

# PROJECT WHY



**SRI RAM GOBURDHUN CHARITABLE TRUST**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2011 – 2012**

***A second decade dawns***

**Sri Ram Goburdhun Charitable Trust  
(project why)  
Annual Report 2011-2012**

## **Director's Message**

*To write a report about Project Why is always a thrilling experience. It is perhaps the only time I can truly assess and appreciate all that has happened in a single moment. Project Why is a vibrant blend of a host of different activities in diverse locations and I never truly get to appreciate them together except when I sit down to write the annual report!*

*The year dawned with a terrible event that shattered us all. Manu who was the soul and spirit of Project Why passed away gently on a cold January day. Manu was the perfect example of the indubitable fact that no life is worthless and that nothing is impossible. If there were no Manu, there would have been no Project Why. And without Manu I would never have had the strength to overcome all the difficulties and obstacles that seem to be the fate of efforts like ours. Manu's smile kick started many of our projects.*

*His passing was a huge shock. For an instant I thought project why would end as many projects seemed to have lost their raison d'être. Our biggest dream – Planet Why – was primarily to be Manu's home. For a few days I was completely lost. But slowly things fell in place. It was as if Manu was guiding me from the heavens above and I realized that above all I needed to honour his memory and spirit. And the only befitting way to do so was by renewing our commitment and efforts.*

*Hence 2011 was a great year. All our centres functioned admirably in spite of little hiccups along the way. Project Why seemed to have matured and every challenge was met with equanimity.*

*Our Okhla centre is gaining strength day after day and is undoubtedly one of our most glowing successes. One cannot forget its turbulent beginnings when our rickety school, erected in a reclaimed garbage dump, was destroyed relentlessly by local goons, and the rebuilt with grit and determination by our committed staff. In those days local mafias used children to push drugs or steal from the good trains that halted on the nearby railway track.. Today we have over 250 children from class I to IX who not only study but are also learning to become good citizens.*

*Our Govindpuri primary centre that opened its doors in 2010 following the closure of our Sanjay Colony centre is now filled to capacity with waiting lists. Anita who joined the Project Why crèche in 2000 has now completed her Boards and is teaching in this centre. A true success story!*

*Our crèche as always is filled with laughter and fun. This year brought a special classmate: my grandson Agastya who began his schooling at Project Why.*

*The special section took a long time adjusting to life after Manu. But time is a big healer and they have slowly resumed their daily timetable. In July the class shifted to a three room flat in the building opposite our centre. Though the three floor climb is not easy for some, they now have more space and better organized activities.*

*Our three computer centres – GiriNagar, Okhla and Khader – run like a clockwork orange. Our teachers underwent a one-day training at NIIT. Many of our students have obtained good jobs in the open market.*

*All is well with our boarding school kids who are busy building their future with determination and hard work.*

*Utpal's mom has disappeared for over 2 years now, leaving the little 9 year old lost and hurting. We had to seek the help of a child psychiatrist and begin medication with psychotherapy. The treatment has been nothing short of a miracle and Utpal is now back to his endearing and smiling self.*

*At the women centre everything is spot on under the watchful eye of our coordinator Dharmendra. Over and above regular schoolwork, the children participate in a host of creative activities. In July some of them participated in a three-week photography workshop and have now become our dedicated lens men. Beauty and stitching classes for the women are now scheduled daily. We have also begun adult education classes for the women.*

*It has been a busy year that passed without any upheavals. The team performed marvellously and I must admit that sometimes I feel redundant. The decision to select a team from within the community is undoubtedly our most resounding success.*

*The highlight of the year was the show held on August 15<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Independence Day as well as my father, Ram Goburdhun's centenary. The hall was filled with children, parents, guests and even some celebrities. The programme was appreciated by one and all as the children performed with confidence and perfection. The most touching moment was the rendering of the national anthem in sign language by the students of our special section.*

*It may seem from the above that the year gone by was free of problems. Not quite. If all went well on stage, backstage was another story. At the beginning of 2011 I still believed in Planet Why, which was the ideal solution to make project why sustainable. But as days and months went by the planet why dream seemed more and more remote. A series of unexpected events made us realise that it was time to bid our dream adieu! And so the sustainability was back to the drawing board.*

*It was also a year when once again I was made aware of the extreme fragility of our funding model. A new Government ruling deprived us of our Paypal account. I would never have imagined how much difference tiny donors would make. I had to make up*

