



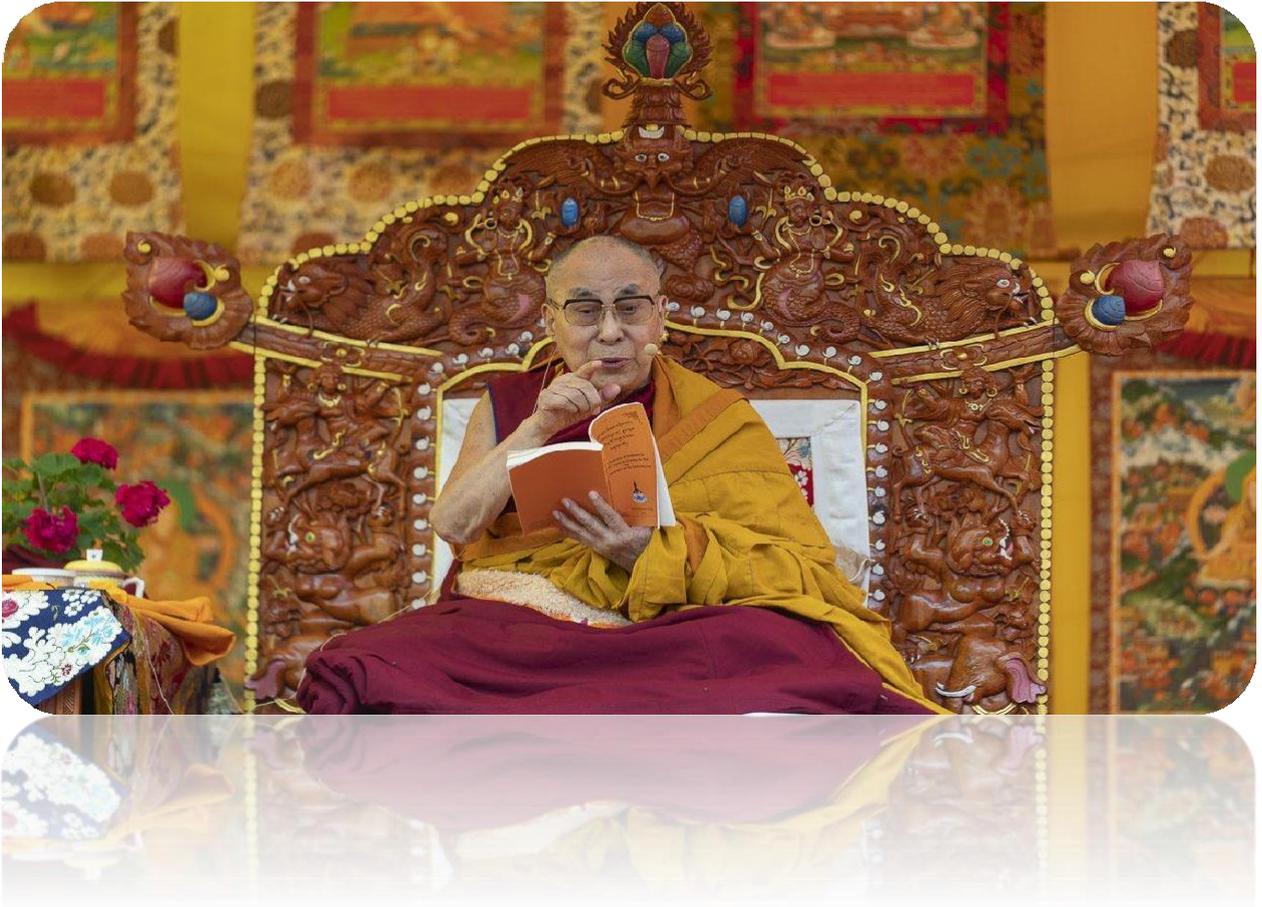
CULTURAL ACADEMY FOR PEACE

ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019

Empowering Women
Promoting Peace





PEACE

We cannot achieve world peace without first achieving peace within ourselves...Inner Peace. In an atmosphere of Hatred, Anger, Competition and Violence, no Lasting Peace can be achieved. These negative and destructive forces, Compassion, Love and Altruism, which are the essential teachings of the Buddha.

His Holiness Dalai Lama

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From the Chairperson's Desk



While dwelling on the decades of my involvement with women's issues, it dawned on me that *Woman is a full circle, she has the power to create, nurture and expand her circle of inclusions.*

Tracing the evolution of women I realized that "women during the Vedic period enjoyed equal status with men in all aspects of life."

In Mahabharata, the story of Draupadi's marriage to five men is a glowing example. This is clear cut evidence that polygamy was matched with polyandry during the Vedic era. Woman was free to select her husband on a particular occasion termed 'Swayamvara.' The accepted practice was that the father would invite men, and the girl would select one and marry him, while the rest of the members gathered there watched them. This clearly showed how women's positions were taken seriously during the Vedic period. This practice was prevalent till the 10th century AD.

During the Medieval Mughal Period, in the Indian subcontinent changes were brought about in society as per the religious norms. The Purdah and the Jauhar are the normal attire used in accordance with the Islamic rules that existed from the 10th century onwards.

Whereas Nair Communities in Kerala practiced polyandry for centuries, during the Medieval period, till the 8th century, when the British came into power. However this practice was not considered as a uniform social behavior, at the same time, there were kingdoms which followed Polyandry, too.

The freedom struggle of India was the opening up of a new horizon for womanhood. In modern India, women have adorned high offices including that of the President, Prime Minister, Speaker of Lokh Sabha etc. Many of the International conventions, UN declarations and International Days observed brought various changes over the past few millennia. Thus women were made aware of their status and place in society.

Now woman has mastered many arts and reached heights she dreamt of. But she still has to go a long way to achieve equal status in the minds of her counterpart.

Madam CAME wrote "the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that moulds the character. That soft hand is the main factor in national life. So do not neglect the powerful hand".

