

Conversations Today

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About Bhoruka Charitable Trust and its activities



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From the Editor

Dear Friend,

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has said: “To awaken the people, it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves, the nation moves.”

Women empowerment has been a priority for development organisations across the globe over the last few decades. Gender equality facilitates women empowerment. Women have demanded equality with men in matters of education, employment, inheritance, marriage, politics and religion as well. Their quest for equality has set the path for many women’s associations and campaigns.

We can now see women in almost every field: medicine, engineering, IT, audit, architecture and law, to name a few. The rapid pace of economic development has increased the demand for educated female labour force almost in all fields.

Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest sons of India, quoted that, “There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing.” Inclusion of ‘Women Empowerment’ as one of the prime goals in the eight Millennium Development Goals underscores the relevance of this fact.

Thus, in order to achieve the status of a developed country, India needs to transform its colossal women force into an effective human resource and this is possible only through the empowerment of women.

—Marie Banu

Aspiration or ambition: What will renew your energies?



When we talk of ambition—it is about deriving personal advantage, meeting desires related to education, wealth, recognition, power and so on. Aspiration is the longing to make a difference to oneself and many others, through an expression that comes from completeness within.

While the methods to fulfill ambition and aspiration may be similar, it’s the inner state of the “doer” which differentiates if ambition or aspiration is the driver.

This inner state is derived from the wholeness one manifests in following a pursuit. So, ambition is a desire to acquire something to gain wholeness, whereas, aspiration is a journey of “opening-up” because of the unity within.

It is not to say that ambition is bad. Ambition as a manifestation is definitely fulfilling, but is likely to ‘dry-up’ as soon as the goal is met. This therefore leaves the doer with a sense of vacuum and restlessness. On the other hand, aspiration is an expression of possibilities, creating a thriving that not only motivates the doer but also is contagious to bring more people into its fold. This is the pathway to renew energies.

The Longing, by Steve Taylor

You feel restless and uneasy, but don’t know why. No matter how many ambitions you fulfil no matter how many desires you satisfy frustration never seems to fade away contentment always seems to elude you.

But trace your desires back to their source – no matter how they disguise themselves, and even if they’re so misdirected that they take you further away from their goal, at the heart of every desire is a yearning for oneness, or an impulse to escape a sense of lack. You don’t really want power, success, wealth or pleasure – deep down, your soul aches to be reunited with the world.

This is the real source of your frustration – not because you haven’t achieved enough not because you’re being deprived of what’s rightfully yours not because you’re being plagued by misfortune but because you were never meant to be separate, trapped inside yourself.

You’re misreading the signals, choosing wrong solutions, or else devising clever strategies to try to distract yourself from the pain of separation which just reinforce your separation, and intensify your original frustration.

Your deepest drive is to expand outside yourself to slip through the net which is tightly wound around your mind and stretch and spread through space, beyond separateness to embrace the world, to enfold and absorb her vastness and become part of her oneness.

And there’s no need to be timid, or to suppress your desire because the world wants to absorb you too. She feels your absence, senses your unease. She’s reaching out to you, as you are to her. She’s pulling you towards her, with electric currents of desire, with a soft magnetic radiance that shimmers through the space between you. She’s sending subtle signals, chemical messages that say: we belong to each other.

And now you know the real nature of your desire you’ll no longer be diverted or deceived and a time will surely come when boundaries melt away, and individuality dissolves and your soul returns home, and merges with the world – an ecstatic marriage, a timeless consummation in which all desires disappear, and all frustration fades away.

Yours Energetically

Ms. Bhuvaneshwari Ravi is trainer, facilitator and coach of the Positive Energy (PE) program. She is a spiritual seeker with a vision of transforming her own energy state from surviving to being. In this journey she has gathered deep insights and is continuously working towards creating a pathway for more seekers. With years of exposure to spiritual practices like yoga, reiki, and personal development interventions like coaching, she is working in the Organization Development and Leadership Development space. She can be contacted at bhuvaneshwari@teamthink.co.in for arranging Positive Energy training and Coaching sessions.

Rehabilitation for the Intellectually Impaired

Mental health care and rehabilitation is an area sidelined not only in India, but across the globe. On an average, there is one mental health worker per 10,000 people in the world. Our nation, besides the systemic issues like lack of mental health workforce and adequate budgets, has also been battling the misconceptions and social stigma around intellectual disability. Given the socio cultural influences on those affected by intellectual impairment, care for them has also to be customized for every individual.

Madhusudhan Reddy is a Mathematics Graduate, also trained in Speech Therapy to help children who could not speak properly due to hearing impairment. “I wanted to help children, who were like my cousin, to speak properly and study like other children. I could not see them left out as unproductive individuals,” says Mr Reddy, who along with his wife Ms Surekha, established the Sadhana Institute for the Mentally Challenged in Habsiguda, Hyderabad in 1996.

Hailing from the drought prone Nalagonda district in Andhra Pradesh that also faced the wrath of excess fluoride in ground water, different forms of disability like blindness, stooped backs, bone diseases, crooked hands and legs and mental retardation was a common sight to the couple. As a speech therapist consultant from 1988 to 1996, Reddy realized that there were very few institutions that provided residential rehabilitation services for such children, especially girls. Further, there were no such institutional services available in the rural areas. This pushed the couple to start a Special School, which had only 2 students in the initial years. Boarding and lodging facilities in the campus allowed care takers to bond with the children and build a routine that was comfortable for them.

Besides funds, the biggest challenge for Sadhana was to get the community accept the need and utility of such an institution in the neighbourhood. “Our neighbours refused to support us. They were completely against such an institution coming up in the locality. Repeated persuasion and sensitization got them to cooperate with us. When the community accepted the initiative, the next challenge was acquiring a suitable building,” recalls Reddy. The couple lived with the children in the same campus and passionately monitored developments in the children. From humble beginnings in rented structures, the Sadhana institute presently has two special schools (one each in Hyderabad and Tekulasomaram village in Nalagonda district) under its banner.

