

REPORT 2014 -15

We said goodbye to Tamara Flatau Chaudhuri our trustee who lived bravely and fought bravely her battle with cancer in April 2015. For the short period of time that she was with us she helped raise funds for our projects besides being actively involved and helping the organization to grow.



MUSIC

The beginning of the year did not see much activity besides the sessions on empowerment through flute a project of Child's Play Foundation India which we were partnering with.

Underprivileged children from Kadaswada, Mapusa studying in Ambedkar School under the care of Mango Tree Trust came twice a week to be tutored by volunteers of Child's Play i.e. Suzzane and Friedrich. The group of five started with a recorder and graduated to playing with flutes which were donated. For a period of 4 months the classes progressed very well as did the children. They had the chance to perform at the Goa museum in a concert organized by Child's Play for all the children who were being empowered through music under their aegis.

Towards the middle of the year these children were included in the play 'Kuthe Gela Swatch Pani ' - a play which was a part of the process of empowerment through theater by the Bal Gram Sabha of Carambolim Village Panchayat. The idea was to create awareness about the state of Carambolim Lake which was being polluted by humans. (Detailed report attached).

However it is important to say that the children were subject to pressure by family members to leave, the perception being that these classes were not

bringing any monetary gain to the families. An incident with one of the children resulted in the father physically abusing the child and breaking the flute. Thereafter he was banned from attending any classes. Though the counselors of mango Tree Trust tried many times to speak with the parents and the child their efforts didn't meet with any success. Given their circumstance they look at any form of learning through the prism of a chance to earn money. This can be highlighted as one of the drawbacks of teaching in places other than a school or a hostel where children have a structured program me under the supervision of the caretaker.

Though attempts were made to regroup with younger children the same problems were repeated. Eventually the program I was closed down due to these extraneous reasons.

TAEKWONDO

A main concern brought up by children in a 'Need Assessment' exercise in the Bal Gram Sabha of Carambolim Village Panchayat was the lack of security in Carambolim, which brought in self-defense as a way of dealing with this scarcity of protection. Therefore the need for 'Empowerment through Sports and Learning'.

We had started the program me in 2013 a valuable structured program in self-defense via Taekwondo. Our trainer and martial artist, Shera Kotkeny, used life skills in his curriculum to empower young people by locally providing Taekwondo training facilities. This program me promotes positive values, healthy habits, and learning. The programme was discontinued in 2014 due to lack of funds.

A small amount was raised through donations given by Nupas Cadmatic, Goa in January 2015 and sessions were restarted.

A total of 20 children joined the Taekwondo classes. Many of these children had attended classes previously which had been discontinued .

Classes were conducted for five months at the rate of 3 classes a week for 2 hrs each .The children have progressed to acquiring blue belts and they felt they have benefitted in the few months and wish to pursue the sport.

Figure 1 Practice Session in Carambolim



Figure 2 Practice Session at the Panchayat Hall



Figure 3



THEATER



Continued meetings of the Bal Gram Sabha with the Village Child Committee of Carmbolim panchayat brought out the problems of health and security and the problem of pollution of Carambolim Lake. The children decided to create awareness about the pollution of the lake which is a lifeline of the village and a place for migratory birds which have declined over the years. They chose theater as the medium to express their concern.

'Kuthe Gela Swatch Pani '(Where has the clean water gone)? was the outcome of the workshops facilitated by Arundhatti Chattopadhyaya (resource person). The idea for the script was written by Diksha Naik of the Bal Gram Sabaha. The project was supported by the Directorate of Art and Culture, Govt. of Goa.

There were six shows staged in Carambolim Panchayat, Sanskruti Bhawan, Museum of Goa and Goa Science Center. The last performance was to an audience of visiting children from a school in Bangalore which had the required impact and interaction amongst the children. The play was supported by World Wildlife Fund , and Jungle Lore .

Read More about Kuthe Gela Swatch Pani on our website www.justmitsuko.com.

This also led to the building of dry toilets in Carambolim.

ECOSAN Toilet

Proceeds from the jumble sale gave us the money to start building the first ecosan toilet in the village.

Tallulah D'silva the architect and founder of SocialT, along with the team from Mitsuko met with the villagers and the Sarpanch at the Gram Sabha in August. After presenting the ecosan toilet and its benefits there were 36 households which came forward.



With the help of the panchayat we started to build the first toilet in Prabhakar's house who we named the "Swatch Bharat hero" for convincing his family of 5 members to give up the habit of defecation in the open and use the dry toilet built for them.

There were a couple of teething problems namely-

1. It needed to take into account the problem faced by the elderly to squat without a handle for support.

2. The problem of insects flying out if the pan was opened
3. The need for more ventilation in the toilet.

At this point we took the help of Parag Modi as a consultant for sorting out these initial problems.

There were visits by Prof Shrikant Muntri of BITS Goa and participants of the Terra Preta Conference where the project was also showcased.



Parag Modi with Prof. Shrikant mantra of BITS Goa.

We began building the second toilet with funds donated by Fundacao Oriente, Goa and it is in the last stages of completion.

The CSR Team of India Today (Care Today) also visited Carambolim to get first hand information on the toilets built and also look at prospective funding for the rest.