

Why does head of the family mean a father or a husband?

Why do we gift the girl-child a doll and the boy-child an aeroplane?

Why does saving always have to do with the daughter's wedding but never her education?

Why does a prospective bride have to be fair?

Why does a family insist that the prospective daughter-in-law discontinue work, however talented she may be? Or work but only from home? Or from home but not for profit?

Why must the working woman also be expected to look after domestic chores single-handedly?

Why is there no tangible value associated with being a housewife?

Why do we say 'nothing' when someone asks what our mothers do for a living?

Why do male colleagues touch their women colleagues at the slightest pretext?

Why do men winners at Wimbledon (and elsewhere) get more than women winners?





## Did you know that in India...

- 7,000 female foetuses are killed every day?<sup>1</sup>
- The female to male ratio is 93:100 compared to a world average of 105 females to 100 males.<sup>2</sup>
- 70 per cent married women (15 to 49 years) are victims of beating, rape or coerced sex?<sup>3</sup>
- Every day, 59 women are raped, 172 women sexually harassed, 26 women murdered for dowry, 223 women tortured by their husband and his relatives?<sup>4</sup>

[Sources: <sup>1</sup>UNICEF *The State of the World's Children*

<sup>2</sup>*Census of India*

<sup>3</sup>*UN Population Fund Report*

<sup>4</sup>*NCRB-2008*]

## Did you know that West Bengal is a high offender against women?

- The state reported the Highest Incidence of Sexual Violence faced by married women in the country.\*
- 21% married women in the state face sexual violence. More than twice the national average.\*
- The state reported the Highest Incidence of Spousal Violence in the country.\*\*
- The state registered the 5th Highest number of Dowry Murders after AP, Bihar, MP & UP.\*\*
- The state reported the 2nd Highest number of Rape cases after MP.\*\*
- The state reported the Highest number of Incest cases in the country.\*\*

[Source: \* *National Family Health Survey 2005-6*

\*\* *NCRB 2008*]

## Director's note

The years 2005-10 were extremely significant in Swayam's progress during which not only did we expand our existing work, but also developed new areas of intervention.

We opened Community Support Centres for the first time in two communities, one urban namely Metiabruz and one rural namely Diamond Harbour with the aim of creating violence free communities by involving community members in ending violence against women. At the same we focused on enabling women in these communities to access their rights from the State. By facilitating leadership development, information dissemination, capacity development trainings, collaborations, and community ownership,

Swayam offered a potential mechanism for sustained community mobilization.

We succeeded in initiating the setting up AMAN: Global Voices for Peace in the Home, an international network to end domestic violence which now has over 80 members nationally and internationally as well as a statewide network of Men for Gender Equality.

We were active in advocacy work around the implementation of The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 both at the state and national levels and translated the Act into simple Bengali to make it easily accessible to women and other stakeholders.

Our annual Campaign against Violence on Women and Girls through which we addressed a

variety of issues grew substantially and we reached out to large numbers of men, women and youth from all walks of life and different sections of society.

We continued to assist individuals and families experiencing domestic abuse and sexual assault to choose options and to control their own lives by providing crisis intervention and a full range of support services.

There was a 52% increase in the number of women to whom we provided direct support services from 2005 to 2010. We also motivated and built capacities of the women we work with to become change agents in their own right. As a result, large numbers of women now participate in the struggles for women's rights and gender equality as part of the larger

women's movement. Some women formed a group called Dishari to address violence against women in their respective localities. Others set up a music group to create awareness on women's rights through songs. The women's Theatre Group and Prayas, the women's magazine, continue to create awareness on these issues.

Our efforts towards self sufficiency bore fruit when we bought and moved into a space of our own with support from the Leger Foundation and local donations in 2006. We also received an Endowment Grant from the Ford Foundation the same year.

We moved towards institutionalising the organisation and began developing second line leadership in the organisations through

capacity building and mentoring processes. Systematic efforts to enhance staff personal and professional self development were made.

Our journey of last 5 years has been one of joy, pride, and anxieties. But we have survived because of the support and faith reposed in us by the many women, youth and men whom we have encountered during this journey.

Our work continues to be difficult and challenging but highly rewarding at the same time. It is the spirit and power of the women and children we work with that gives us the strength and energy to forge ahead. They constantly teach us how to confront some of the worst situations imaginable and emerge stronger and ready to take on the world. The

unwavering commitment of the Swayam team and our consultants, the guidance and encouragement of our Trust and Advisory Boards and the steady backing and assistance of our supporters and volunteers have been invaluable in helping us move towards our goals. I express my earnest and heartfelt appreciation to all of them and to Ms Shamlu Dudeja in particular, for her guidance and advice through the crucial years of the organisation. Finally, I sincerely acknowledge the unwavering support and contribution of Mr Biplab Ghosh, our friend and auditor since our inception, who sadly is with us no more.

**Anuradha Kapoor**

*Director, Swayam*



# Introduction

**Aborted** as foetuses. Seen as **unwelcome additions** to a family.

**Denied** access to adequate nutrition and healthcare.

**Deprived** of education, equal opportunities and the right to work.

**Women** are **subjected to violence** at every stage of their lives.

In the form of **female foeticide, female infanticide, sexual abuse, rape, domestic violence** and **dowry deaths**, to name a few.

The reality or threat of violence poses an obstacle in the lives of women and girls, not only limiting the range of choices open to them and their mobility but even depriving them of control over their lives in several cases.

Unfortunately, violence against women and their daily subjugation in varied ways is deeply entrenched in our cultural and religious traditions. Until recently, it wasn't even accepted as a human rights issue. And yet, gender-based violence is no different from other forms of abuse clearly and

consistently included in the human rights discourse.

*Swayam*, (meaning 'oneself'), a women's rights organisation, began working in 1995 to specifically address the inequality and violence that women face every day of their lives, regardless of their class, caste, religious or educational background, sexual orientation and mental/physical abilities.

## Vision

*Swayam* envisions a violence free world where all human beings enjoy equitable rights and opportunities irrespective of their sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, caste, ethnicity, religion, nationality, language and mental/physical abilities.

## Mission

We work towards establishing the right of women and children to live a life free from violence and fear by:

Reinforcing their belief in themselves and facilitating their empowerment

Challenging and changing societal norms and values that deem violence against women acceptable

Creating social support for survivors of violence

Holding the State accountable to address women's rights issues

Working in a collective manner and in solidarity with individuals, groups, organisations and movements for a violence free society

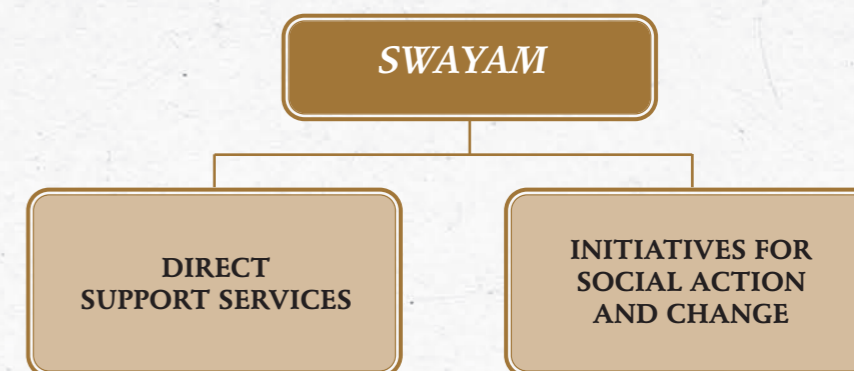
## Activities

*Swayam's* work has two aspects to it – the curative and the preventive. While on the one hand, we facilitate the empowerment of women facing violence – taking into account their psychological, emotional, physical and economic needs – to enable them to take control of their lives and become self-sufficient and economically independent, on the other, we question and try to change established norms and values that subjugate women and create an environment where violence against women is unacceptable and does not take place.

At *Swayam's* Support Centre we provide Direct Support Services – counselling, police follow-up, legal aid, healthcare, referrals for shelter, employment and vocational training, a drop-in centre, child support, group activities to women facing violence in their lives and to their children and families.

Through our Initiatives for Social Action and Change we look to do the following things:

- Generate discussion and debate regarding violence against women
- Promote consciousness about violence against women, influencing public opinion
- Provide a platform to analyse the causes of violence
- Research and Publish materials on women's rights issues.
- Network with like-minded organisations
- Mobilise communities, the public and the State to take action to end gender-based violence





## Change-making through the last five years

Swayam completed 10 years of existence on 30 May 2005. Thereafter our journey through the last five years (2005-10) has been stimulating and exciting. In addition to focusing on organizational self sufficiency and improving the 'quality' of our services, we experimented with new strategies and explored new areas of work.

### A PLACE OF OUR OWN

We moved into our own premises acquired with support from the Jules and Paul Emile Leger Foundation and local resources.

### CORPUS

We received an endowment grant from the Ford Foundation towards building our corpus.

### INITIATIVES FOR SOCIAL ACTION AND CHANGE

We reached out to thousands of



women, men, youth and children to create awareness and action against violence on women at all levels of society, through a range of outreach and capacity building programmes, community mobilisation, advocacy, networking, research,

publications, documentation and trainings.

### DIVERSIFICATION

To mobilise community members to address violence against women and ultimately create violence free communities, we inaugurated two

### Anupama's story

Anupama's was a classic case of domestic violence. Her nightmare began almost immediately after marriage. Her husband was opposed to her pursuing a career and put a stop to it. What began as verbal abuse swiftly escalated into physical torture. By now the couple had two daughters and the father did not spare the children either. He entered into a relationship with the household help and stopped providing his wife with any money to run the home. Anupama registered a complaint with the local police but to no avail. Anupama decided to somehow endure the horrible conditions of her life until her children were settled.

Anupama availed of Swayam's legal advice and decided to file a divorce suit in Family Court where she would be able to fight her own case. Anupama played an active role in her legal affairs. She worked with Swayam's legal consultant to strategise and prepare for the court date. She successfully negated her husband's appeal for a lawyer and secured favourable orders of injunction and attachment of her husband's salary from the judge, who took special interest in her case as she was fighting on her own.

