Chapter IV

Qualitative Data Analysis & Interpretation

PART I
Interview of the Directors and staffs of DSSSs

Introduction:
Qualitative research is a strategy emphasizes words and processes rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. In this chapter the researcher attempts to present the qualitative data gathered from the central level functionaries and from the beneficiaries of the DSSSs on gender mainstreaming.

The chapter has two parts. Part I deals with the interview of the Directors and staffs of DSSSs and part II explains the inferences from FGD and case studies.

4.1 Policy:
All the DSSSs have various policies such as Human Resource Policy, Finance policy, Environment Policy and Gender Policy. Of these policies, Gender policy has immense importance because this is the only policy which was formulated earlier and underwent revision. In all the revisions they brought in timely shifts in the policy considering the global, national and local needs of the area concerned. This policy was formulated because of the demand from the funding agencies. Earlier, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) insisted its partner agencies to do so and recently Carithas India had given technical support to formulate one.
Dissemination of the policy was carried out at different levels. Earlier it was highly superficial and done by top level staff.

The thrust of the gender policy is to empower the mass, to have a better relation between the male and female at individual level, family level and community level. Also the DSSSs want to address the gender issues and make the people capable to handle the issues at their own level. Triangulation (Interview, Content analysis and Observation) was done, to check the validity of the statements made by the Chief Executives and staffs of the DSSSs.

The researcher explored the relationship of gender policy with the vision, mission, programmes, projects and activities of the DSSSs. All the DSSSs are working with the vision of creating a gender just (gender inclusive, gender favourable) society and the mission statement is also in line with the vision of the organization, which means gender is inclusive in that area too. They had formulated strategies such as conduct programmes related to or leads to gender equality like organize programmes like gender study seminars, camps, conferences, publication of books, pamphlets, newsletters, leaflets etc, encourage SHGs to conduct gender equality projects, formation and strengthening of male and female SHGs, encourage members to initiate micro ventures on individual basis and also on group basis through Joint Liability Groups to achieve the vision, also various programmes and projects of the DSSSs are in tune with their vision. As gender is a cross cutting theme, all the activities of DSSSs under various programmes and projects are directly or indirectly channelizing towards gender mainstreaming. The result will be much more concrete, if there is gender specific objective stated in each project of the DSSSs, so that its outcome, effect and impact can be assessed over time.
The proverb ‘necessity is the mother of invention’, matches highly to this context also. All the Directors and staff of the DSSSs said that it was the felt need of the organization to have a Human Resource Policy and a Financial Policy, whereas the Gender policy and Environment policy of the organization is formulated because of the demand from the part of the funding agency (Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)). That was first formulated in the year 2005, later it was revised in the year 2007 and recently reformulated in 2010. In all these shifts, the DSSS considered the evaluation reports of the projects based on gender and feedbacks from the staff and stakeholders.

When there is a need for modification in policy, it will be informed at the executive level and at the staff level. As it is a time consuming matter, usually it will be changed in consultation with the staff and later on it passes to the executive level. If the agencies (Funding) proposing a formulation/shift in policy and as per their guidelines, the target group will be included at that stage. The formulation or shift in policy will be informed to the partners only in case of association or networking, unless otherwise it won’t be disclosed to others. The DSSSs are willing to share to the general public if there is enquiry from their end.

The procedure for dissemination of policy is done through the existing structures of the DSSS. The structures of the DSSSs are at three levels viz, Unit Level, Regional Level and Central Level. Unit is at the grass root level. Unit Federation is at the grass root level with the federation of SHGs and for the administrative functioning there are Local Units at Unit level. Higher to the Unit Level is the Regional level. At this level, there is Regional Federation of Unit Federations and there is Regional Office to carry out the administration of the Local Units. Regional Federation is the apex body of
Unit Federations and top of it is the Central Level. At the central level, there is Central Office and there is Central Federation working as the apex structure of Regional Federations. There is an Executive Body to execute the activities at the Central Level and also they work in union with the Board of Directors and the General Body of the DSSSs.

The Director of the DSSS and its central staff in consultation with the experts in the subject area prepares policy based on the experiences and feedback from previous projects. At times, the representatives of the Executive body also participate in the process of policy shifts.

**Interpretation**

- The gender policy statement should be with a basic assessment of the problems, description of values, principles and mission, intent for applying policy throughout different sections of the DSSSs.

- The developmental interventions and policies at the international level influences the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI), they insisted the church organizations like DSSSs and so they do follow the same.

- All the supporting agencies/ aid organizations insisted the DSSSs to take it.

- DSSSs are timely incorporating all developmental initiatives according to international developments, same time; the seriousness of the policy is not seen at implementation level.
4.2 Resource Mobilization

The DSSSs had various resources like Human Resource (HR), Financial Resources (FR), Physical/Infra structure Resources (P/I R) and Technological Resources (TR). All the DSSSs are using its potential resources in its optimum level. Networking skill and goodwill of the DSSSs make them able to find its sources for resources. Every DSSS has its own HR policy for the realization of the mission of the organization through the commitment of the personnel engaged for various assignments and tasks. It provides a chance to set high standards of personnel management with due place for efficiency and transparency.

Human resources required for the organization are identified based on a need assessment and work analysis. The number of persons required for each position will be assessed from the HR requirement plan drawn up by The Executive Director together with concerned staff of HR department. The appropriate person for the post a raised in the organization will be filled through an interview or from internal appointments.

Financial Resources are identified either on need-based or project-based. The present trend among Funding agencies and NGOs are need based. Earlier times, financial resources were allocated to DSSSs and were asked to distribute it among eligible persons. As there is shift happened from ‘top-down approach’ to bottom-up approach’, the community together with officials identify the persons who needed the most and were distributed among them. There are various sources that are providing financial aids for the developing countries. Networking and liaison work of the DSSSs and its apex organization- Kerala Social Service Forum (KSSF) channelizing financial sources for the DSSSs. Various Government Departments and other
national and international agencies are providing assistance for the development of the marginalized community. Most noticeable and recent development taken place among DSSSs is the mobilization of ‘own fund’. DSSSs use a scientific way to identify the most appropriate persons for the assistance and maintain proper records of the persons seeking assistance. So based on that priority list they allocate the assistance to the deserving persons. DSSSs utilize the complete amount they received from the funding agency. Any misappropriation or malpractice of the funds received found from the part of DSSSs, had to face consequence like cancellation of contract with the DSSSs. The Financial Policy of the DSSS had made it more effective and transparent.

Physical/Infra structure Resources (P/IR) are the physical assets of every DSSS. They are land, buildings, vehicles etc. Every DSSS has its own land & building with well furnished office, training centres and accommodation facilities for fairly good number of persons at a time. The buildings are highly gender friendly and disabled friendly. The transportation facilities of the DSSS can avail by every staff of the organization irrespective of gender for carrying out their duties. The Central offices of each DSSS have separate rooms and dormitories for men and women and there are sufficient numbers of toilet facilities available. There is also a sick room available in the premises separately for men and women. The canteen facility and common dining room for the Central to Unit level staff inculcates a feeling of cohesiveness and fraternity among the all the staff members of the DSSSs.

About 85% of DSSSs, where the study carried has technological resources. The success of the experiments carried out by some of the DSSSs needed specific attention. For e.g., The Honey Research Centre of Bodhana, Thiruvalla, The high-tech tailoring export centre of Thalassery Social
Service Society, Srothas Crafts of Malankara Social Service Society, Rabbit rearing trainings and articles needed for rabbit rearing are developed on its own by HDS and rabbit meat vending centres of HDS and the fruits orchid of HDS etc.

When we analyse the resources of the DSSSs on gender perspective, we can understand that there are proper and timely monitoring and evaluation are carried out of the entire programmes/projects based on the resources utilization. While studying the evaluation reports of some of the projects of the DSSSs, the researcher found out that there is no gender specific monitoring and evaluation had been carried out, it will be effective if the project has a gender specific objective stated while formulating a project. So that there will be corresponding indicators developed for monitoring and evaluation. The efficiency and effectiveness of all types if resources are overt, but its result will be more concrete or much beneficial if it has been carried on gender specification.

