social barriers.

Increased parental support for daughters’ higher education; strengthened understanding of the role of education in empowerment.

**8. Workshop on Benefits of Kitchen Garden – 30/06/2023**

Awareness by **Malini** and **Siddaraju** on growing vegetables and nutrition. Shared experiences of women who practice kitchen gardening.

Promoted home-based nutrition and food security; several families started gardens; reduced expenses and improved diet quality.

**9. Workshop on Women's Rights in Various Areas – 05/07/2023**

Resource persons **Adv. Gangadhar, Social Worker Anand,** and **Advocacy Coordinator Seethalakshmi** discussed constitutional rights of women.

Participants understood structural gender inequalities; developed awareness of empowerment strategies.

**10. Awareness on Gender Roles in Agriculture – 03/09/2023**

Field visits by **Malini, Siddaraju,** and **Ashwatha** to homes of agricultural labourers; discussions on wages and safety.

Women agricultural labourers became aware of their rights and entitlements; motivated to organize collectively for fair wages and safe conditions.

**11. Case Work – Self-Employment Guidance – 06/10/2023**

Counselling and planning for *Shanthamma, Rosa,* and *Yashodha* to start small livelihood activities using available resources.

Two women began cultivating flowers and vegetables; one started home-based packaging work; increased financial independence.

**12. Financial Literacy for SHG Members – 10/11/2023**

Visit to SHG members at Hallimala; guidance on saving, reducing loans, and managing expenses.

Improved financial discipline; women prioritized needs-based spending and increased group savings.

**13. Strengthening  
Mid-Day Meal  
Workers' collective  
– 15/12/2023**

Program at Magadi Facilitated **Latha**, and **Malini**; discussions on collective building and labour rights.

Strengthened unity among mid-day meal workers; increased awareness of rights, government schemes, and collective action strategies.

## **Outcomes and Impact – 2023**

- **Enhanced Legal and Rights Awareness:**  
Over **350 women** participated in rights-based workshops, gaining clarity on labor rights, domestic violence laws, and gender equality.
- **Improved Access to Health and Social Schemes:**  
More than **60 women and families** accessed **Ayushman Bharat Cards** and health-related information; several others benefitted from mental health support and guidance.
- **Cultural Awareness and Social Dialogue:**  
Street plays and script readings by the **Manavi Art Team** used art as a medium to start community conversations on gender discrimination and social reform.
- **Economic Empowerment Initiatives:**  
Alternative livelihood training improved income prospects for **beedi workers**, encouraging transition to safer, home-based enterprises.
- **Women's Political and Civic Participation:**  
Women leaders emerged from leader meetings and accessing government schemes in local administration.
- **Community Engagement through equality Education:**  
Study circles strengthened consciousness of and solidarity among workers across sectors, empowering them to challenge discrimination.
- **Advocacy and Policy-Level Recognition:**  
Direct discussions with legislators and government officials created space for women workers' voices in public policy and welfare schemes.
- **Institutional Learning and Staff Capacity Building:**  
Internal workshops with thinkers and activists enhanced staff understanding of **labour codes**

## Future Goals – 2024

### 1. Strengthening Workers' Team and Collective Bargaining

- Initiate **Beedi, construction and agricultural workers Collectives**.
- Organize leadership and negotiation training for women representatives.
- Host a **district-level workers' conference** to unite all sectors.

### 2. Expanding Livelihood Opportunities

- Scale up **garland making**.
- Link women's enterprises with **PMFME** and **Skill India** programs for sustainability.

### 3. Health and Social Security

- Ensure all women workers are enrolled under **Ayushman Bharat, ESI, e-Shram**, and pension schemes.
- Conduct **regular health camps** for beedi and construction workers with focus on reproductive and occupational health.

### 4. Promoting Education and Youth Empowerment

- Launch the "**Workers' Children Education Initiative**" to reduce dropouts and promote higher education among girls.
- Facilitate scholarship access and digital learning support.

### 6. Leadership Development and Organizational Strengthening

- Regular **staff and leader training** on digital documentation, and advocacy skills.
- Identify and mentor **young women leaders** to represent workers in district forums.

### 7. Advocacy and Collaboration

- Continue advocacy with **district administration** and **labor departments** to ensure inclusion of informal women workers in welfare boards.

- Collaborate with civil society networks and media to amplify women workers' voices.

## **8. Sustainable and Green Livelihoods**

- Promote **kitchen gardens, organic farming, and eco-friendly livelihoods** among women agricultural laborers.
- Integrate **climate awareness** and sustainable practices in livelihood programs.