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Visit Report to KEDI School for Adivasi Girl Students at Dharampur, Gujarat

By

Jyoti & Tushar Shah, NYCNJ chapter of Asha. Dec11, 2007

1. Aparna Kadikar has written a detailed report about the School (Attached). We suggest that Aparna's Report may be read before reading our report.
2. We met Jayantbhai at SPT School at Pindval, as that was his day of teaching at Pindval. His main assignment is with KEDI School. He had taught English at a well-known school in Mumbai for four decades before retiring & volunteering his services to KEDI.
3. KEDI School is just outside Dharampur town, in the planes, about 30 KM from Pindval.
4. Teachers & staff gave us a briefing about the school. They want to create an opportunity for Adivasi Girls to complete High School education.



Teachers & Staff at KEDI(L to R) Bhupendra manages an NGO in the Hills & also helps KEDI & SPT. Sarojben is the Rector for the Hostel & also teaches. Jayantbhai teaches English. Asmita comes from Tribal background, has studied up to M.A. & teaches languages.

5. A small group of like minded people, who have dedicated their lives to the service of the community, have built their centers in a cluster of buildings. Dr. Daksha Patel, who returned to India after living abroad many years & whose ARCH foundation has been providing free Health care service to the poor, is a neighbor.
6. KEDI is located among a mango grove. The ground floor construction is completed. It was financed by Aparna & her well wishers. They do not have funds to complete the first (we say second floor in USA) floor construction & have sought Asha's assistance. Rs 1.8 Million are needed for construction.
7. The top floor is meant to be used as a dorm. The students are sleeping at night in their classrooms until funds can be found.



The ground floor is completed. The Top floor construction will start after the funds are found.



Partly completed Top floor.





Students in a class room, which serves as the dorm at night.



Students I the second class room, also used as a Dorm at night.



Jayantbhai in the Library of KEDI.

8. The students joining in Std 8 generally come from Government run schools, with their poor teaching. Accepting that this is the situation, KEDI starts teaching from the basic stuff. They have found that initially the students have to struggle, but very quickly they catch up.
9. KEDI has planned that they will take six years, instead of normal five years, for studies in Std 8 to Std 12. This will also give time to teach vocational skills & the skills required for a self reliant living.
10. They will also teach, in addition to the normal syllabus, how to grow plants in a nursery, how to run a cottage industry, how to paint & so on.
11. The fees for education, boarding, Lodging, books, study material, health care etc is only Rs 500 (\$ 13) per year. Many students are not able to pay even that small fee. In that case a scholarship is given.
12. Many students come from very poor background. During vacations, they need to go back to work as casual day workers, earning a few Rupees. Many students

return from Holidays, looking exhausted & thinner after hard physical work at survival wages.

13. KEDI is collaborating with Science Center in Dharampur. It seems that the curator has the experience in managing Nehru Center in Mumbai. The students are able to perform experiments & projects at the science center.



Transformation from Shy students to self confident students is amazing. The student in the front center lacked confidence to speak even a single sentence 4 months back. She has found friendship & acceptance by the group. She has regained her self confidence & self esteem.

14. The students are trained to be self reliant. They take all the responsibilities of running the school. They cook, clean the place, water the plants & do all the required work.
15. KEDI has taught all students how to ride a bicycle. Now they are independent & can go wherever required.

16. We interacted with students. They were happier to be at KEDI to study, instead of staying at home.



17. Students sang well a Bhajan for us. They also sang & acted a nursery Rhyme in English, to show off their knowledge of English.



Students performed a song for us.

18. KEDI appears to be a well managed school, providing a good opportunity to Adivasi Girls to get education. Their organizers' credentials are very good. They seem to have obtained cooperation from groups doing similar activities.

19. KEDI's contribution to SPT in terms Architectural designs of the building, sending their English teacher to Pindval, etc are very valuable.

20. The following is an excerpt from Aparna's report:

“Motivation of Starting the Group: Kaivalya Trust is a non-political, not-for-Profit NGO, based on secular values. Its core members are a circle of talented friends that possess professional expertise in various fields. We mutually believe that it is a primary duty of individuals to repay debt to society, which provides a supportive and conducive environment for their growth and economic stability. We aspire to use our talents and expertise for the benefit of rural area tribal communities of South Gujarat.

