

The Dalmian Community Project: Reaching out to Tribal village – Osarvira, Palghar District

Goal : This project aimed to foster the above values among students. There were explicit twin objectives of the project:

- i) To enable students understand the socio-economic realities of the under-privileged
- ii) To train students to grow up as responsible citizens without a self-centred worldview.

Context:

Love in action is service. - Padma Vibhushan Sri Sri RaviShankar

The word Social Responsibility is very significant in today's time when deprivation, inequality and suffering are staring us in the eye even as the per capita incomes increase and the middle class inches upward.

We can serve others in endless ways by using our own creativity and imagination. When one looks for opportunities, it is easy to locate small ways to help even amidst busy daily routines. In line with the theme of the extension unit of “Reaching the Unreached”, it was decided to carry on the assistance programme more intensively and extensively with the necessary aid from Lions Club of Malad-Borivli in the adopted village **Osarvira, Taluka: Dahanu in Palghar District**. The village is situated 120 kms from Mumbai.

A need assessment survey was conducted every year for determining and addressing needs and identifying "gaps" between current conditions and desired conditions. The President of Lions Club of Malad-Borivli along with the extension teachers – Dr. Swati Desai, Dr. Kiran Mane, Mr. Rajesh Ruke and Ms. Shami Nimgulkar- Kamble conducted this survey. Data was elicited from the former Sarpanch –Mr. Naresh Korda, Rozgar Sevak Mr. Dilip Korda and teachers of Zilla Parishad Schools – Mr. Rajeshwar Biradar and Mr. Deepak Sonawane. This survey helped in clearly identifying the problem and for directing the resources towards developing and implementing a feasible and applicable solution.

The following activities were conducted for the benefit of the villagers in and around Osarvira:

2017-18

Inauguration of Lions Medical Centre:

The adopted village lacked basic health infrastructure and the immediate health relief is available only 10 kms away from the village. This situation called for timely care and diagnosis. The Lions Club of Malad-Borivli after realizing the gravity of the problem, constructed the Lions Medical

Centre (permanent project) with an intention of providing charitable medical services to 5000+ neighboring villagers. The Lions Medical Centre was inaugurated by the Chief Guest: DG Lion Sunil Patodia.



The Lions Medical Centre was constructed due to the sincere efforts and commitment of Lion Atit Ruia-

President Lions Club of Malad-Borivli, Lion Rajesh Jain- Secretary, Lions Club of Malad-Borivli, Lion Amit Agarwal- Treasurer, Lions Club of Malad-Borivli and Lion Manish Nemani- Chairman, Lions Club of Malad-Borivli.

Medical Camp:

The Health Care Camp was one such special initiative by the Lions Club of Malad- Borivli to



meet the immediate health care needs of the marginalized community in remote rural areas.

The medical camp lasted throughout the day. Around 300 patients took benefit of this camp. Women primarily suffered from backache as they had to fetch water from long distance. Vitamin tablets were administered to them. The men were found to be suffering with health issues related to heavy drinking. Many cataract patients were also diagnosed. Most of the children suffered from severe problem of scabies. Students were given ointments, soaps and medicines free of cost. All the patients were given general medicines and those who were found to be having larger health issues were advised to visit the general hospital at the earliest.

Donation of Sewing Machines:

To generate self-employment in villages, 10 sewing machines were donated to women who had formally received training in stitching.



Distribution of Bedsheets & Soap:

Service is our own inner joy pouring forth into action. It is not a compulsion, duty or uncomfortable obligation, but instead a natural state of mind that is poised to offer what is needed according to time, place and situation. Seva connects us to others and makes them a part of us. The barriers dissolve that separate our happiness from their happiness. Lingering moods of unhappiness or depression dissipate when our focus is on helping someone else. We come to realize that the true measure of our lives is not how much we have gained for ourselves, but how much we have given to others.

Around 200 people were donated bedsheets and 500 pieces of Soaps were also donated to school children and villagers.

