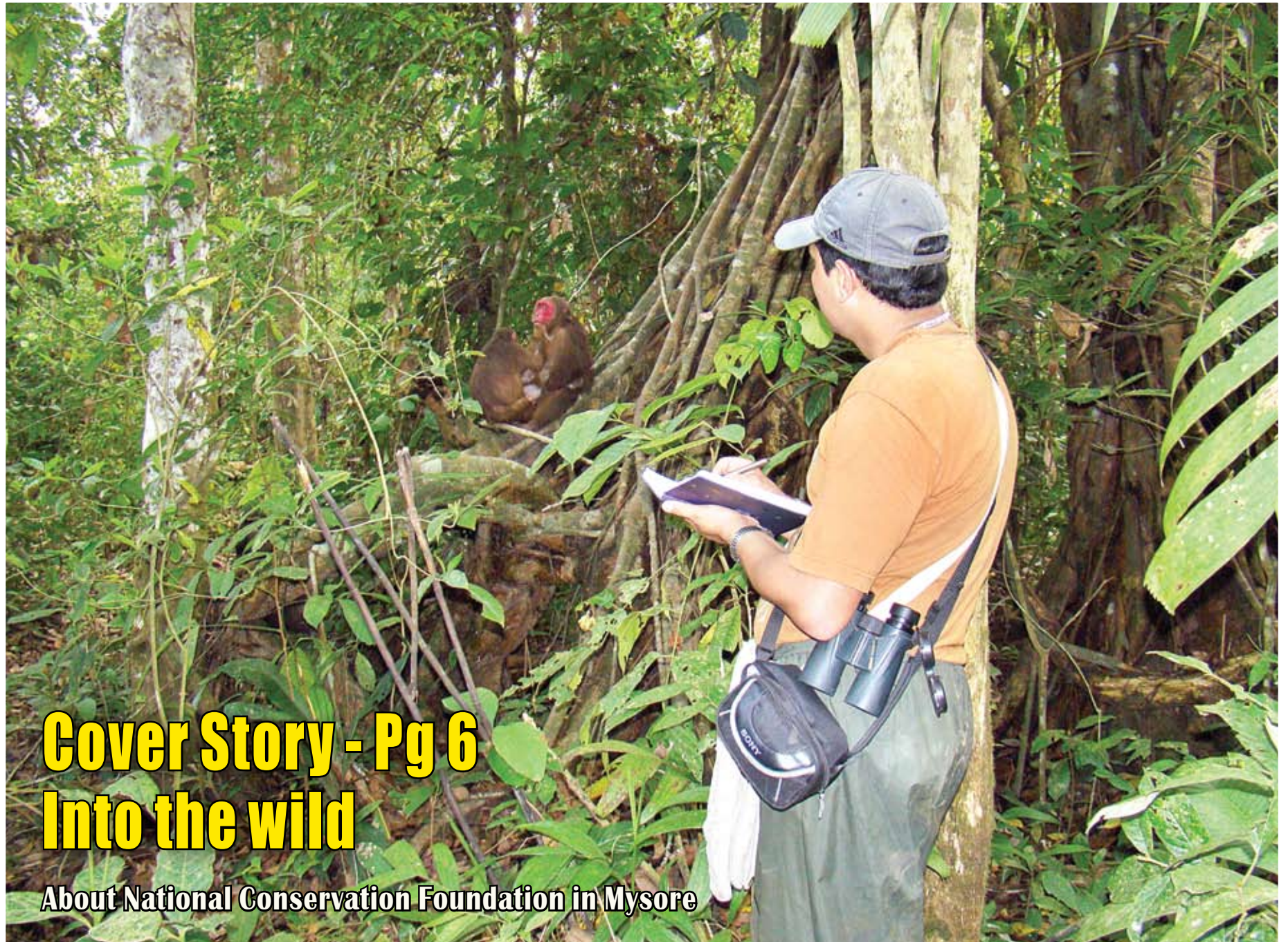


# Conversations Today

Your journal about the world of NGOs and Social Enterprises

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About National Conservation Foundation in Mysore



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journalism education is to sensitise  
the future generation of journalists  
to the reality of India."**  
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Mr. Sashi Kumar



# From the Editor

Dear Friend,

Earth is the only known living planet because of its special environment and ecology which are life-supporting. India has 16 per cent of the world's population with only 2.4 percent of its land area. There is much pressure on our natural resources including forests. In these times of increasing consumerism and nature-hostile activities, the forest-cover is depleting and deteriorating very fast. Protection and conservation of forests and wildlife are therefore essential to maintain earth's health and environment.

Forests are one of the most valued resources and play a crucial role in climate, water and soil conservation. They are the natural home of animals, birds, reptiles and insects and supply timber, medicines, and raw materials for several industries.

The increasing depletion and destruction of wildlife is a source of great concern. Wildlife, like we human beings, need food, water, and shelter. Destruction of forests, wetlands, marshes, ponds, grasslands etc. eliminates their sources of food, water and habitat. As a result, the wild animals come out at night in search of food in the villages and attack human beings and domestic animals and fowls.

It is therefore essential to conserve and protect our environment, develop forests and conserve wildlife. This has become imperative and an urgent requirement as against the over-exploitation of national resources in the name of development. Environment education and awareness must be given top priority. NGOs should be involved in social forestry and regeneration of degraded forest lands.