*the shortfall as for the past years I have been solely responsible for all fund raising activities. I guess this was the price to pay for my decision of recruiting solely local staff. But time is not on my side as I have entered the hallowed ground of senior citizens, and though passion and spirit remain as young as ever, the bones tell another story. The time has come to rationalise matters and come up with a new sustainability plan. Quite a tall order!*

*Many may wonder why matters have come to this point. I really do not know. Maybe we just kept looking with our hearts and believing that miracles would continue to come our way. Maybe I believed age would not make a difference. I cannot pin point reasons but I know that time has come to take some harsh decisions. We were compelled to vacate one of our rented premises and close one of our early education programmes. We also gave up our spoken English classes as we lost the sponsor we had and the classes were rather costly. This was done with a heavy heart and many sleepless nights. But the writing was on the wall; we had to take the wiser road.*

*I worry about the long term, about young Utpal and little Meher who have no one in the world, about Champa who lives with one of our teachers after the closing of our residential programme. These are life long responsibilities that will have to be catered for. I hope that we will find the solutions will seek.*

*I will end this message by thanking all those the world over who have continued to believe in us and have made our dream possible.*

Anouradha Goburdhun Bakshi  
New Delhi, May 2011



## MISSION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



Our main mission is to halt drop out rates and ensure that children remain in school. In the past 11 years, no Project Why child has dropped out of school and many Project Why alumni go to college or pursue further studies each year. Many have secured sound employment thus breaking the cycle of poverty

Our goal is to achieve this through a community steered initiative and hence all our staff is drawn from within the community and include some members who were former Project Why students themselves. We work hard to get parents to participate and take responsibility for their children's education although with marginalized groups who are often illiterate themselves this can be an uphill task.

Our objective is to give the best education possible to slum children within the existing government school structure. We strongly believe that state run schools should be strengthened as they alone can ensure the success of the greater goal of "Education for All". Hence all our children are enrolled in municipal and government schools and Project Why provides after/before school support.

Following the passing of the Right to Education Act and the reservations of 25% in all schools, a new challenge comes our way: to try and get some of our early education kids admitted to good public schools. It is difficult but not impossible and we will give it our best as always.

## HISTORY

Project Why is a non-governmental not-for-profit organisation engaged in education support and life-skills enhancement. Its formal name is Sri Ram Goburdhun Charitable Trust; it was created in May 1998 and is registered under the Societies Act. It also has FCRA registration and 80G exemption. 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 to 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
- 2006 Sanjay colony primary centre
- 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

## **THE MODEL**

The original model of Project Why set out to empower under-privileged and illiterate or semi-literate parents to steer the educational needs of their children by using local resources.

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.

These solutions portend change, leading to more empowerment till they ultimately are in a position to take control. This is the best way to bring real and long lasting change to the lives of those who live in our slums.

2011 was the 11<sup>th</sup> year of our existence and thus time to assess and validate the model we had set out to follow. The model has been successful as both teachers and students have performed beyond expectations. However the aspiration of seeing the community take ownership of the project has not

been realised. However we still believe that this is possible and hope to address the situation in the coming year.

### **RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES**

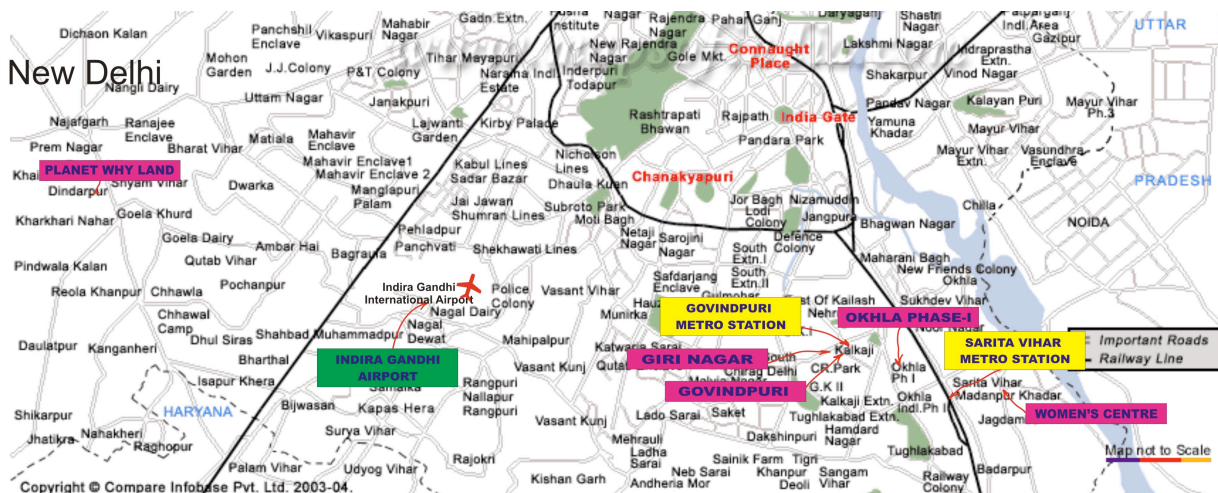
The year saw our education programme continue in what has by now become a well-set successful model. Our children once again performed extremely well, and our programme remained dynamic and flexible, something that we feel is in great part the reason of the success of our work as an education support and has become a well-established and tested model to replicate. However we felt that this was not sufficient particularly in the wake of the new RTE Act that stipulates that no child would fail till class VIII.

