

DEVELOPING INDIGENOUS RESOURCES - INDIA

Summary of Activities

December 2012

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH: In a dark time, the eye begins to see..

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The last month of the year was packed with lots of fun and action for our school kids at DIR's School With A Difference- SWAD. On December 9th, Mr.S.M.Sharma, DIR trustee took a group of kids from the basti, including kids from SWAD to Chhatbir Zoological Park in Punjab. The children had a great educational trip combined with fun and food galore. The Lion Safari was the biggest excitement the kids experienced.

On Dec 22nd SWAD children visited Forest Hill Golf Club where they played games and had a nice lunch. The children then distributed 'DIR' towels to NRI golfers. The towels were donated to DIR by Ajit Singh, an NRI from California who visited DIR office at the basti a couple of times recently and is impressed with the work DIR is doing to help people living in a slum improve their health conditions, empower poor women and educate children. Earlier Ajit gave our children and staff a treat by distributing fresh fruit on Dec 11th, a special day for him.

Big bold 'DIR' was embroidered on the towels by Mr.Bittu, owner of S.K.Embroid Art, who decided not to charge for the job when he learnt about the good work DIR is doing. SWAD children confidently walked up to the golfers, shook hands and wished them, introduced themselves and presented them with a towel and a rosebud each- the towels neatly packed in newspaper bags made by the women in the basti. One had to see the confidence with which SWAD kids handled this- they really did DIR proud!

On Dec 24th, Monica sent cakes for a Christmas party at SWAD. Teachers, DIR health promoters, and staff and children from Anganwadi also joined this party. About 15 senior kids from SWAD were taken out on invitation from Cafe 'Books and Brews' to sector 38 for another Christmas party. All these outings that the children had during this month, and others that take place from time to time with support from our donors, provide opportunities to children living in a dismal slum to go out in to a world that is different- clean and big, and we hope it fills their hearts with dreams of a better life. With the education that DIR provides them, they will definitely be better equipped to make their dreams come true.

Another significant and useful activity that took place at DIR was an eye camp at the basti office on Dec 16. The camp was set up with support from Grewal Eye Institute –a premier eye care center in Chandigarh that provides free eye care to the underprivileged through its charitable wing- Roshni Charitable Trust . One of the objectives of the Trust is that there should be no blindness due to cataract as about 80% of the people suffering from blindness in India suffer due to cataract. Unavailability of resources, awareness and education are the prime reasons for this.

At the camp at the DIR, a total number of 206 people from the basti came for a check-up.133 Females, 70 Males and 3 Children. I was wondering if the reason for more ladies showing up was that they do not get a chance to go out of the basti for medical check-ups. This is true, and the same pattern prevails in villages and slums all across the country, says Jogendra, the Manager at GEI when I mentioned this to him. We talked about having such a camp at DIR at an interval of every six months with support from GEI. 27 cataract cases were diagnosed during the camp (17 females and 10 males) 51 people were advised glasses to correct faulty vision and given prescription, 52 advised further examination and testing at GEI and 76 had normal vision.

Patients suffering from cataract will get free surgeries at GEI. Usually the Institute expects the NGO or a Corporate who facilitate the camp to bear the cost of the lenses needed in the surgery. In our case, an NRI couple who read

about this camp at DIR donated Rs 20,000 to GEI to be spent on buying lenses. So almost all the patients will get free lenses and hence the surgeries have started.

We made an attempt to raise funds for DIR during the Annual NRI Golf tournament held in Chandigarh. Mr. Scot Slessor, the Consul-general of Canada in Chandigarh addressed the NRI's assembled for dinner on Dec 21 at the residence of Mr. Ruby Sangha, an NRI from Vancouver. Mr. Slessor, spoke highly about DIR and its CEO Dr. W. Frederick Shaw. He also expressed his admiration for the staff trained at DIR and informed how the services provided to the residents in the basti have improved their health conditions. Anita Hawa from London and Aryana Vala visiting from Australia volunteered to help us collect donations. It was kind on the part of Mr. Slessor, Anita and Aryana to spare time to support DIR and their gesture is greatly appreciated.