Open to children, adults and elderly alike (5 years to 65 years), the schools provide special education to the mentally challenged. Those with severe and



profound disability are taken in as permanent inmates, while those with mild and moderate mental disorders, are trained and then mainstreamed. While anybody would adjudge this as a very difficult, loaded responsibility, Reddy simply denies this proposition. “This is a responsible job. Yes, but I wouldn’t say it is difficult. Ensuring safety and security of all the inmates is the primary responsibility, which can be managed efficiently,” remarks Reddy, confident of the internal systems put in place, where inmates also participate. It is therefore not surprising that parents from across the country bring their children here.

Sadhana also has an in-house transport facility for children so that any emergency medical concern like convulsions could be addressed immediately. “We have had challenges all the way. One small mistake is enough to derail all the progress. Apprehensions kept vehicle companies

away. They were bothered about their reputation and the risks involved in moving mentally retarded children and adults. For us at Sadhana, vehicles were a necessity as 40 percent of the residents had medical problems. We couldn’t take chances, therefore had to procure our own vehicles,” he explains.

On knowing about the CSIM’s SEOP programme from a friend, Reddy was at first apprehensive to enrol. “I was not even able to communicate in English. I was not sure if I could complete the course”. But when he was told that the course would expose him to a range of skills which will help administer the centres more efficiently, Reddy could not miss it. “Practical knowledge and theory are at cross roads most of the times, in the development sector. Given this premise, we must prepare ourselves to do the best of what we can to succeed against all odds. Such preparation requires knowledge on

different aspects. The SEOP programme helped me build on what I had learnt from a decade long work. When I did the course in 2006, I did not even have an email id,” quips Reddy. Today, Sadhana has a well-designed website and the visibility created helped Reddy and team seek support from the corporates too.

Efficient utilization of resources at hand is something Reddy appreciates very sincerely. “We planted saplings around our campus and our children are enjoying the fruits now”. It has been twenty years now. Sadhana has acquired its own building, cadre of well trained and committed staff, yet sustainability is a challenge as most of the contributions come in kind. “Raising money for recurring expenditure is very difficult,” Reddy asserts. Most of the children here have single or no parent, thus left with no reliable domestic support for their upbringing. Living together as a family and engaging them in the routine administration of Sadhana has brought a

The SEOP programme helped me build on what I had learnt from a decade long work. When I did the course in 2006, I did not even have an email id.

lot of order in their lives.

Sadhana is supporting more than 250 children through these two special schools. “These are children who were denied the chance to socialize with children of their age and mental orientation, simply because the country has not provided schools tending to such children. Parents, having yet to comprehend what has actually happened to their children and what might happen in their absence, cannot advocate for changes in the system. In such a predicament, institutions like Sadhana have an instrumental role to play,” opines Reddy, who along with his wife, dreams of building a sheltered workshop where special children can be trained to develop, produce a product, which can then be marketed by their society.

—Shanmuga Priya.T

Inspiring Conversations with Shri Ramana Maharishi

A U. P. lady arrived with her brother, a woman companion and a burly bodyguard.

When she came into the hall she saluted Maharishi with great respect and feeling, and sat down on a wool blanket in front of Sri Bhagavan. Sri Bhagavan was then reading Trilinga in Telugu on the reincarnation of a boy. The boy is now thirteen years old and reading in the Government High School in a village near Lucknow. When he was three years he used to dig here and there; when asked, he would say that he was trying to recover something which he had hidden in the earth. When he was four years old, a marriage function was celebrated in his home. When leaving, the guests humorously remarked that they would return for this boy's marriage. But he turned round and said: "I am already married. I have two wives." When asked to point them out, he requested to be taken to a certain village, and there he pointed to two women as his wives. It is now learnt that a period of ten months elapsed between the death of their husband and the birth of this boy.

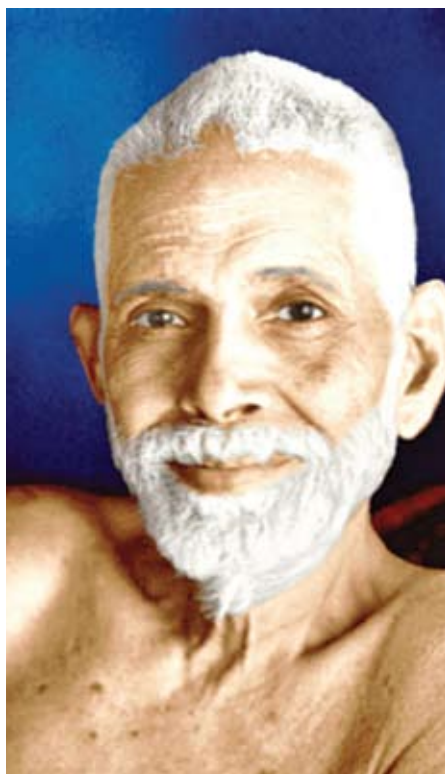
When this was mentioned to the lady, she asked if it was possible to know the after-death state of an individual.

Sri Bhagavan said, "some are born immediately after, others after some lapse of time, a few are not reborn on this earth but eventually get salvation in some higher region, and a very few get absolved here and now."

She: I do not mean that. Is it possible to know the condition of an individual after his death?

M.: It is possible. But why try to know it? All facts are only as true as the seeker.

She: The birth of a person, his being and death are real to us.



M.: Because you have wrongly identified your own self with the body, you think of the other one in terms of the body. Neither you are nor the other is the body.

She: But from my own level of understanding I consider myself and my son to be real.

M.: The birth of the 'I-thought' is one's own birth, its death is the person's death. After the 'I-thought' has arisen the wrong identity with the body arises. Thinking yourself the body, you give false values to others and identify them with bodies. Just as your body has been born, grows and will perish, so also you think the other was born, grew up and died. Did you think of

your son before his birth? The thought came after his birth and persists even after his death. Inasmuch as you are thinking of him he is your son. Where has he gone? He has gone to the source from which he sprang. He is one with you. So long as you are, he is there too. If you cease to identify yourself with the body, but see the real Self, this confusion will vanish. You are eternal. The others also will similarly be found to be eternal. Until this truth is realised there will always be this grief due to false values arising from wrong knowledge and wrong identity.

She: Let me have true knowledge by Sri Bhagavan's Grace.

M.: Get rid of the 'I-thought'. So long as 'I' is alive, there is grief. When 'I' ceases to exist, there is no grief. Consider the state of sleep!

She: Yes. But when I take to the 'I-thought', other thoughts arise and disturb me.

