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KUDUMBASHREE STATE POVERTY ERADICATION MISSION

A Model Documentation Report on Addressing
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in India

Soma Kishore Parthasarathy, Poulomi Pal, Shubha Bhattacharya,
Subhalakshmi Nandi, Nandita Bhatla, and Alpaxee Kashyap

Research Assistance: Iswarya Subbiah

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| <u>ADS</u> | <u>Area Development Society (at ward/village level)</u> |
| <u>BMGF</u> | <u>Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation</u> |
| <u>CDS</u> | <u>Community Development Society (at Panchayat level)</u> |
| <u>CSOs</u> | <u>Civil Society Organizations</u> |
| <u>DMC</u> | <u>District Mission Coordinator Kudumbashree</u> |
| <u>FGD</u> | <u>Focus Group Discussions</u> |
| <u>GBV</u> | <u>Gender-Based Violence</u> |
| <u>GRPs</u> | <u>Gender Resource Persons</u> |
| <u>GSLP</u> | <u>Gender Self Learning program</u> |
| <u>ICRW</u> | <u>International Center for Research on Women</u> |
| <u>IPV</u> | <u>Intimate Partner Violence</u> |
| <u>JLGs</u> | <u>Joint Liability Groups</u> |
| <u>KELSA</u> | <u>Kerala State Legal Services Authority</u> |
| <u>MGNREGS/NREGS</u> | <u>Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme</u> |
| <u>NABARD</u> | <u>National Rural Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development</u> |
| <u>NCRB</u> | <u>National Crime Research Bureau</u> |
| <u>NGOs</u> | <u>Non-Governmental Organizations</u> |
| <u>NHGs</u> | <u>Neighborhood Groups</u> |
| <u>NRLM</u> | <u>National Rural Livelihoods Mission</u> |
| <u>NRO</u> | <u>National Resource Organization</u> |
| <u>PRIs</u> | <u>Panchayati Raj Institutions</u> |
| <u>PPC</u> | <u>People's Plan Campaign</u> |
| <u>PWDVA</u> | <u>Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005</u> |
| <u>RPs</u> | <u>Resource Persons</u> |
| <u>SHGs</u> | <u>Self-Help Groups</u> |
| <u>SPEM</u> | <u>State Poverty Eradication Mission</u> |
| <u>UBSP</u> | <u>Urban Basic Services for the Poor</u> |
| <u>UNICEF</u> | <u>United Nations Children's' Fund</u> |
| <u>UPA</u> | <u>Urban Poverty Alleviation</u> |
| <u>VAW</u> | <u>Violence Against Women</u> |
| <u>WCP</u> | <u>Women's Component Plan</u> |

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to understand, document and analyze the strategies and mechanisms of the Kudumbashree Mission¹ in the southern Indian state of Kerala, for addressing violence, specifically intimate partner violence (IPV). *“IPV is defined as sexual, physical or psychological violence inflicted by a partner or ex-partner.”* As shown in an ICRW report (Pande, et al., 2017), India is the seventh highest ranking country in the prevalence of IPV. According to NFHS 2015-16 report, Kerala, on an average 14.3 percent of all married women have ever experienced spousal violence and 1.2 percent have experienced violence during pregnancy.²

Kudumbashree is the poverty eradication and women’s empowerment program implemented by the State Poverty Eradication Mission (SPEM) of the Government of Kerala. In Malayalam, ‘Kudumbashree’ means ‘prosperity of the family’. Kudumbashree was set up in 1997 by the Kerala State Government in response to the policy shift in ensuring devolution of powers to the Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs)³ in Kerala,

and the People’s Plan Campaign (PPC), which attempted to democratize and decentralize planning, budgeting and overall governance.

The aim of the study is to provide policy recommendations on best practices for an integrated IPV strategy, based on the learnings from the experience of the Kudumbashree Mission. By and large, while gender-based violence (GBV) is acknowledged and discussed to a large extent in this program, discussions on IPV are restricted by codes of honor embedded in patriarchal cultures. The program has been reviewed for its interventions on GBV and IPV, within the political and socio-cultural context of Kerala. However, the key elements and strategies of the intervention are captured and analyzed for purposes of generic relevance regardless of external conditions.

Since the purpose is to study a large-scale, state-sponsored initiative, the framework for the study incorporates a macro view of the policy environment around the program and the intra-institutional processes and other

¹ Retrieved from <http://www.kudumbashree.org/>

² International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS). National Family Health Survey - 4 2015 -16 Retrieved from http://rchiips.org/NFHS/pdf/NFHS4/KL_FactSheet.pdf

³ In India, the Panchayati Raj functions as a system of governance in which Gram Panchayats/Village Panchayats are the basic units of local administration. The system is characterized by Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) at three levels: Gram Panchayat (village level), Mandal Parishad or Block Samiti or Panchayat Samiti (block level), and Zila Parishad (district level).

factors that influence the program at multiple levels. The analysis framework broadly follows the gender and organizational development framework of Rao and Kelleher (2005), further modified by Batliwala (2015), wherein the interface of individual social consciousness is analyzed in the context of: a) Social norms, beliefs and practices; b) Access and control over resources and influence over or participation in decision making; and c) Action to address these norms and practices in order to bring change. Institutional structures and processes are also analyzed for their approach to IPV at individual, socio-cultural and organizational levels.

Key learnings:

- Spaces and opportunities to reflect upon and question gender-inequitable beliefs and practices of gender-based oppression as well as incidence of violence against women (VAW) collectively would enable women to individually resist violence and collectively challenge its normative acceptance.
- Conversely, when communities collaborate to uphold patriarchal family as a normative ideal institution, demands of equality or autonomy are perceived as disrupting its harmony and VAW is likely to be more prevalent and more concealed.
- Economic/poverty programs centered on women's participation as means for family well-being have social costs that are borne by women themselves e.g. ignorance of their own well-being or autonomy within the semblance of some instrumentalized agency.
- IPV may remain hidden when such programs are not coupled with separate and specific efforts to address it through collectivization

and addressing the structural moorings of such patriarchies.

- Finally, to enhance women's status and stop overt and covert violence, a multi-faceted and integrated approach to IPV is required along with feminist collectivization at multiple levels.
- When GBV and IPV are integrated into institutional approaches, the program is likely to then be geared to invest in reflective processes and responsive structures that enable women and men to challenge discriminatory and oppressive practices, norms and belief. Such an approach is also likely to challenge prevalent power regimes toward democratization and equality intersectionally.

Key Dimensions of Study

The key dimensions examined to review and analyze the IPV interventions within Kudumbashree were:

- Genesis, approach and motivations for inclusion of IPV within the state-led poverty-alleviation program.
- Inter-linkages between Kudumbashree structural platforms and operationalization of system responsiveness (such as Snehitha⁴ and group self-learning strategy), arrangements made for an inclusive process, and their experiences in addressing IPV.
- Social impact and linkages between social and economic empowerment.
- Convergence and linkages with other structures - Panchayats, Female Local Health Workers, civil society organizations (CSOs), women's groups, Mahila Samakhya.⁵

⁴ Gender help desks of Kudumbashree explained later.

⁵ The Mahila Samakhya program was launched in 1988 in pursuance of the goals of the New Education Policy (1986) and the Programme of Action as a concrete programme for the education and empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly of women from socially and economically marginalized groups. For more information visit the website: <http://mhrd.gov.in/mahila-samakhya-programme>

- Organic sustainability of the Kudumbashree model to address IPV.

Research Objectives, Methodology, Tools and Process

This section introduces the research objectives, methodology and design, and discusses the emergence of the Kudumbashree program, its evolution toward gender concerns and its understanding of IPV and GBV.

Setting the Context

Existing literature shows a high gender development index in Kerala (life expectancy, sex ratio, literacy etc.) but also a high proportion of crimes and violence against women and incidents of suicides.⁶ This is attributed to the continuance of cultural Feudalism⁷ along with decline of matrilineal traditions.⁸ Political reforms had not encompassed cultural changes, leading to women only serving as instruments in politics and in the politics of development.⁹ The marginalization of women in governance was only realized and acted upon after emergence of the PPC to institutionalize decentralized governance, when inequalities and poverty were addressed within Panchayat level plans more directly through allocation of resources in the form of the women's component plan and specific local targets. This, however, did not lead to gender initiatives that addressed GBV or IPV, although crimes against women remained at high levels in the state. The advent of the flagship

Kudumbashree program and its expansion across the State positioned as a program for women's empowerment offers potential for this burning issue to be addressed on a wide scale and for effective strategies to be instituted.

Previous studies of the Kudumbashree program have concentrated either on economic or governance aspects of women's participation. Studies from feminist viewpoints have highlighted the gendered nature of the components and status quo politics rather than on addressing violence against women (VAW). For this research, literature review was conducted in two trajectories: the first indicated analyses of Kudumbashree and references to VAW initiatives within them; references to initiatives for women and their benefits leading to gender analysis was mostly absent except for the study by Devika and Thampi (2007),¹⁰ which observed the resistance to feminist mobilization, potential risks to women and reinforcement of traditional images of women.

The second trajectory comprised of a search for data on incidence of VAW and IPV and then extracted references to the existence of such initiatives and their impact. The second trajectory found absence of large scale, comprehensive, analytical or comparative studies. A study by Kodoth and Eapen (2002) did point to the higher incidence of crimes against women in the domestic sphere of intimate family relations, pointed to the need for greater analysis and interventions designed to address this problem.¹¹

⁶ Kodoth and Eapen, 2002; Eapen, 2002; Sonpar and Kapur, 2001; Bhaskaran, 2011

⁷ In "Kerala: Towards a New Agenda", Thomas Isaac T. M. and Michael Tharakan P. K, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 30, No. 31/32 (Aug. 5-12, 1995), pp. 1993-2004.

⁸ Menon, 1995; Kodoth and Eapen, 2002

⁹ Saradmoni, K. Women, Kerala and Some Development Issues; Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 29, No. 9 (Feb. 26, 1994), pp. 501-509

¹⁰ Devika, J. & Thampi, Binitha V. (2007). Between empowerment and liberation: the Kudumbashree initiative in Kerala. Indian Journal of Gender Studies, Vol 14, pages-33-60, Jan 1, 2007

¹¹ Kodoth, Praveena & Eapen, Mridul. (2005). Looking beyond Gender Parity: Gender Inequities of Some Dimensions of Well-Being in Kerala. Economic and Political Weekly. 40. 3278-3286. 10.2307/4416933.

However, a study by Rajagiri College (2005) and data from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) helped in selection of districts for this study along with inputs of senior functionaries of the program. With a view to highlight the best practices, districts with higher incidence of violence, greater initiative showed by the program team and a medium to high success rate were selected so as to map both conducive and constraining factors for the program.