**Interpretations**

- DSSSs are channelizing Government funds for the welfare of the members of the society. More than individual focused rather it focuses on achieving target. In the case of ‘own fund’, discretion of the authorities of the DSSSs play a vital role.

- Need based allocation of resources to the beneficiaries help the DSSSs in achieving the target among the deserving, marginalised community ie, women, children, differently able and tribal community.
If the DSSSs stand for gender mainstreaming or for gender equality, they should have gender specific objectives or targets to be achieved related to each heads of resources.

4.3 Staff Structure

Every DSSS has its own HR policy, and any matter related to staff structure is clearly stated in the policy. This is considered as a guideline or principle for the realization of the mission of the organization through the commitment of the personnel engaged for various assignments and tasks. It provides a chance to set high standards of personnel management with due place for efficiency and transparency.

Human resources required for the DSSSs are based on a need assessment and work analysis. The number of persons required for each position will be assessed from the HR requirement plan drawn up by The Executive Director together with concerned staff of HR department. The vacancy will be advertised in at least one leading newspaper, websites of the DSSSs, other job portals and also in at least one Catholic magazine having wide coverage in each diocese. The appropriate person for the post arisen in the DSSS will be filled through an assessment process or through internal appointments. For temporary, project related staff it is not mandatory to follow the advertisement procedure. To have in place a competent staff, selection will be made on the principles and practices of equal opportunities with due representation to all sections of people represented by the DSSSs and with no discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, sex, race or disability. The assessment process for programme staff and administrative staff recruitment, there will be written test, Group discussion and Interview or any of the one or from internal appointments. In order to avoid stagnation of the competent
employees and encourage career growth, the DSSSs had developed a mechanism of creating avenues for growth/promotion—as far as possible—they promote internal appointment.

An appointment letter duly signed by the appointing authority is issued to the candidate. The appointment letter contains the Designation/title of the job and responsibilities specific to the job, the level of commands/reporting to and taking responsibilities in the absence of supervisors. All new staff will initially be on a probation period. It shall be 6 months for regular employees and 2 months for contract employees. All newly joined employees, on completion of the formalities, undergo an induction program intended to familiarize them with the dynamics of the organization. The methodology adopted is Guided Interaction with the various sections in the staff. The HR Department is in charge to co-ordinate the induction programme. The induction process may be phased over a few days so as not to disrupt the daily work of staff and those conducting the induction.

Process of on-going Capacity Building for staff will be conducted internally every year, if needed with the help of external experts specifically looking into the job requirements of each individual, scope of the job in future. Coaching is intended to provide encouragement, guidance, correction and to identify strengths, weaknesses and learning/training/career interests which will help not only to improve their performance, but also to identify problems areas inhibiting achievement of the set objectives and behaviours and to provide an opportunity to make adjustments to approved plan of action.

The DSSSs plans special Capacity Building with the help of external resource persons or agencies for larger personnel. These trainings will be planned from time to time based on need analysis. Another type of training
is an individual availing training provided by external organizations. For this also the need analysis as well as inputs from the performance appraisal will be followed.

Majority of the DSSSs has female staff over numbered by their male counterparts. The male –female composition in the DSSSs from top till bottom is in proportion 1:4. Each position in the DSSSs is analysed in terms of job content and broken down to knowledge and skill requirements. Each position requires position (Job) description and position (Job) profile in order to be able to recruit the persons with the right skill and qualification for carrying out the job expected out of that position. Based on these requirements, the positions in the DSSS is open to all irrespective of caste, creed and gender. There are various policies in the DSSSs like gender policy, HR policy, Financial Policy etc. These policy guidelines help the administration of the DSSSs in an effective way. The Governing Body is the decision making body of the DSSSs. The management of the DSSSs is functioning based on the instructions of the Governing Body. The hierarchal structure in the organizations is established for the easy management and administration of the DSSSs scattered over a wide area. The central staffs provide trainings to the staff working at grass-root level, so that they are aware of the accountability and the management develops system for effective functioning of the DSSSs. As part of this, proper communication system was developed at the DSSSs, which in turn help in gaining accurate information about all developments from the field. Even though network of communication extends up to the grass root level, the beneficiaries cannot get an initiation by themselves to approach the liaison people to seek help for resolving their problems. In most of the cases, those get an attention always
resolve at its origin or sometimes it may goes up to the unit level. But it won’t get due attention beyond this limit.

One of the most common problems and dilemmas that NGOs experience is the decision-making processes. (Billis and MacKeith, 1992). Tensions often occurred between staff and senior managers because of the staff expectations that they would be equal partners in the decision-making process.

NGOs were weak at staff career development (Billis and MacKeith, 1992). Often organizations lacked a career structure in which staff could develop. In addition they were not good at budgeting for staff training. (Stark Biddle, 1984)

In situations where organizations were expanding rapidly, it created problems for many who were unable to keep up with the demands of their work. (Billis and MacKeith, 1992)

**Interpretations**

- Church hierarchy of administration follows a male dominant culture, and it reflects throughout all the organizations of the church.

- All the DSSSs has a male Executive Director, since DSSSs follow church hierarchy of administration there is only chance for a male to be in the key position of the social Work Organ of the Catholic Diocese.

- The Governing Body of all the DSSSs consisted majority with male members, the ratio of women representatives in it is comparatively increased when compared with the previous decades.
• In the General body, more than half of the members are women. The same proportion is to be considered while formulating the Executive Body of the DSSSs.

• Developmental interventions of DSSSs are designed and planned by the Executive body of the DSSS, which consisted majority by the males. So it’s up to their discretion on how to implement it.

• Females in the decision making role is very less. Whereas males are the key decision makers. Even at the staff level, males show the courage to take quick decisions and inform the Directors in the later stages.

• The church hierarchy insists of having a male member to control/supervise the female staff at the Central/Regional/Unit level.

• The Human Resource (HR) Policy states so, but there are certain barriers like lack of family support to attend residential trainings, lack of self-initiative to go and attend trainings conducted in faraway places, lack of interest to travel alone are there for female staff members to take up the opportunity. Whereas male staffs, especially youngsters are utilizing the opportunity open to all sects of the staff.

• All the DSSSs tries to uphold gender balance in their staff structure by appointing equal or more number of females than males, but the number does not speaks of gender balance. It should reflect in the kind of strengths achieved through DSSSs, Weaknesses overcame with the help of DSSS. Opportunities available and utilized, services available and utilized.
• There is only one DSSS who have only two male members at the central level, the rest seven DSSSs have more females than male staff.

4.4 Networking Organization (Stake System)

The various development programmes and social activities of the DSSSs works with the partnership of various support organizations in terms of funding and expressing solidarity through visits, training and sharing information. DSSSs keep up the partnership and collaboration by maintaining contacts with the agencies and giving them feed backs on the programmes supported by them as well as sectors of collaboration. All the DSSSs have well established linkages with Government, Non- Government agencies/ departments at national and international level. All these networking organizations were identified majorly based on the need-assessments conducted at field level of the DSSSs. The reputation and good will of the organization attracts other organization to associate with DSSSs. Publications and wide coverage of the activities of DSSSs through medias strengthen the good will and attract other organizations to associate with DSSSs. It also interacts with as many people as possible and also identifies a strategically important organization and contributes to that organization.

Interpretation

• Radical methodology of working of DSSSs prevent it from having network with certain NGOs based on the philosophy of the organization, which otherwise can create better results.
4.5 Organizational Process (Inclusiveness)

The existing social relations, institutions, structures, customs and practices determine the rights and entitlements of an individual and that determine the success or failure of an individual in having access to the resources and services in a society. In a society, particular groups of people are systematically excluded from opportunities for development that are open to others. Discrimination on the basis of identities (sex, caste, religion, age, gender, health, disability etc.) leads to social exclusion and can lock people into long-term traps.