Cultural Academy initiated all its programs focusing on the development and empowerment of the families with special emphasis on women and children since the last 35 years. Lot of women have gained self-confidence being enabled to raise their voice to demand justice and discover their potential.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru remarked "you can gauge the condition of a nation by observing the status of women".

For the last few years we have been concentrating helping women and men to familiarize

with the laws related to women and children through which they can ensure changes in their life, such as Domestic Violence Prevention Act(2005),POSH Act(2013),POCSO Act(2012),Dowry Prohibition Act(1961), Juvenile Justice Act(2015), Anti Human Trafficking Act(2003), etc.

When there are not many groups striving to focus on Right based approach for women Empowerment and development, Cultural Academy for Peace could extend help to marginalized communities with its unique strategies, with the support of Government Agencies, Local Government Bodies and Civil society groups.

Our collaboration with local, national, and international communities assisted us to reach our goals. We offer our special gratitude and appreciation to Cultural Connections Director Ms.Deanna Brown, Mr. Brian, Wheels for women project- Mrs .Kathleen Mulligan and Mr. David Studwell, Schwester Myriam and Margrit Germann, TDH Project and AEIN etc. for their partnership and participation. Also other enlightened women and groups around

Gratefully acknowledge the continuous support of our Cultural Academy Community and well-wishers.

Pressures and powerlessness in the face of certain situations do not block our road to reach out to the oppressed and voiceless groups. Cultural Academy believes in networking and partnership which energize and nourish the roots of hope. Its deep convictions and staunch determination provide ample motivation to pursue its mission.

Beena Sebastian

Chairperson

DOWN THE HISTORY LANE...



Every organization has its own trajectory that calls for attention and appreciation. Over three decades Cultural Academy for Peace has moved on its own rhythm of determination, fearlessly holding its head high seeking Peace and harmony especially in the world of distressed women and children.

My association with Cultural Academy for Peace dates back to 2004, when I first listened to Madam Beena Sebastian speak at a Women's Conference. Deeply impressed, by her narration of ground level experiences of working for the upliftment and empowerment of marginalized and oppressed women and children, struggling for their Rights and a dignified life, I dared to question her. She softly held my hand and said "come and see what we do." I paid a visit to Shanthi Bhavan.

That was a turning point in my life. Never before, in my comfortable zone, imagined that such voiceless and powerless women existed in Kerala. Decided to follow her, though I could not work with the same grit, unparalleled sensitivity, understanding of women's issues as she did. Yet to be with Madam Beena and her Team was a tremendous learning experience.

Cultural Academy's initiatives and effective interventions have saved the lives of thousands of women who would have fallen into despair, or trapped in trafficking. Moreover, the various sensitizing and training programs even for the Police Force, the Panchayat, other Organizations and groups have contributed to bring about a shift in our society's perception of Gender Roles.

It is worth mentioning that Cultural Academy is aware of our increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. The responsibility of hosting Women Peace keeping Program(WPP) (2007-2009) has forged greater links with Asian Women Peace practitioners. This in turn has promoted exchange of grass root level experiences, and better understanding of handling cases of domestic violence and human rights violations. The exposure to an international group enriched the Staff and the volunteers. Many have remarked how it broadened their vision of life and motivated them to change attitudes.

Over the years, Cultural Academy has built up a strong network of partners, Social Activists, Legal Personnel, Government Agencies etc , who support it to achieve its goals. With Madam Beena at its helm, it has won recognition of the Government as well as of International Groups and Organizations. Indeed she holds the reins firmly, steers through paths with the confidence of a mother, sister, friend and committed counselor. Friends from abroad, who visited Cultural Academy's Projects , have been inspired to replicate similar programs in their own country.

Undoubtedly Cultural Academy has targeted socio-economic transformation and sustainable Development. The pages to follow evidence it. The continuous striving to achieve its goals obviously reiterates 'there is no end to growth because there are no limits to human potential'. Let us be part of its history.

Rosie Martin
Editor

IN THE ARBITRAL TRIBUNAL, ERNAKULAM
Mrs. LEELAMANI N., B.A., LL.B. DISTRICT JUDGE (Former)



It brings me great pleasure to write on behalf of Cultural Academy for Peace for the 2018-19 Annual Report. In our constitution, Hindu mythology, and the Holy Bible, women are offered equal status to men. But in reality, women are often subjected to mistreatment, harassment, and cruelty. Often, without any fault of their own, they become victims of violence regardless of caste, race, age, culture, economical or educational status. CAP extends their services for the development of women and children who have been subjected to violence, abuse and discrimination; particularly those who are neglected, distressed and discarded by their relatives and the society at large.

As our respected Chairperson has stated, the Academy acts as a “Collective Conscience” of Indian citizens. This description is exceptionally fitting. With my background in judicial service and social work, I have witnessed a significant number of cases where women have lost everything, due to sudden unexpected events in their lives. In such situations, victims without an understanding of the law suffer enormous atrocities. However, instead of suffering with empty hands and broken hearts, CAP extends peace and courage to women and children for their very survival. They also ensure efforts to sustain equality, sisterhood, and love.

The greatest service an organization can provide is to help affected individuals take their broken pieces and learn to feel whole once again. CAP does this by providing services and support to victimized women and children, showing them a way forward. With an understanding of the trauma suffered victims, CAP offers protection and rehabilitation, reaching and surpassing its goals of providing a holistic approach to addressing victim’s emotional, physical, present, and future needs.

Despite many beneficial laws and acts of protection for women and children in India, there is no effective methodology for putting an end to the crimes perpetrated against them. This phenomenon is being challenged by Cultural Academy for Peace. This often means educating society at large or lobbying and working with the government, all for the ultimate development of women and children.

I take this opportunity to remember our Holy Mother “Mother Theresa” and her reply to a media person in an interview. The media reporter asked a question to Mother: “how do you find the source of income to do all the divine services to the poor and weaker section in society? Are you people selling any goods or something else?” Mother got a little bit angry and replied, “Yes, Yes, we are selling Love and Love alone.” I honestly wish to adopt those words because they are absolutely befitting the entire members and performers of the Cultural Academy.

