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VIEWSLETTER



CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATION IN SLUMS OF BHUBANESWAR

On 14th November, VIEWS celebrated Children's Day in five slums of the capital city of Odisha. The slums are Sikharchandinagar, Patrasahi, Tarinisahi, Muslimsahi in Sikharchandi and Saibanaphula. The venues were the Girl Child Education Centres being run by VIEWS at the five slums to impart education to girl children of the communities residing there. At the beginning of the celebration, teachers of the Girl Child Education Centres and the VIEWS Coordinator for the project delivered speeches on Children's Day to sensitize the children about why the day is celebrated and its importance of the day. A cake-cutting ceremony was organised at each of the five centres which were followed by songs and dance. At the Patrasahi Girl Child Education Centre, a fashion show was organised in which the girls walked on the ramp wearing different attires. The day was also celebrated with fun and games at Children Learning Centre being run by VIEWS in Jalimunda slum. Speaking to the children, Mr. S. Bheemaroo, Executive Director, VIEWS, congratulated the children on the occasion of Children's Day and urged them to study well and inculcate values to become good citizens of the country.





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Sharifa – The favourite teacher of Shikharchandi

Born to rag picking parents, Sharifa was one among thousands of girls born to poverty in the lanes of Shikharchandi slum. She too, like her peers, would have disappeared into the depths of misery if not for the gift of education.

It was an afternoon of 2017 when two strangers visited her house in the minority (Muslim) colony. “They stared quizzing me about my education. I had dropped out after class 9 to support my parents with home chores since they left early for work,” said Sharifa.

The teachers from VIEWS encouraged Sharifa to join the remedial classes for high schoolers. She was hesitant in the beginning but her desire to learn and complete schooling pushed her to visit the centre and know what was being offered.

“There were lot of girls who had already joined. I saw them thoroughly enjoying the classes. The teachers were explaining chapters in a very interesting way. There were audio-video learning tools that I had never seen before,” shares Sharifa who decided to continue the classes.

Sharifa was shy during the initial few classes and would not speak much but soon she started gaining confidence and sharing her opinions before the jam-packed class and teachers.

Sharifa met many girls from the slum who she had never interacted before They had so many stories to share. Together they worked on many projects. The resource persons who visited the centre would encourage them to continue studies and never give up. This kept her motivated.

“We were taken to Universities and Skill centres for exposure visits,” she says joyfully.

Back home, Sharifa had to convince her family who belonged to very conservative mindset. Her parents feared that her exposure to the outside world might bring about rejection from the community. The Muslim community in her locality never prioritised education especially when it came to females. For most parents, sending their children to Madrasas for religious education was enough.

But Sharifa was steadfast and assertive.

“My parents always tried to stop me on the pretext of household work, but I had made up my mind. I would rise before daybreak and complete all the household chores including cooking for the day,” Sharifa shared. Her hard work and dedication was recognised by teachers.

During spare time extended her voluntary support to mobilise many students from the slum to a children’s school run by VIEWS. Slowly parents of the kids who

witnessed improvement in their wards started approaching Sharifa for tuitions.

Well aware of the importance of early pre school education and the strong foundation it can lay in a student’s life, Sharifa dedicated her time in teaching these students. She incorporated the fun pedagogy she learnt at the resource centre to keep the students interested in studies. Soon she became the most sought-after teacher in the locality popular by the name “Sharifa Ma’am”

“Life completely changed for me. I could have never imagined myself in the position I am now and this was not possible if those two teachers from VIEWS had not knocked on our door that day.

Recognising her keen interest in motivating students, Sharifa was offered a job at the Children’s school. In less than a year she changed the behaviour of the slum kids. Not only did she teach them from the textbooks, she made sure they gave importance to their health, hygiene and nutrition. The school was a talking point in the community as parents were keen to send their wards there.

“Some days when my son is absent for more than three days, Sharifa Ma’am visits us and takes him along. She even assures us that she would herself pick and drop the kids if parents are unable to do so,” says Pratibha Mohanty, a parent.

After her regular work at school, Sharifa reaches home to conduct a special evening class for students of the Muslim community. She charges no money for it.

“The greatest joy in my life is to be addressed as Maam/ Teacher. This would not have possible if I was not blessed with the gift of education,” she says.



