From the Director’s Desk.....

October is a month of many celebrations in different parts of the world – Gandhi Jayanthi or International Day of Non-violence, German Unity Day, World Food Day, Halloween, Deepavali – to name a few. While these help us remember and revive history and its teachings, we never fail to learn and create new histories and teachings as we go.

This month, the city of Vishakapatnam came to a standstill after the cyclone Hudhud. The once acclaimed steel city of Andhra Pradesh was shattered. Vizag has never experienced destruction of this kind. One could see uprooted trees, collapsed buildings, broken electrical poles everywhere in the city and its vicinity.

Call it act of god, nature’s fury, or the impact of man’s abuse and exploitation of mother Earth, it has touch all our lives to some degree. Shelters and interventions of Don Bosco had no escape either. We are dealing with extensive damage to infrastructure that will take weeks and lot of funds to repair. But we have the responsibility of 130 children under our care.

My visit to Vizag in the aftermath of Hudhud was heart-wrenching and heartening at the same time. Widespread devastation and despair was evident in the eyes of the victims. We could also see people reaching out in solidarity. This was evidenced in the way children under the care of Don Bosco Navajeevan were willingly given safe shelter temporarily by families in the neighborhood less affected. We deeply appreciate this timely support.

We move on taking this bit of history and take its teachings, remembering Don Bosco’s words “Remember, God does not pay us for results, but for efforts.”

Fr. Thomas Santiagu sdb
Executive Director

Youth Orientation on Livelihoods – Day Camp

In collaboration with V Lead Consultancy, a group of 28 was provided orientation on Livelihoods program.

The programme was organised on request by the field team, as they in turn got a request from the field for youth development and career guidance. It was a good initiative – where 3 aspirants found job by their own leads as recovery agents in Warangal. Mr. Rajnikar, Mr. Dilip and Mr. Praveen came to DBNJ for showing their gratitude and got ready to donate rice for children.

Program partner, V Leads Consultancy also shared their database with the participants and advised them to attend interviews to explore possibilities of employment.

Tuition Centre @ New Chintal, Warangal

A new tuition centre was initiated on 2nd October, 2014 with 28 children in New Chintal slum. A survey conducted early this year (February 2014), bought up the need to start a new tuition center. Children were found unattended after school particularly in this slum and girl children were not sent for higher studies – as school was quite far away. There are 198 houses in New Chintal slum with 422 children in school-going age group, about 79 were to have dropped out, 46 female children in school and 6 children at home.

Based on the need the tuition point was initiated with 28 school going children in a free space arranged by the community leader Mr. Ramesh. A college student from the same community, Ms. Pramila has been motivated to teach these students. She will be given honorarium of Rs.1,500/- p.m. It is hoped that the tuition centre will be an opportunity to make headway into other issues in the community especially school dropouts and livelihood training for girls.

CHILD-FRIENDLY POLICING IS GOOD POLICING

DBNJ Warangal represented the NGO sector at a workshop on Good Policing, organized by the District Police unit in Kakatiya Medical College, Warangal. In NGO level representation, “we discussed about Child Friendly Police in all police stations and the collaborative awareness programs in the community on various child and women related issues.” Ms. Hymavathi, DSP East Warangal, had responded to the point and asked the team to connect to local Mills Colony police station to bring out a blue print of issues and programmes.
Children in Kottur have brought in a revolution for prohibition of liquor in their village.

Members of the Children’s Parliament, in their weekly meeting brought up the chronic issue of drunken behavior of their fathers. They decided to do something about it.

As a first step, they started discussing the issue with their parents, expressing anguish over the adverse effect alcoholism was having on them. Many of them were naturally rebuked for talking out of turn. Some had an impact, however, short-term.

In the next meeting, children formed a Committee for Anti-liquor. They decided to take the issue to higher authorities. First they intimated the local Sub-Inspector of Police about the issue.

Next, they mobilized youth and women to take part in a protest rally and demonstration. They used the medium of local Radio to broadcast their initiative to prevent liquor from spoiling their lives.

A. Konduru Police, Mandal Revenue Officer, Tiruvuru Exchange took up the operation of seizing all materials related to illicit liquor manufacturing in the village.

With their little minds and vast plans, members of Kottur Children’s Parliament have been instrumental in bringing down the menace of liquor in their village.

