

in both English and Telugu has been 356, with 192 boys and 164 girls. This has included 68 new students.

6. Women. [For some years our granting agencies, justifiably in relation to “the poorest of the poor” and of who really does the work, have insisted that special attention be given to women in projects. Thus, a separate category for reporting -- and sometimes repetition of what has already been said.]

“Female role models from SERVE have been working in the slums, and women from them have been meeting together to discuss issues, in awareness programs. 30 women leaders (5 per slum) have been attending leadership training programs and going on exposure visits. Women have been participating in community councils, and thus identifying their own issues and designing strategies to deal with them. Of the 40 individuals working with SERVE in the project, 26 are women, in positions from Community Animators, Principals and Instructors, Health Care Workers, Clerks, Cooks and Ayas. Sangams [apparently councils or committees] have been created in all six communities with women filling 49% of sangam positions and receiving leadership training. 32 women have been elected leaders in their communities.

Training programs have been available for 60 women in sewing (lately some 34 enrolled), and for 40 in the Multi-purpose Health Worker Program.

More girls have been attending HOPE School on a regular basis at each grade level.

As mentioned above, SERVE has sent us some “before and after” stories of individuals benefited by the training given.

First, some figures on earnings after training (in Rupees):

1) graduates of nursing program, between 2,000 to 3,000 per month; 2) sewing trainees, between 1,500 and 2,500; 3) drivers, between 4,000 to 6,000.

[From other accounts it appears day labourers might get from 20 to 40, sometimes 50, per day, when employed; but in many cases, employment might be for only a fraction of a month.]

The stories sent, in some detail, were of three women trained in the health worker program, of five in the tailoring program, and of three boys and one girl who had attended

HOPE school. For both women and students, several of the families had migrated because of drought. It appears most, but not all, were illiterate. Of the women mentioned, most were married, some very young, at 10, 12 or 13 years; one was separated, and some had experienced harassment or abuse by their husbands. For several women, after they were earning on their own and usually helping to support families, harassment had stopped. We will include three stories in all.

a) Health program graduate in 2007, now earning some Rs. 3000 per month. She was the third of five children, her parents of a minority race. In 1997, she had been married, age 13, to an older cousin, 27. They lived one and one-half years with in-laws, and then her husband left her and subsequently married another woman. She lived in varying periods with former in-laws or her parents, doing the entire household chores, or working as a day-labourer. She had at times contemplated suicide. This went on until 2006 when she became known to the SERVE program through a woman from an uncle’s village. Her uncle persuaded her to join the training program.

b) Sewing program graduate in 2007, now earning Rs. 1500 to 2,500 per month at her own tailoring shop. She is now 27, but had been married at 12, and has three children. Her husband is a truck cleaner, but has been a drunkard, and abusive. Since she is now adding to the family income, her husband has stopped harassing her.

(It appears in the stories sent, that SERVE has helped the graduates in buying their own sewing machines.)

c) Of a young person, graduate of the HOPE school. This boy’s mother was a widow, and he was the youngest of five siblings. The older children had become anti-social; he quit school to work as a cleaner, with the purpose of helping his mother, but then himself got into bad habits. He was encouraged by a teacher in the HOPE school to resume studies, initially at the 3rd standard. With personal attention he gradually gave up his bad habits and graduated from the 7th standard with a 70% average. He is now studying in the 8th standard at a public school.

Note: Our fiscal year ends March 31. In the next issue we expect to include lists of donors for the period 2007-2008.



News



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P.O. Box 1685, Camrose, Alberta T4V 1X6 Phone (780)672-8222

President’s Message

I have been thinking about all the reports of violence and upheaval that have been in the news lately and wondering how they may affect Sahakarini’s work. We need to remember that violence and upheaval may not really be increasing, they are just being more widely reported, especially with the advent of the Internet.

Even so, the link between good governance and development is clear. The brutal regimes which have destroyed Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe are ample evidence of that. We simply could not help the people to help themselves in a situation of civil war and political unrest.

But there is hope. Sierra Leone is calm, and the government is taking steps to improve the lives of the people. We are sponsoring a project there to help improve agricultural practices and opportunities. I am optimistic that the Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe will not last much longer and we will be able to resume projects there. Brutal regimes are by nature unstable, and eventually topple.

India is going through a remarkable period of political stability, economic development and openness, and we are there with extensive projects in the slums of Hyderabad and in rural impoverished villages near Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

There was a recent series of reports in the Globe and Mail about violent gangs in Guatemala. We were certainly aware of such gangs when we visited projects there in March 2007, but they are primarily in Guatemala City. We have no doubt that our projects can thrive and flourish with the remarkable women in the three rural villages where we have continuing projects.

Alan D. Fielding, Q.C.
President

Annual General Meeting
Friday, May 30, 2008
to begin with carry-in supper, 6:00 p.m.
Bethel Lutheran Church Fellowship Room
73 Street and Marler Drive in Southwest Camrose

Loaves and Fishes 2007: Extend a Hand



It is truly amazing what our hands can do.

