

I used to listen to different stories from the villages each time I visit. This time I was impressed to learn about the village Buknala. Buknala is situated 7 km away from *Saint-Anthony school*, has a population of 6 thousand people and majority of them belong to Muslim religion. A Trust sponsoring poor children from the Muslim Community approached us seeking admission for children from this particular village. The proposal from our side was that we could admit 40 poor children from their village if the ratio between girls and boys is 3:1, keeping in mind the promotion of girls education. During the last 2 years we have admitted 80 children sponsored by this Trust and besides that there are another 50 children studying in our school from the same village.

The changes taking place in the attitude of these villagers are being noticed by the people around and one of the parents of a student from our school told *Krishna*, our coordinator, « *It is a miracle that people from Buknala started to look at our face while talking, they started to be more polite and more social, and this happens because of the children from Saint-Anthony School* ». This village was known to have many trouble shooting people and neighbouring villagers avoided to have anything in common with them.

Children from *Saint-Anthony School* are rewriting their history by influencing not only their parents and families but also the villagers. It is a big change in their lives. They appreciate the education these children bring home and started to see life in a different perspective !

Like every year, I have gone through the Activity Report of the Year. Let us have a close look at the activities done in 2011.

Saint-Anthony School

Affiliation to CBSE

All the schools in India have to be affiliated either to the State government or to the Central Boards. *Saint-Anthony School* opted to follow the Central Board of Secondary School Education (CBSE) as the standard of this Education Board is better than that of the state government. The first step to get affiliation to CBSE, is to get the permission from the State Government that it has no objection (No Objection Certificate). This was done last year, when class 7 was started. The next step is to forward an application to the CBSE for affiliation when the students reach class 8 so that the Board verifies the quality of the school before starting class 9. To start class 9, the permission/affiliation from the Board is mandatory. This is a long procedure, involving a lot of paper work and following the requirements laid down by the Board. Proper Library, Laboratory, playground, qualified teachers etc. are mandatory. The school just went through all these procedures and availed this Certificate of Affiliation to CBSE in February, so this year we can proceed to class 9. Renewal of



Inspectors from CBSE came to check the school.

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
No. Childr.	184	309	414	523	616	666	887	1054
Villages	15	20	37	45	49	57	65	71
Classes	Nur->1	Nur->2	Nur->3	Nur->4	Nur->5	Nur->6	Nur->7	Nur->8

Here is the evolution of the school during the last 8 years.

this affiliation is required every three years. To start class 11, affiliation to higher secondary school is required. This has to be done when the school reaches class 10.

Our plan is to reach up to class 12. This will again engage us in building up class rooms and other facilities necessary for the higher secondary classes. The present building can occupy maximum 1250 students and we soon have to plan for the near future!

Evening class for the slow learners after school continues. Children from the near by villages and those who have bicycles or other transportation facility attend this study time. Those children who don't have a conducive atmosphere to study at home also come and study in the school.

Transportation

You might remember that we have been encouraging villagers to provide transportation for their children, from the beginning of the project. It took almost 7 years to get some positive response! Last year two villagers from the locality took the initiatives to buy school buses. One of them took a loan from GMVS, and is currently paying back. This is a good start and hopefully we may get more people involved in the transportation.

Village animation program

The Village Animation Program include Formation of SHGs, Socio economic em-

powerment of the poor, Bringing awareness among the villagers about Health and Hygiene, Immunisation among Pregnant women and babies etc.

Covered area : 7 villages with a population of around 50.000 people around *Saint-Anthony School*.

Micro Credit

Micro Credit through Self Help Group (SHG) is one of the main activities of GMVS' Social work wing. This program has been carried out during the last 7 years and since the beginning there has been a gradual progress in the attitude of the villagers involved in this program. During the first 4 years the staff had to go from house to house to motivate the women to come for the meeting and not to default. The constant motivation from our social workers helped them to be stable, consistent and today they are empowered. They learn to read and write, to go to bank and deposit money, to keep the reports and records of their groups etc. This activity not only empowers women economically, but also socially. More women are coming forward asking to start new groups.

