

India: Street Children education and rehabilitation

In the South of India, the region Tirupur is known for its garment export industry. An important industry, that has grown enormously over the last 20 years. From the 80's till late 90's it was accompanied by a massive recruitment of child labour. Over the last decade international campaigns have helped to reduce child labour use. At the same time there is a large poor, illiterate rural population that has to cope with poverty. Every month, hundreds of street children come into the region, in search of a livelihood, looking for work. Besides the poor external environment, the region also faces environmental problems: drinking water, huge piles of solid waste and domestic and industrial effluents.

The organization SAVE is trying to improve the situation of street children in this region, and has a project in preparation for an ecological park, that is to sustain itself within 4 years. Linking the development of street children and the issue of managing environmental degradation is the key and novel creativity of this project.

Net4kids' partner for this project is [SAVE](#). This project is contracted and monitored by [Wilde Ganzen](#).

Ecological Park for Street Children in Tirupur

A sustainable ecological park has been selected as a tool to rehabilitate street children. The park will provide food, shelter, education, training and recreation. It will cultivate the habit of an ecologically sustainable living style. The energy of street children will be converted into positive action.

What

The ecological park will provide shelter and proper dothing to the street children. Their literacy skill will be developed through

educational programs. A fruit and dairy farm and agro-forestry will assist in gaining economic sustainability. Children will be trained as computer literates, waste recycling mechanics, carpenters, electricians etc. The street children will learn skills after which they are better prepared to face the competitive world.



Objectives

The aim is to change street children into dignified members of society by providing them with physical care, social care, education and income generation skills and attitudes. It is estimated that 100 to 120 children (from 8 to 18 years of age) will be rehabilitated each year.

How to help

The funds we are currently looking for to finance this project are: For 2005: Euro 77,082 (i.e. land purchase Euro 36,364, buildings Euro 24,818, site development etc. Euro 15,900). Planning is that the park can sustain itself from the proceedings of the land within 4 years.

The project activities are:

- the purchase of 6 acres of land (land has been identified)
- development of sustainability: fruit farm (bananas, mango, pomegranate, lime, papaya, coconut), tree planting (a.o. teakwood, silver oak), vermi-compost yard, dairy farm, etc.

Net4kids Aid Foundation

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- set-up of education and training
- shelter, food, education and development of income generation skills for street children with the aim of rehabilitation

The elder children will be involved in the preparation of the project in multiple stages.

Accomplished so far

The land has been identified and fences have been put up. The land has been cleaned. Several trees grow already on the land, such as coconut, mango and teak trees. SAVE has many years experience with the rehabilitation of street children.

The story of Mani

When SAVE rescued Mani, then aged about 12 years in the gutters of one of the dirtiest slum, he didn't have proper clothes and had been living without food for two days. He had left his home a few weeks earlier. He was a school drop out and both his parents were unemployed in his native place due to drought. He came to Tirupur in the hope of being employed in the garment export industry but he had no job, no food and no shelter. It took more than a week for the staff of SAVE to make him normal. SAVE would be able to make him rejoin with his family, but since there is no hope of getting food, education and a livelihood for him, he refused to rejoin with his family. He dropped out of school at the age of 10 while studying in 3rd standard and for the past four years he was involved in goat rearing. He forgot most of his learning from the school. Staff of the transit home taught him for two years and at the age of 15 he was enrolled in an income generation program of the organization. Now he is learning computers and he possesses skills in recycling waste papers as bags. He is an integral part of SAVE's growing association of rehabilitated street children.

About SAVE

There is a major need for rehabilitation of street children in this fast growing Tirupur area, but the institutional arrangements to shelter street children are inadequate. SAVE (Social Awareness Voluntary Education) is among the organizations who run shelter home projects.

SAVE is a Non Profit and Non Governmental Organization (NGO) working for the rights of children in the Tirupur region ever since its inception in 1993. Initially, SAVE's activities were conducted with the support of volunteers. In May 1994, SAVE became a full pledged organization by engaging full-time staff for the implementation of its planned activities.

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