

Dear Friends,

One more Christmas in our lives is on its way. I was reminded of my interaction with PLHAs*, men and women, during their first get together in Yuva Bhavan at the launch of Navajeevan's project for the care and support of children and their families affected/infected with HIV/AIDS. Most of the parents present were down with AIDS and were from marginalized background. Some of their faces reflected the impending doom and despair. They expressed their anxiety about the future of their children more than theirs.

During the meeting, when I told them, "Mee thodu memu unnamu" ("Come what may, we are with you always") in all their tribulations, to provide them unconditional care and support and for their children, I vividly remember their smiles; the relief and glimmer of hope flashed on their pale faces.

It seems, that small phrase "Mee thodu neenu unnanu", came from the depth of our non-judgmental hearts, lifted their spirits up. For a moment, all of us are in a tearful silence!

Perhaps, infant Jesus' message from the manger to each one of us is same, "Mee thodu neenu unnanu" ("Come what may, I am with you always") in all ups and downs, in all deprivations, in all humiliations, in all tribulations, ...

For me then, the Christmas means nothing but to be non-judgmental to the deprived, the most vulnerable – to be with them, **"Mee thodu neenu unnanu"**!

Wishing you a Happy Christmas & Joyful New Year,

Fr. Koshy.

**PLHAs – People Living with HIV/AIDS.*

**The Grandpa's visit was really an enriching and enhanced experience for the children!
Fr. Koshy visited different Boarding Schools where Navajeevan children are housed.**



At the moment, under Street Based Children & Anti-Child Labour Programmes, the Counselling Teams have 1675 children/adolescent girls and boys for individual follow-up – including Home Enquiries when needed. Out of these, 850 are children from the most marginalized communities/families enrolled in regular schools – mostly after bridge course. 403 of these children (girls: 218 & boys: 185) are attending school staying in 9 Government Run Social Welfare Hostels and 6 Boarding Schools run by Don Bosco Community and other religious congregations. 356 children (girls: 130 & boys: 226) attend local 8 local schools, mostly run by government, staying in their families.



On the threshold of Senior Citizenship! Fr. Koshy turned 60 on last September 15th. Thanks to Friends of Navajeevan – Holland for sponsoring cake for children of various Navajeevan centers on the occasion!



They are rewarded for their hard work – heralding a new era in Navajeevan. A batch of 18 members of various Children Parliaments under Navajeevan's 'Child Safety Net' participated in UNICEF sponsored training 'Children As Media Producers' (CAMP). Mr. Ch. Anand Kumar first underwent a ToT who in turn trained the team for 3 months. Mr. Flow, a volunteer, also helps the kids a lot in the process. In all seven categories, the children produced 17 short documentaries on issues related to their villages. They themselves made the script and shot them. The team attended the final two-day programme at Hyderabad, and came back with flying colors – with 3 awards: 2 for Self-Employment and Health and Hygiene categories. The most appreciated film was that of 'Plastic pollution'. Seeing the film, some of the village members have already started taking action against the usage of plastics. And, State level overall award. Now, Navajeevan has taken the policy of continuing CAMP productions and use visual medium to highlight the issues of children and their villages by children themselves. Kuods to Anand, Flow and our kids!



Life was always ups and downs for Nagadurga - an orphan girl took refuge under Navajeevan's wings when she was only 11. Finally she found her partner for life. The couple is blessed with a child and Navajeevan with another grand-child!



There is still a deficit amount of Rs.4,764,099/- (excluding the cost of furniture and other interior facilities) required to complete the construction of a two-storied building to house 'Balika' (meaning 'girl-child'). As of now, there are 82 girl-children, attending bridge course, aged between 5 and 14 years, housed in rented residential centres, including 'Sethu'. These girl children are from streets, run away from homes, trafficked for prostitution, victims of child labour and sexual abuse, orphans, etc. The present project 'Balika' is primarily meant to house these girl-children, mostly from the marginalized communities/families. It is also meant to accommodate rescued street girls above 15 years on a temporary basis before they are joined in a permanent rehabilitation process. **The construction of the two-storied building for Balika has reached to the pillar level of the top floor. The second and final slab will be completed before Christmas.** If funds come in time, we plan to complete construction of Balika by the end of March 2011.