Donation of Footwear, toothbrush, toothpaste, chocolates and biscuits to School Children:

Things that we consider as "normal" are beyond reach of many..... Things as simple as footwear.... which appears trivial... but is very important... Let us try walking on burning roads in the heat, or dusty terrains with thorns... We will not be able to sustain. Such is the pain that the deprived undergo and such is the terrible nature of their hardships. Their paths are laden with pain. A footwear is a source of great solace to their feet and minds. It makes a journey that much more bearable and enjoyable for so many, especially school kids.... There are city dwellers that would spend so much on pedicure and foot massages and there are some whose feet have endured heat, thorns and infections. Footwear is a first significant step in that healing.....

After realizing these hardships faced by school children from a pre-camp survey, footwear were donated to 250 school children of three Zilla Parishad Schools. This step was highly appreciated by the school authorities and the smiling faces of the children drenched the souls of all present with a sense of fulfillment. 250 Toothbrushes and toothpastes each were also donated to these children. Chocolates and biscuits were also donated. There was a special magic show arranged for the school children which they thoroughly enjoyed.

Donation of Cupboards, Tables and Chairs to School:

Steel Cupboard, tables and chair were donated to the Zilla Parishad schools.

Donation of Chairs to the BAYAP Hall:

30 plastic chairs were donated to the community hall.

Donation of Sarees, Towels and Mats:

One in five citizens in India—that's 270 million people—live at or below the international poverty line of US\$1.25 a day, according to The World Bank. They live with what they wear on their bodies. While food and clothing are both basic necessities, India's poor generally prefer the former over the latter for obvious reasons. For many, clothing remains an unfulfilled need their whole lives. 200 women were donated sarees and mats and 200 men were donated towels.



Anaaj- Dan:

200 poorest of the poor families were identified and they were donated- Tur Daal, sugar, edible oil and salt.

Donation of Clothes and Cloth Pieces:

250 villagers were donated clothes. 1000 unstitched pure cotton cloth pieces were also donated.

All the above mentioned donations and contributions were possible due to the special and concerted efforts of the President of Lions Club of Malad-Borivli, Lion Atit Ruia and other Lion members.

2016-17

Distribution of Blankets, Soaps to 300 Zilla Parishad school children from standard I to VII Sports items like Footballs, Skipping ropes, Carrom boards , Badminton Kits and Cricket Kits were donated to the school.

Medical Camp: The adopted village lacked basic health infrastructure and the immediate health relief is available only 10 kms away from the village. This situation called for timely care and diagnosis. The Health Care Camp was one such special initiative by the Lions Club of Malad-Borivli to meet the immediate health care needs of the marginalized community in remote rural areas. Lion Dr. Ajeet Jain and his team of dedicated doctors were instrumental in providing basic health care facilities to the patients. Around 300 patients took benefit of this camp.



Women primarily suffered from backache as they had to fetch water from long distance. Vitamin tablets were administered to them. The men were found to be suffering with health issues related to heavy drinking. Many cataract patients were also diagnosed. Most of the children suffered from severe problem of scabies. Students were given ointments, soaps and medicines free of cost. All the patients were given general medicines and those who were found to be having larger health issues were advised to visit the general hospital at the earliest.

Donation of Footwear to School Children: Footware were donated to 100 girl school children of three Zilla Parishad Schools.

Donation of Green Cloth: To provide respite to the school children and the villagers from the scorching heat and to provide them shade, green cloth was donated to the Zilla Parishad schools and the Gram Panchayat office.



Donation of Sarees and Towels: 200 women were donated sarees and 150 men were donated towels.

Inauguration of Toilet Blocks: Poor sanitation exposes females to the risk of assault, and when schools cannot provide clean, safe toilets girls' attendance drops.

Poor sanitation has significant impacts on the safety, well-being and educational prospects of women. Girls' lack of access to a clean, safe toilet, especially during menstruation, perpetuates risk, shame and fear. This has long-term impacts on women's health, education, livelihoods and safety but it also impacts the economy, as failing to provide for the sanitation needs of women ultimately risks excluding half of the potential workforce.

The village faces the problem of open defecation. The Zilla Parishad school for students of Standard VI and VII lack toilets leading to a crisis that contributes to disease and childhood malnutrition.