Year	SHG	Women	Villages
2011	55	628	7

The bank doesn't give loans to people who neither have a job nor any land. The local lenders charge very high interest rate and it is unaffordable for the poor people to approach them. Inter loaning facility in the SHG provides the opportunities for the members to take loan



The newly built up play ground gave a good opportunity to conduct several games at the annual sports day. Almost all the children participated in different activities.



Women empowerment is very important for us.

from their group at a very low interest rate and to invest in something that will bring them some income. The interest of the loan is put back in the group, so that the money in the group keep growing. This back up give them also the confidence of being able to survive in case of any emergency.

Members who took the loan from SHG for buying buffaloes and starting grocery shops are doing well, they are able to manage their families and save some income.

The average amount of the loan is approximately Rs.10000 (175 euros). Here are the details of loan taken by SHG members for various purposes in the year 2011 :

- 61 members improved their agriculture.
- 60 members modified their houses.
- 22 members bought buffaloes.
- 10 members made flush toilets.
- 21 members started grocery shops.
- 15 members got their girls children married.
- 50 members admitted their children in schools.
- 15 members got treated.

Awareness Program

48 General Awareness Programs were conducted. The topics covered in these programs were; Concept of Community Based Organisation, Health and Hygiene, Female infanticide, Gender Sensitization etc.

HIV- AIDS Day, Girl Child's Day, Environment Day and Women's Day were observed with special events organised in each of these villages. Several hundreds of women and men from the villages participated in these events.



Training Programs

Vermi Compost Making : The purpose of this training is to get better yield in the agricultural fields. 50 farmers profited from this training. The trained villagers in turn teach the new techniques to other farmers as well.

Dairy Management : 50 women profited from this Program, they were taught how to manage the milk production in the village.

Embroidery : One month training was given to 80 women from the SHG groups.

Leadership Training Program : 30 leaders of SHGs were trained. (See pictures on next page)

Medical Clinic and Health Care activities

Villagers wait for the weekly mobile clinic. This clinic is not only to take care of the pa-



After the training, the women earn an income by doing the embroidery work at home.



Leaders of SHGs were trained to administer their group efficiently. This leadership training program was organised in Moradabad.

tients, but also to conscientise the villagers about the importance of health and cleanliness of the environment etc. Pregnant women are regularly examined and their safe deliveries are ensured. Children between 0-5 yrs. are identified and made sure that they get all the vaccination.

Year	No. of Patients	Pregnant women
2011	4123	212
2010	3318	187

Sponsorship Program

The Sponsorship program in the Leprosy Colonies of Delhi and Sonipat are well followed up. The social workers' team follow up each of these 40 children under the sponsorship and meet all their educational needs. Their parents/families are visited and guided to better educate their children. Many of those children have gone to high school. Special classes are arranged for those students who are weak in studying.

School in Orissa

Chattamba Primary School in Kahuchuan: The school is till class 7 (13 yrs old) and those children who want to continue higher classes have to go to other schools in the cities. Please see the mail from *Fr. Bennichan* in charge of that project :

In Kahuchuan everything is going on rather smooth. This year in the hostel there we have 76 children and in the Middle school sixty. In the sixth class there were 36 new admissions. As the years pass by the number of the children in the school are increasing. Though it is a small place and people give very low priority for education, both these institutions are progressing gradually and earning a good name.

All the children who wrote exams of the 7th standard from our school passed and have got admitted in various high schools. Most of them I tried to get admitted in the mission schools. Some went to schools with hostel facility run by the Gouvernement.

This is the first time in the history of this area that so many children have passed out of the 7th class and have gone seeking admission for the 8th class. I feel so happy about the whole thing. This happened just because of your support and encouragement and we are grateful to your organization. A BIG THANK YOU to all of you !

Fr. Bennichan SVD, in charge of the project in Orissa (Tribal area of Kauchaun), December 2011.

In 2012

Besides the ongoing activities, a few more activities are planned for this year. The National Bank for Rural Development (NABAD) has been closely observing our projects and staff from their head office visited our project and social work unit several times. They have been appreciative of our ongoing projects and have offered their assistance in reaching out to more people. We have applied for the financial support of two programs : Formation of Farmers Club and training program for Income generation for women. Currently we are waiting for their response.

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