



## The Sangama Collection

Sangama is an organisation dedicated to protecting the rights of working class queer communities, sex workers and people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA). Elavarthi Manohar established Sangama in Bangalore in 1999 when he was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship. The material E. Manohar collected formed the basis of Sangama's extensive records on working class sexual minorities. It enabled the establishment of a centre for resource and documentation on issues of gender and sexuality at a time when most Indian queers were afraid to come out publicly, and information on alternative sexual and gender identities was severely lacking.

Over the next few years, increasing interactions with the local queer communities of different classes informed Sangama's evolution into a formidable grassroots organisation involved in crisis intervention and HIV/AIDS prevention while advancing the judicial battle against Sec 377 IPC. With the aim of empowering working class queer persons to lead the queer movement, Sangama created several Community Based Organisations (CBOs) such as Vividha, Samara, LesBiT, Sadhane, and Karnataka Sexual Minorities Forum.

This collection gives a broad view of the functioning of Sangama and its daughter CBOs, and describes the context in which the queer movement developed in the city. The collection is organised in the following series:

- a. **Elavarthi Manohar papers:** Prior to founding Sangama, E. Manohar was part of Khush Club and Khush Manch in Bombay, and Good As You (GAY) and Sabrang in Bangalore. Documents from this phase indicate how Sangama was envisioned and came into being. The papers also include E. Manohar's collection of textual material relating to queer lives and queer groups/organisations in India and abroad from before 1999, which fed into Sangama's Documentation Project.
- b. **Sangama Organisational:** Organisational documents from Sangama and its daughter CBOs provide a glimpse into what fuelled the projects launched by the organisations and sustained a movement. This series contains internal and staff documents, correspondence, organisational records, daily reports by employees, posters and pamphlets from the events organised by Sangama, letters from other organisations inviting Sangama to engage with them, and documents from the various projects undertaken by Sangama. Also included in this series are ephemera (brochures, pamphlets, reports, posters, newsletters, surveys, stickers, booklets, cards, flags, fact sheets, programmes, and invitation cards from across the globe) and academic articles, mostly on gender, queer theory, and political theories collected by the organisation.



- c. **Sangama Documentation Project:** From 1999 to around 2016, Sangama's documentation project culled articles from regional and national dailies, periodicals and magazines to create a bank of resource material on themes of gender, sexuality, human rights, violence, society, healthcare, HIV/AIDS, Commercial Sex Work, and culture. Publications from six Indian languages were chosen—Kannada, Tamil, English, Malayalam, Telugu and Hindi.
- d. **Audio-visual:** This series contains CDs, DVDs, floppy disks and hundreds of still images. This series is yet to be catalogued.