Studies by Kodoth and Eapen (2005) have pointed to statistics on crimes against women which reflect “a direct violation of personal liberty” and reveal “the serious dimensions that domestic abuse has attained in Kerala. The picture might well survive even after adjusting for the possibility of better crime reporting (associated with higher levels of literacy). Thus, patriarchy, reconstituted actively through social reform, defines the terms of women’s well-being in Kerala,” they conclude, pointing to the imperative to strengthen frameworks to address IPV and GBV in its deepest forms. This study seeks to review the existing structures, systems and processes as well as to explore the potential for the model to incorporate addressing IPV as a critical part of a program that has over the years become more focused on economic empowerment goals.

Methodology for the Study

Given the limited time frame and its specific purpose, the following parameters were determined to gain insights into the program and its implementation.

- 1) Program perspectives, structure and processes were reviewed through interactions with actors and experts involved in the program, its initiatives, supportive institutions and other associated departments in the State.
- 2) Two districts were selected for study of the implementation of the program – these were Kollam and Kozhikode. Both districts record some of the highest rates of crimes against women in the state;¹² both are old districts with program coverage, have more intensive focus and have taken specific initiatives relating to crimes against women. These were also districts at varied positions of success.¹³ These districts are in different parts of the state and have a varied population, ensuring representation of spatial and demographic diversities.
- 3) Within each district two Panchayats were selected that had a varied success rate in implementing the VAW initiatives. Efforts were made to select at least one Panchayat that was relatively remote, and one with higher cooperation from the Panchayat members and a functional Jagratha Samithi.¹⁴

¹² C. Sunny et al (2005); A situational analysis of domestic violence against women in Kerala, Centre for Women's studies & Development Research Institute, Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Rajagiri, Kochi, Kerala

¹³ While the ED suggested three districts and two of those were selected (Kollam and Kozhikode), our effort was to ensure that these were in fact representative of the criteria of location, incidence of VAW, intensity of efforts and demographic variance. The third district was not considered as there was a need to incorporate lessons from the less successful as well as the more successful districts.

¹⁴ Jagratha Samithis were formed at the ward and Panchayat levels under the aegis of the Kerala State Women's Commission in 2004.

¹⁵ A District Collector, often abbreviated to Collector, is an Indian Administrative Service officer in charge of revenue collection and administration of a district in India.

¹⁶ Protection Officers are nominated by the state governments under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA), 2005, for its implementation.

- 4) Interviews and discussions were conducted with nodal personnel in the program, senior government personnel involved with the program, District Collectors,¹⁵ Protection Officer and Police Circle Officer¹⁶ in one district and senior individuals from CSOs.
 - 5) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with Neighborhood Groups (NHGs) and Panchayat level Community Development Societies (CDS) in all the Panchayats as well as with one Jagratha Samithi. Interviews were held with the survivors to trace the mechanism of delivery of service and access to justice. Discussions were also held with Panchayat presidents and members available.
 - 6) Visits were made to the Snehitha in two neighboring districts – Thiruvananthapuram and Mallapuram – since the selected districts did not have Snehithas established yet. Each Snehitha was expected to serve three to four neighboring districts. Analysis of functioning of Snehitha Help Desks, Gender Self Learning Program (GSLP), Gender Corners, and Jagratha Samithis enabled the researchers to gain an in-depth insight into the model around VAW prevention and response taken up by the Kudumbashree Mission.
 - 7) Specific FGDs were held with groups where the Vulnerability mapping and the Crime mapping were undertaken. FGD was also undertaken with the Rangashree theatre group in Kollam.
 - 8) Discussions were also held with numerous members of communities and office bearers such as District Mission Coordinators, Gender Resource Persons, Community Counselors, Area Development Society (ADS) committees and Vigilante Committees, along with extended interviews with the Gender coordinators.
 - 9) The analysis of State mission and policy documents was undertaken by reviewing reports of the program and the literature available on several websites. Relevant national and district level documentation was also referred to as far as feasible.
- Insights were drawn on the level of awareness regarding IPV, conceptualization and implementation of strategies of engagement with IPV and readiness of institutional means of addressing IPV.

¹⁵ A District Collector, often abbreviated to Collector, is an Indian Administrative Service officer in charge of revenue collection and administration of a district in India.

¹⁶ Protection Officers are nominated by the state governments under the PWDVA, 2005 for its implementation.

1

GENESIS OF THE KUDUMBASHREE PROGRAM

Kudumbashree was set up in 1997 by the state government of Kerala, in response to the policy shift in ensuring devolution of powers to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Kerala, and the PPC, which attempted to democratize and decentralize planning, budgeting and overall governance. A precursor to Kudumbashree, the Urban Basic Services for the Poor (UBSP) was a women-oriented poverty-alleviation program collaboratively implemented in Alappuzha in 1993 by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), State government, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and Central government. It worked through NHGs and demonstrated women's capacities of saving, resource management and participation in decentralized planning. The State government, thus, became interested in utilizing the NHG approach to improve previous poverty-alleviation programs and increase women's participation in local self-governance.

Kudumbashree was set up as a Mission and a program of the Government of Kerala through its Government Order G.O. (MS) No.240/97 of October 29, 1997, popularly known among Kudumbashree team as 240/97. The objectives

stated included enlisting of poor households, based on 'Poverty Index':

- Organizing them into CDS and enhancing their capacities;
- Informal banking and promotion of thrift and credit;
- Enhance incomes through self-employment
- Health services for the poor;
- Improving basic amenities and housing for the poor and ensuring education for children of 'risk' families;
- Promote participation of the poor in the decentralized local governance.

The G.O. explicitly focused on the aims of poverty-alleviation for the program, and linked them to community institution building, thrift and income generation through self-employment for women's empowerment. It also mentioned funding allocation of INR 10 million in the State budget for the year 1997-98 and of INR 100 million for the entire Ninth Plan period (1997-2002). The G.O. directed the Urban Poverty Alleviation (UPA) Cell to initiate Kudumbashree; the two would later be merged.¹⁷

¹⁷ <http://thekudumbashreestory.info/index.php/history-and-evolution/kudumbashree-through-years> last accessed on 23.11.17

Following the 73rd and 74th Panchayati Raj Act Amendment in 1994, which enshrined quotas for women and marginalized groups in governance, and with the victory of the political Left in the state elections, the PPC was rolled out to facilitate decentralized local planning with greater citizen involvement.¹⁸ Bureaucratic departments with a high people interface were transferred to the PRI, paving the way for NHGs as participatory forums for citizen engagement, with 10 percent of Panchayat budget reserved for women’s programs. The Kalyanshri program in Kunoor rendered the NHG template as a successful gender-focused institution.¹⁹ The government could directly intervene through these to provide economic opportunities and support for women.

The approach was adapted and expanded further under the Community-Based Nutrition Program to Mallapuram district across 58 Municipalities and 96 Panchayats. By 1999, Kudumbashree was operational in urban local bodies. It was extended to selected Gram Panchayats (Village Panchayats) in 2000-2001 and universalized thereafter in 2002-2003.

A significant milestone was in 1995 with the merger of State Poverty Eradication Mission with the rural mission, whereby Kudumbashree emerged as a mission for women’s empowerment, implying creation of a special implementation vehicle relatively free from red tape procedures and sanctions. This structure also had greater powers for decision-making on internal functioning, resource management and adaptation of specific mechanisms.

Kudumbashree Community Network/ Mission (as on March 2015)

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------|------------------|-----------------|
| Number of NHGs | 260,252 | Rural 228,555 | Urban 31,697 |
| Number of ADSs | 19,773 | Rural 16,656 | Urban 3,117 |
| Number CDSs | 1,072 | Rural 978 | Urban 94 |
| Total members | 4,114,097 | | |

Source: The Kudumbashree Story: What is Kudumbashree? Retrieved from: <http://thekudumbashreestory.info/index.php/what%E2%80%99s-kudumbashree>

The Panchayat’s decentralized processes gave opportunities for hitherto marginalized groups including women to gain space in politics and government representation through reservations at local level structures. Reservations were already a dominant national and sub-national policy strategy in India for women’s political participation and leadership since the early 1990s, and 10 percent of Panchayats’ funds were meant to be dedicated to the Women’s Component Plan (WCP).

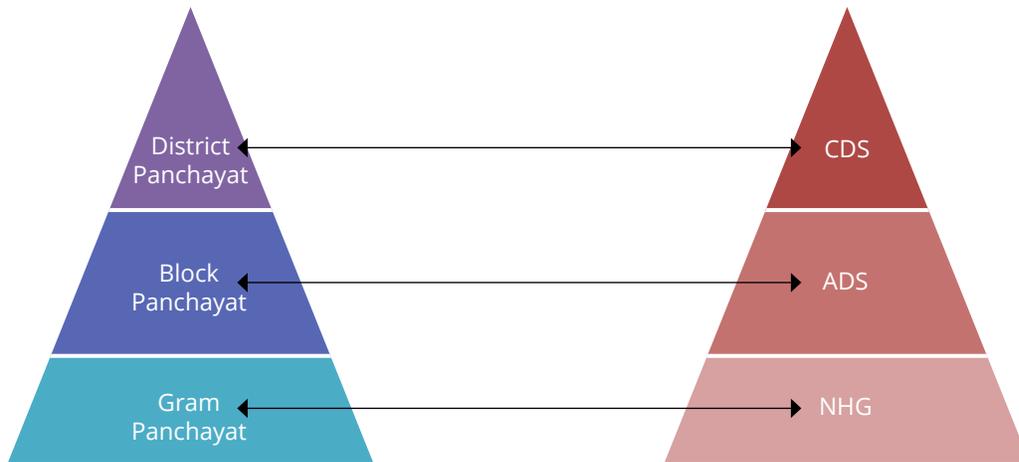
The institutional structure of the NHGs and its federated structures at block/ward and district level, had a close relationship with the three-tiers of Panchayat.²⁰ The Kudumbashree structure has the CDS at the Gram Panchayat (village) level; the Area ADS at the Ward Level and NHG at the Gram Sabha/Village level. This is illustrated in the diagram.

¹⁸ The PPC for decentralization, whereby 40 percent of the state’s financial and administrative powers would be devolved to the Panchayat level, was a unique initiative of the Government of Kerala.

¹⁹ Interview with Sarada Murleedharan, IAS, on 09.09.17 as part of this case study

²⁰ In the Indian administrative systems, one or more villages make up a Panchayat; a number of Panchayats make up a ward, and multiple wards constitute an administrative block. Several blocks cumulatively make up a district

Institutional Linkages with Local Government



Inclusion of IPV within a State-led Poverty Alleviation Program – Motivations, Genesis and Approach

Kudumbashree typically addresses certain forms of violence and harassment, ranging from violence in the public domain, trafficking due to extreme poverty, or distress migration, rape/sexual assault and child sexual abuse etc. But perpetrators often face impunity, due to their power or political associations, and GBV prevails, since women seldom have access to such power networks. Only one of the four visited CDS teams revealed some level of feminist understanding and articulation and challenged the Panchayat members for their patriarchal explanations of IPV as caused by women's lack of 'adjusting' and 'harmonious behavior.'