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 fell 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.



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:**

1 day 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**

As usual 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.

This year we were successful in getting over 100 children admitted to regular schools. This is in keeping 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.



From this year onwards we will also 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. In case any of our children are admitted in such schools we will provide required after school support to them.

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.

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, Sita, Sophiya, Neetu, Shipra, Smita (left in November 2011)

Our Okhla centre has been in existence for seven years. The journey began in a garbage dump that we 'reclaimed'! It all began 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! Our international volunteers now handle the classes, as Smita our English teacher had to leave for personal reasons and we were unable to find a suitable replacement.

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.

The Okhla team, staff and children is extremely motivated and committed to their school. It is the only centre where children participate actively in painting the school every Diwali each child contributing five rupees and the

teachers coming up with the balance. They have truly taken ownership of their centre.

The primary children were taken for an outing to the Science Museum and participated in a First Aid workshop at the American School.

As each year the children celebrated all the festivals with gusto and joy. A painting competition was organised by them. The children are fond of dancing and always perform for visitors and friends.

Many children topped their respective classes in school and done us proud. The primary children who stand 1st and 2nd in their school sit of a government exam called Medhavi. If they succeed in that exam, they get scholarship in secondary and a certificate. The following children sat for this exam: Ajay, Babul, Sachin, Durga and Kamalpal.

### **Secondary Classes VI to VIII**

**Number of children:** 64

**Staff:** Sonia, Probir

The secondary classes were started recently as our own students had graduated and wanted to continue studying with us. Children are helped with difficult subjects like maths and English and are also taught to study independently. At present we run classes till class X.

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. However for the 15 August celebrations the students wrote and performed a play in English based on the Gandhi's Dandi march.

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.

A workshop on self-esteem was held for the secondary students and was very successful.

### **Computer class**

**Number of students:** 25

**Staff:** Mithu<sup>1</sup>



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 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.

This year 3 students obtained their certificates and our teacher participated in a one day NIIT teaching workshop.

### **Spoken English classes<sup>2</sup>**

**Number of Students:** classes III to V

**Staff:** Smita (left in November 2011)

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 all slum children never had the opportunity to learn spoken



---

<sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>2</sup> Now closed as Smita our teacher had to leave and it was impossible to find a suitable replacement.

English. The classes are fun and interactive and help the children build their confidence.

Smita left us in December 2011 and we have been unable to find a suitable replacement. Spoken English classes are now taken by our international volunteers. This is not the best alternative as there are times we have no volunteers.

## **GOVINDPURI –GIRI NAGAR**

### **Early Education**

**Number of children: 30**

**Staff:** Vinita<sup>3</sup>, Urmila, Seema, Geeta



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.

Our early education programme was divided in two classes:

Crèche: Here the children range from 1 to 5. They are taught poems, counting, how to hold a pencil, draw a straight line. They are also taught to draw, sing and dance.

Prep: After a year in the crèche the children are moved to the prep section where they are prepared for entry into Class I. They are taught English and Hindi alphabets, numbers, etc.

Each year about 15 children get admission in Class I in neighbourhood schools.



---

<sup>3</sup> Vinita one of our oldest teachers left us in November as she got married.

However shortage of funds compelled us to close one class, as it was located in rented premises. 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 3. These children come very deprived homes in slums located near our Okhla centre.

We intend preparing these children for admission in good schools in accordance with the provision of the RTE that stipulates that 25% seats be reserved for poor children.

### **Primary Outreach**

**Number of children:** 90

**Staff:** Anita, Anita and Manju



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. This is a real success story and what we had always hoped for.