As evidence, one of the prized items of the evening was a sculpture of our Sahakarini logo. It was created by Dean Flewell from ordinary,

recycled metal. Scraps of metal, rusted and bent, may invoke nostalgia but are seldom something of beauty. However, in the hands of someone with imagination, who can see beyond the obvious, who cares about what could be, and has the skill to bring about the transformation, something not so lovely can become a thing of burnished beauty.

With our partners wherever we are, we also look beyond what is, imagine what could be, and begin the work, extend a hand, to transform lives.

Three speakers carried out the theme of extending a hand. Donna Tower shared how her participation in the workcamp in Brazil helped her to think and see in new ways as she witnessed the influence the daycares had in bettering the lives of the children and their families.

Signe Swanson told about the visit she and her daughter made to SERVE to help orient them to what would be required with them as a result of the major CIDA project we are partnering in. The work of change can be very complex and demanding.

Alan Fielding talked about the amazing women in the villages in Guatemala who are grabbing the chance at small scale micro-credit to improve their lives, but most of all their children’s lives.

Friends and supporters extended their hands to help by contributing approximately \$39,000 to the cause. The sandals alone raised \$3000 from an anonymous buyer whose story will be told next year.

The work of extending a hand begins with each of us and a passion for making a difference that burns every bit as bright and hot as the fire that transformed old metal or the spirit that walked humbly in a pair of simple sandals.

Application for Membership / Renewal of Membership

Please print name, address, and phone number (if you wish, also e-mail address) and sign below.

I, _____

of _____

Address

Telephone

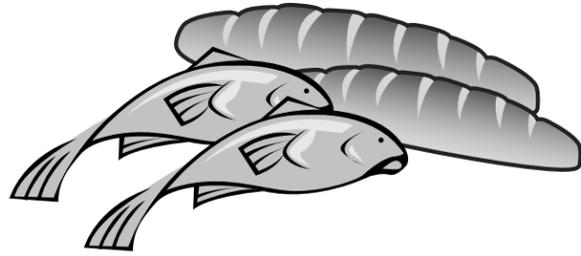
Email (optional)

commit myself to the purposes of Sahakarini, and hereby apply for membership/renewal of membership in Sahakarini Inter-World Education and Development Assoc.

Date _____ Signature _____

(optional) Enclosed is a contribution to the work of Sahakarini in the amount of \$ _____.

Mail to Sahakarini, P.O Box 1685, Camrose, Alberta T4V 1X6



Please keep your calendar open for the
2008 Loaves and Fishes Banquet

Saturday, November 15
 Doors to open at 5:00 p.m.
 Norsemen Inn

Visit of Dr. Luther Paul Nakka

Beginning in late January, Dr. Luther Paul, president of SERVE, had been visiting churches and organizations in the United States on business relating to other work he has in India. In the midst of this, in mid-February, he made a visit for a few days to Camrose. He attended and spoke briefly at a Sahakarini supper meeting, February 14th.

Unfortunately, while here, he had become ill, and thus, on return to the United States decided to cut short his tour and return home immediately. We have been gratified to hear from Rod Haney of CIDA, who visited Hyderabad recently, that Dr. Luther Paul appeared to have been recovering well.

News on New and Continuing Projects

Besides stories of some projects below, we continue work (with another NGO) in Sierra Leone, and we are starting a new project in partnership with CCDO (the group associated with Dr. Luke) in India. Also, there is some preliminary investigation of the possibilities of some new or revised work in southern Africa.

Film to be made re: Guatemala project

– by Margery Gaede

Sahakarini is excited to announce the undertaking of a new educational initiative. With help from CIDA, we have hired two young film makers from Camrose and Edmonton to tell the story of *transformation* of individuals in Guatemala brought about, in part, through funding of projects by Sahakarini, in partnership with the Presbytery of Kaqchikel, Guatemala. Hans Olson and Mike McLaughlin set out in early March to film the lives of individuals and families living in this area. Their stories will transport us into these people's lives, thoughts and hopes. We hope it will *transform* us as well as our viewers.

Many of you will remember that in 2006 Sahakarini partnered with the Kaqchikel Presbytery to make microcredit available to three groups of women to help generate income for themselves and their families. These women make soap, weave articles and raise small animals. In 2007 we extended funding to other families in the Kaqchikel area to help them buy basic water filters and stoves for their homes. This is their story.

Stay posted for the announcement of the film premiere in the fall. We plan to have a gala evening, and you are all invited.

[Editor's note: Mr. Olson a while ago had spent some time in Guatemala as a CIDA intern, and so has previously visited the groups. Since then, he has also taken some training in film production.]

Sahakarini In Haiti

– Sewing project extended

Some years ago Sahakarini established a sewing school project in Haiti. As it turned out, the people most interested were from Ontario. Support from the granting agencies has come to an end, but the school continues, and we have recently had word that in fact a second has been established.

