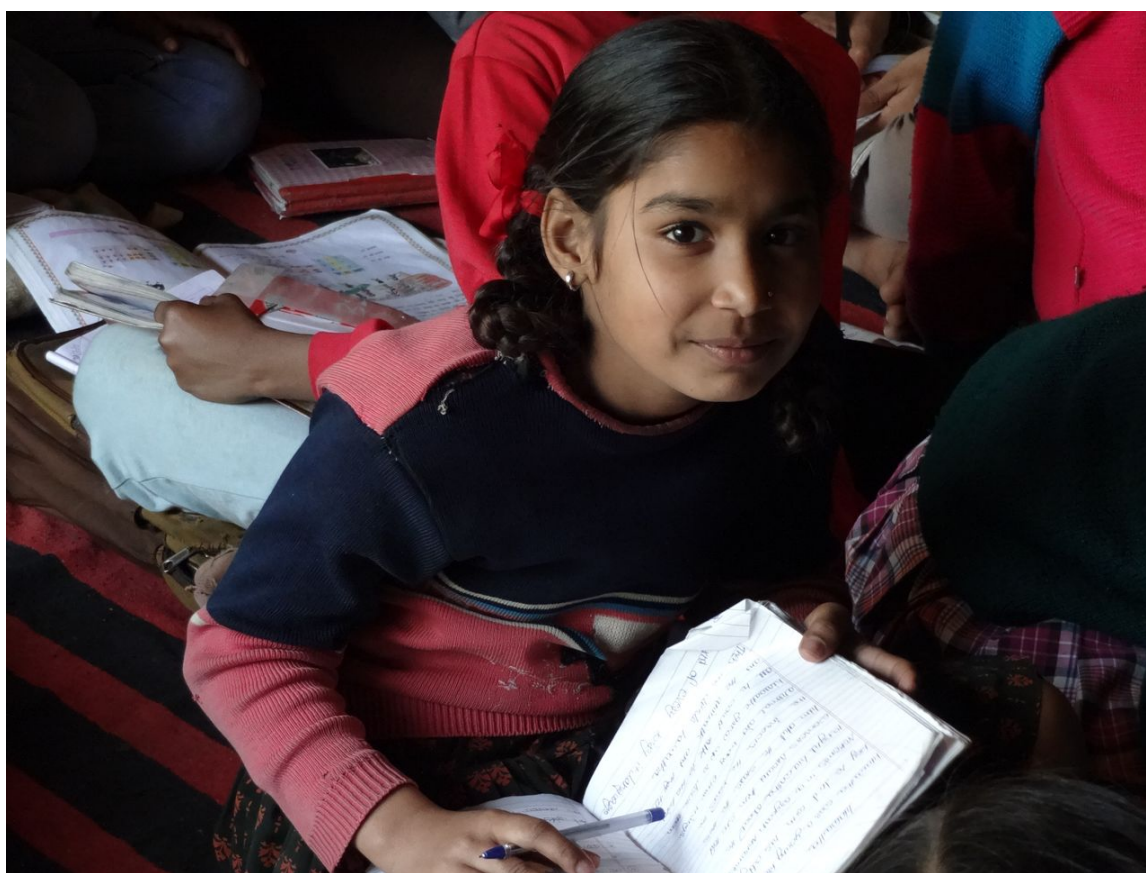


PROJECT WHY

SRI RAM GOBURDHUN CHARITABLE TRUST



ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014

Director's Message

The year gone by has been one of the most difficult ones for me personally. In July 2103 my husband was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease stage II. He had been sick for over a year and though the diagnosis was God sent as it meant that we were no more groping in the dark, it was a huge shock for me having lost both my parents to Cancer. Determined not to lose the battle again I gave myself 100% to taking care of him and finding out ways and means to beat the dreaded crab. This meant having to neglect my beloved project why but how could I forget that there would have been no Project Why without Ranjan as he was the one who has supported me all the way and remains my rock.

As expected we set out for battle in the conventional way which in his case meant 12 chemotherapies to begin with. Knowing how debilitating chemotherapy can be, I began research on ways to minimise the side effects and in the course of my research discovered many alternate therapies that seemed to work. Today my husband is in remission according to medical parlance. To me he looks well but one cannot forget the nature of the ailment and the possible relapses. The alternative therapies require a strict regimen that takes a lot of time.