Children in this class are doing exceedingly well and many have topped their respective classes.

Safeen Malik a class 7 student stood 2nd in a zonal mental maths competition. He also had 2 of his poems printed in the school magazine.

The results were out on the 24th march for class 5th and all the children passed. Durga and Vijay stood first in there class.



## 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, Kalpana, Surya Prakash, Kamal



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.

The start of 2011 did not augur well for this section as Manu passed away on January 6th leaving all his pals stunned. They grieved for him in the most touching manner but soon realised that life has to go on. A smiling picture of Manu now hangs on the wall reminding each and everyone of us that his spirit is to be honoured.







In class we lay emphasis on activities such as cooking, stitching, and self-care. This year we introduced baking and weaving. The children have learnt how to make yummy cookies and scrumptious muffins.

They also have a lot of creative and fun activities. This year the children decorated their class by making stunning murals

Dancing remains the all time favourite.

A speech therapist visits the centre regularly.

The children are also taught computer skills.

Special children are rarely taken out of their homes. This is why we endeavour organising as many outings as possible. This year the children were taken to the Lodhi Gardens. They had a wonderful time and it was touching to see them enjoy what we almost take for granted.



As the section has shifted to a bigger place, we are hoping to be able to add new activities such as cooking, baking, housekeeping, gardening etc. These will prove useful to them in the future.

This year the special children made some beautiful diyas for Diwali. These were sold and with the money they 'earned', gifts were bought for all and a super party organised with everyone's favourite food. Everyone had a ball.

### **Residential programme for adults with disabilities**

**Number of residents: 1**



This programme was started to ensure that Manu, the young adult with disabilities that we found on the streets 10 years ago has a place to call home. He was joined by Anjali and Champa both in need of shelter and security. Sadly Manu left us in January 2011. Anjali left later to get married.

We had to close down the facility as it was becoming too expensive to run for one person. Champa is now living with one of her teachers.

## Senior Secondary

**Number of students:** 100

**Staff:** Naresh

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.

We also sponsored the technical course fees of two of our best students: one for the course of lab assistant and the other for a diploma in electronic engineering.



## Computer classes

**Number of students:** 60 in six month batches

**Staff:** Dipankar, Vijay



Our computer classes are very popular. We have 10 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 2011, 31 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.

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.





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

**ACTIVITIES**

**Primary Section (class I to V)**

Number of children: 150

Staff: Parveen, Neha, Archana



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.

Moreover 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: 133

Staff: Gita, Neha, Rajesh, Parth

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 get good results in the school leaving examinations and thus accede to further education.

Children also participate in extra curricular activities.



to



### **Computer classes**

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

Staff: Sonia

This class was started on popular demand by the children, who are fascinated by computers. Thanks to some generous donors we have 5 computers.

The children enjoy these classes.

### **Environment and Awareness**

All classes

Dharmendra and the team

The first issues taken were water and plastic as well as cleanliness of the surroundings. 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.

### **Sewing classes**

Number of trainees: 34 in 2 batches (6 months course)

Teacher: Nema, Renu<sup>4</sup>

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. We plan to begin and advanced course in the near future



### **Beauty classes**



Number of trainees: 32 in three batches, as space is very limited (6 month course)

Teacher: Neetu (old student and physically challenged)

Classes are held daily and are very popular. Some trainees have secured jobs in local beauty parlours. Others work from home .

### **Adult education classes for women**

Number of students: all ladies attending sewing and beauty classes

Teacher: Geeta

In order to promote adult education we have made these classes compulsory for all women attending sewing and beauty classes. The classes are for 30 minutes. The women have to pass a small exam. If they do not clear it they do not receive their vocational certificate. We had to resort to this extreme measure as when the course was optional, ladies always found an excuse not to attend



---

<sup>4</sup> Both the teachers are our old students



## **OTHER ACTIVITIES**

### **Independence Day and Ram Goburdhun Centenary**



The highlight of 2011, which undoubtedly was the celebration of our Independence Day, which coincided with the Centenary of Ram Goburdhun in whose memory Project Why was created.

Children from all centres participated in these celebrations. The show was breathtaking in more ways than one. The passion of the children, the quality of the different items and the warmth of the audience made it a unique experience. The large community hall was packed and the foot tapping music and dance were appreciated by one and all.

The show began with a beautiful rendering of the National Anthem in sign language by the children of our special section. It was a truly moving experience.

The children staged two plays in English that were written by them with the help of their teachers: one was on Gandhi's salt march and the endearing adaptation of Dear Popples.

