

# Manav Sadhna Annual Report

April 2004 - March 2005







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## **Mahatma Gandhi's Talisman**

I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test:

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melting away.



“I used to polish shoes everyday. My mother is a rag picker and my father is a pedal rickshaw driver. He has been addicted to alcohol since his youth. We tried very hard to help him get over his addiction, but he is too habituated. This is my situation at home.

One day, I found out that Manav Sadhna was organizing a picnic. I decided that I wanted to be part of this organization. I took time off from boot polishing to visit Manav Sadhna. I saw children like myself designing greeting cards. They gave me a design to work on. At first I had no idea what I was supposed to do so I went back to polishing shoes. But a part of me wanted to return to the Ashram. I did. Over time I learned how to make different paper crafts. Today, I am pretty good at making handmade paper products and I love my work.

I wasted three years of my studies because of my shoe polish job. Now I wanted to study. With the help of Manav Sadhna and the support of my family, I was readmitted in the 5<sup>th</sup> standard. Manav Sadhna helped me with tuitions and the elders there would always track my progress. I couldn't let them down. I grew more and more interested in my studies and have ranked at the top of my class consistently.

After the 7<sup>th</sup> standard, education is not free in India. I had to pay fees to continue with school. I worried I would have to discontinue my studies since I couldn't cover my fees. I confided to one of our trustees about my concerns. On the day the fees were due, he showed up at my school, took me to the principal's office and settled everything. Since then, I have never looked back on my studies. I scored over 70 percent on my 10<sup>th</sup> standard exams and 72 percent on my 11<sup>th</sup> standard exams. Today I am in the 12<sup>th</sup> standard and I know how important this year is for my studies. I will work hard and aim for my goal: to score 90 percent on my exams this year. My dream is to become an Indian Administrative Services (IAS) Officer.

Today, people tell me that I have become a good citizen. My wish is to spread the good work of Manav Sadhna, which helped transform my life, around the world. 'Sahib...shoe polish?' is a line I hope to never hear from the mouth of a single child.”



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Dear Reader,

After working with children and women for over 13 years, we are proud to present our first annual report. We want to share with you our successes and failures this past year and touch on our journey thus far.

Our projects and scope have grown beyond our expectations. We continue to learn from the people we work with and continuously grow to incorporate their ideas and adapt to their needs. Over time we have realized that empowering children requires more than a good education; children need access to values, health, hygiene, nutrition, alternative income sources and a healthy environment. As they grow older, they need vocational training and guidance. To ensure the development of a child, we must also work with the family, especially the mother, so that the necessary information percolates down to the child. As a result we helped develop Gramshree, a sister NGO that focuses on women's development through skill training, income generation, health, nutrition, awareness campaigns, and much more. We have also undertaken a large preschool project, working to introduce children to basic education, nutrition and hygiene and inculcate these concepts into their fresh minds. We continue to develop new initiatives to embrace more lives. Today Manav Sadhna continues to focus on the holistic development of each individual we serve.

There is no shortage to the number of people who need access to development programs, love and support. Our focus initially engaged slum-dwellers in Ahmedabad, but since then we have sown seeds of service in various communities including Patan, Kutch, a village outside Surat and PerunduraiKuppam-a village in Tamil Nadu.

Manav Sadhna is a concept. It is a series of experiments grounded in service through love and aimed at promoting the ideal of sharing and caring across humankind. We strive for the sustainability of compassionate service, not of the physical organization called Manav Sadhna. Through our efforts we hope to spread this philosophy and instill the idea of Manav Sadhna into the hearts of people worldwide.

Our service to so many souls has only been possible with the generous and consistent support, guidance and contributions we have received from our friends, both in India and in the USA. On behalf of all the beneficiaries of Manav Sadhna we thank you all for your support. As part of a collective effort, like a drop in the ocean, we look forward to continue trying to make a small difference through our humble efforts.

Love All, Serve All

The Manav Sadhna Parivar



## **Our Mission**

Our mission is simply to serve the underprivileged. At Manav Sadhna, we navigate with the philosophy of love all, serve all. By seeing God in every individual (*manav*), mere service is transformed into worship (*sadhna*). To this end, Manav Sadhna is engaged in constructive humanitarian projects that cut across barriers of class and religion while addressing issues faced by socio-economically neglected segments of society. In executing this mission, Manav Sadhna is guided by Mahatma Gandhi's unshakable beliefs in peace, truth, non-violence and compassion.

## **A Brief History**

In 1990, a team of young volunteers, inspired by Gandhian values, began gathering under the branches of a tree in the Gandhi Ashram every Saturday to play with street children. They provided the children with a nutritional meal and taught them about basic hygiene by cutting their nails and bathing them. This activity quickly cultivated into a full time endeavor working to brighten the future of underprivileged children. Under the guidance of Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh, Safai Vidyalaya and Environmental Sanitation Institute (ESI), Manav Sadhna was established both in India and in the United States. Today, from a quiet corner in the Gandhi Ashram, Manav Sadhna serves more than 4,500 children and women through over 38 projects. We also indirectly touch the lives of more than 4,000 individuals through our healthcare and educational support projects. The projects are created based on the needs and participation of the community.





## Ramapir No Tekra

Slums are the product of broken down village life. The irregularity of rain, unemployment, the caste system, the appeal of city life, and a lack of facilities are some of the factors that lead people to migrate from their village to urban spaces. These spaces are congested, unhealthy and lack basic amenities - spaces otherwise known as slums. These areas, usually located on the fringes of society, consist of migrants - often landless laborers, who come to the city in search of employment.

At the time of India's independence, 90 percent of this country's population lived in villages while only 10 percent occupied civic space. Today, India's cities host 39 percent of the country's population.

Ramapir No Tekra, also known as the Tekra, is the largest slum area in Ahmedabad. The population, approximately 1.5 lakh (150,000), consists mainly of people from scheduled castes around Gujarat and potter families from Rajasthan. The entire development is considered an encroachment because the land is owned by the government, and therefore, temporary. People have been living on this space for over fifty years. Initially the Tekra lacked light, water, communal toilets and overall cleanliness. Today, through government attention, the slum area has electricity, water, sidewalks, and a gutter system. However, due to problems with addiction, health issues, superstitions, backward traditions, high-interest loans and illiteracy, many slum dwellers continue to live in the same cycle of despair and poverty. They earn their income by driving rickshaws, picking rags, cleaning homes, shining shoes, and working as potters or as day laborers.

Manav Sadhna chose to work with the Tekra because of its proximity to the Gandhi Ashram. A lack of education and opportunity are the core causes of many of the problems in the Tekra. By promoting values, education and awareness among children and women of the Tekra, we hope to eradicate many of these challenges and uplift their standard of living.



# Basic Education

Illiteracy is the root cause of many social and economical problems in India. There are various factors that contribute to a lack of education: a lack of awareness, lack of finances, lack of resources, or lack of interest. Based on household circumstances, millions of children have neither the desire nor the opportunity for an education. By developing unique programs such as the Non-Formal School, *balmandirs*, the Street Children School and tuition classes to supplement a municipal education, Manav Sadhna has succeeded in educating thousands of children, from toddlers to teenagers, who otherwise lack the opportunity and resources. Manav Sadhna's success lies in its attitude towards education. Education here is holistic. Hygiene, values, spirituality and social skills all figure into the curriculum because we know that children are the future. All of our education programs start with a communal harmony prayer and end with a nutritious snack. We believe that education should not just increase knowledge; it should foster understanding and critical thinking while generating life skills.

Basic education links the children, whether of the cities or the villages, to all that is best and lasting in India. It develops both the body and the mind of a child.

-Mahatma Gandhi

# Balmandir

## Overview

The future of the country lies in the hands of our children. In 1975, the Indian government launched the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) to improve the health and nutrition of slum children. Presently, more than 5,000 ICDS centers and over six lakh *balmandir* (preschools) exist in the country. Of those, more than 200 ICDS centers and 35,000 *balmandir* are in Gujarat.

For eight years, Manav Sadhna funded and operated 13 *balmandir* in slum areas around Ahmedabad. We constructed nine of these facilities and rescued four from impending shut down due to inadequate resources. In 2004 Manav Sadhna joined hands with the Gujarat Government in the ICDS scheme to establish 66 preschool centers around Ahmedabad, while continuing to manage five of our previous centers.