We are proud of these children, assure them of our continued support and wish them all the best in future.

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**Children – agents of change in Kottur Village**

Child Safety Net has the responsibility of building a child-friendly approach in society, making it safe and non-threatening for children. It aims to achieve this objective by creating awareness among more and more civil society groups on child rights and related issues.

On 20th October, 2014 as part of Child Safety Net, Navajeevan Bala Bhavan and Sneha NGO organised an awareness program on Child Rights at Kurthuvennu for Child rights activists. Emphasising on the role of elders in child development, they covered rights of a child to protection, participation, development and education. Mr. Joseph Donald, spoke about protection of children against exploitation of all forms - labour, verbal & physical abuse at home, corporal punishment in schools.

On 24th October, 2014, a training program on protecting the child rights for the child protection committee of Mylavaram Mandal at Service Voluntary organisation was conducted by Child Safety Net.

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**DON BOSCO MONDO VISIT**

Many of the program interventions of Bosco Seva Kendra are supported by Don Bosco Mondo and Don Bosco Mission, Bonn, Germany. Two of the team members from Don Bosco Mondo, Ms. Susanne Artz and Ms. Larissa Wulfert visited BSK for a monitoring and evaluation of the various interventions.

They were with us between 20-24 October, 2014 visiting the field and interacting with respective teams. In Hyderabad from 20-22 October, they visited DBNJ, Ramanthapur and Auxilium Nava Jeevan, Bhoiguda.

22nd October onwards they set off on the journey towards Andhra Pradesh, starting with DBNJ Vijayawada and the other projects. Next on the schedule was East Godavari District. The team visited the projects run by PARA in Ravulapalem and Rajahmundry. Here they also released a book published by PARA, “Human Rights Club Handbook” at a ceremony organised to honour Susanne and Larissa - the friends from afar.

At the end of the visit – on 24th October, 2014 - to projects supported by Don Bosco Mondo through Bosco Seva Kendra, both Susanne and Larissa greatly appreciated the work, the commitment of the team and above all the spirit of the children and youth.
On 19 October, 2014, Don Bosco Navajeevan Child Safety Net and Vijayawada Municipal Corporation organised the Swachh Bharath Abhiyan (Clean India Mission) Program at Navajeevan Shelter. Initiated by Hon’ble Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi, the program has gained much popularity among all the states.

In Andhra Pradesh, Hon’ble Chief Minister Mr. Nara Chandra Babu Naidu has initiated ‘Pachchadanam – Parishubhratha’, (Greenery–Cleanliness) ‘Neeru-Chettu’ (Water-Plantation) and ‘Sramadanam’ (Voluntary Labor) with the support of local implementing agencies.

Mr.G.Ramana Rao, Deputy Mayor of Vijayawada participated in the program appreciating the initiative of Navajeevan. He said, “This kind of program where the children are involved as volunteers, will help to develop the children in a sportive manner.” He assured support for the shelter and children both in his individual capacity and as part of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.

Mr. M. Venkateswara Rao, the ward counsellor for 42nd Ward, Mrs.Punya Seela, YSRCP floor leader, Mrs. P Subhashini, the ward counsellor of 41st ward also participated and appreciated the work of Navajeevan since 25 years. All of them assured to give support for the development of Navajeevan from personal and corporation side as well.

The children and staff then went on to plant some saplings in the shelter surroundings. Children also joined in the cleaning work at the canal.

The children also volunteered in an earlier program held on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, 02 October, 2014. They led the campaign to clean the Vijayawada Railway Station, by taking up Platform No.1. They cleaned the floor, drinking water basins, and collected waste papers at the platform.

2-Day Residential Training for Office Bearers of Human Rights Clubs

101 members from 33 Human Rights Clubs of 18 high schools across the district of Khammam were trained in a 2-day residential program held on 30th and 31st October, 2014.

This training program was an offshoot of the HR training program held for teachers in September, 2014. The 46 teachers who participated in that program went on to form HR clubs in their schools and having elected office bearers – ie., President, Vice president, Secretary, Treasurer and six group leaders – sent them for training.

Of the 101 participants 72 were girls and 29 boys. Sessions covered topics like – 1) What is a club 2) What are rights 3) History of human rights 4) Child Rights – the right to participation 5) Objectives of the club 6) Role of the office bearers 7) Identification of Human right violations in school / village 8) How to organize the club meetings 9) Agenda of the club meetings 10) Role of the HR club advisor.

