**ANNUAL REPORT 2015- 2016**

**Sangini – *a friend***

**Registered Charity number 1124769**

**April 2016**

**Sangini**

**Sangini** in Hindi means ‘a friend’. It is a women led, multi-cultural organisation with a focus to

**Improve the quality of women’s lives by increasing their physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being, through artistic, educational, cultural and recreational activities that also celebrate cultural diversity’.**

**Background**

**2002**: A group of women met regularly to support each other through sharing, talking and listening to each others’ experiences. Very soon they realised that this had a positive affect on them and the idea was borne to take this experience to women more widely in Sunderland. That was when Sangini came into being.

Ten years on, today Sangini has evolved into an organisation with credibility, vision and capacity to deliver its work to highest professional standards.

**About us**

**Our Vision:**

***There will be increasing number of empowered BME (Black and minority ethnic) women and other currently excluded women involved in all aspects of civil and civic life, they will be influencing policies and recognized as decision makers in the mainstream.***

***By the year 2015 BME women and currently excluded women in Sunderland and wider will be healthier and have more confidence in expressing their identity***

**Our Values:**

* The well being and health of all women
* Empowering and uplifting minority women and excluded women
* Learning, enjoyment, creativity and development through the arts
* Promoting inclusion, integration and participation through the arts
* Challenging the inequality and invisibility of women
* Making a difference

**Governance and Delivery**

Sangini’s governance is led by diverse group of leading women from different social, cultural, ethnic and professional backgrounds who provide the forward direction for the overall work. The membership draws on the range of expertise that varies from the community development, mainstream healthcare provision, the cultural sector to sustainable development. The level of experience represented includes high-level project management, strategic planning, financial management, business planning, fundraising and policy advocacy. It is this collective experience that we aim to draw upon when we develop and deliver our activity.

The **effectiveness of delivery** is maintained by monitoring and evaluating all the projects, and provides essential lessons learnt for the next phase of the development.

All the work is designed and delivered in partnership with its users, stakeholders and wider community groups, thus harnessing good working relationship across the sector.

Volunteers are the life-line of this organisation and they provide crucial support to ensure that the organisation’s work carries on with equal effectiveness. In turn, they gain valuable work based experience that has often contributed towards their employment.

**Chair’s Summary**

It gives me great pleasure to present this report, a general account of our work in 2015 – 2016.

It has been another successful year with members working very hard to ensure that we are working to make a difference in the lives of women and children living in Tyne & Wear, building confidence among communities with new ideas and partnerships and develop new partnerships. All of this has helped us to achieve our goals as set out in our charitable objectives.

Here is a brief summary of our work undertaken during the past year:

**Coffee Mornings**

The most outstanding and long term outcome from the project Stories from Our Sisters in Sunderland has been the ‘Coffee Mornings’ that has encouraged the women who took part in the project to continue to meet every Tuesday. The group has grown in confidence using arts as a medium to engage and has now established a firm identify as an art group. The members look forward to coming along and are receptive to new ideas, challenges and methods of working.

**Abstract Connections:**

A project funded by Cultural Spring was completed successfully with 9 women taking part in the project. The project helped women to understand abstraction and create own work. Evaluation report is being submitted for this project.

**Drawing in Northumberland with VARC and Customs House**

Sangini was given an opportunity to be part of this initiative through participatory workshops in Northumberland. Both Visual Arts in Rural Communities and Customs House had collaborated to bring this unique opportunity to the members of Sangini.

The workshop was limited to six women from diverse background and took place in September and November at Tarset, Highgreen Northumberland.

Final session is to be held in January 2016. Date to be confirmed. A 20 meter drawing produced by the women is currently in exhibition at Bamburgh House, Newcastle.

**International Women’s Day**

A very successful event held in partnership with WHIST, CREST, Apna Ghar, Hindu Nari Sangh and other organisations in South Shields.

Over 100 women from various cultures attended the event. Sangini’s members created a special art piece to mark the event. Vera Baird, the Mayoress. Lijie Zhang, Susan Mahal, Sue Robson were among some of the women who spoke at the event.