Manav Sadhna nurtures more than 2,800 children, ages 0 to 6, through the *balmandir* project. Approximately 1,400 children (ages 3 to 6 years) receive a value-based education every day through songs and stories that give importance to culture, values, and hygiene. Manav Sadhna organizes field trips to expose these children to new concepts in a fun environment. The *balmandir* program prevents children from having to turn to street labor later in life by promoting education early on. An additional 1,400 infants (ages 0 to 3) take advantage of the nutrition and healthcare programs. Towards the end of the year, Manav Sadhna started providing the *balmandir* children with uniforms which convey the value of hygiene to parents.



### Six Goals of the Manav Sadhna *balmandir*:

- Provide nutrition to underprivileged children ages 0 to 6 years
- Foster the mental, physical and emotional development of these children
- Improve the health of pregnant and feeding mothers
- Promote awareness on health, hygiene and nutrition to these pregnant and feeding mothers
- Give immunizations
- Network between various government departments involved in the ICDS to ensure communication and a united vision



In an attempt to battle malnutrition, we provide each child with a wholesome snack every day. All food is prepared fresh in our kitchen which employs women from the Tekra. These snacks are government tested for the proper nutritional content. Manav Sadhna grants one rupee in adjunct to every 1.40 rupees the Indian government allots per child in the ICDS scheme, enabling us to provide nutrition to twice as many children as enrolled in the *balmandir*.





India's infant mortality ratio is 62:1000, according to government figures. Fifty percent of India's children are anemic because of malnutrition, usually caused by the mother's lack of awareness on how to ensure proper nutrition during her prenatal period and after the birth of her newborn. Through the *balmandir*, Manav Sadhna targets a total of 770 expectant and feeding mothers and provides them with medical care and proper nutrition. We provide 1.10 rupees in addition to every 2.35 rupees the government grants to ensure the highest quality nutrition for expectant and feeding mothers.

Manav Sadhna purchases additional resources for each *balmandir* center to ensure the optimal development of each child. So far, friends of Manav Sadhna have adopted over half of the *balmandir*.

## Highlights

- Employed 132 women as *balmandir* teachers
- Provided 1,068 vaccinations to infants to prevent TB, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Chickenpox
- Vaccinated 1,246 infants for polio (*balmandirs* play a key role in preventing Polio in India)
- Distributed Vitamin A to 33 pregnant and feeding mothers, a treatment that takes place every six months for a duration of three years
- Conducted annual health checks of every child in the program
- Encouraged expectant mothers to make weekly visits to the Manav Sadhna health center
- Taught personal hygiene and sex awareness classes to a group of 20 adolescent women
- Provided nutritional meals to expectant and new mothers and to the preschool children
- Provided emergency care to several pregnant women and new born infants
- Organized a health and nutrition awareness camp for more than 40 women between the ages of 15 and 45
- Built a playground at Manav Sadhna for *balmandir* centers to visit
- Organized a toy bank and distributed the donations to the *balmandir* centers



On the opening day of each *balwadi*, Manav Sadhna held a special celebration in the community. Some of them included a decorated a camel cart, a procession with music, and dancing around the community. Teachers, staff and guest helpers collected each child enrolled in the new center and paraded them around the community. The festivities helped the children transition into their first day away from home, while promoting the value of education to the community.



“Anita Ben, a Manav Sadhna *balmandir* teacher, often visits the homes of her students. On one such visit, she noticed that her student’s youngest sibling, Deepak, looked extremely small and feeble. His eyes were shut tight and his skin clung tautly to his bones.

She immediately informed Manav Sadhna about Deepak’s critical condition and shared her concern that the young infant would not survive much longer. Suhag, a teacher at the computer center, and I went to check up on Deepak.

We arrived at his home, a cramped 10 feet by 10 feet room. As soon as we saw Deepak, we told the mother we had to take him to the hospital. At two years of age, he resembled a one year old in size. He had been sick for the last week. His father, a day laborer, pushed a *lari* (wooden cart) to transport supplies to farmers. The father had not found work for the last week and had no money to buy milk, let alone afford a visit to the doctor. At first the mother refused to take her child to a hospital because her husband was not present. We explained the urgency of the situation and convinced her to accompany us immediately.

Dr. Sharad Patel at Gayatri Hospital diagnosed the baby with severe dehydration. Deepak had very little blood and water content in his body. It took the doctor five minutes to just locate a vein to start an IV. After a series of medicines, glucose and injections, the child’s health began improving. Dr. Patel commented that the child would have died if another hour had passed.

Due to the lack of food and nutrition, Deepak weighed only 5 kg (11 lbs), when an average two year old weighs between 12 to 14 kg (26 to 30 lbs). The mother had not eaten in the last two days. Her own lack of nutrition and lack of awareness on proper feeding for her child almost killed Deepak. The child spent three days in the hospital to recover. Today, thanks to Anita Ben’s initiative, Deepak is happy and in good health.”

*Sunil, community relations*

# Street Children School

## Overview

The child labor market in India consumes approximately four crore (40 million) children. To promote education among youth working on the streets, Manav Sadhna launched the Street Children School. Some children work all day to support their family or themselves and cannot attend school regularly. These circumstances force the child to sacrifice his childhood and mature before his time. The Street Children School takes education to popular street intersections in Ahmedabad, where children spend their days polishing shoes, selling wares, or collecting garbage. For two hours in the afternoon, when there is a lull in their business, they gather under shaded trees to expand their horizons. They are always eager to learn, as sometimes this is the only education they receive.



This year, through four Street Children Schools, more than 110 children received training in academics, hygiene and values. Teachers motivated several children to shorten their work hours and enroll in municipal schools.

This program's curriculum includes a communal harmony prayer, basic math, Gujarati, social and environmental studies, drawing, music, craft, personal hygiene and sanitation education. At the end of class children receive a nutritious snack.

On January 10<sup>th</sup> 2005, we inaugurated our fourth Street Children School at Lal Darvaja, where many children polish shoes, providing the perfect platform to spread the seeds of a basic education.

This project continues to face the challenges of irregular attendance and slow improvements in discipline. Despite these issues, however, children practice personal hygiene, demonstrate discipline and understand basic math. They are giving up habits, such as chewing tobacco and cursing. More importantly, these children enjoy learning. On days when the teacher is running late, students will take the initiative to call Manav Sadhna from a pay phone to ask when the teacher is arriving.

## meet Dudho

"When Dudho first started coming to my classes, he would chew tobacco while I taught and he would curse at the other children. He showered only once every 15 days and had long and soiled hair. He would shout, bully his peers and leave class abruptly. Before participating in the Street Children School, Dudho had only attended the first standard. He neglected his studies to polish shoes for the last six years in order to help supplement the family income. Today, at 13, he showers daily and comes to class with his lessons prepared. His reading is improving and he can proudly read the name of each of his classmates."

*Kamlesh, teacher*



# Non-Formal School

## Overview

The inception of the Non-Formal School in the Tekra five years ago, helped Manav Sadhna establish a strong presence in the community. The school serves as a multi-purpose learning environment:

- Providing an education alternative for children not able to attend government school
- Providing a bridge to the government school system by kindling the children's interest in education
- Providing a supportive environment for children already attending government schools through tuition classes



The Non-Formal School focuses on four main goals:

- Giving slum children an education and the chance to enjoy their childhood
- Utilizing love and understanding to teach the children basic reading and writing skills
- Preparing these children, in four to six months time, to start municipal school
- Providing the children with daily nutrition

The Non-Formal School divides the children into groups based on their learning and skill levels. Lessons are given in basic literacy, personal hygiene and creative development with values and discipline integrated into every lesson. Despite huge barriers to education that are typical within this community, several children have been motivated to study and enroll in regular schools because of their positive experience at the Non-Formal School. The Share and Care Foundation in New Jersey has played a vital role in the success of this project.

**55** children between 6 and 15 years old attended Non-Formal School this year

- **12** students graduated from Non-Formal School and working full time
- **28** students also attended municipal school
- **0** students dropped out this year
- **4** students dropped out last year

Each year, once the students demonstrate regular attendance in the Non-Formal School, we provide them with a student kit. This kit includes a backpack, notebooks, pencils, and other supplies. They also receive a school uniform and shoes. Often these uniforms are the second or third pair of clothing these children have ever owned. These added incentives help the students feel confident and encourage them to attend school regularly.