The unparalleled services rendered by the Academy have been acclaimed both by the government and the world over, on many occasions. It is, therefore, my great pride and pleasure to wish success to each and every soul touched by CAP. I would also like to express my deep gratitude and sincere thanks to the Chair Person and other respected members of CAP for giving me an opportunity to speak a few words about their noble institution.

N.LEELAMANI
Arbitral Tribunal

Message from Arpita Varghese, Gender and Humanitarian Action Analyst, UN Women

*In an environment where violence against women and girls persist as among the most systematic and widespread human rights violations, the contributions of women-led organizations such as Cultural Academy for Peace cannot be overstated. Over the years, I have witnessed CAP's consistent efforts to advocate for and empower women and girls in Kerala, and to provide much-needed direct and referral service to survivors of gender-based violence; and applaud the impact the organisation has had. It is my sincere hope that its work is recognized and supported to help Kerala grow by building the resilience and empowerment of women and girls across the state**

Arpita Varghese
UN Women

**Remarks are of the author and not representative of the organization*



“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive.”
— Dalai Lama XIV, The Art of Happiness





Dr. Aparna Elizabeth Mammen

Experience Sharing

Before volunteering for Cultural Academy for Peace, I was ignorant about the plight of abused and vulnerable populations in our society. The media under-represents this widespread epidemic and its impact on women especially. CAP provided the rare opportunity to interact with very strong women who had been subjected to unspeakable violence and traumas but through sheer will, rose up against all odds. I also met children who never had a chance to experience a normal childhood but were extremely well-adjusted. Soon, I began to recognize the blatant societal disregard and neglect these women face on a daily basis, as well as its negative psychological impact. It is this very impact that Cultural Academy fights to attenuate. Working with them gave me a perspective into the lives of these women, one that was miles from the bird's-eye view that I've comfortably been accustomed to.

Gender justice as subject is discussed corollary to acts of violence and atrocities, but what happens when the person on the receiving end is unaware of her rights? Society truly fails these women when they try to go back to their normal lives and sustain themselves. They face such extreme social ostracism that it can diminish all previous efforts taken to empower them.

Cultural Academy works to rectify this by educating and empowering women while providing them with a safe home, (which some desperately need.) This organization aids survivors through counseling, legal support, and by guiding their struggle for justice. Cultural Academy for Peace is constantly churning out innovative strategies to prevent these hardships and transition women into a life that is free from the remnants of their tumultuous pasts.

The month I spent with them helped me realize that the change we want to see begins within ourselves. The more you understand something, the more you can contribute to its cause. Your actions are neither inconsequential nor inadequate. As Arundhati Roy once said, "There's really no such thing as the 'voiceless'. There are only the deliberately silenced or the preferably unheard," and sometimes, it's as simple and complicated as that. You give disadvantaged individuals power when you listen to them.

Despite its allure, changing the world quickly and on a large scale is a fallacy. Instead, CAP has been incrementally and systematically working towards the change for the past 35 years with unyielding resilience. I consider myself extremely lucky to have been able to be part of it.



MAHASWETA BANERJEE

Student of Peace and Conflict Studies
Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Experience Sharing

Johan Galtung famously said that peace is a continuous process that requires empathy and creativity. My name is Mahasweta Banerjee and as a student of Peace and Conflict Studies in Tata Institute of Social Sciences; and this past year, I was lucky to intern for Cultural Academy for Peace. During my time at CAP, I found this sentiment from Galtung to be apparent in their everyday work.

My field placement was an eye-opening experience. CAP works extensively on reconciliation and gender issues because they know that peace cannot be achieved when half of the populations is exploited. This is especially true when Indian women don't understand how to use and access the legal system to address issues that affect them.

We are taught that unless peace is built at the grassroot level and realised from within, society can never truly be peaceful. I came from my home in Assam to Kerala to learn how this state attained levels of HDI ratings that compare with developed countries. In my limited time with Cultural Academy for Peace, I realized that dedicated organisations like CAP are major contributors to overall development in India. They truly have the power to help the entire country achieve peace.

CAP uses the teachings of non-violence by Luther King Jr. And Gandhi in their work culture. This makes them a unique organization. Coming from Assam, language was a barrier for me. But during my time with CAP, I learned how to transcend this barrier and do quality work to serve people. CAP also taught me the importance of hard work, dedication and empathy. I hope to come back to work with Cultural Academy for Peace again.

Thank you so much for the experience.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR (2018-2019)

Cultural Academy for Peace (CAP) has been dedicated to creating a culture of peace and non-violence for more than 35 years. Our mission is to create a society based on peace, justice, reconciliation, and respect for life where models of domination and destruction are replaced by those of nurture and cooperation. Cultural Academy places precedence on the betterment of the welfare of women and children. By focusing on women and children, our efforts impact not only these critical populations, but society as a whole. We understand that we can preach, practice, and attain peace only when the future of our society and its nurturers are protected and everyone is encouraged to achieve their full potential. As Cultural Academy for Peace steps forward into another year of its fight for gender justice, equality, inclusiveness, and freedom from violence, let us take a look at the projects and programs that it manages and is a part of:

- ❖ SAKHI EMERGENCY DROP-IN CENTRE
- ❖ LEGAL AID: PROTECTION OF WOMEN FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- ❖ UJJWALA PROJECT
- ❖ SHANTHIBHAVAN
- ❖ NIRBHAYA PROJECT
- ❖ WHEELS FOR WOMEN
- ❖ AWARENESS AND TRAINING PROGRAMS
- ❖ KURAMKOTTA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
- ❖ FLOOD RELIEF PROJECT

We are always in the process of envisioning and initiating more programs to strengthen our ongoing fight for equality, peace, and justice. As a testimony to our work, we present this report of the year 2018-19.

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive away hate, only love can do that.” [Martin L.King JR.]