PROJECT ENLIGHT 2.0: TRAINING ORGANISED FOR TEACHERS

A one-day training was organised for teachers on teaching through innovative methods under Project Enlight 2.0 at the conference room of VIEWS head office in Bhubaneswar on 26th November 2022. In Project Enlight 2.0, children from rag-pickers communities in five slums in Bhubaneswar, the capital city of Odisha. The objective of the training was to improve the teaching skills of teachers through innovative methods like the use of teaching learning methods (TLM). The techniques would help the teachers spread knowledge among children. The training was divided into different sections i.e. training on child-friendly and participatory teaching methods, how to improve children's interest in innovative teaching methods, how to build habits of students in improving their learning level and outcomes, how to conduct team assignments by students, how to make teaching fun in the classroom, how to build leadership skills in students, etc. Ms. Banaja Mohanty, a teacher from DAV School, Jagmara, Bhubaneswar, was the resource person for the training. During her session, she explained many useful things including how to deal with the students and how to teach small kids through rhymes and stories. During the training, the teachers learned how to make counting easy for the children through pictures and how to make the small kids understand what is taught. The resource person taught the teachers how to use fingers for doing addition and subtraction. Thus, she said, fingers could be used for study through play. The training covered addition, subtraction, multiplication, simple math calculations, number identification, color identification, ascending & descending order, consonants, vowels, flower & fruit identification, identification of senses & organs, etc. The teachers were thankful to the resource person for all the tips she gave and the teaching experience she shared with them during the training session.



CASE STUDY

Fresh vegetables on menu every day at Naikani's house

Naikani Gauda is a member of a self-help group (SHG) in the Ganjam district in Odisha (India). She lives with her four-member family in Budagada village in Patrapur block. She is one of the active members of the Maa Kalua Self-Help Group and proactively takes part in all kinds of activities carried out by the SHG in Budagada. So when VIEWS NGO implemented a project to promote organic kitchen gardens in her block, she was one of the beneficiaries who readily agreed to be part of it.

Under the project, VIEWS provided nine types of vegetable seeds - tomato, brinjal, radish, bitter guard, ridge guard, chilli, okra, cluster bean and leafy greens (Kosala) - to selected women, including Naikani. Before this, training was given to them on how to prepare the land, how to prepare organic manure and how and when to plant the seeds.

Following the instructions given during the training, Naikani prepared a square-shaped kitchen garden and created separate beds for each of the nine vegetables. She planted the seeds maintaining the required space between them and applied organic manure (handi khata) she had prepared following the steps as told by VIEWS officials. She also created a bamboo fence and a bird scarer for protecting the kitchen garden from animals and birds.

After three months, Naikani started harvesting vegetables from the kitchen garden. Every day, Naikani takes a round of her vegetable garden to pluck fresh vegetables for family consumption. When there are enough surplus vegetables, she sells those for some additional income. Thus an unused small piece of land on her backyard not only provided fresh organic vegetables to her family but also the surplus vegetables added to the family income.

About the change resulting from her small step, she says, "The market is almost 7 kilometers from our village. It is very difficult to get fresh vegetables for the family's needs from there. The kitchen garden has been a blessing for us. We eat fresh vegetables every day and at the same time, it saves family expenditure too."





INT'L TRAINER HONES VIEWS STAFF'S SKILLS

A development orientation for the staff of VIEWS was organised at a picturesque location of Gopalpur-on-Sea from 28th to 30th November. Mr. R.K. Surdeo, an international trainer, was the resource person for the three-day event.

Through various activities, including indoor and outdoor games, he explained different aspects of development and shared his rich experience of many decades in the field of the social sector.

On day one, he focused on leadership building, while achievement motivation in individuals was the theme on the day two. On the concluding day, he oriented the staff on community mobilisation. It was a very learning experience for each one of the VIEWS staff.



REGISTERED OFFICE ADDRESS

**At/Po: Venkatraipur, Via: Gopalpur on-sea, Dist: Ganjam,
Odisha, PIN-761002**

HEAD OFFICE ADDRESS

**Plot No: 448/2940, Near Koel Campus, Patia, Bhubaneswar,
Odisha, India, PIN-751024**

✉ info@viewsindia.org.in ☎ +91 9937381255