Going by the wishes of her younger daughter, Anupama didn't divorce her husband, but filed an appeal to the judge to grant her lump sum alimony through the bank where her husband worked in a managerial capacity, which the Court granted her. This was a big victory for Anupama and today she inspires a lot of women to find the courage to fight their legal cases on their own. She has also instilled faith in the hearts of the caseworkers that it is possible to win a legal battle without a lawyer representing the case. Anupama now is an active and informed participant in Swayam's legal information awareness campaigns and participates regularly in Swayam's group activities.

new Community Support Centres – one in urban Metiabruz and the other in rural Durgapur village (Diamond Harbour).

### DIRECT SUPPORT SERVICES

We extended a variety of support services to 2,625 women survivors of violence and to their children (an average of 525 women annually).

### CHANGING THROUGH MOTIVATING SURVIVORS

We believe in the inherent potential and ability of each woman who comes to Swayam to make a meaningful contribution to society and encourage them to become change makers in their own right through promoting group processes,



creative expression through writing and the use of cultural forms like theatre and music. Two new groups, Dishari and the Swayam

Music Group were formed during this time while the Swayam Theatre Group and Prayas continued with their efforts to create change.





### Dishari

Dishari or 'path setter' was formed by a group of 12 women who attended a number of group processes with Swayam and were inspired to work on violence against women and women's rights in 2006. We trained Dishari members in counseling, case handling, women-related laws, other women's rights issues, group building, and held a training on gender and related issues. The group members convened regularly and met with the Swayam team for guidance. Since then, they held 28 meetings with the Swayam team, 24 among themselves and attended 8 capacity development workshops. They also followed up cases of women in their localities and participated in and carried out specific responsibilities during Swayam's campaign programmes. Moving ahead, the group designed, organised and conducted awareness programmes in their own localities with support from Swayam to generate awareness about violence against women and PWDVA, 2005. Dishari members in 2009 played a major role in the year's Campaign to Stop Violence against Women and Girls.

### Swayam music group

The Music Group was conceptualised during an Adda session in June 2006. The group gave public performances as part of Swayam's awareness programmes and campaigns and met regularly for rehearsals as well as to address various issues that concern members of the group. Group members provide support to each other in times of need.

### Swayam Theatre group

The idea of using theatre as a tool for raising awareness grew spontaneously out of a support group exercise 14 years ago. The Swayam Theatre Group has 13 productions on violence against women and women's rights in their repertoire. We organised numerous conceptual, technical and teambuilding workshops for members including 'dance therapy'. A support group was also created to promote better understanding among group members. The group performed regularly in

“One of my neighbours was brutally beaten up by her alcoholic husband and in order to escape further beating she came running to my house in the middle of the night. I live alone with my teenaged daughter but I decided to take the risk and gave the woman shelter for the night. I also informed the local club and enlisted their support in case of any emergency at night. There have been a number of occasions when I have accompanied women to the police station or other places whenever they sought my help.”

– Natasha Ahmed

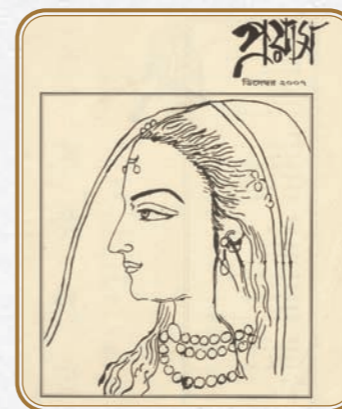
“Being associated with Dishari, I have become confident and I now protest against any form of violence and also inspire others to protest.”

– Renu Batra

public spaces during Swayam's awareness programmes and campaigns as well as gave numerous call shows at different venues. The most recent production of the group focuses on highlighting “The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005”.

### Prayas

'Prayas' ('endeavour'), the women's quarterly magazine brings out latent talent and emotion and is written and edited by the



women themselves. Prayas provides a platform for them to communicate their experiences, dreams and desires to society at large as well as to other women facing similar problems through poems, short stories, drawings and other writings. Some 17 issues featuring 254 contributions by women and 55 contributions by children were published during this period. Many of the women have written for the first time in their lives. The Editorial board of Prayas (the women's magazine) was remodelled and expanded in 2009. The 36th edition of Prayas was

released on 8th March, 2010 to commemorate a century of observing International Women's Day.

### Connecting to the larger women's movement

We helped women connect their personal struggles with the struggles of the women's movement and mobilised

them to organise and participate in campaigns/programmes against violence on women and other women's rights violations, particularly during the International Campaign to Stop Violence against Women and Girls (25 Nov-10 Dec).. Consequently, many of these women have emerged as vocal spokespersons for these issues.



Involvement of women in Theatre, Music and Prayas

Financial Year	Theatre group			Music Group		Prayas	
	No. of Members	No. of Workshops held	No. of Performances	No. of members	No. of Performances	No. of Issues published	Average No. of Women who contributed per issue
Apr'05-Mar'06	15	9	10			1	13
Apr'06-Mar'07	11	-	6	10	3	4	12
Apr'07-Mar'08	13	5	9	8	7	4	13
Apr'08-Mar'09	10	2	8	6	11	4	21
Apr'09-Mar'10	10	1	14	8	13	4	14
TOTAL		17	47		34	17	

Through their participation in the movement and through writing, performing plays and songs about issues that are 'taboo', the women have graduated from being 'oppressed' to emerging as activists in their own right



## Persevering through

Suchitra had entered a relationship with a man without the knowledge of her parents, as she knew that they would not approve of him. Meanwhile, exploiting her vulnerability, the man was exerting sustained pressure on her to provide him with money. And Suchitra would oblige by giving him her gold ornaments and money. After a while, he started threatening her and pressurised her to sign on some papers. Later, it became apparent that Suchitra had actually signed on a marriage registration paper. The man now began to blackmail Suchitra regularly for money saying he would tell her parents that they were 'married'. After a while, she had no option but to inform her parents about what had happened. Suchitra and her parents lodged a case in the High Court. Utterly confused with the court proceedings and the indifferent attitude of the lawyer, coupled with the pressures of conservative family members who had no qualms about blaming Suchitra and her parents for the trouble that had befallen on the family, she and her parents were under immense pressure to settle the matter quietly and on any terms. However, Suchitra and her parents refused to succumb to pressure. They

decided to approach Swayam.

Swayam provided Suchitra and her mother with regular counselling and a detailed safety plan was worked out with Suchitra, as she and her brother were followed and threatened by the abuser and his allies. Suchitra's case was referred to the State Legal Aid Services Authority and the Chairperson took personal interest in the case. Apart from monitoring the legal proceedings of the case, the chairperson also encouraged and motivated Suchitra to carry on her fight. Due to the pressure created by Swayam and the State Legal Aid Services Authority, a relative of the abuser finally gave a proposal to settle the matter. After a series of discussions, it was decided that the matter would be settled through a legal decree to be effected though the Lok Adalat (People's Court). Finally, after a struggle of more than two years, Suchitra was able to get a decree that nullified the 'so called' marriage. Meanwhile Suchitra decided to pursue a career and mustered the courage to travel on her own without any escort. Suchitra now has an excellent job and is settled and happy.



members share information and strategies. Various capacity building workshops and a collective campaign highlighting the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA, 2005) were conducted nationally. Resources were shared amongst members — posters on the law designed by an organisation in Mumbai were used by groups across the country, TV spots produced by Swayam in Bengali were dubbed in a further five languages by AMAN member



organisations. Collaborations on specific cases of domestic violence continued both nationally and internationally. Four regional secretariats were set up to coordinate activities of the region. Six member organisations used the Right to Information Act to get information from their respective state governments about the measures they were taking to ensure effective implementation of PWDVA, 2005 and the extent to which it was being implemented on the ground. Network members mobilised to put collective pressure on their state governments to take meaningful measures to implement PWDVA, 2005.

### 'Men for gender equality'

Swayam appeals to men who we believe can facilitate a change in male attitudes towards women. In December 2008, we facilitated the establishment of a network of men — Men for Gender Equality — to mobilise men to

create awareness on women's rights, fight violence against women and promote gender equality in West Bengal. The members meet every month, discuss relevant ideas, chalk out future plans of action and conduct programmes on these issues in their respective work areas. Several awareness programmes on gender equality and child marriage were held by

the network during the International Campaign to End Violence against Women in November/December 2009. Three network members attended two national level workshops organized by Forum to Engage Men, in New Delhi.

### The Seventh National Conference of Autonomous Women's Movements in India

Swayam took the initiative to bring the Seventh National Conference of Autonomous Women's Movements in India entitled "Towards a Politics of Justice: Affirming Diversities, Resisting Divisiveness" to Kolkata, from 9-12 September 2006. As an active member of the National Coordination Committee for the conference, Swayam mobilised different women's rights organisations and networks in Kolkata to

STOP VIOLENCE  
AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

WHEN WE KEEP SILENT  
WE SUPPORT MEN WHO ARE VIOLENT  
TIME WE ACT  
TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
SPEAK OUT, PROTEST







host the conference.

The Seventh National Conference of the Women's Movements in India was unique in several ways. The conference provided a space for expression of ideas, politics and struggles, where no one voice is more important than another, but rather, where the spirit of democracy, sisterhood and solidarity seeks to encourage debate and dialogue by bringing together women and 'autonomous' organisations, i.e. non-government, non-electoral, non-political, non-violent and non-underground groups or funding agencies. Participants represented a wide cross-section of such diversity, including Dalit women, Adivasi women, women agricultural workers, workers in the informal sector, women from minority communities, displaced women, migrant women, survivors of violence and state oppression, and women with disabilities, sex workers and sexual minorities.

Swayam staff, along with about 25 women we support, enthusiastically took

responsibility and participated in the conference. A film on female foeticide scripted by one of the women was screened along with other films during the conference and another boldly shared her experience of



“I had an opportunity to express my thoughts in the session on communalism. I disagreed with the facilitator in the workshop that it had become important to uphold our religious identities. I feel that even though we have many identities, the sole identity that binds all of us together, is that of a 'woman'. When I was facing domestic violence, I was looking for an organization that was capable of responding to my needs, rather than a Muslim organization.”  
 – Feelings shared by a woman who participated from Swayam at the Conference

the conference at the Closing Plenary before an audience of thousands of people. On the last day, the women also participated in the rally with great enthusiasm. Their energy, spirit and dynamism were laudable.

