



Building trust across the world's divides

Initiatives of Change

AP Newsletter - Sep 2015



Welcome to Asia Plateau



Asia Plateau, after the two-month monsoon break, plunged with enthusiasm into a yet another never ending series of programs, with participants unlocking their inner potential through personal change.

Almost 450 participants came to a plethora of programs, starting with the Effective Living and Leadership program for industries, programs for Indian Army officers and students of Symbiosis Institute of Business Management. A very significant group was that of the officials of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) who have been sending the IAS officers here over the last ten years, which was followed by the department's internal 'retreat' led by the Secretary (P) to the Govt. of India Mr. Sanjay Kothari. After a tour of the centre and watching the AP documentary he made a special mention of his appreciation for the 'beautiful centre'.

One of the most touching moments was when Symbiosis student related the way a friend was shot dead and he had no idea whose bullet it was and he apologised and said, "To the whole of Jammu and Kashmir an Indian says Sorry."

At the same time, Grampari was working closely with nearby villages to promote eco-friendly Ganapati festival in which several local youth and village heads participated.

It was a very busy month for the new interns; supporting in all the programs by taking initiatives through songs, skit, and story sharing. The interns are growing through participation in the programmes learning what could change the society. They are learning new skills and present skits and songs during the programmes.

A month ago Wimارشana and Shashika of the 'Initiatives of Change for Life (IfL)' returned to Sri Lanka to prepare for the visit of the larger IfL group to that country. With help from the local team, they set up programmes through the length and breadth of the country and even before IfL's arrival had raised most of the finance needed.

"When man listens, God speaks. When man obeys, God acts. When men change, Nations change."

So said Frank Buchman, "The truth isn't new. But it is explosive. And one that each can test for himself or herself."

-Parag Shah



Evergrowing Impact through Programmes

September saw a variety of six programs, starting with an “Effective Living and Leadership” for 72 middle management and other employees from 10 different industries. This was followed by a day program for Indian Army officers from Institute of National Integration (INI) led by Himanshu and the Interns.

Twenty three of our Course Directors and key facilitators gathered from all over the country for a two day “Think Tank” to redesign and realign our ELLs and HELs with the current business scenario in a fast changing national climate. The programme had been prepared painstakingly by Kiran Gandhi with thoughts and ideas sent by a large number of our active and experienced industry people which were gone into carefully and final conclusions reached by the Think Tank. A significant outcome was the decision to present all our industry programmes under a single ‘group’ banner with CIB, ELL and HEL programmes brought under it.



Over the last 10 years deputed by DoPT, through ICCfG, about 400 public service officers –IAS, IPS, IRS, etc.- have gone through our programmes on “Ethics in Public Service” at Asia Plateau. Now the DoPT officers themselves decided to experience the programme and twenty director and higher level officers of DoPT came for a special programme and were totally won over by what they got.

Some of their decisions, quoted below indicate the impact of the programme:

“I will give due regard and respect to my subordinates to get highest quality of work from them.”

“I will consult all concerned before arriving at a decision.”

“I will say sorry to my family members, whenever I feel I made a mistake.”

“Say sorry to those whom I have hurt.”

This was followed by a retreat for their top brass and high-level trainers to plan for training programmes in Ethics for all government officers throughout the country. This is project being undertaken by the department in collaboration with UNDP which arranged this event also. Being so busy they could go for an unscheduled centre tour late at night (10pm) and then saw the AP documentary. So thrilled were they that many hope to return for a regular programme. The Secretary of the department Mr. Sanjay Kothari was full of appreciation for the place and people. He will return with his family for the valediction of a “Train the Trainer (TTT)” programme for their ‘Master Trainers’ in October.



The fifth and sixth programs were Effective Living and Leadership for Symbiosis Institute of Business Management. While Siddharth Singh led a programme for 104 management students, a second batch of similar numbers was led by Rhea D’Souza. Young and vibrant facilitator team including from Pune, Mumbai and Delhi joined the interns to inspire and delight the future managers. Some of the decisions heard were:

“I have understood myself and will change.”

“I will stop being judgemental.”

“I will take U-turn whenever required to change myself.”

“After this program i understood what i am and what i can do.”

Vibrant Grampari



Youth For Change Programme

The focus was to promote Eco friendly Ganapati Celebrations:

Some of the decisions taken and results we observed:

No use of plastics

Reduction in the size of the Idol

Reduction in use of Toxic 'gulaal'

Stopping of loud music (Dolby)

Led by Vishal Bagade and Vijay Bade, the entire Grampari team worked days and nights to conduct meetings, raise awareness through debates and to bring about these very crucial changes. The entire Eco Friendly Ganapati programme will end with a prize distribution ceremony with the best 3 receiving awards.