SAKHI EMERGENCY DROP-IN CENTRE

SAKHI is an emergency drop-in centre that connects vulnerable women, children, and families with legal counsellors, psychiatrists and psychologists, medical support, police protection, and other supportive services. Target groups include people suffering from suicidal tendencies, survivors of domestic violence, survivors of sexual abuse, prisoners' wives, and women and children in need of care and protection.

SAKHI has been instrumental in settling many police registered cases that ended in the reconciliation of both parties or had a favourable outcome for the complainant. In cases where a compromise was deemed impractical, SAKHI has helped initiate necessary legal procedures.

UJWALA PROJECT

Ujjwala Project, launched in 2012 and supported by the Central Government of India, is an initiative aimed at preventing human trafficking — a crime that is becoming an epidemic in our country. People may be trafficked for forced prostitution, indentured labour, or other exploitative purposes. The Ujjwala Project's primary objectives are prevention of trafficking, as well as the rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration of survivors into society. The Ujjwala Project targets individuals who have already been victims of trafficking, as well as those who are at risk.

Since its inception, Cultural Academy has been fully committed to the Ujjwala Project and its cause. The organisation has developed its own set of strategies to meet the objectives and goals of the project, including providing shelter, education, and livelihood training to victims of trafficking.

SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE VICTIMS:

- Counselling
- Education
- Awareness on Prevention of Trafficking
- Occupational Therapy
- Spiritual and Social Empowerment
- Legal Support
- Follow-up Services

LEGAL AID: SERVICE PROVIDING CENTRE (SPC)

The SPC is an arm of Cultural Academy's Legal Department that provides legal counselling for people facing physical, sexual, verbal, economic abuse, and other legal difficulties. Service providing centres are a key component of the state of Kerala's Domestic Violence Prevention Act. Cultural Academy is proud to partner with the state in operating our SPC. In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the SPC served 59 clients. Case specifics are highlighted below.

CASES

- NEW CASES: 18
- SETTLED CASES THROUGH COUNSELLING: 17
- SETTLED CASES THROUGH LEGAL MEASURE: nil

KINDS OF ABUSE

- PHYSICAL ABUSE: 52
- SEXUAL ABUSE: 11
- VERBAL/MENTAL, EMOTIONAL ABUSE: 54
- ECONOMIC ABUSE: 43
- SPIRITUAL ABUSE: 2

Despite being the highest ranking state in Human Development Index in India, the level of violence and atrocities against women in Kerala is alarming. Due to the patriarchal and parochial nature of the society, it often becomes increasingly hard for a woman to get her problems addressed and get legal support if required. Cultural Academy aims to bridge that gap.

It intends to do so through its service providing centre by creating a strong support system with a network of legal counsellors, psychologists, the police department and the District Protection Officer.

The contributing factors to violence are diverse. Despite being outlawed in 1961, dowry remains a major issue, with women regularly facing violence in the name of ‘unpaid dowry’. Caste also continues to be a daunting concern that can trigger domestic violence in cases of inter-caste marriages. Often, any apparent ‘shortcoming’ of the woman is attributed to her ‘caste,’ due to which she is subjected to casteist discrimination and, more often than not, physical violence. Women who are subjugated through violence are often left with little or no agency for reprisal. The SPC aims to equip women with agency and strives to create a strong network that helps survivors stand up against their abusers from an equal footing, without having to worry about the disparity of their positions in the power spectrum.

Major Activities by the SPC	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring police protection • Emotional first aid • Legal literacy program • Petitions to police and court • Legal counselling & aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach • Regular follow-ups • Medical support • Safe shelter • Submission of DIR to DELSA & TULUK authorities



Legal Awareness Class being taken by the Legal Counselor of Cultural Academy for Peace, Adv. Pinku Thaliyath –High Court of Kerala

SHANTHLHAVAN

With the help of the Corporation of Cochin, Cultural Academy for Peace manages Shanthi Bhavan, a short-stay shelter for women and girls below the poverty line who are survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual abuse. The holistic services at the home include:

- Individual and group counselling
- Education
- Job and life skills training
- Health education
- Spiritual empowerment
- Recreational activities
- Legal support
- Income generation through making jewellery, paper bags, and sustainable paper pens

Shanthi Bhavan can house up to 60 individuals at one time, and 105 women were rehabilitated at the home between 2018-2019. The shelter's management committee holds quarterly meetings to address the needs of the survivors and to discuss schemes to amplify the project's impact. Regular visits from doctors, legal aids, social activists, and volunteers are arranged to ensure residents' recovery and progress.



SHANTHI BHAVAN GALLERY



Residents of Shanthi Bhavan working on crafts



Children at Shanthi Bhavan showing off their beautiful mahendi for Ramadan



Residents of Shanthi Bhavan making paper bags for a renowned company as part of vocational training



Residents have the option to partake in daily yoga practice



Residents selling their handmade jewelry and crafts



Jewelry handcrafted by residents at Shanthi Bhavan

NIRBHAYA CENTRE

A ccording to official records, 2690 children were abused in the state of Kerala in 2018. These cases are only those reported and registered under the POCSO Act. The number of unreported cases remains uncertain.

Being subjected to sexual violence and trauma as a minor is associated with many repercussions. To restore the well-being and security of the survivors, a carefully structured plan of action needs to be in place once a case is filed against the perpetrator. This should be designed specifically for each individual and their particular conditions.

The Nirbhaya Home is an initiative that began in recognition of this, housing female child abuse survivors from across the state. Nirbhaya Home's dedicated staff and resource persons aim to create a space that is welcoming, all-inclusive, and therapeutic. Cultural Academy believes in healing through warmth and kindness.

With the help of the Kerala State Social Justice Department, Cultural Academy operated the Nirbhaya Home from 2014-2018, at which point the project was transferred over to government authorities.