### The National Conference of the Muslim Women's Rights Network

Swayam and Muhammad Bazaar Backward Classes Development Society jointly organised the national conference of the Muslim Women's Rights Network, for the first time in Kolkata, from 18-20 December 2008. Over 150

delegates from different states and grassroots level workers from West Bengal participated. The first day was devoted towards discussion on the Sachar Committee report, legal rights of Muslim women and the role of the Wakf Board, while the second day saw 'experience-sharing' by Muslim women from the interiors of West Bengal's districts. The post-lunch sessions on the second day and the entire third day were devoted to a meeting of the network, where issues relating to Muslim women that came up during the conference and pertaining to the institutionalisation and structure of the network were discussed and deliberated in detail. The discussions on all three days were interspersed with cultural programmes. The curtains came down with a press conference at the Calcutta Press Club. At the end a fifteen-point charter of demand was read out.



### CHANGING THROUGH ADVOCACY

#### The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA)

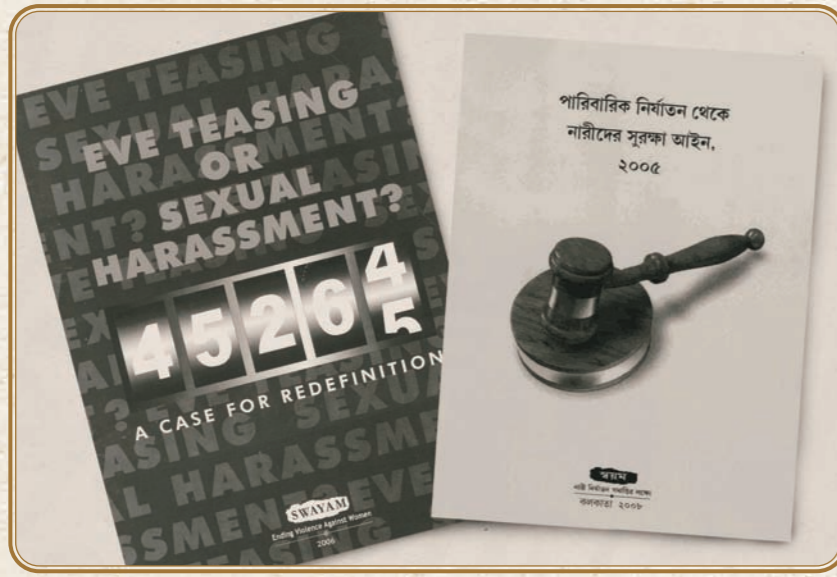
Swayam has been active in advocacy work around the passing and implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 both at the state and national levels. After much lobbying by

the movement, the Act was passed in August 2005 and finally became operational on October 26th 2006. Since then, we have been committed to ensuring that the law is implemented in its true spirit and that there is awareness about the law among the different stakeholders — women, activists, NGOs working on domestic violence, lawyers, judges, police and the society at large. We actively participated in the various efforts to monitor the implementation of the Act nationally and have taken many initiatives at the State level to ensure effective implementation of the Act.

### CHANGING THROUGH RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

We undertook a study on sexual harassment to understand the attitudes, experiences, beliefs and perceptions of women and men in Kolkata and published the report entitled 'Eve-Teasing or Sexual Harassment, A Case





for Redefinition’ which called for elimination of the term ‘eve teasing’ altogether.

We published a Visual Training Kit on Gender and Violence against Women as well as a simple Bengali translation of ‘The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005’, to make it accessible and easily understood by women and other stakeholders.

### CHANGING THROUGH EXPERTISE AND TRAINING

We were frequently called upon to provide expertise on addressing violence against women and women’s rights in workshops, seminars and discussions, etc, by organisations and institutions in India and abroad. Some of these include being invited as guest speakers at women’s rights courses conducted by Women’s Studies Departments in Calcutta University and

Jadavpur University, programmes organised by the National University of Juridical Sciences, West Bengal Women’s Commission, the British Council, women’s rights organisations in the state and nationally, on television, the radio, as well as at international conferences on human rights, equality and gender issues at the University of Connecticut, USA (organised by the UNESCO Chair) and in Dhaka (organized by Bangladesh



Human Rights Advocacy project).

As a resource organisation we conducted trainings for stakeholders at all levels including students, teachers, government officials, various state agencies, NGO staff, grassroots level communities and corporate organisations. Some highlights are given below.

In 2007, we introduced a yearly ‘Two Country Gender Training Workshop’ in Bengali for grassroots workers from West Bengal and Bangladesh in collaboration with SANGAT (South Asian Network of Gender Activists and Trainers) India and SANGAT Bangladesh. The training encompasses many important issues – gender, patriarchy, masculinity, feminism, communalism and fundamentalism, sexual rights and its relation to human rights, violence against women with a special focus on domestic violence, trafficking and problems related to migration. Apart from these we



also focus on identity politics, development theories, gender analysis — its approaches and tools, the women’s movement in India and Bangladesh and globalisation and its effects. “Songs for Change” is a special session that was included in the

programme from 2007 that highlighted the importance of songs in ushering in change. For the first time in 2008, male participants attended the workshop held at Manikganj in Bangladesh and the presence of both the sexes contributed

immensely to enrich the texture of this workshop and made a powerful impact on the exploration of gender relations. The third workshop organized in Kolkata in 2009 helped the participants develop a strong gender and human rights perspective on major development issues. We also conducted a three day workshop on ‘Gender and Laws relating to Violence against Women’ for Oxfam partners in Ranchi in 2009 and made presentations and conducted trainings on The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 for community groups, women’s organisations and other diverse groups.



“I have come to know about my rights and learnt ways to assert those rights in my family, political and civic life and also in my economic decisions. I think I can make my own position more powerful now.” – *Sufia Begum*

### Expertise and Trainings 2005-10

Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010
Number of workshops, seminars, trainings, presentations	20	16	25	25	21

### CHANGING THROUGH INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT

Swayam believes in providing quality services through staff capacity building. Swayam staff members are sent to appropriate workshops, seminars, trainings and exposure trips along with being trained in-house. These help the staff increase their knowledge base and also provide them scope to exchange views, enriching themselves.

Some of the in-house trainings organised for the staff included a workshop on 'Sexual Health' in April 2005; a workshop on 'Muslim Women's Rights and Laws' in January 2008; a training programme on 'Presentation and



Communication Skills' in June 2008; a training course on basic computer operations between June and December 2008; a

training session on 'Right to Information Act' in February 2009; a PRA training workshop in February 2010.

### Staff Capacity Development 2005-2010

Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010
Number of workshops, trainings seminars (in-house and outside) attended	16	18	20	22	35

### CHANGING THROUGH EVOLVING

Over the past five years, we restructured the organisation. New policies were formulated and formalised, systems for monitoring and evaluation

were introduced by consensus to ensure quality and transparency in our work. As an organisation, we believe in sharing 'ownership' and the opinion of women we work with and staff matters a lot. We introduced a process of evaluating our work by the women we work with and took

their views into account before embarking on our annual strategic planning. Keeping the future of the organisation in mind, a process of developing second line leadership was begun five years ago and this has already proved to be effective.



We have identified a few areas where we were unable to fulfill our objectives and are adopting new strategies and methods to address them in the future.

#### Employment opportunities for women

Accessing employment and creating income generation activities for the women we work with has been an uphill task. On the one hand, motivating women to consider a career or employment as a necessity is a big hurdle because of their mindsets, socialisation, lack of family support, inability to leave small children and go to work and other related problems. On the other, it is difficult to access lucrative employment opportunities for them. Most of them do not have the required professional skills to match the demands of the job

market. The expectations of the women and those of the job market also do not coincide. Furthermore, not all women are suited to becoming entrepreneurs.

We have taken to empower the women so that they are able to translate the opportunities into more and better jobs for themselves. We tried to address this problem by taking a complementary set of measures to help develop women's vocational skills and entrepreneurship abilities and helped place women in jobs as well as set up small businesses. However, these numbers were insufficient.

#### Website

Our website is a tool to reach

out to women and create awareness about the issue to a larger community. Our website has been increasingly accessed by women who need support but are unable to come to us directly either or because they are in another city. We have provided information and support to these women and often connected them up with organisations in their cities that can help them.

Although the website has tremendous potential and we can use it in a more effective manner by making it more interactive, informative and updated, we have not been able to do so due to lack of technical knowledge and manpower.

# Operational Review: Direct Support Services

Swayam's support centre caters to the immediate and long-term needs of women, their children and their families through a number of support services, both at the individual and at group level. Our work revolves around several key themes: respect for victims and their children, quality services based on individual and family needs, and a continuous commitment to safety and confidentiality. Woman's problems are looked at in a holistic way and we provide crucial support to help empower them to take decisions about their life and stand on their own feet.



### Helping women help themselves

Swayam helps women understand their situation, analyse its causes, assume the

responsibility of their decisions and have the strength to address probable consequences. During the period under review, we provided services to 2625 women and their children

directly, over the phone and by email. There has been a 52% increase in the number of women we have provided support to since 2005-06.

Women we worked with directly (new and follow-up cases) over email and telephone



“I have discovered myself. I am more communicative now and also more self reliant.”  
– Priti Ganguly

### Individual support services

We provided women with a wide range of support services as detailed below:



**Counselling and psychotherapy:** A woman's mental wellbeing is key to her overall recovery process and our mental health services combine counselling with group activities. We provided counselling and psychotherapy to 2473 women to help them rediscover and reinforce their confidence and self esteem and take positive decisions about their lives. Besides this family counselling was provided to 81 women.

**Legal support:** We provided legal aid and advice to women to discuss their problems, clarify doubts, seek legal redress and fight for their rights. 1070

“Psychotherapy has reduced my doubts and made me more positive about life; this has positively impacted my work”.  
– Mina Mehta

women were given legal advice and 193 were provided legal aid. Significantly, we made 325 court visits to follow up women's cases in court.

**Police follow-up:** We accompanied 217 women to the police station to ensure that their cases were properly reported and timely action taken.