M.: See whose thoughts they are. They will vanish. They have their root in the single 'I-thought'. Hold to it and they will disappear.

Again the Master pointed to the story of *Punya* and *Papa* in Yoga Vasishta, V. Ch. 20, where *Punya* consoles *Papa* on the death of their parents and turns him to realising the Self. Further, creation is to be considered in its two aspects, *Isvara srishti* (God's creation) and *jiva srishti* (individual's creation). Of these two, the universe is the former, and its relation to the individual is the latter. It is the latter which gives rise to pain and pleasure, irrespective of the former.

A story was mentioned from *Panchadasi*. There were two young men in a village in South India. They went on a pilgrimage to North India. One of them died. The survivor, who was earning

something, decided to return only after some months. In the meantime he came across a wandering pilgrim whom he asked to convey the information regarding himself and his dead companion to the village in South India. The wandering pilgrim did so, but by mistake changed the names. The result was that the dead man's parents rejoiced in his safety and the living one's parents were in grief.

Thus, you see, pain or pleasure has no reference to facts but to mental conceptions. *Jiva Srishti* is responsible for it. Kill the *jiva* and there is no pain or pleasure but the mental bliss persists forever. Killing the *jiva* is to abide in the Self.

She: I hear all this. It is beyond my grasp. I pray Sri Bhagavan to help me to understand it all.

"I had been to a waterfall in Mysore. The cascade was a fascinating sight. The waters streamed out in the shapes of fingers trying to grasp the rocks but were rushed on by the current to the depths below. I imagined this to be the state of the individuals clinging to their present surroundings. But I cannot help clinging.

"I cannot imagine that we are no better than seasonal flowers, fruits and leaves on trees. I love flowers but still this idea has no hold on me."

After a few minutes, she pointed out that she had intended to ask Maharshi about death and matters relating to it but did not however do it. Yet Maharshi was reading the related matter in the newspaper and the same topic came up for enlightenment. She left after seeing the cow Lakshmi.

—Source: Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi

Editorial

Latha Suresh
Marie Banu

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INITIATIVE AND MANAGEMENT



Centre for Social Initiative and Management (CSIM) is a unit of Manava Seva Dharma Samvardhani. It is a learning centre that promotes the concept of social entrepreneurship. **CSIM offers training and consultancy to social enterprises – for-profits and non-profits – to facilitate**

them to apply successful business practices and yet retain their social mission. It also offers training and hand holding support to prospective social entrepreneurs and enable them to launch their social initiatives. CSIM operates in Chennai, Coimbatore, Hyderabad and Bangalore.

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CSIM also facilitates Social Audit for social enterprises through Social Audit Network, UK and SAN, India.

For more information, please contact Ms. Latha Suresh, Director @ 92822 05123 or visit www.san-india.org.

Sharing of experiences

HOC - A Government of India enterprise in Rasayani, Maharashtra.

I was the Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Organic Chemicals (HOC) and lived in the company's colony at Rasayani in Maharashtra, about 60 kilometers from the city of Mumbai. I was deeply involved in social service activities and connecting with the employees and their children in schools. This gave me an opportunity to work in this vertical.

One example is that we handed over the school that we managed to Fergusson Society of Pune, a very old educational institution of repute. We provided the teachers with accommodation and we did not interfere with the academic administration. We provided them with top class facilities for them as well as for the school children.

For instance, we provided an indoor auditorium, and a half of Olympic size swimming pool, to develop extra-curricular activities for the children of the employees. During holidays when parents wanted to go on a trip or on a holiday, the children refused to go along with them because they wanted to spend time in the indoor auditorium and swimming pool.

Another great attraction that I provided was to invite people who top sports personalities to live with their family in our guest house and teach our employees' children indoor games. One such personality was Shri. Prakash Padukone, a top badminton player who spent a month with the children. Thus, children used to look forward to spend time with such people than joining their families for a trip outside. Even though employees had Leave Travel Concession (LTC), they could not leave the city because their children would refuse to join them. Their children were more actively interested in developmental activities and this facilitated their all-round development. To this extent, all the school children scored good marks and pursued a good career as well.

This is a way in which you can become socially active though an opportunity given by your own organisation. I call it a neighbourhood. Instead of going out to around 300 kilometers to do some social work, just look around and you will find opportunities.

HOC built a hospital with 50 beds and several resident doctors so that the entire institution and their family members were provided quality health care, most importantly preventive health care.

The children studying in 10th to 12th standards are grown up and independent. So, we involved them in conducting eye camps for the company employee's, their



children, and the neighbourhood people. We selected 6 to 8 villages in the areas around our colony, most of which belong to the fishermen community, Kollis.

The employee's children went to their dwellings and found out how they were dealing with issues related to education and how they were able to manage their eye related problems. They collected data on the type of eye problems that were prevalent so that they could be brought to the eye camp which was held at HOC hospital with the support of doctors from Mumbai.

All the above programmes were managed by the children. Thus, we inculcated the spirit of service amongst the children of employees. The employees were happy and so were their children. Thus, we engaged in social intervention by helping the people in our neighbourhood.

I wanted to make this eye camp as a perpetual camp wherein it should not be conducted for a particular week, but instead throughout the year. This was because we had many people who have

various grades of eye problems that required our attention. We lined up these people so that in 3 years' time we could totally address all eye related problems in our locality.

To get a flavour for this program, we named this after Late Dr.

Kasbekar who was the Former Chairman of HOC. He earlier worked in the defence and was deputed to HOC. Employees held him in high regard as was very inclined to help people. The eye camp was thus called "Dr. Kasbekar eye camp". What is in a name is always a question, but a name can get people to identify themselves with somebody whom they revere.

I approached the board of directors at HOC and got a fairly large sum to manage the eye camp. I invested this into a corpus fund and from the interest amount managed the programme along with some additional donations as an ongoing camp year after year.

The entire programme was managed by the employee's children and the Doctors. There was a surgical theatre,

operation theatre and we brought specialist doctors from Mumbai on specific days for consultations.

We extended the scope to social interaction by using employees and their children engaged in this activity. We could ingrain the attitude of giving in the minds of the employees.

Now, the programme at HOC is continuing and they have completed about 100 villages. We have spoken about this in several public sector forums so that many people can adopt this methodology.