Conversations Today had featured several environmentalists earlier. This month, we have yet another interesting cover story that talks about National Conservation Foundation which promotes knowledge and conservation of India's wildlife heritage.

Happy reading!

Marie Banu

# Social Accounting & Audit



**S**ocial accounting and audit will help the NGOs more than anybody else, because it is a system to be built by the NGO with their limited staff or with outsiders. It is a system which will come into operation every year or every two years, in a cycle which they can manage. It will give the output of the NGO, not profit output, but impact output. What it aims is to boil down all social work to quantitative and qualitative numbers expressing the impact. It is through measurement of outcomes and outputs.

The cycle of work undertaken in the social audit process in NGOs will help in generating vision, mission and objectives. Whether they are fulfilling it or is there a gap between what was expected and actually happening. By taking the cycle of accounting, auditing, outcome, output and impact in another period and so on, will show whether it is edging towards collapsing the gap or is static or whether it requires any more activities to address the objective to get the intended impact. Since it is self-generated scheme for NGOs by themselves for themselves, it becomes easier for all stakeholders to understand what they are attempting and giving them a presentation on what has been achieved. This is

generally absent in most of the NGOs, and can be exceptions to it.

We need to train the NGOs to create a framework of Social Audit and initially facilitate to write down their vision, and how to break down the vision into a mission in a time specified objective and quantifiable targets. It also means vision with values, what they will do and what they will not do; what values they will cherish in context of their NGO activities. This is the first framework.

The next framework is how the mission is broken down into objectives, and this is broken down into activities. Activities are mostly carried out by the NGO staff or what I call by people at the base of the pyramid.

Activities can be one or there can be several activities for one objective. This depends on how complex the objective is.

Next step is to measure the output of the activities and this you measure what the qualitative change is made to the NGO or the stakeholder or the beneficiaries and what impact it has made.

Finally, the impact on society's role. For example, if you are working in the field of visual impairment, which is a community in itself, and are a group of people either in one geography or pan India. Each of them have got their own problems arising

out of the impairment and is unique in its own way. It may not be similar to another location. A study on the society, the individual who are the beneficiaries and the stakeholders would be assessed on the impact created by the NGO.

This is called framework which has to be written by the NGO so that they own it. They collect data on various activities, and outputs, both qualitative and quantitative and record it. They go to the stakeholders and share their mission, vision and what activities has been conducted in the past years by taking them into confidence. Similarly, we need to ask their staff if there is any change required in the organisation and whether they need any training.

Meeting key stakeholders should happen every year. The key stakeholders may vary, with changes in Trustees and the management. But, you need to interact with them periodically so that there will be appreciation for the output and outcome of the social work. It is shared with all people who are involved in getting it done.

Social accounting is a very useful process internalized by the NGOs for the NGO, for its vision and mission. It is a tool for all. Starting with specific NGOs but enlarging into being a tool for all.

Social Audit Network UK is collaborating with Social Audit Network India and bringing in a new way of self-regulating and self-managing NGOs without having government to control it. It will be real assistance to government in spreading the money and allocating them into areas fruitfully and efficiently in an accountable manner.

People who are qualified as a Social Auditor by Social Audit

Network, either in UK or India, come and listen to the presentation made on the social accounts and raise any queries that they might have. They also suggest ways of improving the activities and give their comments on how effectively the social organisation impact has been achieved.

It gives a third party examination instead of self-regularization and we need to have people to do it. I also learnt that SAN India is collaborating with SAN UK is creating an auditing manpower by organising Master Programs to train and certify social auditors.

I wanted to understand the concept of social accounting and audit and offer my services as an auditor, hence I underwent this programme.

—P.N. Devarajan



# Get ready to help

*“Through field exposure, professional acumen, and real life case studies CSIM helped us to understand and realise our future plans.”*

**H**ealth has become a challenging phenomenon, particularly for the poor for whom access and utilisation of services is extremely difficult, owing to the systemic inequities and ‘asymmetry of information’ that has been sustained over the years. For a simple domestic worker who takes her child to the hospital, every word uttered compounds her fear. It is hard for her to decipher what is wrong with her child. Most of all, poor find it difficult to comprehend instructions on the prescription and follow up on checkups. Burdened by labour routine and the lack of confidence to approach hospital staff, most people from this section of the society often find themselves lost amidst the bustling hospital crowd and procedures, thus leaving with more number of questions than they came in with.

Ms Nandineeshree is well aware of the repercussions of such a predicament. “There is a huge gap between affordability and the actual cost of health care services. Further, poor are burdened by the information gap that determines the impact of the services received. They do not understand what neuro, cardio, and nephron unit means. Hospital staff is busy with their chores that they are not able to help them with simple instructions. Having children die because of all these issues disturbed me a lot,” says Nandineeshree.

A typical Chennai girl, Nandineeshree completed her Post graduation in Science from Loyola College. She came to know about Ekam during her volunteering days and spent a lot of time in medical support activities that was coordinated by the organisation. From explaining prescriptions, out-patient timings, diagnostic procedures, directions to reach specialisation units, she also coordinated Ekam’s support services like distribution of nephrology aids and free medicines.

For children who missed school due to operation or other treatment procedures, Ekam also provided Montessori training. “Patients are not aware of the number of out-patient units in the hospital they visit. The imminent crowd in some units naturally consumes the time that could be spared for patient-doctor interactions,” she laments.

