**ANNUAL REPORT 2012- 2013**

**Sangini – *a friend***

**Registered Charity number 1124769**

**September 2013**

**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 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

**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***

**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 2012 – 2013.

The year was largely spent on embedding the project, ‘Stories from Our Sisters of Sunderland’. The year also saw the completion of another project ‘Melting Pot’ led by Maggie Perry. Most crucially, it was ten years of completion for Sangini.

‘Stories from Our Sisters of Sunderland’, envisioned and led by Shruti Jain, one of the key trustee members of Sangini, and project managed by Clara Shields is one of the key projects to-date. This project has given us yet another opportunity to work with new as well as existing groups. Whilst, Clara and Shruti shared with you some of the developments so far, the year focussed on setting up the context and managing the operational aspects of the project.

One of the observations from this project has been the challenge around increasing participation among women and empowering them to come forward. That only goes to show that the work is not yet finished and the gap in terms of women’s engagement continues.

On the other hand, Melting Pot, a multi-cultural cookery project was completed successfully and culminated in a recipe book. Through the project we engaged with more than 50 women and collected various recipes from different countries. Whilst, this allows us to remain true to the vision of health and wellbeing, it is also about befriending, respecting each-others cultures and creating a cohesive environment in Sunderland. We would like to thank the funder Awards for All for this project.

Sangini celebrated 10 years of its journey with the launch of the Melting Pot cookery book. The evening was graced by His Worshipful Mayor of Sunderland, local artists and young girls who gave a superb performance.

Sangini is pleased to say that Dr Gitika Banerjee has now agreed to become a patron for Sangini. Dr Gitika Banerjee, a retired GP and a former High Sheriff of Tyne & Wear is a highly respected figure in Sunderland and works tirelessly to raise funds for The Children’s Foundation.

**A brief background:** Dr Gitika Banerjee was born in Rangoon, Burma in the 1937. Her father was an Advocate in Ragoon High Court. During the War of 1939-1945 the family suffered and had to move several times following Japanese occupation and her father became seriously ill.

Her basic education was severely disrupted. Against all these adversities she succeeded and moved to Calcutta for higher education and gained a place in the Medical College there. After her graduation she came to the UK and obtained FRCS and trained as a General surgeon and worked in Sunderland Hospitals and as a GP only part time. She retired in 1998.

In addition to her work she volunteered to become a pioneer police surgeon for sexual abuse and Rape centres for Northumbria women police doctors scheme 1985-1994.

She got involved in several charities in this country and in India including Yellow Brick Road from the beginning raising funds and helping events both in UK and India. She was High Sheriff for Tyne and Wear 2002 -2003

There could not be a better person than Dr Gitika Banerjee to take on this role and provide meaningful support and encouragement to Sangini and its team.

We continued to work with Sunderland BME Network and took part in the development of BME Consortium. Sangini continues to play a significant 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.

Our engagement with young people remains a constant feature and we delivered participatory workshops, involving up to 50 young people.

Sustainability of the organisation is at the forefront of our work and one of the areas we are exploring is setting up either a social enterprise or a co-op. The spices and the cookery workshops are key to taking this forward. An example of this is displayed here. 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.

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.

**Board of Trustees departing:**

Munmun KC

Pat Wallace

Swadesh Bansal

Asma Begum

Carole Grimshaw Nissen

We would like to specially thank Louise Taylor who is also departing this year. Louise has been with us for the past year and became an important part of the team. We are sad to let her go, but equally wish her very well and every success for the future.

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 voluntary sector and we remain indebted to our partners for their support and belief in our work. The women of Sunderland 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.

**Our achievements in 2012 to 2013**

* Continuing with the delivery of Stories from Our Sisters of Sunderland
* Successful completion of Melting Pot
* Engaging with more than 200 women and children in participatory activities

**Trustees**

Padma Rao Chair

Margaret Dobson Vice-Chair

Sreeleka Reddy Treasurer

Louise Taylor Board Secretary (now departing)

Shruti Jain Board Member/ Project Lead

Cllr Mary Turton Board Member

Clara Shields Project Coordinator

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