You can also imagine that in spite of the brave face I put on and still have, this year took its toll on me in every which way imaginable. And I am not out of the woods.

So since last year Project Why had been in the hands of the team I so carefully selected and nurtured for over a decade. I tried to teach them what I knew and also learn from them and together I am proud to say, we crafted a model that is working well. My prolonged absence both physical and emotional put my team through a real baptism by fire and they came out winners all the way. The only use I have I guess is to keep the bank balance in the green.

Whereas the previous year went like a dream thanks to two unexpected and very generous donations, this year ended on a low as one of our main funders informed us that they would be cutting their monthly donation by 50%. This is because of the negative image India has taken following the news of rapes and increased crime rates as well as the unstable political situation.

It is sad that it is always the poor and more so poor children that have to bear the consequences of decisions they are not a part of. I remember how when India had imploded its nuclear bomb, many NGOS had seen their donations cut.

Rape, crimes or political instability are not caused by a bunch of slum kids trying to get an education. Actually it is education alone that can change both the social and political fabric of a country. There are no miracle or short term solutions. These problems have taken a long time to come to this and they will take a long time to vanish. Hanging a rapist does not bring the rape statistics down. I hope we find people who agree to this point of view and reach out to help us do our bit.

Education, particularly girl's education, has always been opposed by extremists as they know it will bring a change in society a change they do not want as it will rock their boat! As I write these words, hundreds of Nigerian girls have been kidnapped and threatened to be sold simply because they were getting a western education. I hope they are saved in time. But this again not only proves that education is the only way a society can transform itself for the better, but that it will be opposed by vested interest.

Anouradha Bakshi

28 June 2013

MISSION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

What compelled Project Why to zero in on arresting drop out rates is still of relevance, more so today as in spite of acceding to the Right to Education, nothing has changed on the ground, or rather things have deteriorated as infrastructure and resources are few. Today, there are sometimes more than 100 children in a class and one wonders how even the best teacher can 'teach' in such circumstances. More so the no-fail policy till class VIII means that without outside support, the likelihood of children from Government schools may be almost 'illiterate' when they attain the age of 14, when according to the RTE their free education comes to a stop. This makes programmes like ours crucial and we feel a sense of responsibility to ensure that not only no child drops out, but completes his schooling in the best conditions possible. It is with pride that we say that no Project Why child has dropped out of school in the past 13 years and that many of our alumni are gainfully employed and some have even pursued higher education

Our objective was to set up a community driven initiative to fulfil our mission in the hope that it would be in a position to its ownership. The first step to this approach was to select and train a team from within the community. We did and this was undoubtedly our greatest achievement. However we were unable to fulfil the second step, which was to motivate parents into a meaningful partnership.

HISTORY

Project Why is a education support and life skills enhancement programme of the Sri Ram Goburdhun Charitable Trust, a non governmental not-for-profit organisation set up in May 1998 and registered under the Societies Act and having FCRA registration and 80G Exemption. Its beneficiaries are children and women from underprivileged homes residing in South Delhi.

Project Why was conceived to answer a series of queries:

- Why do children from underprivileged backgrounds perform poorly in school?
- What could be done to enhance their performance?
- What skills should be taught to them to better their employment options?
- How could this be achieved in a replicable community driven model?

Project Why aims at creating an enabling environment to help underprivileged children and youth access better earning options. Project Why's classes do not seek to replace mainstream schooling - the provision of educational support is our goal.

The significant milestones of Project Why to date are:

- 2000 - one small spoken English class for 50 children
- 2001: first primary class
- 2001 first 'pavement' secondary class
- 2002 class for special children
- 2003 Okhla primary centre
- 2005 Nehru Camp centre (closed)
- 2006 Sanjay colony primary centre (closed)
- 2007 Women's centre with primary classes and vocational classes for women
- 2008 Foster Care Scholarship programme
- 2009 computer classes at Okhla and Women's Centre
- 2009 secondary classes at Okhla and Women centre
- 2010 Primary centre at Govindpuri
- 2011 Library and cine club in Giri Nagar
- 2012 Primary and Junior Secondary in Giri Nagar

THE MODEL

The original model of Project Why set out to empower under-privileged parents to steer the educational needs of their children by using local resources and steering funding initiatives.