Communication was from Paul Breau, who made a recent trip there along with Dennis Vandenberg, another supporter and representative of Sahakarini in Haiti. We include excerpts:

"Dennis and I spent a week in Haiti at the home of the Saintfleurs in Saintard. We are very excited and pleased with the health of not only the initial Sahakarini Sewing Center of Saintard at the home of the Saintfleurs, but also of the additional 'Sahakarini Sewing Center of La Gonave'.

"In Saintard the women (no men so far!) meet virtually every day from about 3 PM to as late as 8 PM. Saintfleur has acquired a small solar panel which charges batteries which feed a couple of light fixtures that provide light until this time. (It gets dark at about 6.)

"The new Sahakarini Sewing Center of La Gonave is located on a large island off the mainland, about 18 miles from the coast. The trip takes about 50 minutes by "Flyboat" as they call it. Costs of food, gasoline and other supplies are higher on the island, but nevertheless, the new Center is in a secure, well-built building. Dennis and I along with Saintfleur met with the proprietors of the building which is a school. The proprietor has an agreement with us that room for the Sahakarini Sewing Center will be provided to us for the first year at no cost. This center has been in operation for about two months already. We met with some of the users of the center and they are very eager. We have a qualified instructor for those that require help to learn. Some of the students walk down the mountain in the morning, six or seven miles, to attend the Center, and afterwards walk back home. Dennis, Saintfleur and I took a trip up the mountain to visit the homes of a few of these students. There is a great need up there and we are hopeful that we can provide a sewing machine or two up in that vicinity in the future.

"We were very pleased with what we witnessed at both locations."

HOPE and Change Hutment Project [the overall name for a complex work being carried on in the area near Hyderabad, India, by our partner SERVE (Society for Enlightenment and Reorganization of the Village Ends)]

We are in process of preparing a report for the period of July



The banners on the stage were made by students at Jack Stuart School. They applied pictures of ways we can extend a hand and surrounded them with their own handprints. The Grade 3 students have supported the HOPE School project for three years.

1, 2007 to December 31, 2007. The project officially runs from Jan. 1, 2007 to March 31, 2009. What we have received from India indicates that a great deal of progress is being made since SERVE has reorganized its management. We will try to summarize, sometimes quoting.

This project seeks to alleviate the poverty of marginalized Dalit and Tribal people in six hutments/slums in the target area outside Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. The goal is to foster greater self reliance and open up choices in all areas of life.

["Dalit" – at one time described as "untouchables" in reference to the caste system. In actuality, though true, included sub-divisions.]

From the reports and conversations with our partners, it appears that a great deal of the improvement for residents of the "hutments" comes in getting recognition from government authorities of their existence as families/individuals.

To illustrate: "Within the six hutments, of 980 families, 495 were issued ration cards by the government; 395 are waiting for ration cards. Within three of the six hutments, of 610 families, 530 have been granted land ownership by the government." And, "Government officials visited three of the six communities and have committed to visit others."

The first objective, "Community and Leadership development" largely involved forming self-help groups and giving training to their leadership. In the period, 14 additional self-help groups were formed in the six slums, and the leaders were given leadership training, focusing on the roles of non-government organizations, and of social workers, community organizers (or "animators"), community enterprise and the role of their groups in the process of development. A total of 33 such groups have been formed.

In respect to their status, Government officials have been made aware and were involved in discussion with slum leaders. As a result, ration cards were issued, and three of the six slums have been supplied with power from local



Ken and Caroline Taylor read the ongoing story of the sandals. Each year the buyer of the sandals writes the story of where the sandals have been. On the right a woven Guatemalan blouse (huipil) and photo of the 80-year-old woman who made it. She is one of the beneficiaries of our micro-credit project.

authorities. Negotiations have been going on to find new living arrangements for 43 families displaced from one hutment as a result of highway expansion. Negotiations have been going on with authorities for one of the slum communities to allot 30 square yards of land to each family, but this allotment would not feature permanent ownership.

Also, they have been working with authorities to extend old age pension benefits to poor elderly women in slums. SERVE has conducted a socio-economic survey, gathering information related to the health standards of the community, particularly of children.

3. Health. Immediate health needs of communities were met effectively, and people have been showing more health-seeking behaviours, including being more aware of causes and prevention of communicable and common ailments, and of STDs and HIV/AIDS. SERVE has participated in 11 government health programs in collaboration with other local health centres.

4. Income Generation. 120 Men and 100 women have been trained and thus are able to earn an income from new skills. These include 30 drivers, 30 plumbers, 60 tailors, and 40 multi-purpose health workers. The driving school program took 10 each time, approximately for 3 months. 25 more have been selected for future courses. 10 men were recently in training in the plumbing program, expecting to complete it in February, 2008. 52 women have been enrolled or have completed training to improve earning capacity as tailors. Of these, 27 have been enrolled recently in the sewing program with four having completed and five in the final stages of the program. A total of 73 women have completed training in the Multi-Purpose Health Worker Program, of whom it appears 34 women completed it in December 2007.

[Separately, SERVE has sent us "before and after" stories of some individuals, mostly women, helped by such training. We will briefly describe some of these later.]

5. HOPE school. In the 2007 to 2008 School Year, enrollment