This exclusion can be intentionally trickle down with an inclusive approach (inclusiveness), an intentional approach to bring fairness in the distribution of gains and losses, and the entitlement of everyone to an acceptable quality and standard of living. For this the DSSSs build a wider platform to bring the actors of social equity together in order to further the goal of inclusion. Under the influence of the globalization, DSSSs involve the communities in the perennial process of engagement with systems, power structure and patterns of development in order to bring the equity perspective into the organizational vision, mission, goal, structure, programmes, activities and practice of empowerment in gender mainstreaming. For this they use their CBOs and the various programmes and activities for empowering the community for fair access to livelihood, education and resources; full participation in the political and cultural life of the community and self-determination in meeting the fundamental needs. With this intension DSSSs framed its vision, mission goal, structure, programmes and activities. Various gender supportive measures are there in the DSSSs. Maternity Leave for a period of twelve weeks with complete monthly salary and benefits are given to the women staff and paternity leave for the spouse of the expectant wife will be given for five days.
at the time of the birth of the child with full pay and allowances. This is also applicable to the field staff also. Also there is flexibility in the DSSSs for their staff to carry out their multiple roles ie, in case of meeting family needs/attending family functions the staff are provided with excuse to come late to the office and leave the office early with prior permission of the authority. The office also permits the staff to attend their children’s needs, i.e., for nursing mothers the office permits the flexibility and even allow the children of the staff to be in the office for child care.

At the community level, men tend to have formal leadership roles and perform high-status tasks while women often do the organizing and support work. Because women are active in all three types of labour (reproductive, productive and community), they are said to have a “triple role”. Most of the development projects have focused on women’s reproductive work as caregivers to children and families and ignored women’s economic roles and contributions. However, gender-focused projects recognize all the roles and responsibilities of women and men. They also recognize that women and men have different levels of access to resources and benefits from those resources.

There is a general notion that power is vested with male. Power is relation to socio-economic and political aspects indicate control over resources and decision-making, which lead to internalised oppression. Women are under represented in political office due to lack of income, education and freedom not to mention gender divisions of labour. The four oft-cited barriers to women’s political participation are culture, confidence, cash and caring responsibility-conceal the actual experience or threat of violence that restricts women to a private sphere. Political violence against women is an
intractable barrier to women’s political participation even at local or at national levels.

The less rate of literacy, lack of training in vocational skills, less opportunity for employment especially in jobs that matches their educational qualifications and home situations pull back them from job sector. Unrecognition of their support and contributions even in informal sector, structural inequalities of labour, inability to maintain the right dignity and security even in the work place may act as barriers for women to upgrade their potential.

DSSSs adopted gender enhancing strategies/approaches in all its structures. For this they provided gender sensitization programmes for the staffs, community leaders, members in all structures of the organization, religious leaders etc. They also adopt strategies like network of communication, giving emphasis on spreading awareness (knowledge), giving opportunities to take part, a space for attitudinal change and equal opportunity for participation and providing a better platform in decision-making through giving them the key roles.

Interpretations:

- Gender sensitivity is there at the administrative level of the DSSSs but its seriousness is lacking in the projects.
- DSSSs are working/ proposing projects/ programmes with the intention of upholding the interest and philosophy of the church.
- As per the directions of the CBCI in lieu with the international development policies, DSSSs followed it.
- Gender mainstreaming is vivid in the vision statement of the DSSSs but not percolating in mission statement of the organization.
• The emphasis made in the goal of the DSSSs about gender mainstreaming lacks the practicability of it.

• DSSSs are giving over importance to women and grass root structures, which gives additional responsibilities to women rather than encouraging their participation in the development process.

• Individual based approach and person centric approach is necessary for the empowerment of the process. The empowerment processes of the DSSSs lack this in their work.

• Empowerment in its true sense should increase the participation of men and women in the decision making role, access and control over resources, in the leadership and management role, increase in the use of opportunities for personal development and achievements, rather than focusing on financial resource mobilizations.

• Gender differences in perceiving the opportunities available in the DSSSs are evident in all DSSSs.

• Women restrict themselves from utilizing the opportunities and taking leadership.

• Inclusiveness was influenced by the international policies and policies of the aid agencies. At times this was not percolating to the grass root level in selection of beneficiaries.

• The approach adopted for gender mainstreaming is common in all DSSSs and some of the approaches / strategies need to be modified according to local conditions of the area of interventions- cultural specific interventions.
4.6 Issues related to gender in concern

The concept of development includes respect for all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural, as an inherent and constitutive part of development. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that the ‘recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’. The common features of gender system are male-female demarcation, allocation of roles, gender-based hierarchical placement. In any society, roles are attributed for specific function.

In every society there are gender issues, it begins from family and gradually extends to the society. It is universal and age is not a barrier for the issues. Discrimination based on gender, such as gender based preferences, physical and sexual harassment, domestic violence, emotional abuse and the harassment are not only in home but also in public spaces and work places. Men also have issues such as lack of reservations and preferences in public transports, to express their feelings in public (like crying), and expected to behave stronger and harder, and face role conflict because of gender stereotype behaviours.

There is a general notion that power is vested with male. Power is relation to socio-economic and political aspects indicate control over resources and decision-making, which lead to internalised oppression. Women are under represented in political office due to lack of income, education and freedom not to mention gender divisions of labour. The four oft-cited barriers to women’s political participation are culture, confidence, cash and caring responsibility-conceal the actual experience or threat of violence that restricts women to a private sphere. Political violence against women is an
intractable barrier to women’s political participation even at local or at national levels.

The less rate of literacy, lack of training in vocational skills, less opportunity for employment especially in jobs that matches their educational qualifications and home situations pull back them from job sector. Unrecognition of their support and contributions even in informal sector, structural inequalities of labour, inability to maintain the right dignity and security even in the work place may act as barriers for women to upgrade their potential.

DSSSs have separate strategies for implementation of their projects among different age groups such as children, women and men, even though they aimed at women in the beginning. The change of strategies based on the view that the gender mainstreaming should start at the budding stage i.e., with children. Even though network of communication extends up to the grass root level, the beneficiaries cannot get an initiation by themselves to approach the liaison people to seek help for resolving their problems. In most of the cases, those get an attention always resolve at its origin or sometimes it may goes up to the unit level. But it won’t get due attention beyond this limit. A few DSSSs have counselling centres in association with State Social Welfare Board and Kerala Legal Service Society. Through these centres they provide counselling for adolescent counselling and marital and family counselling. They handle varied issues of the community and in case of further assistance they do referral services. There many success stories to their record. Lack of attitude among the community members who need services are main bottlenecks for the effectiveness of this system. Their fear that it would bring bad name for the family, matters of privacy etc are the
hurdles for the effective utilization of the services. DSSSs also faced threats from the opponents because of the support they render to their members to overcome those issues. Understanding their limitations, DSSSs do associate with organizations which are of reliable nature mostly with Government departments and/or bodies like State Women’s Commission, Women Development Corporation, Kudumbasree etc.

Literature supports the findings of the researcher that all approaches to working with women treat identity as crucial in overcoming specific symptoms of distress and in empowering women to use their own resources and those of others to overcome the social problems they face (Burden and Gottleib, 1987; Phillipson, 1992; Morris, 1996). In many life experiences, women report a lack of self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness.

Commonly cited problems in working with women are lack of self-esteem, depression and lack of confidence and motivation (Langham and Day, 1992; Smith and Nairne, 1995).

**Interpretations**

- Gender issues are universal and taking place at individual, family and community level.

- Gender issues are ignored intentionally or unintentionally by the staff for easy functioning. At community level, members ignore it in their family life for maintaining peaceful and harmonious living.