By making use of local talent it has been proved that quality teaching in India can be offered in the most basic of locations and situations and does not require expensive infrastructure and formal training practices.

Project Why believes in the power of the virtuous circle: by planting the seed of empowerment in the right people within the community, Project Why aims at teaching them the means to find solutions themselves. Many project why alumni have come back to teach at the project.

The hope was that these solutions would portend change, leading to more empowerment till they ultimately are in a position to take control. This seemed the best way to bring real and long lasting change to the lives of those who live in our slums. However this proved more difficult than we thought. Whereas we could find and train a formidable team to run the Project, getting the parents involved in any form of resource gathering seemed impossible. Our many fund raising options that could have been steered by the community failed. Parents seemed to feel that they were 'entitled' to what we gave them simply because they were under privileged! This attitude is a real stumbling block towards empowerment.

2013 was the 13th year of our existence and the model we had set out to follow is now more than validated. The Project Why team is fully capable of running the project on a da-to-day basis, dealing with all managerial challenges and taking the right decisions and even corresponding and

interacting with our donors. This was truly put to the test this year as the Founder and Director who normally plays an active role in the running of the organisation was unavailable due to personal reasons. Thus 2103 was a litmus test for Team Project Why, a test they passed with flying colours.

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

The year saw our education programme continue in what has by now become a well-set successful model. Our children once again performed extremely well, and our programme remained dynamic and flexible, something that we feel is in great part the reason of the success of our work. Our model withstood a huge change with the sudden unavailability of its CEO and adapted to the new situation with great aplomb.

We are all aware of the poor teaching conditions that exist in Municipal schools in Delhi, the ones our children study in, and hence the onus to 'educate' them falls on us. With the RTE in place and no new infrastructure, classrooms in Government schools have more than 100 students making teaching practically impossible. The children of Project Why come from very humble homes and their parents cannot afford any private tuition. Hence the onus of teaching falls on us.

Our Focus on Quality Programme whereby primary students were taught spoken English began in early 2010 and was a success. However we were not able to find sponsors to take it forward. Moreover having lost our teachers we were unable to find suitable replacements. It is a sad but real fact that people with good qualifications are not willing to work in grassroots environments like ours. The Classes are taken sporadically as and when we have volunteers with the needed skills.

We also lay emphasis on teaching the children about the Environment and other issues that we feel are needed in an all round education programme. Even though there is shortage of time we still feel the need to address these issues and try to do this in the best way possible.

PROJECT WHY AT A GLANCE

This financial year we ran the following programmes:

GIRINAGAR - GOVINDPURI OKHLA

Early Education:

1 creche at
Govindpuri

Primary outreach:

Okhla
Govindpuri
Giri Nagar

Special children:

1day care at
Govindpuri

Junior Secondary

Okhla Classes VI to
VIII

Senior Secondary

Giri Nagar Classes IX
to XII

Computer centres:

Giri Nagar
Okhla

Other activities

Cine Club and Library
Print shop

MADANPUR KHADER Women centre

Primary outreach

Classes I to V

Secondary Outreach

Classes VI to IX

Vocational activities

Stitching and Tailoring
Beauty classes

Computer Centre

Profile of community served:

Migrant Labour from Bihar,
UP, Nepal and other states
Parents are self employed,
daily wage earners, street
vendors, part time
employees in factories,
sweepers.

Average income: 3000 Rs

Average family members:6

Children:

Main centre: ~600

Women centre: ~300

Staff:

Main centre: 29

Women centre: 15

ACTIVITIES REPORT

Overall situation

The overall situation remains unchanged as we have not added new activities, and the model we follow meets all the demands.

Most of the time was spent on finishing curriculum. However the elimination of examinations, the new grading system, and the new rule whereby no child can be failed till class VIII has led us to institute a non-formal in house assessment schedule to ensure that children keep up with their studies. This has helped children get good marks in school.

This year we were again successful in getting over 100 children admitted to regular schools, which means that we have by now been able to mainstream over 1100 children. We also try and ensure that these children remain in school except when the family is compelled to move to another location. This happens more often than we would like as there is a perceptible change in the demographics of some of our locations, and houses are being renovated making the rent unaffordable for the families we work with.