# STOP Project

## Overview

More than 1,500 children from the Tekra attend the Nava Vadaj Municipal School in Ahmedabad. Many of these children belong to single-parent households. To get to school, these children must cross three busy intersections, bustling with a combination of pedestrians, vehicles and street vendors. The high speeds and sheer number of vehicles passing through make it dangerous for children to travel to school. Since their parents are not always available to accompany them, many children skip school to avoid crossing the streets to attend school. In order to ensure the safety of these children and encourage their regular attendance at school, we established the STOP Project, where older students of Manav Sadhna serve as crossing guards.

Prior to the inception of the STOP Project, roughly 15 accidents occurred every year, involving children from the ages of 3 to 14. As a result, some parents stopped sending their children to school. In direct response, Manav Sadhna initiated the STOP Project in 2001. Six Manav Sadhna youth use stop signs and bright uniforms to help control traffic and guide the safe passage of children. As a result not a single accident took place this year and school attendance to nearby municipal schools increased by 20 percent. The young crossing guards also help the elderly cross the road safely. Drivers have become more aware of children crossing the road and have been supportive of our traffic control team.

## meet Kamlesh



Kamlesh, 23 years old, always wanted to serve society as a teacher. At 12 years of age, in pursuit of this dream, he began working with children from his own community-the Tekra. He tutored about 40 children for a token 2-rupee fee every evening while attending school in the mornings.

Manav Sadhna initially crossed paths with Kamlesh at a local fair where he was looking over 35 slum children on a field trip he organized. We found inspiration in the spirit of service Kamlesh embodied and employed him to continue tutoring students in the slum.

Today Kamlesh leads the Non-Formal School, teaches at the Street Children School and manages the Community Center at the Tekra. He alone brings more than one hundred children with him to the Saturday Special. He is also mentoring 12 youth to become community leaders. He is a true torchbearer for Manav Sadhna.

# Tuitions

## Overview

After Manav Sadhna children enroll in municipal schools, we provide tuitions to supplement and support their education. Each year, more than one hundred students participate in after-school tuition programs concentrating on mathematics, science, social studies and language. The tuition classes are separated by grade levels. From December to March, a special emphasis is given to children in the 10<sup>th</sup> standard to assist them in passing their state-level board exams.



# Earn N' Learn

## Overview

The issue of child labor looms large over India. Life in a slum revolves around day-to-day survival. Circumstances often force children into street labor- polishing shoes, picking rags, selling water pouches and engaging in other dangerous employment activities. Manav Sadhna provides a program through which these children can gain an outlet for their creativity in a safe and fun environment while also earning an income with dignity. Instead of working in the hot sun, they work under the roof of Manav Sadhna making greeting cards and other arts and crafts items.



Through Earn N' Learn this year, we worked with 40 children. Each child participating in this project must attend a formal school. We also involve each child's family in his/her growth by continuously interacting with them and encouraging their working participation in our activities.

During the four hours these children spend at Manav Sadhna every day, they participate in prayer, receive a nutritional snack and attend free tuition classes for one hour. Moreover, the project coordinators act as mentors and friends that provide guidance to the children. The children make 20 rupees a day initially and with practice, soon earn 40 to 50 rupees. A child working as a boot polisher on the streets will earn an average of 10 to 30 rupees daily for longer work hours in harsher surroundings.



## Highlights

- During Diwali break and summer vacation, between 50-55 children earned additional income from making greeting cards.
- The children, on their own will, came to Manav Sadhna daily during their vacation time to help clean the center. They often chose to spend their Sundays here as well.
- Cursing among the Earn N' Learn children decreased dramatically.
- During summer vacation, Manav Sadhna organized a six-day trip to Mount Abu. The children took a rock-climbing course at the Swami Vivekananda Mountaineering Institute, trekked through the jungle and visited the famous temples around Mt. Abu. This activity aimed to foster connectivity

between the children while increasing their self-confidence and sportsmanship. We also gave them some spending money in addition to the few rupees they brought from home. All of the young children used the money to buy gifts for their loved ones.

## To the Point



“We constantly reinforce the importance of not playing with sharp objects, such as scissors, to the children during card making and other craft projects. One day while talking to some of the children, I started fiddling with a pair of scissors without realizing it. Bhavesh, 13 years old, one of my Earn N' Learn children, did not hesitate to point it out to me. He told me that we always tell them not to play with scissors, but that I was doing exactly the opposite. I was caught off guard for a second, but immediately I warmed up. The values of truth, discipline and confidence that we try to inculcate in the children reflected in Bhavesh's action.”

*Jagat, coordinator / art teacher*

- This year Manav Sadhna took 30 children on a field trip to Shanku Water Park in Mehsana. To instill ownership and pride in the children, they paid 50 rupees while we covered the remaining expenses. The field trip provided the children with a fun and memorable experience packed with alternative learning and character building.

- In an effort to coordinate with other service organizations, Akanksha, an NGO working to educate street children in Mumbai, held a leadership program at Manav Sadhna for 40 of their children. Our Earn N' Learners taught them paper cutting and mud work and also participated in a discussion with the Akanksha team about leadership development.



## Marketing Project

During summer vacation, the number of children participating in Manav Sadhna increases two-fold. To keep these youngsters engaged and earning steadily, we piloted a marketing project. Twenty adolescent teens, former Earn N' Learn participants, would market the handmade paper cards made by our younger children to increase orders, and therefore, increase the number of children who could participate in the program. The young adults visited businesses around Ahmedabad to promote the hand made goods and the concept of Manav Sadhna.

Initially, our young marketing team received basic training on how to market a product. However, due to the summer heat and a lack of following through on leads, the project failed. During the process, the teenagers learned about marketing, communicating professionally and

strengthening their self-confidence. They also offered their criticisms and recommendations for the project from their own experiences and observations. At every step in our efforts at Manav Sadhna we strive to incorporate leadership training to help

our children take control of their own futures. Every failure presents the opportunity to learn, reflect and try again.

*To see samples of products made by the Earn N' Learn children, please visit our website at [www.manavsadhna.org](http://www.manavsadhna.org) . If interested in purchasing these products please visit [www.cshops.org](http://www.cshops.org) or visit our center at the Gandhi Ashram.*

## meet Manish



At the age of ten, Manish's hands were covered with blisters and burns. He helped his father fill bottles with Acid and Phenyl, but his little hands lacked experience in handling the harsh chemicals. He also used to help his father sell these dangerous substances, often carrying them door-to-door, to support his family. One day he showed up to a Manav Sadhna Saturday Special on the word of his friend. Slowly, he became an integral part of the Manav Sadhna family.

Today, Manish no longer participates in our programs, he coordinates them. He now runs the Street Children School, Young Doctors and Muthi Anna Daan projects. He also participated in the 2002 Ektaa Show in America. After passing the 9<sup>th</sup> standard, he stopped his studies due to financial problems at home. This year he worked to earn a BPP certificate, the equivalent of a high school diploma. Manish advocates the importance of education to his younger peers. He uses his own life experiences and lack of opportunity to teach and inspire his students at the Street Children School. Fourteen years after he stepped foot in Manav Sadhna, Manish's passion and commitment help lead Manav Sadhna in its mission.

# Distance Learning

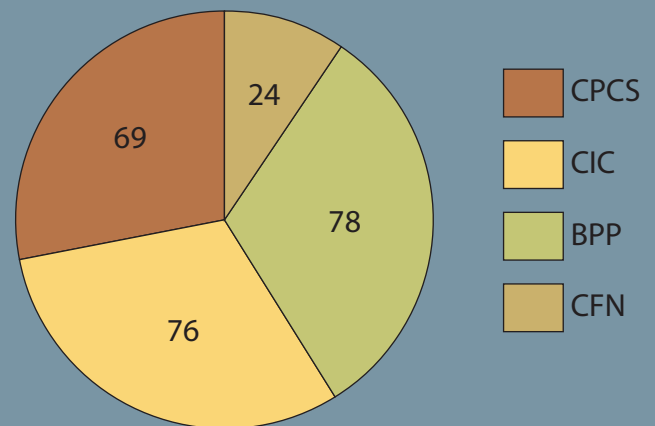
## Overview

Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar Open University (BAOU) targets high school students and college dropouts by establishing courses through which students receive certification to attend an accredited university. Manav Sadhna works with BAOU to offer several of the institution's distance learning courses at our center. Our main focus with them is the BPP exam and the Certificate in Food and Nutrition Program (CFN).