CDS and Kudumbashree members either deny the existence of IPV or present such incidents as aberrations, although candid revelations by women in FGDs showed that violence was more the norm, and it was just treated as a topic that could not be discussed or could only be

discussed in secrecy. Hushed tones are used to speak of IPV even in the premises of the CDS, which is proclaimed to be the most successful in gender issues by the state office. The social acceptance of women needing shelter from the neighborhood due to husband's violence in order to protect themselves and their children have been seen in several instances, however secrecy permeates into the culture of allowing IPV to continue.

Issues of GBV and IPV, which required questioning of social power relations, was far-fetched and not envisaged in the organizational mandate of the program during inception; rather, the program was driven by the state and designed within the increasing influence of neo-liberal patriarchal politics. Over a period of time, notwithstanding the initial focus on democratization, decentralization and devolution of governance; the program began to focus on thrift and credit activities alone over the years. It was envisaged that this activity and the NHGs, would form the means of strengthening grassroots democracy by drawing women into

the mainstream to challenge established power structures and corruptions, and participate in local development.²¹ Women were encouraged to enter the public economic and political space and assert their priorities, but the normative social context imposed a limitation upon them to work within existing patriarchal power boundaries and primarily expected them to work for well-being of their families and communities in positions subservient to the Panchayat.

The CDS and PRIs worked together, with PRIs leading the process and using the CDS as a means for convergence of services for women enabling them to achieve the political purpose of increased outreach and inclusion of women. PRIs initially dominated the functioning of CDSs through leadership appointments, by-laws determination and an informal stronghold backed by the patriarchal mindset and women's socialization to remain subservient.

Mr. Jagajeevan, a senior official long associated with the program and with the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP [People's Science Movement in Kerala]) explained, *"The Panchayat people are very friendly and supportive to SHGs and give more financial assistance but at the same time, need the control and the leadership (of CDS)... They control the SHGs and CDS... The Panchayat will decide who will be the members and chairperson. Generally, our women are trained in a patriarchal society. So they are very dependent and will not express their difference of opinion and will follow the direction from the Panchayat. Unfortunately, our Panchayat people did not realize that they are controlling their democratic rights."*

The ward level ADS members were three women directly elected from among the NHGs. According to the latest by-laws, these women in turn elected CDS members and chairperson at the Panchayat level through indirect elections. This gave the CDS chairperson equal political clout as the Panchayat president, and freedom to implement their women-centric agenda and activities. Their autonomy enabled the program to advance toward a more transformative politics and role, which facilitated establishment of VAW redressal processes.²²

The processes of reflection on their status and the quest for voice and agency as an autonomous organization compelled a realization to address the issue of VAW and a strong critique from the women's movement network Stree VEDI following several cases led women within the program to seek support to address GBV. The state government's decision to initiate the Nirbhaya scheme²³ provided the impetus to the emergence of a programmatic intervention on GBV and finally to the establishment of Gender Help Desk or Snehitha.

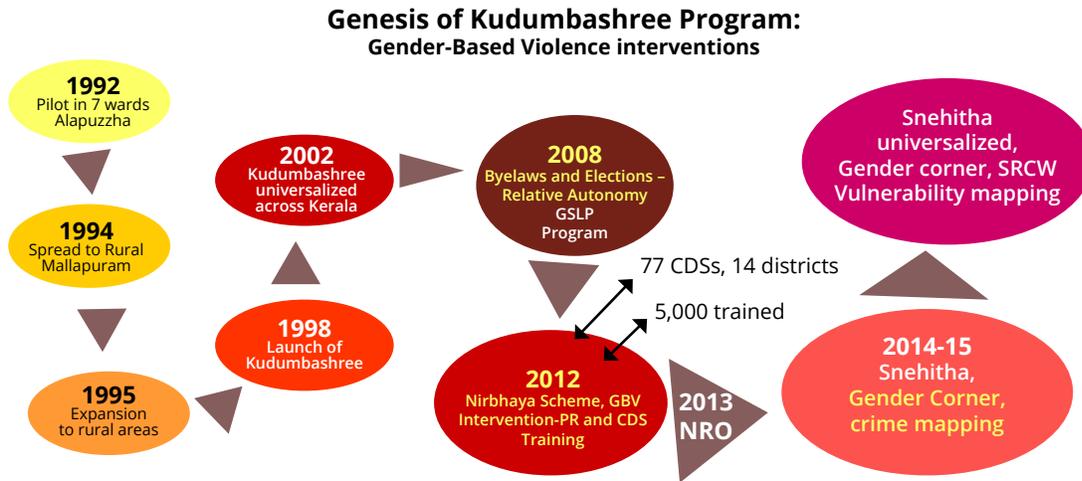
Introducing the GBV agenda - GSLP and Nirbhaya Convergence

The gender agenda of Kudumbashree was limited to a women-centric approach to poverty-alleviation through economic opportunities for them for almost a decade after its inception. It is only in 2007 with the introduction of the GSLP and its convergence with the Nirbhaya scheme in 2011 that revisions were made in the program strategy and by-laws, ensuring more autonomy

²¹ Interviews as part of this case study with Ms. Sarada Muralidharan and Mr. Vijayanand, bureaucrats associated with the program point to this aspiration

²² While PRIs and CDSs are supposed to be interdependent and work in tandem, there are examples such as Vettikavelu village (one of the field sites visited as part of this case study) where difference in political affiliations of Panchayat Representatives and CDS members has caused bitter rivalry, leading to PRI taking over the basic infrastructure facilities meant for CDS, constraining their budgets, and being antagonistic and manipulative while claiming credit for the achievements of the CDS.

²³ The Social Justice Department of Government of Kerala started this scheme in 2012 for safety and security of women and girls



and linkages of women's economic activities with services for social defense and GBV. Through the mandate to CDS to play a pivotal role in the gender program, the appointment of Resource Persons (RPs) and counselors and their training through GSLP, and the targeted training for political representatives, GBV and IPV began to receive more attention and were gradually integrated in the policy documents. The evolution timeline of the program is represented in the diagram and details are provided in Annexure 2.²⁴

Convergence of Social Security Measures: linkages with addressing violence

The CDS's role in convergence of social security measures along with the PRI has emerged more recently. It is the ADS members and RPs who provide the interface between state agencies

and communities. The ADS members are elected cadre and are important for convergence of services for beneficiaries, but only the RPs, who are more dispersed, have received systematic training and have a perspective on gender issues.

Kudumbashree members, especially CDS and ADS leaders are utilized by the Panchayats to reach out to women for data collection or dissemination of information, or to create platforms for discussion and action on issues of social justice, equity and sanitation etc. Kudumbashree mobilization of women for governance activities led to an increase in women's participation in Panchayat Gram Sabhas from 15 percent to 60 percent of total participation, i.e., higher than men. Women's forums also emerged as 'supplementary forums' to the Gram Sabhas.²⁵ The trainings held for the PPC also included gender as a

²⁴ The details of Snehitha centres, gender corner, crime mapping, vulnerability mapping is included in section 5 of this report. In 2012, Kudumbashree was recognized as a National Resource Organization (NRO) by Ministry of Rural Development. The state resource centre for women (SRCW) is part of the National Resource Centre for Women, part of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.

²⁵ [http://www.kudumbashree.org/pages/178 history and evolution- the gender dimension](http://www.kudumbashree.org/pages/178%20history%20and%20evolution-%20the%20gender%20dimension)

mandatory dimension. Despite the monitoring of gender dimensions in PPC much of the focus was on social development indicators of health and education, and IPV was not on the radar. Even in the case of Kudumbashree for this case study also confirms that “Kudumbashree has become, by chance or choice, the mainspring for the empowerment and development of the hapless women in the communities. All other programs may be considered as supplementary or supportive. One lacuna noticed is the absence of a suitable mechanism for assessing the outputs and outcomes of the manifold activities of the groups.”²⁶ Although the beneficiary-oriented programs are monitored as program deliverables.

However, the extent to which this has enabled the women to assert themselves in PRIs and claim resources for their priorities is debatable. Some functionaries state that women’s participation does impact IPV interventions, since their public presence and women’s organizations act as deterrents and watch dog mechanisms against violence. While researchers and women’s organizations express the opinion that violence is in fact rising, since discrimination and oppressive patriarchies have not been adequately and explicitly addressed hitherto in the program. Our evidence reveals that Kerala is a complex situation where apparent liberal and inclusive public rhetoric coexists with deeply conservative social and cultural structures that trivialize or ignore VAW. There has been need expressed for departments to converge to deliver services to address gender crimes, with the State Gender Resource Center as a nodal point.

Rigorous Training and Learning Process: A Tenet of Systemic Responsiveness

GSLP emerged as the vehicle for understanding gender through experiential reflection and learning processes on identified themes. The Executive Director at the time – a sensitive and committed woman bureaucrat – was instrumental in taking into account the feedback and critique from the women’s organizations and senior activists and facilitating more interactions with women’s movement. Their expertise was utilized to identify issues based on which the program created its own manuals for GSLP training and reflection programs. Through these trainings, initially a group of 60 women, which later grew to 120 women emerged as RPs at Panchayat and district level, who worked to strengthen the outreach for women to support in instances of violence as well as other services within the gender agenda. Some of them are now gender focal points at districts; others are part of vigilante groups supporting IPV survivors.

The institutional architecture to address GBV and particularly IPV that has evolved significantly only in the past 3-4 years,²⁷ but has been in the process of evolving for the past decade, now includes the following:

From the discussions held with RPs, the topics for the GSLP emerged and manuals were developed. GSLP brought an analytical rigor and participatory approach to the program, especially in trainings. Over five years, five themes were covered in these volumes shared with women and discussed at multiple levels within NHGs and RPs.

²⁶ Women Development Programmes under People’s Planning: An Impact Study to Evolve a Frame Work of Facilitating Factors. Retrieved from: <http://www.cds.ac.in/krpcds/report/Padma%20Ramachandran03.pdf>

²⁷ Interviews with (Rejitha, District level consultant Kozhikode and Bina, DMC Kollam as part of this study

| At Village/ Ward Level | At Panchayat Level | At District Level |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NHG as a solidarity group mainly for economic activities, but also as a support group • ADS members as rescue and support point persons • The Vigilante Group – members of NHGs and RPs • RPs • Counselors • Ward level Jagratha Samithi chaired by ward members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Corner as a space to confidentially register complaints and receive support • CDS chairperson, vice chairperson and other committee members – 1 per ward • Jagratha Samithi – chaired by the Panchayat president with CDS chairperson as a member and ICDS supervisor as convener, to respond to cases in convergence with representatives of other institutions: police, social justice, KELSA,²⁸ ICDS,²⁹ health, education etc. (active in 20-40 percent of Panchayats according to district gender personnel) • Crime Mapping | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Focal Person at Kudumbashree office • Protection Officer for cases of Domestic Violence • Police support for building a violence-free environment – Pink Police,³⁰ Vanitha Police³¹ • District RPs and consultants • Snehitha short-stay homes in six districts to provide shelter and counseling; being expanded to all districts • NGO, Bhoomika and Nirbhaya centers as one stop crisis centers |

The first booklet was developed by the first batch of RPs from a rights and gender justice position, on the theme of Employment. It deals with issues of gender-based division of labor, women's visible-invisible care work, legal issues, employment guarantee scheme, and workplace issues and the need for crèche services etc. Through case studies and discussion exercises, it encourages women to analyze situations and challenge discriminatory practices. Sexual harassment at the workplace is not mentioned, but some topics such as control over income,

unpaid work and division of labor associated with IPV are examined.