- Though it is mentioned in the gender policy of the DSSSs about redressal of gender issues, still DSSSs does not have the mechanism to practice it.
• Administrative structure of the DSSS at Unit and Regional level headed by males and consisted majorly by males, handles the gender issues. Gender balance is not maintained there in the structures of the DSSSs.

• Only three out of eight DSSSs studied by the researcher have counselling facilities.

• Number of cases seek judicial assistance was very limited because of the cultural barriers. Only extreme cases of harassment and brutal domestic violence extent to that extreme.

• Men who seek the services of the counselling centres were very less. Instead they used the service for de-addiction.

• It is considered as a helping hand for anyone in distress. It is beneficial not only for the members of People’s Service Society Palakkad, others also seek the assistance of it.

• A permanent mechanism and machinery should be constituted by the DSSSs, rather than having an ad hoc committee to resolve the issue.

• Issues settled in a hidden way, creates an opportunity to occur incidents of similar nature in a progressive way. There are chances to be biased if it is handled by a single person.

4.7 Beneficiary Selection

The criteria for selection, who sets criteria, selection process of beneficiaries, gender sensitivity of selectors, documentation of selection process (for transparency), ultimately benefits whom, mechanism to ensure the result –
Beneficiaries are the corner stone for the success of every intervention/activities of the DSSSs. DSSSs works among women and men from the socially and economically weaker families, children and adolescents, small and marginal farmers, rural artisans and entrepreneurs, families with destitute and the aged, families of the physically and mentally challenged persons, tribal and socially under privileged groups. DSSSs implement various projects and programmes with the assistance of local, national and international support. The beneficiaries for the programmes/ projects were identified from their operational area through their people’s structure. There are projects were beneficiaries are selected on the criteria set by the implementation agency and there are agencies who provide their criteria in selection of beneficiaries and in all these project, gender is a criteria in selection of beneficiaries. The office bearers of the people’s structure has already attended gender sensitization programmes, this doesn’t mean that they are gender sensitized. The whole process of selection is documented both at the SHG level and unit level so that they can maintain transparency which will in turn result in the reputation of the DSSSs. The ultimate focus of the projects of DSSSs focuses on family development rather than individual development. For achieving gender mainstreaming, more focus should be given to the individual, because, sustainable development of the family can be achieved only if the individual is properly attended and constant follow-up should be taken. DSSSs use its people’s structure to ensure the result. But this has certain lacunae like educational background of the person responsible for it, his/ her attitude, commitment also matters its effectiveness.
Interpretations

- DSSSs set Gender as criteria in beneficiary selection process is because of the guideline of the aid agencies and also due to the influence of the international policies of social welfare. In the projects and programmes of DSSSs, women outnumber the men.

- The gender sensitivity of the selection committee members can be seen quantitatively ie, more women are included in the project.

- In the identification process of beneficiaries for the project, DSSSs are focusing on family rather than individual development. Individual based approach is necessary for getting expected results of the intervention.

4.8 Projects/ Programmes Interventions

Most of the development projects have focused on women’s reproductive work as caregivers to children and families and ignored women’s economic roles and contributions. However, gender-focused projects recognize all the roles and responsibilities of women and men. They also recognize that women and men have different levels of access to resources and benefits from those resources. The shift in the programmes and projects of the DSSSs with the intention of directly or indirectly focuses to gender mainstreaming. The result can be achieved only through gender focused problem analysis, and based on that carry out planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation with people’s participation and carryout Gender Impact Analysis before actual implementation of the project, so that any loop-holes can be identified and reconciled.
The impact of the programme or project with regard to time, place, concerns and aspirations of the women and men should be carried out with utmost care and critical thinking. The less rate of literacy, lack of training in vocational skills, less opportunity for employment especially in jobs that matches their educational qualifications and home situations pull back them from job sector. Reflections on the findings of the matter should be given wide coverage, so that many persons including stakes of DSSSs should know about it and reflections/ feed-backs from them should be valued high, which results in creating confidence, self-esteem, leadership capacity, self-organization, participation in decision-making not only in family but also in political arena.

Unrecognition of the support and contributions of women even in informal sector, structural inequalities of labour, inability to maintain the right dignity and security even in the work place may act as barriers for women to upgrade their potential so that attain confidence, self-esteem, leadership capacity, self-organization, participation in decision making.

Interpretations

- DSSSs though working for gender mainstreaming still stick on to charity. This is evident in some of the projects of the DSSSs.

- In all phases of the projects/programmes of the DSSSs, inclusiveness of men is expected by the staff and the members at the Regional and Unit level. Women will find out time to be in the process, while many inevitable hurdles are there for men like working time, social activities etc.
PART II

Inferences from Focus Group Discussions and Case Studies

FGD No: 1

Name of the DSSS : Cochin Social Service Society (CSSS).

Venue : Perumbadappu Unit Office

Date : 2nd September, 2011

Participants : 10

Time : 2hrs

Aim: To understand how the members of the focus group perceive gender mainstreaming and its social implication, gender issues they faced, how they handled it, role of CSSS in resolving it and their awareness of various machineries to tackle those issues.

Discussion: The FGD started with an introduction about the process and continued with an informal self-introduction by the participants. This was carried on by discussion and concluded by briefing up the main points of the discussion.

As an introduction Mr. Antony shared about the various types of gender issues happening within the family and outside the family. The group discussed some of them in detail such as discrimination based on gender within the family like gender based preferences, physical and sexual harassment, domestic violence, emotional abuse within family and harassment in public spaces and in work place.
Men also shared their problems like lack of reservations and preferences in public transports, not suppose to express their feelings in public (like crying), expected to behave stronger and harder (they too are sensitive and fragile), caring nature is expected of them by the spouse but not expected by his mother (this creates conflict in the family).

Ms. Catherine shared that “As part of the policy of the CSSS, we are now able to have our own savings, own source of income, assets in our own name. Now we are in a position to express our feelings and family members listen and respect my decisions. SHGs of CSSS are a platform to know many things in the world and it gave me the opportunity and courage to take decisions in life.

People are more social sensitive irrespective of gender because of mass education and there is progressive cultural developments taking place in the society which paved way for women to come forward take play major roles in family and society. Majority of the women members in my group are the real bread winners of the family this was the statement made by Ms. Laly. Lack of proper education is the root cause of many of the gender issues. The recent change in the social situation is because of the education, and if we keep on moving forward we achieve gender equity.

Social awareness is needed this can be done by DSSS. DSSSs are doing various programmes for us stated Lisa and she explained various programmes of CSSS. The organization conducted various training and capacity building programmes for the members. We all joined the DSSS only after our marriage and earlier we were shy to talk to others especially males. Through DSSS we got the opportunity to do things with them and we are working with the male members for the society.
Women are also contributing to the financial resources of the family but not having full control over it.

DSSS should take steps to change the attitude of the mass towards gender mainstreaming. Because of the Organization, women are able to sit along with men in the same platform; earlier women were marginalized because of the cultural influence,

Through the interventions of DSSS a favourable change occurred in their personal, cultural even in the political field. The number of men and women members of the DSSS contested in the election of local bodies’ states the involvement of DSSS in the field of political empowerment.

Before 1997, Ammu was not permitted to go outside the home. In her words, “I was permitted to go only to the church, that too on Sundays, but not let her to spend more time in the church. Because of the organization and the animators, the animator personally met my husband and got the permission to send me for the meetings. Through the trainings and awareness programmes, I got the confidence and courage to stand before you and address the people. Now I am capable to make decisions by analysing what is right and what is wrong, now I am least bothered about the public fear, if I speak publicly”. Avoidance of private money lenders in their locality, who lend money at high rate of interest only to women, became possible because of the intervention of DSSS.

