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The impact of various child-centric NGOs in the city of Vellore

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we discuss the impact of various child-centric Non-Governmental Organizations present in our city. This will help volunteers to choose better organizations for their efforts and at the same time provide a platform for the organizations to improve their mistakes. Over the past decade, many NGOs and social change organizations have mushroomed in India, but very few have expanded on the basis of scale and community impact. After all, scraping through red tapestry in government is a herculean task to be able to set up an NGO in the first place.

Keywords— NGOs, Child development, Ayuda, MAD, Fepsi, Volunteering, Impact of NGO

1. INTRODUCTION

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a major role in today's society, typically picking up the government's services and social protection deficits for citizens through donor philanthropy and social consciousness. It is gratifying to be able to contribute to society in the knowledge that people working in the NGO sector have a shared objective – to educate and uplift the members of their society and to invest in future generations. And given the lack of transparency in our country's transactions, donations and sponsorships are also not easy to receive. Despite all these hurdles, there are a couple of NGOs that have made a significant social impact in India so far.

In this paper, we concentrate on the various child-centric NGOs and their impacts, present in the Vellore district which drives the youth of our college towards achieving greater goals and a better life for the lesser privileged.

According to UNICEF, India is home to the world's largest child population, with 400 m of children including an estimated 31 m orphans, and almost 176 m are considered in need of care and protection. In India, children at risk, whether orphaned or not, often end up in shelters that are under-resourced and often more focused on basic needs and long term aspects of it.

The result is that this demographic has a very poor quality of life as well as adult outcomes for children, leading to cycles of poverty and abandonment. With inadequate educational skills, life skills, financial or emotional support to cope outside these institutions; children who have grown up in shelters often take

small jobs or are trapped in alcoholism, violence, drug abuse, and prostitution and trafficking.

2. FEPSI

FEPSI (Forum for Empowering People through Social Innovation and Entertainment) is a youth-driven NGO working towards a fairer, more egalitarian society. It is a group of individuals who work on projects for the betterment of the society and consolidate events that ensure that every individual is able to fulfil their potential, irrespective of their circumstances. With its three premier projects, namely, Global Leadership Labs, SOCH and ULLAS, FEPSI endeavours to achieve in identifying and ensuring to ameliorate the impact and effectiveness and act as a catalyst to bring about a change in the society. This level of effectiveness is only possible with the help of the support provided by the working of the departments of Research and editorial, Design, Human Resource and Communication, Public Relations, Finance and Purchase.

2.1 Projects

2.1.1 ULLAS: Born with the idea of spreading happiness among all, Project ULLAS is responsible for organizing and conducting various outreaches to orphanages and schools for underprivileged. They plan out various activities that can be conducted for the outreach, both fun and educational and help children to learn and grow to make our country a better place to live in. In its much recent endeavors, it has also made a curriculum in order to make their outreaches more planned and in order to yield greater success. Having the improvement of the kids in mind, ULLAS always improvises itself first. It is not shocking that every one of their outreaches is a success on both teaching and learning sides. After all, goodness boomerangs.

2.1.2 SOCH: The Project SOCH of FEPSI is all about spreading awareness among the people by learning their point of views through various events. The Voice of Youth being their premier event aims at learning the views of students by holding a topical group discussion on various social, economic and political issues. In addition to the Voice of Youth, Project SOCH also holds video shoots which aim to discover the views of people by discussing questions that were left unanswered before. This has taken birth from the basic idea that the youth today are most comfortable with social media as their platform. The number of viewers on every one of its videos is proof of how successful their run throughout has been.

2.1.3 GLL: The Project GLL – Global Leadership Labs, was born with the idea to identify, train and give birth to the budding leaders of the world. Through various events conducted by them, which aims to accomplish in giving rise to the leaders of the future, Project GLL has successfully given them a platform to achieve the dream they desire and making them a leader that the world needs. They hold conferences and invite the leaders of today who will guide the budding leaders of tomorrow and make our country and the world a better place to live in. Also, the newer semester-long curriculum and the activities planned in collaboration with the Business School of VIT proved to be a booming success. The faces of its participants glowing with confidence stand testimony to this.

2.2 Annual ULLAS Activities

In a number of successful outreaches conducted by Project ULLAS of FEPSI, they put their best foot forward to bring a smile on the faces of many innocent little minds at Sacred Heart Boarding School. Working and playing with them, gives everyone a different kind of pleasure and satisfaction in life. The ‘feel good’ factor plays a major role when one goes out there to spread love and happiness among the less privileged.

