AROH
F O U N D A T I O N

AROH Foundation

Annual Report 2006-07

…working to emancipate the poor and disadvantaged through programmes of education for life, vocational training and community health to promote a democratic, exploitation-free society, ensuring quality of opportunity to all - both at research level and action level.

A Ray of Hope

Intoduction

AROH (A Ray of Hope) Foundation is a non-government, social welfare organisation formed by a group of likeminded professionals and academicians from various segments of the society. AROH Foundation works to emancipate the poor and illiterate people through programmes of education, vocational training and improvement of community health services to promote a democratic, exploitation-free society, ensuring quality of opportunity to all both at research level and action level.

AROH's mission is to provide necessary services and facilities for education, growth and development of the vulnerable women and children. To understand and analyse the socio-economic concerns of women, especially from the weaker sections of society, whenever possible empowering women to gain their rights and advocate on behalf of them.

To fulfil its aims and objectives, the organisation adopts a two-pronged strategy. It undertakes research activities in the areas of concern to strengthen and consolidate the policy-level decisions. Along with research activities, the organisation is also actively involved in grassroots-level action to make a direct difference to quality of several lives.

Major activities and projects taken up by AROH in 2005-06 are:

- New Working Space and Office for AROH
- Computer Literacy for Under Privileged Girls
- Literacy and Education Programmes under UNGEI
- Padhna-Likhna' project
- Health camps under programme for Healthy Living
- Counseling of psychiatric patients
- Research and Surveys

New Working Space and Office for AROH

AROH Foundation's activities were shifted to a bigger and more accessible space at F-52 Sector 8, NOIDA. The space has following major advantages:

- Bigger area that provides space for more activities
- Better approach and accessibility
- Amidst the industrial sectors which require more welfare activities and target audience is approachable.

The office has become functional from the current financial year and we were able to launch several important projects from here.

Computer Literacy for Under Privileged Girls

This was the first project to be taken up at the new premises.

The world is in the threshold of a new revolution where time and space will no longer be barriers for communication. While many have access to computer, there are still quite a few, who have no clue whatsoever to the so called technological revolution. The need of the moment is to bridge the digital divide. Girls in a non-IT-enabled space grow up with a distinct knowledge disadvantage, not only compared to the more developed countries, but also to those girls who have access to Information Technology in India.

At AROH, we started using educational software to educate under privileged girls who are unfamiliar with the use and benefits of Computer Technology, in the month of March. The material is in the form of interactive games, activities, classes. The software used for the programme is game- and- application-based, allowing the users to learn through self-paced, interactive sessions.

The valued qualities of the programme that AROH has planned lie in four areas. First, the chosen software provides an interactive experience that the girls will enjoy. Second, the programme matches the level of challenge to the capability of the individual learner to ensure an appropriate level of challenge and learning. Third, the program allows the child to control the pace as a means of retaining their interest and involvement. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, the child would get immediate feedback as she is learning. This latter point is very important as all of us, in a learning experience, want feedback. "How am I doing so far?"

OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING

Our objective is to provide an exposure which should enable them to access new and necessary information so that they are able to explore more and better options for a better quality of life.

Giving children a creative space is important to bring their imagination to life and to develop inspiration, wide ideals and an active imagination which may constantly lift the child to a higher and finer level. Children are naturally curious and creative. At AROH the girls are using graphics and animation programs which will allow them to utilise their creativity and imagination to the fullest.

AROH desires to provide a window of opportunities to the girls by exposing them to an environment which gives them all the information required in various areas and subjects. AROH wants to contribute to causes that would create opportunities for girls participating in this training programme.

Personality development can help one improve and achieve career goals. In this age of competition, a child has to be very intelligent and smart right from his childhood. Self-confidence must be increased in a child right from the beginning. Our objective would be to help them recognize their abilities and build their confidence.

THE TRAINING PROGRAMME HAS BEEN DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS:

1) Basic Computer Literacy:

The first part of the training programme for street and working girls comprises of a basic Computer literacy module

MODULES OBJECTIVES:

Information Science:
1.   To identify the main components of a computer system.
2.   To explain how to switch on and off the computer system.
3.   To explain how to boot the computer system.
4.   To demonstrate how to use the printer.
5.   To identify a floppy disk.
6.   To demonstrate proper handling of floppy disk.
7.   To identify a CD-Rom disc.
8.   To demonstrate proper handling of CD-Rom disc.

