



NEWSLETTER

January - March 2015

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Aarohi health team: **Exposure visit to Jamshedpur**

In the month of February 17 of our health supervisors traveled to Jamshedpur in Jharkhand to visit MANSI (Maternal and Neonatal Survival Initiative), as Aarohi and MANSI share the same objective: to reduce child and maternal mortality and morbidity. The visit was collectively orchestrated by AIF (The American India Foundation Trust), TSRDS (Tata Steel Rural Development Society) and SEARCH (Society for Education, Action, and Research in Community Health).

MANSI took our supervisors on home visits with government sponsored health workers (ASHAs), where they manage critical ante-natal and post-natal care cases. This provided a real sense of the ground realities of what issues ASHAs face, as well as how they manage and cultivate relationships with the women. Along with the learning and experience gained at MANSI, Aarohi's team also got a chance to see Tata Nagar and other famous sites.

A happy and productive exposure all-around! We look forward to implementing what we learned in our health project in Okhalkanda Block.

FIELD REPORT

Life in Okhalkanda

is simultaneously beautiful and challenging. In this remote mountain region, life is arguably most difficult for women, who gracefully bear the responsibilities of housekeeping, child raising, livestock caring, and physical labor in the fields and forests. Their days routinely start before sun-up and keep them moving until the whole family is fed, themselves last of all, late into the evening.

A major problem with this lifestyle as identified by Aarohi's Community Health Program is that the women do not decrease their activity during pregnancy. Thus, one of the major goals of this program is to re-educate women about health-seeking behaviors for themselves during pregnancy, and as mothers. Last month we supported two government-run Village Health Nutrition Days in Raikuna and Dewli. We brought together 8 pregnant women, 26 mothers, and 32 children.

After doing routine check-ups of the pregnant women, all the women received counseling on health-seeking behaviors. The children's growth was also monitored and they all received nutritional supplements and immunizations where needed. Most were right on track! In the few cases where malnutrition was identified, Aarohi and government health supervisors together spoke to their mothers about strategies to better provide for the children. The benefit of these Village Health Nutrition Days is that they bring together the community, in one place, to share knowledge and receive services creating energy and peer-pressure to adopt new behaviors.

UTTARAYAN 2015



After months of waiting for our children to make their trip to Delhi for our Annual Cultural and Fundraising Event, it finally happened on Sunday, 25th January at Sanskriti Kendra, Anandagram. This year's theme was 'purity' - how the purity of the Himalayas the Kumaoni children witness everyday move their emotions, thoughts and spirits. It is with this purity of thought they aspire for a Swaccha Bharat. The Ganesh stuti and the grand finale sing, sung for a Swaccha Bharat was well executed, uplifting and very well received by the audience. Despite the Republic day closures and Jaipur Literary Festival we had a healthy turnout of about 200 people.

As always, a Kumaoni lunch made by our very own staff was offered. **Sheeba Sen, our Secretary presented a brief 'report card' of the work done by Aarohi in 2014 and appealed to everyone to donate generously- because we need your support! Email us on info@aarohi.org should you need any information about his event.**

Showcasing our products in South India



In January and February Aarohi's Livelihoods Program spends most of its time among its friends at exhibitions. Per usual, our team and our beautiful products went on a grand tour, appearing in Delhi, Gurgaon, Coimbatore and Chennai.

However, not all was routine. For the first time, Aarohi participated in the 'Hands of Grace' event in Coimbatore. Despite our products being new to the audience, they were received very well - a testament to their quality! Also, the debut participation in Holi Cow exhibition in Delhi and the Gurgaon Mahotsav resulted in attracting new fans. The Dastkari exhibition in Chennai had its own grace and brought equally good attention to our products.

All in all, our exhibition season was a success! It is great to see our products in such a diversity of environments.

Education = Adventure and learning through fun!!!!

“Keep learning as the fruits of knowledge are abundant and sweet”.

Mohan Chandra Kabadwal
(Retd. Govt. Teacher, Satoli)



A team of eight teachers left for Pune on 17th February for a 3-day exposure visit in order to develop and enhance their teaching and classroom management skills, and learn creative teaching methodologies. The first visit was to Sapling Schools, a well-established chain of nursery schools in Pune, which is famous for their effective and innovative teaching methodologies.

Next, our teachers visited Mercedes Benz International School (MBIS). The huge campus and innovative ways of teaching were extremely thought provoking. The need for an organized teacher-focused system that covers all aspects: teacher trainings, lesson planning, follow-ups, cluster meetings was felt most intensely.

The final visit was to Arvind Gupta's Learning Centre, at Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) inside Pune University Campus. We went for a one-day workshop on creative methods of teaching science and maths using models and toys made from waste materials.

We learnt that teachers must go through a process of learning and unlearning before applying new methods in their classrooms. Also, we saw how technology can be integrated better into the classroom to enable and trigger discussions.

The visit ended with a unique and first time experience for the group, a flight journey back to Delhi, which was a whole new learning in itself!

FUNDRAISING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BORING!

Two supporters of Aarohi have shown us how fundraising can be creative, fun and build community. Our upcoming Aarohi Charity Bike over the Easter weekend is one such effort of ours to encourage everyone to be champion fundraisers in their own right. Here are their stories:



SYLVIE MORE

Charity Rider in AKHR 2015

Sylvie More, one of the UK Charity riders for this year's Kumaon Himalaya Ride (to be held from 3rd-5th April, is busy training in one of the hilliest places she could find in the UK: the Peak District*. This is a stunning national park in the north of England whose hills are breathtaking in more way than one!