On the other hand the appearance of five a five star hotel near our Okhla centre and the building of an underpass along the railway line has and will lead to razing of many slum pockets. This would lead to our losing our children and eventually may also lead to the closing of the centre.

Keeping children in school is in sync with the main objective of our organisation. In spite of existing Government policies claiming easy access to primary schools, the reality is often very different. Parents often become weary of the attitude and complex administrative formalities and give up. It has been our constant effort to convince parents on the necessity of educating their children and though it is a difficult battle we believe that even one family convinced is a step in the right direction.

Our endeavour to get a few project why children admitted in neighbourhood public schools that now have to reserve 25% of their seats for children from underprivileged homes did not work out as this option rarely benefits the poorest of the poor who often are unaware of this facility, or do not have the required documents needed to apply. Since its inception, we have realised that it is often middle class families who are taking advantage of this reservation as they manage to get the required documents even if they have to falsify them. In our opinion this decision is not going to make a difference in the education of the poorest who will continue to study in overcrowded and poorly run schools, if at all.

The recent Nursery Admission fiasco in Delhi is an indicator of things to come and the absolute necessity of the new Government to look at enhancing capacity and resources of the existing Government schools that have ample land but often, ramshackle building or even simple tents. Only good quality state run schools can make the Right to education a reality of all the Children of India.

Driven by the dual objective of containing and arresting school drop out rates and enhancing performance, our main stress was once more on our curriculum support programme. As in the past, the programme was flexible and adapted to the specific needs of the students and once again the children did us proud as every single child passed with good marks thus validating our approach.

GOVINDPURI-OKHLA-GIRINAGAR

Coordinator: Rani Bhardwaj

Okhla

**Primary Classes
I to VI**

Number of children: 200

Staff: Pushpa, Pinky, Sophiya, Neetu

Our Okhla centre has been in existence for more than eight years. The journey began in a garbage dump that we 'reclaimed'! It all started in a makeshift structure of bamboo and plastic sheets amidst extreme resentment. Today it is a happy children centre under a tin roof. The centre runs in 2 shifts with boys in the morning and girls in the afternoon.

The children come from extremely deprived homes, most of migrant labour. When we first came in the area 90% of the children were not going to school. Many were peddling drugs or engaged in petty theft. Now all children are in school and doing well.

In early 2010 we began spoken English classes to help children build their confidence. Within a year there is remarkable improvement in the children who have now begun to communicate in English! This was confirmed by a volunteer who returned to Project Why after two years!

Children are taught through fun activities like story telling, educational games etc. Environment classes are also held. Children are taught how to keep the neighbourhood clean, prevent disease and make the planet plastic free and even plant flowers!

The Okhla team, staff and children is extremely have taken full ownership of their school Once again the building was whitewashed by the children before Diwali and as usual all festivals were celebrated with great gusto.

Last year, as part of our gender equality project and in the wake of the gruesome Delhi rape, we had decided to call boys and girls together during all holidays. The experience proved a great success and this approach has come to stay!

Slum children rarely go out on educational visits or even to parks and playgrounds. We are aware of this need but unfortunately the cost of an outing is difficult to budget keeping in mind the number of kids we have. It is often volunteers who are kind enough to sponsor such outings.

This year a group of volunteers sponsored an outing for the Okhla children. They went to the Red Fort, India Gate and the Children's Park.

Many children topped their respective classes in school and did us proud.

Secondary Classes VI to VIII

Number of children: 120

Staff: Sonia, Probir

The secondary classes were started because of our first batch of class V who felt they had no option for after school support as their parents were poor and would not be able to afford private tuition and without tuition it is impossible to succeed. This year we welcome our first class XII batch!

Over and above school curriculum, we endeavour to widen the knowledge of the children, something crucial for children from deprived homes. The students are taught to explore encyclopaedias and general knowledge books from our well-stocked library. The centre also subscribes to newspapers to help them keep abreast with every day occurrences.

During exam time the students have regular tests based on sample papers. The pressure of exams is such that it leaves little time for extra curricular activities.

The students benefit from the volunteers who come time and again and share their knowledge and skills.

Monday to Friday is reserved for studies, whereas Saturdays are for other activities.