- The total project costs comes to Rs.11,077,071/- (Foundation: Rs.1,292,352/- + Ground Floor: Rs.3,738,080/- & First Floor: Rs.4,145,371/- & Compound Wall: Rs.1311630/- + Bitumen Road: Rs.589638/-). ***The original estimate for constructing the two floors has been increased due to rise in costs for cement, sand, bricks and steel.***
- Towards these costs, Mr. Bernd Traude, through MISSIO, donated an amount of Rs.4,512,972/- (Euro 72,800/-).
- Navajeevan's former volunteers and friends in Germany, Austria and Holland, collected an amount of Rs.1,800,000/-
- Thus, there is a Deficit of Rs.4,764,099/-.
- The Compound Wall is necessary as the structure is for girl-children and the location is open space with river on one side & so too the Bitumen Road as the area around the building becomes slushy during the rainy season.



Trainings on Child Rights Monitoring resulted in starting the process of establishing district level Child Rights Monitoring Cells (CRMC) as part of District JJ Forums with a view to assist Children Welfare Committee apart from advocating the rights of the child. CRMC consists of committed and trained activists who act on individual basis irrespective of the organizations they work with. The CRMC – Krishna district is now very active in fact finding the child rights violations. Since in its inception, in March 2010, CRMC – Krishna district has so far undertaken 27 cases of child rights violations in and around Vijayawada (rape/sexual harassment: 10 & corporal punishment 6 & physical torture: 3 and others: 8). Of these, 15 cases has been registered JJ AP Desk intends to develop CRMC – Krishna Dt. as a replicable model for other districts., the investigation is on and the accused have been arrested and are in court process. CRMC has done fact finding in all these cases except one.



“Nee thodu” (I am with you) – the project providing care and support for Children and their families affected/infected by HIV/AIDS observed ‘World AIDS Day’ – had a family gathering in Yuva Bhavan of children and their parents without media fanfare – provided nutritional support for over 50 families. During 20009-10, Street Presence team rescued 40 children (23 boys and 17 girls) affected by HIV/AIDS – with their parents either infected or died of AIDS & 17 children (13 boys and 4girls) infected with HIV/AIDS. These apart, since November 2009, Navajeevan identified more than 125 families with 242 children infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, covering 12 target villages and some of the slums in Vijayawada urban.



The scenes are from Life Skill cum Sexual Health Education training organized for 83 girl students who attend Intermediate, Degree and other professional courses, such as, Nursing, Lab Technology, etc. Life Skill – Sexual Health Education is now being inbuilt into the activities of various Navajeevan centers, with the objective of developing competencies and actual positive behaviours among children/youth. Main Life Skills are: problem-solving; decision-making (including goal setting); critical thinking; creative thinking (including value clarification); communication skills; interpersonal skills (including assertiveness); self-awareness; empathy; coping with stress and coping with emotions. Without acquiring the Life Skills, the real impact of other activities – such as, skills trainings, education scholarship, etc.- cannot be achieved. In today's market, a student cannot bloom without life skills and career orientation, however high marks he/she obtains in exams.



'Child Safety Net' program was initiated by Navajeevan to develop a replicable model by developing sustainable institutional measures in a village for preventing any sort of child abuse (including physical and sexual violence, exploitation by trafficking and employing child in hazardous works detrimental to childhood and without providing opportunity for quality education and forcing the child many a time to run away from the family) and for creating an enabling environment by ensuring the protection of each child and his/her overall development on an equitable basis in the respective village. The underlying principle is to promote and practice an 'Integrated Child Rights Approach' to realize the dream of a Child Friendly Village.

The whole process is based on the concept that children have the capacity to identify the issues affecting their lives, after collecting the required information/data (perhaps more efficiently than adults). However, they cannot address them realistically, which may be, at least when socio (caste)-economic-political issues are involved, falling within the horizon of adults. This apart, when children take the responsibility of addressing these complicated issues, they may endanger their childhood (by becoming pre-mature adults), hindering their education/acquiring the skills necessary for their all round development to responsible adulthood. In sum, Child participation (Children Parliament) and the protection of children cannot be seen or practiced in an isolated manner but that being taken as the Inner Circle to be protected and nurtured within the Outer Circle of Adults (Activists Group).

