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HOPE NEWS

From the Managing Director

Dear Friends, Colleagues & Well Wishers,

Once again, it is a joy and a privilege for me to share with you brief details on the activities of the on-going projects at Agnes Kunze Society Hope Project from the start of this year! We are indeed grateful to God for His wisdom, strength and guidance, which has enabled us to successfully implement various activities, complete many projects as well as begin new ones.

As you go through this newsletter, I am sure you will be encouraged to see the valuable contribution and hard work of all our staff, who have worked through the year with full commitment and dedication. They are the key to making a difference in the lives of these children and community that are entrusted in our care and are most valued. It is the smile on the faces of these children that brings peace and joy in our hearts.

The highlight of this year has been the introduction of E-learning; our journey from **'Slate to Smart Board'**. Smart Boards were installed both at the Hope Home and Hope Academy. This was made possible through our friends in the Netherlands. We are extremely grateful to them for this initiative.

Again, it is our friends, partners and donors who have been our pillar of strength, supporting us through prayers, visits, gifts, and encouragement. A big 'thank you' to all the 'Friends of Hope'. You have been a great source of encouragement to the staff of AKS Hope as well as the children.

Manju Lawrence
Managing Director

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Advocacy

Empowerment

Livelihood

Education

Healthcare

Environment

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HOPE HOME



Hope Home is currently a home for 41 children; 26 girls and 15 boys. The children enjoy their stay at the Home. Each day is filled with different activities for them after they return from school. The Home caters to the holistic development of each child, giving emphasis to not only the educational needs of the child but social, emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual needs as well. It is a large family with each member owning responsibility and taking care of the Home.

Hope Home is always open to visitors, national and international, who visit the home regularly and interact with the children. The children love this experience and enjoyed their time with visitors from Germany, Netherlands and Tear Fund-UK. Students from Shri Ram School also visited and interacted with the children. Friends from Germany taught computer, knitting, making table mats, etc. They also enjoyed playing games with the children.

The facilities for the children have been improved with the construction of the tin shed for their play area and whitewashing and renovation of the buildings. A SMART Board was installed, which was inaugurated by Mr. Rogers from ASML, Mr. Paul & Jo from SHPI, The Netherlands.



Children making friendship bands with Sheelpa

Ms. Sheelpa S. Lamichhane has joined as Project Officer at the Home. The children love her and she is enjoying her work at the Home.

Various activities with visitors at HOPE Home



HOPE Home



Inauguration of the Tin Shed Activity Area



First Table Tennis match in progress



ULM Team from Germany



Inauguration of the Smart Board



Hope Home children with guests & staff

Children enjoy their stay at the Home



Children celebrated Easter— Painting Easter Eggs was fun



The children had a great time meeting their parents. A program was organized where they were able to show their talents to their parents.

HOPE Academy

A small step is the beginning of a great journey in the direction of lasting and effective change. Agnes Kunze Academy “Hope Project” has been determinedly taking these steps towards changing the lives of the children in Madrasi Colony since the last decade, the results of which are now visible in the community. It has not been an easy journey. With a lot of hurdles, challenges, criticism and people refusing to accept change in their lifestyles, the continuous efforts, determination and hard work of the Principal and staff at Agnes Kunze Academy, awareness on the importance of education has been created amongst the slum community and the parents of those children who attend the school.

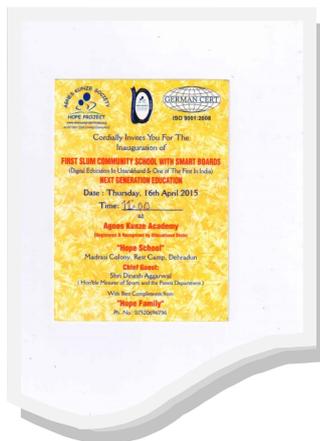
The days at Hope Academy are always filled with various academic and non-academic activities at the school. The school closed for winter vacation with wonderful Christmas Celebration. The children enacted the Christmas story and the program also included songs and dances. A delicious Christmas lunch was served to all after the program. Quilts were also distributed by the Chief Guest at this occasion.

It was a joy to the smiling faces of the children when the school re-opened in January 2015. Even though it was so cold and windy, the enthusiasm of the children returning to school was not dampened. The year began with an effort to complete the syllabus and the children were encouraged to study hard and complete their work. However, it was not all studies as there were activities in between like celebrating the 66th Republic Day on January 26th. The Chief Guest, Mr. Rajkumar Kakkar, former Parshad, along with Mr. Anoop Kumar, hoisted the flag. Children sang songs and performed dances. There was a P.T. parade and some speeches as well, ending with the melodious recital of the National Anthem. Sweets were distributed at the end of the program.

February and March were test and annual examination time. Children concentrated in studying hard for their annual exams. All the children performed well in the Annual exams held in March. Parent teacher meetings were also held to keep the parents involved and informed about the academic progress of their child.