Two workshops on gender issues were held for the secondary students and were very successful.

The secondary section was also taken to an outing by volunteers. They chose to go to the Science Museum.

Last year we tied up with Vintage Rides, a Enfield aficionados travel agency. We were hoping to train mechanics for Enfield bikes as we thought it would be a good vocational skill for students not academically inclined. Students have been going there in batches and some of them are quite enthused. However we came across an unexpected stumbling block when parents expressed their displeasure as they felt that they were not education their children to become mechanics. I guess for them the image of a mechanic is someone sitting on the roadside! We will need to have parent's meeting and maybe a visit to the upmarket Enfield garage where a mechanic earns a minimum of 20 000 Rupees!

Computer class

Number of students: 30

Staff: Mithu¹

The classes were started on popular demand as we were told that there were no computer classes in the vicinity and that those that were there were very costly. Thanks to some generous donors we got 3 computers and began classes. These are extremely popular!

The classes are taught by Mithu, who is physically impaired after having contracted polio in his childhood. He was a student of project why who showed keen interest in computers. He worked as a teacher's aide in our main computer centre before taking over the Okhla computer centre.

We would like to give him further training in specialised courses but need a sponsor as these classes are very expensive.

Spoken English classes

Number of Students: classes III to V

Staff: Volunteers

¹ Mithu is physically impaired after polio in his childhood. He was a student of pwhy who showed keen interest in computers. He worked as a teacher's aide in our main computer centre before taking over the Okhla computer centre

Okhla was one of the two centres selected for our focus on quality programme. The programme was launched in April 2010. It was felt that a good command in English was essential to succeed and slum children never had the opportunity to learn spoken English.

It has been impossible to find an English Teacher willing to work in a 'garbage dump' and at the remuneration we offer. We are entirely dependent on international volunteers for spoken English Classes.

GOVINDPURI –GIRI NAGAR

Early Education

Number of children: 30

Staff: Sita, Mamta, Seema

Early education has always been a great concern for us as early education is still not in the ambit of free education. Experience shows that slum toddlers do not lead a privileged life in the arms of caring parents. They are often left to their own device and even used as child labour. Some are physically abused, tied to charpoys while their mothers go to work. Others are left to uncaring elders and learn aggressive behaviour and bad language. By the time they reach school, they are unsocial difficult children who find it extremely difficult to adjust to a set pattern and routine. Our early intervention programme is above all aimed at giving toddlers and pre-schoolers the right to babyhood in a safe environment.

The early education class is now located in the building we own. We also decided to change the social profile of the class and have admitted 30 children between the ages of 2 to 5. These children come very deprived homes in slums located near our Okhla centre and thus can easily move on to our Okhla centre once they have 'graduated' from our crèche.

The children are taught age appropriate activities and basic social interaction. They learn about hygiene and self care. They learn how to hold a pencil, draw a straight line and how to count and then move on to alphabets and numbers. The aim is to prepare them for class I.

The Project Why crèche is a joyful place filled with fun and laughter. We try and take the children out as often as possible and this year a group of volunteers sponsored an outing to the Children's park. The children had a great time.

We also partner with the Anubhav Learning Centre and our children went for a Shivratri special where milk was distributed to all.

A staunch supporter celebrated her grandson's birthday by distributing school bags, lunch boxes and water bottles to the class.

2014 saw 30 kids 'graduate' and get admitted in regular school. They will be attending our Okhla centre for after school support.

Primary and Secondary Outreach

Number of children: 110

Staff: Himani, Anita and Shipra

This class was started in April 2010, after we closed down two of our small centres. However children from Sanjay Colony and the Govindpuri slums come all the way to our new centre and in the span for 2 years the class is filled to capacity with more than 100 children.

Anita, one of the teachers is a project why alumni. She has been with us since nursery and completed her class XII this year. She is now completing her B Com by correspondence and is in her final year. This is a real success story and what we had always hoped for.

This year the children went for an outing to Qutab Minar, Science Museum and Children's park.

As in all centres boys and girls come together during holidays and this year too gender issues workshop were held for the secondary students.

This class is filled to capacity and it is a juggling act to try and admit as many students as possible.

This year again many students topped their classes in school.

