

- 1) **Target Group** :- The target group constitutes the orphaned and poverty stricken children of our state. The children have either lost one or both of their parents, or have been abandoned by the parents or relatives because of various socio economic reasons.
- 2) **Regional Focus** :- There is no selected area to choose the children from. Any child in need of protection, from any part of the state can come and get shelter at Basundhara.
- 3) **Subject Focus** :- Our goal is to provide a near family atmosphere to these children so that they will not suffer from any emotional deprivation, and can enjoy the normal joys of their childhood life which is their birth right.

Our main goal: - As true education is the most powerful weapon to combat all types of challenges a person has to face in life, Basundhara after 24 years of its inception decided to open in her own campus a school, so that she can cater to the needs of more and more children, especially the needy, physically handicapped, mentally challenged as well as the dropouts, poor and dalits.

4) **Associated Institutions** :-

- a) For pedagogical support we are associated with Matrubhavan a premier school in Cuttack (of which school we have the franchise)
- b) Prasanti Coaching Centre for educational guidance.
- c) Chauliaganja Girl's high school, Cuttack (we are now talking with them to send class IX children to their hostel)
- d) Other local NGOs working in the field of child welfare and education - by participating in the workshops and seminars organised by them.

5) **Setting/Background** :- (Brief Statement of the mission of Basundhara and why it was founded).

Basundhara was founded in the year 1986. The founder members Dr. Jogamaya Pattnaik and Dr. Mahamaya Pattnaik(Two renowned gynaecologists of our state), Mrs. Bijayalaxmi Sahoo and Mrs. Saila Behera(Two social activists) regularly came across abandoned children while working on their respective fields. Initially they placed some children privately in some homes in their personal capacity, but with the increasing number of abandonment it became impossible for them to find home for each and every child. So they searched for a permanent solution to this problem so that the children could be taken care of in an organised manner. Thus Basundhara was born.

The mission of Basundhara is to see that a human being lead a decent life on his own. The task is to facilitate the situation that will be instrumental in creating a just society.

To achieve this objective Basundhara acts as a home for the needy children, rehabilitates them through family restoration, adoption, vocational training and marriage. Basundhara is also recognised as a home for the women in difficult circumstances under the project 'SWADHAR SHELTER HOME'.

6) **Number of Children supported by the project:** - There are 63 children, 15 boys and 48 girls.

7) **What was the problem? What kind of assistance you are looking from Asha and why?** :- The school is residential. It has 2 hostel buildings (both double storied) and a school building which is half constructed. It doesn't have any source of income as no tuition fees or admission fee is collected from the students and no Government grant is received. On the physical side the half constructed building is required to be completed so that there will be sufficient rooms available for each class. The building used for hostel needs repair work from time to time. These expenditures cannot be avoided as it is essential. Basundhara has to spend money on these areas as well as provide everything for the children from A to Z in terms of education, food, clothing, health, sanitation, recreation, etc.

Due to the scarcity of funds we are unable to provide adequate facilities to our children. In this regard we have to manage with less number of teachers and most of the time a teacher has to be in charge of two classes. We feel that in this process the teaching suffers, as one teacher cannot do justice to both the classes at the same time, even if number of students in one class is small. So we requested Asha to support us for the salary of the teachers so that we can recruit one teacher for one class along with teachers for art and dance. We already have teachers for yoga, music, tabla.

8) **What was the outcome?** :- At the time of approaching Asha we had classes from Nursery to VIII and there were four full time teachers (salary Rs.4000), one part time teacher, two voluntary teachers from SWADHAR Project. The part time teacher, two voluntary teachers left their job in the month of May. With Asha's support we intended to recruit 2 residential teachers with the salary of Rs. 3500/-and 2 junior teachers with Rs. 3500/- . One dance teacher and one art teacher with Rs. 1500/- and Rs. 1000/- (part time) respectively. Accordingly we advertised in the newspaper and spread word about our requirements. To our dismay nobody agreed to stay in the hostel for a salary of Rs. 3500/- (demanded more than Rs.5000/- which we could not afford) and junior teachers also demanded minimum Rs. 4000/- per month. After 2 months of waiting and searching (May, June) we finally selected 4 teachers with a salary of Rs. 4000/-(none of them is a specialised subject teacher. The subject teachers are charging minimum of Rs. 10000/- per month) and they promised us to teach our children with dedication and sincerity. But unfortunately after working for one month with them we felt that all the 4 new teachers are insensitive and insincere. Moreover they demanded more salary over Rs. 4000/- because they felt that they have to labour hard as the children were not upto standard. So we let them leave the job as they would do more harm than good. Regarding Art and Dance we could not get part time teachers on that salary. So we dropped the idea for the time being as we also have to raise the salary of the senior teachers by Rs. 500/- to retain them in the school. We have bought a computer with Asha's money. Two of our senior teachers know computer. So till we get computer teacher in an affordable salary (they are also charging Rs. 10000/-) in a part time basis our teachers will manage the computer class by teaching some basics to the students.

We have already started the work for filling up teacher's vacancies. For the time being I and our head mistress have started taking classes regularly until everything is settled properly. We have also arranged four girls (qualification – Matriculation) to give tuition to the beginners in the hostel.

On the whole with Asha's support we are atleast in a position to recruit desired number of teachers. One for each class (so that teaching will not be hampered) with a raised salary as demanded by the teachers recently. This could not have been possible hadn't we get Asha's support. We would have to manage with 4 to 5 teachers for 9 classes.

9) **What are the next steps?** :- As it became almost impossible to get qualified teachers to teach in the higher classes with the salary we can afford and it seems this problem will persist. So we decided that after class VIII we will send the children to hostels of other schools (As Matrubhavan has no facility to keep girls in their hostel) where they would stay upto class X and appear the board exams from that school. In this regard we have started talking to some schools. Most probably by the end of this month we will be able to send the children to the hostel. For the next 3 or 4 years the children in class IX wil not exceed 5.

For our school we will now concentrate upto VIII and will try to provide all the facilities which all other normal schools have.