The core strategy is to equip the village children and elders with information and required skills - on international instruments, Constitution, national/state legislations, programmes/schemes – to enable them to demand and access their rights and entitlements. In sum, the project implementation aims towards building ‘Knowledge-Based’ Village Communities as part of actualizing an Integrated Child Rights Approach.



The 26 evening tuition centers, covering 933 children as of now, in 10 Child Safety Net Villages, enable their parents to retain them (most of whom are former child workers/dropouts) in regular schooling. The volunteers at these centers provide, on an individual basis, additional support for children after school hours to grasp their daily lessons and do the home works. All these children are not having a favorable environment at home to study as most of the families are only one-room huts, and most of the parents are illiterate. The tuition centers are also the rallying points within a village to bring together the local community under the umbrella of Child Safety Net project, being implemented by Navajeevan – organizing children under Children Parliaments (CPs) and their parents under Activists Groups (AGs). These CPs and AGs discuss the issues of children in particular and the issues of the local community in general and take measures to address them. It is amazing to see how the members of the CPs identify the issues and take measures to address them by themselves and, when not possible, with AG’s support – be it enrolling and retaining their peers in regular schools by motivating parents; mobilizing support for their education and medical emergencies; pressurizing the elected village president and ward members to repair/clean the drainage, provide safe drinking water, close a liquor shop which creates nuisance to the peaceful environment of the village/school, and many a time, spoiling their family lives by making some of their parents more and more addicted to alcohol.



Thanks to the efforts of Infirmary team and the calipers by Rotary Club, Ganji Sekhar is on his ‘legs’ again! Sekhar’s left leg was cut off when he fell under a running train. During the year 2009-10, from street and various Navajeevan centers, 1317 cases were referred to Navajeevan Infirmary – including Malaria, Dengue and Chikungunya cases, 5 train accidents, 18 TB with HIV+, 1 renal failure, etc. Out of these, 1084 were taken for consultation as Outpatients to different hospitals, especially to Government General Hospital (785, i.e., 72.42%). This has helped a lot in reducing the costs. 85 cases were admitted, including 20 to Government General Hospital and 42 to St. Ann’s Hospital.



Training in Low Cost Nutrition and growing kitchen garden are organized for children and their parents, and vegetable seeds are distributed under the aegis of CPs and AGs. The aim is to inculcate the culture of kitchen garden in the backyard of their houses, however smaller plot of land they are having – may be less than one cent, and thereby, to produce vegetables required and, in turn, to contribute to enhancing the most needed nutrition level, especially for those families affected/infected by HIV/AIDS. Apart from tackling to some extent the acute problem of mal-nutrition, the stated activity also is aimed to enhance the soft skills, such as, shouldering responsibility, budgeting skills, positive competitive spirit, team work, self-confidence, etc. among the children.



Some of our volunteers with a group of trainees attending skills training in Computer Applications & Beauty Culture. Since September 2010, Navajeevan conducts skills trainings in computer applications, beauty culture and electrician for the unemployed rural youth, above 18 years, in collaboration with Bosco-Tech – Delhi and Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), GoI. As is the case with skills training programme for the street youth above 18 years under national Academy of Construction (NAC), all the trainees are awarded Certificates by the Government of India and assured of job placements.

Thrisha – a 4 year old orphan girl was rescued by Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and Child Rights Monitoring Cell (CRMC). The girl was with burns and bruises all over – inflicted by her Aunt in the name of disciplining her. She is now safe and happy go lucky school going child – well taken care of by her foster parents – Mrs. Kamala's family, one of Navajeevan's Accountants.



They Left Us! May They Rest In Peace!



In the morning of September 14th, Mr. Johnson died of massive heart attack. He was in-charge of college and some of the school going children. He was on his way to attend the needs of some children by bike. Suddenly he felt severe pain and collapsed after making a call to his friend nearby. By the time they reached him hospital door, he died. He is survived by his wife and three children. As part of supporting his family, Mrs. Mary, his wife, has been appointed as Nurse Asst. in Navajeevan infirmary.

Sk. Basha, 21 years, left us for his eternal rest on October 30th. As we conveyed in our last Newshour, he was suffering from renal failure for the past one year and we were keeping him alive with frequent dialysis and towards the end it became necessary to have it almost every other day. As an 11 year old, 10 years back, Basha was taken under the protective wings of Navajeevan.