Library

Number of children: 20

Staff: Israel

Thanks to a huge donation of books we were able to start a Library in our old classroom in Giri Nagar. Children come and read books or take them home and enjoy the experience. The library also has a TV and DVD player and is thus a cine club! Pwhy children come and see movies or cartoons once a week.

As our librarian has time on his hands, he also runs a small primary class for 20 children.

Special Section

Number of children: 20

Staff: Shamika, Shagun, Amit and Deepti

The plight of children with disabilities has always been of great concern to us as they are by far the most neglected of all. More so as they grow into young adults and become a 'burden' for their families.

We run a day care for 20 children and young adults with disabilities. The children have a vast array of disabilities both physical and/or mental. The main thrust of the programme is to help these children and young adults gain independent living skills and if and when possible some vocational skills to help them become income earning members of their families thus regaining the respect they have often lost.

In class we lay emphasis on activities such as cooking, stitching, and self-care and appropriate vocational activities

Weaving has been taken seriously and each student capable of weaving has her own frame.

They also have a lot of creative and fun activities.

The children painted beautiful diyas for Diwali and the money of the sales sponsored a great outing to the Lodhi gardens.

Need your room painted: call our special section. The children, under the guidance of their teachers and volunteers painted their space – all of 3 rooms – in bright colours with stunning murals. They loved every bit of it. The third room was decorated with a 3 D mural. Stunning!

The children also went to a birthday party at Dilli Haat.

Dancing remains the all time favourite and 3 of our girls put up a great show for visitors from France and other lands.

A speech therapist visits the centre regularly.

The children are also taught computer skills.

Senior Secondary and one small primary

Number of students Senior secondary: 100

Staff: Naresh

Number of students primary: 50 in 2 batches

Staff: Ritu ²

These classes are from IX to XII and focus mainly on mathematics and accountancy, as these are subjects that are feared the most by students. In the past years many of our students have passed their X and XII with excellent marks and some have even topped their respective schools.

This section runs quasi independently thanks to our reputation and track record.

Many parents come to this section asking for classes for primary kids. So we opened a class, which is taught by Ritu one of our old students.

~~Computer classes~~

Number of students: 60 in six month batches

Staff: Dipankar, Vijay

Our computer classes are very popular. We have 12 computers and run 6 month courses. Many of our ex students have got jobs in companies, banks, etc.

New courses have been introduced this year.

A certificate is given to the students after completion of their six-month course.

In 2013, 50 students completed their certificate in a variety of courses Basic, Tally, DTP, Flash Animation, Hardware – and secured good jobs.

Boarding School Programme

We sponsor 8 children in a boarding school. These are children from extremely deprived homes and would have never completed their studies and most probably dropped out and become child labour. The children are in different classes and each one of them tops his or her respective class.

² Ritu is one of our old students

This is by far our most cherished programme as it is in consonance with what we stand for: equal opportunities for all children born in India.

Utpal and Meher both third degree burn survivors are part of this programme

Each child has a sponsor for the school fees. Additional costs are borne by a pool of friends and supporters of this programme.

Our first batch has graduated to class VII

**MADANPUR KHADER
THE PROJECT WHY WOMEN CENTRE
Coordinator: Dharmendra**

ACTIVITIES

Primary Section (class I to V)

Number of children: 150
Staff: Parveen, Manisha, Priyanka

From the very outset of the project we ran primary classes for the children of the community. The classes are held in 2 shifts: boys in the morning and girls in the afternoon. Each shift is further divided in two 1.30 minutes shifts. This was done to accommodate more children.

Most of our children are from migrant families that belong to Eastern UP and Bihar.

The new education policy whereby no child can fail till class VIII has made it imperative for us to educate children, as education in Government schools is practically non-existent. Hence we have to concentrate on school curriculum.

We also want to try and make our children better citizens and hence the general knowledge component which is designed to enable them to acquire more rounded life skills.