Services provided by the staff at the Nirbhaya Home include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ✚ Individual counselling | ✚ Health education |
| ✚ Group therapy | ✚ Indoor and outdoor activities |
| ✚ Spiritual and moral empowerment | ✚ Assistance for education and |
| ✚ A therapeutic healing program | vocational training |

TRAINING AND AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

Cultural Academy for Peace believes that no stone should be left unturned in the process of ensuring equality and promoting justice. Cultural Academy aims to create change through providing trainings on topics such as gender sensitivity, human trafficking, and laws pertaining to the wellbeing of women and girls. Cultural Academy provides training to social workers, volunteers, students, government servants, officials, activists, and members of the public. Emphasis is placed on conflict management, negotiation, reconciliation, and non-violent mediation. Regular in-house training is also conducted so that staff members stay updated and can work to the best of their abilities. The following is a list of training and awareness programs facilitated by Cultural Academy for Peace in 2018-19.

<u>SL. No.</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TARGET GROUP</u>	<u>NO. OF PARTICIPANTS</u>
1	Summer Splash Children's Camp 2018	Shanthibhavan auditorium	Children of Ujjwalaand Nirbhaya Homes	75
2	Awareness Class on Laws Related to Women	Social Service Society	Women	100
3	Awareness class on POSH Act	Collectorate	Members of Local Complaint Centre	22
4	Class on POSH Act	Riviera Suites, Thevara	Various Government Officers	75
5	Class on POSH Act	Petronet LNG, Vypin	Petronet LNG Employees	40
6	Awareness Class on D.V Act, POSH Act and POCSO Act(2 day workshop)	ESS, Ernakulam	Women's Groups	75
7	Awareness Class on POSH Act	KITCO, Vytilla	Employees	120
8	STREET PLAY Theme: Anti Human Trafficking	South KSRTC Bus stand	General Public	250
9	Awareness on POSH Act	PetronetLNG, Vypin	Employees	50
10	Poster Exhibition on Environmental	Ernakulam North Railway	General Public	-

	Pollution and Human Trafficking	Station		
11	Legal Workshop on Recent S.C Judgements Related to Women (IPC SEC 498A and 497)	Shanthibhavan auditorium	Lawyers and Women's Activist Groups, Religious and Civil Society Groups , Social Work and Law Students	65
12	Awareness On Laws Related to women	E.K Narayanan Auditorium, Kundannor	Anganwadi Teachers and Workers	80
13	Inspirational Talk on Women Empowerment and Gender	St. Theresa's College	Students and Teachers	200
14	Workshop on Issues of Domestic Violence Against Women and Framing Marital Property Law in Collaboration with KELSA	Banquet Hall, High Court of Kerala	Stakeholders, Judges, Lawyers, Protection Officers, Local NGOs	150
15	Awareness program on Domestic Violence (gender based violence and its effective implementation)	Shanthibhavan	Students of St. Theresa's College Ernakulam	50
16	Community Living Camp (5 Days). Sessions on: - Women's Rights (with special reference to domestic violence) - Child rights (with special reference to POCSO)	ST. Joseph College of Teacher Education for Women	Students and staff of the B.Ed College	120
17	Street Theatre on Prevention of Child and Human Trafficking	Marine Drive and Govt. Girls HSS	General Public	-

18	Training Program for all JJ registered child care institutions	DPC Hall, Civil Station, Kakkanad	JJ Child Care Institution Head and Staff	100
19	Legal Awareness and Women's Empowerment	Govt. ITI, Kalamassery	College Staff and Students	150
20	Legal Awareness(POSH Act) and Empowerment of Women, Legal Literacy Training	Police Commissioner's HeadQuarters, Ernakulam Boat Jetty	Staff from the Ernakulam Police Department	60
21	Empowerment of Woman and Children Program in Occasion of 1000 Days of Govt.	TDH Ground, Ernakulam	Common Public, NGOs	700



Summer Splash 2018

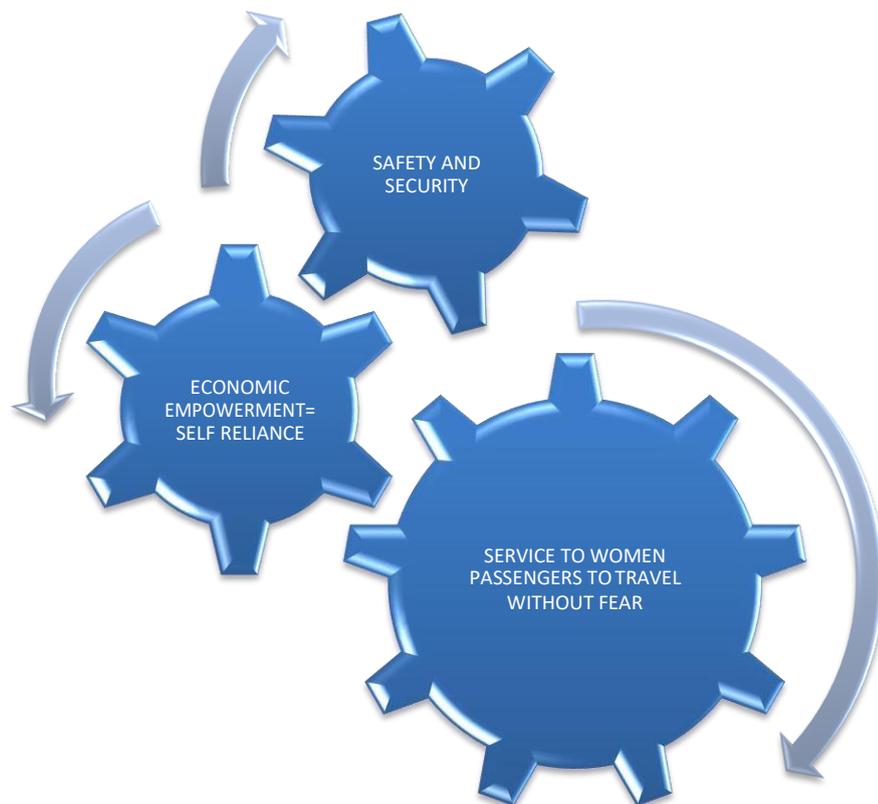


Street theater on the prevention of human trafficking



WHEELS FOR WOMEN PROGRAMME

Wheels for Women, founded in 2011 in partnership with Ithaca College, New York, is a job training program that empowers women by providing training in four-wheeler and three-wheeler operation. This arms our target group with confidence and enables them to support their families with a steady income. To date, Wheels for Women has trained 25 women to become certified drivers, benefitting them and their families. With our support, 5 of these women purchased their own auto rickshaws and now work independently as drivers.