For those who missed Sanjay's story on DIR's facebook page, a four year old boy Sanjay had stones in his bladder and his parents brought him to Chandigarh for treatment. However after getting disappointed for not getting any results after a long treatment at big hospitals, and having run out of all their money, they decided to take the little boy back to their village- without the stones having been removed. It was at this stage, on Dec 10 that the case was brought to our notice by Natasha and Sarita. We approached a Urologist friend who runs a hospital in Chandigarh and asked for his advice and support. He examined Sanjay and readily offered to carry out Urethrolithotripsy for free and also waived off all other hospitalization charges. Sanjay was operated upon on Dec 12 and is now a happy and carefree child- as you may see from his pictures. He does not have to bear the agony while passing urine any longer. Sanjay's older brother Birej lives in the basti in a rented room and is a daily wage labourer. He has been spending every rupee he earned in the last few months on the treatment of his younger brother and supporting his parents who are so poor that they do not have money to buy food. Birej stayed determined that he would work his way through in order to support his parents and get his younger brother treated. I must not forget to mention that another friend (who also wishes to remain anonymous like the Urologist friend) paid for Sanjay's medicines.

A report from India would be incomplete without a mention of an extremely unfortunate and shameful incident that took place in Delhi on Dec 16, 2012. A 23 year old girl, who accompanied by a male friend boarded a bus to go home, was brutalized, gang raped and thrown out of the bus. This led to her death on Dec 29 due to multiple organ failure triggered by damage to her brain and body, despite doctors in India and Singapore doing their best to save her. She was brave and she wanted to live. The whole country is seething with pain and anger. Discussions are taking place everywhere about why and how have things gotten this way, what has happened to the social, ethical and moral fabric of this country, why do men treat women the way they do, what changes need to be brought about in safety laws for women, how can the police be made responsible and accountable so that such incidents are prevented in the future, etc, etc. Media personality Pritish Nandy said "I do not know her name. I do not know her religion. All I know is that we are all responsible for her death..."

There is little hope that things will change soon in a misogynist and hypocritical culture that worships women and yet prays for the birth of a male child. Nevertheless, there is a role and responsibility for all of us to play and try to bring about changes. Perhaps DIR can take some small steps and play a role too. We could begin by educating people in the basti to change their patriarchal ways, educate women that they have to stop treating sexual molestation as an inevitable consequence of being a woman or as a minor irritant they have to learn to live with (this perpetuates sexual violence as women learn to tolerate it), teach men to treat women with respect. DIR is devoted to the cause of improving health of the people in slums and developing healthy minds is as important as developing healthy bodies. Please send your donations to DIR as funds are needed to run the existing programs and then there is so much more to be done !

Also visit DIR page on facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/IndiaDIR?ref=ts&fref=ts>) regularly and give us your suggestions **and** please do not forget to tell your family and friends to also support **DIR**.

Jaspreet





1: SWAD children at Chhatbir Zoological park. 2: Lion safari. 3: Eye camp at DIR 4: Sanjay posing for a pic (he loves getting clicked) while other SWAD kids follow him in a train 5. SWAD kids, DIR staff with Mr.CSR Reddy, ADGP Punjab and President Chandigarh Golf Association (third from right), Ms.Anita Hawa, Financial Asset Analyst and Advisor, London (second from left) Birej and Sanjay (first left). 6. Vishal, SWAD student poses after presenting an NRI golfer with DIR towel and a rosebud. 7. Left to right- DIR Health Promoters Sanjeev, Meenakshi, Suman, Natasha DIR Nutritionist, Mr.Ajit Singh, Donor DIR, Mr.CSR Reddy IPS, Sangeeta, HP DIR. 8. Manjeet, teacher SWAD and her students at Forest Hill Golf Club. 9. Children playing games with Santa at Christmas party arranged by Aryana Vala at Books and Brews.