“I engaged in every role that Ekam offered and loved my work here. I was awarded ‘Best Volunteer of the year’ trophy in 2011 by Chennai Social Service organisation. After my studies, joined Ekam as a full time staff,” she informs.



As a full time staff at Ekam, Nandineeshree had more scope to explore her roles and responsibilities. She became the Chief coordinator at the Institute of Child Health hospital and supervised the ‘May I Help You Desk’ activities, Youth Wing programmes, camps and also the plantation drives which introduced medicinal plants around hospital premises. With her support, Ekam took the responsibility of organising Balwadi camps wherein patients were guided to approach the nearest government hospital.

Nandineeshree also served as a Welfare Officer and followed up with children who had undergone treatment at the hospital. Further, she supervised volunteers from other city colleges while moving from one role to another at Ekam.

Inspired by Ekam’s work and CSIM’s course - Post Graduate Diploma in Social Enterprise Management, she established her own NGO in 2014. “CSIM’s course in Social Enterprise Management helped me

to identify what I wanted to do. The network that I built in the process was priceless. There were people from all walks of life in my batch and their positivity was a driving force for me to lean towards my vision,” shares an excited Nandineeshree, who admires the bottom up approach inherent in all procedures at CSIM and how it grows into a value that students wish to imbibe in their own institutions.

Nandineeshree feels that the continuous hand holding offered by CSIM gave her the confidence to dream of her own NGO. “Through field exposure, professional acumen, and real life case studies CSIM helped us to understand and realise our



future plans. I also learnt the dynamics and significance of body language,” she adds.

Nandineeshree launched ‘Aayartham Ayudha Foundation’, meaning ‘get ready to help’ in 2014. She wanted the foundation to provide skill development programmes and services for orphan and differently abled children. While education is widely recognised and provided by different players, skills on the other hand, is not yet an exclusive focus area in the development sector. Given that skill acquisition is in itself not accessible and affordable for many, underprivileged children are doubly discriminated in this front.

Nandineeshree wishes to alter this situation. Run completely

on a volunteer basis,

Aayartham Ayudha foundation has shown a lot of progress in its first three years. The foundation’s networks have built the visibility their workshops enjoy today, but there’s still a long way to go,” she says.

Nandineeshree wishes to see orphan and challenged kids live their dreams – both in personal and professional lives.

—Shanmuga Priya.T





# Social Enterprise Skill Lab



**C** SIM launched the Social Enterprise Skill Lab at Madras School of Social Work on 2nd August 2016. Dr Saundarya Rajesh, Founder - President, AVTAR Group, was the Chief Guest for the event.

29 students have enrolled for the first batch and the training commenced on 3rd September 2016. The Lab provides exposure visits to social enterprises and offers practical learning on social research.

Social Entrepreneurship Skill lab is a unique concept which has been launched by CSIM. The highlight is the orientation to social entrepreneurship that is offered to the college students. Students are exposed to a breadth

of social issues and case studies of social entrepreneurs who have started innovative social enterprises to address these issues.

This programme helps to build the capabilities of prospective social entrepreneurs in relation to their personal development, business skills, social impact and networks. They will be oriented to idea of working on the social impact of projects which would be very useful in their prospective place of work.

CSIM aims to train 50-75 students/aspiring social entrepreneurs in the current year. There are around four students in the first batch who had expressed a desire to start a social enterprise and many who wanted to work

in social enterprises. A few students have direct experience of the social issue they aim to address whilst some are exploring the opportunities to become a social entrepreneur.

Two MSSW staff are being mentored on SE so that they are capacitated to handle the SE Skill lab after CSIM phases out. At the end of the training, project proposals would be reviewed and 2 projects will be incubated by the SE Skill Lab.

**CSIM proposes to groom at least 2 social entrepreneurs and make them incubate Social Enterprises while studying at Madras School of Social Work.**

***“Personally, the independence of an impact organization from donations and charity to sustain it and the entrepreneurial outlook the social entrepreneurship applies to the social issues in our society made me to enroll for the course to learn it much more in detail”***

**– Remigius**



***“I have enrolled in this course to know about the social entrepreneurship concept in detail as my goal is to start a Social enterprise in the future”***

**— Raj Kumar**

***“I came to know about Social entrepreneurship as a concept through a seminar held in our college and its key difference of taking the impact to a larger scale compared to normal. This was the key driving factor in me for enrolling in this course”*** – Karthika



# Nruthya Bodhini – Musings of an Artiste

## 01-Stepping into Dance school

**W**e all say art and culture were a part of our existence since the beginning of culture. That is the way our right brain is still in existence haha ; also, that is how the cultural nuances are passed on from time to time. But there are not many sharing on what the art brings to life. We have biography and conceptual, experiential frameworks written, yet few on a reflective note of what the artiste truly got from being with the art; the life education processes that it builds into self and the kind of values that are instilled experientially for the artiste simply by learning and living the art. No doubt over the last 70 years, with the logical brain being in action in schools, learning, storing and retrieving in every exams churning out marks after marks... slowly art has been relegated to extra-curricular activities and educational institutes have not treated them as part of the main curriculum. A career in music and/or dance has been seen as a student being a failure in main stream taking up alternative ways to live life or it is seen as something second grade. But successful artiste who become popular movie stars or great entertainers have always been applauded. It is only for appreciation, but never accepted if a child says I want to be a dancer or an actor. Yet, being with the art is as tough and builds as many perspectives into anyone that a main stream education can do. Here is the story of Sadhana, whose journey with art and her value based learning that stand her in good stead in all her achievements through life. From ability to dream, perseverance, team work, leadership, let go, integrate, emotional consciousness, decision making, play with numbers... she learnt it all, experientially, living each day with the art.