Our new Auto Vehicle



Trainees with their Auto Rickshaw

KURAMKOTTA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Cultural Academy for Peace recognises the importance of uplifting all sectors of society. Progress means something only when the least privileged among us are given opportunities and a chance to lead better lives. In 2018, Cultural Academy identified a community that had been overlooked by the local government and surrounding community. Kuromkotta Island, located in the Kerala backwaters and severely affected by the 2018 floods, houses 85 families lacking adequate resources. Residents of the island have the lowest literacy rate in the region, and poor hygiene practices and health problems are persistent challenges that require immediate attention.

Our interventions on Kuromkotta include wellbeing camps to address trauma among flood survivors, water filter provision, hand washing education and promotion. We have also organised several awareness and sensitisation programs on gender equality, as well as a summer camp for children. Most recently, we held an educational session on vector-borne diseases and menstrual hygiene. We are currently working on establishing a community public health centre and connecting the island to the mainland via a bridge. Throughout our work on Kuromkotta, we continue to encourage the community to sustain and celebrate their local traditions and culture.

Transportation remains the most pressing obstacle the islanders face. The only means of transport connecting the island to the nearest city and medical facilities is an engine-boat. With the help of its benevolent contributors, Cultural Academy bought the residents a new Yamaha Engine suited for the boat.



Kuramkotta's ferry boat

KURAMKOTTA GALLERY



A house on Kuramkotta. The water line from the flooding can still be seen on the house's walls.

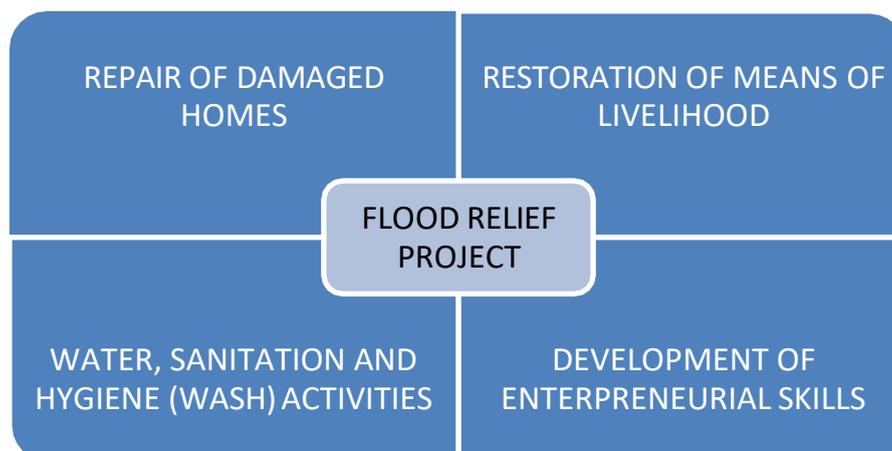


Homes on Kuramkotta



Islanders taking part in the Kettukalakku festival, during which the entire village comes together to fish before the rainy season.

FLOOD RELIEF



The Project for Recovery and Resilience of the Flood Survivors of Ernakulam District of Kerala, also known as the “Flood Relief Project,” was supported by *Terre des Homes* and taken up by Cultural Academy for Peace after the devastating floods that affected Kerala in August last year. The project focused on Paravoor and Chendamangalam Village, areas that were particularly hard-hit by the floods. The project covered a total of 42 wards, including all the wards under Chennamangalam Grama Panchayat and 24 wards under the North Paravur Municipality. Objectives included repairing partially destroyed homes, providing economic rehabilitation through livelihood restoration, and addressing issues regarding sanitation and public health. Through the flood relief project:

- 94 people benefitted from livelihood restoration
- 29 family homes were repaired
- Water filters were installed in 10 schools
- 409 children attended camps on the themes of post-traumatic stress management and life skills education
- 10 people benefitted from an entrepreneurship skill training program
- 666 men, women, and children attended a water, sanitation, and hygiene event
- 83 high-school students participated in a disaster risk reduction awareness program

The Flood Relief Project is scheduled to end by September 2019 and has exceeded the goals we hoped to meet by this time. The disruption caused by a disaster should not be a factor that throws individuals and families into poverty. The project was designed to prevent future damage from flooding and to aid the development of affected areas and individuals.

HOUSE REPAIR

For the repair of partially damaged houses, 14 families from North Paravur and 15 families from Chennamagalam were selected. Cultural Academy assisted 29 families under this project.



A house that was repaired through the project

ECONOMIC REHABILITATION

Mr. Antony is an auto rickshaw driver whose auto was submerged in the flood resulting in severe damage. However, his house was not affected by the flood, and he received no assistance from the local authorities or the government to help repair his only means of livelihood. He was selected as one of the beneficiaries of the Flood Relief Project and Cultural Academy provided the money he needed to repair his auto-rickshaw. To quote Mr. Antony, “The flood relief project has helped me gain back my livelihood and now I can look after my family. It is good and sincere work that has genuinely helped people in need.” A total of 94 people just like Mr. Antony benefitted from the project.



Livelihood Restoration

WELLBEING CAMPS

The effects of disaster include long-term trauma. To help children and adolescents deal with the aftermath of the floods, Cultural Academy conducted several Children and Adolescent camps. Some of the camp themes were Post Traumatic Stress Management, Environmental issues and Entrepreneurship Skills.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION

At the beginning of the project in October, Cultural Academy tested the quality of drinking water. Safe water filters were provided to schools and hand-washing kits to anganwadis in the affected areas as part of the WASH program to stress the importance of hygiene.