This is a CSR activity when it was not at all heard about. It was in 1977 to 1981 and the company reported these activities in their annual financial report. We also brought in new concepts in our annual reports. We made our profit and loss accounts corrected to inflation, i.e. if inflation is taken into account are we making really any profits? This is because of the constant cost factors in the profit and loss account. For this, we got a recognition from the Chartered Accountants of India as the best presentation of balance sheet amongst the public sector companies in the country.

Another programme that we launched at HOC was providing monthly incentives to SC and ST students to pursue their education and assure them with employment at HOC after they had completed their graduation. There was a reservation system for SC and ST candidates for employment, but none fulfilled the criteria for employment. I therefore made the organisation realise that we have to make the availability of candidates possible through our efforts. Thus, I visited schools in villages that were named after Dr Ambedkar and mentioned about our programme to the students. Students who were pursuing their second year of graduation were adopted and were assured employment on completion of the course. This scheme was praised by Hon'ble Minister Bahuguna and shared our example with many Public Sector Companies. It was a special participatory proactive drive to make availability of scheduled caste people for employment. Around 10 Companies that came under the Ministry of Chemicals implemented this programme.

There was zero attrition rate at HOC as wholesome support was provided to the employees and their children.

—P N Devarajan

Taking Rural To Another Level

An ideal example is the thought that went into empowering the women of Rajasthan. We did this by starting self-help groups within the community

He was just 13 when P D Agarwal moved out of his home in a rural pocket of North India, but only to return around 30 years later. However, when he moved back to a village that was for some part of his childhood, his home, some of the grim realities of life began hitting home. Infrastructure and basic amenities were two of the basic challenges that Agarwal's village faced – issues that needed urgent addressing. Agarwal knew that something had to be done. A few years later in 1962, he founded the Bhoruka Charitable Trust which began by providing financial assistance to the deserving, including educational institutions and hospitals. Although this was a start, the trust itself did not take up projects during this period, owing to limited scope. This carried on until 1973.

It was only the next year that the Bhoruka Charitable Trust adopted what it would go on to call the 'Social Service Approach' to rural upliftment. This period lasted for 11 years (1973-84) when Bhoruka began initiating activities in and around Agarwal's village Bhorugram. "When he was still a boy, this village was called Nangal Badi," explains Dr Surya Prakash, Project Director, Bhoruka Charitable Trust (South), "Eventually, such was the magnitude of work that Bhoruka did in the village, that the village itself went on to be renamed Bhorugram." While being associated with this initiative, BCT also directly became involved in implementation of activities relating to development of rural infrastructure and formal education. BCT spent its own resources during this time with no external funding.

Soon after, the trust began what it called the 'development approach' towards social service. The key here was to encourage development through holistic participation from the community. This entailed including members of the community in decision-making, looking for funding, and helping in the development of grassroot organisations. All this, of course, in the quest to bring about empowerment.

"Over time, Mr Agarwal's sons have continued the tradition of giving back to the community," says Dr Surya, "His youngest son, Dr Ashok Agarwal completed his Master's degree in Public Health from John

Hopkins, came back, began IHMR. In due course, he became a trustee of the Bhoruka Charitable Trust." Even today, the Bhoruka Charitable Thrust has designed what it calls, its major "thrust areas". Surya explains: "This includes water, Sanitation, health and livelihood."

While the Bhoruka Charitable Trust is wholly dedicated to the social-economic transformation of rural and remote areas of India, its focus lies on specific weaker and socially underprivileged groups. The trust helps achieve these ends through physical, social, cultural and economic development of rural populations. "An ideal example is the thought that went into empowering the women of Rajasthan. We did this by starting self-help groups within the community," says Dr Surya, "Women there, hardly come out of the house. Hence, we felt this could lead to income-

While the Bhoruka Charitable Trust is wholly dedicated to the social-economic transformation of rural and remote areas of India, its focus lies on specific weaker and socially underprivileged groups

generating activities like tailoring, and housekeeping." Another challenge that the trust also took up, was the propagation of family planning in Rajasthan. Surya continues: "Another challenge was the education of the girl child. We had to adopt many schools to help in that cause."

Interestingly, BCT has not been left out of the education space. The trust founded the Bhoruram Jiram Das Public School in 1976 to offer children a formal education

that was otherwise, at that point in time, not available to them. Today, BRJD Public School continues to educate young minds, drawing more than 1200 students for its current school year. In 2012, BCT wished to further its potential in the academic field, a decision that gave birth to the Prabhu Dhan Degree College. Twice a month in Bhorugram, the Chogmal Bhoruka Hospital runs eye camps to perform surgeries, and improve the eyesight of more than 100 people per camp. Interestingly, BCT offers these eye camps free of charge and it's only one of several health programmes.

But the cause still remains on women empowerment. In fact, Dr Surya explains how working in women empowerment near Chennai isn't exactly the best example. "We have been working in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. We have noticed here that women are more empowered." But BCT has done in the meanwhile, is spread awareness on HIV. "A lot of this campaign was done with truckers as the audience. In fact we began spreading HIV-AIDS awareness among truckers in 1996." The trust also covers sex workers, migrant labourers and garment factory workers in the rural upliftment department.

Perhaps the greatest reason for pride is simply the fact that BCT is largely self-funded. While Dr Surya does admit that a small portion of the funds comes from external agencies, the funding for these programmes are usually generated from within. At this time, BCT is also looking out for people to become more involved in the work it does. "There are many ways individuals can become involved with Bhoruka Charitable Trust. Professionals looking for a meaningful and fulfilling work environment, as well as interns seeking to gain valuable experience in the development sector are encouraged to apply", says a notice on the company's website. And why not? After all, community development and social integration are the two key points of BCT's strategy. All that's left is to check the scope of involvement and learn more from it in the laboratory of life itself.



K.C Mishra: transforming India through the use of ICT and eKutir

eKutir Rural Management Services Private Limited), a socially focused venture engages in innovating new products, services, and sustainable models of development at the BoP market

KC Mishra (KC) is a veteran social innovator and Ashoka fellow, who has 30 years of leadership experience in areas like rural banking, microfinance, agriculture development, education and technology services. An Ashoka Fellow, KC has many certification and accolades under his belt. He is certified in “Innovative Organizational Model of Farmers” from Graduate Institute of Co-operative Leadership (GICL), University of Missouri, is an honorary trustee to Global Knowledge Partnership Foundation (GKPF), and an Advisor to BoP (Base of Pyramid) Hub.