9.   How to develop confidence with the computer mouse through various graphical projects.

2) Computer Aided Learning:

Once the basic Computer Literacy need is addressed, expansion into education in the fields of introduction of alphabets, numbers ,different colors, monuments of Delhi, etc. would be the next step.

The objective of the second part of the training is to teach the girls the basics of English and Numbers , spoken and written. Our effort is to make learning a pleasure for them by capturing their interest and bringing the excitement of learning for them. Also, this will help them build their communication skills .Having strong written and verbal communication skills are important to carry out a business of any kind , this will also help them with day to day human transactions.

Result of the training:

There should be a measurable improvement in the quality of learning gained after the completion of the training Programme at AROH. The girls should be able to recognize, understand and speak out English alphabets and numbers.

Literacy and Education Programmes Continue:

AROH Foundation has been working towards increasing awareness about the importance of educating the girl child. Under this programme, several types of awareness building

activities are taken up for different target groups. For policy-makers and stakeholders, it prepares of reports on indicators, best practices and interventions needed to increase the GER in educationally backward areas. The Foundation works closely with the government of India and UN system. It mounts its efforts on programmes like UNGEI to reach the unreached. It participated in celebrations of Global EFA Week and prepared several posters and information material on girl's education which was widely disseminated. The programme was launched in 2003 and has since been carried out in various locations. Under this programme in the current year following activities were taken up:

Preparation and Dissemination of pamphlets: Awareness building material was disseminated in these workshops.

Padhna-Likhna' project

In recognition and support of community based grass root organisation - AROH's efforts continued in promoting early literacy for the disadvantaged children via its community reach programmes.

AROH's initiative called 'Padhna-Likhna' is to promote reading, writing, and basic arithmetic in children and the organisation is working with the communities and gram panchayats to help ensure that children between the ages of 6 and 14 achieve basic literacy.

The 'Padhna-Likhna' project, was launched in January 2006, will try to improve the learning levels of children in language, mathematics, physical and social sciences and life skills.

The programme involves four major components - introducing learning to read activities in the target groups, creating and supplying reading and learning materials to volunteers, involving mothers in their children's learning, and mobilising youth groups in helping teachers, children, and parents.

The programme is an step in the efforts to end the cycle of poverty perpetuated by illiteracy and poor education. As part of its mission, AROH volunteers see that every child is in school.

Community Health Initiatives

AROH is running several community health programmes with the help of resources drawn from community, corporates, civil society and volunteer support. Some of the major programmes carried out duting the year are:

Identifying health problems and hazards in different areas:

Under this programme we carry out surveys to identify area-specific health concerns and try to find their root causes. Problem is tackled by adopting a two-way strategy – removing the cause on the one hand and providing medical aid in the other. Such surveys were carried out in 6 villages of Dadri Block.

Programme for Healthy Living

The project supports the national reproductive and child health programme in its aim to reduce maternal, neonatal and child mortality. It's aim is to improve overall immunisation coverage, raise awareness about the indispensable role played by routine immunisation in protecting a community's health, improve the quality of emergency obstetric care and promote an integrated management of early childhood illnesses.

Gender mainstreaming is of special concern to us. Due to their lower social status, girls are far more at risk of malnutrition than boys their age. Partly as a result of this cultural bias, up to one third of all adult women in India are underweight. The project seeks to provide the healthcare facilities to girl children and to create awareness about equal status and facilities for both girls and boys.

Project Duration: The duration of the project is one-year in each area. The frequency of camps depend on the local needs.

So far we have organized the following camps in 4 villages, each of one year duration.

Bal Swasthya Shivirs (Child Health Camps) organised in Villages Bhishan Pura and Khora of NOIDA, as a follow up for ongoing activities in these villages. Regular periodal camps are organised in these villages and follow-up is kept. The project envisages to organise several one-day health and childcare camps in rural and backward areas in and around Delhi. These camps will:

- Provide free health check-up facilities for children upto 12 years of age.
- Provide free vaccination for infants.