2. NUTRITION

Mrs. Natasha Sharma and Mrs Renuka- DIR-I Nutritionist

During the month of December, a nutrition demonstration on Besan chilla was given through out bustee and Adarsh Nagar. This is a low cost nutritious recipe and made using wheat flour, Gram flour, Spinach, Carrots, Onion, Coriander and oil. The recipe is rich in Calories, Protein , Vitamin-A and Iron. Moreover, the ingredients used are very cheap and readily available to bustee people. Another cooking demonstration on, sweet rice (calorie rich sweet snack) which was prepared, made of jaggery, rice, carrot, and peanuts. All ingredients used for this snack are seasonally available and very nutritious as jaggery is rich in iron, peanuts are rich in protein and carrots rich in vitamin A. Since immunization was going on, we distributed sweet rice to all the kids and pregnant ladies who came for immunization and they liked it very much

This month, topics were covered in nutritional classes, including; protein and PEM, Anaemia, Diabetes, Diet in Pregnancy and Bladder stones. As there is huge variety in seasonal vegetables and fruits in winters so this month we taught people that how these food stuffs protect them from so many health problems like constipation, piles, anemia, acidity, obesity etc.and keeps them healthy for long. At the end of this month an exam was also conducted to test the nutrition knowledge of HPs, in which most of them scored well.

3. MOTHERS' HEALTH

Ms. Meena Kumari - Senior Health Promoter

Pregnancies

On the 1st of December, there were 87 pregnant women in Janta colony and Adarsh Nagar. Of these, twenty-one women delivered their babies during the month. Two pregnant women shifted their residence permanently from the colony, and co-incidentally, twenty nine new pregnancies were reported during the month. Out of twenty-one women who delivered, all had appropriate postnatal examinations within two days of delivery, and three had three or more antenatal checks-up.

Deliveries

Out of twenty-one women who delivered this month, eighteen delivered in the Government Hospital, Sector-16, one delivered in P.G.I, Sector 12, one delivered at a private hospital and one delivered at home. Of the newborns, 12 are baby boys and 9 are baby girls. Twenty deliveries were assisted by qualified professionals, one assisted by local midwife.

4. IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMME

Mrs. Veena Rani – Senior Health Promoter

In the month of December, DIR-I collaborated with the government-run immunization programme on the 5th, 12th, 19th and 26th. A total of 148 shots were administered to children, details of which are as follows:

(a) Measles – 19 (b) Measles Booster -13 (c) BCG -2 (d) DT -6 (e) DPT Booster - 11

SHOTS	1 st Dose	2 nd Dose	3 rd Dose
Hepatitis B	15	17	9
DPT	15	14	7
TT	5	8	-

In addition to these, **Seven** children of age ten were given tetanus shots, and 43 children were given a supplemental dose of Vitamin A.

5. D.O.T.S.

Mr. Sunny Bighania – Field Co-ordinator

On the 1st of December, **Twenty-three** tuberculosis patients were being served medicines at our basti office through the government DOTS program run by DIR. Our basti office is an authorized DOTS centre, and patients from the vicinity get their supply of medicine from our office on a regular basis. During this month, **four** patients completed their treatment and are declared free from this disease. **Five** new patients have been diagnosed having Tuberculosis this month, and has started medication from our centre.

Following is the distribution of these patients in different categories and what each means:

Category I – All those new patients whose pulmonary smear is positive for Tuberculosis Bacilli or those whose pulmonary smear is negative but are seriously ill, or those who have extra pulmonary Tuberculosis but are seriously ill are included in Category I. This month, we have **eighteen** patients in this category.

Category II – Those old Tuberculosis patients who had either defaulted from the treatment at an earlier stage and have re-started the treatment or those who have again contracted the disease after being cured once those who had not been cured even after completing a full prescribed course are included in Category II. This month we have **five** patients in this category.

Mostly young boys of age Eleven to Thirty are diagnosed in category 1

6. INCOME GENERATION

Ms. Meena - Senior Health Promoter

CLOTH BAGS

18 women are now earning some income in this project making cloth bags as gift-wrapping for bottle of wine. Some of them are stitching purses as well as wine bags, and still others are stitching cloth I-Pad covers. This month 314 wine bags, 49 purses, 12 I-Pad and 1 craft bag stitched by the ladies. Each lady makes between 20-25 bags in an average month, but they are getting faster.

We are grateful to all fabric shopkeepers who are donating remnants of fabrics, and we send thanks to all these people who buy our products. The income means a lot to the women in the slum, and the profit goes 100% to fund our Medical activities.

Mrs. Tikki Maya - Senior Health Promoter

PAPER BAG S

"Stop using plastic bags, use paper bags to save our environment". We would like everyone to read and follow that advice. We would like to thank all those shopkeepers who are buying our paper bags especially "My Earth store" in Panchkula and Vrinda our neighbourhood store in Sector 9.