Children from all classes delighted the audience with many Bollywood dance numbers executed to perfection. Needless to say these drew the loudest applause.

At the end of the show children who had topped their respective classes were honoured with medals.

It was truly a wow moment for project why.

### ***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 the special children were spoilt as they had two outings, one to Dilli Haath to celebrated the birthday of their friend Yashu and the other to the Lodhi Gardens.

The primary children went to the Lotus Temple and the Science Museum.

### ***Creative activities***

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

A six week photography workshop on the theme 'respect' was held in July/August for 6 children of class VII. The children exhibited their work during our 15 August celebrations and everyone was touched by the sensitivity of the pictures. These children are given cameras every day for half an hour to chronicle the activities of their centre.



Children celebrated Gandhi Jayanti and Children's Day. They made posters on the lives of Gandhi and Nehru. A science competition was also organised and the children from all classes made interesting models.

Saturday is reserved for co curricular activities, group discussions and interactive pursuits. The following topics were discussed, right to education, learning disorders, sex education (for girls), Jan Lokpal Bill.



The special children painted colourful Diyas that were sold to friends and well wishers who really appreciated them.

Workshops on self and self-esteem were organised for adolescents in our Okhla and Madanpur Khader centres.

### **Networking**

This year our networking went international as children from our Okhla Project exchanged letters with children from France and Germany.

The children of the women centre painted pictures of Jack and the Bean Stalk. These were used in the programme of a Pantomime Show in England and then auctioned. The benefits came to Project Why.



### **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. It is now back to the drawing board and we hope we can find a sound sustainability option for the future.

## **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, SARI, Delhi Network, HVS, Orient Exp Pvt Ltd, Hunter Business Company

## **Individual donors**

sowmya venkateswaran,dawn mccormick, anisa chowdhury,, manish menghani, jillian murphy, emily worman, sonya vikouloveskala, rohit suppal,



harriet page beth mccord, paul martin, irene mitchell,emma, james, andy mitchell,steve morcraft, david page,bereley boon, bev nicholas, mark page, arpita maredyy, hari rajgopal, nagamohan kompelle, amanda edwards,anais miners, mukul dasgupta, sarah consentini, marc savage, kalpita deobhakta, beth drummond, priya ramaswamy, sarita madhukar, chetan patel, laskhsmi, naresh boga, vijay singh, venkat nandikolia, b.r ramaprasad, hilary moses cat robinson, steve paterson, palianppan lakshmanan, beverley hart, catherine lough, sarah birch, sanyogeeta diwedi, praveen salwan, rahul batra, p.p. Kapoor, shyam krishnan, neena sharma, jai kishan gupta, shyam and shobha krishnan, rajesh and satish chandra, a.k saxena, sanjay raizada, s. shekhar, gurmeet singh, sachu jacob, rohit suppal, sumita thanpar,manav thadani, deepika thadani, kausjik vardhajan, mansi bhatnagar,inshita vij, tarun gulati, pooja goel, arushi bhattacharya, manish gaur, siddharth thaker, smita mukerjee, sonia singh, sudhi ranjan sinha, snati goburdhun, rahul malhotra, paresh kapoor, surabh anand, megha, sumita mukherjee,sameer chabbra, p.p. kapur, bhumica chugh, anu bora, david hart, sabrina and chris, chetan patel, saritha madhukar, lakshmi, priya shankar, shilpa and suvidh kankaria, seema haji, suresh burra, priya sebastian, kashmira, mira lane, sonal, venkat, naresh boga, vijay, emily and alan, shyam, harcharan, vibhu, hilary moses, dawn , effi jono, peter erickson, abbey klaassen,anasuya grenfell, maia, sergio, clara,vanessa dien, jennie page, guylaine boylard, 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

### **Guest and visitors**

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

Hans Emde and his friends, Enfances Indiennes group, Megha, Naveen, Kirsten and Ben, Delhi Network, Cesare and Luisa, Martin, Japanese Ladies Group, Kiran Sethi, Mallika Chopra, Catherine and Eva, Julia, Frizzey Grief, Megha, navin.

### **Volunteers**

Many volunteers came to help project WHY this year:

Cynthia, Amanda, Carmen, Jon, Cat, Martin, Marion, Christiane, Thomas, Jeanne, Isabelle, Mireia, Simon, Drew, Laura, Shane, Honorah, Debbie, Delphine, Clare, Erica, Zubin, Chantal.

***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://projectwhy.org>

<http://projectwhy.blogspot.com>