Alongside her training regime, Sylvie has been busy raising awareness and funds. With the support of the UK Chapter, she organised a supper club in London on 5th March, the eve of Holi. Over 40 guests attended. They were treated to a 3-course Indian-themed meal cooked by volunteer chefs, an inspiring talk about education in the Himalayas and a life-skills workshops by Atul Pant, live music and henna and tikas by former Aarohi volunteers dressed in saris!

Sylvie has so far raised 1440 US Dollars for Aarohi's education and youth wing activities. We are appreciative of her dedication, and look forward to seeing her at the ride!

*Arun Harish, Aarohi's UK Chapter Head, is organising a fundraiser run in the Peak District in June 2015.

Find out more by writing to arun@aarohi.org



HELEN HITCHCOCK

Putting the Fun in Fundraising

What drives an eccentric English woman to raise funds for a school in the hills she has not yet even visited?

Well, first of all, she simply fell in love with the photos her friend Gina had taken of the countryside around Satoli, and, secondly, she just loves a challenge!

Helen's fundraising tips?

Fundraising must inspire, it must paint a picture for the audience, make them want to be involved as well as nudge them to think what they will be missing out on if they don't engage.

So, why not create a vehicle to tell the story? - hence my idea of 'Freddie the Fish:' swimming from England as far as the Himalayas via Pune! I am not raising funds... Freddie is!

Think about how TV advertising works!



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Neha Jacob

“My experience at Aarohi in Satoli...”

Life was rushing me by. Routines were intimidating me. I was feeling jaded by the day. It was time to stop, take a step back and do something about it, before it got the better of me. I chose the option of volunteering at Aarohi.

As soon as I reached Satoli, I was given a very warm welcome by my homestay family. This gave me a teaser of what Satolians are like. They are warm, welcoming and abundant in their love and affection. They know how to make merry and make most of life with whatever they have. They have imbibed the spirit of the mountains which means they are resilient and beautiful.

Working with the grassroots NGO is immensely gratifying. You start from scratch, there is plenty of scope for trial and error and you have to keep trying till you succeed. It is a long process that requires patience, dedication and commitment. But the rewards are far greater. It is an incredible feeling to be part of this process or being able to contribute to the change that you can see happening right in front of you.

During my 3 months in Satoli, I un-learned and re-learned some important lessons on life. Aarohi and Satoli had weaved their magic in me. Did I make peace with myself? Yes I did. It was hard not to.

FROM AAROHI'S KITCHEN

“Kumaoni Raita”

Ingredients

Cucumbers (2-3 for 4 people)

Mustard seeds- 2 Teaspoon

Turmeric powder -1/2 Teaspoon

Green chilies -2 Medium, finely chopped

Coriander leaves 1/2 Bunch (50 gm), finely chopped

Curd, or yoghurt- 400 gms

Salt To Taste

Method

- 1 Peel, grate and squeeze to get water out of cucumber.
- 2 Grind mustard seeds in a 'Sil Batta' or in grinder with a small quantity of water to make a paste.
- 3 Add paste of mustard seeds, salt, turmeric and chopped green chilies into the curd and Mix well.
- 4 Then add grated cucumber and mix well. Allow to stand for some time so that the flavors blend.
- 5 Garnish with coriander and serve as side dish with any meal.



AAROHI KUMAON HIMALAYA RIDE (AKHR) 2015

In its second year, AKHR 2015 was a resounding success. Despite the unpredictable weather, relentless rain, dropping temperatures and poor riding conditions, our 43 riders including our two local boys Shahnawaz and Roshan, braved it all covering more than 100 kms on mountain roads.

The event took place during the Easter weekend from 3-5th April. The volunteer team from Delhi lead by Ashwin Bhatia and Lalit Bhandari took charge and in true spirit managed the show faultlessly. The objectives of the ride have been to promote mountain biking in the region and through this platform raise funds for Aarohi Bal Sansar and Youth Wing. This year's event was a testament to the fact that fun and social responsibility go hand and hand.

We thank all our riders for their enthusiasm and generous spirit in supporting Aarohi. Most of all, we thank our stellar volunteer team of Ashwin, Lalit, Usha, Ankur and Trilok for being such beaming examples of a true volunteering spirit.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

You can become a member of AaroHi or make a donation towards any of our projects. You can reach out to your family and friends and talk about our work. You can help spread the word.

For more information email us at info@aarohi.org

DONATE ONLINE!

We have partnered with GlobalGiving offering an easy and safe platform for online giving. **Go to www.globalgiving.org and search for 'AaroHi'.**

JOIN HANDS

We welcome doctors, teachers, managers, designers, musicians, theatre persons, IT professionals or anyone with a desire to share his or her skills to volunteer with us. AaroHi encourages creative ideas and provides a unique opportunity to experience a different way of living and working.

All contributions to AaroHi are eligible for Income Tax Exemption under section 80G of the IT Act.



AaroHi

AaroHi is a voluntary organisation founded in 1992. It is registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. It is also registered u/s 80 G and 12 A of the IT Act and under the FCRA.