The BPP exam is similar to the American Graduate Requisite Exam (GRE) that allows people without a high school diploma to obtain diploma status and attend college or gain employment thereafter. The CFN program enables individuals to gain the credentials and certificate to work in any *balmandir* in India.

BAOU also offers the Certificate in Computing Program (CIC) and the Certificate in Personal Computer Software Program (CPCS). To this end, Manav Sadhna functions as an *abhyas kendra* or study center by offering its computer lab. The CIC allows the recipient to further their studies and obtain a Masters in Computer Applications. In exchange for the use of our facilities, BAOU pays a nominal rental fee for computer and telephone usage during these two classes. Since these certifications and exams are via university courses, the Government of India acknowledges them.

**Number of Students in Each Course**



## Highlights

- This year a total of 326 students took these courses, of which, 28 students are furthering their graduate studies, 50 students are working with government jobs and 24 students are waiting for their exam results.





# Computer Education

## Overview

In the face of rapid development in technology, it is hard to get a good job without computer skills. Due to the high costs of training courses and learning institutes, individuals from poor economic backgrounds struggle to acquire the skills necessary to land a sturdy job in the market.

In September 2002, the USA-based Indian Council, provided Manav Sadhna with 10 Personal Computers and four printers, all at a cost of five lakh rupees, permitting us to offer classes throughout the day. Typically, a computer class costs 1,000 rupees per month, but for a nominal fee of 100 rupees per month, we provide three-month computer courses to students interested in obtaining computer skills. Each class admits a maximum of nine students, ensuring that each student gets the proper attention from the instructor and individual access to a computer.



We offer classes in Microsoft Office, Tally, and Desktop Publishing with CorelDraw and Adobe PageMaker. These classes are supplemented with computer theory, typing skills, basic word-processing, and spreadsheet skills .

This year we taught a total of 166 students. As with all of our programs, computer classes start with a communal harmony prayer and emphasize the importance of discipline, personal hygiene and good sanitation. Our efforts lie in providing a value-based computer education.

# Computer Distribution

## Overview

In a collaborative effort to bring computer technology to remote villages in Gujarat, Manav Sadhna and the Indian Council distribute computer hardware, software and consultation to these communities. Indian Council provides the funding while Manav Sadhna facilitates this initiative by:

- Consulting and advising school management on computer lab set up, administration and budgetary aspects
- Evaluating the program's effectiveness at individual schools
- Coordinating teacher workshops and training in different districts of Gujarat with the help of the Noble Institute

So far, this venture has assisted four schools, and will continue to reach out to more villages.

# Strengthening Schools

## Overview

With the support of the India Development Relief Fund (IDRF), Manav Sadhna offers its assistance in renovating schools because we recognize the need for clean and well-equipped learning environments. These renovations include structural maintenance and repairs and organizational support such as teacher training. Our targeted schools comprise a mix of municipal and non-municipal schools located in and around Ahmedabad. Currently, we are concentrating on the Mehsana Girl's Hostel, Vinay Mandir Municipal School, the Primary Teacher's College (PTC), the Ashram Municipal School and the Bapunagar Municipal School.

## Highlights

We supervised 23 lakh rupees worth of repair and renovation of these institutes, making certain that the quality of work matched the cost of labor and materials.

<u>Institute</u>	<u>Rupees Invested</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
Mehsana Girls Hostel	5.00.000	36
Ashram Municipal School	6.00.000	700
Bapunagar Municipal School	1.20.000	3500
Bapunagar School No. 7	38.000	400
PTC Girls College	4.00.000	180
Vinay Mandir School	6.00.000	280

We also started an interactive program between Muslim and Hindu students to promote communal harmony.

## Adopting Residential Hostels and Schools

### ■ Parikshitlal Majmoodar Chhatralay - Gandhi Ashram



Adopting Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh's historic hostel inside the Gandhi Ashram in 1989 was one of Manav Sadhna's first efforts at strengthening education among the neglected sectors of society. We poured our hearts and savings into molding and improving the lives of many children from the scavenger community.

This year, 107 children from this community lived in the hostel and received an education in the Ashram Municipal School based in the Gandhi Ashram, established by Mahatma Gandhi himself.

### ■ Thakkar Bapa Chhatralay - Naroda

A residential school, the Thakkar Bapa Chhatralay almost shut down due to a lack of funds, lack of students and administrative issues. Each year Manav Sadhna invests time and funds into this residential primary school of 120 underprivileged children. Last year an international volunteer took the initiative to get a grant of \$2,500 from E-bay Corp., USA. This contribution helped provide the children with individual lockers and enabled structural repairs and the painting of the hostel building. We also worked through the administrative issues to help the school head in the right direction.



### ■ Blind School - Gandhinagar

Throughout India, society often looks down on blindness, resulting in maltreatment, disrespect and negligence towards the blind. In some cases, blind children are abandoned and left to fend for themselves.

Manav Sadhna makes an active effort to address this situation by funding and managing a blind school on the outskirts of Gandhinagar, the capital of Gujarat, located only 30 minutes from Ahmedabad. This residential school gives blind children a loving home, square meals, and a nurturing learning environment focused on encouraging personal strength and building a positive attitude. This facility also extends help to elderly blind people in surrounding areas.

There are 56 blind students ranging from ages 5 to 18 in this school. The government grant received by the school does not provide enough to support all of the teaching and hostel needs. For the past ten years, Manav Sadhna has supported this school with the required funds and administration. Also, with the donations given by E-Bay Corp., we took the students to Dakor, Galtheshwar and a water park on the outskirts of Varodra. The children and our volunteers enjoyed the experience tremendously. Diving in the river and experiencing rides for the first time created memories that these children will cherish forever.



Through the kind contributions of the Share and Care Foundation, an organization based in the United States, and Manav Sadhna, the school now has a computer and a modern technology Braille printer. The school now possesses the capacity to emboss its own educational material in Braille.

The Blind School is located in a residential apartment building that stands three stories high, a situation not suitable for blind students. Currently, Manav Sadhna is working to collect 22 lakh rupees (50,000 dollars) to help strengthen the Blind School by building a new campus with a hostel and school. The Gujarat Government has offered land at a subsidized rate to build this institution in Gandhinagar.



# Assistance for Education

## Overview

Education in Gujarat is free until the 7<sup>th</sup> standard, after which, fees have to be paid. Many students do not have the money to pay these fees to continue to the 12<sup>th</sup> standard. Often, students quit school because of the embarrassment they face when continuously asked to pay these fees. Once they quit school, the students rarely return to finish their education.

At the beginning of each school year, Manav Sadhna provides educational materials either free of charge or at subsidized cost to the neighboring communities. Since most of the students in nearby schools come from the Tekra, they have very few resources to purchase school supplies. Manav Sadhna receives donations from wealthier schools in the form of notebooks, schoolbooks, study guides, backpacks and other supplies. These are then circulated to students attending schools in lower socio-economic areas. Last year, special efforts were made to reach out to riot-affected Muslim slum areas.



## Highlights

We compiled a list of 126 students, with the help of schools near the Tekra, who needed financial aid. After conducting a house-to-house survey, we assessed how much each child would need to continue his/her education and assisted each child with the relative amount. The schools contributed 15 percent of the fees, while Manav Sadhna financed the remaining amount. These students are now continuing their education and aspiring to make their dreams, their reality.

## meet Vijay

Vijay lost his father at a very young age, forcing him and his family (his mother and a younger sister) to lead a life filled with hardship. They traveled from place to place in search of work that would support them. Vijay's mom finally landed a job at the Naroda Ashram School.

Vijay sketches beautifully and wished to develop his talent. Manav Sadhna provided him with financial assistance and today Vijay is enrolled in the RV Shah College of Fine Arts in Dholka. He demonstrates his commitment to learning by traveling four hours daily to attend college.



# Rebuilding Homes

## Overview

Children often neglect their education due to shortcomings in their living conditions. Reading in a dimly lit one bedroom house can prove challenging, while studying in a roofless home during the monsoon can prove impossible. Although Manav Sadhna avoids giving hand outs and prefers to find solutions that empower the individual, sometimes a child or a family needs assistance to reach their goals. With this in mind, Manav Sadhna helps rebuild homes for families in critical situations. One condition applies; the children in the household must commit to continuing their education. This year we helped remodel four homes in the Tekra through the kind support of donors.

## meet Gauribhen



Arvind drives a pedal rickshaw while both Bhikhi and Deepak attend the Manav Sadhna Non-Formal School. Deepak also attends the 3<sup>rd</sup> standard in a nearby government school.