- Provide counselling to mothers for better health and hygiene
- Check if there is any neglect in healthcare of a girl child by the mother or the family.

It was observed that the children suffered from cold, fever, throat problems. Generally they had (Ear Nose Throat) problem. Some children were so dirty that there is lack of proper hygiene rules. Mothers looked slightly better but they were unable to keep their own ward clean. Some of the children were malnourished. Some rare cases of disorders were also seen. A child if 1 year old had some bulging portion in back of his shoulder like a tumour, another child of same age had some problem in his private parts which gets swollen in the night and reduces in its usual shape in the morning. Which cannot be cured in the camp, for which they were referred to the hospital. Neither the children get a proper diet nor do the mothers care for them. Malnutrition is also a major contributor to childhood deaths. Mothers and other caretakers need to know how to feed their child correctly to prevent nutritional problems. If a child becomes malnourished appropriate health care from a trained provider is essential.

Both prevention and care are important at all times, but the balance between them shifts over time, from when children are born to the age 19 prevention and care for illnesses are both very important, and both focus primarily on the mother and other caretakers the appropriate introduction of complementary foods, hygiene practices, and caring behaviours that contribute to the healthy development of the young child. Care for illnesses in infants and neonates are also very important, as young children can die very quickly if an illness is not recognized. Sick young infants must be taken immediately to a trained provider who can give appropriate care. Frequent camps have to be organized in the area to see what progress has been done by the caring mothers.

Mahila Swathya Shivirs (Women Health Camps): organized in villages Agahpur and Barola. Stress was on reproductive health and childcare.

Counseling of psychiatric patients

Under this programme we started a training programme for Rehabilitated Psychiatric patients In the months of September to November 2005, training programme was conducted for 10 psychiatric patients undergoing treatment at Vinayak Hospital NOIDA.

These patients suffered with schizophrenia and needed assistance in readjusting to society once his or her symptoms are controlled. Common symptoms patients suffering with schizophrenia include thought disorder, delusions, and hallucinations. Thought disorder is the diminished ability to think clearly and logically. Delusions are common among individuals with schizophrenia. Hallucinations can be heard, seen, or even felt; most often they take the form of voices heard only by the afflicted person.

The hospital provides prevocational and therapy activities to the chronically mentally ill people The training programme at AROH forms an important part of the overall Rehabilitation process.

Depression is common for people that have schizophrenia - it is a frequent mood disorder that co-exists with schizophrenia .Fourteen patients from the day care centre have been trained in the basics of computer literacy at AROH. All the patients benefitted from their classes. The computer for many of the patients was "some what like a magician that creates magic". During these classes the patients were thinking positive and their minds were occupied in learning more about the Computer which helped them move out of their depression. The computer served as a friend to the patients , using graphics and animation programmes they were able to express themselves fully. They enjoyed listening to music on the computer thoroughly.

Research and Survey

New trends and challenges in secondary education in the Region with special emphasis on science and technology teaching

Commissioning Agency: UNESCO, New Delhi

The study, which started last year, was finished this year and final report was submitted to UNESCO. The study was being conducted to strengthen the national capacities and the knowledge base for the decision- and policy-making, curriculum planning and for implementation of secondary education reforms and management of science and technology teaching for secondary education.

Research and Surveys

During the year 2005-06 two research programmes have been completed. The final reports have been submitted to the respective agencies. *(Reports can be made available on request)*

Educational status of Minorities and causes for their backwardness & identification of socioeconomic indicators for backwardness

Commissioning Agency: National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

This study was meant to capture the educational status of minorities using statistical, economic, social, political and other dimensions including Constitutional, legal, geographical, social/religious, ethnic (tribal: non-tribal), etc. Interdependency of these factors shall be explored. It aims to find out the rationale behind certain minority classifications such as national, regional, social, religious, etc., and unravel the present requirement of safeguards, and the use or misuse of such provisions by the 'minorities', and ultimately to assess whether this classification or categorization is healthy, and whether this classification is of help to the people/groups in any significant way.

During a visit to a minority school

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The study was conducted to strengthen the national capacities and the knowledge base for the decision- and policy-making, curriculum planning and for implementation of secondary education reforms and management of science and technology teaching for secondary education.

A Government school in the city seems well equipped to handle secondary education