A number of guests from abroad visited the Academy and encouraged the staff and children. These were Magelena, Charloote, Bunsak, Gary, Matt, Maggie, Margaiete, Roger Prince, Paul Daemac, Dannis, Mr. jo, Cristia, Madelaine, Augelika, Galr, Susauue, Christel and Heidi. The children were delighted and thankful to these guests for sparing their time to come and interact with them, which was also a great learning experience for them.

A great achievement at the Agnes Kunze Academy this year has been the introduction of Smart Board or e-learning. It has been a journey from ‘Slate to Smart Board’. This initiative was sponsored by ASML from the Netherlands, which is one of the biggest IT companies in the world. A huge thanks to Mr. Roger, Mr. Paul, Mr. Jo and Mr. Dennis from the Netherlands for taking Agnes Kunze Academy to the era of Digital Education. AKS Hope Academy becomes the first slum school to install Smart Board education and introduce E-Learning. It is indeed a matter of great pride as well as joy to see these children enjoy and capitalize on the facilities donated generously by friends.



Activities at Hope Academy



Exam Time
at Hope
Academy



Republic Day Celebrations January 26th



Students attending Smart Class



Parent Teacher Meeting



Friends
visiting Hope
Academy to
encourage
staff and
children



Hope Community Health Program

Hope Target TB team has been actively campaigning and raising awareness about TB. A number of awareness meetings were conducted from the beginning of this year in the villages with the main theme being a definite cure for TB. The Anganwadi and ASHA workers were also a part of the awareness meetings. Overall, 42 corner meetings were conducted in Dehradun on TB Awareness. The staff also tested a number of TB patients. So far, 49 patients have been cured. The DOTS provider as well as the patients, together conducted a number of awareness meetings with the aim of 2 persons reaching out to 2 other persons and thereby completely eradicating TB. The slogan of these meetings was “DOTS sure cure for TB”. On 24th March 2015, World TB Day was celebrated. Hope Target TB team actively participated in this rally. All the children of Hope Academy and other project staff of Hope were also present during this rally from Dehradun Railway Station to Clock Tower. A lot of material and hand-outs were distributed to passer-by and people along the road. The Health Supervisor of Dehradun was also present at this occasion. The MDR TB patients meeting was conducted by the Hope Target team. The patients were advised about daily nutrition and taking medicines. This awareness meeting is conducted four times in a month in the Dehradun urban slum area. Family members are also counselled along with the patients about the cure of MDR TB, if medicines are taken regularly and a nutritious diet is followed.

Various activities undertaken by Hope Community Team



Hope Community Health Program



Distribution of Nutritious food packets to HIV infected persons under the Hope "VIHAN" Project



HOPE CHILDREN CSC - VIHAN PROJECT, FOOD NUTRITION DISTRIBUTION

At the Hope Comprehensive Care Support Service Centre, 153 HIV infected people stayed during January to March 2015, i.e. 42 men, 48 women, 41 boys and 22 girls. These patients were provided shelter and food free of cost. Some were already on the ART treatment from Doon Hospital and others were to start the ART treatment. On January 1, 2015, nutritious food packets were distributed to HIV infected children. In this program Dr. M.S. Rawat (MO, ART Plus Centre, Doon Hospital, Dehradun) , Deepak Garsewal (Community Coordinator, ART Plus Centre, Dehradun) & Mr. Susheel Chamoli (Counselor ART Plus Center Doon Hospital) , and the Team of TB Clinic Dehradun were invited to distribute the Nutrition to the children .

This program was organized by AKS 'HOPE' Project Coordinator Mr. Lawrence Singh. The children & their parents were given knowledge about Nutritious food. Each child was given a bag 30 Kg consisting 10 items such as (Channa Dal – 3Kg, Atta Multi grain– 12 Kg, Dalia – 3 Kg, Black Chana –2kg, Sugar – 3kg, Salt – 2kg, Moong Dal – 3kg, Rice – 2kg, Chyavanprash –half kg and Pickle) . Staff present at the distribution programs were Dharendra Singh Rawat (PC Hope Vihan Children CSC) , Sanjeev Issachar (PO AKS Hope Mental Health Programme) , Burans Team - Laxman Balan, Rakesh Sharma, Anuj Kumar Sharma , Mrs. Beera Devi (Care taker) .

Samvedna



Awareness Rally



Awareness Meeting

At Hope Samvedna, the focus has been on building relationship with the local authorities. The staff visited the community to conduct surveys on PWDs, whether they require assistive devices, accessible toilets, etc. Awareness programs were conducted in the village primary school and anganwadi centre on women's disability and barriers. Ms. Pratima was able to assist many PWDs to get a disability certificate made at the hospital. Pratima has also been actively involved in the formation of DPGs in different areas, as well as participating in the training on the formation of DPGs. Three new staff joined in from beginning of February: Mrs Maheshwani, Mrs Anupma, Mrs Rachna.