**Career counselling, vocational training and employment:** We provided career and small business

### Meena's story

Meena bore three children and beatings for 20 years. When Meena sought Swayam's intervention her husband accused her of mental sickness. The situation calmed down for two months after Swayam intervened and counselled her husband. After this the beatings resumed. We then helped Meena lodge a complaint at the local police station and the Officer in Charge summoned the husband. Following discussions, promised he would not abuse her and would provide her with adequate money for household expenses. Meena's husband has stopped the abuse and now provides her with maintenance and more importantly, a life of dignity.

counselling to 81 women, vocational training support to 64 women, job referrals and small loans for getting into business to 43 women. In-house skill training workshops in handicrafts, glass etching, jewellery making and patch work were organized using external resource persons. Some women put the training to use and began to make and sell handicrafts. To encourage their entrepreneurship and provide them with a platform to showcase and sell their products, we introduced an annual exhibition of handicrafts and apparel in 2009 where about 20 women participated.

**Healthcare and shelter:** Emergency medical aid and shelter referrals were provided to help 40 women tide over critical situations.



**Child support:** Limited child support for education was provided to 104 children of needy women.

**Drop-in-centre:** Our drop-in-centre provided women with a space to get away from their troubles, however fleetingly. The space made it possible for

them to read, listen to music, drink tea, sleep, play games, converse, befriend or simply relax, enjoy themselves and access a modest library of books, films and cassettes. On an average, 5 women have been using the drop-in-centre each day.

### PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AVAILING SPECIFIC SUPPORT SERVICES 2005-2010

Service	Percentage Of Women
Face to face Counselling	100% (New Cases) 50% (Old cases)
Psychotherapy	11%
Telecounselling	21%
Following up cases with the Police	8%
Legal Advice	41%
Legal Aid	18%
Career Counselling	8%
<i>Of the women who availed of Career Counselling:</i>	
■ 30% were provided Vocational Training	
■ 16% were placed in Jobs	
■ 4% were provided Loans for setting up small businesses	

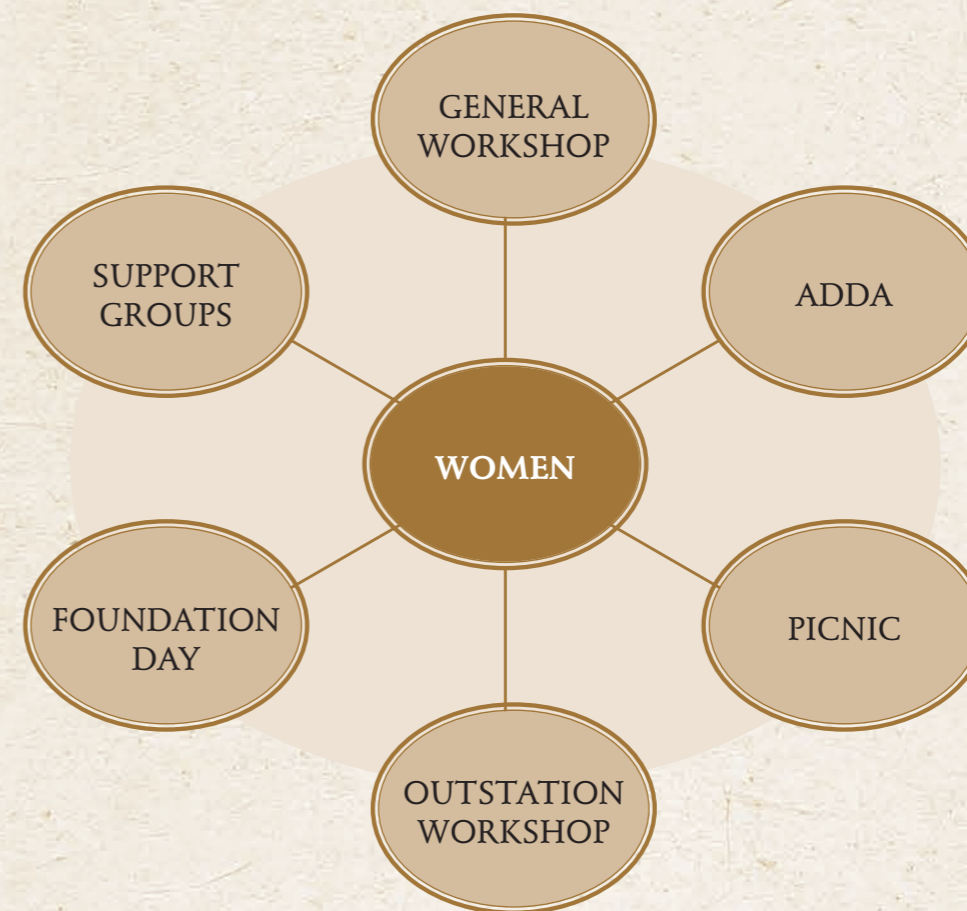


“I am more informed about legal matters now; more self confident; I want more financial help for fighting legal battles.”

– Sonu Bhagat

### Group activities

Swayam emphasises a collective and participatory approach to remove isolation, create friendships and facilitate the emergence of women as change agents. Our group activities comprise general workshops, addas, picnic, outstation workshops, parenting workshops, women support groups and celebrating Swayam’s foundation day and so on.



**General workshops:** These workshops provide an opportunity for women to meet other women and gain a broader perspective to their individual problems. Various issues including mental health, legal rights, sexual harassment at the workplace and International Campaign to Stop

Violence against Women were discussed. The women also evaluated our work in these workshops.

**Adda:** This monthly institution provides women with the space for fun (jokes, songs and dance) and free-flowing conversation. It lessens

stress and cheers up the lives of these women.

**Outstation workshops:** These provide women distance from the trials and tribulations of their daily lives. They get to spend quality time together, create bonds of trust and reaffirm self-belief. The annual

“These meetings act as stress relievers for me.... I would never miss the opportunity of coming here. It makes me happy to be among friends.”

– Bina Swaroop

“My favourite activity in Swayam is adda. Adda has no substitute as this is the forum where women are able to forget all their pains and worries for a while and participate only as a member of Swayam”.

– Sonu Bhagat

“I am at peace with myself when I come for the group meetings. I find a lot of mental strength from the support group. A strong bond connects all of us in the group. Whenever I am faced with a problem, instantly I think of my group members for support”.

– Christine Lobo

week-long workshops comprise structured sessions in line with the emotional vulnerability of the participants, the space to express themselves without restraint and help them overcome depression. These were held in Kalimpong, Gopalpur, Puri, Vishakhapatnam and Digha.

**Support Groups:** Each of the outstation workshops led to the formation of a new Support Group. Hence 5 new Support Groups were formed during this

time that provided women a space to share their personal experiences of violence and abuse, derive mutual support and form friendships. Each year, we ran two support groups, one old and one new. A total of 77 support group meetings were held during this time with an average of 6 women attending each meeting.

**Picnic:** The annual picnic for women, children and Swayam staff is a day of enjoyment with games, prizes and sumptuous

food. Participation in this event increased from 127 in 2005-06 to 207 in 2009-10, a testimony to its popularity.

**Foundation Day:** Swayam’s birthday celebration offers women, their children and staffs a chance to showcase their talents in an uninhibited manner. Impromptu performances by women and their children added to the general mirth and gay atmosphere.



### Namita's story



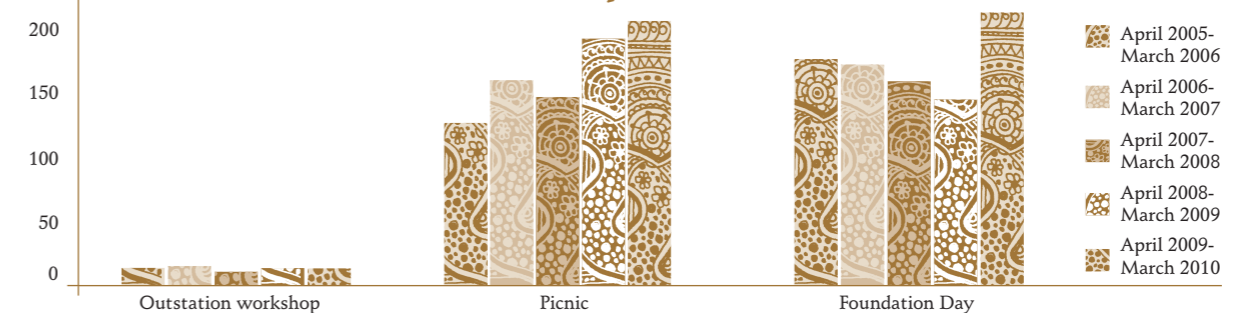
Namita was a demure, stammering woman when she first came to Swayam. A survivor of domestic abuse at her in-laws. At Swayam, she attended counselling and actively participated in group activities. That is when Namita realised what she always suspected. That she had courage and a flair for tailoring. The consequence was two things Namita had not done until then: she filed for divorce and started her business.

**The result:** Namita now personifies positive transformation and confidence.

### General Workshop and Adda 2005-2010

Year	General Workshop		Adda	
	No of Workshops	Average Attendance per workshop	No of Addas held	Average Attendance per Adda
April 2005-March 2006	3	61	11	35
April 2006- March 2007	3	53	10	36
April 2007 - March 2008	3	56	11	32
April 2008 - March 2009	2	94	9	39
April 2009 - March 2010	4	90	10	39

### Other Group Activities 2005-2010



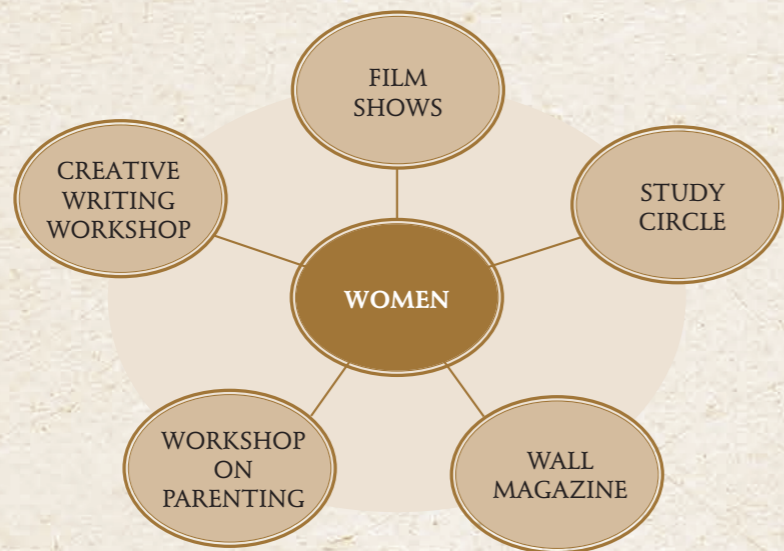
### Introduction of new group activities

**Workshop on parenting:** Witnessing violence on their mother has a negative impact and leads to psychological and behavioural problems in children. Their mother is often at a loss on how to deal with these problems. In response to this, we organised workshops on parenting for women to explore these problems and understand how to address



them. In 2009, a parenting workshop was conducted to help mothers of adolescent children to enhance their ability to handle sexuality issues related to their children.