The second booklet evolved through a health mapping exercise wherein women analyzed their status, needs and links between health and work, provides information about relevant labor laws and raises issues of women's participation in the public domain. The Sree Sakthi Portal was set up through which the gender team responds to varied comments.³² The third booklet focuses on mobility and consists of travel accounts of

²⁸ Kerala Legal Services Authority

²⁹ The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is one of the flagship programmes of the Government of India which looks at early childhood care and development. It was launched in 1975 as a response to the challenge of providing pre-school non-formal education and to address malnutrition, morbidity, reduced learning capacity and mortality amongst children in the age group of 0-6 years, pregnant women and lactating mothers (source: <http://www.icds-wcd.nic.in/icds.aspx>).

³⁰ Kerala police introduced 'Pink Beat' patrol for enhancing the safety for women and children in public places

³¹ Women's cells in Police stations started by the Department of Home, Government of Kerala

³² This information is shared at State and district levels but is not referred to by the NHG or the CDS persons except in one instance as a source of information or dialogue. The fact that such a process has been instituted is encouraging, and it needs to be reviewed for its efficacy and its didactic format, and whether it could be more participatory as well as for the quality of discussions.

women journeying to other NHGs for exchange and learning. These were first trips outside home for some women and served to broaden their horizons.

Several additional learning processes and initiatives have also been identified by women as empowering, such as:

- Monthly gender team meetings at districts, at which discussions are transacted by RPs with their own teams at Panchayat and Ward levels.
- CDS chairperson's meetings with their teams to transfer learnings and strengthen their roles.
- Classes conducted for awareness by KELSA lawyers to disseminate information about using legal provisions.
- Distribution of and discussions on the State Police Women's Safety Manual which incorporates self-defense techniques, information regarding women-centric laws and emergency contacts.
- An intensive legal training conducted from 2010 to 2012 by lawyers of KELSA and District RPs, which was more input based than participatory.
- Self-defense classes for members of Vigilante Committees.

Feedback, however, reveals that there has been lack of systematic capacity building and follow up in the trainings, particularly after the first batch of RPs were trained, leading to loss of impact.

³² This information is shared at State and district levels but is not referred to by the NHG or the CDS persons except in one instance as a source of information or dialogue . The fact that such a process has been instituted is encouraging, and it needs to be reviewed for its efficacy and its didactic format, and whether it could be more participatory as well as for the quality of discussions.

2

CONDUCTIVE AND CONSTRAINING CONDITIONS PREVALENT FOR KUDUMBASHREE

NHGs versus SHGs and the Question of Solidarity

In the view of the Left government, the neo-liberal self-help initiatives were seen as the state shifting the onus of poverty-alleviation to communities and evading responsibility, and NHGs – which were already prevalent through previous programs – were preferred over SHGs as more integrative and vesting the onus of addressing poverty on the state rather than thrusting the responsibility for the same on the poor themselves to resolve. It also reiterated belief in social structures of family and community despite the fact that both (SHGs and NHGs) perform similar practical functions: collection of savings and lending at low interest rates. Groups are formed among neighbors and people living in proximity, which encourages intermingling through rotating meetings at every member's household and reduces dropout rates. The social affinity of groups, however, was observed to be across class and caste affiliations.

Family, including the husband, is strongly involved and men prone to violence are deterred by this cohesive presence of women due to the

threat of being exposed by their wives to the groups. Several women initially connected with the program as victims seeking support and thereby became members, recognizing that the program offers freedom of mobility and social interactions, and restrains violence in this way through social deterrence.

Family in Focus

The Kudumbashree slogan and central philosophy³³ is *“to reach out to families through women and reach out to the community through the family.”*³⁴ NHGs were organized as groups of ten or more women (one per household) for savings and entrepreneurial activities and later dovetailed with National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) for wage employment opportunities. Although women-centric, the program focused on family as the primary unit and viewed women in the gendered images of ‘caring citizens’ responsible for their family's well-being. The norm of denying the existence of IPV or treating it as a taboo may result in little support for women exposing IPV and risk of further hostility, violence and even political captures.

³³ Augustine and Kumar, 2010; Kudumbashree was identified as among the 15 best practices in governance in India by the Planning Commission and the UNDP in the same period.

³⁴ http://www.kudumbashree.org/storage//files/q339m_27092017kila.pdf

Reinforcement of Conventional Cultural Values

Although NHGs build women's solidarity and provide a space to discuss issues, they lack a strategy to build perspective, and continue to function within conventional cultural values. The researchers heard of an instance where the victim had suffered kidney damage due to severe ongoing violence, and NHG members were supportive but surprised at the existence of violence and also reluctant to intervene, fearing that their family may disapprove of it and put restrictions on their own mobility. Another instance was where a victim of violence was given support and protection, but rather than challenging the betrayal she faced, there was greater focus on protecting her daughter's sexuality and ensuring her safety sustained her relationship with the new partner. During the research, the team found three groups who acknowledged having supported victims in standing strong and resisting violence, but the involved persons were unwilling to disclose identities or case details.

Prominent patterns were found, of women not willing to question norms such as lack of freedom to stay out after dark or untouchability during menstruation, out of fear of their family's reactions or of jeopardizing the economic benefits they gained from NHGs. The most explicit evidence of this was found in Chiruvanoor Panchayat, where there was an absolute denial of violence, and yet women reported experiencing fear and retribution for asserting their voices or social mobility. They explicitly reiterated that issues such as domestic violence are best handled within homes or borne in silence. The groups in Kollam where the women members of CDS were collaboratively working with the Panchayat as well as older

women leaders of CDS who were members of Panchayat Jagratha Samithis now were more willing to challenge such conventional patriarchal mindsets and assert rights and freedoms from violence. Their empowerment was nurtured in some measure by the meetings held at district level for knowledge sharing of district gender resource teams.

Group Norms and Age Cohorts

While women have drawn strength from their NHG memberships and had significant achievements, NHG is seen more as an economic and governance forum than a source of social support. The upholding of conservative family values and patriarchal structures constrains violence survivors from breaking the silence and seeking support. This is further aggravated by group norms that prohibit multiple women from the same household from joining the group. Since most NHGs are over 10 years old, the members are middle-aged women of the households, not the young daughters-in-law. Although many senior women have played supportive roles in addressing VAW, most of them express the need to protect family honor and sanctity as opposed to reporting IPV cases.

Singular Focus on Convergence Negates Focus on VAW and IPV

The allocation of significant budgets for women's component in Panchayati Raj provided an impetus to the Kudumbashree women to intervene in Panchayat processes and demand convergence with their needs. Several economic programs have been linked with Kudumbashree and social security inputs been directed to benefit NHG members. However, there is more focus on economic activities, reinforced by being

deemed as 'acceptable' without challenging societal norms, and also by offering recognition to gratify women about their contributions while maintaining unequal power relations between couples and within families. This leaves little scope and resources for redress mechanisms, awareness-raising or infrastructure for VAW.

Some functionaries at district level pointed to the pitfalls of aggressive convergence. VAW issues were not explicitly addressed in the first decade of the program and have evolved in a reactive rather than a proactive way. The 1990s period was characterized by an increase in the incidence of VAW and IPV in the state; dowry related crimes and death, and increasing sex-selective abortions, but a recognition of the incidence of violence also emerged gradually. A network of women's organizations- 'Kerala Stree Vedi'- was formed to address public safety of women, and the Kerala Women's Commission was established in 2001 with a mandate to address the same. This, along with increasing poverty and low work participation of women created the need for the government to become proactive. It also provided conducive conditions to explicitly address gender relations through women-centered programs.

However, the state chose to implement poverty programs, assuming that economic and political empowerment of women would automatically lead toward addressing GBV.

Kudumbashree underwent a transition between 2000 and 2008, whereby its scope was broadened to explicitly include gender discrimination and violence issues, its administration was eased and the three streams of economic, governance and gender interventions separately developed. The gender interventions included issues of social justice and security including VAW but not explicitly targeted to address IPV. Convergence of services for social security as well as violence incorporates working with the pink police and KELSA to create access for women to legal and support services. Some district functionaries were of the view that while convergence of services is a laudable and necessary practice, the pitfalls may arise if the offered set of services are inappropriate for IPV or in a straitjacketed or standardized approach, creating more risk to the survivor, or the survivor preferring a different approach than offered, fearing judgment or loss of control over their lives due to the dependency on state machinery and services.

3

RECOGNITION OF VARIOUS KINDS OF VIOLENCE

A decade into the program, women were eager to raise their issues, having gained confidence from handling economic problems. There was also increasing demand for a mechanism to address VAW, which propelled the government into commencing *Bhoomika* – a one stop crisis center scheme to be run through hospitals, as part of the implementation of the Nirbhaya scheme.

Kudumbashree was identified as the executing agency for Nirbhaya scheme and would work

in coordination with other programs. 74 best-performing CDSs were selected for a special VAW intervention. About 5,000 persons – Gender Resource Persons (GRPs) and three members of each CDS – were given gender training by the Kudumbashree Gender Team. Gender trainings were also conducted for Panchayat presidents and elected representatives.³⁵ These activities brought a spotlight on GBV, although constraints of social attitudes, family honor and victim shaming remain significant concerns.

³⁵ <http://kudumbashree.org/pages/54> on Nirbhaya and crime mapping

4

PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF GENDER INTERVENTIONS - MINI AND MICRO PLANS AND INCORPORATION OF GENDER

Gender interventions are planned at the level of the state mission by the Gender Coordinators, under the guidance of the Mission Director. District units do undertake a planning process and provide feedback and input to the state mission, but the annual targets and priorities are determined by the state. Mini plan and micro plan are mentioned in documents, but not seen in the gender component. State-driven activities – Crime Mapping and Vulnerability Mapping – were executed by CDSs. However, there has been no follow-up or action strategy by the state based on them.

Absence of gender integration in program mandate

The program considered women's participation and a women-centric approach as sufficient indication of a focus on gender issues. There was emphasis on financial and physical targets and achievements, but not on gender issues like control over income or asset creation for women. Because integration of the gender perspective

across the verticals of the program was not pursued,³⁶ the gender program functioned as a stand-alone program and gender coordinators struggled to address violence in the absence of sensitivity or support from other sections of the program. Ultimately, while program targets were achieved, the gender consequences were not emerging. Mere promotion of activities with women would not bring about gender equality and freedom from violence and may in fact have the opposite impact of increasing women's work burden with greater responsibilities, while not transforming gender relations at household or community levels.