At social level, Magi opined that women are engaged in micro ventures with the support of CSSS, and are earning income from it. Now women are able to support the family economically and at times they will give money for their husbands, if he doesn’t have work and women are also able to decide on how to spend the money. Three out of five women participated in the
discussion opposed Magi and said that women have much economic resources like Gold, land in their own name but couldn’t make own decision of, to lend to others. But the male members said that they feel free to ask their spouse to lend gold for others.

Ms. Catherine said that there is gender equality everywhere in the society and because of this divorce rate is becoming high. This was encountered by all others in the group including males. If gender equality was there in the society, then how come women harassment is more? Ms. Laly questioned the above statement by quoting examples like what gender equality is maintaining in getting benefits, at work place, at public spheres,

Mrs. Annie said, men and women have equal importance in family and they should sit together and decide on family matters, which are the right way to do things in family by respecting each other.

Mr. Peter said that he feels free to ask the gold of his wife to help his friend who needs financial support. Earlier women were not permitted to go outside, as time went by, the change in social, Economic, Educational and political system brought in commendable changes in the situations of women. Now they are free to join and work in any movements or organizations, can use their leadership qualities.

Mr. Antony said that before the functioning of CSSS in Perumbadappu unit, people lack basic education and because of that they were afraid to outside their house, even to a hospital. Through formal and non-formal education, people got the chance to understand about their society, this brought in the change. If the present members give due motivation to other members who are less active in the activities of CSSS, we can achieve a fruitful result of highly informed and better social condition of the society.
Mr. D’cruz shared that in the present society both men and women are aware of their rights and people accept when women speak publicly. Even women politicians were accepted by the society.

Mrs. Usha supported Mr. D’cruz that, at the time of her daughter’s marriage, her husband is less talkative and in that situation she took the initiative and discussed the matters with the bride groom’s family. In her words “My daughter’s wouldn’t happen if I didn’t cover the inadequacy of my husband. My children thought that with gratitude towards CSSS, because with their capacity building programmes, I was able to handle those kinds of situations in my life.”

Mrs. Jain said that equality in wages cannot be seen in labour market. Equal wages were given for men and women under NREGA, but men usually won’t work under it. They were not ready to compromise their wages of 450Rs/day to 150/day. There is much exploitation in unorganised sector like piece rate system and also long working hours.

Mrs. Lourde Mary said that I don’t want to stick on to women empowerment, instead I want my family to be a heaven and for that I want to share, love and sacrifice. If my husband is also with same attitude, then we can live to the possible extent. Also I have to train my children like that, and then where ever they live, they live peacefully and happily.

Mrs. Mercy, opined that though there is gender issues in the society, CSSS had initiated several activities for safeguarding the rights of people irrespective of gender. They organise capacity building programmes, leadership trainings, public awareness programmes, competitions, right based issues like price hike of LPG cylinders, health issues, disaster management for socio-economic, cultural and political development.
All the members of the group supported it and majority of the group members had at least one example to support the statement of Mrs. Mercy. Mr. Antony said that from Perumbadappu itself there are 3 lady ward members of CSSS. This was achieved only with the support and motivation of CSSS.

For handling gender issues CSSS is using their unit structure and the animators of CSSS try to handle the issue with the support of the Unit director and the Unit structure, if the person needs conselling or other services, they refer the case for further assistance. Mrs. Laly quoted the 3 cases in their surrounding, which CSSS provided referral services.

To protest against scarcity of safe drinking water in Perumbadappu, CSSS Unit organised picketing of National Highway and several cases were filed against the protestors. In that case CSSS supported its members and even they have to spend money to pay off the penalty.

Mrs. Catherine said that CSSS used to associate with State Women’s Commission, Human Rights Commission, Social Welfare Department and Kerala Legal Aid Society for protecting the rights of the people in their operational area.

**Observation:** The researcher was able to observe the group dynamics, when one person opined that their society already achieved women empowerment, all of the group members including men raised their voices against her and they strongly argued that don’t be a pit frog and don’t generalise one’s situation as the situation of people in neighbourhood. Through the discussion it was explicit that men too have problems and it made the women to think about it and the basic expression was that it was unbelievable for the women. Everybody accepted and appreciated the role of CSSS in empowering and mainstreaming gender.
**Derivation:** The strategies, the CSSS adopted like awareness generation about the rights of citizens especially of the women, made them conscious of their rights and they are confidently try to keep up that in the society.

**FGD No: 2**

**Name of the DSSS:** Pala Social Welfare Society (PSWS), Pala  
**Venue:** Central Office, Pala  
**Date:** 7th September, 2011  
**Participants:** 10  
**Time:** 2hrs

**Discussion:** The discussion started with the present situation of the society like crime and injustices and various social problems like communal riots, disasters etc and how it affects the women folk of the society. When Mr. Baby told about men are more affected of these problems. Suddenly women in the group raised their voice and expressed their feelings against his statement and Mrs. Jancy analysed the situation of women when tsunami occurred in Kerala’s coastal area and flood and land sliding situations in her locality. Mrs. Smitha also supported Jancy’s view by telling women and children are the most affected and even in the crisis situation they have to be mentally prepared to take care of their family.

The point of Smitha was taken over by Ms. Akhila that in case of domestic violence, the lady has to serve her husband as if nothing had happened to her. Many a time women had lost her self-esteem because of her husband’s deeds. She is not able to use the legal rights because of her children’s sake. Though there are various authorities to help the person in distress, people are not using for the sake of the family, especially children. That point was
crossed by Mr. Marian, he said that if the lady is bold, then no one can attack her, even her husband. PSWS are imparting training and leadership programmes through male and female SHGs but the people should have the courage to use it. We have so many tools and implements with us but not using at the right time with the right person. That is a curse for us.

The discussion was continued by Mr. Mani, he mentioned there is encouragement for women from everywhere but males are not getting that much attention. This was reciprocated by Mrs. Annie with a statement that women are marginalised from the mainstream of the society. She intentionally said that “We don’t want to be called as dependent or feeble. Instead I myself train my mind to call myself as capable to do anything in the world”. Others in the group congratulated her and encouraged her by giving shake hands. Another person in the group Mr. Vijayan said that I don’t let any kind of discrimination happen in my family. “I have three children 2 girls and a boy, even though the boy is the youngest I don’t pamper him, I love him as I love my girl children, because the culture of considering girls as burden is over, now everywhere we can see girls or women accomplish higher positions and bring prestige to the family. Only thing we have to accept, love and give good education”. “Education had a great role in moulding children and parents, because that changes the attitude of the individuals”, that was the opinion of Mrs. Prabha. Mr. Das, said that in their SHG meetings, they used to introduce a famous personality and carried out discussion based on the work that person did, so that everybody should be motivated. We introduced women also in that programme and in that discussion, they discussed what made her extra ordinary that analysis was highly useful to understand the role of woman as an individual, in the family and in the society and how they perceived by the society. Mrs. Prabha also
shared about the micro ventures they started and how they are contributing to the income of the family. “If I sit within the four walls of my house, I am sure my children won’t come like this, now they are professionals and earning a good amount. Through DSSS I came to know about the scope of education and I want my children to be in better position and in a decent living condition. Now I am very satisfied with what I have today.”

Observation: the researcher got to know the attitude of the people through their responses and reactions. When one person shared how she conditions her mind as part of building confidence, others openly encouraged her. The group was a very balanced one, with good emotional involvement and experience sharing. There was mutual respect evident in the group. Gender issues can be better identified at the initial stage itself, if the community is sensitized towards it and people accepted the role of PSWS’ role in it. The words of the participants throw light on their confidence. DSSS provided them exposure to life situations and to be ambitious in life, through its members it reached every home and it brought out results.