**Study circle:** This forum facilitated an exchange of views among the Swayam staff and the women. A session on Sexuality and Sexual rights was held in July 2008. The Study circle was remodelled to make way for film shows.



**Film shows:** Film shows were introduced in January 2009 to provide a forum for self-exploration, introspection, awareness and understanding on issues relevant to women's lives, women's rights and the social environment. The intense debates and discussions that follow the screenings have helped women to connect with the issues and have provided them with another space for personal sharing.

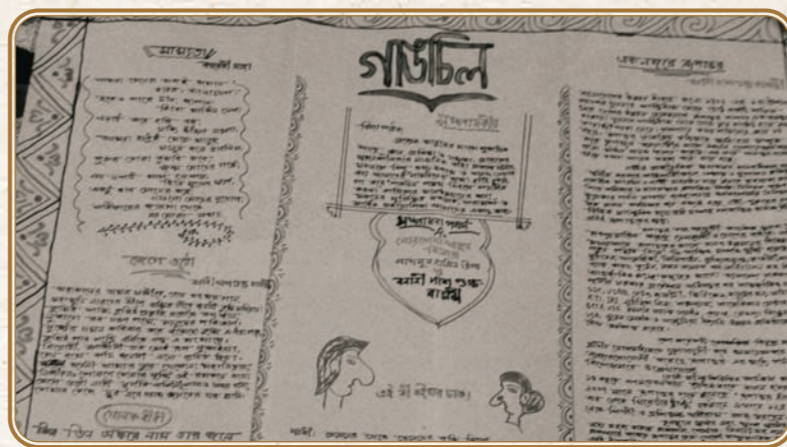
**Creative writing workshop:** Regular creative writing workshops were introduced in 2006 to encourage women to write. The writings were published in their magazine Prayas. Writer Bani Basu was invited to one such workshop as a resource person.

**Wall Magazine:** A new addition to our Drop-in-Centre is the Wall Magazine which was introduced in June 2008. It displays a summary of current news item related to women/human rights issues



and comments and feedback on the same are sought from the women who frequent the drop-in-centre. The objective is

to make women aware about wider social issues and offer them a new forum for self expression and reflection.



### New Group Activities 2005-2010

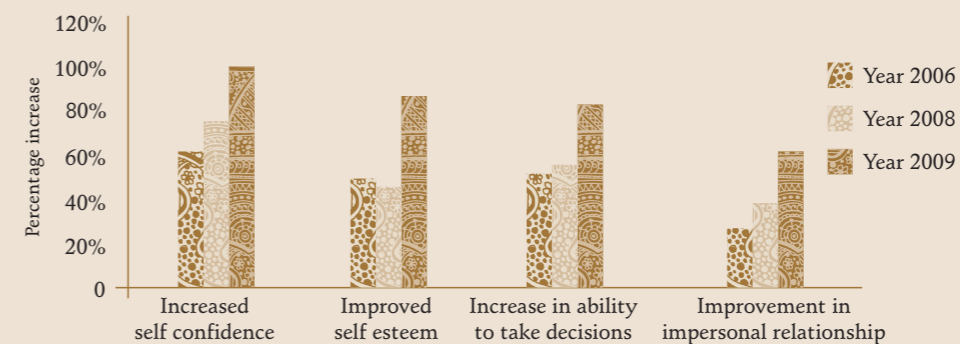
Year	Parenting workshop		Creative writing workshop		Film shows		Wall magazines
	No. of Workshops	Average Attendance per workshop	No. of Workshops	Average Attendance per workshop	No. of shows	Average Attendance per show	No. of Magazines
April 2005-March 2006	1	16	1	14	-	-	-
April 2006- March 2007	1	7	1	22	-	-	-
April 2007 - March 2008	1	21	1	36	-	-	-
April 2008 - March 2009	2	11	1	27	3	24	3
April 2009 - March 2010	2	13	1	25	8	15	7

“The creative writing workshop opened the window of my mind. It's a space for hidden talent to flower.” –Monimala Choudhury “I came to know that even I can express myself which has given me enough self confidence”

-Roxana Begum

### Impact of Swayam's Services on Women

We conducted survey's among the women we work with to see how Swayam's services impacted on their self confidence, self esteem, ability to take decisions and interpersonal relationships in 2006, 2008 and 2009. The results are given below:



### Working with children

Domestic violence often scars children for life and they need special attention to deal with the consequences. We address the needs of these children through individual therapy and group activities.

At the group level we formed four support groups for children based on their ages. Regular support group sessions were held with all the groups on issues ranging from anger management, group bonding, child sexual abuse, health and

hygiene through group activities and role play, among others.

At the individual level, children were offered psychotherapy. Each year, one of the groups was taken for an outstation workshop, while a day long



outing was organised for all four groups annually. Career counselling workshops were conducted with adolescent and young adult groups. Based on the feedback of one such workshop with the young adults, five students from the group were enrolled in a summer course on computer training and conversational English at the British Institute in 2008. Children also contributed to Prayas, the women's magazine.

In 2009, a couple of new initiatives were undertaken to revamp the children's group activities - regular film shows for children and dance classes for adolescents were introduced and adolescents who expressed

their wish to be involved in our annual campaign against violence on women underwent a 2 day gender-training workshop and performed a play on Gender Equality. The Child group and Play Group had a session on painting kites.

Children who have participated in individual and group work have been able to understand domestic violence and its impact on them and their mothers. They have been able to address the negative impact of living with abuse and move



**Support Groups**  
No of Structured Sessions Held 2005-2010

Financial year	Play group	Child group	Young adolescent group	Adolescent group
Apr '05 - Mar '06	—	43	—	—
Apr '06 - Mar '07	21	16	33	37
Apr '07 - Mar '08	7	13	25	10
Apr '08 - Mar '09	11	7	23	11
Apr '09 - Mar '10	9	30	33	-

**Activities with Children 2005-2010**

Financial year	Parenting workshop	Outings workshop	Outstation workshops		Prayas	
	No. of children who availed of therapy	No. of outings	No. of Workshops	No. of children	No. of issues	Average no. of children who contributed per issue
Apr '05 - Mar '06	-	1	1	15	1	2
Apr '06 - Mar '07	3	1	1	8	4	2
Apr '07 - Mar '08	12	1	1	8	4	3
Apr '08 - Mar '09	18	1	1	18	4	2
Apr '09 - Mar '10	12	1	-*		4	5

\*In Apr '09-Mar '10 the outstation workshop did not take place as the same group would be going. A number of new activities were started instead.

on. It has reduced their isolation and feeling of being 'different', they have formed friendships and become more confident of themselves.

**Working with women's natal families**

A woman fighting against violence in her life most often relies on her natal family for strength and support while gender stereotypes and social norms create a lot of pressure and stress for her natal family members. This frequently results in misunderstandings and problems between them and the woman which severely hampers her ability to rebuild her life. Keeping the needs of both parties in mind, we initiated a dialogue with the natal family members to create an interface for interaction, to understand their concerns and



help them to appreciate the woman's needs. We began informal meetings where talked about how crucial their support was to help women move ahead and explained our role in supporting them. Workshops addressing issues of concern that became apparent from these meetings were also held. Through these meetings and workshops emerged the need for a support group of women's family members who were

feeling isolated and pressured. A process was initiated for the formation of a support group and in 2009 a support group was formed. The attendance at the Natal Family Support Group meetings has been increasing steadily and a sustained interest is being shown in by group members. The bonding between the support group members has also strengthened over time, a very positive development.

**Natal Family Activities 2005-10**

Financial year	Workshops		Support group meetings	
	Number held	Average attendance	Number held	Average attendance
Apr '05 - Mar '06	1	12	-	-
Apr '06 - Mar '07	1	14	-	-
Apr '07 - Mar '08	2	6	-	-
Apr '08 - Mar '09	2	8	-	-
Apr '09 - Mar '10	2	24	4	8



# Initiatives for Social Action and Change (ISAAC)

This segment of our work goes beyond direct intervention. The *Initiatives for Social Action and Change* Programme aims at generating mass awareness and triggering action across society to end gender-based violence through community mobilisation, outreach, capacity building, campaigns, research, publications, documentation and trainings. We also network with like-minded groups to advocate for changes at the policy level.



## COMMUNITY MOBILISATION PROGRAMME

One of the main reasons why violence against women, particularly at home, continues to escalate with impunity is because it is by and large sanctioned by society. Creating social condemnation against this is one of the most effective ways of preventing it. Women need social support to fight violence or leave an abusive relationship. Bearing this in mind we began an initiative in 2007 to build violence-free communities in two areas, one urban and the other rural, in collaboration with local community members, CBOs, NGOs and the local government machinery. The first was in Metiabruz, a minority-dominated poor area in Kolkata and the other was in Durgapur village in Diamond Harbour, a rural area near Kolkata with an almost equal mix of majority and minority community populations. The aim of the initiative was to facilitate the formation of proactive groups of men, women and youth and to equip them to prevent and protest against violence on women, with the ultimate objective of creating violence-free communities.

We initiated our work in Metiabruz on the request of a local woman who had come to us for support. In Diamond Harbour we began by collaborating with CINI, an

NGO working on health issues. We started by conducting a baseline survey in both communities that clearly indicated pervading gender-based violence and the marginalisation of women. In response, we conducted meetings with local clubs, men, women, girls, local state officials, panchayat members and the police, among others, to enlist their support. We

they could freely share their problems, access information on issues affecting their lives and undertake livelihood training. During this period, we also provided women facing violence in the communities with support services like counselling and followed up their cases with their family, police and court as required.

With an increase in visibility and acceptance we began to



organised awareness programmes and campaigns and mobilised community members to participate.