Assisting PWDs to get certificates

World Disability Day was celebrated on December 2. The management and staff of Shri Ram School helped the children in preparing good songs and dance and they were happy to interact with the children at Samvedna. On 3rd December, the Samvedna staff and children attended an awareness rally at Sahaspur Disability People's Group, which was organized by Anugrah Centre, Herbertpur. The Sahaspur school children and parents of the children who attend Anugrah Centre took part in the rally.

The staff of Hope Samvedna have also been actively involved in the Rapid Assessment of Disability (RAD) Tool, an initiative of Community Health Global Network, Uttarakhand Cluster. They attended the training and have been assisting in filling out the assessment forms.



Hope Samvedna Centre



PWDs at the hospital to get a disability certificate made



Training on Formation of DPGs

Rapid Assessment of Disability



Training on how to use the RAD Tool



Conducting survey using the RAD Tool

The Rapid Assessment of Disability Survey Tool is an initiative of the Community Health Global Network Uttarakhand Cluster (CHGN UKC). After an initial training conducted in Hyderabad on how to use the tool, AKS Hope was selected as the lead NGO in implementing this tool in Dehradun.

Many challenges were faced during the survey of the RAD Tool. The staff from Hope Samvedna was involved in door to door visitation and assisted in filling out the survey form. Many of the community members welcomed the survey team, shared their problems, and had expectation about receiving help and assistance for family members with disability. At other households, people were not so cooperative. They did not open up their houses, refused to talk, refused to accept that they need supportive devices for their disabilities.

Many times accessibility and weather conditions were a challenge, yet the survey team overcame these challenges and completed the task successfully.

Hope Project BURANS

The Mental health awareness programme was conducted by Hope Project Burans team in different villages and schools. The mental health school programme was conducted in Rampur and Charbha inter college for Classes 8 & 9. 8 groups were formed, 4 of boys and 4 of girls, covering a total of 140 school children in 91 sections. There was a very positive response from the school management for this kind of a programme.

Under the Burans project, the Hope support group has been encouraging women in taking initiative in bag making. They are regularly counselled, which is a very basic exercise to recover from mental distress. A 4 day training was conducted in bag making, after which, the women have been involved in making bags at the cost of Rs.100/- per bag. This has been a source of help in sustaining family income as well as it keeps their minds occupied. Now these women are also teaching this skill to other low income group people in order to help them earn a living.



Boys group



Girls Group

Awareness Program in schools



Training session being conducted



Women learning how to make bags



Awareness on mental Health



Most significant stories of change

MENTAL HEALTH

I am Sultana. I am 22 years old. I belong to a very poor family living in Sahaspur Idgah, Dehradun. My family was unable to take care of me and got me married at the age of 17. My husband's name is Irshaad and I have two girls. Since my marriage, I have been facing a lot of problems. My husband is an alcoholic and also takes drugs. Every evening, he would come home drunk, beat me and my children and abuse us. As a result I went into depression and for two years my condition was very bad. I always thought that I would commit suicide but whenever I would look at my children, I would stop myself thinking that if I kill myself what will happen to them. Due to my depressive state of mind, I left one of my daughters with my mother so that she could look after her as it was difficult for me to take care of both of them.



One day, I heard about the Burans team visiting our village, talking, sharing and giving counsel about mental illness and how to overcome problems related to it. When the team visited our village, I talked to Ms. Preeti, one of the Burans team volunteer and shared my story with her. She talked to me for a while and counselled me and later she took me to the hospital for consultation and follow up with the doctor. She continued to come and talk to me, always encouraging me and supporting me. She said that the entire Burans team was with her and they would also speak with her husband. One day the entire Burans team visited my home and counselled us on family life, caring, sharing and loving each other. They talked to my husband and made him understand how important it is for him to take responsibility of his wife and children and live as a family. My husband felt happy after the talk.

As time passed, the team kept visiting us and personally encouraging us. As a result, now my whole family is happy. We are happy and respect each other. My husband has given up his habit of consuming alcohol and drugs and has taken up a job in a factory. Through his earnings, we are able to send both our children to school in Sahaspur.

We are so thankful to the Burans team for their support and counsel. It is only through their support that we are together as a family today.

MDR - TB



Vijay
with
his
parents



Vijay was affected with MDR TB but due to the regular care and counselling of the staff, he has been completely cured from this disease. Since last 8 months he is perfectly normal. Now he has set up a mobile shop so that he can help his family financially. He is very happy. Hope staff regularly visit him and are continually giving him advice and counsel. Further, he has taken an initiative to have concern for people around him who are affected with MDR. Vijay had lost all hope to live, being fed up with this MDR disease, but Hope Target TB team helped him gain a new perspective and meaning in life. He is very thankful to the entire Hope Target TB team.



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