We have different sizes of paper bags to send every customer. If some generous local people want to donate old news paper we would be grateful. And we would be happy to provide jobs for more women if we could get more customers for our products.

Contact us if you live locally and want to donate newspapers or wish to buy the fine recycled bags our women make. Find us at House 45, Sector 8-A, Chandigarh. Phone first to ensure someone is in.

7. EDUCATION

Ms. Sunita Sharma (Head Teacher)

On 7th December Parent teacher meeting was held, where besides parents being informed about the examination of their wards, they were urged to send their wards to school on time. DIR school students prepared for their term end examinations in the third week of the month, results will declared on 4th January. The school is off for winter vacations from 25th December onwards.

On 9th December, 11 SWAD Kids went to Chattbir zoo for picnic. This picnic was sponsored by our trustee Mr. S.M Sharma . Dr. Shaw, Sunita Sharma teacher, 11 school kids and other friends of our host were there. Kids were shown many animals in zoo. They enjoyed a lot and were very happy. Mr. Sharma's staff served fruits, juices, chocolates, muffins and delicious lunch to our kids. Adults and children played so many games with each other and won prizes. It was a rememberable day. Thanks to Mr.S.M.Sharma. We hope more such educational outings for our students in future.

Apart from that 16 kids went to forest hill golf club to welcome NRI Golf players. On 24th December, 25 SWAD kids went to Books and Brew for Christmas party. Amongst other regular activities at the 'School with a Difference', we celebrated Christmas Day and also the birthdays of 11 students. Cake donated by Monica was cut by these children and were distributed to all of them. School closed on the same day on account of winter vacations and will reopen on 2nd January' 13.

8. PERSONEL ACTIVITY

IBS Pannu(Administrative Officer)

Veena, our senior health promoter fell in her home on Dec 28 and broke her tibia at two places. She was operated upon at PGI and a rod has been inserted to fix the bone. We wish her a speedy recovery. Visitors:Mrs. Arvinder Kaur,CDPO, Kharar.Mr. Ajit, from California,USA.Mr. Sushil Maudgil , Ex-CARE. Ms. Anita Hawa, Financial Asset Advisor, London.Ms. Aryana Vala, student from Adelaide, Australia.

Absences:

Name	Paid Leave		Unpaid Leave	
	# Days	Dates	# Days	Dates
Mrs. Natasha (Nutritionist cum Administrator)	3.5	6 th Half day and 26,27 ,28 December full day.		
Mr. IBS Pannu (Administrator)	1	12 th December full day.		
Mrs. Renuka (Nutritionist)	5	21 and 28 half day and 5,6,24,31 full day.		
Ms. Sangeeta (HP)	1	12 th full day.		
Mrs. Banita (HP)	1.5	10 th half day and 31 st full day		
Ms. Sarita (HP)	1	14 th full day.		
Mrs. Sushma (HP)	2	5 th and 31 st of Dec.		
Mrs. Lata (HP)	2	15 th and 16 th full day.		
Mrs. Veena (SHP)	3	17,24 and 31 of Dec. full day.		
Mr. Sunny (Field Coordinator)	1	7 th of month half day.		
Mrs. Maya(SHP)	2	21 and 24 of Dec. full day.		
Mr. Sanjeev (HP)	2	24 th and 28 th full day.	2	27 th and 31 st full day
Mr. Sunil (HP)	2	12,20,21,22 and 23 Full day.		
Ms. Meena(SHP)	3	7,21 and 24 full day.		
Mrs Anita (HP)	1.5	14 th half day and 3 rd Dec.full day		
Mrs Sunita Mukhiya (HP)	1	14 th and 21 st Dec. half day.		
Ms. Suman (HP)	1.0	17 th and 24 th Half day		
Mrs.Sunita Sharma (Teacher)	2	6 th and 12 th full day		
Mrs. Meenakshi Chauhan(Teacher)	0.5	20 th half day		
Mrs.Hemanti (Maid)	5	17,18,19, 26 and 27 Dec. Full day		
Mr. Sarvan (Driver)	1	26 th Dec. full day.		