Guests who attended the training were: Sri Lourdu Prasad – CWC Chairperson; Sri Swaroop – Juvenile Justice Board Member; Smt. Jhansi Lakshmi – Child Development Project Officer; Sri Suka Jeevan Babu – ICDS Project Director; Sri Ramana Murthy – CWC Member.

On 15th October, 2014 Bala Vikas Kendra team identified a family, in Varalakshmi Nagar, Vijayawada. A family of six, the household is managed through the earnings of the mother and her three girls daughters who are all engaged in domestic work in the neighboring residential colony. The husband was found to be an alcoholic abuser and did not go to work. The children did not go to school.

The Bala Vikas Team then rescued the children and admitted them into the Elementary School at Moghal Rajapuram. They are being monitored to ensure they are not pulled out.
Don Bosco Navajeevan, Visakhapatnam felt direct impact of the Hudhud cyclone that hit coastal Andhra Pradesh and Odisha in October, 2014. Though fatalities were limited, thanks to the early warnings, it reduced the once beautiful district of Visakhapatnam into barren land, throwing people into a state of desperation. Many buildings were rendered uninhabitable, sources of livelihood wiped out.

Inmates of DB Navajeevan protected themselves by running to safer buildings as they thought the old and feeble building would collapse at any moment. When the strength of Hudhud weakened all the children were temporarily shifted to some neighbouring houses. They cannot return to resume their schooling and training till the buildings are repaired and water supply, electricity, etc. restored.

Fr. Thomas Santiago made a personal survey of the affected area and assessed the extent of damage to people and property.

Losses Incurred by NAVAJEEVAN, Vizag....

Shelter at Sivalayam Street rendered useless for living. It needs to be demolished and rebuilt.

Roof of Children's Home at Allipuram blown off leaving it vulnerable to rain and wind. Many doors and windows are lost. Water supply and electricity connections need to be restored.

Dormitory and kitchen at Rehabilitation Home, Sabbavaram are totally destroyed.

Water and power supply systems are completely ruined, including a newly installed Heavy duty Generator and a Transformer Unit, uprooting of 850 coconut trees, 360 Cashew trees and 320 Teak wood plants apart from other fruit trees.

Unless resources are immediately mobilized and the necessary restoration works carried out on an emergency basis the future of Navajeevan children will be in great jeopardy.

Fr. Thomas Thottayil, Director DBNJ Vizag, appeals, “In this condition of unparalleled tragedy, I request all those who are kind and compassionate to the cause of the young at Risk, to contribute your valuable donations to meet these emergency needs to help the most needy children to find their way in life.”

MACS’ Support helps restore hope

“I am able to financially support my family inspite of my illness, all thanks to Chaitanya MACS. My family is very happy with the progress we are making.”

Venkatalakshmi belongs to a remote village in Guntur District. A mother of two, she works as a field laborer along with her husband. She joined the women in her neighborhood in forming a Self Help Group, ‘Chaitanya’ saving Rs.100/- every month. After six months she took a loan of Rs. 5000/-. This she used to fulfill some financial obligations.

A sudden illness put the household in a crisis situation. Chaitanya MACS offered to support her with a loan of Rs.10,000/-. Since she was no longer able to go to work in the fields, Venkatalakshmi decided to start a home-based business. She invested MACS’ loan in setting up a kirana shop (provision store) and also started trading in coconuts.

She is managing the shop well, with support from her husband. Her children go to school without any problem. She is also able to repay the loan. She is happy that she joined the SHG and wishes for more women to form such groups for mutual help, support and confidence building.

BSK @ SEVA MELA 2014

Bosco Seva Kendra participated in the Seva Mela, 2014 organised by United Care Development Services (UC) and United Way of Hyderabad at HITEX Exhibition Centre, Hitech City, Hyderabad.

A stall of size 6x6 was put up displaying different interventions and activities of BSK with special focus on formal and nonformal education for children in difficult circumstances and in tribal areas, and for the youth.

Team leader for the event, Ms. Pascal Flynn participated in the Rice Bucket Challenge prompting a series of donors accumulating a total of 93 Kgs of rice.

Youth Volunteers pitched for the ‘Our Children, Our Future’ campaign, spreading word of BSK’s interventions for street children.