Manav Sadhna learned about the plight of this family through their children in the Non-Formal School. The children had made Manav Sadhna their second home, and participated in many of its programs. The family demonstrated strong values and self-respect. They were determined to survive the difficulties thrown at them.

Gauri Ben married twenty years ago in the small village of Siddpur-Mehsana. She and her husband migrated to Ahmedabad in search of employment. Three years ago, her husband fell ill and passed away. She started working as a rag picker to support her family.

Gauri Ben and her three children, Arvind (17), Bhikhi (12) and Deepak (10) all live in a single room. Together, they leave the house early in the morning to pick rags. If they have money they take the bus, and if not, they walk five kilometers to the place where they collect paper and plastic. After working all day, they will usually walk home with fifteen kg of waste on their heads.

Manav Sadhna initially enrolled Gauri Ben in the *Muthi Anna Daan* program, in which widows receive ten kg of wheat every month. The family also received free medicines and school supplies. The children responded positively to this assistance, never losing their own self-determination. Manav Sadhna continued to help when the opportunity arose.

Manav Sadhna rebuilt Gauri Ben's home. By building her home with a smokeless *chula*, bathroom and toilet, the family can lead a healthier and happier life. Gauri Ben and her family participated in building their new home, once again demonstrating their principles of hard work and self-reliance.



# Empowerment & Financial Stability

Life in the slums often resolves in a hand to mouth existence. Time and again, after feeding a household and paying for rent and electricity, families have nothing left to save. Manav Sadhna helps people stand on their feet through income generation projects. We guide them to understand the importance of saving for emergencies and for their future. Manav Sadhna also provides loans to enterprising individuals to enable them to establish themselves. Several individuals have bought carts to sell wares using this loan plan. In addition to helping people save, we offer income-earning opportunities to individuals who do not have jobs or face discrimination in their community. This way, these individuals are able to sustain a decent job and earn a good wage.

*I cannot teach anybody  
anything, I can only make  
them think.*

*-Socrates*



# The Women's Livelihood Project

The women of the Devi Poojak community in Patan, traditionally sell fruits and vegetables for their livelihood. These women carry a basket of fresh produce on their head and sell from door-to-door. They also set up their produce on the roadside. After surveying Patan, Manav Sadhna identified more than 175 women, including 49 widows, who were earning insufficient income.

In September 2003 the Gujarat State Women and Child Welfare Department instigated efforts to provide employment to disadvantaged women to strengthen their economic condition. Manav Sadhna proposed that these women could carry a larger selection of fruits and vegetables while traveling farther and faster if they had a cart. By alleviating the physical weight they carried, the women's health would also improve.

On January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2004, Manav Sadhna provided these women with the first of four installments of materials, which included a cart, basket, fresh produce and a weight scale among other necessities. Manav Sadhna inaugurated the project with a puppet show that targeted the issue of women's empowerment, which followed with a speech by Anandiben Patel, the Education Minister of Gujarat, who also emphasized women's development.

At the end of February 2005, we provided the women with our last installment of vegetables. These initial materials enabled the women to earn and stand on their feet. Manav Sadhna continues meeting with the women and checking up on their progress. The Devi Poojak women no longer depend on Manav Sadhna for financial aid. Today these women are earning 50 percent more and saving money for their future.

## Empowerment



"I was attending a women's meeting in the Tekra when one woman stood up and spoke out about her husband. She shared that he sexually abused her. She had two little children, but no relatives otherwise. She feared leaving her husband because she had no other option for supporting her children. She did not dare to file a case on him, because if he went to jail, her children went to bed hungry. She felt she had nowhere to go, no support system and no skills to fall back on.

I felt completely helpless. I did not have a solution for her problem. And in the Indian context, there are not many alternatives for a woman looking to leave her husband's house. Her husband had managed to completely isolate her from all social activities, depriving her of friends.

Since that experience, I strongly advocate the need for women to gain skills and stand on their own feet. I believe each woman should receive a basic education and learn skills that will allow her to earn and build confidence in fighting for her own rights."

Anar, coordinator

# Khakra Project

Mahatma Gandhi established the Sabarmati Ashram in his efforts for an independent India. One of the guiding principles practiced in the Ashram, *Swaraj* or self-rule, aimed to empower the underprivileged. Today, those residing in the Ashram demonstrate a disconnection with the vision of Mahatma Gandhi. In efforts to recover the foundation of the Ashram community while encouraging women's development, Manav Sadhna started the Khakra Project.



The Khakra Project facilitates 40 women to earn 30 to 50 rupees daily while building their self-confidence and financial independence. The women are responsible for making the dough, rolling, frying, taking stock and packaging. Parth Industries, an Ahmedabad based company that sells Gujarati snack items both locally and abroad, market the finished goods and provide the women with their wages.

Through this supplementary income, these women give their children a proper education, improve the standard of living in their family, build confidence in their own abilities and proudly demonstrate financial independence.

These delicious snacks can also be purchased at Manav Sadhna in the Gandhi Ashram.

# Popcorn Project



Manav Sadhna has been called to a new task as its children grow up. After receiving a good education and set of values through Manav Sadhna, our older children now turn to us for guidance in employment. We piloted the Popcorn Project as an experiment to generate jobs.

Manav Sadhna purchased three popcorn machines and trained 10 adolescents on operating the machines and making a certain yield of popcorn without any waste. We also guided them on customer service, communication and presentation.

We inaugurated this project in February 2005. The Popcorn Project, which ran for three months and helped our young adults earn a total of 4,000 rupees, Vexpanded to service marriages, parties, talent shows, and other venues. During *Navratri*, a dance festival that lasts nine nights, we set up a machine at the National Institute of Design for 10 days..

Although this project and our children demonstrated potential success, finding a permanent and promising location is necessary for the sustainability of this venture. This challenge has led us to temporarily discontinue the endeavor and redesign it for long-term sustainability.

# Marketing Center

Through various Manav Sadhna projects, children and women use their hands to make cards and paint *divas* to create a better life. The Manav Sadhna Marketing Center serves as the outlet to sell these hand crafted items while promoting the concept of humanity and social service.

This year, Manav Sadhna held its third annual handicraft exhibition and also participated in exhibitions in Patan, Sanand and Gandhinagar.

Products sold in the Manav Sadhna Marketing Center can also be purchased online at [cShops.org](http://cShops.org).

## when seeds bloom



"Each child at Manav Sadhna is a story. One evening I was returning from the Community Center in the Tekra. I sat in an auto rickshaw to go home but before I could give the driver directions, my cell phone rang. When I finished my phone call, I realized that the driver was taking the last turn into my neighborhood. As the rickshaw stopped in front my house, I asked the young man how he knew where I lived. 'You don't recognize me

but I know you very well,' he said. When he was 16, he and his brother came to my house for a *Shiv Pooja* Festival with 250 other Manav Sadhna children. They also used to come to Manav Sadhna every Saturday, where they learned the importance of savings and even had a savings pass book with the Manav Sadhna savings bank.

He and his brother started saving money from boot polishing. Three years ago, they had collected enough for the down payment of an auto rickshaw. They also took out a loan.

Today the rickshaw is fully paid. They also bought another rickshaw so that their father, who is old and ill, could retire. After sharing this story, he added that the value of savings he learned at Manav Sadhna made a huge difference in his life and his family's life. Although he insisted against it, I managed to give him my fare. He took off with a big smile and left me with an even bigger one."

Viren, coordinator

Tell me, I'll forget; show me I'll remember; involve  
me, I'll understand.

-Dr. Ernst Wynder





# Health & Hygiene

Mahatma Gandhi believed that “Cleanliness is next to Godliness.” Influenced by Mahatma Gandhi and our close association with the Environmental Sanitation Institute (ESI) at the Gandhi Ashram, Manav Sadhna implements cleanliness, hygiene, and sanitation as very critical aspects of all our projects. In the slums, problems arise because most homes do not have proper sanitation facilities or running water. Children run around without shoes on their feet, bite their nails, and do not wash their hands before eating or after going to the bathroom. Through our awareness programs, children are taught proper hygiene. This awareness program is part of every education project at Manav Sadhna. In addition, we have specific programs that target health and hygiene issues. Some of these programs include medical camps, a community health center, and hygiene and sanitation education.

He who has health, has  
hope. and he who has  
hope, has everything.