In the year 2018-19, FEPSI managed to organize 6 outreaches. The sessions were based on an entire English curriculum that was being followed. It began with teaching the students- “parts of speech”. The worksheets are provided to assess the understanding of the kids and look for a scope of improvement. The teaching sessions are always followed by Sports or other educational activities.

2.3 Reaching out

Here is the description of the various outreaches that were conducted.

2.3.1 Outreach 1: 22nd July 2018, the teaching session was about Nouns and its use and identification in a sentence. The activities that followed were playing Kho-Kho with girls and Football with boys. They had a fun music and dance session as well and the outreach ended by distributing pastries and juice to the children.

2.3.2 Outreach 2: 25th August 2018, the study session was based on teaching Pronouns and Articles and their use in a sentence along with the Nouns taught previously. The educational session was conducted to make them aware of cleanliness and certain healthy manners including the correct steps for washing hands properly. This was demonstrated by them then they were asked to follow and later repeat it on their own to actually learn and use these daily.

2.3.3 Outreach 3: 2nd September 2018, the academic session was utilized to teach them about Pronouns and Articles as a recap of all the previous sessions. This was followed by another session on personal safety which began with displaying the first aid kit and explaining the importance of each component. Later they taught them steps on how to use the kit in case of the basic injuries.

2.3.4 Outreach 4: 9th September 2018, the first session was about teaching kids the use of Verbs. The worksheets included identifying the components of a sentence to improve the understanding of the children, followed by a talk about the role of plants on the Earth and how their numbers are depleting due to global warming. In yet another session, the students were guided to create an entire large painting which was a composition of trees and humans. This was framed and hung in one of their classrooms so that their daily activities keep on

reminding them about their role towards the protection of plants.

2.3.5 Outreach 5: 7 October 2018 The study session was based on teaching Adverbs and its significance in a sentence, followed by an activity related to their Initiative named ‘Haritha’ where a few printed pictures were displayed for 5 minutes and during this time they had to memorize it to be able to recollect and draw these along with identification of their names in English and Tamil. The children were given a token of appreciation for their work.

2.3.6 Outreach 6: 9 December 2018 The teaching session involved a word game where the kids were provided with 10-15 words along with their meanings and usage of the words in proper sentences. Notebooks were also distributed for their use. In the second half, they were taught the National Symbols of India with the help of pictures and conducted an interactive session where the kids had to talk about themselves in English.

Someone has rightly said, ‘If you have the power to make people happy, DO IT. The world needs more of it.’ Organizations like FEPSI make this possible through the medium of projects like- Project ULLAS.

2.4 Burgeoning the “ULLAS” feel

The three major Campaigns by ULLAS which began in full swing were: HARITHA, the Birthday Campaign and the Library Campaign. The significance of HARITHA was to improve the greenery in the school by planting saplings and teaching the students how to take care of these plants. The contributions for these plants came from interested people.

The Birthday campaign began with the aim of sharing happiness with these little ones by contributing in the form of cash (or kind) which was used to celebrate birthdays with the children by providing them with books, stationery and eateries.

Lastly, the Library Campaign’s objective was to collect books which were no more used by people across the campus of Vellore Institute of Technology (Vellore) and set up an entire bookshelf in the school. This contained books from a wide range of genres which may suffice the interests of children.

Photo gallery (ULLAS):



2.5 Your views, our platform

Through the platform created by this NGO, they started and the initiative called SOCH. The basic aim of this initiative was to shoot videos to create awareness among youth through social media and through its videos. Because every social network has a unique audience, social videos need to be optimized. The most obvious and effective way is creating awareness or telling your story through videos. So, the members of FEPSI started having a healthy discussion on various topics with the students of VIT (Vellore) to create awareness among youth throughout the country.

3. VIDEO SHOOT: 1

Friendship and youth: To showcase the power of friendship and what youth thinks about friendship, Project SOCH organized a video shoot and found the following opinions:

The friendship that has no ties and yet binds you to an everlasting bond. Sometimes it need not be even mentioned as friendship it might not be given any name at all. It knows no boundary, no gender, no race, cast or creed. It depends on what you make of it, but one thing remains common, which is a sense of security and belongingness. That is what friendship is all about. That is what friendship is supposed to be. That is the power of friendship. True friendship always gives and never demands because it knows that it will receive when required. Happiness doubles and sorrows half in the company of a friend. Friendship can heal a depressed mind or a broken heart.