Derivation: For bringing gender mainstreaming in the society, the parents have to start from childhood and should give constant support for them throughout their life. SHGs are a good vehicle to carryout gender mainstreaming in the society by PSWS. Various activities and programmes carried out through DSSS made possible for its members to achieve something in their life and is a matter of credit for the members as well as its members.
FGD No: 3

Name of the DSSS: Thalassery Social Service Society, Thalassery

Venue : St. Mary’s Parish Hall, Thaliparambu, Kannur

Date : 15th Sept, 2011

Theme : Gender Mainstreaming

Participants : 10

Time : 2hrs

Discussion:

Jose Kokkanatt started the discussion with an introduction about the need of gender equality in the society and whatever we achieved now is because of the intervention of TSSS, they provided various trainings. As an impact of the training many of the SHG members were capable to draw salary, work as politicians and bearing some responsibilities in society. Sangeetha said that she wished to have a male leader in the meetings. It doesn’t mean that she don’t have leadership quality, the way she brought in speaks like that. Mr. Jose countered it by saying that it is a very traditional thinking and it’s high time to bring in a change in that of thinking.

Maya stated in the political field, “There are lady ward members who completed their tenure very successfully don’t want to take another turn and they said that only with the support of her husband, she was able to complete the tenure. This attitude should be changed, why she can’t do it? Doesn’t she have the ability to talk or do things? One inadequacy is the exposure to the outside world other than family. I think within one year of election she can even gain that. I personally feel that
Mr. Sadhasivan explained some of the gender issues occurring in his home and in neighbourhood. Because of our cultural influence, at every house, people either explicitly or implicitly prefer at least a male child. This was the initial point of gender discrimination in the family. Through the awareness programmes and discussions in the SHGs/ Credit Unions, there is a slight change in the attitude towards male child preferences. Even for their girl children they are providing basic education and higher education. In contrast to this males usually go for job oriented courses.

Mr. Suresh also shared their problems like lack of reservations and preferences in public transports, not suppose to express their emotions in public (like crying), expected to behave stronger and tough (they too are sensitive and fragile), caring nature is expected of them by the spouse but not expected by his mother which creates conflict in the family.

Pennamma said now people are capable to identify issues/problems based on human rights violation. “Usually we can see so many problems related to women and the victim needs support and I render my support, because I know how it will be if we don’t have support to react against injustices” she also said that people are more social sensitive irrespective of gender because of mass education by TSSS.

DSSS adopts various strategies to make the gender mainstreaming. DSSS provides trainings like self-defence, crisis management, karate etc. Sherin said that progressive cultural developments taking place in the society, more freedom and more opportunities available to men as well as women. Even husbands and in-laws encourage women to take up responsibilities in the group and outside. “My family got the opportunity to understand the benefit of going outside and work with different kinds of people. When my
mother-in-law was ill and my husband was out of station, I took her to the medical college and did the treatment. My family members observed the change occurred to me and my exposure and courage brought her to life. This was praised by everyone in the family and in the neighbourhood.”

Monthly monitoring and evaluation of TSSS conduct at Unit and Region level help us to have proper sense of direction and it help us to rectify our faults in our work.

Mrs. Omana supported Sherin by telling that lack of proper education is the root cause of many of the gender issues. The recent change in the social situation is because of the education, and if we keep on moving forward we can bring mutual acceptance and proper relation between the males and females in the community.

Ms. Kavitha shared the importance of awareness, every month the DSSS is organizing serious discussion on varied topics and through that we are able to gain knowledge. Motivation by the members and the staff of TSSS help us to do so. Jagratha Samithy working at the Regional level helps the members to solve their problems both within the group and outside the group.

Lisa also emphasised how she resolved her personal problem in her family life because of domestic violence. TSSS helped her to seek legal assistance and enforce law in her life. She also shared her experience in the political field, she once had the experience of her ward member showing favouritism to a person who belongs to her political party, she questioned that and others supported her and was able to deny the benefits of favouritism. She also mentioned that change in the attitude occurred because of the intervention of TSSS. “Earlier I was ruled by the feeling of
inferiority and considered myself as a second line member, but now I personally feel that I am competent to do any sort of work with men and I evaluate myself as a person with self-worthiness and I can boldly tell that it all happened because of the activities of TSSS.”

**Observation:** In the FGD, the members openly discussed various gender issues faced by men and women. They also explored the reason for it. The members accepted the role of DSSS in equipping its members to resolve it through various strategies like training and capacity building programmes, legal aid service, formation of jagratha samithy etc. Critical thinking and courage to react to the injustices in the society is the needed and DSSS plays an important role in it.

**Derivation:** Positive and constructive relation between males and females in the society can bring about gender mainstreaming and TSSS is trying that through their interventions, this needs people’s support and cooperation. Positive attitude and attitude to change and acceptance of change is the need of the hour.
FGD No: 4

Name of the DSSS : People’s Service Society Palakkad

Venue : St. Mary’s Parish Hall, Karimba.

Date : 24th September, 2011

Theme : Gender Mainstreaming

Participants : 10

Time : 2hrs

Discussion:

Laila- shared about the discrimination that she faced in public places and in public conveyance; she said that “I will ask for my rights and in some situations the male who denied her right backfired her. I ignored the situation, that gave me the courage to fought for the rights of women and now if I witness such situation I will question it and give support for the victim”

Anitha supported Laila and shared her experience of not getting support from Lady Co-passengers. She elaborated her experience of speaking in public to the males and that was questioned “Why a lady is talking to us, you call your male member in the family and let him speak to us.” In return Anitha told I am capable to speak to anybody who questions me or matter related to my family. She also said that “being a member in the family I too have a major role in the family and I too can be a spokes person of my family. Our male members in the community should have the sense and sensibility to accept this”.

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Sheeba supported Anitha by narrating how a marriage proposal cancelled because the woman in the family took lead role in talking about the matters to the proposed boy’s family. Cultural barriers make the women tied to least position in the family and in the society. The Government official harassed her in the name of political party and she got the courage to question her. In her words, “If we have the courage to question anybody who challenge or threat us, we can easily defeat that person”. All the members in the group supported her statement. The economic and social freedom I enjoy today is all because of the PSSP.”

Rosamma shared about the crisis a women politician faced from her experience and the experience she faced when she was a contested in panchayath election. The panchayath president of her area was a Scheduled Caste woman, who scared to decide things on her own. She depend her male counterpart for making decisions of each and everything. She opined that “We are not using the privilege of 50% reservation in Local bodies; still we are blindly depending on males for administration. I personally feel women are good administers but we tied ourselves at home and not using our skills for public”. 

Mary raised another issue of domestic violence and many in her neighbourhood face that problem. There are multiple reasons for that, some of them are substance abuse, inferiority complex, obsessive nature of the spouse etc. She narrated an incident in her neighbourhood and how the wife and children overcome that crisis. PSSSP helped the victim to overcome the crisis through family counselling and took initiative to undergo de-addiction treatment. Now that family lives happily.
Chellapan added to what Mary said, it is not only the women are victims of domestic violence, there are many men who face violence from partners. Because of our cultural barriers many of them are not willing to disclose it. There is an association formed by men of this sort.

Joseph said, culture is always changeable, in his words, “what we believed to be valued earlier are not like that, it has changed a lot, so as education and technology developed, there is change in attitude and culture of mankind.” This was supported by Rosamma, “the way I was brought in the family hurt me because of gender preferences. The inputs I got through the trainings of PSSP helped me to understand the need to protect our human rights- even in the case of my children. So I always try to create a space for them in the decision-making arena of the family.” Everybody in the group supported her attitude towards protection of human rights and child rights.

Xavichen said we are not showing any discrimination between boys and girls. Everybody in the group agreed to it. The awareness programmes given by PSSP helped me to be aware about the discrimination, because of that I can avoid it.

Anil said that “I know the burden of running a family and my wife used to help me in the work, so I help her in her work and I don’t want to segregate household chores as her work and my work. I am thinking, it’s for the benefit of my family.”Everybody in the group congratulated Anil for being recognising his wife and wished if our society was like that.