Secondary Section (class VI to IX)

Number of children: 150
Staff: Kalpana, Parth, Rajesh, Geeta, Ashish

These classes are also held in two shifts. Emphasis is laid on the school curriculum and teaching the child to study independently and enable him to get good results in the school leaving examinations and thus accede to further education. This is imperative as the parents cannot afford private tuition and without tuition the children cannot get good marks needed for access to further education

Children also get space to be creative and learn about a wide range of issues. A sex education workshop was held for teenage boys and girls

Computer classes

Number of children: limited due to shortage of space and computers
Staff: Neha³

This is an all time favourite class as it was started on popular demand of the children. We encourage them as computer skills can help them get better employment

The computer centre has now been 'adopted' by Chess Without Borders an organisation based in Seattle and named Maggie Gruber Computer Centre. We now have 7 new computers, the maximum our space can take!

The children enjoy these classes and we now have many women wanting to learn computers.

Environment and Awareness

All classes
Dharmendra and the team

The issues taken up last year were water and plastic as well as cleanliness of the surroundings were continued this year too. This is particularly relevant as the centre is located in a village where access is through a small lane replete with buffaloes. Children were also encouraged to plant some green plants and learn to tend to them and respect them.

Water and the plastic menace are issues that are discussed on a daily basis, as 10 minutes are set aside for this after every class. Children are encouraged to come up with their own solutions. Some children have now stopped bringing plastic bags and urge their friends to do the same. Peer pressure seems to be the best way to ensure such changes! Children are taught to recycle water.

On Saturday it is a hand washing day as we feel that teaching children the importance of washing their hands is one of the best way to protect one's self from many common diseases. Children are taught not to waste water while washing their hands.

³ Old students

We also try and take up various topics for discussion and celebrate special days in the centre. The importance of hand washing was discussed with each and every class. On Mother's Day the children were asked to write about their mothers. In the month of June that is a holiday month Each one Teach one was implemented with the secondary children teaching the younger ones.

A large water filter plant was donated by a supporter, and a workshop on the importance of saving water was held by the children of this supporter. The project why children asked pertinent questions that were answered adequately.

The children celebrated Dr Ambedkar's birthday, Independence Day, Teacher's day, Gandhi Jayanti, Diwali, Children's day and Republic Day. Posters and paintings were made and displayed and the older children prepared speeches on the relevance of these days.

Sabine a volunteer from Germany introduced the children to modern art. The children were bemused at first as it required them to think out of the box, but once they had got the knack they let their imagination run free. The result a stunning mural in bright red and other hues.

Sewing classes

Number of trainees: 60 in 4 batches (6 months course)

Teacher: Renu⁴

The classes are held everyday from 10 to 3. Timings are flexible to suit the trainees, as many have home and families to tend to. Certificates are given every six months

Some of our ex trainees are now gainfully employed. While some have taken full time employment others get contractual jobs from export houses that they do at home. The certificates help them in securing such work.

Beauty classes

Number of trainees: 44 in four batches, as space is very limited (6 month course)

Teacher: Priya

⁴ She is an old student

Classes are held daily and are very popular. Some trainees have secured jobs in local beauty parlours. Others work from home and two of our students have opened parlours in their villages.

Adult education classes for women

Number of students: 12

Teacher: All our women teachers

Every teacher takes 2 students daily. The women are learning fast and an exam is taken at the end of the course and the ladies are given a certificate. This class remains a challenge, as the students have to be bullied, coaxed and even chided to attend. However it is amazing how quickly they learn.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Kirkistan Brass Band

One of the highest moments last year was the visit of the Kirkistan Brass Band all the way from France. In their red and gold costumes they played for the children of Okhla, Khader and Govindpiri to the delight of children and by-standers.

The show stopper was undoubtedly our very special Shalini who joined the band in dance and executed the number to perfection. Let it be said that she had never met, let alone danced with them

More Breakfast and dance at a Five Star Hotels

When one of our main funders, Enfances Indiennes, suggested that the Project Why children put up a show for two large groups of visitors from Europe, we accepted without hesitation. The idea was to hire a hall not far from our centre and have a small dance performance. So we hired a dance teacher and after many rehearsals had 4 stunning dances ready.

A few weeks later we were told that the schedule was tight and that with the Delhi traffic nightmare it would not be possible for the guests to come all the way to Govindpuri. The only alternative was for the children to perform at The Ashoka Hotel just after breakfast on the day the group was leaving. Some thought that a visit to such a large hotel, that dazzles even the likes of us, might not be 'appropriate' for slum kids. But I knew my kids and accepted the idea.