DHARAM POSHINI SABHA LP SCHOOL

One of the most affected schools in the area was the Dharam Poshini Sabha Lower Primary School in Chennamangalam Gram Panchayat. Cultural Academy provided the school with classroom furniture, library books and shelves, bathroom stalls, and partitions between classrooms to enhance their educational experience.



Students at Dharam Poshini Sabha LP School with their new furniture.



Inauguration of the The Project for Recovery and Resilience of the Flood Survivors of Ernakulam District of Kerala. At the center is Advocate Mr. V.D. Satheesahan, MLA, Paravur representing the state legislative assembly at the event.

UPCOMING PROJECTS

COMMUNITY PEACE VILLAGE

For the past 35 years, Cultural Academy for Peace has been engaged in providing safe environments for women and children who are survivors of violence. Since 2001, Shanthi Bhavan, the organization's short-stay shelter, has provided a home for women who have experienced violence. Now, Cultural Academy envisions a new program to serve as the next step in the process of rehabilitation and reintegration for survivors of violence: a Community Peace Village.

Our Community Peace Village will be the second stage of rehabilitation for women and girls in our other programs, such as Shanthi Bhavan, on their journey to re-entering the wider community. At the Peace Village, women and their children will have the opportunity to live as a family in cottages in a gated community. At the village, Cultural Academy will bring together all of our services under one umbrella — residents will participate in activities at a community level, learn life skills, and receive occupational therapy. They will also have the opportunity to enjoy activities including meditation, exercise, and nature excursions. It will be a place where survivors become empowered and self-sufficient.

We envision our Community Peace Village as much more than a therapeutic residence. It will be a hub for peace educators and activists from around the world to come together to practice non-violence, peace, and social justice. It will also serve as a place for international students and groups to come live in an Indian community and experience the local way of life

While our partners such as Cultural Connections, Wheels for Women, and Ithaca College are working hard to fundraise for the village and help us realize our dream, we are still in need of more funds. This project requires the combined efforts of all our partners and donors in order to come to fruition. If you feel so moved, please send donations towards:

- Purchasing 25 cents of land
- Constructions of the building

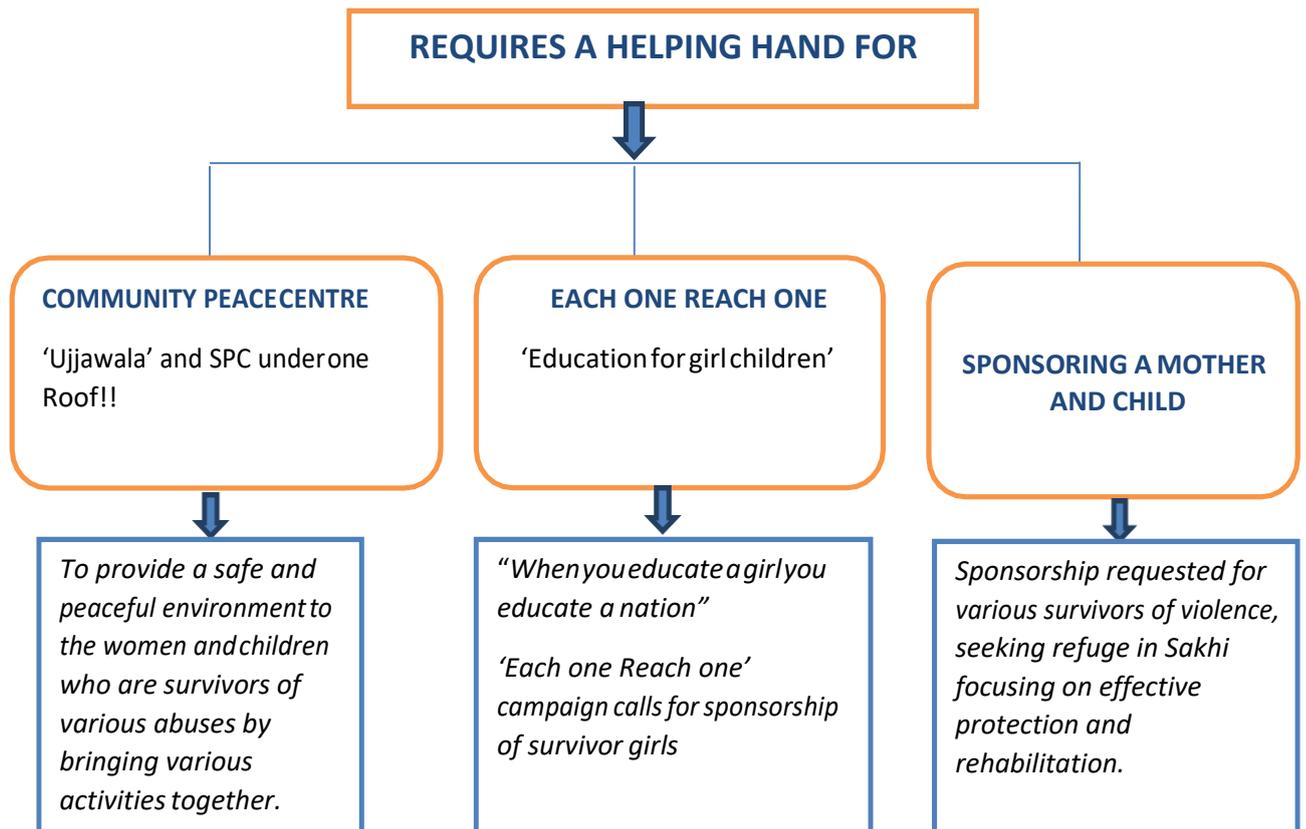
We require your partnership and association to carry forth our Projects. Your contributions would take us a long way and may be sent in favour of "Cultural Academy for Peace",

1. *Syndicate Bank, Banerji Road, Ernakulam, Kerala, 628018
Account No: 43052200021413 IFSC Code: SYNB0004305m.*
2. *Outside India Contributions: Federal Bank, M.G.Road, Kerala, India, 628011
Account No: 12380200011338 IFSC Code: FDRL0001238
SWIFT Code: FDRLINBBIBD*

