

# Sahiyar (Stree Sanghathan)

## Inception

Sahiyar began as an initiative of a group of students from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in 1984. Consciousness of the secondary status of women through their experiences as women and emergence of the autonomous women's movement in the country had strengthened their urge to start a women's organisation in Baroda.

Sahiyar is an organisation by women, for women, In the long term, it aims to work towards a society free from inequality, injustice and atrocity - a society whose women enjoy equal status and recognition as human beings.

## We Believe

We live in an unequal society. Economic, social, religious, cultural and gender-based inequalities affect women from all classes, castes and cultures, but they have the most serious impact on Dalit, working-class & minority women, who also face marginalisation due to their caste and class & Community. Gender based inequalities have become deep rooted in our society.

Inequality, oppression and exploitation of women do not originate from the biological differences between men and women but from the cultural values and socio-economic structures of a society. They are not natural. Human beings have created them. We can eradicate these inequalities, only if all people, irrespective of their gender, participate in the movement for social change.

## Our Appeal

**LET US JOIN HANDS TO CREATE A SOCIETY FREE OF ANY EXPLOITATION, OPPRESSION, ATROCITY, INJUSTICE AND INEQUALITY-WHERE WOMEN HAVE EQUAL STATUS AND RECOGNITION AS HUMANBEINGS.**

**WE SOLICIT YOUR ACTIVE SUPPORT IN OUR ACTIVITIES.**

## Invitation

Only women can be decision makers at Sahiyar (Stree Sanghathan). However, in all our programs, campaigns and activities. We have always welcomed and received valuable contributions from gender sensitive men.

We invite you to join us as a member or support us as a well-wisher.

## Our Activities

we conduct awareness programmes to achieve our long-term aim to change the patriarchal values and structures of our society.

We provide support & services to help women meet immediate needs in their struggle against injustice and violence.

### 1. Awareness Programmes :

We use various mediums to convey our message.

- (1) Street Plays, awareness songs, garbas (folk and dance of Gujarat), poster exhibitions, film shows are some of the mediums used to address a large number of people in the community.
- (2) Demonstrations, public meetings, rallies, wall paintings, human chains, etc, to attract immediate attention to urgent issues of violence or atrocity.
- (3) Students are involved through group discussions, essay-writing, workshops on current issues, and awareness camps.
- (4) Our campaigns generate awareness on different kinds of violence against women - rape, custodial rape, sex determination, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and harassment at the work place-and on the various laws for women. We organise and

participate in campaigns in Baroda and at the state level to press for amendments in laws.

We actively participate in national campaigns.

- (5) We undertake fact-finding, survey and research in significant cases of violence against women or violations of Human Right.
- (6) Publication and Documentation : Sahiyar publishes and disseminates leaflets, pamphlets, booklets, newsletters, and training material on issues concerning women, Our library have books on women's issues. These are available in English, Hindi and Gujarati.

**2 Training, Workshops, Seminars :** We hold training programmes, workshops and seminars for NGO workers, government servants (police officers, legal professionals, officials working on development issues), teachers, lawyers, trade unionists and activities from various organisations to sensitize them about gender issues and help them incorporate a gender sensitive perspective in their respective fields.

We offer training programmes on gender, patriarchy, history of the women's movement in India and communalism, song of the women's, movements, street theatre, women and development, women and violence, and women and the law.

As resource persons, we also help other organisations to conduct training programmes organised on these issues.

### 3. Immediate Support

**When women face injustice, discrimination and violence in the family, in the society and at the work place, we offer,**

- F Counselling and Legal Advice
- F Emotional and Moral support

- F Assistance in dealing with their problems
- F Constant and intimate support in their struggles

#### 4. Work with adolescent Girls

Adolescent girls face various problems because they have little understanding of the physical and emotional changes occurring in their bodies and minds. Social and familial restrictions and lack of space to discuss their dilemmas increase their problems. This time is crucial to career building and future development.

- F We organize group discussions and individual counselling for girls.
- F We offer computer courses and in other short-term courses to help girls develop skills.
- F We provide the link between girls who might stop going to school due to economic reasons and those who wish to contribute scholarships towards education.

#### 6. Women's Leadership for Peace and Justice :

We work in the eastern parts of Vadodara, where the major slum areas are located. These are also communally sensitive areas. Women living in these vicinity come from different communities. We train women to assume leadership roles in their communities. and actively spread the message of justice, equality, peace and communal harmony, create awareness and empower other women in their neighbourhood.

#### 7. Mahila Mandal :

Poor and lower middle class women come together for saving activities. They also discuss problems they face as women in every day life. We organise discussions on current issues, film screenings and other cultural activities during these meetings. We encourage women who aspire

to make a difference in their lives, to gain independence through education, training, earning work.

#### 8. Funding :

Fund raising is not just a financial concern for us but part of our awareness generation activities. As a matter of policy, we collect small contribution from as many people as possible. All our members and supporters contribute according to their readiness and capacity. We also collect funds through cultural programmes and training programmes for other NGOs. Several local and national trusts and occasionally, international trusts, with similar objectives, lend support through financial contributions.

**The donations given to Sahiyar (Stree Sangathan) are exempted under 80 (G-5) of incometax.**

#### Registration No.

**As Public Trust : F(452) Vadodara.**

**As Society : Guj. (739) Vadodara.**



# Sahiyar

## [Stree Sanghathan]

Established in 1984



*Sahiyar - a woman's friend*

*A space for women  
to share their joys and sorrows,  
hopes and despair,  
aspirations and experiences.*

#### : Address :

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Vadodara - 390019 Gujarat, India,  
Phone : (0265) 2513482  
E-mail : sahiyar@gmail.com  
Time : 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

(2) C/o., Matrushi Gangaba Vayvsayini Gruh,  
Opp. Sursagar Lake, Nr. Music College,  
Nyaymandir, Vadodara.  
Phone : (0265) 2417092  
Time : 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.