In 2009, KC founded eKutir (eKutir Rural Management Services Private Limited), a socially focused venture engaged in innovating new products, services, and sustainable models of development at the BoP market. While eKutir is inspired by the Hubli Sandbox model philosophy, and is part of Action For India’s (AFI) Vision 2020 project whose goal is to create 20 Hubli type sandboxes by the 2020, it is different, because all its initiatives are for-profit.

Currently operating out of Odisha. It works in three areas: agriculture (Krishi Vikas), sanitation (Svadha), and social finance (One Acre Venture). It also operates a e-commerce venture called VeggieKart. Broadly, eKutir acts as an incubator that validates ideas, tests them in the field, iterates if necessary, and after validation, packages and releases them into BoP markets.

KC decided to choose the Hubli Sandbox model, because he believes that the Sandbox as a concept is a good initiative, that brings together young talent and ideas, where their ideas can be accepted, and they receive the required guidance. Since the Hubli Sandbox has demonstrated success in scaling, he believes, that following the model was a good idea. “Orissa needs good initiatives to create social impact. Lots of youngsters, have ideas, but need a forum to experiment, and need the help of experts take it to field. When AFI wanted to popularise the Sandbox model, I said yes,” says KC. KC has been busy popularizing the eKutir idea in among individuals who have ideas to solve problems of society.

One of the key things that eKutir offers is the strong mentoring, provided by a network of partners including: AFI, BOP Hubs (Singapore), Ashoka group and Headstart.

They have already incubated two ventures. “Svadha was formed when



“KC decided to choose the Hubli Sandbox model, because he believes that the Sandbox as a concept is a good initiative, that brings together young talent and ideas, where their ideas can be accepted, and they receive the required guidance.”

Garima Sahai resigned her job and wanted to do something in social entrepreneurship. Ekutir had a bunch of ideas. We incubated Svadha together and it is doing exceedingly well now,” adds KC. Svadha is a subsidiary of eKutir that works in the area of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

The idea to form VeggieKart came from linking farmers to consumers. They adopted a new design and co-designed innovations, these designs and ideas in terms of product portfolio, price, packaging and last mile delivery solutions were validated in the last mile lab. It is doing really well, KC wants to replicate in India across the globe: already different organizations in Africa and even US have shown interest.

Through Krishi Vikas Initiative, eKutir offers ICT enabled tools to farmers for soil nutrient analysis, seed selection and farmer portfolio management. In addition, they support local farmers by setting up franchises and local hubs, and provide training to local entrepreneurs on agricultural advice and trade information.

The role of partners is very important at eKutir. They have 32 partners including foundations, think tanks, universities and corporates. Some of them include Unilever, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Intel, Ashoka, BoP Connect, BoP Hub, Grameen, Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA) and Yunus Social Business.

The impact so far has been encouraging. “With agriculture, we are working with 1000 farmers, and by linking farmers to cities, we are encouraging more than 100 micro-entrepreneurs to sell directly to consumers. In sanitation, we are engaged with 126 entrepreneurs and have built 10,000 toilets so far, that impacts close to 50,000 people: We have touched 20,000 individuals through information and communication technology (ICT) for which we won a Facebook innovation award,” says KC.

eKutir is currently welcoming social entrepreneurs and offers full infrastructure support, human resources, legal advice, mentoring, supply chain support and investment help.

Please contact +91 674 255 5550 (<http://www.ekutirsb.com>) for more.

— Nelson Vinod Moses

This article first appeared on the Facebook page of Action for India

Empowering Communities

Dr R Balasubramaniam and his group of friends came together to build a platform that could provide 'rational, ethical and cost effective' medical care to the poor.

A group of students introspecting on the pros and cons of development, with the determination to bring about change in their own ways is not a rare occurrence. As they evolve, their very journey and their reach at different levels have a range of stories that can influence the idea of development and the society's perspective on the same. A group of young medical students from Mysore Medical College did just that in Mysore, beginning with the H D Kote Taluk. Inspired by Swami Vivekananda's words and learning the consequences of trying to treat diseases without considering the socio-economic history of patients, Dr R Balasubramaniam and his group of friends came together to build a platform that could provide 'rational, ethical and cost effective' medical care to the poor. And so was born Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM) in 1984.

Beginning with the collection and distribution of physician samples of medicines to the poor, the team went on to organize blood donation camps and rural outreach clinics around Mysore district. During this course of work, SVYM also came across indigenous tribal groups who had lost almost everything to development projects in the region. Setting up a clinic in the tribal hamlet, SVYM was not contended with the medical service they could offer. "Our concern was for the next generation. The tribes had no reliable source of livelihood. We believed education could lead the way for the generation next, so opened an informal school for the tribal children," Dr Balu recalls.

After about a decade, SVYM established two hospitals that became the epicenter of all its health interventions – Vivekananda Memorial Hospital in Saragur and Vivekananda Memorial Hospital in Kenchanahalli taluk. The former is a multi-speciality hospital providing secondary health care through a combination of allopathy and ayurveda, while the latter is an ayurvedic treatment centre. Mobile Health Units are managed in such a way that each of the 70 tribal colonies is visited once every week. There are also specific programmes focusing on reproductive & child health, community based rehabilitation of the disabled, palliative care and HIV/AIDS control programme, that was documented as a best practice model by UNAIDS.

The informal school eventually evolved into a residential school for the tribal kids in 1990. Alongside the regular state curriculum, the children are taught yoga, meditation and are also prepared to



use safety equipments like fire extinguishers. Interestingly, Viveka Tribal Centre for Learning deputed a team on a rotational basis to follow up on students who do not return after the vacations. In a conscious effort to reinforce tribal values, teachers are sent to the tribal colonies to observe and understand tribal life. Imbibing these observations while teaching helps promote reflective thinking. Only a nominal fee of 10 rupees from a non-resident and 15 rupees from residential students is collected by the centre. Another school, Viveka School of excellence was established in 2002 in Saragur. The two schools together provide 'child centric quality education' for 940 students every year. Scholarships and new family saving schemes ensured that poverty did not prevent children from enrolling in schools.