From the bits he has given us while he was sick, we did succeed in tracing his siblings. We called one of his sisters to inform her of his death. She was very keen that her brother's body should be brought to her home about 40 kms away from Vijayawada. His siblings gathered together to perform the last rites in Muslim tradition. It is sad for all of us that Basha had to go at the prime of his life. Yet, we also feel in a way relieved because his suffering has finally ended. In fact, one of our former volunteers from Spain, Enrique, did offer to donate one of his kidneys so also did Ch. Anand Kumar, a former Navajeevan kid presently staff, come forward. These were indeed very touching experiences for us, that these two came forward so spontaneously with such a generous offer to give away a part of their vital organs! We also take this occasion to thank specially our infirmary team and numerous others who helped Basha throughout.



Marati Babu, 19 years, one of our senior boys got drowned in Krishna River and died when he went for swimming. The boy was attending a three-day preparatory Life Skills Camp at Chiguru (children's village) prior to joining Vimukthi De-addiction Camp. Until 18 years, he as an orphan spent most of his childhood in a child care home in Bangalore. He joined us just this month beginning. We thankfully remember our Volunteers – Johannes, Ferdinand and Hanna – who did exemplary first-aid to revive him. In fact, daring strong currents, it is they who fished the body out of river.



This year too, our [Metu boys won prices for their craft works in an exhibition](#) organized by Maris Stella College. In all the re-orientation camps and bridge schools, craft class is an essential ingredient.

[Scenes from a 'Day-Out' with 102 street girls and boys as part of weaning them away from street life.](#) The children were encouraged to speak up their minds in an 'Open House' about their problems, especially the reasons what keep them away from Navajeevan shelter. Of course, it was an eye opener for all of us staff who participated. Our 'Play Back Theatre' troupe did a wonderful performance during the day, by enacting on the spot the life experiences narrated by children. Of late, Play Back Theater has been incorporated as part of Life Skills Education. For many children, it has turned into the beginning of a healing process. The experience of Play Back Theatre is same for many of women victims of domestic violence who participated in 'Women's Court'. Our thanks to Sr. Clare and Fr. Thomas Pallithanam who trained the team!



[Some of our present Volunteers in the group photo \(left\) & Dorothie with some children \(middle\) & Niklas with parents and siblings when they visited Navajeevan.](#)
[Dear Niklas & Dorothie, Welcome Back Home!](#)



Shots from 'Awareness Drive' against Domestic Child Workers, during Child Rights Week in November 2010, participated by 100 National Service Society student volunteers from Maris Stella College along with Navajeevan Team & the rescued child workers narrates their plight with the District Collector, Mr. Peeyush Kumar, while their parents and employers argues with him and Child Welfare Committee (CWC) members. The story is not different from the rescue drive in the month of June 2010. The ignorance and vulnerability of the marginalized families being exploited by hawkish employers and dominant households! Whatever may the reasons, while all the rescued children wanted to be school and enjoy their childhood as their peers, the parents often push them to exploitative and detrimental child labour market for short gains. During this drive, altogether 70 child workers, including 16 girl child domestic workers were rescued and rehabilitated.



Visit by SKN Team from Holland (Ms. Annelies & Ms. Annette Selten along with Mr. Solomon Chelladurai, the local consultant)



Visit by JDW Team from Germany (Ms. Anna Patzke Salgado & Mr. Roland Strux)



Visit by JEW Team from Austria (Ms. Karin Hintersteiner & Ms. Nina)



A 'Home' Visit by our former volunteers. Eric, Heidi and Ilona – representing 'Navajeevan Friends of Holland' visited different projects of Navajeevan. They also undertook a tedious trip to integrate a child with family to have first hand experience of Home Integration. Thanks Friends for your valuable support and suggestions!

Our Heartfelt Thanks to our donors, volunteers and friends here in India and abroad who support us to reach the marginalized and vulnerable children! We specially remember the teams at our various Funding Agencies & Friends at BSNBB – UK & Friends of Navajeevan – Holland & Friends of Navajeevan – Germany & Friends of Navajeevan – Austria & Friends at Action Five.

**We at Navajeevan – staff and children
Wish you all a Happy Christmas & Peaceful New Year!**