Initially, community members/clubs provided us with spaces to hold community meetings and run a counselling centre. However, these soon became inadequate and we started a community support centre in both communities to provide women a space where

mobilise women, men and youth to form groups to address issues of violence against women in their community as well as created awareness about their rights and entitlements from the state. We have also begun the process of identifying and building capacities of the groups to access these rights and address violence in their areas.



**Metiabruz:** In the first year, an Information Fair on women's rights was held and more than 3,000 community members participated. Four women broke traditional barriers at the fair and performed a play in public for the first time in their lives. The following year, the International Campaign to Stop Violence against Women and Girls was observed with five street corner plays on eve-teasing and domestic violence followed by community interactions. Students from local colleges participated in a debate on women's rights issues and children from local schools performed plays on the importance of education for girls and child marriage. Six young girls formed a music group and sang publicly for the first time. The International Women's Day programme in 2009 was celebrated through games and sports, activities considered 'unwomanly' by the



community. Community women took the initiative and played an active role in planning and organising the programme. In November 2009, an Information fair on Citizen's Rights and Entitlements was organized.

We observed a positive shift in the involvement of women and girls from the community in the participation and organising of our programmes and

activities. In the first year, they attended our programmes. By the second, they were performing and conducting the programmes themselves. They also helped translate materials in Urdu for us and accompanied us to the police station and homes of survivors when required. In the third, women in the community played an important role in mobilising other women in the community for small group meetings prior to the fair. Two women's groups named "Khud Ki Awaz" and "Haque ki Awaz" emerged as energetic and vibrant groups and have started taking initiative in identifying local problems and prioritising the identified problems.

We have also been able to mobilise support from other community members including teachers of local schools and colleges, counsellors, local government representatives and locally influential individuals. The local police station has

now begun to refer cases of violence against women to our Support Centre.

Livelihood-based computer training for women and adolescent girls was introduced in collaboration with Anudip Foundation and proved to be popular with 100 participants. Monthly Majlis (informal chat) sessions were started for women to have fun and discuss issues that are of relevance to them.

helped organise the fair and participated in cultural activities. International Women's Day was celebrated on 9 March and community women enthusiastically participated in the sports events that were organised. With their mobility curtailed at every step, women and girls got a much-needed breather. A workshop on parenting was held for the women with a child psychotherapist answering their queries. Film screenings

liaising with the government machinery yielded dividends with the Sub-Divisional Police Officer referring cases to us regularly, the Department of Information and Culture collaborating with us in our programmes and Sansad members (lowest rung of local self government) of the Patra Gram Panchayat asking us to provide them gender-based training. This has been an excellent development as these are the members who will



**Diamond Harbour:** An Information Fair focusing on women's rights and violence against women was organised in December 2007. Over 5,000 men, women and children from 12 villages under the Patra Gram Panchayat attended the fair. We also formed groups of men, women and a core youth group to work on gender-based issues. The following year, the Information Fair was held again and men, women and youth

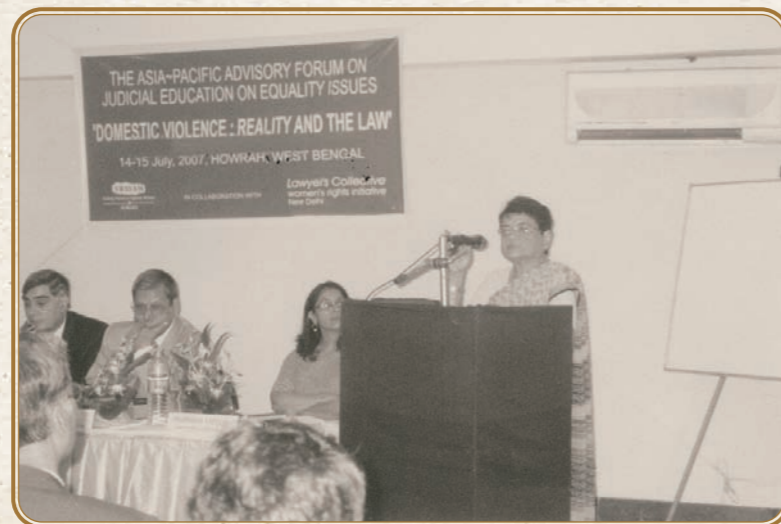
were also organised to create awareness on relevant issues and initiate further discussions. Handicrafts training was introduced for the core youth group. Gender-based trainings were conducted for youth groups. Consequently, community men, women and youth took the lead in mobilising community members for our activities and participated enthusiastically as well.

ultimately become a part of the local government and will be sensitised on women's rights issues by the time they assume office.

In 2009, we held an information fair in collaboration with CINI the community where government departments/organisations like the Panchayet, ICDS, Nehru Yuva Kendra, Life Insurance Corporation of India, State Bank of India put up stalls informing the community

about the different schemes and programmes available to them. Other NGO's also put up stalls on social issues like health, human rights, violence against women and the Right to Information Act. Awareness programmes, street corners and rallies were held on these issues. Community women's groups and youth groups participated in these programmes and the youth group put up cultural performances on these issues during the information fair.

This period saw Swayam forge stronger links with the communities despite resistance from some men and we are now working towards building community groups that focus not only on women's rights but also on issues affecting the community as a whole. CINI is working to integrate VAW in its work and using many of our posters and other communication materials in its training and programmes. We are now extending our work into adjacent villages.



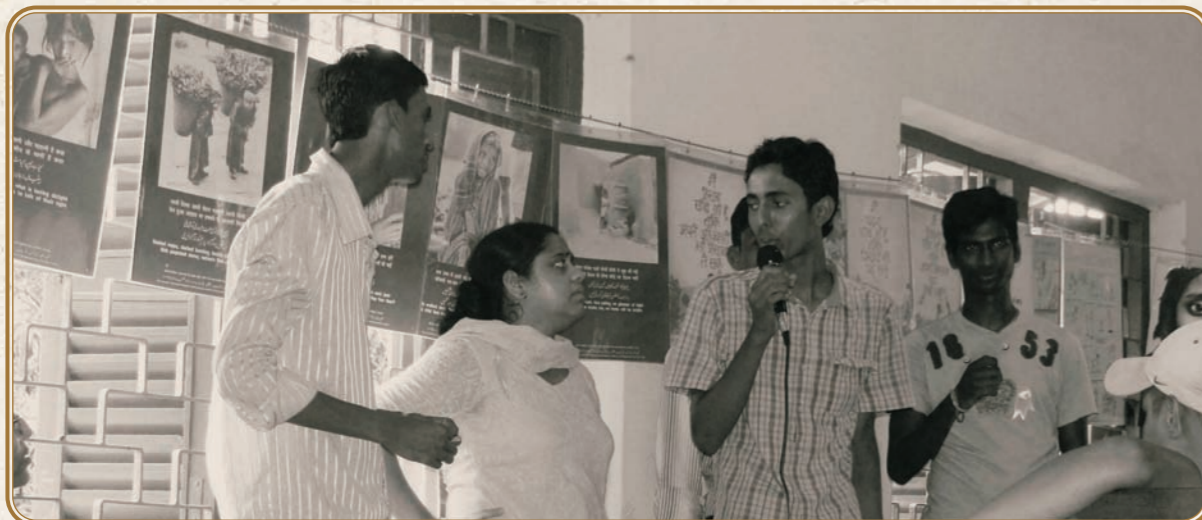
### OUTREACH AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES

Our outreach programmes are essentially geared to analyse the causes of violence and discuss ways in which different social groups – the judiciary, educational institutions, the police, NGO's and community based organisations, health practitioners and the general public – can combat it through focused group discussions,

workshops and interactive sessions. Some of these programmes are highlighted below:

#### Judiciary

- We held workshops, seminars and training on gender justice with judges, lawyers, public prosecutors, law students and law faculty under the aegis of the Asia-Pacific Advisory Forum on judicial education on gender equality issues. (Swayam is part of the management team of the Forum).



- We organised a three-day residential workshop on gender equality entitled 'Beyond the myths: Upholding equality' in July 2005 in Dooars, West Bengal for 24 judges and magistrates of district and sub-divisional courts of West Bengal.

- We held a two-day residential workshop on the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, for 30 judicial magistrates from Kolkata and districts in collaboration with Lawyers Collective in 2007.

#### Educational institutions

- We worked with 29 Kolkata colleges and schools to raise awareness among students through three poster exhibitions, 14 interactive sessions and panel discussions, 22 workshops, 3 debate competitions and 4 inter school/college competitions centring on gender equality and violence against women.

- We held an essay contest with The Statesman (Voices section) on the topic 'Men of quality are not afraid of equality', inter-college drama competitions, self-defence training for girls and open-mike sessions where college girls shared their personal stories of courage.

- We were involved in the Peace works process initiated and conceptualised by the Seagull Foundation for the Arts to introduce and instil a human



rights education curriculum in urban schools covering gender, identity, diversity/equality, media, human dignity and justice.

- We conducted a gender orientation workshop with 22 teachers from schools and colleges and initiated discussions on the findings of our report 'Young Minds Speak' on students' perceptions of gender inequality and violence against women with educationists, the Ministry of Education in West Bengal and other players in the educational system.

- We initiated a process of mobilising youth by conducting interactive sessions on Gender Equality in 4 colleges and identifying student volunteers who wished to work on this issue. The volunteers then went through a three day orientation workshops on 'Gender Equality

and Violence against Women'. Interested students were then divided into groups based on their interest in Theatre, Dance and photography and a professional resource person helped them translate their learning on the issues through the cultural medium they had chosen. This culminated in a public performance called 'Winds of Change... Toward Equality' at the G.D. Birla Sabhagar Hall.

#### Police

- We conducted a number of sensitisation programmes with inspectors and sub-inspectors of police from different districts in West Bengal.

#### Public

- We used various tools for awareness generation including film festivals and poster exhibitions and collaborated with Breakthrough, Delhi, and Point of View, a Mumbai-based non-profit organisation, to bring exciting film festivals –



'Made by Women' in 2005 and the Tri-Continental Human Rights Festival each year from 2006-2009 – to Kolkata as a part of our mandate to create a more equitable world.

- We organised 'Peace Women across the Globe', an exhibition detailing the work of 1,000 peacemakers nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005 and a photography exhibition in December 2006 of renowned

journalist P. Sainath, reflecting the story of poor rural Indian women and their work in collaboration with the Seagull Foundation For Arts and SANGAT.