Come, let us join the little 8 year old on a Sunday morning playing outside the house all by herself...

"Sadhana, Sadhana! Come inside. How long will you be playing outside? Come and drink up your milk", shouted Amma in a loud voice as usual. "Uh! What a disturbance to my creative little



drama", thought I. It has been a hour of bliss for Sadhana standing near the gate and playing her favourite princess drama. She, as the most beautiful princess ... no no dancing princess, who was the daughter of the greatest king in South Bangalore. Being born in the middle class family where both parents worked in government clerical jobs, there couldn't have been happier moments than fantasy of being the princess. "Appa, why weren't you born as a king? See, if you would have been the king, I would have been the princess and I would have been the best dancing princess. All because of you now I'm not a princess but just an ordinary Sadhana". "Who says so my dear, you are always my princess. Tell me, what you will do if you were the princess?" asked Appa very lovingly. He never got upset with me and would never stop me from dreaming in life. I could tell him I want to be so many things from princess to actress to airhostess. He will just laugh. "Oh! If I

was the princess I will dance in a big hall, I will make all happy; I will clean up this whole area and give lot of money to all, everyone will be smiling, no pain and all will be friends with me. So nice it will be Appa, what do you say?" He just laughed, but his heart and eyes said, I totally believe my girl will grow up to be someone someday!

*How many of us allow our children to dream, to live in a fantasy that they create and are willing to write their destiny? How many of us allow them to live their life?*

Time passed and two years later tragedy stuck in Sadhana's life. She lost her most favourite companion, her grandmother all of a sudden. That was the first death experience and she couldn't simply understand why her grandmother died. She was the only child of a working middle class family and so doted by the grandmother. Now, no one to take care of her when she came back from school and on holidays,

she felt depressed and lonely. She forgot to smile, play and withdrew falling sick with running nose and fever. Then, one day a neighbour mentioned to Sadhana's mother that her daughter is going to an Indian classical dance class nearby. It is a new class and the teacher is an accomplished certified dancer, a young bride, who has relocated from Chennai to Bangalore after marriage. That night Amma couldn't sleep. She thought it was the best idea that she could find to get Sadhana back to being the cheerful, lively, dreamy girl.

"Amma, where are we going? Tell me" pestered Sadhana. "Tell me, tell me, tell me". "You are joining a dance class, where Revathi is going". "But Revathi said I am so chubby I won't be able to dance at all?" Sadhana asked puzzled. "Don't make your own assumptions. Let us first go and try out for some days. There is always a way out for everything we want to do. Maybe you will become thin because you will dance" Amma curtly replied not wanting to talk much. She decided said, "Look here, I have spoken to the teacher. After school you will go to dance class and be there until 5.30pm and I return back home from office. That was you will not need to be alone and you will be safe". Amma looked like she had solved a problem.

*Assumptions and Conclusions rule our life and we are not ready to explore with absolute openness. For every problem on earth there is a solution. Also, problem itself may hold a pathway for learning and thereby solution. How much do I explore?*

Well, that is how Sadhana landed up in the dance school. Not so much to dance, but to be engaged, forget the pain of losing the grandmother and having a place to stay till her mom was back.

*Strange are ways of life. It seems like a logical solution, but it is predestined in the web of life, with a hidden hub for myriad number of relationships to connect, learnings to be collected and purpose to blossom one day. How many of us think every experience has a connection to life purpose?*

*To be continued....stay connected...*

—Dr. Kalpana Sampath



# Into The Wild

*National Conservation Foundation traces its origins to a group of students who met as classmates at the wildlife institute of India at Dehra Dun, which back then, was the only institute that awarded a Masters degree in Wildlife Science.*



India's fragile ecosystem couldn't have found a better friend in need than the National Conservation Foundation. For two decades now, the foundation has been actively engaged in the use of science to conserve wildlife in India. Through its exploits, the group has been using science to aid it in the process of conservation. Based in Mysore since the foundation was set up in 1996, NCF India has also done its bit to promote knowledge and conservation of India's wildlife heritage. NCF traces its origins to a group of students who met as classmates at the wildlife institute of India at Dehra Dun, which back then, was the only institute that awarded a Masters degree in Wildlife Science. Spurred by their understanding of wildlife and ecology, and the threats to the same, these four idealistic individuals felt the need to begin a conservation programme for wildlife. With a collection of 500 rupees each, the organisation started with a grand corpus of just Rs 2000.

Over the years, in the pursuit to promote conservation of wildlife, NCF India has also gone a long way in understanding the survival needs of endangered species. Prime examples in this case are snow leopards and elephants. These exploits have also opened to the door to not-so-well-known species of corals and spiders. "Without this basic knowledge, there's no way of knowing or understanding what can be done to address the threat," says Pavithra Sankaran, Development Manager, NCF. "In the case of the snow leopard, it's interesting to remember that for centuries, people have lived and co-existed with the snow leopard as part of the same landscape. However, things have begun to change in the last 30 or 40 years, because people's relationships with their landscape have begun to be influenced by new forces. Conflict between people and wildlife has existed in the background but it has taken on a new dimension in recent years: the economy is changing and people's relationship with the landscape and its wildlife too are impacted. So, in our efforts to conserve wildlife, we have seen the need to understand society in order to understand wildlife. So, a large chunk of our efforts lie in understanding the relationships that people have with the species."



