In ‘Making an Impact’ Article - 128, we explained about Gender Resource Centres functioning in convergence with the Local Self Government Institutions. These centres were initiated as a part of the women empowerment activities under the leadership of Kudumbashree. 647 GRCs are established until now. GRCs are constituted for elevating the status of women in the society and to extend the needed guidance, expertise, support and training for the women development activities.

The aims of GRCs include extending support to the various women empowerment and gender justice activities in the area of jurisdiction of Local Self Government Institutions. The goal was also to improve the participation and leadership of the women in democratic system and decision making process. Also, it was envisaged to capacitate them, prevent atrocities against women and children and to support those who were victims of such atrocities. Also, GRCs aim to provide leadership to the formulation and implementation of Women’s Component Plans during the plan preparation of the Local Self Government Institutions. GRCs function as an important convergence model with the Local Self Government Institutions. These centres function with the support of the respective ward members and social workers. The services of the Kudumbashree Community Counsellors and Resource Persons would be ensured on fixed days a week. Gender Awareness Classes are extended for elected representatives and training classes are extended for women in yoga and other activities including dance and music as
well. The staff of Snehitha Centres of the districts also extend services here.

As the GRCs are functioning in a broad manner, we had aimed at turning some of these centres to Model GRCs in the first phase. We had planned to turn the selected 10 Resource Centres from each district and had submitted an innovative project before the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), under the Ministry of Rural Development. During February 2020, we had received approval for this project worth Rs 14 crores from NRLM. We consider the approval for this project as the national recognition for this innovative idea of Kerala. We aim at setting up model GRCs across the state through this project.

In the first phase, 140 GRCs would be selected for turning into Model GRCs. One Community Counsellors would be entrusted with the functioning of each Model GRCs. A team consisting of 10 Resource Persons would be appointed at each GRCs in convergence with the Local Self Government Institutions. These teams would coordinate the activities of GRC. After the team formation, a status study of respective Local Self Government Institutions would be done and suitable projects and activities would be formulated and implemented. In addition, the projects would be submitted to the respective LSGIs based on the status study. It is expected that GRCs would act as the centre which will work towards identifying suitable projects for women component plan of each LSG. Also, it’s hoped that GRC s will act as focal point to find solutions for the issues faced by women. It’s also expected that activities of GRC will help reduce the atrocities against women and children. As its next phase the district level coordination of these activities would be done through Snehitha Centres and its state level coordination would be done through the Gender team at Kudumbashree State Mission.

The details of Gender Resource Centres is available in this link: http://www.kudumbashree.org/pages/514