Monachan said that through PSSP we identified several problems in the society and took initiative to solve it in discussion at various levels. “For resolving it we even jointly attended the grama sabha and raised the issues at
the meeting, our planned strategy put the Panchayath members in pressure to sanction the petitions to resolve the issue.”

**Observation:** The members in the group had great experience in their life. How gender differences in the family affect a person and how it be cleared off from the society. The emotional ventilation of the members touched everyone in the group. I created a cohesive environment for the protection of human rights especially child rights.

**Derivation:** Protection of human rights is the best way to maintain status quo of the members of the society.

**Case Studies**

**Case No: 1**

Mrs. X got married to Mr. Y at the age of 24, 17 yrs ago. At the time of their wedding, Mr. Y was engaged in daily labour in his neighbourhood, which was the only source of income for the family. They have two children who are doing their schooling, elder one is 16yrs old and the youngest one is 9yrs old. Ten years ago, Saji met with an accident; he fell down from a tree and got spinal injury. He underwent two major surgeries and because Mr. Saji was paralyzed, Mrs. X took care of him completely that resulted in depletion of her spinal cord and soon she was not able to bend, carry weight or take care of her husband anymore. For five years she was also bedridden and couldn’t undertake treatment due to lack of money.

Before her marriage itself, she had been a member of the SHG of High-range Development Society (HDS). With the financial support from well wishers and from HDS she managed to get the operations done for her husband. Even after two surgeries, her husband could walk only with the support of calipers.
Her illness, husband’s illness and children’s education became a burden for the family. At that time she heard of the financial support from Save A Family Plan (SAFP) for purchasing auto rickshaw as part of Income Generation Programme (IGP) through HDS. She decided to do that work and started learning auto driving. She successfully passed all the tests and took the license and, as promised HDS provided financial assistance for buying auto rickshaw, they also arranged loan from the commercial bank for the same. She started her career as an auto driver 3 yrs ago. She bought an auto, driven using petrol. Two other ladies also bought auto rickshaws along with her and they parked their vehicle in the nearby auto stand and she was alone in her area.

When she started her career, she faced so many crises from the society and from the family like lack of confidence from the part of passengers, lack of acceptance as a lady driver from co-drivers, cannot be available at early morning hours and cannot work at late evenings because of household chores. She said that “many of the people from the community discouraged me from starting this work and they encouraged me to do traditional jobs like petty shop, but I felt that everybody can do that kind of work but only courageous people can do the challenging work. This statement is my guiding principle”. She challenged the gender stereotype in the society and she managed to gain the confidence of her fellow drivers. My husband gave me full support and I used to share with him the difficulties I faced in the initial days. She said that “Now my husband and children understand the work that I do and they support me by helping in the household chores. So I am able to start my work at 9 am and if I get long trips I even come home late. I even dare to go for emergency trips to hospital if there is any need in the locality where I live.”
With the income from driving the rickshaw, she is able to manage the family needs like food, medical expenses of husband, education of children and repaying the loan for buying auto rickshaw. Frequent hike of the petrol charge affected her income; so she decided to buy a diesel engine auto and she bought it last year. She boldly says that, “now I am confident and I am able to plan and implement things for the betterment of my family.”

**Researcher’s Observation:** The capacity building programme for the women SHG members on gender mainstreaming made her think of taking up a challenging job which breaks the conventional thinking of the society. Overcoming the gender stereo types was not an easy task. At the initial stage, people were afraid to take a ride in her auto. As she proved her ability, people accepted her as a professional driver. Role of family in achieving confidence was noteworthy. The decision to take a challenging job and being the only lady auto driver and parking the auto along with male drivers shows her willingness to cooperate with them without inhibition made her a success in the field.

**Discussion and Derivations:** In the case of gender, there always exists an inequality between the two genders and this is the prime cause of dependency in this case. For many reasons, women are not allowed to perform many actions as men do, so it will make them different form them. This will result in a depending state. Challenging the social norms and gender stereo types is a difficult task, because it creates cracks in the social structure of the society. In this case one can really note of the dependency theory. For this, the person who does this needs constant support from the family and from the society. For this the HDS make the social structure to accept changes in the society.
Case No: II

Mrs. A, 40yrs of age, married and blessed with 2 sons, is a house wife. She had studied till 10th class. Mr. B.A’s husband is a daily wage labourer. Because of the cultural barriers; her parents didn’t allow her to go out for work before marriage. She has been the member of Bodhana Vikasana Samithy (BVS) since 2007, and it is a mixed group of male and female members from 15 wards of Thalavady Panchayath. She was elected as the Secretary of BVS by other members. The responsibility made her committed towards community development work. Through BVS, Bodhana imparted several leadership and capacity building programmes. She motivated others to gain from the trainings and she herself utilized the programmes to do so. She started vegetable cultivation, bee-keeping, vermi-compost making on commercial basis and earned regular income for the family. Bodhana also educated the community about the importance of Gramasabhas and that made her internalize the relevance and its modus operandi. In January 2010, the then ruling party member of the 4th ward of Thalavady panchayath convened gramasabha in her ward and there were not enough members to satisfy the quorum; even then the ward member wanted to conduct the meeting. The agenda of the gramasabha was to have discussion on fund utilization. Mrs. A firmly opposed the move and some members of the ward supported her. She didn’t even bother to get support from other members in the community. She wanted the deserving members in the community to get the benefits. She told the member and those who came to attend the gramasabha, “If the gramasabha doesn’t have the quorum then the meeting should be convened after informing everyone in the ward and should inform the date of the next gramasabha” and explained the relevance of having gramasabha and questioned why the member wanted to convene the meeting.
without quorum. Her open attack made everyone in the gramasabha realise the wrong intentions and the ward member was forced to convene another meeting. Meanwhile she encouraged the members of BVS and other members in the ward to attend the gramasabha and convinced them of its importance. When her family came to know about the incident, her husband supported her, but her two sons discouraged her by stating “it’s not good for ladies, but my husband tried to change my sons’ attitude by telling it’s the responsibility of every individual in the society to react to these kind of injustices, we should feel proud that your mother did it for the sake of everybody in this ward”. After 3 weeks, the ward member convened another gramasabha and discussed the agenda of the meeting in detail. Only after a hot debate the agenda was passed and she still remembers that incident with pride. She shared that Bodhana’s Rights based trainings made her question the situation and do justice to the entire community. Throughout the time, Bodhana Director, central staff and BVS gave constant support and follow-up which made her more confident to challenge the authorities when they go wrong.

**Researcher’s Observation:** Internalizing the inputs of the training session made her think of the importance, rules and procedures of Panchayati Raj. Her attitude and the decision-making capacity were enhanced because of the trainings and experience from the BVS of Bodhana. The cohesive feeling of the members of BVS, gave her confidence to challenge the ward member. Moreover, the courage to make decision to react to the social injustice and the encouragement by the authorities of Bodhana needs to be highlighted. The courage of Mrs. A to bring injustice before the public needs recognition. The community people’s response to this incident was that, after that the
ward members learned the Panchayati Raj Act thoroughly and worked in accordance to it.

**Discussion and Derivations:**

Mrs. A’s sons’ comment of not to engage in these kinds of activities, that’s not expected from ladies and the response of her husband towards that statement is catching. Her husband said that the gender sensitization programmes of Bodhana made me think at this level, earlier I was a man who thought typically in the patriarchal way. In this case how Mrs. A challenged the social role theory and the acceptance from the part of her spouse is a matter which should draw attention of the society. Give and take recognition or acceptance is the prime thing for gender mainstreaming. Constant trainings and capacity building programmes of Bodhana encouraged the members of BVS to react to injustices and question the persons who commit this irrespective of their power, social status etc.