It was palpable that access to services like health and education, was only a beginning. The communities needed support to further evolve and grow independent of the movement. As Dr Balu puts it, "This is work in progress and we have a long way to go". SVYM, conceived to engage citizens as participants, has grown physically and

also in terms of ideology. Tribal chieftains and youth meet every month to deliberate on issues and identify workable solutions addressing these issues. Every month, SVYM facilitates a discussion on development so that 'members from the community begin to understand what is best for them and appreciate the development they have achieved.

SEEP – Socio Economic Empowerment Programme was initiated in 1989 to ensure sustainable, holistic development of the communities with reliable assets. Basic infrastructure needs were provided and self employment avenues were created. The team got to learn construction engineering in the process, with the community. There are more than 100 women's groups which act as key facilitators in building the communities. The groups meet every month in a different tribal colony every time, so that all families in HD Taluk and adjoining districts get to know about different government and non government schemes they can avail of. Development communication, participatory decision making and right to information reached a new level of functionality in the communities with the setting up of Janadhwani community radio station at Saragur.

SEEP's programmes were founded on the principles of micro level planning so that community members, specifically women and youth, could be groomed as emerging leaders. Efforts began to show results. With an emerging second line of leadership, tribals could take over the administration of SVYM's many programmes, in the place of non-tribals. Organisational leadership is also emerging, creating more space for social

and political leadership too. In the recent Gram Panchayat elections, 8 men and 28 women from these hamlets had contested without spending any money. Students from the residential school have also been trained by the Vivekananda Teacher Training and Research Centre to join the school as teachers. This centre runs a two years Diploma in Education programme, reserving 20% of the seats for forest based tribal students, especially girls.

Dr Balu opines that tribal development is a 'mixed bag'. "Conventional wisdom that subscribes to the simple matrix of human development did not answer all our questions. It is unfortunate that the country's development narrative prioritises economic growth over human and social capital," he elaborates. With the novel thought of sharing SVYM's trust with development and developing education leadership in the social development sector, SVYM established the Vivekananda Institute for Leadership Development in 2002. SVYM also runs the country's only university accredited Master's in Development Management programme at Mysore to prepare a generation of young leaders who can be social change agents for the nation. With new collaborations and new strategies, SVYM has continued to grow in terms of its ideology, physical presence and firmer in values. "Our appreciation of development has matured over the decades," says Dr Balu.

Recipient of WHO Award for excellence in primary health care (2012), ICAI (Institute of Chartered Accountants in India) award for excellence in financial reporting (2009 & 2015), Karnataka State Award for Child Welfare (2008), Nani Palkivala award for civil liberties (2013) and many others, SVYM continues to inspire many in the development sector, continually contributing to the idea of development, as it evolves.

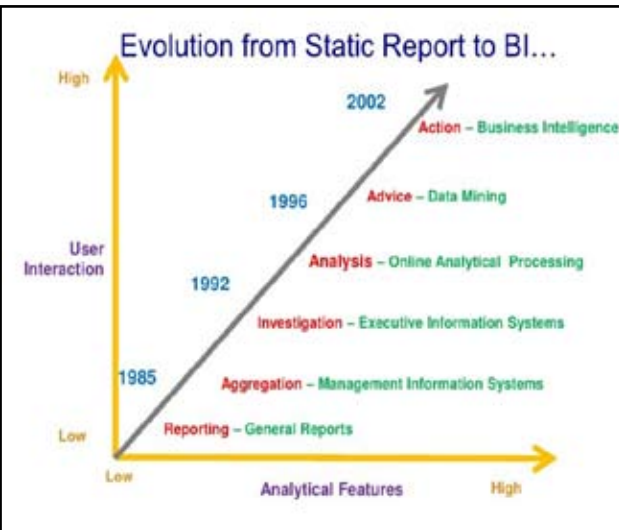
Conscientisation, participation, leadership emerging from the communities are some facets of the developmental paradigm that constantly seeks to expand human and social capital, which in turn can lead to economic and social consequences. Consistently learning from the communities, SVYM's adherence to the aforesaid model made it possible to build a cadre of young minds from the rural, tribal families who have embraced reflective thinking. "Very few of us have the courage to reflect. Reflective thinking must be encouraged. The culture of questioning will bring out a lot of learnings from within, paving the way for solutions to emerge".

—Shanmuga Priya.T

Analytics in Projects – Importance & Relevance

With the evolution of the business world, and the dynamic interplay between the various Gen X, Gen Y and emerging Gen Z understanding projects and the business has become more and more complex. To a large extent the decisions made in projects and business has been based on the expertise and experience of people who hold positions through their ability to read the context or gut feel. Be it in a social organization or for profit, decision making has been person based and not data based. Every decision made is not quantified or qualified based on the data and its analytics.

Over the last two decades the penetration of data based decision making has made a steady progress. Given below is the evolution of how business decision making and using decision support has been maturing. Productivity has been approached through extensive analysis of Business dimensions. Connecting business dimensions to productivity has been existing since Industrial era, but with the Gen Y coming into business decision making process makes it more challenging.



While referring to analytics, Business intelligence (BI) is a critical aspect. It is assumed that by presenting the latest information to the right people at the right time the accuracy of the decision making process is enhanced. BI in general, is a collection of tools and methodologies that transform the raw data that companies collect from their various operations into usable and actionable information. Statistical and Mathematical techniques are used to analyse the extensive data collected on various dimensions in the organization. It could aid in decisions with regard to CRM, marketing, resource optimization, revenue management, resource planning and in formulating strategies, tactical trends opportunities

through data mining and predictive and improving the performance of their business processes to increase organizational effectiveness. Besides discovering trends and opportunities that may improve business objectives, BI often includes mechanisms to rationalize business performance by outlining possible reasons, along with suggestions for business actions.

The typical the advantages of analytics especially in predictability are:

1. To get a higher return on your data investment by obtaining a complete picture of the situation.
2. Find hidden meaning which will help uncover hidden patterns, trends, and relationships and transform these into action.
3. Look forward, not backward by using the data to be proactive, rather than reactive.
4. Deliver intelligence in real time.
5. Advanced analytics tools help to develop hypotheses, test them, and choose the scenario most likely to give the desired results.
6. Mitigate risk through evaluating risk using a combination of business rules, predictive models, and past employee actions, thus minimizing exposure to unforeseen events.
7. Discover unexpected opportunities to respond with greater speed and certainty
8. Guarantee organization's competitive advantage

In social organizations, the BI has been one of least focussed areas. The vision of the organization, the achievement of goals surrounding it has been more important than studying and understanding and evolving how it works and the business sense it makes to sustain the cause. This inability to analyse has many a time failed excellent cause-oriented social organizations to sustain.