-Arabian proverb

# Community Health Center

## Overview

Manav Sadhna founded a healthcare center to address the needs of the impoverished. This center is in the middle of the Tekra and treats between 40 to 60 patients daily. If need be, cases are referred to a specialist. For a nominal three rupees, patients are treated by two professional doctors and provided with the necessary medication. Manav Sadhna has trained two youth to work as compounders (pharmacists). By dispensing medication, these children earn a steady income, increase their self-confidence and gain training in a desired profession.



Water and air borne diseases are the most common problems in the Tekra because of unsanitary practices. Fifty percent of the cases that come through the Center are children with cough, fever, and worms. Although cough is not a serious problem, it can develop into pneumonia or tuberculosis (TB) because families cannot afford the necessary antibiotics. Worms are a result of unhygienic practices and the fact that these children's families cannot afford to buy them shoes. The health center provides free de-worming medicine and affordable treatment for other illnesses.

The most common diagnosis among adults includes cough, fever and skin diseases. The fevers are generally caused by jaundice or typhoid, which result from a lack of hygiene and sanitation. The Center also works to improve the dangerous living conditions of the Tekra.



## Highlights

- In an attempt to battle unsanitary practices, Manav Sadhna worked with the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) to implement a door-to-door campaign to 500 households to encourage people to boil water for drinking, to wash hands regularly, use chlorine pills and keep a clean home.

- Approximately 85 percent of the women in the Tekra have anemia. To fight against this, we supply iron pills free of cost. Many households in the Tekra have at least one TB infected

individual. To alleviate these numbers, we also work with the AMC by sending these patients to Directly Observed Therapy (DOT) centers where they can receive free TB treatment. Fifty-six patients underwent successful DOT treatment while 28 are currently being treated.

- During monsoons this year, we provided weekly doses of malaria preventative medicine to 500 households, or approximately 5000 people. This program continues to grow every year. As a result, we see fewer people infected with malaria each year. Also, this program is run completely by the young adolescents of the Community Center.

In July, we held a 15-day eye camp, treating 56 patients. We paid for 12 cataract operations and provided 34 patients with new glasses, subsidizing 75 percent of the cost.

For patients with complicated cases, who require hospitalization or surgery, Manav Sadhna covers 75 percent of all costs, while the patients cover the remaining expenses. This year we treated approximately 132,000 patients and diagnosed 12 special cases that required hospitalization.

## Young Doctors Program



### Overview

Manav Sadhna currently works with 21 trained children in the Young Doctors Program. They mend wounds, trim nails, repair torn clothes, and provide basic first aid to children of neighboring municipal schools. Parents often lack the finances to treat their children's minor cuts and scrapes. However, without proper attention, these basic problems can lead to serious conditions. Our Young Doctors treat these children while learning the value of service and developing self-confidence.

Our efforts are currently targeted at six schools in Ahmedabad. In 2004-2005, this program treated almost 7,000 children. As a result, several of these Young Doctors have become role models in their own schools and communities.

On average, a Young Doctor serves for two years, leaving the project when he reaches the 10<sup>th</sup> standard. Each young adult visits a school twice a week for two hours a day. They earn 50 rupees a week for their efforts. Our first aid youth are selected based on their own interest in the project. The Young Doctors program has been running for six years. This year we plan to expand our program by adding another school and increasing the number of Young Doctors so that more children can benefit.

### Highlights

- In July 2004, we provided the young doctor team with continued training on how to approach children, talk to teachers and treat other minor health problems.

## meet Kajal

"My name is Kajal. I am in the first standard and live on the streets. I lost my mother when I was very young. My father, who drives a pedal rickshaw to support my family, is an alcoholic.

I do not have anyone to help me wash my hair properly. After some time infected sores began to emerge on my head. Soon after, the boils covered my entire head. One day when Mayur and Jigar (Young Doctors) came through my school to treat my classmates, they saw my infections. They washed and treated my sores and told me about Manav Sadhna. Mayur and Jigar then helped me get new clothing, blankets and grains from Manav Sadhna to help my family lead a better life."



# meet Chelabhai



Chelabhai, age 45, resides in the Tekra. His wife and four children pick rags to support themselves. Last year, Chelabhai started suffering from severe gangrene in his hands. It prevented him from going to work, further weakening his economic condition. His left leg and hand also suffered damages due

to paralysis, and is unable to speak. Chelabhai applied to Manav Sadhna for treatment. We sent him to a good hospital in Ahmedabad for testing. The gangrene had spread through his entire hand and, if not treated, would have spread through his entire body. The doctor amputated part of his left hand to prevent the spreading. Manav Sadhna covered the 6,000 rupees cost of the treatment. He received his operation and treatment in a private hospital, with complete financial support provided by Manav Sadhna.

Chelabhai's family has a strong relationship with Manav Sadhna. He and his wife encourage their four children to get a proper education. Each of the children has attended the Manav Sadhna Non-Formal School. We also found a donor to help them rebuild their home.

## Family Planning

### Overview

According to the 2001 Census of India, the country's population figured in excess of one billion people. India continues to grow at a rapid pace and in 2050 will exceed China's population by 200 million individuals, marking it the most populated country in the world. One of the main reasons for this drastic increase in numbers lies in a lack of awareness and family planning among the uneducated sectors of society.

In February 2005, Manav Sadhna started a family planning project; three widows from the Tekra conduct household surveys and promote the 'Small House, Happy House' campaign while informing families about family planning and its benefits. They earn 100 rupees per case, and follow through each operation to ensure a healthy healing process for each woman. Since the program's inception, 45 women have undergone successful operations.

In addition to a small government financial incentive, Manav Sadhna awards each woman with one kg of *ghee* (clarified butter). Most of these women lack the proper fat in their diets and need to increase their strength. *Ghee*, an expensive luxury, provides the women with these benefits.

# Nutrition

## Overview

The statistics of malnutrition amongst low-income households in India are alarming. Unfortunately, malnutrition related deficiencies and sicknesses are a major contributor to low energy levels and growth stunting amongst children. Our nutrition programs attempt to address these issues by providing a nutritious meal after every educational activity. In this manner, Manav Sadhna provides basic nutrition to over 4,000 children through six different projects daily, enabling them to lead healthy and active lives.

## Highlights

- In addition to Manav Sadhna's vehicle, we have employed a young pedal rickshaw driver to deliver the food fresh from the

Manav Sadhna kitchen to the field site of each project. The Manav Sadhna kitchen staff employs two full time cooks and three assistants.

- The *balmandir* project provides each child and woman with a daily snack consisting of 8 to 10 grams of protein and 300 calories, all of which are government tested for proper nutritional content.

- In the other Manav Sadhna projects, children and women receive a variety of nutritious and wholesome snacks. For Saturday Specials we make items that have nutritional value that children would enjoy but do not get to eat regularly.

Project Name	Who is receiving the nutrition
■ Balmandirs	3,570 children and women daily
■ Street School	113 children daily
■ Non-formal School	55 children daily
■ Earn N Learn	40 children daily
■ Gramshree	50 women daily
■ Saturday Special	180-200 children every Saturday
TOTAL	Approxiamately 4,000 children

## In India...

- 30 % of infants have a low birth weight
- 18% of children under 5 suffer from severe underweight
- 47% of children under 5 suffer from moderate underweight
- 16% of children under 5 suffer from wasting
- 46% of children under 5 suffer from stunting

\*Based on UNICEF records - visit [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

# Hygiene & Sanitation Education

Unhygienic practices in the slum areas lead to series of food and waterborne diseases such as bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A and E and typhoid fever. Common colds, lice and pink eye pass from child to child due to a lack of personal hygiene. Children play alongside open defecation while narrow alleys linger with the smell of rotting garbage. Children in slums are exposed to dangers that could be avoided by practicing basic hygiene and sanitation.

Manav Sadhna advocates personal hygiene in all of its activities. Throughout this year, we brought more than 150 children to our center to give them a bath, provide them a set of fresh clothes, cut their nails, oil their hair and comb out their tangles. Through this process we highlight the importance of hygiene by exposing the child to its benefits while building a relationship with them through this interaction. We often take the child to a mirror to show them their new appearance. They find confidence by looking and feeling clean. We remind all our children of the importance of washing hands before eating and after using the toilet.

In November 2004, ESI launched a Hygiene and Sanitation Education Program with the Manav Sadhna Non-Formal School. Initially the project attempted to train 10 adolescents from the slum to help teach these classes; however, due to inconsistencies in attendance, the project took to working directly with 40 primary school-aged children.