Centralized approach to gender initiatives

Since the training programs are planned at the state level, and the state mission also initiates other programs to provide deliverables for planned activities, the priorities are based on a centralized statist view while limiting the district's role to making demands and proposals. With the establishment of a State Gender Resource Center, the processes could divert even more

³⁶ The Executive Director, Kudumbashree, in his interview for this study, mentioned 15 program domains including Micro Finance, Micro Enterprises, Farming Initiatives, Marketing, Asraya, BUDS/BRC, Balasabha, Gender, Tribal Development, Attappady Special Project, Thrift & Credit, Bank Linkage, Matching Grant to Thrift & Credit Societies, Interest Subsidy, KAASS and Financial Literacy. Please refer to these webpages: <http://kudumbashree.org/pages/292> and <http://kudumbashree.org/pages/234>

from a local, contextualized view that could make local staff feel more capable of addressing IPV at their own level. Localization needs to be deliberately nurtured and supported by program leadership and political leadership.

Since the field visits and discussions pertaining to this case study, the revised website reflects the emerging strategy and vision for 2017-18, and incorporates a greater focus on GBV as reflected in the following content:

Team Gender – Vision 17-18

| | |
|---|--|
| 2 | Address the existing situation and vulnerabilities in the society where the exploitation and violence exist, through the introduction of a preventive mechanism and supportive system. Also will address the social status of women, which determines the prevailing attitudes in socio-cultural, political and psychological impact. Eliminate all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage, child labor, trafficking, female genital mutilation etc. |
| 5 | Formation of a convergent platform/ system to prevent and respond to GBV at home as well as public space – Formation of a social security network; it can be linked with different stake holders. Vigilante group will capacitate in all Local Self Government (LSGs) and Jagratha Samithis can be strengthened. |
| Convergence platform will be created at LSG level by networking the different roles and provide services to the community. | |
| Crime Mapping in all LSGs in convergence with Women & Child Development Department and intervention through Snehitha Gender Help Desk. Also legal clinic in all LSGs with the support of KELSA. | |
| Establish counseling and immediate help centers in all LSGs with the support of community counselors. ³⁷ | |

³⁷ Gender: Team Gender Vision 17-18. Retrieved from: <http://kudumbashree.org/pages/234>

5 INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIES, PROCESSES AND IMPACTS

The CDS is the fulcrum of interventions for GBV and functions as a team of women promoting women's interests and acting to prevent and resolve GBV. The role of the CDS in addressing IPV,³⁸ was seemingly envisaged as limited to awareness raising and strategizing, and direct intervention responsibilities were added later with the inclusion of the Nirbhaya Scheme, due to lack of an alternative channel for victims to seek help. Although the police are a channel with several initiatives of their own, women are more comfortable with representatives from their own localities.

Process of Resolving Cases

With regard to responding to IPV cases, usually they are reported through ADS/ CDS by survivors/ victims, their relatives or friends, or ADS and CDS members may observe a case during their travels, report it to the chairperson, and they along with CDS/ ADS member of that ward and the local RPs may approach the woman to counsel and extend support.

Initially, the survivors/ victim or her immediate family is taken in confidence, ensuring that she and her children are in a safe environment and

that the perpetrator is not in the vicinity. Support is extended and a conversation is started for her to talk about her situation, ensuring that she is not pressurized or intimidated by the team. She is then informed of ways to deal with her predicament or made an offer to withdraw her from the space along with her children and take her to a safe location such as a Snehitha or a Nirbhaya Center³⁹, where she will be provided shelter and basic needs until she recovers from the trauma and reviews her options. She is also asked if she wishes to have anyone accompany her or be informed of her whereabouts without compromising her situation.

The survivors/victim is supported at the safe center for a week. Thereafter, she may decide to return after a brief respite or after a settlement with the perpetrator, or she may be transferred to a shelter if there is no other space or person willing to provide for her (relatives or parents may be hesitant for fear of retaliation from the perpetrator). She is then provided with counseling and legal assistance in registering a case.

Pathways of seeking support are mostly linear, assuming that women would have the knowledge, confidence and outreach to approach the CDS

³⁸ <http://kudumbashree.org/pages/9>

³⁹ As part of the Nirbhaya Scheme

or gender corner for help, when in reality they face constraints of social stigma and restricted mobility and social interactions. There is more reliance on CDS members to respond to cases, since RPs are few, scattered and not directly accessible, and the NHGs have conventional attitudes and are more inclined toward finance activities.

Snehithas are short stay homes providing shelter, advice, counseling and rescue services to women. The centers have a cook and a supervisor/guard for security, and two counselors providing in house counseling. Cases are referred to them by district offices when they are informed by CDSs, or even by the police. Cases range from IPV, domestic violence, trafficking, theft, psychological trauma and other crimes. The Help Desk registers case sheets for victims and maintains up to 20 registers of case records. The program has been approached by 8501 persons till date in its six centers and has provided shelter to 1906. Survivors we interacted with felt that Snehitha provided a necessary service apart from facilitating linkages with other services such as police, doctors and child protection facilities.

Focus on GBV

Snehithas' work and the trainings given to counselors are generic in nature and not specific to IPV. Although refresher orientations are imparted through monthly meetings at the district coordinator's office, more specialized and rigorous trainings are needed so that services do not fall short of the required sensitivity and innovative strategies as well as preventive actions are designed and effectively delivered to victims.

Strategies for Addressing IPV at Many Levels

Kudumbashree has several avenues and structures to address IPV. However, while an immediate rescue is required in IPV cases, they all lean more toward enabling women to escape rather than to challenge or deal with the perpetrator. Efforts need to be made for strengthening women's security and ensuring that the perpetrator is penalized. Also, each mechanism has been added as the program evolved rather than a holistic strategy being thought out from the conception phase. There is also dearth of a larger perspective within NHGs; the program could benefit from more interactions with women's programs and gender research organizations.

The Rangashree initiative is an attempt at awareness-raising for Kudumbashree through performances by the Rangashree theatre groups. Rangashree workers are selected from among NHG members and RPs through talent screening and then trained in multiple phases, mostly on-stage management. They undertake performances and songs based on briefs received from clients or the program. IPV is one of the six themes that they have developed so far.

However, they are not specifically trained in gender issues and their perspective is limited, similar to the program itself. They portray the problems women contend with rather than raising issues and encouraging the audience to engage with solutions. Nevertheless, being committed, multi-skilled and capable of reaching the youth, they have the potential to promote gender goals and build facilitative environments.

Monitoring and Reporting

Unlike other components of Kudumbashree, the gender component does not have an MIS process apart from the records of expenditure against allocations and utilization of services. No system of monitoring and reporting exists for the qualitative aspects of the program. This makes it difficult to assess institutional processes and strategies. Going beyond expenditure targets and outputs from activities, effective assessment methods and indicators of change need to be determined for the program.

Data base to assess services

The database available to assess the services is only in the form of individual case sheets

and figures of service utilization. There is also variance among the multiple registers maintained by Snehitha centers. Utilization of the Snehitha services seems far from adequate and the centers would benefit from more investment leading to better preventive and supportive work for IPV.

Addressing IPV Structurally

Addressing Men: Several people within the administration acknowledged that there was a problem with the fundamental focus of the program, and one District Collector stated “we are focused on the women, while the problem is with the men” pointing to the need for a much more holistic strategy to address the problem as a social and structural issue. One senior

Snehitha: Status of the Survivors Approached (District Specific) (Up to October 31-2017)

| Survivors approached | Ernakulum | Mallapuram | Thiruvananthapuram | Idukki | Palakkad | Wayanad | Total |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | Started in 2013 August / September | | | Started in 2015 March / June | | | |
| Direct | 1048 | 721 | 462 | 453 | 128 | 529 | 3341 |
| Over Phone | 2207 | 811 | 1209 | 188 | 324 | 391 | 5130 |
| Human Trafficking | 2 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 14 | 7 | 30 |
| Total | 3257 | 1533 | 1673 | 645 | 466 | 927 | 8501 |

Status of Short Stay Facilities Availled (District-wise – Up to October 31, 2017)

| Short Stay | Ernakulam | Malappuram | Thiruvananthapuram | Idukki | Palakkad | Wayanad | Total |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------------------|----------|---------|-------|
| | Started in 2013 August / September | | | Started in 2015 March / June | | | |
| No. of Persons Availled Short Stay | 571 | 414 | 473 | 108 | 148 | 192 | 1906 |

Source: <http://kudumbashree.org/pages/51>

retired bureaucrat, earlier in charge of the Tribal Department, stated that the program has lacked a social orientation from its inception, and the recent attention to issues of gender and violence and social inclusion has largely been provoked by the pressure and critique placed upon it by women's NGOs and organizations.⁴⁰ An inclusion approach was introduced in the programs structure only recently in 2014, after the amendment of the by-laws came into existence to ensure proportional caste representation in the leadership structure through electoral process. The program now oversees the elections to the CDS and members are elected ensuring a caste-based representation of women leaders. The issue of sensitizing men is yet to be recognized or addressed strategically.

Addressing Vulnerable Communities: While Panchayat leaders – men and women – pointed to the Dalit communities and working class as those where crime and alcoholism was higher, the truth of this is difficult to assess, and seems to reflect an attempt to distance from the problem as a societal one.

Vulnerability mapping was undertaken recently in a few districts and villages to identify the most vulnerable communities and households, but there is little understanding of the structural moorings of vulnerability; and responsive strategies by state agencies to deliver services and schemes on priority to

such communities through convergence are yet to emerge. The age at marriage for girls was much lower in the areas identified as high vulnerability and although studies have made the connection between adolescent marriage and higher incidence of IPV, this issue has not emerged as an issue for concerted action in the program. Girls in the communities in such areas are prone to be labeled – much to the indignation of those resident there (Ward Member of Vettikavella Panchayat) – shared how they felt early marriage would help them get out of the drudgery and hardship only to find themselves further oppressed and married to men at least 8-10 years older and trapped into relationships where drudgery and child care were accompanied by frequent bouts of violence against them by their partners. The lens of IPV has yet to emerge in the analysis of GBV and its connections to social vulnerability. The connections of early age at marriage and GBV and IPV are issues that will need to be considered as the problem intensifies with decreasing age at marriage in the state, unlike in other states where the age at marriage is in fact increasing. IPV is not a focal area hitherto and will require intensive repositioning within such a program to become a focal area with greater investment in an integrated approach across all components of the program. Given its current primary focus on economic and governance inputs, the issue is only marginally addressed.

⁴⁰ Thomas Bejoy K., Roldan Muradian, Gerard de Groot and Arie de Ruijter Confronting or Complementing? A Case Study on NGO-State Relations from Kerala, India, *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (September 2010), pp. 358-370

6

OPERATIONAL LINKAGES AND RESPONSE SYSTEM BETWEEN KUDUMBASHREE PLATFORMS

Kudumbashree platforms that currently address IPV directly or indirectly are:

- i) CDS team, Gender Corner and District Unit of the program;
- ii) RPs and counselors at the district, Panchayat and ward levels as well as the Vigilante Groups at village/ ward level and as members of the Jagratha Samithis;
- iii) Snehitha Gender Help Desk as an institutional short-stay home.

When a case is reported or noticed, the CDS chairperson with the help of ward CDS members visit the victim and extend support. They keep the district office gender desk updated about the case and seek their support for providing legal and medical aid. They also work with the Panchayat members to bring the case before the Jagratha Samithi if required.