That is perhaps why the organisation's research programmes have in large part, dealt with how humans have had an impact on wild species and the ecosystems that host such creatures. It's this knowledge that is put to use while the organisation thinks up conservation strategies that are locally-appropriate. In conforming to this methodology, NCF also ensures collaboration with the local demographic who are directly dependent on natural resources. Therefore, promotion of wildlife conservation also brings about a sense of sustainability through livelihood safeguards and overall social development. "We've always studied people in order to understand society and wildlife," says Pavithra, in continuation to her earlier point, "It has taught us that we can't do much to conserve wildlife without the support of the local community. And by support, we don't mean distant acquiesce, we mean active involvement where we put

in place an intervention in collaboration with the local demographic and step away. Financial inputs may be needed, but ownership of any conservation lies with the people belonging to that landscape." Interestingly, the working principle of the organisation lies in its federation of programmes. While each of NCF's programmes is headed by a programme head, who sets goals for programme itself, of note is the concept of each programme being autonomous and independent of the other. "The very nature of the work that we do demands that this autonomy is exactly what our programmes ought to have. So, in a sense it's independent and autonomous by design and not by grant," says Pavithra. She continues: "Our Programmes are the core of our work. And this autonomy that they are bestowed with translates into many things in practical terms: programmes for instance raise their own programme funding. And because funding is raised

on its own, the programmers are free to determine what they want to do with the study; whether they ought to go deeper, or replicate a certain model platforms, as the case may be."

This area of autonomous research programmes has NCF focus on multiple areas of independent research. Research at the organisation stretches across geographies like the Himalayan region, or the oceans. It has dealt with subjects like hornbill biology, interactions between rats, seeds and rainforest trees, tree phenology, understanding patterns and processes in vegetation recovery following shifting cultivation being some of the key study areas. The work that the organisation has done in the past involves monitoring threatened wildlife, exploration surveys and management of reserves, to name a few.

While on the face of it, funding for NCF does not seem to be much of a hassle — the organisation has funders from the likes of The National Geographic Society and the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund to other big names like Attica Zoo in Greece, Chester Zoo in the UK and the Department of Science and Technology in New Delhi, India — Pavithra says that this isn't completely true. "We have never had trouble raising money for conservation," she says, "But the bigger challenge is to raise funds for fundamental research, because fundamental research is something that is under-funded, today. And given the fact that the focus and scope of most of this research is in locations that may not exactly be closer home, the function of distance has served to act as a deterrent in assigning priority to the research itself, on the fund front."

Going forward, the organisation plans to continue growing organically, as it has through the years. "At the end of the day, we are looking for creative, energetic people to join us," says Pavithra. "On our part, we will provide them the space and resources to grow since we firmly believe that good work can only be born out of passionate, invested people." She adds: "For instance, if someone comes to us and says 'I'm passionate about the gharial and I want to do something for it; here's the track record for work I've done so far', we'll be happy to provide that individual with resources and space."



# The Pencil man

*Education is the best investment for mankind's future and everybody must enjoy this as an entitlement.*

**S**ocial Services is a mixed bag. Where one contributes not only depend on their strengths, but also their limitations. The sooner one gets to realise this, the sooner will they be able to begin their cycle of contribution to the community. Mr Venkatraman Krishnamoorthy realised this.

Known as the Pencil Man, Venkataraman is a Chartered Accountant from Mumbai who moved to Dubai in 1992. As years passed by, he founded his own software services company. "When I turned 50 in 2008, I felt contented. I had earned and saved for my children, and lived my dreams. I wanted to do something for the community. I visited homes for the aged to figure out if there was anything I could do for senior citizens, but soon realised that this was not my cup of tea," says Venkataraman.

"I could not see people in pain, whether it was children or older people, as it disturbed me very much. I therefore decided to focus on something that needs many hands—Education," he explains.

Education is the best investment for mankind's future and everybody must enjoy this as an entitlement. However, Venkataraman was bothered by the inequities creeping in different forms. Stationeries used by his children who outgrew them were acknowledged as a 'luxury' for underprivileged children by one of his friends. Within a month, Venkataraman managed to collect 80 kilograms of pencils/colour pencils and distributed it to 50 schools in India.

"Lack of proper pencils or even colour pens discourages children. Their yearning distances them from the learning process," he says. Cognizant of the fact that surplus led to wastage amongst the financially well-off sections, he decided to collect and route them to the needy. His approach did address some critical gaps in the system. "There are children who have only two sets of uniforms provided by the Government Schools. An extra pair of uniform means a lot to them. An extra notebook means they can practice writing more efficiently; and extra pencils mean they can write more. While stationeries have become a lucrative business, wastage of extras or unused stationeries meant a lot more to me," he says.







Venkatraman began collecting all extra stationeries, books and other utility items for school children from the two countries. Education4all took shape in 2009 and was solely managed by Venkatraman's efforts. From the thought of committing an hour a day for the community, Venkatraman engages himself full time in coordinating awareness programmes and collection drives in schools, consulates and other places. Simple messaging services helped him facilitate interested individuals manage the collection and deliver things at his place. From stationeries, he moved on to collect uniforms, books, board games, and toys too. With his support, libraries have been set up in few Government Schools in India. Connecting with one or two NGOs in 15 states in India, education4all is now active in more than 120 government schools across India, 44 in Tamil Nadu alone. Now that these efforts take care of providing the essentials, Venkatraman feels that funds allocated for such expenses could be utilised for other necessities. From 2016 onwards, he has started collecting sports items and school infrastructure items like benches and chairs.