**Case III**

Mrs.K, Ward member of Ettumanoor Grama Panchayath was a simple housewife before entering in the mainstream of society. Being a member of a large family of 7 daughters and 2 boys, she has faced many crises in her life. Now, 52 years old, she is the Diocesan President of Mahilavedi of Vijayapuram Social Service Society(VSSS). She got married at the age of 25. Only after the marriage did she realize that her husband was a psychiatric patient. She had three sons and the youngest one is mentally challenged. She took membership in the mahilavedi of VSSS after the marriage and through that she got the opportunity to study various topics related to women leadership, women empowerment, Reproductive health, Income Generation Programmes, people’s participation, Disaster management, environmental
issues, social evils and gender equality etc.... The classes enlightened her, broadened her knowledge and the motivation from others in the neighbourhood prompted her to become an Animator of VSSS. As a result, she got the opportunity to associate with other organizations and institutions working in nearby areas, which made her to do schooling for her youngest son at Sneha Bhavan, School for the Differently Able at Gandhi Nagar, Kottayam. Further, she was selected as the Animator of Sneha Bhavan for the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Programme because of her capability and leadership quality. She underwent 40 days training programme, away from home. She has to work almost 8 hrs daily for both these agencies. All this was possible with the support of her husband and children. She used to train them in doing household chores irrespective of gender roles.

In the year 2000-2001 she came to know that a toddy shop got license to operate in her locality, ie, in Adichira Kunnukulam, which is going to be a nuisance to the public. She organized 100 women from the same locality and conducted strike to shut down the toddy shop. The strike continued for 14 months and they faced very bitter experiences of physical attacks from the owners of the toddy shop as well as from its consumers. They planned each day’s activities of the strike with experts in the field and also from VSSS. Key personnel from VSSS attended the strike on everyday basis and also political leaders, cultural activists and representatives from various movements visited the people engaged in strike. Mrs. K and some of the colleagues were admitted to the hospital because of the physical assault and even in the hospital they were attacked by the opponents. 28 cases were filed against them and 3 cases were in the High Court of Kerala. In the year 2007, she won the President’s Award for Best Social Volunteer. Her commitment
for the development of the community motivated her to organize Bala Panchayath (Children’s Panchayath) and conducted classes for the children in Ettumanoor panchayath. This gave her confidence to contest in panchayath election and she approached political parties for support but was denied. So she decided to compete in election as an independent candidate and won the election by 26 votes. She used her ability for the welfare of the community. Being a woman panchayath member, she faced several issues specific to gender. She showed the courage to question the preceding member in different matters that she felt should be questioned. For dispensing the duties of being a ward member, she had to work and travel even at late nights. The male political domination was used by the former ward member against her and she challenged it with courage and spirit. The harassment faced by Mrs. K was to the extent that some people questioned and commended even on her character. The discussion initiated by Mrs.K with her husband made her resolve her family problem. Her leadership skill and problem solving skill was duly accepted by the voters of that ward and by the panchayath itself. She encouraged the members of her ward to work towards social good irrespective of caste, creed and gender.

**Researcher’s Observation:** When Mrs.K spoke about her past life, from her expressions and feelings the researcher observed the intensity of the difficulties she encountered in her life. Her life experience together with her awareness about social evils and its impact on individual, family and community made her to enter into the agitation. Even the threats and physical assaults she faced was taken as a challenge by her. Being a woman, the opposition group thought that threats can prevent her from her target of shutting down of the toddy shop. Instead, she gained motivation and energy from the threats. Moreover people from all over India supported her on the
noble cause she fought without even considering her life. The ability to manage private and public spheres of life needs special appreciation. The quantity and types of work she has done and the way she resolved the problems of the society speaks of her commitment and leadership skills. Her capacity to work with people of different categories and with officials of various departments is noticeable.

**Discussion and Derivations:**

Her leadership abilities and networking capacity was identified and cultivated by Vijayapuram Social Service Society. She started her association with VSSS as a service seeker and now she is one among the first line leaders of the people’s organization of VSSS. This transition occurred because of the interventions of VSSS. The capacity building programmes, sensitization programmes and leadership trainings increased her knowledge. Her life experiences made her resolve to overcome them and for this she inculcated right attitude with the help of the staff of VSSS. She also indoctrinated the courage to practice what she acquired from the organization and motivated others to fight for justice. In that task, she incorporated the support of men and women in the locality, in the organization and other well wishers. In this case it is really visible of the theory of empowerment, she made herself for; having decision-making power of her own, having access to information and resources for taking proper decision, having a range of options from which made choices, she made herself capable to exercise assertiveness in collective decision making, having positive thinking on the ability to make change, ability to learn skills for improving one's personal or group power, ability to change others’ perceptions by democratic means, involving in the growth process and changes that is never ending and self-initiated and increasing one's positive self-image and
overcoming stigma. She proves that change is possible and it should come from within.

Case IV

Mrs. S, 37yr old, is in true sense a homely lady having her husband and a 9 year old daughter. She belongs to a very poor socio-economic background. She got married in the year 2000. The only source of income for the family was the wages of her husband. He won’t give money to meet the daily needs of the family and she had to spend days even without food. Her husband was an alcoholic and used to harass her physically and emotionally. Because of his physical assault, many a time she was hospitalized and she didn’t disclose the reason even to the Doctor. The neighbours couldn’t help her because of her husband’s attitude. That time one of her friends encouraged her to join the Self Help Group of Malankara Social Service Society and she became a member in the year 2002. Now she is also an Executive member of the Federation of SHGs at Chekkadi in Trivandrum District. In the year 2009, MSSS started its Suraksha Project at Chekkadi and through that project, imparted legal awareness and gender equality trainings. That was a thought provoking session, which really influenced her. Knowledge of individual rights and the privileges available in the society for safeguarding rights of the women motivated her to challenge her so called fate. When her husband continued his routine of violence, she questioned him and defended him. Her knowledge about personal rights and privileges gave her confidence to defend herself from the physical abuse of her husband. Her friends and members in SHG provided enough support and confidence to face any crisis caused by her act of self-defence. Her husband didn’t expect such a response from wife and as a result he stopped beating his wife and started to spend to meet the needs of the family. She started an Income
Generation Programme (IGP) of Grocery retail shop in her locality with the assistance of MSSS. From this, she made some money that helped her run the family. Her husband helps in her work which resulted in an improvement in their relationship. She is able to manage her family even when her husband doesn’t have work. Now, in the decision making in her family, she too play a key role and her husband discusses matters with her and taking decisions jointly. In her opinion, getting knowledge at the right time saved her life. Also, she opined that every individual should have awareness about one’s own rights and should use the wisdom to put that to practice.

**Researcher’s Observation:** Her family background of low income forced her to marry a man who demanded lesser dowry. For that, she compromised so much in her life, even her expectation of providing good education to her daughter. Her dissatisfaction of not achieving her dream was vivid in her words. Her frustrations made her react to her husband’s cruelty, which happened because of her awareness. This instance is an example of how awareness can bring change in the life of a person. In that way social legislations are a blessing to the mankind.

**Discussion and Derivations:**

The importance of right based approaches of NGOs at global, national, state and local level attained visibility in the recent years and it has benefitted the citizens of the country. In this case, it is explicitly shows how empowerment theory and gender role theory works out. NGOs’ approach of educating the public of social legislations through social awareness is a medium for change. More such awareness programmes should be dispensed for the betterment of the society. Protection of human rights is the best way to keep and maintain social justice.
Summing up

Through qualitative analysis of the organizational systems and interventions of the DSSSs, the researcher came to the conclusion that, at the policy level there is gender mainstreaming but there are lacunae in implementing it. As the DSSSs are work under the Church hierarchy of power, always follow male dominancy. If a change takes place or occurs in the power structure of the church, there is scope for more female inclusion in the administration of the DSSSs which is not only at the functional level but also at the administrative level that results in the development of a new organizational culture. Lack of consciousness about the philosophy of the project among the staff and beneficiaries generates a gap in achieving expected out of the project. To avoid this, create a conscious effort to do so and that helps to incorporate gender in all the interventions and functions of DSSSs. Thus the DSSSs can match its vision with its function.