- We organised a photography exhibition 'Women Struggle, Women Resist' in collaboration with Drik India, depicting women's protests, struggles and resistance in 2007.



- We conducted rallies, held public programmes, conducted street corners and collected signatures from the public to advocate for the effective implementation of The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, in 2008 and 2009.

### CAMPAIGNING

The highlights of each year's campaign and the issues it dealt with are as below:

#### 2005-06

The campaign focussed on the different forms of violence against women and was aimed at men in particular and conducted in collaboration with 14 organisations in West Bengal. The various events held during the campaign were:

- An Information Fair covering different right issues, including child rights, right to sexual preferences, trafficking, domestic violence and rights of disabled people with a special focus on women, among others in Diamond Harbour.

- Poster exhibitions at busy street junctions like Park Circus and on Nicco Park premises

- A peace march to observe South Asian Women's Day at the Shyambazar five-point crossing

- An open session with college girls sharing personal experiences of strength and courage

- A debate and interactive sessions with college students



#### 2006-07

The campaign was designed in collaboration with Drik India and IAWRT and appealed to men and young boys to take responsibility in ending violence against women and girls. We also collaborated with the Seagull Foundation for the Arts, Calcutta Samaritans, Hope Foundation, Child In Need Institution and Maitree to reach a larger and different audience. The events included:

- Film screenings and panel discussions on 'Women and State Violence'

- An artists workshop on gender, sexuality and violence against women

- A panel discussion on 'Men's responsibility to stop violence against women' with actor Rahul Bose as a speaker

- An exhibition of paintings entitled 'SHE' by Anita Gurbaxani in collaboration with the Oxford Bookstore

#### 2007-08

The focus of this campaign was the Protection of Women from

Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA, 2005) and towards this:

- A mobile matador rally on PWDVA, 2005 was organised in collaboration with numerous women's rights organisations.



- TV spots on PWDVA, 2005 were designed and shared with AMAN members who translated them into their local languages. These were shown through cable television in various rural and urban areas.

- Information fairs, street corners, film shows, theatre, music performances and a press conference were also organised.

Over 40,000 people were reached directly and while the media helped us reach many more.

#### 2008-09

The focus of the campaign was men's responsibility in ending violence against women and

girls. The events organised were:

- A walk to stop violence against women and girls
- Awareness programmes and signature campaign with men
- Street theatre
- Information fair
- A debate competition

All India Radio consistently invited Swayam in its live phone-in programme Mahila Mahal. Consequently in 2008, phones started ringing in Swayam's office from villages in Burdwan and Midnapore even before the programme had ended.

### 2009-2010

The focus of this year's campaign was twofold; Gender Equality and The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. The events organized during the campaign were;

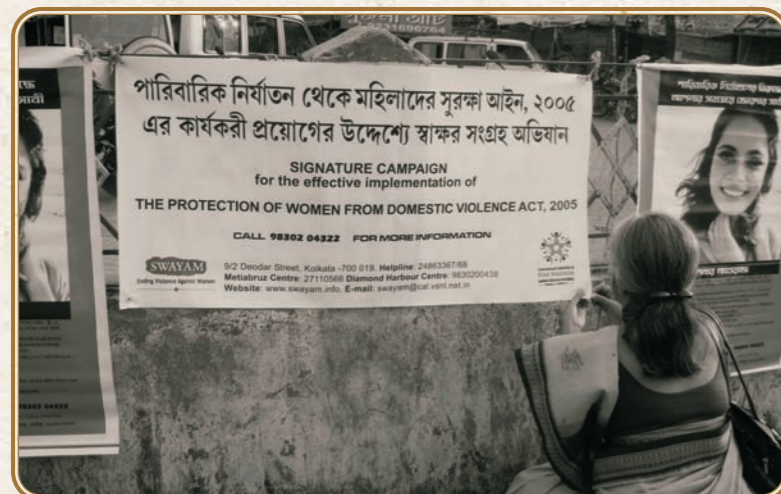
- Winds of Change... Towards Gender Equality, a public programme with theatre, photography and dance on the issue by school and college students



- Street corners, Leaflets Distribution and Signature collection for the effective implementation of The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. 20000 leaflets were distributed

and 2945 signatures collected

- Information fairs in Diamond Harbour and Metiabruz on citizen's rights and entitlements from the State and the Right to Information Act.



### PUBLICATIONS AND CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

We produced and published numerous resource and campaign materials in the form of books, information kits, booklets/ pamphlets, leaflets, posters, training kits, reports, fact sheets and TV spots, among others, in Bengali, Hindi, English and Urdu. Some publications comprised:



- Posters and leaflets on 'The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act', and other issues addressed by our campaigns

- TV spot on Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
- Bengali version of Bell Bajao, a TV spot on domestic violence
- Set of seven posters on Gender Equality

- Pocket Calendar on Gender Equality
- **ADVOCACY AROUND THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT (PWDVA, 2005)**

We have been active in advocacy efforts around the implementation of the PWDVA, 2005, and some of our work in this regard, between August

2005 and March 2010, is given below:

- Participated in meetings and discussions with parliamentarians, the National Commission for Women and West Bengal Commission for Women
- Organised meetings of like-minded organisations to discuss and carry out collective advocacy on PWDVA, 2005, in West Bengal

- Met the Minister of Law, Minister for Social Welfare and Women and Child Development, the Home Secretary, to discuss the effective implementation of PWDVA, 2005, as part of the “AMAN Global Voices for Peace in the Home” (AMAN) network (West Bengal chapter).

- Applications under Right to Information Act were filed with the Department of Women and Child Welfare in 4 states (West Bengal, Kerala, UP and North East) by members of the network AMAN demanding information around implementation of PWDVA, 2005.

- Held Press Conferences for the Effective implementation of PWDVA, 2005, on behalf of AMAN.

- Participated as a panellist in a discussion on the PWDVA, 2005 on the National TV Channel Doordarshan

- Made two TV spots on PWDVA, 2005 in Bengali on the Act which were shown on four television channels



- Translated the PWDVA, 2005, into simple Bengali for women and other stakeholders. Designed a which spelt out details of the provisions under the Act

- A play in Bengali detailing benefits under the PWDVA, 2005 was written by Swayam's theatre group and performed in various public places

- Created awareness on the PWDVA, 2005, through presentations, workshops, awareness programmes, information fairs, street corners, a mobile rally on matador vans, for lawyers, activists, grassroots women, magistrates, police, NGO's and the general public.

- Held a two-day residential workshop on the detailed provisions of PWDVA 2005, for 30 magistrates from six districts in West Bengal

- Conducted street corners and signature campaigns to put pressure on the government to implement the PWDVA, 2005 effectively.

- Prepared and distributed

information leaflets on the PWDVA, 2005 in four languages (English, Bengali, Hindi and Urdu)

### NETWORKING

Collective processes catalyse social change. We reinforced linkages and worked with other like-minded organisations/networks/platforms to strengthen our efforts to create social change and make our policy level interventions more meaningful. A sampling of the work we did in collaboration with these organisations is given below:

Maitree, is a women's rights network in West Bengal. As members of Maitree we participated in the following protests and campaigns:

- A protest was organized against the attack on noted writer Taslima Nasreen by fundamentalists and the decision of the West Bengal government asking her to leave the state

- A 24-hour sit-in demonstration and hunger-strike to protest the state violence and grave violation of

human rights against villagers in Nandigram.

- A demonstration to protest dastardly crimes against the Christian community in Orissa.

- Protest demonstration against a leading daily for ridiculing and stamping women as “incompetent and worth only as dressing up and looking good” in the garb of criticizing the government officials

- A protest against the high-handed attitude of Sri Ram Sena in curbing the autonomy and mobility of women in the name of tradition and culture

- Protest for the release of Dr Binayak Sen, a human rights activist who has been kept in jail custody without trial

We also took responsibility for Maitree's Secretariat on two occasions during this time. We organised a number of study circles on Reservations for Women's Political Participation

and the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 for Maitree members.

SANGAT is a South Asian Network of Gender Activists and Trainers. We are part of the core group of the network and participated in numerous programmes, trainings and meetings organised by Sangat. We also organised three Gender Trainings on behalf of SANGAT in collaboration with Sangat members in Bangladesh.

We became members of Forum to Engage Men, is a national platform of individuals, organisations and institutions working with 'Boys and Men for Gender Equality' and participated in numerous national level meetings and workshops organised by them.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD, Cairo 1994) marked a watershed in the understanding of

population and development issues. ICPD+15, a Civil Society Review is a platform that was set up for to review key gains and challenges that have emerged in the last fifteen years since ICPD in the context of health related policy and programming in India. Swayam is part of the Co-Ordinating Committee of ICPD+15 and participated in programmes organised by the Secretariat. We also co-authored a fact sheet on Violence against Women and Women's Health with Jagori, for ICPD+15.

We believe it is important for us to lend solidarity and work with groups working on different human rights issues to strengthen the overall movement. In this context we participated in a number of meetings and rallies organised by different rights organisations (including Disability Rights groups).

### Volunteers and interns

We engaged young volunteers from schools and colleges to help with office and programmatic work.

Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010
Volunteers	18	2	-	9	-

We have had numerous interns including young women from Ghana and France.

Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010
Interns	1	3	1	2	2

### Visitors

We received visitors, both individuals and organisations from India, Bangladesh, Japan, the US, Finland and Israel who wanted to learn about our work and experiences.

Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010
Visitors	9	54	15	50	62

## Towards a brighter future



“If you can imagine it,  
you can achieve it. If  
you can dream it, you  
can become it.”

– William Arthur Ward

Swayam's vision is to create a world free of violence with equal opportunities for all. To achieve this vision, we aim to carry on with our core activities and change direction and focus in some areas of our work. While we will continue to provide support services to women facing violence, their children and parental families, the spotlight will be on building the capacity of women to create awareness and action around women's rights and gender equality, as well as on addressing their need for economic self sufficiency. We will mentor members of Dishari and encourage women to use their creative talents like theatre, music and Prayas to contribute to broader struggles around these issues. New strategies with regard to women's economic self sufficiency will be introduced and small enterprises and non traditional forms of work will be actively developed and promoted. Activities that respond to the mental health needs of women will continue

to be given priority. Efforts will be made to liaise with health care providers and provide information on medical treatment and support at affordable cost to the women. Our work with children of survivors, particularly adolescent children will be revamped to address their specific needs.