Last year, fourteen classes were organized. Subjects include washing hands, brushing teeth, covering the mouth when sneezing, throwing trash into a waste bin, understanding water sources, understanding the digestive system, describing a clean house and practicing eye hygiene.





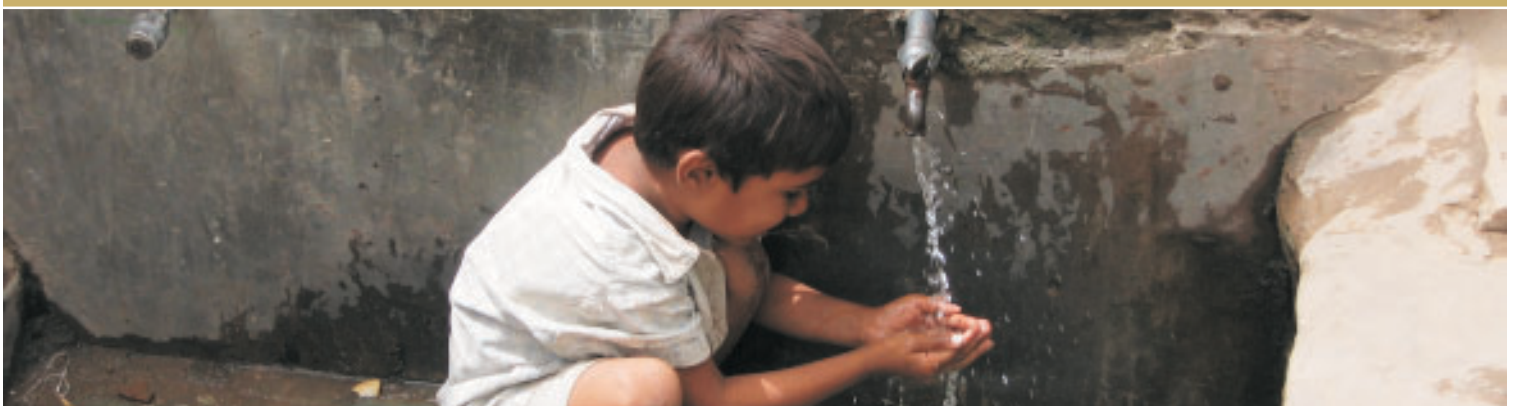
# Environmental Projects

## Overview

Throughout the year Manav Sadhna organizes clean-ups around Ahmedabad. Through these efforts we aim to exemplify the benefits of cleanliness and emphasize the importance of a clean environment.

## Highlights

- We held several public sanitation activities this year, including a clean up project at the civil hospital and the Tekra. Manav Sadhna spent one afternoon removing human excreta from the nearby Parikshit Lal Bridge. We followed the clean up with a music program in the neighborhood next to the bridge to promote the importance of keeping public spaces clean and encouraging children not to use the bridge as an open toilet. During this time, Manav Sadhna also emphasized the value of a toilet and the priority it should take over investments such as televisions and scooters.
- For the past two years, we have also worked with local colleges and students to promote better sanitation habits. Over 100 students enrolled in the Sanitation Inspector (SI) program at their university. They came to the Tekra and held a sanitation campaign, rallying and announcing slogans to promote practices such as picking up garbage from the streets and avoiding public spaces as toilets.
- As an extension of our Hygiene and Sanitation Education Program, we took 40 Manav Sadhna children to the ESI training center for a one-day fair on sanitation. Children learned about how toilets work, how to make natural fertilizer out of waste, how to conserve water and other relevant topics. We also facilitated a painting activity with the children from the Harijan Sevak Sangh Hostel. They created a collaborative piece on their understanding of the environment.
- In this coming year, Manav Sadhna will build toilets in the homes of women already associated with our organization. Due to social stigmas, these women generally wait until dark to relieve themselves, a practice that leads to serious health problems and leaves the women vulnerable to an attack by either a natural or human predator.





Our environment, the world in which we live and work, is a mirror of our attitudes and expectations.

- Earl Nightingale



# Community Development

Community development should embody total development of both the people and the community. Manav Sadhna believes that every individual should have access to spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical development. We organize collection banks and donate food grains to ensure people have the basic necessities. We promote spirituality through regular prayer and *bhajans*. We develop values and leadership in our children so that they can take the future of their community in their own hands. By fostering inner strength in each individual, we foster a strong and united community. Societal harmony encompasses respect for all living beings, respect for all religions and respect for all cultures. We organize interactions between diverse groups of children to promote peace and understanding in these young minds. We pray to every denomination to demonstrate that humanity should be rooted in solidarity, not in their differences. Manav Sadhna also promotes the wisdom of great leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi so that their philosophy and ideals continue to inspire mankind.

*It takes an entire village to raise one child.*

*-African proverb*



# Elderly Care

In the Tekra, men are dying earlier due to harsh physical labor, alcoholism and excessive use of tobacco products. As a result, women as young as 40 are forced to face the life of widowhood. Their children and their society ostracize and neglect them, leaving them feeling worthless, depressed and frustrated.

Seventy of these widows now often gather at the Manav Sadhna Community Center in the Tekra. They have created a space they consider home. Every Monday evening, the women meet to sing *bhajans* (devotional songs), followed by a nutritious meal. Children also read books and newspapers out loud to the women. These widows have taken ownership over the Center and maintain the premises, doing everything from watering the plants to sweeping the floors. They work as motivators in the community, promoting family planning, health efforts and education. During our malaria prevention efforts, the widows provided awareness and passed out preventative pills throughout the Tekra. They also led an awareness rally on cholera and typhoid.

In addition to the center, Manav Sadhna includes the women in every celebration giving the women ample opportunity to sing, dance, eat and enjoy. We also provide these women with blankets, clothing, and medical care. This year Manav Sadhna held an eye camp, supplying the widows with glasses and, when necessary, cataract operations. Manav Sadhna also took the women to visit Amarnath, Dakor, and Akshardam.



## meet Channndla Vala Maji

At the age of 78, Channndla Vala Maji walks eight to 10 km in the slums to sell *channndlas* (bindhis) and bangles. It is from her trade that we nicknamed her Channndla Vala Maji (the grandmother who sells bindhis). She supports her widowed daughter, who has two children and a 15-year-old grandson, who lost his parents in an accident. We found this family when Manav Sadhna youth volunteers were conducting a survey to assess which students needed financial aid to prevent them from dropping out of schools. Maji's home had walls of jute on three sides and no light. On many nights the family went to bed hungry.

Maji's situation was so severe that we had to do something. We told Maji that we would take care of her grandson's fees, and asked her what else we could do to help. She stared blankly for a minute before a stream of tears ran down her face. She did not know what to say. Maybe her pride and self-dignity prevented her from asking for help. There was no doubt though that the family struggled with poverty.

Today, Maji's grandson is studying in the 10<sup>th</sup> standard. We helped build a permanent room and provided a year's supply of food. Maji often comes to the Community Center to participate in our activities. She continues to sell *chandlas* and works hard to support her loved ones.

# Leadership Camp

*How far can you support a man climbing a coconut tree? Only as far as your hands can reach; after that he has to do the climbing himself.*

— Kasturi Sreenivasan

All children possess potential in their life to achieve greatness within their own capacity. This potential, however, if unnurtured, remains latent and withers away as the child develops into a young adult.

Manav Sadhna held a five-day summer camp to provide young teens with insight on what it takes to become a leader. A six-member committee of staff and volunteers selected twenty-seven boys and girls ages 12 to 18 from underprivileged areas of Ahmedabad. The children stayed at the Harijan Sevak Sangh hostel located right across Manav Sadhna. Through various activities and discussions, the children gained an understanding of the principles behind the Gandhian approach to leadership. These focuses included discipline, self-confidence, tolerance, teamwork, non-violence, and positive thinking. The camp also provided daily instruction on healthy living such as personal hygiene, exercise, proper nutrition, and maintaining a clean environment.

Each day of the camp centered on a certain theme. For example, the first day emphasized self-confidence. We led a discussion by having each child stand up in front of his peers and share his personal goals, strengths, and weaknesses. The speaker then asked each child how she would attain her goals or how she would transform her weaknesses into strengths. This activity pushed the children to think about their future with confidence, despite limitations set by society. The discussion also assuaged shyness and the fear of public speaking among the group.



