From the Director’s Desk...

**Wealth vs Happiness**

Money can buy the husk of things, but not the kernel. It brings you food, but not appetite, medicine but not health, acquaintances but not friends, servants but not the faithfulness, days of pleasures - but not peace or happiness.  

– Henrik Ibsen

Happiness and success cannot be measured in terms of money, power, position, wealth or social status. For a man may have all of these and still be miserable. The world thinks that a millionaire is a ‘successful’ man. Success must be measured by the yardstick of inner happiness – our ability to be happy and make others happy; the ability to love and be loved by others; the ability to live in harmony with those around us, with oneself and God’s cosmic laws....

Let us be happy and make others happy.....

**Prep School for Tribal Children in Kancharlapalem Slum**

DBNJ, Vizag: Kancharlapalem slum is located under a bridge with roughly 100 families living in a small hut with clothes thrown on top as roof. Most of the women work in apartments as maid servants and men as coolies, children are left uncared for. Preparing them for education involves changing the mind-set of the parents too. Given the impoverished conditions that this community lives in, children are found to be mostly under-nourished.

Don Bosco Vizag has started a small initiative ‘Bosco Manger’ within the Kancharlapalem Slum. Arrangements are being made to provide mid-day meals for the students at this centre to ensure improvement in their health while also retaining them for the post-lunch sessions.
MACS: “My name is Y Rojalli. I had a major heart surgery in my childhood, owing to which I cannot go out to work in the fields or carry out heavy labour work. I learnt how to stitch on a sewing machine. My husband works as a helper with an Electrician. His income is just enough to meet our basic household needs. We have a son who is now of school-going age.

One day, Mariamma came to me and explained about how MACS can help women like me to make small savings and provides financial help by way of loan at low interest rates. I discussed it with my husband and became a member of ‘Kalpana’ self-help group.

I received my first loan of Rs.5,000/- and bought a sewing machine for myself. I started offering tailoring services for the women in the neighborhood. They like the quality of my stitching and now I have a strong clientele.

I have enrolled my son in a Convent School. Our financial situation has improved. I am highly satisfied with the fact that I am able to support my husband financially.

Thank you Mother Teresa MACS for giving my confidence and helping me improve our life.”

DBNJ, Kurnool: DBNJ is aimed at reducing the incidence of drug and substance abuse, HIV/AIDS etc among the children on the street, in slums and vulnerable communities. The shelter provides preventive health services for the street children. It has a bridge centre and non-formal education for the street children and tuition centre for the mainstreamed children. The centre provides assistance to parents in enrolment of rehabilitated children in the schools. The adolescent boys are provided vocational training and occupational placement for the youth trained.

Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR Programme: The Indian office of a prominent multinational manufacturing company has been partnering with BSK by providing financial support to several initiatives and helping start new initiatives.

The company has been instrumental in positively influencing the lives of over 10,000 children, youth and women over the past 3 years of partnership.

Some of the programs are Evening Tuition Centres in different locations across the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, Vocational Training for women, Skill training for unemployed rural youth, Healthcare services for disadvantaged children, educational support for poor and orphaned children. There are many more Salesian interventions that will be supported through the year 2017-18.

BSK gratefully acknowledges the kind and unflinching support that Niehoff of India has been extending to our every proposal for assistance. We treasure the mutual trust and understanding that has grown over the years.

Helping Children get off the Streets

DBNJ, Vizag: Don Bosco Navajeevan, Visakhapatnam has been working to rescue, protect and advocate the rights of the street and working children, enabling them to be self-reliant and responsible citizens. The shelter works towards reintegration of children with their families and counseling to the parents. 24 hours drop-in and foster care is available for the street children.

The shelter is also empowering a significant number of girls through education and skill training.

DBNJ Vizag extensively lobbies and networks with other organisations and agencies at different forums, to persuade the authorities concerned to ensure policies, resource allocation and all governance actions in a manner that is in the best interest of the children in their constituencies.

Various programs are organized to create awareness on child rights and proper healthcare among the children, their parents and the public at large.

Stitching for Success...

Don Bosco Navajeevan, Kurnool
Neighborhood Children's Parliament

**Children's Parliament:** In an attempt to introduce the practice of democracy to children within local communities, BSK’s introduced the widely accepted concept “Neighborhood Children’s Parliaments” in key areas of the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. This was envisaged as a pilot to be replicated in other rural parts of the state. The experience would build confidence and respect for democracy among the children who participate in this initiative.

**A win-win proposition:** Parents do not immediately agree to the concept of Children Parliament, concerned that it would eat into their private space. They are however concerned about their children's education and believe that academic progress can be enhanced through private evening tuitions to supplement the teaching at school. BSK took advantage of this situation and created a win-win situation. The project offers tuitions to children in the neighborhood. Once a week the tuition teacher encourages children to express their opinions and present them to the local authority. Once a week the tuition center becomes a “Neighborhood Children’s Parliament”. The strategy is to facilitate Children’s Parliament through tuition centers. Poorer neighborhoods or slum areas of Hyderabad city were selected for the Tuition centers.

**Field research:** Key areas were identified on the basis of the socio-economic conditions as also research data on the status of school drop-outs. Tuition centres were piloted in 10 areas. Each of these tuition centres caters to 25-35 children from the local area which is mostly a slum or colony for economically weaker sections.

In areas where there were grassroots NGOs operating, they were involved in the implementation of the project. They participated by identifying suitable candidates for teaching the students. The final selection was done by BSK.

Members of Children’s Parliament have at various instances participated of the process of governance in the community. They have made representations to the local corporators on issues that need immediate intervention to improve the quality of living in their areas. Most of them received positive response and firm action.

Elders of local communities where the Children’s parliament are functional are encouraging the initiative. This is manifest in the allotment of space for conducting evening tuition classes, attendance at celebrations in the centre to interact with the students, etc. this is a positive step forward as it has broken class and caste barriers.

Bosco Seva Kendra has been successful in making a dent in the minds of the communities it has worked with. There is a paradigm shift in their attitudes towards education – including that of children. There is an acknowledgement of their rights and responsibilities towards the progress of the nation. The children are able to focus on their education, their roles as future leaders of the country and as instruments of change in the community they live in.

DBHRDC organized a special session on Life Skills for its students on 04 April, 2017 at the centre in Gagillapuram. The resource person was Bro. Jack – a social worker from Ponnur of Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh. He was successful in motivating the students to persevere in life and set goals for themselves.

Bro. Jack spoke to the students about the need for the youth to build their self-confidence. That alone will help them overcome and face any challenges that may arise is life – without fear. He cited the example of how an Eagle goes through a tough struggle before transitioning into a majestic bird.

The importance of having faith in God at all times was also emphasized upon. Bro. Jack inspired the students with anecdotes from his life about how faith brought him out of some dreadful situations in life. Addressing the complex the students carried of being inferior due to the lack of proper education, he gave the example of Apple CEO Steve Jobs who was a college drop-out from a poor economic background but that did not stop him from setting high goals and he made it big.
DON BOSCO
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

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