It seems that, in this part of the world, time has stood still. A wide gap has developed between the urban and the rural civilizations. The irony is that many vices like tobacco and alcohol have been introduced to these under developed communities by the greedy and unconscientious business owners. However, the basic facilities like health-care, primary education, literacy programs, water and electricity have not arrived in many parts of these areas yet. The abundant opportunities to earn a livelihood, which urban populations enjoy, are not available to rural populations due to the lack of basic amenities”

“Aim of the Group: Our main goal is to design, promote and implement socially effective and result-oriented activities. To reach larger area of the community, we work and design projects in collaborations with other non-profit organizations, volunteer groups, schools and colleges.

Kaivalya Trust firmly believes that economic progress and awareness towards various aspects of life is possible only by providing primary education, basic healthcare, health education, vocational skills, revival of cottage industries and encouragement to art and artists/artisans, through well-planned projects. Only then, villages will become healthy and self-sufficient, and in-turn the society will be able to stand on its own feet with dignity and pride. Mass migration towards the city will decrease and urban areas will have fewer problems to deal with.

Other Non-educational Activities:

[A] Basic Health and Hygiene: Seminars on Adolescence and its problems for the students of Std VIII to XII.

[B] Art Projects and Summer Youth Camps: Activities that help the children to communicate through different forms of art like drawing, painting and other mediums.

[C] The Trust has helped to design and construct a school building and a guest house at Khadki, a school building at Pindval (For Sarvodaya Trust), Education Center at Vavar (located in the interior rural area of Kaparada), A girl's hostel at Vansada, Dist. Navsari, Designed-Arch Clinic, Training Center, Kala Bhavan as well as Primary School and Hostel for Girls [Std: VIII to XII] at Nagaria, Dharampur.

[D]The Trust is actively involved in the Re-forestation program and awareness for use of alternate energy sources (Solar Energy, Rain Water Harvesting).

[E] Vocational Training - At "Kedi" Residential School the trust is offering various relevant vocational training. Such as - Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Nursery, Food Products, Craft and Bamboo Products, Machine and Hand Embroidary, Cutting and stitching, Computer and Marketing."

"Detail about the School Project:

Type of Education Provided: (Basic Literacy and Vocational training) The school will impart, high school level education, from Std VII through Std X (SSC) and also give vocational training to the students.

The focus: The focus of Kedi Residential School is on bringing about a transformation in the quality of learning in the classroom and thereby in the school and the community so that the change is sustainable and it will benefit all partners – the children, the teachers and the immediate society.

The core philosophy of Kedi Residential School is to provide relevant formal education along with vocational training system which can prepare them to work and live in their own villages. Thus, to use literacy as a vehicle of social mobility, train them for income generation and for increasing market value for employment. The ability to take independent decision and the desire to take personal responsibility are the major objectives of the education.

Teaching techniques: (Conventional vs. Alternative) Instead of Conventional Chalk and Talk method, the school faculties are using alternative inter-active teaching methods as well as hands on educational tools and kits. The school will follow Gujarat State School Board curriculum. All the students will appear for the final Board Examinations.

Expansion Plan for the Future: We are in the process of building a facility to accommodate between 120 to 150 girl students. Every year we will have only 30

to 35 students for Std. VIII. As these students move on to higher standards we will have more students admitted to Std. VIII again. Thus within 3 to 4 years there will be 120 to 150 girl students in the residential school.”

“Project Budget:

School Facility: The total area of construction for school and living facility is 10,400 sq.ft.

- **The ground floor:** 5200 sq. ft., consisting Class Rooms, Kitchen, Dining Hall, Bathrooms, Quarter for Rector and Visiting Faculties **is complete**.
- **The first floor:** Out of total 5200 sq. ft., 1800 sq. ft. of living facility on the first floor is complete and remaining 3500 sq.ft. Including support facility requires about Rs. 18, 00,000.00.

Recurring Cost per Year	Per Student	120 Students
■ Food Cost	Rs. 05,000	Rs. 6,00,000.00
■ Text Books, Notes	Rs. 00,300	Rs. 0,36,000.00
■ Educational Tools	Rs. 00,400	Rs. 0,48,000.00
■ Utilities	Rs. 00,400	Rs. 0,48,000.00
■ Teachers and Staff Salaries	Rs. 03,500	Rs. 4,20,000.00
Total variable Recurring Cost	Rs. 09,600	Rs. 11,52,000.00

An Appeal

We need your warm and generous financial support to complete the construction of the educational facility as well as other running expenses. We are appealing you to act promptly to land a generous helping hand. The donations to “Kaivalya Trust” are Tax-exempted under the article 80G (5) of the Income Tax Act 1961.”

21. Recommendations:

21.1 We believe that KEDI has embarked on a very good project.

21.2 We recommend that Asha give support for Completing the remaining building as also for recurring expenses in proportion to the actual students studying at the school.

Jyoti & Tushar Shah