However, the focal point of our work in the coming years will be the community based prevention work that we have begun in Metiabruz and Diamond Harbour. We will concentrate on mobilizing women, men and youth to work towards ending violence against women in these communities and facilitate the emergence of proactive groups working towards change. Simultaneously, we will facilitate a process of empowering community members, particularly women to demand their rights and entitlements from the State and make the State accountable.

Another important area will be to work with the student community to address gender inequality and violence against women and strengthen our campaigning efforts.

We will strengthen the work of AMAN: Global Voices for Peace in the Home and Men for Gender Equality, advocate for

the effective implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and initiate a collective campaign against Domestic Violence. An interactive website will be developed and awareness materials and publications produced. Personal and professional capacities of our staff members will be developed and second line leadership strengthened.

In the last five years we provided support to over 525 women annually on an average; going ahead, we expect to increase this to 575 women annually. In doing so, we expect to widen our circle of influence, touching more women across a larger number of geographies.

Now the time has come for us to move from awareness to action; from patient progress to accelerated rollout; from the success of established captive models to widespread replication, from direct support to policy level interventions. We expect to this by inspiring other NGOs to replicate our successful model through training and mentoring processes and working towards systemic change at the policy level in collaboration with like-minded organisations, networks and social movements.

# Financial information

Balance Sheet as at 31.03.2006, 31.03.2007, 31.03.2008, 31.03.2009 & 31.03.2010.

(Amount in Rs.)

	For F.Y.:2005-06		For F.Y.:2006-07		For F.Y.:2007-08		For F.Y.:2008-09		For F.Y.:2009-10	
	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)
<b>A. SOURCES</b>										
OF FUND:										
Corpus Fund		83,289		133,289		133,289		133,289		250,789
Capital Assets										
Fund		6,629,485		7,860,696		8,219,097		8,435,058		8,554,265
Endowment Fund		-		14,160,436		15,012,730		16,089,462		17,261,528
Project Fund										
c/f to the next year		530,473		4,481,889		2,136,386		2,459,563		2,966,880
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,243,246</b>		<b>26,636,309</b>		<b>25,501,502</b>		<b>27,117,371</b>		<b>29,033,461</b>	
<b>B. APPLICATION</b>										
OF FUNDS:										
Fixed Assets		6,629,485		7,860,696		8,219,097		8,435,058		8,554,265
Investments		391,109		18,836,458		17,210,834		18,741,500		20,235,409
Current Assets,										
Loans & Advances	222653		(44645)		71571		(59186)		243788	
Less: Current										
Liabilities										
& Provisions	NIL		16,200		NIL		NIL		NIL	
Net Current										
Assets/ (Liabilities)		222,653		(60,845)		71,571		(59,186)		243,788
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,243,246</b>		<b>26,636,309</b>		<b>25,501,502</b>		<b>27,117,371</b>		<b>29,033,461</b>	

Income & expenditure accounts for the years ended 31.03.2006, 31.03.2007, 31.03.2008, 31.03.2009 & 31.03.2010

	For F.Y.:2005-06		For F.Y.:2006-07		For F.Y.:2007-08		For F.Y.:2008-09		For F.Y.:2009-10	
	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)	Amount (Rs.)
Project Fund received in advance b/f from previous year	1,979,993		530,473		4,481,889		2,136,386		2,459,563	
<b>A. INCOME DURING THE YEAR :</b>										
Donation Received from-										
UNIFEM	78,217		-		-		-		-	
Jules & Paul Emile Leger Foundation	3,207,389		7,926,142		1,444,941		5,157,443		5,301,339	
The Ford Foundation (through I. I. E.)	-		-		-		-		296,000	
Local Donors	525,450		268,762		62,368		32,041		288,275	
Interest Income	391,432		291,834		420,370		490,724		520,562	
Other Income	36,841	6,219,322	470,315	9,487,526	26,200	6,435,768	76,600	7,893,194	362,000	9,227,739
<b>B. EXPENDITURE:</b>										
Direct Support										
Services Programme:-										
Individual & Group Support										
Services for Women	772,996		709,728		871,784		1,148,646		1,169,330	
Support Centre Expenses	243,241		217,302		184,373		199,432		225,191	
Space Charges for Support Centre	372,420		-		-		-		-	
Individual & Group Support Services for Children	77,685		83,366		62,313		117,860		130,676	
Programme Staff	1,023,186		1,054,931		1,184,628		1,538,762		1,380,584	
Initiatives for Social Action & Change (ISAC) Programme:										
Community mobilisation, Campaign, Outreach & Capacity Building Programmes	344,177		505,584		292,602		501,170		1,093,633	
Research, Documentation & Publication	236,321		23,010		57,711		220,826		141,041	
Advocacy & Networking	19,036		76,782		301,293		245,917		352,035	
Programme Staff	336,097		326,271		490,388		695,300		1,040,188	
Organisational Development	-		480,585		163,288		189,288		230,642	
Accounts & Audit	110,844		203,440		236,561		273,558		298,768	
Capital Expenses including Capital Maintenance	2,152,847	5,688,849	1,324,639	5,005,637	454,442	4,299,382	302,875	5,433,631	198,772	6,260,859
Project Fund received in advance c/f to the next year		530,473		4,481,889		2,136,386		2,459,563		2,966,880



## Organisational Information

### Trust Board

Anuradha Kapoor *Managing Trustee & Founder Swayam*

Kamla Bhasin *Trustee, Founder Member Jagori (New Delhi) & Advisor, Sangat*

Shyamalu Dudeja *Trustee, Chair Calcutta Foundation (Till March 2008)*

Somnath Zutshi *Trustee, Psychiatrist*

Rajashri Dasgupta *Trustee, Journalist*

Kavita Punjabi *Trustee, Professor*

Shazi Ahmed *Trustee*

### Advisory Board

Mahasweta Devi, Author And Activist

Uma Ahmed, Educationist

Sandhi Mukherjee, IPS (Retd)

Aparna Sen, Filmmaker

### The Swayam Team On 31 March 2010

Anuradha Kapoor *Director*

Anindita Majumder *Assistant Director*

### Direct Support Services Team

Gargee Guha *Coordinator*

Saswati Mitra *Senior Programme Facilitator*

Kakali Bhattacharjee *Senior Programme Facilitator*

Shyamali Das *Case Worker*

Surama Ghosh *Case Worker*

Rimple Mehta *Case Worker*

### Initiatives For Social Action and Change Team

Sukanya Gupta *Coordinator*

Anamitra Mukherjee *Programme Officer*

Jharna Maity *Community and Case Worker*

Aditi Kar *Community and Case Worker*

Swati Sanyal *Community and Case Worker*

Mosaddek Molla *Field Worker*

Nargis Ara *Field Worker*

### Accounts

Bijoya Ghosh *Chief Accountant*

Ananda Mohan Dey *Asst. Accountant*

### Support Staff

Ganesh Das

Raju Purkait

### Consultants

Chandana Bakshi *Mental Health*

Anuradha Das *Mental Health*

Amalesh Kanti Ghoshal *Legal*

Uttam Kumar Roy *Legal*

Avijit Dutta *Legal*

Suranjana Dasgupta *Theatre*

Sukla Mitra *Part Time Librarian*

### Collaborating Organisations /Individuals

Anudip Foundation

Sudarshana Ladies Circle

Seagull Foundation For The Arts

Kolkata Sanved, Dance Therapy

Samaj Darpan Natya Sanstha, Theatre

Shamita Das Dasgupta, Research

### Auditors

Biplab Ghosh & Co.

### Bankers

United Bank Of India Tivoli Park Branch

SBI, Garcha Branch

### Registration Details

Registered Under The Indian Trusts Act And The Foreign Contributions Regulations Act.

All Contributions To Swayam Are Exempt From Income Tax U/S 80G of The Income Tax Act.

## Acknowledgements

We Wish To Thank All The Individuals And Organisations Mentioned Below Without Whose Support Swayam Would Not Have Been Able To Achieve Its Goals.

### Funding Partners

The Cardinal Leger Foundation

The Ford Foundation

### Organisational Donors

Calcutta Foundation

Ladies Education And Welfare Trust

Time And Talents Club

Ladies Education And General Trust

Jyotirmai Club

Edelgive Foundation

Rudra Prayag

Charitable Trust

Greenplay Industries Limited

Hindustan National Glass

And Industries Limited

Khivraj Tech Park Pvt Ltd

Switz Foods Pvt .Ltd

Balarampur Chini

Mills Limited

Merlin Holdings Pvt .Ltd

### Individual Donors

Anant Mody

Anita Gurbaxani

Arnab Basu , Pratima Basu

Girdhari Malhotra

Kheali Bose (Late)

Meena Malhotra

Mohandas Pai

Naveen Kishore

Pooja Doshi

Rajatava Dutta

Rakesh Surie

Somnath Hore (Late)

Sujan Dasgupta

Sunandini Banerjee

T.V Kusum Lata Pai

### Our Supporters

Abeer Chakravorty

Anusuya Bhaduri

Dr J Ram

Dr K.L. Narayanan (Late)

Dr Sumitra Rahman

Mudar Pathereya

Naveen Kishore

Ronnie Gupta

Sunandini Banerjee

Seagull Foundation For the Arts

Trysis Communications

### Community Supporters

#### Diamond Harbour

Sheikh Aminuddin

Sheikh Maibur

Sheikh Azizullah

Badruddoza Molla

Saleya Bibi

Karunamoyee Bhowmik

#### Metiabruz

Shakil Ansari

Tabassum Ara

Md Naushad

### All our volunteers and in particular:

Atique

Bandana Chatterjee

Flower Silliman

Naveen Jhaharia

Nibha Bhakta Mitra

Piya Sengupta

Piyali Sen

Pritam Bandopadyopadhyay

Raisa Hosain

Riya Sengupta

Shashi Kapoor

Suruchi Gupta

### Interns

Ameyavikrama Thanvi

Ananya Basu

Aroni Choudhury

Denise Twum

Irina Roy

Madeleine Martin

Neelanjana Sikdar

Sindhura Chakravarty

Y. Benita Mercy

*All the networks and organisations we have worked with during this time  
All the women we have worked with for their strength and courage*