"Education4all is not country specific, nor is it limited by the network of people



known. The organisation website connects with all interested individuals and those who wish to help schools in their locality. They just have to get in touch with us," insists Venkatraman, whose vision has helped reach out to 25,000 children across India and Africa.

He is now gearing up for the largest collection drive in Dubai for refugee children. During one of his school visits in Tamil Nadu, Venkatraman found that the cost of milk bought from open markets limited food expenditure in a school. He then pooled in resources and gifted cows to the school. Local villagers were engaged in maintaining the cows and milk

was bought by the school at a subsidised price. Twenty families living around the school are now above poverty line and empowered with a livelihood.

Education4all also began to focus on quality of teaching in government schools. Volunteer teachers, housewives and interested students from Mumbai and Dubai spend an hour a week to teach children in remote schools in Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh, through skype. Teaching through skype has also made it possible to teach music and nutrition to children in these locations.

From stationeries to infrastructure, and

quality of teaching to learning – education4all has intervened in all these fronts, making a remarkable impact on the quality of education in government schools. Recently, Venkatraman has introduced the 'gyanavahanam' which is a mobile van with laptop and internet connectivity manned by a science teacher who visits schools on a rotational basis to promote visual learning.

His principle is very simple—"Education is meant for everybody. There are no conditions - whether background, terrain of habitation or access to learning aids; one must limit one's entitlement to education."

Venkatraman strongly believes that goodness spreads and that ideas must not go unattended. Only an initiation is needed. What one starts with and what one ultimately manages to do – the journey between these points is the experience we seek. He is also categorical that ideas must not be restricted to the people behind its initiation.

"Anybody can execute an idea in his or her own way. What matters is execution for the goodness of all. After all, doing good is an addiction too," he smiles.

—Shanmuga Priya.T

## Editorial

**Latha Suresh**  
**Marie Banu**

## CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INITIATIVE AND MANAGEMENT



**C**entre 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 Accounting and Audit for social enterprises, CSR projects, and NGOs through Social Audit Network, India (SAN, India).**

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# Egotism



There was once a scientist who discovered the art of reproducing himself so perfectly that it was impossible to tell the reproduction from the original.

One day he learnt that the Angel of Death was searching for him. So he reproduced a dozen copies of himself. The angel was at a loss to know which of the thirteen specimens before him was the scientist, so he left them all alone and returned to heaven.

But not for long, for being an expert in human nature, the angel came up with a clever plan. He said, "Sir, you must be a genius to have succeeded in making such perfect reproductions of yourself. However, I have discovered a flaw in your work, just one tiny little flaw."

The scientist immediately jumped out and shouted, "Impossible! Where is the flaw?" "Right here" said the angel, as he picked up the scientist from among the reproductions and carried him off.



## Explicit Learning

- A. While our skill takes us high, our ego pulls us down.
- B. At times our ego sees to our end.
- C. My ego is my problem.



## Introspective Learning

- A. What is the nature of 'Ego'?
- B. Where does my ego come from?
- C. How do I deal with my ego?

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## Conversations with Shri Ramana Maharishi

**M**iss Merston, an English lady visitor: I have read Who am I? While inquiring who the 'I' is, I cannot hold it for any length of time. Secondly, I have no interest in the environment, but yet I have hopes that I shall find some interest in life.

**M.:** If there are no interests it is good. (The interpreter points out that the questioner hopes to find some interest in life).

**M.:** That means there are those vasanas. A dreamer dreams a dream. He sees the dream world with pleasures, pains, etc. But he wakes up and then loses all interest in the dream world. So it is with the waking world also. Just as the dream-world, being only a part of yourself and not different from you, ceases to interest you, so also the present world would cease to interest you if you awake from this waking dream (samsara) and realise that it is a part of your Self, and not an objective reality.

Because you think that you are apart from the objects around you, you desire a thing. But if you understand that the thing was only a thought-form you would no longer desire it.

All things are like bubbles on water. You are the water and the objects are the bubbles. They cannot exist apart from the water, but they are not quite the same as the water.

**D.:** I feel I am like froth.

**M.:** Cease that identification with the unreal and know your real identity. Then you will be firm and no doubts can arise.

**D.:** But I am the froth.

**M.:** Because you think that way there is worry. It is a wrong imagination. Accept your true identity with the Real. Be the water and not the froth. That is done by diving in.

**D.:** If I dive in, I shall find.....

**M.:** But even without diving in, you are That. The ideas of exterior and interior exist only so long as you do not accept your real identity.

**D.:** But I took the idea from you that you want me to dive in.

**M.:** Yes, quite right. It was said because you are identifying yourself with the froth and not the water. Because of this confusion the answer was meant to draw your attention to

this confusion and bring it home to you. All that is meant is that the Self is infinite inclusive of all that you see. There is nothing beyond It nor apart from It. Knowing this, you will not desire anything; not desiring, you will be content.

The Self is always realised. There is no seeking to realise what is already - always - realised. For you cannot deny your own existence. That existence is consciousness - the Self.