Video link:

<https://www.facebook.com/fepsi.india/videos/383432152190210/>

4. VIDEO SHOOT: 2

Blood Donation: Every year our nation requires about 5 Crore units of blood, out of which only a meager 2.5 Crore units of blood are available. The gift of blood is the gift of life. There is no substitute for human blood. More than 38,000 blood donations are needed every day. A total of 30 million blood components are transfused each year. The actual blood donation typically takes less than 10-12 minutes. The entire process, from the time you arrive at the time you leave, takes about an hour and 15 min. More than 1 million new people are diagnosed with cancer each year. Many of them will need blood, sometimes daily, during their chemotherapy treatment. Typically, two or three of these are produced from a unit of donated whole blood – hence each donation can help save up to three lives. Donors can give either whole blood or specific blood components only.

So to spread awareness among youth, Soch took the initiative to spread awareness through this video shoot on blood donation.

Video link:

<https://www.facebook.com/fepsi.india/videos/285646742051771/>

5. VIDEO SHOOT: 3

5.1 Me Too Movement: With many local and international alternative names, is a movement against sexual harassment and sexual assault.

#MeToo spread virally in October 2017 as a hashtag on social media in an attempt to demonstrate the widespread prevalence of sexual assault and harassment, especially in the workplace. It followed soon after the sexual abuse allegations against Harvey Weinstein.

5.2 False allegation: A false allegation of child sexual abuse is an accusation that a person committed one or more acts of child sexual abuse when in reality there was no perpetration of abuse by the accused person as alleged. Such accusations can be brought by the victim, or by another person on the alleged victim's behalf. Studies of child abuse allegations suggest that the overall rate of false accusation is under 10%, as approximated based on multiple studies.

5.3 True allegation: An allegation is an accusation, which is sometimes true and sometimes not. If you say your sister stole a candy bar but you don't have any proof that she did it, you have made an allegation.

#MeToo as a way to try to highlight and stop sexual abuse that happens between 2014 and 2016, Bengaluru police received 2,160 complaints pertaining to the outraging of a woman's modesty, sexual harassment, use of force with the intent to disrobe, voyeurism or stalking -all covered under IPC Section 354 that prescribes imprisonment of up to three years with a fine.

Video link:

<https://www.facebook.com/fepsi.india/videos/762814730744185/>

6. VIDEO SHOOT: 4

6.1 Difficulties faced by differently abled people in their life: Persons with disabilities comprise at least 4 to 8 per cent of the Indian population. Children with disabilities in India are subject to multiple deprivations and limited opportunities in several dimensions of their lives. Their families and caregivers also go through a lot of stress and challenges in having a person with a disability at home which ultimately leads to grave discriminatory practices towards these children. The discriminatory practices seen in the community towards differently abled children, same been categorized as denial of disability, physical restraints, social boycott, denial of property rights, decreased marital life prospects due to disabled member in family, implications on sexuality of people with disability, women with disability, discrepancies in state welfare programs, and problems in measuring disabilities. The new initiative which we did in this event was we let them play the games related to the difficulties faced by differently abled people and what do they feel after playing this game and their experience.

Video link:

<https://www.facebook.com/fepsi.india/videos/240560650189984/>

Photo gallery (SOCH):



7. INTRODUCTION (AYUDA)

It is a Non-Government Enterprise, founded in 2013, which aims at bringing different sections of the society together to work towards a common goal of collective development.

7.1 Mission

Their major mission is to bring out the change in society by spreading hands to help out the unprivileged children and other backward social communities.

7.2 Projects of AYUDA

7.2.1 Project Gyaan: Project Gyaan focuses on learning and education. It offers elementary education to underprivileged children. Project Gyaan provides support and knowledge by which children can move forward and attain education for their better future.



7.2.2 Project muskaan: Project muskaan spreads the smile. Weekly trips are planned to the old age homes where the members of Ayuda interact with them, try to make them feel like a family member, talk to them, listen to them and make efforts to spread that love they deserve.

7.2.3 Project nirmaan: Project nirmaan focuses on building and creating at orphanages for the betterment of the children and to make their life a little easy. We focus on giving these children a life like the other children in this world. Project nirmaan contributes to bringing a change in this society.

7.2.4 Project Sudhaar: Project Sudhaar provides the basic health care facilities to the children of the orphanage and the old age home people. They provide regular eye checkups, health checkups and all the basic health care facilities. Frequent organ donation awareness camp is a new addition to the list of things project Sudhaar provides to the needful people.



7.2.5 Go Green Project: Project Go Green focuses on the greenery around us. They go on plantation drives because we know how important nature is and they try to make some efforts to maintain the greenery around us. They believe that the importance of trees and plants in our life are inexhaustible. So together they join hands to save trees and plant more.