While analysing business is important for efficiency, understanding people, their behaviour and actions is equally important. This is the People Analytics (J.M. Sampath et al 2015). Social organizations are largely human capital intensive organizations. The know-how, skills, competencies, strengths and weaknesses that people bring to organization become integral in decision making process.

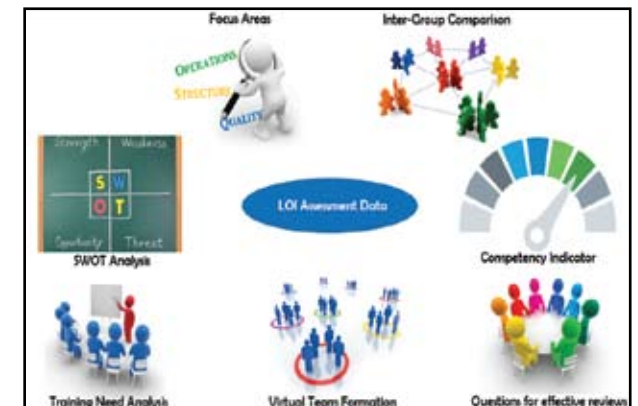
In Corporate, the places where analytics in HR is thought about are in recruitment, workforce planning & optimisation. People Analytics is yet to get to the point where it can connect performance excellence with cultural excellence so that organizations can further leverage its human capital. Training is another area where analytics is used to understand people. Training needs are often identified with a view to enhancing performance or getting tasks accomplished, but not to develop certain orientations or attitudes. Several organizations measure the effectiveness of training programs in terms of competency developed, but only some analyse to what extent the competency acquired has been utilised and

what impact or changes are perceived subsequently. To a large extent training budget seems to be a more important measure than the increase in revenues or efficiency due to the competency acquired from training programs. The metrics gathered from training initiatives only provide the data from which inferences are to be drawn and development measures planned highlight contributions made. But the drawing of inferences is dependent on people's capacity and competency for analytics. There are many methods and approaches to understanding people more objectively and quantifiably. Assessment based approach with built in analytics would surely be one of the best ways to gather data about people and keep a tab on every action and decision.

One example of the unique effort in the people analytics area is Life Orientation Instrument (LOI) that assists in understanding people and enabling efficient project management. LOI developed by Dr. J.M.Sampath (www.discoverself.com) has been in use for the past 25 years with over 100,000 people taken, can assess teams and do People Analytics. This instrument measures over 30 attributes understanding 5 critical orientations of people –

1. Ability to achieve results (Achievement Orientation)
2. Ability to relate to people (Relationship Orientation)
3. Ability to influence people and events (Leadership Orientation)
4. Ability to learn & change (Learning Orientation)
5. Ability to share feedback and develop others (Nurturing Orientation)

Using a multi-rater approach the data from both self-score and others assessment on that self, the instrument throws open data to analyse from the multiple number of combinations and permutations that emerge from the action – perception gap. Using this data one can do many analysis and sample is given below.



There has been a long standing belief that people related things are hard to measure objectively and this has most of the soft skill training included in it. It has got extended to the impact studies in social organizations. There are many institutions that have been doing very good work with under-privileged, villages, needy and poor, children and elderly, in providing education, health and basic necessities and so on but they do not have any statistics or number analysis to quantitatively show the impact of the efforts.

Data with high relevance, reliability, accuracy and objectivity will definitely give higher predictability and better decision making possibility. As a project head and social entrepreneur, there is a strong need to have that analytical bent of mind set and be able to collect, analyse and use appropriate data and take actions accordingly. The essential need of the hour is to sharpen both Business and People Analytics for effective project management and successful execution.

— Dr. Kalpana Sampath and Prathaap B



CII-CSIM Capacity Building Programme for NGOs in Bengaluru

Confederation of Indian Industries, Bengaluru is hosting an extensive two-month capacity building programme for NGOs in collaboration with Centre for Social Initiative and Management. This programme was inaugurated on March 11th, at the Fortune Park JP Celestial Hotel by Padma Vibushan Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah Former Chief Justice of India and Dr. H. Sudarshan Founder, Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra.

“There is a big gap between corporate expectations for CSR and the NGO’s ability to deliver. Corporates have a lot to learn from non-profits and vice versa. The objective of this program is to find a good common middle ground to bridge this gap. CSIM has put together excellent curriculum and carefully chosen faculty, experts in their field, for this program” said Mr Aroon Raman, Past Chairman – CII, Karnataka State Council and Convener – CII CSR Panel.

Justice M.N. Venkatachaliah lauded the CII initiative and emphasized on the need to close the gap in the expectations between the Corporates and NGOs and learn from each other. “There must be an osmosis of good ideas between the two and NGOs must grow up in a hurry.” He emphasized on three important areas in which NGOs need to strengthen their skills – examining their legal options, researching on their accounting systems to capture the services offered, proving their credibility through third party assessments.

Dr. H. Sudarshan stressed on developing Public-Private-People partnerships for sustainability of NGOs and mentioned his success at BR Hills was largely due to the active tie up his organisation had with the Government. “CSR should not dictate the NGOs or work at Corporatizing NGO’s. NGOs should focus on Income generation and Individual Social Responsibility for their sustainability.”

A panel discussion on Government Social Responsibility, Corporate Social Responsibility and Individual Social Responsibility was held with eminent speakers - Dr. Kalpana Gopalan IAS, Principal Secretary to Government of Karnataka, Mr. R. Basavaraju, Grassroots Research And Advocacy Movement (GRAAM), Mr. Murali Vullaganti, Rural Shores, Mr. Rajan Narayanan - India Cares Foundation and Dr H. Sudarshan and moderated by Mr.S.Deenadayal.

The first session of the programme was on ‘Journey of CSIM Alumni Entrepreneurs’ in which Mrs. Akhila Ramesh of Nivasa, Mr. Ramesh Balasundaram of Balutsav, and Mr. Shanmugham of Jude Felix Hockey Association shared their experiences.