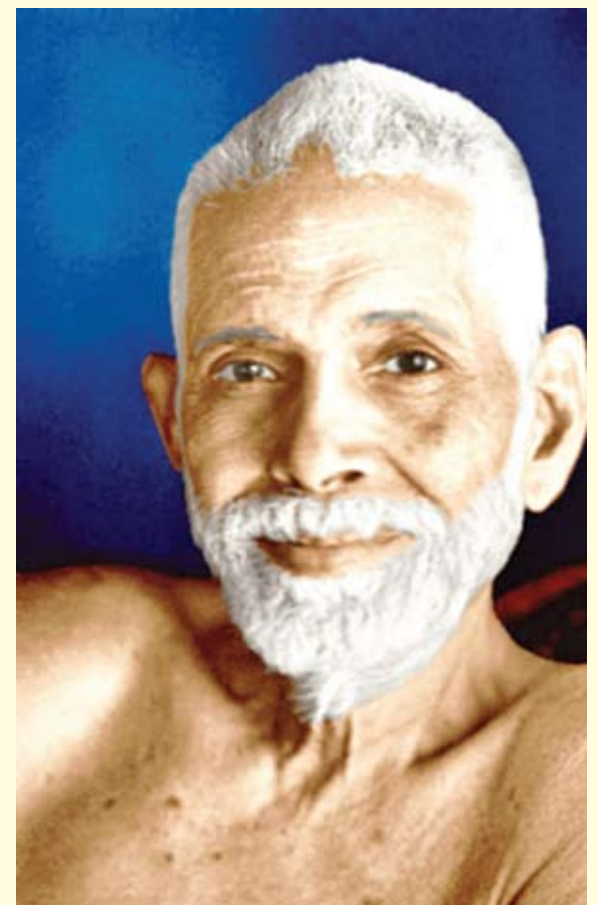
Unless you exist you cannot ask questions. So you must admit your own existence. That existence is the Self. It is already realised.

Therefore the effort to realise results only in your realising your present mistake - that you have not realised your Self. There is no fresh realisation. The Self becomes revealed.

**D.:** That will take some years.

**M.:** Why years? The idea of time is only in your mind. It is not in the Self. There is no time for the Self. Time arises as an idea after the ego arises. But you are the Self beyond time and space; you exist even in the absence of time and space.

—Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi





# Social Audit Master Class at ICAI Dubai Chapter



**T**he Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) was established under the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949. The second largest accounting body in the world at present, it is globally recognized for its contribution to the highest standards of accounting, auditing and governance.

ICAI has set up 27 overseas Chapters in different countries for the professional and personal development of the CA community. The Dubai Chapter is the largest of these and presently has over 2000 members. It has achieved the "Best Chapter" award from ICAI for 3 years in a row, being the first recipient since the Award was introduced.

The activities of the Chapter are managed by an annually elected body, the Managing Committee, consisting of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and five executive committee members. The growing size of the Chapter

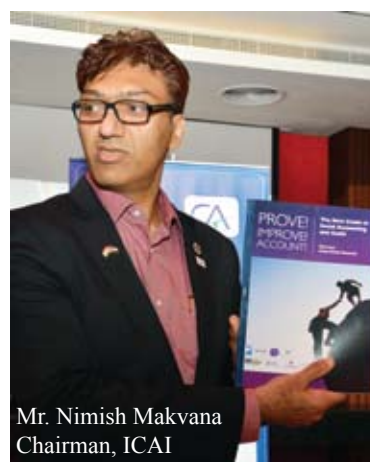
has led to increasingly complex roles for the Committee members, all of whom work on a voluntary basis.

Given the challenges brought about by the size of the Chapter, its growing reputation as a professional body in UAE and the need of CAs to continually educate themselves in light of the developing professional requirements, the Managing Committee considered it important to set up a framework to identify whether the work being done for the Chapter was meeting its objectives and what areas of development could further be introduced.

Social Audit Network, India was invited to conduct a Master Class in Social Accounting and Audit for ICAI Dubai Chapter members on 13th and 14th August 2016. The first day focused on understanding the framework, impact mapping and calculation of economic impact. This was illustrated with the practical study of two



organisations, Manzil (a special needs school based in UAE) and Education4All, a non-profit organisation that collects and delivers stationery to underprivileged school children in India and Africa. The second day focused on understanding how to draft the social accounts of the ICAI Dubai Chapter as well as



Mr. Nimish Makvana  
Chairman, ICAI

Education4All. All participants were given a certificate for their attendance.

The course was highly appreciated and the Chapter managing committee decided to implement the framework and prepare a set of social accounts for the period from July 2014 to June 2016. The Dubai Chapter of



ICAI is now in the process of drafting its first set of social accounts, which will be audited by Social Audit Network, India.

—CA Karuna Luthar,  
ICAI Dubai





## “The overall philosophy of our journalism education is to sensitise the future generation of journalists to the reality of India.”

**Sashi Kumar** shares with **Marie Banu** the changing trends in journalism in our country today.

**S**ashi Kumar is a prominent media personality from Kerala, India. In the late seventies he was among the earliest Newscasters in English on Doordarshan, India's national TV network, and over the next decade, became a familiar face in TV households in India as news and current affairs anchor, film critic and producer and director of topical features on television.

He was the first West Asia correspondent of The Hindu in the mid-eighties. He directed the film *Kaya Taran* in Hindi based on the short story “When Big Trees Fall” by writer N.S Madhavan. He is the founder of India's first regional satellite TV channel Asianet.