*All the contributions are exempted from Income Tax
Exemption U/S 80-G, CIT/CHN/12A/TECH 92/98-99 Dated 14-03-2008*

REACHING OUT OUR NEED

During its course of development Cultural Academy for Peace realises that many generous hands, associates and partnerships will go a long way to fulfil its mission. The following diagrammatic representation explains our requirements in brief:



Your contribution may be sent **in favor of “Cultural Academy for Peace”**,

1. With Syndicate Bank, Banerji Road Branch, Ernakulam-682018, Kerala.
Ac/No. 43052200021413, IFSC Code: SYNB0004305
2. Outside India Contributions-With Federal Bank, MG Road Branch,
Ernakulam-682011, Kerala, India.
Ac/No. 12380200011338, IFSC Code: FDRL0001238,
SWIFT Code: FDRLINBBIBD

*All the contributions are exempted from Income Tax Exemption U/S 80-G, CIT/CHN/12A/TECH 92/98-99
Dated 14-03-2008*

Our Team



Cultural Academy for Peace team members with Smt.Saleena V.G Nair [Secretary (Sub Judge) District Legal Service Authority], Smt.Lida Jacob IAS [Former Government Secretary, Advisor –Gender & Child Protection], Dr.S.D.Singh[Psychiatrist, Board Member], Smt. Dr. Neena Joseph [Board Member] etc.

“Coming together is beginning, keeping together is progress,
and working together is success.” -Henry Ford

The success of an organization depends on the team members and their collective work. Cultural Academy for Peace is fortunate to be comprised of a reliable and responsible staff team.

Our chairperson, Mrs. Beena Sebastian, possesses all the qualities of an effective leader. She provides great motivation and support for the team, inspiring us in our work every day.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ongoing projects, programs and initiatives of Cultural Academy for Peace moves toward success, only as a result of the continuous support and encouragement received from our partners, sponsors and volunteers. With immense joy, we place on record our heartfelt gratitude to:

- Members of the legislative Assembly
Shri. Hibi Eden
Shri. P.T. Thomas
- Former M.P., Dr. Sebastian Paul
- Hon. Mayor, Smt. Soumini Jain
- Deputy Mayor, Shri. T. J. Vinod
- Corporation Welfare Standing Committee Chairman, Shri.A.B.Sabu
- UPAD Project Manager, Smt.Nissa
- Corporate Ward Counsellor, Dr. Poornima Narayanan
- Ernakulam District Collector, Shri. K. Mohammed Y. Safirulla IAS
- Former Chief Justice of Kerala, Justice K.K. Usha
- Former Judge of High Court: Kerala and Mumbai, Justice K. Sukumaran
- The Central and State Governments;
Women and Child Ministry, Government of India
Women and Child Ministry, Government of Kerala
- Kerala State Social Welfare Department
- Social Justice Department, Ernakulam District
- Nirbhaya Cell Team, Government of Kerala
- Kerala State Legal Service Authority
Hon. Judge of High Court of Kerala and Chairman, Justice K. Surendra Mohan
Hon. District Judge and Member Secretary, Justice. K. Sathyan
- District Legal Service Authority(DSLA)- Secretary, Justice A.M. Basheer
- Commissioner of Police, Ernakulam District, Vijay Sakhare, IPS
- Child Welfare Committee(CWC), Ernakulam
- Cheranalloor Grama Panchayat President, Smt. Sony Cheecku
- K.A. Mathew Foundation, Ernakulam
- Live’N Style- Ms Sobha Mohandas
- Regional Sports Centre, Cochin, Shri. S.A.S. Navaz, IRS(Retd.), Hon. Secretary
- Popular Vehicles- Ms. Susan Francis
- Cultural Connections, led by Deanne Brown
- Peace Pilgrimage Group led by Margrit Germann and Schwester Myriam
- Partners supporting ‘Wheels for Women’ - Ms. Kathleen and Mr. David Mulligan(Ithaca College)
- Jean Anderson (One Woman at a time-Founder)
- Active supporters- Mr. Thomas Joseph and Mrs. Anu Thomas, Ms. Nisha Chandy, Mr.Mathew A. Kunnamkeril, Mr.Akesh and Mrs. Mirium Thomas, Mr. Jishu and Mrs. Sheela
- Board Members of Shantibhavan, Nirbhaya and SPC(Service Providing Centre)
- Cultural Academy for Peace- Governing Board Members
- Cultural Academy for Peace- Team members
- All well-wishers and contributors

We express our sincere gratitude and thanks for your continuous support

MY REFLECTIONS

When the Information Highway is almost clogged,
When the various media compete for supremacy,
When age-old Idioms and folklore are abandoned,
When Grandma's tales and bed-time stories are ignored,
When Google, Wikipedia, Games portals hold the sway,
Where has the wisdom, grown out of
rich life –experiences vanished?

Children and Teen-agers welcome the diverse Apps,
Forget the warmth and beauty of Teacher's words,
Heed not their commitment, their responses,
Often become copy-cats, stagnatingcreativity,
Do these "search-engines" read their emotions,
Ever sense their smiles and tears?

Many adults caught in the web of the Media,
Enmeshed in the digital world,
Find no space for person to person exchange,
No time to listen to voices clamouring for
Compassion, love, recognition, justice,
What are they struggling to achieve?

Break the chained links,
Stand up with the committed, goal-oriented,
Dedicated NGOs, Faith Groups, and Social Activists,
Determined Technical Teams,
Whose achievements loudly proclaim
"All is not lost".

Together let us construct a New Highway,
New space for human communication,
New roads to Justice, Peace, inclusiveness,
Safe and secure lanes for the oppressed, discriminated,
Together pledge to "make a difference".

Rosie Martin
Cultural Academy for Peace



CULTURAL ACADEMY FOR PEACE

“WITHOUT PEACE, DEVELOPMENT IS IMPOSSIBLE AND WITHOUT WOMEN NEITHER PEACE NOR DEVELOPMENT CAN TAKE PLACE”

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