8. INTRODUCTION (MAKE A DIFFERENCE)

Make A Difference (MAD) is an Indian non-profit organization working to ensure better orphanage and shelter outcomes for children across India. Make a Difference works with nearly 3,460 children in 67 shelter homes across 23 cities across India, bringing impact through a fellow-managed 4,250 youth participants volunteering model. Rizwan Tayabali and Jithin C Nedumala are currently running it, alongside a board of directors. Make A Difference originated in Cochin, with a core team working in Bangalore, and work and operations that are spread over 23 cities in India.

In Vellore, Make a Difference function in two different shelter homes, namely, Kasam and Pastor Home. Taking care of over 115 children in both the shelters. In Vellore, there are over 130 dedicated volunteers who visit the shelter once a week to take their scheduled classes. All the volunteers are extremely loved by the children and each volunteer has connect to the cause. The volunteers are mobilized to take leadership through ownership by the fellows, mentors and directors.

Michelle Obama, who chose Make A Difference as one of the few organizations to visit on her trip to India in 2010, recognized the work of Make A Difference in India. Great workplaces for India, top 10 in the category Mid Size.

The vision of Make a Difference is that equitable results can be achieved even by the most vulnerable children in shelters. Make A Difference mobilizes young leaders to ensure that children in shelters have equitable outcomes by empowering the child, improving the ecosystem, and enabling the sector.

MAD uses certain strategies to ensure achieving these outcomes for the children. Namely:

- Empower children by improving emotional health, life skills, exposure, support for education, readiness for transition and aftercare.
- Improve the ecosystem around them by promoting better practices among institutions that affect their lives directly; primarily shelters, schools, family, state, and society.
- Enable the sector to build coalitions and networks through better data, sharing knowledge and building.
- They believe that at Make A Difference, everyone should have a reasonable quality of life. A life in which they need not struggle or suffer to make ends meet. A life that enables one to provide their families and children with reasonable safety and security. A life that can be lived with dignity and in its own terms.

8.1 Programs at MAD

8.1.1 Foundations: Focuses on the youngest age group of children with whom MAD works, i.e. 10 to 13 years, which will provide them with the foundations, allowing them to cope and develop even if they have to leave the shelter at 14 years of age.

8.1.2 Ed support: Ed Support is a unique program designed to ensure the quality of support and 1-on-1 attention required for children in shelter homes to bridge learning gaps and allow them to clear Grade 10 and pursue higher education.

8.1.3 Dream camp: It is planned to take up Dream Camps as an all-inclusive initiative, spanning 1-3 days. The lessons are divided into small, quantifiable time packets called 'sessions.' These aim to provide our children with highly practical and realistic learning experiences, where experts from different fields of work address them.

8.1.4 Transition readiness: Transition Readiness focuses on 16 - 18-year - old young adults. It equips and supports young people at the age of 18 who leave shelters to make the transition to the wider society successfully.

8.1.5 Aftercare: The Aftercare program provides support in the form of a reliable mentor to young adults after leaving their shelter and being admitted to the college or vocational training or placed in a job.

9. RESULTS

96% youths that MAD works with a passed 10th grade as compared to a national average of 80%, 97% of the highschoolers were able to go to college or get jobs. 97% volunteers actually feel that they are making a difference. It was voted as the top 10 mid-sized places to work with.

The youths that MAD worked with are placed in colleges of their choices and their college is usually funded by MAD. MAD also signs a contract with the youth to ensure their studies go fine in accordance with the college rules. One of the children that Mad worked with, was placed in VIT and has recently graduated with a degree and is now working. At the same time, MAD has specially dedicated people who take care that the child's needs are taken care of by the shelters. Including food, proper shelter and constant care and support. Each child will have at least 10 volunteers who they can rely on at all times.

10. CONCLUSION

There are numerous NGOs working in Vellore, only a few are able to show real impact on the children's life. Only a few are able to provide child-centric holistic solutions through their work. The work done by all the organizations has a different kind of impact on the child's life. While organizations like Fepsi and Ayudha concentrate on health, education, social awareness and on other sectors by visiting the shelters, MAD was the only organization with the properly structured organization and well planned sessions to be able to provide as well as record the impact on a child's life. It provides a much more complete and satisfactory education to the children, while also tending to their emotional needs and career guidance. The volunteers working with the organization felt much more satisfaction and could see true results based on the methodology followed. Even though all the discussed NGOs are child centric and are dedicated towards the cause, MAD was able to provide a long term impact and a support system till each child is independent.

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