Sashi Kumar founded and chairs the Media Development Foundation, a not-for-profit public trust which set up and runs the prestigious Asian College of Journalism in Chennai.

*In an exclusive interview, Mr. Sashi Kumar shares with Marie Banu the changing trends in journalism in our country today.*

### Your career graph and most cherished moment ?

My cherished moment, of course, is being part of Doordarshan as a News Producer. Those were the days when it was a one horse race where Doordarshan was the only act in town. We had the advantage of having the entire nation watching us, but today the channels have to vie with one another to get their viewership.

From there, I moved on to print journalism. I was The Hindu's West Asia Correspondent and started their bureau at Bahrain in mid-eighties. It was the time of Iran-Iraq war and it was quite exciting to coordinate the coverage for The Hindu. I then came back to India to set up a television for Press Trust of India in Delhi. It was then my own entrepreneurial instincts were aroused and I started thinking of setting up a television station all of my own. That's how I founded Asianet which is based out of Kerala and now seen by a large section of Malayalees across the world.

After 10 years in Asianet, I divested my stakes in 2000 and founded the Media and Development Foundation, a not-for-profit Public Trust. The idea was to give back to journalism what journalism had given me and for some people like us. My good friend Mr. N Ram is a fellow Trustee; Mr. C.P. Chandrasekhar, a well-known economist; Mrs. Radhika Menon, my wife, and a publisher of children's books; and Mr. N Murali are also Trustees. We set up Asian College of Journalism to enable excellence in journalism education. Journalism as a distinct discipline was not available in India then. We had Mass Communication, but Journalism is distinct



Photo: Marie Banu

of Mass Communications. We were the pioneers in that sense.

Looking back 16 years later, I can say that we are the leading journalism college in the Country today. We plan to expand and start courses in Financial Journalism and so on. Unless we have ideas and keep translating ideas into actions as far as possible, you stop living. For me, it is not a great act of courage or boldness or self-sacrifice. For me to live, I have to keep doing things and this is part of that whole exercise.

My career graph has been interesting and I have been learning through the whole process. Today, many young adults learn about journalism and talk about it, because journalism is at cross roads and is not as how we knew it. With modern technology, everything is delivered on your smart phone with buzz feed, tweets, and blogs where viewers, readers, and listeners are themselves the producers of journalism—Citizen Journalism is rampant. We are learning as much as we are imparting.

### ACJ's scholarship for Dalit students. Can you give us more details?

Diversity in the news sphere has been a very important part of my agenda. News organisations in India have been earlier very gender insensitive. There were times when news organisations will not take many women, but now we have far more women than men in journalism. In our college, year after year, the proportion of

women to men is always in favour of women. A lot of women are entering journalism and with generations we will see the impact of that. It is true that women have not made it to the top editorial positions, particularly in the print media, but that will change eventually.

Like gender injustice, there has also been class and caste injustice. The most invisible part of journalism was the Dalit voice and the presence of the Dalits. We always wanted to change this and hence instituted scholarships for Dalit students. These have fluctuating fortunes to it as the problems were not always the scholarships, but finding qualified young Dalit students who could cope with the course. The medium of instruction being English, they should have the language skills to grasp the programme. We used to despair sometimes on how to change that.

This year is a Dalit year at ACJ where we have six full scholarships offered for Dalit students and also Mr. Surjit Ambedkar, the great grandson of Dr. Ambedkar studying here. I dare say that the Dalit journalists who are working in the industry today are those who have studied at ACJ. This gives us a lot of satisfaction.

### About ACJ's Covering Deprivation Programme?

The overall philosophy of our journalism education is to sensitise the future generation of journalists to the reality of India. Reality of India is not

shopping malls, not fashion and designs, not movies and gossip, nor voyeurism—it is also the reality of the ordinary man on the street. It is about people living in rural India who hardly find any presence in media, whether print, television, or radio. We have been trying to correct that.

It is a great, difficult, and daunting task and our students are equipped to handle it. When they move out into the real profession, they find little space to do stories and that has been the kind of relationship into which the students or the journalists who come from here enter into the media organisations and niche out their spaces to publish their stories.

Reality of India is rural India, and our 'Covering Deprivation programme' looks at vast areas of India which live in relative deprivation – in terms of child labour, female foeticide, gender injustice, social inequality, unemployment, farmer suicides, and many other areas.

When our students leave from here, there is a reality check. They are mentally equipped to see India not the way they were born and brought up, but understand their duty not to talk about 'shining India' but the 'struggling India'.

### What are the features of ACJ's module on investigative journalism?

Investigative journalism is a specialize module at ACJ. In fact, we have instituted an award for investigative journalism from last year. We give a sum of two lakh rupees for the best investigated story in print for the entire year, another two lakhs for the best investigated story in broadcast. The first prize was won by a lady who wrote about the famous Raj Rajaratnam case and how they were using the maid as the front person for their bank accounts. This article was published in The Caravan.

Investigative journalism is a new thrust area for us. Real journalism is all about investigative journalism. Normal journalism is becoming everybody's cup of tea. You get all the information you need from Google or Wikipedia. So, the real litmus test of true journalism is how investigative your stories are.

### We have too many media channels today. Your thoughts?

Yes, we have many media channels, but we get more and more of the same—whether Times Now or NDTV or India Today or News X or TV 18. You are getting the same headlines in the same order, the same news discussions, and same experts appearing all these discussions. People have no choice. Normally, when you have a variety of channels, you must have variety of news.