Most cases are dealt with in a confidential and discreet manner, as the concerns of the survivor/ victim and her family remains the primary concern for the CDS members. But the secrecy may isolate the victim from the NHG, cutting a potential avenue of immediate help and emotional support rather than empowering them as a solidarity and support structure. In

cases of bigamy and violence, the survivor also needs to be reassured that the guilt is not to be borne by them.

The counselors and RPs are seen as awareness-building mechanisms who conduct discussions on current social issues. They also support the ADS and CDS members in rescue work and intervene in women's places of work or social interaction. They work on daily honorarium basis with the program, and also seek work elsewhere. Therefore, they are accessible locally but restrained in proactively responding to program needs. Some RPs are also members of vigilante groups or the Rangashree theatre group as well as district resource groups and play a more pro-active role.

The program relies upon counselors for providing psycho-social support to deal with trauma of all kinds of violence and dysfunctional relationships that arise, and for creating a support mechanism for people to benefit from their services. 320 individuals were selected from all 14 districts and trained as per a module developed by counseling experts.⁴¹ They are now working as community counselors and collaborate with Gender Corner and Snehithas. A 'counseling day' is also organized at the grassroots level as a

⁴¹ Community Counseling Program. Retrieved from <http://www.kudumbashree.org/pages/52>

primary initiative to create awareness about the service and to de-stigmatize its functions.

Although most counselors are from a psychology background and some do intervene from a feminist perspective, their counseling frame is rooted in their own orientations and social attitudes. Thus, they currently emphasize restoration of marital relationships and reinforce the archetype of a patriarchal family, while there is a need to prioritize women's interests above these.

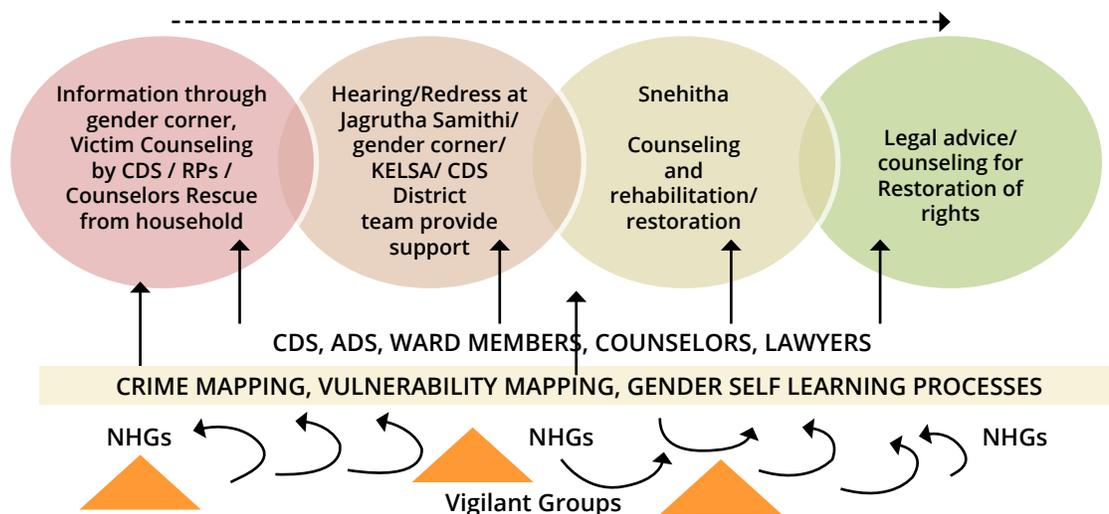
The Snehitas, currently located in six districts, with more proposed in each district, function as linking institutions for women in distress. They currently provide long term care even though they are short stay homes. They operate closely under supervision of their district with monthly review meets, but also work with other districts. They accompany women for legal and medical procedures and for liaising with Protection

Officers and the police. Their efficacy as referral facilities is far lower than their capacity, and much will need to be done to publicize their services, given the existence of other such facilities in the districts.

Strategies for Convergence & Facilitating Institutional Linkages

Strategies for convergence have evolved to address violence, in coordination with police, social justice and protection officer relating to the PWDVA, juvenile justice system, KELSA, and with NGOs. The Gender Team collaborates with the police department at local level, in conducting awareness and vigilante committee training programs in self-defense, as well as in the pursuit of cases, although these are too brief. The social justice department defines the ambit of their work on GBV as does the engagement with the KELSA in conducting training for NHGs and follow up with cases as

Operational Linkages and response system between Kudumbashree and Panchayat to address GBV/IPV



well as training for the representatives of the Panchayats.

The theatre group Rangashree as mentioned earlier is the means to communicate a perspective and open the discourse on issues considered taboo. It is operational on pilot basis in Northern, Southern and Central regions of the state. 37 master trainers were given orientation, gender sensitization training, technical training and training in script writing, material preparation, music, yoga and dance. They impart trainings at the CDS level and also act as national RPs. These performance groups in each region also perform across the state for other departments. The members receive a per diem for the duration of performance days and some support for the days of preparation. Their engagement in performances needs to be enhanced in order to impact social awareness of issues especially related to gender, VAW and IPV. Youth and other outreach programs can also benefit to engage more community people in media strategies.

Crime Mapping

In 2014, Kudumbashree undertook a crime mapping exercise in 77 Panchayats with the help of a tool developed by their Gender Team. The exercise included crime spotting which reveals locations of atrocities, and issue wise mapping which extracts a detailed picture of the nature of atrocities. In Kozhikode, four Panchayats were covered under the exercise that revealed a clear pattern of the nature and location of crime and opened the discourse on the issue to be taken up. One of them had an incidence of as high as 40 percent of IPV. This called for a

systematic strategy combining micro planning, training and follow up through convergence to prevent violence. However, the district team did not focus its attention on the issue and the process was abandoned midway after the data was shared with the state office, awaiting their direction rather than sustaining the process at local level through analysis and planning. It fell upon the CDSs and NHGs to analyze the data and address the issue, without any instructions or support. The exercise also lost momentum after the change in political leadership following the fresh elections for CDS positions. There have been calls for re-starting the initiative.

Alcoholism and state revenue dilemma

Alcohol is viewed as the significant reason for crime by most Panchayat and CDS leaders and is also used as a pretext to point to high socio-economic vulnerability areas as locations of crimes. However, only one of the six cases encountered for the study was from such a location. Also, the crime mapping data in one Panchayat indicates that only a third of the crimes were related to alcohol consumption, showing that IPV is not caused by alcohol, but is a manifestation of gender dominance and unequal power relations.

Recognition of alcohol as a problem related to VAW has, however, led to the Excise department setting aside an amount for anti-alcohol and public awareness program. While the same department deals with sale of alcohol in the state, its programs have enabled people to approach de-addiction facilities and seek help. Some success is reported in men receiving treatment and being cured, but the dichotomy is also viewed by some people as hypocrisy.

Youth potential

Several youth in the Panchayats we visited for the study were eager to work with the CDS to address GBV. In three of the households with women survivors that were visited it was found that boys/young men stand up to support their mothers and confront their fathers. The researchers also encountered a group of youth who recounted being thrashed by older men in

the community for raising resistance to alcohol consumption and wife beating and threatened them not to intervene. This group was ready to form a club, take self-defense and dance training, and work with the vigilante group to build awareness. There is unexplored potential and will among youth to transform the community and address GBV, in need of organization and planning.

7

SOCIAL IMPACT OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS AND LINKAGES BETWEEN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The programmatic focus of Kudumbashree has always remained women's collectivized economic activities. Though the sustainability of entrepreneurship development is questionable,⁴² it has helped the program to draw large numbers of women into its fold who have gained greater mobility, greater access to income and resources of their own, greater say in financial decisions, and enhanced public participation and access to public funds for their needs.⁴³ The emphasis on economic goals to the neglect of other gender considerations, however, was encouraged by its tangible outcomes, political traction and no apparent need to address causal roots of VAW.

The period of 2007-08 witnessed a shift in the program toward a gender empowerment strategy, partially in response to the criticism of the overemphasis on economic activities and no changes occurring in women's status or VAW. This period also saw a focus on inclusion of marginalized communities and introduction of democratic electoral processes for leadership.

A deeper engagement with social issues emerged, with clear institutional mechanisms, defined role of CDS and appointment of RPs and counselors. The convergence with Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) also expanded its outreach to the marginalized section.

Today MGNREGS touches the lives of most women in the network – over 80 percent of the people who are entering the program are women... from Kudumbashree. Kudumbashree is actively involved in the myriad aspects of implementation of the program, from job card registration through labor budgeting and work site facilitation to social audit. Moreover, it is the single rights-based program spearheaded by the state, which recognizes women's work participation concerns as a matter of rights and equity. NREGS therefore poses for us the best opportunity to engage women in rights-based discourse with the consensus of the state and of most involved stakeholders.

⁴² This critique of the sustainability of women's enterprises is borne true by a recent study, data from which is only sparingly available, which points to only 30 percent of the enterprises surviving beyond the initial phase. Prof K.P. Kannan's study on Kudumbashree Evaluation Draft 2017 (access to the report was not made available but have drawn upon tables presented at a meeting held to share the preliminary findings from the report at Kudumbashree). Queries by authors to Prof. Kannan drew a response that his study did not refer to gender issues in its evaluation, another pointer to the lack of institutional focus on gender gains and outcomes even of the economic initiatives.

⁴³ It would be useful to assess the extent of Panchayati Raj Women's Component Plan budgets the Kudumbashree program has been able to leverage over the years

The exercise is expected to generate over 200,000 resource persons, who would have been sensitized to the issues of women in the development context and understand the gender implications of development and welfare scenarios. These people would be available to carry this strategic citizenship program forward, and to manage the change that is inevitable if rights are to translate as achievements and justice. A total of INR 16.3 million is estimated for the implementation of the project.⁴⁵

Evidently, there has been a shift in the perspectives of women empowerment from women being actors in production, to being citizens engaged in economic work, to claiming work entitlement and autonomy over incomes. There are criticisms that NREGS has only led to inflation of resources available to the program, and no evaluation of actual asset creation for

women from the scheme.⁴⁶ However, the NHG women did claim greater say in household decision making as income sources. Women from marginalized and landless sections are better able to survive hardships and have improved their assets and taken land on lease.

The change in the state government had impeded this progression. With the return of the incumbent government, the program renewed its rigor with the pro-poor agriculture program and an institutional focus on VAW. Despite that, the orientation of the program toward gender has been slow due to gender team activities being viewed as supplementary and deep-seated patriarchies not being addressed. Expansion and investment in women's enterprises receive much attention rather than gender issues of asset ownership, control over income, sharing of invisible and unpaid work and financial decision making.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ The period for this amount is not mentioned, although the website is updated on day of reference. 23.11.17

⁴⁶ Kadiyala, S. (2004). Scaling-up Kudumbashree: Collective action for poverty alleviation and women's empowerment. Technical Report. IFPRI Discussion Papers Brief. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Retrieved from: <http://researchonline.lshtm.ac.uk/1440428>

⁴⁷ The program has recently released its Vision 2017-18 documents, which incorporate some of these issues and aim to undertake activities that refer to such outcomes more actively across all its domains. It remains to be seen to what extent these issues are integrated and monitored as assessment criteria for the achievement of empowerment goals, but this is a marked departure from previous strategies.