We had our own eco friendly Ganapati at Grampari

Governance

Under the leadership of Dipak Jadhav five Grampari staff spent 3 days in Vivar to get to know the village better. This included the filling in of a form for providing us with information about the village. The form whilst necessary for the implementation of the right projects, was also a wonderful way to connect and get to know the people of Vivar. The stay culminated in a full village meeting where we showed pictures depicting the condition of their village drains, roads and contrasting them with pictures where things have been done differently. Next day the youth of Vivar decided to clean their drains.

Trainings

Organised by Archana Rao 13 staff of an NGO called Keystone from Nilgiris came for 3 days training in Spring protection.

Organised by Shubhangi Autade 64 Agriculture Officers from Maharashtra came for one night 2 days programme for learning to implement a new scheme to increase Horticulture.

Livelihoods Programme

Caring for the hands that feed us.

The feedback in response to the introduction of the gloves programme were touching but also unexpected! 'We were saved from the mosquito bites' 'hands felt better' 'the boils that we got because of pesticides in the water have gone'. An unexpected feedback came from a lady from Vivar who spoke of the improvement in her relationships as a result of these gloves. Wanting to know more, Shubhangi, our livelihoods coordinator heard that because

of the burning sensation after a whole days' work in the field the lady used to get very irritable and snap at people. Gloves stopped her pain.

We are constantly working on the improving our design. Any ideas would be welcome. A pair of gloves cost Rs. 100/- This gives relief to one lady and livelihood to another who gets Rs. 20 for stitching them. Donations for this will be gratefully accepted.



Bhujaldharak Samiti

Organised by Archana Rao 57 people from the villages who want to form the Grampari Bhoojal Dharak (aquifer committee) Samiti came for a day's training with Dr. Himanshu Kulkarni of Acwadam. This was a landmark event held at Grampari. This was the first official meeting of the Bhujaldharak Samiti. Also invited were villages from those who weren't part of the first bhujaldharak samite. Pachputewadi took a decision to start their own

Samiti given the need to rely on several other villages to protect their springs. Ashok More, from our team and also from Pachputewadi will be leading this process.



Outreach

36 boys from villages were taken for a exposure visit to KeinFie and Bajaj

Five months journey with eight young people

The new, dynamic and diverse team of the AP Volunteer and Interns Programme (APVIP) embarked on the five months journey with eight young people from Tibet, Korea, Japan and India (Jamshedpur, Vijayawada and Chennai).

They have been quick to learn and into the life of AP and of the seminars with songs and skits.

This batch will have the opportunity to volunteer at two international conferences in January and February apart from two IAS programmes and several seminars for university students.



Minha (Korea)
There is no endless pain in life



Kunchok aTibet)
When there is a way,
there is a goal



Surjeet (India)
Quality for leadership



Masaki (Japan)
Pen is mightier than the sword



Naemat (India)
Where God leads,
God provides



Lekshey (Tibet)
If you want to fly, give up
everything that weighs
you down



Grupada (India)
Koshish karne walo ki
kabi haar nahi hoti



Nani (India)
Where there is a
will,
there is a way



If God Guides, He provides. IfL in Sri Lanka

At present there are lot of discussions in Sri Lanka about “change” as never before. The frustrated population of Sri Lanka who had been politically deceived after independence now have positive hopes from the new government which took office last August. But past memories and recent political events have begun to erode their expectations.

We recall how Sinhala politics and the greed for political power intentionally neglected the historical opportunity, after 30 years war, to create a sustainable peace in Sri Lanka which is a multi-ethnic and multi religious society.

An opportunity is now open in Sri Lankan politics again for a sustainable transformation.

The IfL team had decided to visit Sri Lanka in the month of October and help in taking new initiatives to create reconciliation.

Wimarshana Nishadi Ranasinghe and Shashika de Silva, the IfLers have been in Sri Lanka for the last two months. They are pushing the boundaries and moving forward to make it possible for the team to visit their country for at least a month. They found most of the required

funds first themselves contributing Rs. 15,000 each for the operation. Mr. Vijitha, the IfC President, said that if the unsalaried full timers can give, why cannot the others do so too? The total quickly became Rs. 2, 50,000. In addition, meals and accommodation provided was worth 40,000. Team are confident the balance would be provided for in the faith, “If God Guides, He provides.”

The rest of the team is being primed and geared up to set sail by the end of September to help build a more ethical and just Sri Lanka and also to strengthen the foundation for long term IfC work in the island.

The main aim of the IfL visit to Sri Lanka would be to help foster communal trust among Sinhala, Tamil and the Muslim communities.

A hopeful October awaits us as the Sri Lankan IfC is convinced that IfC India will be able to help in the crucial groundwork for the long-term need of greater understanding and friendship between the different ethnic communities of Sri Lanka.

Upcoming Events:

Ethics in Public Governance program for Officers of Odisha Administration - [Click to know more](#)

Effective Living and leadership - [Click to know more](#)

Heart of Effective Leadership - [Click to know more](#)

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