**The Light Project**

Over five months period the project aimed to:

-Promote community cohesion and social inclusion through arts activities among women and young people across Tyne & Wear

-Bring people together to celebrate, share and experience the richness of diverse cultures through a community event to mark Diwali

-Provide a memorable cultural experience through a two week exhibition by creating an 'Indian home'

As well as introducing this traditional art from India, the project provided a space for personal reflection and explored Rangoli in the context of line drawing. During a two week residency, Ranbir Kaur worked with a local North East artist Miki Z to look at contemporary drawing and Rangoli practice. Together, the artists queried and explored the ephemeral and the organic that imbues Rangoli, along with the notion of aesthetics, symmetry and harmony, whist experiencing free movements of contemporary drawing that is challenging and evolutionary.

* We exceeded out targets of 200 children to nearly 400 children.
* Worked with 6 schools instead of 2.
* We secured new work in Washington and accessed new partner in Art Centre Washington that wishes to work with us on regular basis.
* Created one new installation in Arts Centre Washington.
* 40 women have engaged with this project so far as opposed to 30.
* We secured national (online), reginal and local publicity.
* We have secured a major exhibition for Ranbir’s work next year at Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens.
* The work continued with second segment of the project whereby Miki and Ranbir did a one week’s residency at Makaan. The duo produced a collaborative piece with an open day to be held in February.
* Workshops with one schools and the women’s group is due in February.

**Unexpected outcomes:**

* Port of Tyne made a film about Sangini and this project
* A film about the violence and abuse on women featured Ranbir Kaur which came about as a direct result of this project. This film has now been included in Cannes Film Festival.
* Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens have agreed for a one woman show in January 2017

**Partnerships:**

We have done well with local partnership with Apna Ghar, CREST, WHIST and Hindu Nari Sangh. This is important since we are new to South Tyneside. Partnership with Sunderland University is continuing on ongoing basis with the Radio show where Padma and Miki take active part.

**Sunderland BME Network** - We continued to work with Sunderland BME Network and played a role in the ongoing strategic management of Sunderland BME Network through its role at board level. This allows Sangini to work in strategic partnership with other agencies across Sunderland.

Sustainability of the organisation is at the forefront of our work and this will become a key focus of our work to ensure that Sangini continues to exist and achieve its vision to make a difference in women’s lives.

Cost saving is as real to Sangini as many other organisations. With this in mind, Sangini moved its administrative base to South Shields, but will continue to work in Sunderland. We will have a base at the Thornhill Community Room where we aim to provide drop in sessions, conduct meetings etc., but we will now broaden our work across Tyne & Wear. We plan to work with women in South Shields with new partners and help strengthen women’s voice across Tyne & Wear.

Sangini is deeply indebted to its members who have contributed tirelessly and without their support it would not have been possible to carry out the work as a collective. Some of these members have now departed due to various personal reasons. We would like to thank them for their valuable contribution in helping to shape Sangini’s work through their advice and guidance.

We wish to give special thanks to – Spark FM and Sunderland University for its support.

Plans for 2016- 2017

**Creative Women’s Collective**: We now have plans to develop a more established group ‘Creative Women’s Collective’ focussed on arts engagement.

**Sustain work in Sunderland**

There has been positive discussions with Sunderland Women’s Centre about working in partnership to deliver some art sessions at the centre. We need to generate funding for this.

**Our achievements in 2015 to 2016**

* Office now set up in South Shields
* Engaged with more than 400 children in participatory activities
* New contacts made with women’s group in South Shields
* New board members recruited
* Funding secured for a major project

**Board of Trustees departing:**

Cllr Joyce Welsh

Haffezar Khan

Vivien Lee

We are looking for new members who can play a role as board members, so if you are interested then please don’t hesitate to contact us at anytime after this meeting.

Sangini has played a significant part in the Sunderland and South Shields’s voluntary sector and we remain indebted to our partners as well as funders for their support and belief in our work. The women of Sunderland and South Shields have remained our true friends and without them we would not be here doing what we are.

We look forward to another year of exciting service that makes a difference in women’s lives.

**Trustees**

Sreelekha Reddy Chair

Margaret Dobson Co-Chair

Viv Lee Board member

Teona Grigolia Treasurer

Lesley Etherington Board member

Nilima Chowdhry Board member

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