8

ASPECTS OF ORGANIC SUSTAINABILITY OF THE KUDUMBASHREE MODEL TO ADDRESS IPV

- 1) State sponsorship ensured that Kudumbashree received patronage and support required to evolve strategies and create avenues for changes in the system for women. However, it is unclear whether the state agencies are adequately equipped to be transformative and address the roots of VAW. The requisite **perspectives and skills** are available with NGOs and women's organizations which may be included in the program through an alliance and may benefit from the outreach capacity of Kudumbashree.
- 2) The program has gained autonomy and a democratic process, but there are challenges in provision of support to women. Vigilante groups have been a proximate support system, apart from which **CDS is the primary locus** for services.
- 3) As mentioned before, women serve as instruments in political activities and play an extension of their domestic roles in the public sphere as caring citizens. Empowering them to influence agendas and priorities in governance depends on the **Panchayat leadership and its willingness** to pursue a transformative agenda. There was adequate evidence to reveal that women's leadership in panchayats is important to strengthen the focus on GBV and IPV in collaboration with the CDS and the program needs to focus on developing such leadership.⁴⁸
- 4) Changes in **political patronage** have often constrained Kudumbashree either by sidelining the issue of violence as it has less political traction or by manipulating processes in their favor when the complaint is against a party affiliated person. Through building a greater solidarity and a political narrative across parties that reflects women's interests, this can be addressed. While there has been much effort for convergence at multiple levels in governance for women's empowerment, there are several **issues with convergence**:
 - Banking system not as responsive to women's needs;
 - Women's asset base inadequate;
 - Gender division of labor not addressed in promotion of economic enterprises, raising women's work burden;
 - Staff in other domains needs to be more vigilant and aware about GBV.

⁴⁸ While the program reported a significant rise in the election of women CDS members elected to Panchayat leadership the 2012 study by the Kerala State Planning Board reveals very low figures of less than 5 percent and 77 percent of those elected for only one term. This will need to be verified from the recent evaluation and steps taken to strengthen the leadership of women in both bodies simultaneously, and to then synergize between them to address IPV.

5) **Engaging with men and youth** on gender issues is necessary for a sustainable model to emerge, and for social change to occur. Without this, the efforts directed at women only add to their burden and responsibility and can even be disempowering. Boys and girls who have been supportive of women in survivor families should be recognized for being supportive and creating new role models and may be organized to have a more active role in the program for IPV redress.

6) The **staff structure and work environment** of the program itself **needs to be pro-gender equality**. Firstly, the cadre of volunteers such as RPs and counselors who are crucial to addressing violence are paid daily honorarium, reinforcing the norm of undermining and under-remunerating women's unpaid work. Their commitment and personal risk needs to be recognized, rewarded and they need to be provided with exposure opportunities to build their capacities and perspectives. Similarly, the patterns of remuneration for the Snehittha staff are not uniform at all locations. The terms of employment for these ground-level and institutional workers need to be secured to ensure their continuity and dignity as part of a program that addresses women's empowerment and dignity.

Secondly, the institutional practice of appointing senior officers on deputation

from mainstream departments to the Mission serves to infuse political interests within the program. Efforts are necessary to whet all staff and personnel for their commitment to gender equality in personal and professional lives, to ensure that they themselves are not the causes of VAW in any way. Methods like induction orientation and selections through workshops and debates to examine attitudes could be employed.

7) Another issue previously mentioned is of building a sustainable model for gender equality and freedom from violence that addresses **inter-generational challenges**, where younger women and men with varied aspirations and educational levels also find the space and support for their needs, and not just original NHG members who are older women of the community.

8) **Integration of gender across domains** of the program and incorporation of indicators to evaluate program efficacy as well as staff attitude and conduct are necessary to reflect an equality-prone environment. The National Resource Organization (NRO), which is the arm of Kudumbashree that provides technical assistance to other states across India on strengthening the engagement of PRIs with women's collectives, does not currently include information on the program's GBV work, rendering these as insignificant achievements of the program.

9 LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Kudumbashree program has several achievements to its credit that are laudable and well acknowledged and offer learning for others engaged in the field of promoting gender equality. It has mobilized women in large numbers through an economic model geared to enhance governance responsiveness to women's needs. The program has become increasingly inclusive, responsive, and ecologically and locally rooted in its innovative activities to address the economic empowerment of women and toward gender equality in economic spheres. It now offers a model that is providing learning for replication far and wide within India through the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) as a resource organization as well as internationally in South Africa, Azerbaijan, and Ethiopia etc.

There is however less discussion or awareness in public realms of its efforts to address gender equality and to encompass the issues of GBV and IPV in its work. This may be due to the initiative being recent and the lack of tangible results that such work can showcase. The results of an IPV or GBV intervention strategy will reveal themselves in the incidence of social change in women's status and even in the

data on violence in the next few years. It may even reveal itself in the backlash from society and dominant patriarchal forces caused by the change in gender power relations, and an increase in incidence of violence in the short run. Much will also depend on the nature of the intervention and the mobilization of women in their communities to challenge GBV across political and class denominations. A centralized approach of service delivery and rescue with institutional care can provide immediate support but does not adequately create an alternative political space or strategically address societal attitudes or responses to the problems of IPV and GBV.

The following measures may strengthen the program for a more concerted strategic process of addressing IPV:⁴⁹

Toward Integrated Empowerment Approaches

Economic empowerment is a necessary condition to strengthen resistance to and redress of IPV, but it is not a sufficient one. Economic autonomy allows women to sustain themselves

⁴⁹ This section draws upon the Rao-Kelleher model and on the presentation, *Movements & Why They Matter*, by Srilatha Batliwala (BFEMO & AWID). Retrieved from <http://slideplayer.com/slide/6167972/>

and own resources,⁵⁰ but does not necessarily free them from internalized values and attitudes of subservience or enable them to challenge systemic discrimination to assert their autonomy, without questioning their self-images. Social empowerment agenda needs to be coupled with economic efforts for this. Economic or social goals such as increased wages, increased opportunities of self-employment, access to education and collectivization are practical goals that may be initiators. Empowerment needs to integrate perspectives and shift from practical to strategic gender goals, by moving the focus from women as instruments to serve the family to deeper underpinnings of IPV and unequal gender relations.

Program Planning and Integration of IPV from below: Strategies and Processes

The program should strengthen collective action by involving grass root level groups of women and making gender strategies into political goals for the program as well as these groups. This can be done through:

- Localized analysis and planning through the use of crime mapping data;
- Institutional and community-level strategies to address GBV;
- Generic awareness building and campaigns on specific issues that determine incidence of IPV: age at marriage, asset ownership rights for women, trafficking, etc.;
- Local street theatre performances, debates

and discussions to create awareness and deter miscreants;

- Involving boys and young men in creating a violence free and respectful environment.

It is not the institutional efforts alone, but the capacities of women and communities to resist violence and question norms of acceptance that will build a progressive environment.

Through leadership building and intensive training of NHGs, discussions on these issues can be opened up. Interventions could go beyond rescue and temporary support to environment building, preventive efforts, local intervention prior to escalation, restoration of rights to safety within residence, penalties and restrictions on offenders, and social acceptance and support for victims. Greater focus on social reform is needed rather than on problematizing victims. This would help women see themselves as active social change agents.

Streamlining Training Design and Content – Manuals, Handbooks, Thematic Handouts

For program leadership to take ownership of the IPV interventions, capacity and perspective building is required. Training content and methods should be uniform across locations and time. For this, a core team consisting of program staff and external resource persons may be identified who will train the trainers; and the knowledge may further be distributed through the trainees.

⁵⁰ There is also a feminist critique of the thrust toward self-employment as a ploy of globalization forces and policies, that the focus on self-employment as a means of addressing poverty serves the purpose of absolving the State and market from responding responsibly to generate employment opportunities; and that poverty alleviation policies that focus on self-employment do not invest in peoples ventures adequately for their businesses to emerge as viable or adequately remunerative in most cases, causing the poor to be able to just about emerge above the poverty line but seldom move beyond it, keeping them vulnerable and therefore subservient politically to the machinations of markets.

Integrating IPV Support Processes in Program Goals and in Monitoring Indicators

Personnel policies: As champions for gender and empowerment, values of gender equality should reflect in the staff across domains and also in recruitments - both on deputation and contract- with priority to women, single women heading households and vulnerable women. Recruitment norms must also incorporate elimination related to incidence of violence or harassment and encourage downward accountability to women's groups.

Creating a Gender-Based Program Management Environment

The services offered by the program need to be strengthened through:

- Better communication between Kudumbashree and CDS, and Snehitha;
- Better interface between PR and CDS;
- Gender Orientation for all staff;
- Enhanced attention to gender issues and deliverables across all domains;
- Monitoring indicators for redress of IPV and for gender equality across all domains;
- Strengthened functioning of Jagratha Samithis as implementation mechanisms.

Generate Sex-Disaggregated Data on Violence and Institutionalize Monitoring and Social Audits for IPV

The government of Kerala has released disaggregated data on VAW which specifically shows the scale of the problem. This along with the data and insights from the crime mapping should be used to undertake a decentralized planning process as well as strengthen capacity building inputs to deal with the issue. This includes training for CDS members, ADS members, Panchayat members as well as Jagratha Samithi members along with members of the Kudumbashree team itself. All the stakeholders will work in tandem with the police and Planning Board, but women themselves need more opportunities and support to take on the issue more directly. All strategies and processes on ground should be monitored institutionally along with planning social audits on schemes that address IPV.

Interventions with Panchayat

IPV needs to be viewed as an issue for civil society engagement through Panchayat actions. It should be a criterion during elections for selection of candidates. Also, strict norms should be developed for political interferences of Panchayat in IPV cases.

⁵¹ State Planning Board, Economic Review 2016, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India, March 2017, Volume One, Government of Kerala

CONCLUSION

The Kudumbashree Program emerged as a mission of convergence of state programs to address poverty and has evolved more recently toward social development and GBV initiatives on the one hand. In reference to the objectives of this study, the program has led to greater recognition and convergence, political presence of women and now gradually to VAW. Its genesis indicates a long route to emerge as a program for women's empowerment in social spheres and especially to address GBV, given the void in such services and the denial of the incidence of VAW and IPV in the state. The program platforms that critically address GBV are the CDS along with the Jagratha Samithis at the Panchayat level, although the efficacy of Jagratha Samithis is mixed across Panchayats. The Snehitha provides a significant support for women victims and is important in its location within the program but limited in its efficacy given its temporary nature. The convergence of services to address IPV has the potential to afford support to women provided it is dovetailed with the efforts of women themselves to address the problem, rather than provide a straitjacketed approach to rescue and institutional care without building a social discourse and awareness about the issue. Although embedded within an economic program, the GBV initiatives have grown in

strength and need to be focused and grounded more systematically across the districts and within the program.

