

A new dawn on the horizon

It is a blessing in disguise for the scores of slum children studying at Parikrama. Rotary Bangalore is on its way to making it a success story.

The word Parikrama, in Sanskrit means "completing a circle". It has drawn a new meaning in the local context of Bangalore and become a buzzword of hope for many young children who have had the misfortune of being born into poverty and condemned to slum dwellings around Bangalore.

The three schools of the Parikrama Humanity Foundation is ensuring that the distant dream of these young slum children become a reality. The Parikrama Education Package involves an end-to-end program to cover: four major facets of a child's life - Education, Nutrition, Health and the home. Parikrama is not just an NGO, but a high quality educational institution. The strength of the students at all the three Parikrama Schools - Sahakaranagar, Koramangala and Jayanagar are about 600 students.

Among the students, about 50 per cent of the admitted are girls. Today; the burst of rainbow colours and the unmistakable chatter of children draws anyone's attention to cheerful looking buildings in the Sahakaranagar, Koramangala and Jayanagar schools whose facade is covered with fascinating wall paintings.

Parikrama also assists school dropouts with vocational training so that these children can be economically independent. Children at Parikrama are provided with breakfast, lunch and milk on all six working days, as most of these children are deprived. In order to make sure that these children are not deprived of basic food, Parikrama does not declare any Summer holidays.

Rotary's contribution

In 2003-04, two Rotary Club Presidents, 6,000, miles apart, in two different continents were examining Community Service projects and ways of working together in their Presidential year to make a real impact in their chosen project. The idea was floated about adopting Parikrama as the chosen charity for International Co-operation and the two clubs in question were the Rotary Club of Humberside, UK, and the Rotary Club of Bangalore. The two clubs signed a Memorandum of Agreement and established a "Sister Club Relations" "Twinning."

Together, it was decided to raise necessary funds in their respective clubs for a Rotary Foundation Humanitarian grant, which would quadruple the final amount raised by the two clubs.

The visiting President from UK club was given a guided tour of the Parikrama schools in October 2003, who

witnessed every aspect of the Parikrama experience from the induction and orientation of the newly arrived children to the detailed tracking process of the progress of existing pupils. Of particular interest was the medical screening and recording of nutritional and immunisation schedules started for each child. It became instantly apparent of the obvious and urgent need for funds to sustain this remarkable project.

Organising a Golf Tournament and Garden Party in the UK and India, by individual subscription towards entitlement of "Paul Harris Fellow" awards, raised the money in a record time of six months. This enabled the rotarians of Bangalore to introduce nutritional supplement programmes for a whole academic' year covering 400 children. Parikrama Foundation's third centre at Jayanagar was inaugurated in May 2004.

For more information please contact: Rtn Shukla Bose, Phone: 2363 5225, Mobile: 9845067473, Rtn Elizabeth Zachariah, Phone: 2558 6468, Mobile: 98450 07937