On realizing the gravity of this critical issue, the Lions Club of Malad-Borivli promised construction of two toilet blocks for the Zilla Parishad school (one for Boys and one for girls).

Donation of Wheel Chair: Two Wheel Chairs were donated to physically disabled students to



bring about a ray of hope in their bleak lives and to foster the attitude of – “ Yes... Even I can” in them. All the above mentioned donations and contributions were possible due to the special and concerted efforts of the President of Lions Club of Malad-Borivli, Lion Vivek R. Narsaria and other Lion members.

The students and teachers of our college in their own small way also made valuable donations. Details of donation are mentioned below:

Donation of Clothes, Utensils, Stationary

Donation of Geometry Boxes

Distribution of Dates

Donation of Fans

2015-16

Donation of Footwear to School Children:

The observation and the survey conducted at this village made our students realize the fact that school children of this village went about their chores without any footwear. Footwear , a necessity for us all was not available to these school children. Our students realized that on

one hand we city dwellers do not bat an eyelid in spending on pedicures and foot massages and on the other hand there are these tiny feet of village children who have to endure the strong heat, thorns and infections as they go to school bare feet. After realizing these hardships faced by school children from a pre-camp survey, our teachers decided to donate footwear to 300 school children of three Zilla Parishad Schools. This step was highly appreciated by the school authorities and the smiling faces of the children drenched the souls of teachers with a sense of fulfillment.



Distribution of clothes, stationary, toys, utensils and food items:

To take is the nature of animals. To give and take is the nature of human beings. To give without taking is the nature of the Divine. Through giving, we grow in divinity. Kept to ourselves, our happiness will become stagnant and fade away. To increase our joy we must share joy with others. Seva connects us to others and makes them a part of us. The barriers dissolve that separate our happiness from their happiness.

Around 300 Zilla Parishad school children from standard I to VII were distributed notebooks, Pens, Pencils, Erasers, toys and writing pads. 250 tribal women, men, children were distributed clothes which were collected from teachers and students of our college. IQAC would especially like to acknowledge the DLLE students who donated the entire profit that they made during the Business Fair organized by Department of BMS.

Medical Camp:

The camp lasted throughout the day. Around 500 patients were treated. The college roped in services of two doctors - Dr. Rajesh Bombe and Dr. Prajvalit Sonkamble to conduct the medical camp. Women primarily suffered from backache as they had to fetch water from long distance. The men were found to be suffering with health issues related to heavy drinking. Most of the children suffered from severe problem of scabies. Students were given ointments, soaps and medicines free of cost. A demonstration on "How to wash hands" was given by our teachers to signify the importance of cleanliness and personal hygiene. All the patients were given free general medicines and those who were found to be having larger health issues were advised to visit the general hospital at the earliest.

Donation of spiritual books:

Education becomes holistic when spirituality becomes the epicenter of knowledge transmission. Keeping this in mind, our teachers donated spiritual books like-BhimrupiStotra, VidhyartyancheRamdas and YuvakachaSfurtiNirzar by Samarth Ramdas to school children.

Lessons Learnt: The Intention Matters and Not the Labels... The nobility and genuineness of the act matters, not how it is packaged and classified. It is not just the contribution, but the underlying intention and urge to be useful to society that counts. These are times when we must rise beyond all likes and dislikes, broaden our horizons, enhance our vision and look beyond our narrow confines. These are times to make a positive difference and touch lives and heal them. Isn't this intention more important than details of classification and labeling. We must be true to our conscience and do our very best.

The extension unit is grateful for all the help & support provided by the President of Lions Club of Malad-Borivli, Mr. Vivek R. Narsaria and other Lion members, Management and Principal Dr. N. N. Pandey, Extension Units and the In-charges - Dr. Swati Desai, In-charge – NSS, Dr. Kiran Mane, In-charge – NCC , Mr. Rajesh Ruke, In-charge – Students' Council. We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the teachers for their generous contribution and donation towards making this campaign a great success.

- **Dr. Shami Nimgulkar-Kamble, (In-charge – DLLE)**

Project Coordinator