Registration for individual sessions are now open. Please visit csim.in for more information. If you wish to enrol, please contact Marie Banu at 9884700029 or Geetika Goyal at 09741002885.



“The joy of giving and saving lives cannot be compensated by monetary benefits.”

Dr H Sudarshan shares with Marie Banu his work with the tribals.

Padmashree Dr. H Sudarshan is the Founder and Honorary Secretary of Karuna Trust. Karuna Trust has pioneered and implemented successful Public-Private-Partnership models with government and corporate to strengthen the primary healthcare and reached out to over 1.5 million people of underserved communities with affordable and quality healthcare. Dr. Sudarshan holds an MBBS Degree from Bangalore Medical College.

Dr. Sudarshan has dedicated his life towards working for the upliftment of the Soliga tribal communities in Karnataka. In 1981, he set up the Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra (VGKK), which has blossomed into a sustainable tribal development program with only a few peers in the country. He has shared his wide experience by volunteering with the Government in his Chairmanship of the Karnataka Governments' Task Force on Health & Family welfare as well as leading a 'battle against the 'epidemic of corruption' as the Vigilance Director of the Karnataka Lokayukta (Ombudsman).

*In an exclusive interview
Dr H Sudarshan shares with Marie
Banu his work with the tribals.*

About your childhood, education?

I was born in a cowshed, as my mother was not allowed to deliver inside the house. I come from this background! My father came to Jayanagar in Bengaluru and I studied in a school here. At the age of 12, I accompanied my father to a village and he literally died on my lap due to lack of medical aid. It was then I decided to become a doctor and dedicate my life for those who did not have access to medicine.

At 16, although I had scored good marks in the board exam, I could not pursue higher studies as I was below the required age by two months. This was because I got a double promotion in school. I worked in a flourmill for one year and earned 110 rupees a day. I saved my salary and paid for the medical college entrance fee.

I read about Swami Vivekananda and I received motivation from him. It was clear for me that I should reach the unreached and save their lives. I joined the medical school, and after my internship worked in Ramakrishna Mission Hospital in the Himalayas. I heard about BR hills, and in 1980, I came here and started my work with the Soliga tribes.

You have been working for more than

three and a half decade with the Soliga tribes. Can you please share your experiences?

I started with curative health – saving people from snake bites, pneumonia. Then I found that the community were prone to many epidemics like whooping cough, hence I engaged in immunization - Community Health. I found that I did not have pills for poverty, so I had to find ways to get access to land and forest resources. This became community development and we have been fighting for the last 34 years for land rights. We finally succeeded two years ago by getting land rights and community rights for minor forest produce.

We were in midst of a wild life sanctuary, and today it is a tiger reserve – a biological hotspot. We call this sustainable development – Biodiversity conservation and livelihood of tribal people. It was a gradual evolution from curative health to community health to community development to sustainable development.

We therefore focus our work in areas of health and education. We started a school with six children in 1981 and two out of the six have become doctorates—one in forestry and the other in social work. These are the first generation learners and several graduates and post-graduates have come up.

We also have income generation activities for them, mainly based on the forest produce and we have a cooperative where the forest produce is collected, processed and sold. We have also promoted a lot of women self-help groups.

What is your concept of tribal development?

Our concept of tribal development or my own understanding is that we should first go and live with the people, understand their strengths—the traditional systems which made them survive—and build on those strengths. This is the basic theory! We need to also understand their core values, culture so that we can promote this in their education system.

I do not believe in bringing them to the so called 'national mainstream' as diversity is their strength. Development should be based on their decisions – self-determination. The tribals can't live in the past as they do not have access to the forest as before. So, they have to change their lifestyle a little. They now have land for cultivation. Within these limitations, we need to see how best

we can preserve their value system, family system, and other social systems to bring about development.

About Karuna Trust and its programmes?

Jadaya, the first doctorate from the tribal school is now the President of Karuna Trust. Many tribal people themselves are part of VGKK and they are taking care of it. We also have income generation activities to sustain tribal development as we were depending on grants and donations. Now, we have Gorukana, an eco-tourism project which is managed by 25 tribal youth. The guests are taken on a trip to the forest and are exposed to the tribal life. All the profits from this social enterprise goes to the tribal development.

All tribals have got their land titles and participate in the Panchayat Raj system. We had a Soliga woman as the vice-president of the Zilla Panchayat, we also have women heading the Taluk and Graam panchayats.

We found leprosy spreading in the tribal areas in the foot hills. Whatever the tribals had was recent infection, hence we wanted to work on leprosy eradication as it was hyperendemic in Yelandur taluk. Thus we launched the Karuna Trust! We eliminated leprosy in Yelandur taluk and we found that there was a particular type of epilepsy called 'hot water epilepsy' as named by Dr. KS Mani, Director of Nimhans, wherein when one takes a hot water bath they get seizures. We conducted an

epilepsy control programme for the rural people living in the entire Yelandur taluk and brought it under control by cost effective intervention.

We found that the government also had its own infrastructures—primary health care centres in the areas where we were working. I met the Secretary and asked him to partner with us instead of duplicating efforts. That's how the PPP came and the government agreed to give two primary health centres in the tribal areas which we manage. At first, the government granted a 75% funds and then 90% funds for this project.

After launching this model in South Karnataka, we have now moved to Northern Karnataka as well. Arunachal Pradesh government invited us and this place is more difficult than the BR Hills. Even today, most areas do not have electricity or telephone connectivity. We took up the challenge, and now we have 11 PHCs in Arunachal Pradesh, 11 in Meghalaya, and 3 in Manipur.

Therefore, we started our work in Veerapan's territory and then we worked in Naxalite areas of Karnataka and Orissa, and we worked in insurgency areas in the North East. So, we take up very remote areas and places where there are conflicts and difficult situations to render health care.

At present, we are reaching out to about 1.5 million people and through our primary health care, taking one indicator of infant mortality rate; we have prevented 550 infant deaths in the last year's intervention.

Can you share a quote of yours to inspire our readers?

The joy of giving and saving lives cannot be compensated by monetary benefits. There is a great joy in giving, and that is what I have realised. One of my classmate, an oncologist who earns more than a million dollars, once said to me: "You are leading a much more meaningful life."