The first shows were in March but there was another one in April and more breakfast too.

In May the children performed at the Hyatt hotel for the ladies of Delhi Network, an expat spouses organisation. Once again, in spite of some logistical issues with the sound system, the children performed like pros.

SMILE

Stanford and Oxford University ran a workshop with our children on called SMILE (Mobile Inquiry-based Learning Environment). The programme is based on the use of mobile phones. This new approach to learning was loved by all children and teachers and is now used twice a week with success.

You can learn about the programme here:

<https://gse-it.stanford.edu/research/project/smile>

Nutrition

This year the nutrition programme once again extended only to special cases on a need basis.

Some of the children in the special section and the crèche are given regular lunches as their families do not send any.

Specific nutrition programmes are run at the behest of specific donors.

Recreational activities

Slum children are rarely taken out. We strive to take them out as often as possible but it not as often as we would like to, as transportation is expensive

This year a group of volunteers sponsored outings to the Rail Museum, India Gate, Children's Park and Qutab Minar.

Creative activities

Children are encouraged to express their views through essay competitions. The children were asked to write on a variety of subjects.

The special children painted their classrooms and did a remarkable job.

The Khader children painted one of their class rooms.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability has been a major concern of Project Why since its very inception as we are all aware of the extreme fragility of the funding model of the project, which is based on donations obtained almost on a day-to-day basis and requiring extensive efforts.

Planet why

In spite of our best efforts we were unable to raise funds for building planet why. At the end of 2011 we decided to shelf the project. This was done with great sadness, as we all believed that planet why was the only sustainability option that befitted the spirit of project why.

We explored many possibilities and have not yet zeroed in on the right one. One possibility that seems feasible is to sell the land we had acquired as it has appreciated and build a centre in the neighbourhood of our women centre as we risk losing the premises sooner than later.

This year being an election one, we were advised not to sell our land as the prices had fallen. We now hope to be able to do so and then purchase land in the vicinity of our present women centre.

WEB PRESENCE

The greatest achievement of the year was once again our increased web presence: a well visited website and a blog that now has a group of die-hard supporters. The blog enables one to share the everyday realities of our work and is thus a great diary of the trials and tribulations of working in an urban slum.

Our blog and site are updated as regularly as possible and have been linked by many other sites.

A photo gallery is also present so that people can get a feel of the project.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Our audited balance sheet is attached to the report

FUNDING

As Project Why is above all a project from the heart, it grows organically as and when a new challenge has to be met or a new 'why' answered. This of course leads to an ever-increasing budget that needs to be met on a crisis footing.

We are extremely lucky and blessed to have supporters who understand us and come to our rescue each and every time.

Organisations

The following organisations help us sustain our old and new activities:

Asha Seattle, Chemical Construction Company, Enfances Indiennes, Asha Canada, Project Why de, Deutsch-Indische Gelsellschaft V Winsen, Delhi Network, HVS, Orient Exp Pvt Ltd, Hough School Chess Club, Chess without borders

Individual donors

sowmya venkateswaran, sujatha, catherine lough, beverley heart, jennie page, irene and andy mitchell, gareth harries and friends, cat robinson, steve paterson, debrah jones, damini sinha, sarah birch, catherine walls, beverley hart, palianappam lakshmanan, vijay kalivarapu, jillian murphy, manish menghani, sowmya venkateswaran, rosaria petrillo, lauren christian, lakshmi, balaji muralikrishnan, kashmira patel, peter eriscson, kaushik partasarthi, dawn mccormick, emily worman, andy mitchell, catherine west, colin page, jennifer shahade, debra bakal, uttara shahani, david schlenker, elizabeth lanier, francesca carollo, samia azad, francine grant, edith lange, emily and alan worman, anirudh bokil, michelle andriola, yuri shulman, sonal onkar, martha kelsey, elena jacoby, marck schnitzer, claire sokoloff, jonathan filley, neil kaye, isabelle cullen

Guest and visitors

We had a number of visitors this year and many became friends of project WHY and great supporters:

Volunteers

Many volunteers came to help project WHY this year:

***To all who helped, and stood by us we would like to say:
Thank You***

If you want to know more about project why visit

<http://project why.org>

<http://project why.blogspot.com>