The various platforms under the Mission have the potential of addressing IPV through playing a role in recognition and voicing of the issue, through preventive measures and building resilience (e.g., land rights), through facilitating institutional linkages for survivors of violence, and in creating an enabling environment for making the 'private' issue of IPV a public concern, including eliciting a response from government and state policymakers.

At the same time, the program needs to deepen the engagement with women especially leaders at grassroots levels in NHGs, ADS and CDS, and enhance their autonomy and empowerment to lead and address IPV and GBV interventions through an intensified process of capacity building and collaborative agency. Panchayat resources can be dovetailed effectively toward this end.

The institutional location of the program as a state-led initiative provides an opportunity for state agencies to address the issue of GBV and IPV more coherently with the women leaders

and NHGs strengthened to define the contours of such an engagement, and with support and coordination with the KELSA and police and other support agencies. The role of the women's movement and engagement of women's organizations in this process has much to offer in terms of perspective and strategy as well as deepening capacities. Their engagement will also serve to multiply access to services for women to address IPV manifold if soundly oriented women's NGOs such as Anweshi and Sakhi are engaged in the process of training, support and counseling to the program. An intensification of engagement with such support agencies is also required for such agencies to grow their

efforts in the realm of IPV and building a gender sensitive social environment and to strengthen and sustain their role for support to women survivors of IPV.

Efforts to engage with and prepare youth and progressive men and organizations in supportive roles to women's needs and leadership to address the malaise are also required. Given the large outreach and embedded scale of the program, the effort to change the narrative at societal levels and to hold people in public office responsible and charge them with goals and systems of accountability for GBV goals is an important step in this direction.

ANNEXURE-1

STUDY FRAMEWORK

The purpose of the documentation is to undertake a “comprehensive in-depth documentation of the Kudumbashree model to understand the mechanisms of its systemic response to violence”. *The aim is to undertake an institutional analysis of the Kudumbashree program toward policy recommendations for a proposed integrated strategy to address IPV.* The framework for the study is derived from the purpose which is to examine the significance of a large-scale state sponsored initiative for women’s empowerment for its potential

to redress IPV our study must encompass a broader view of macro policy environment to locate the program in its institutional context and the changes therein. The framework of the study must therefore incorporate the intra institutional genesis and processes as well as the influencing factors that impinge upon the direction, structure and processes of the program at multiple levels.

The key dimensions of the framework are summarized in the grid below:

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| B A C K G R O U N D | 1. Motivations for inclusion of IPV within a state-led poverty-alleviation program | 1.a i. How did the IPV component evolve? ii. Is it reflected in policy? iii. What elements of the context helped? (Elements such as PPC, KSSP, Experts such as Sarada Muraleedharan and other programs such as UNICEF) | 1.b What processes helped to strengthen these strategies? Perspective on IPV violence in policy Training/ Self reflection Tool Theatre Others? |
| I M P A C T S | 2. Social impact of economic empowerment programs and linkages between social and economic empowerment | 2.a (i) Impacts at level of Self / collective: Poverty – nine indicators: change (ii) Changes in social attitudes/self image | 2.b (i) Impacts at the level of Community/Society gender division of labor/ Drudgery Care work (ii) Asset ownership/ control |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| I M P A C T S | | <p>(iii) Changes in practices, negotiations/ assertions at institutional levels</p> <p>(iv) Instances of challenging stereotypes and discrimination</p> <p>(v) Capacities</p> <p>(vi) Inclusion and special groups</p> <p>(vii) Solidarity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of key issues: poverty and its intersections, - empowerment as a feminist / inclusive concept - Power conceptualization | <p>(iii) Social discriminatory practices</p> <p>(iv) Violence</p> <p>(v) Addressing class and caste and minority issues</p> |
| S T R U C T U R E | <p>3. Structural interventions initiated to address IPV within Kudumbashree (such as Snehitha and group self-learning strategy), arrangements made for their inclusion, and their experience in addressing IPV</p> | <p>3.a</p> <p>Evolution and Spread of initiatives</p> <p>i. Positions and status of structures like CDS, Snehitha, gender resource centers vis-à-vis gender, IPV</p> <p>ii. Pedagogy - Learning processes (including land and resource ownership, organic and economic empowerment and integration of issues of VAW such as work burden and drudgery, invisibility, gender division of labor, etc.)</p> <p>iii. Pedagogies of learning process: training materials, structured intervention programs, on-going processes.</p> <p>iv. Snehitha and gender corner</p> <p>v. Nirbhaya committees</p> <p>vi. Within NHGs</p> <p>Structures and systems of reporting/ monitoring/ follow through and focus on GBV and IPV</p> | <p>3.b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural linkages and impacts –within village: with gram sabha, with NHG • At panchayat level • At district level • Gender resource center • Crime mapping • Vulnerability mapping • Campaigns • Media- TV show • Mapping Rangashree theatre in both districts • Funding- Financial allocation on gender violence and priorities of institutions- Payment per case as incentive? |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| L I N K A G E S | <p>4. Linkages with other structural bodies and element of convergence</p> | <p>4.a Convergence between varied institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panchayats – Jagratha Samithis, • Frontline Health Workers, • Civil Society Organizations, • Women’s Groups, • Mahila Samakhya • State Women’s Commission • Snehitha | <p>4.b Mechanisms for linkages with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerala Stree Vedi • Sakhi • Anweshi • Disabilities groups • Trafficking/AIDS etc. and intra marital and inter-partner issues |
| | <p>5. Aspects of organic sustainability of the Kudumbashree model to address IPV</p> | <p>5.a Means and strategies to sustain IPV interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political • Policy • Social • Financial | <p>5.b Inclusion Adherence to norms Tweaking norms – institutional reforms 2008</p> |
| | <p>6. Learnings and recommendations</p> | | |

ANNEXURE-2

KUDUMBASHREE GENEALOGY: SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES

| Date | Events | Remarks |
|------------------------|--|---|
| May, 1998 | Prime Minister launches Kudumbashree Mission in a function in Malappuram Thrift management, internal lending, grading, bank linkage | Alappuzha Municipality had CDS system by 1994 In 1994, CDS system was formed in 94 Gram Panchayats and five Municipalities in Malappuram district. In 1995, the CDS network was extended to cover all the 58 Municipalities in the state. |
| November, 1998 | State Poverty Eradication Mission (SPEM -Kudumbashree Mission) registered under the Travancore-Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable Societies Act 1955 | Kudumbashree Mission becomes a legal entity with a Governing Body, Executive Committee, and staff. |
| September, 1999 | State Urban Poverty Alleviation (UPA) Cell wound up; SPEM declared State Urban Development Agency (SUDA) | Mission becomes the nodal agency for urban poverty-alleviation projects. |
| August, 2000 | CDS system extended to 262 Gram Panchayats | The 262 Gram Panchayats were selected based on their performance in the People's Plan campaign. |
| December, 2001 | CDS system further expanded to cover 338 more Gram Panchayats | Revised Guidelines were issued. |
| March, 2002 | CDS system launched in 291 more Gram Panchayats | |
| 2003 | CDS system extended to cover the entire state | Coverage becomes total for the state. |

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| July, 2007 | State government issues orders integrating SHGs under SGSY with Kudumbashree | End of dual membership of poor families in SGSY SHGs and Kudumbashree NHGs. |
| 2008 | Standardized CDS by-laws Election guidelines issued | Common by-laws for Kudumbashree CDS. Elections to the leadership in community organization; election through consensus at respective general body meetings. |
| 2011 | Elections Phase II | Second phase elections held in community organization |
| 2011-2012 | Nirbhaya and crime Mapping | Social justice Department Scheme implemented by Kudumbashree in 77 CDSs across 14 districts. Training to 5000 GRPs and Panchayat representatives and CDS members. Crime Mapping in 6 districts. |
| 2014 | Modified election guidelines | Secret ballot system replaces election through consensus at the respective general body meetings of the community organization. |

Source: History & Evolution. Retrieved from Kudumbashree Website.

ANNEXURE-3

RESEARCH CONTACTS– ICRW BEST PRACTICE STUDY TEAM KUDUMBASHREE

| Name/ Designation | Organization |
|--|---|
| S. Hari Kishore Director | Kudumbashree |
| Soya Thomas Program Manager, Gender, NRLM and Balasabha | Kudumbashree |
| S. M. Vijayanand Former Secretary | IAS (Retd.) |
| Sajith Sukumaran | Chief Operating Officer National Resource Organization Kudumbashree-NRO |
| Rema and Usha | Mahila Samakhya |
| S. Subbiah | IAS(Retd.), Former Social welfare Secretary |
| N. Jagajeevan | Former Kudumbashree Now Haritha Kranthi |
| K.P. Kannan, Chairman | Laurie Baker Institute for Habitat Studies, |
| Mercy Alexander/ Director | Sakhi: Women's Resource Center |
| Kudumbashree Gender Help Desk | Snehitha |
| Aleyamma Vijayan | Trustee, SAKHI |
| Mini Sukumar | Assistant Professor, Department of Women's Studies, Calicut University |
| Sarada Muraleedharan | IAS, Former Director, Kudumbashree |

| | |
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| Kavitha DMC Rejitha | DMC Gender Resource Person |
| Afeefa | Gender Coordinator |
| Ajitha, Anweshi Women's Counseling Center | President |
| Protection officer at District level | |
| District team of Kudumbashree across units | |
| RPs and Counselors at district level | |
| Nirbhaya Center team members in the district | |
| District Collector | |
| Panchayat 1 – Chiruvanoor meetings with: Jagratha Samithi, Panchayat president, members at Panchayat level, ADS, NHG and vigilante group meetings. | |

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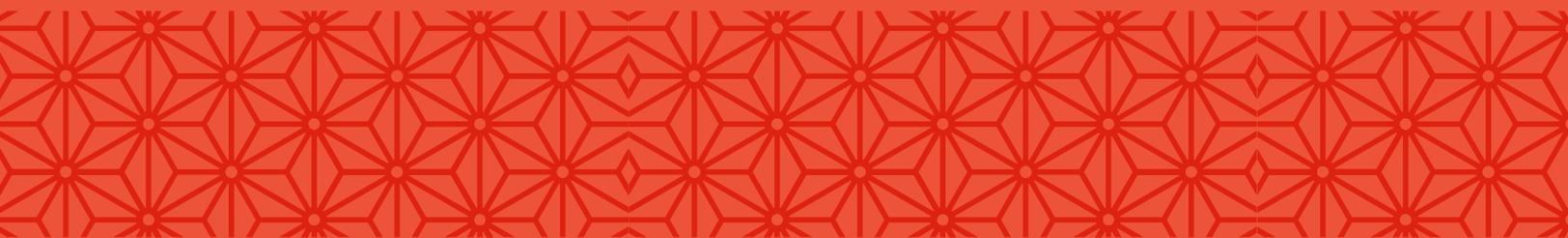
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