## volunteer experience

“Over the five days of summer camp, we (the summer camp leaders) saw an immense change within the children. They demonstrated confidence and practiced what we discussed. The goals of the camp had been met and the children had set a benchmark for next year’s summer camp. After one month the summer campers will meet again to discuss the changes they implemented in their daily lives. This experience was unbelievable. It proved that no matter what their circumstance, each child owns the potential of becoming a leader.”

Raju, international volunteer



# Ultimate Frisbee

*Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to unite people in away that little else does. – Nelson Mandela*

Healthy Body, Healthy Mind. Sport, a challenging activity that ignores socio-economic backgrounds, provides a great platform to bring people together. The mental and physical discipline required to succeed at any level of sport builds character, self confidence and inner drive.

Through a Junior Ultimate Frisbee League, Indicorps, an NGO that encourages volunteerism among local youth and Indian diaspora, aims to meet the need for a low cost sport that can bring children from the cross section of Ahmedabad together. The activity also provides children with life skills, confidence and good sportsmanship. In September 2004, Indicorps initiated the Ultimate Frisbee Project with 15 Manav Sadhna youth between the ages of 18 to 22. After teaching them the rules of the sport and game strategy, Indicorps spent six months training the adolescents on coaching. Practices emphasized how to teach and encourage good sportsmanship and confidence among children. In the fall of 2005, the project will expand to establish four to five teams lead by the young coaches. Teams will include children from diverse backgrounds around Ahmedabad, including children from the Manav Sadhna Street Children School.



Ultimate Frisbee, also known as Ultimate, is a non-contact fast paced field sport played in two teams. The aim is to throw a Frisbee (plastic disc) up a field from teammate to teammate until it is caught in the opponents' end zone. The game combines elements of football and basketball. Ultimate is a sport that requires very little equipment and the basic techniques and rules can be learned quite easily. It is a game that is very active and requires the participation of every team member. Ultimate players build a spirit of mutual respect and sportsmanship towards others, both on and off field.

## Highlights

- Ultimate Frisbee teams from the United States and London donated about 100 discs while the University of North Carolina contributed 14 pairs of track shoes.





# Muthi Anna Dhan

*Muthi Anna Daan* was stimulated by the Indian tradition to give a fistful of grain to a domestic animal every day. Manav Sadhna encourages that fistful to be given to our underprivileged neighbors until they can stand on their own. Through this unique program, we aim at facilitating nutrition for widows unable to make ends meet because of social stigma or disability, and we also work with families in really dire situations.

This year we provided 54 widows with ten kg of grain each month. In exchange the women paid a token fee of one rupee per kg, a symbolic payment to discourage these women from taking hand outs. The widows are selected based on an annual survey, and at the end of each year, most widows are encouraged to find more self-reliant sources of income; we continue to help those in serious need. At the monthly meetings, in addition to giving out grains, we hold a *bhajan* and follow up with discussions on health, nutrition and other important issues. We also cut nails while the women wait and interact with them to build heart-to-heart connections.



In order to involve the local community, Manav Sadhna has given out plastic jars to many middle-class households. We encourage these families to place a fistful of grains each day in these jars. Our intent is to make more people aware of the needs of the lower-income communities. Two local volunteers have taken leadership in going house to house to collect these jars and spread the concept. Each month they end up collecting 20 to 25 kg (44 to 55 lbs) of grain, while we purchase the remaining grain with money contributed by donors, in kind.

Fewer women beg on the streets of Ahmedabad because of this program. These women have been able to rediscover their self-dignity.

## Collection Banks

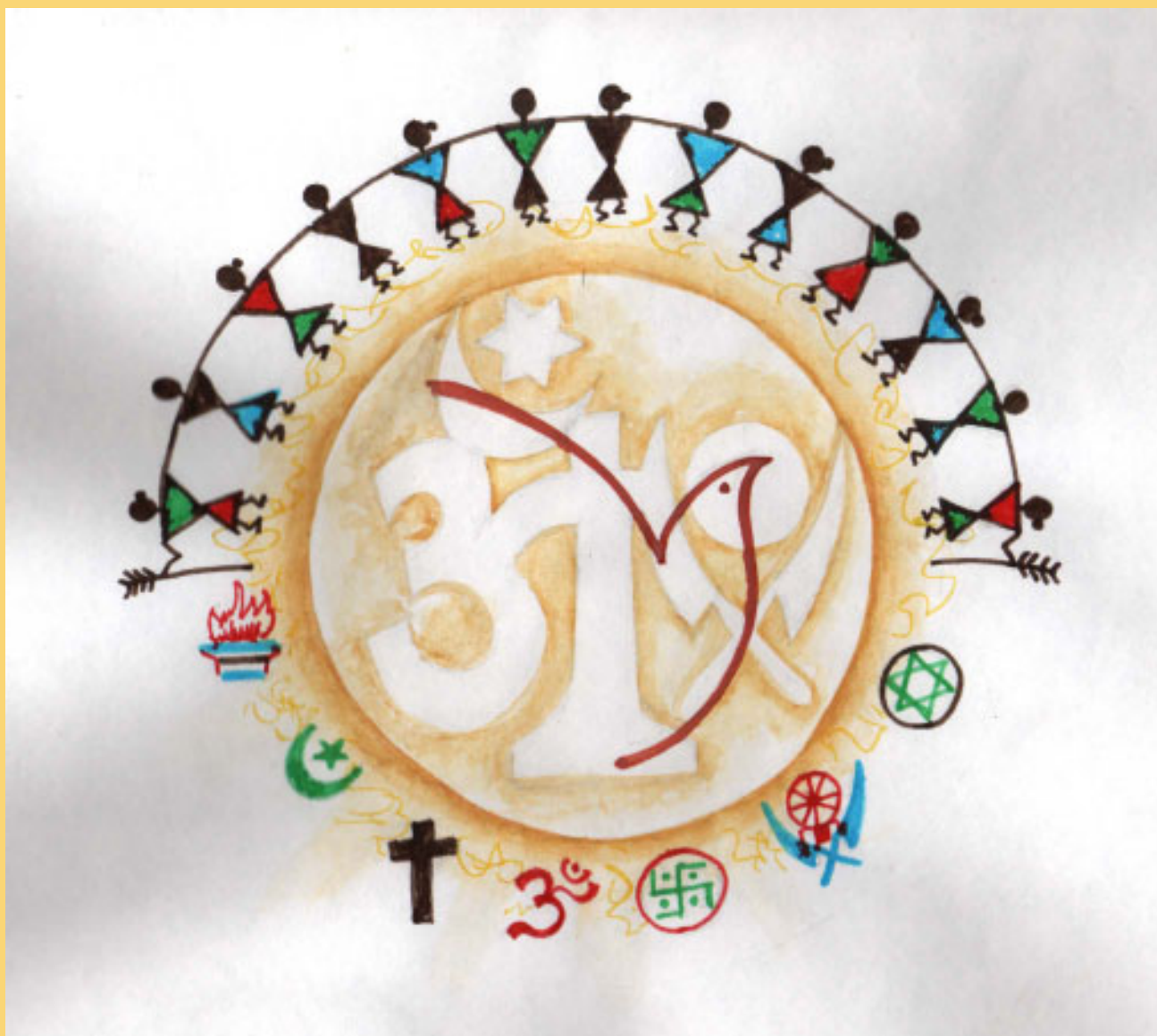


Many people desire to give back to the community but may not have the money to donate. In lieu of this, Manav Sadhna has set up collection banks for donated articles, including clothes, shoes, toys and other supplies. This effective means allows people to help better the lives of others as thousands of clothes and supplies have been systematically distributed to slums and villages. We always keep a supply of donated clothes and other items to pass along to needy families that come to the center.

# Spiritual Development

Value education at Manav Sadhna emphasizes spiritual development. All daily activities commence with an “All Religions” prayer. Beliefs, symbols and texts of all religions are discussed, so that children develop a respect for all faiths. Children are also encouraged to practice meditation for inner spiritual strength.

Manav Sadhna sees every religious festival as an occasion of joy to celebrate with vigor and enthusiasm. Festivals like Christmas, Eid, and Diwali are observed with equal zeal, and are used to encourage children from all castes and all religions to celebrate, in unison. By inculcating children with the concept of communal harmony at an early age, we hope to prevent communal violence in the future generations.





# Sarva Dharma Prathna - All Religion Prayer

The All Religions Prayer recited daily before beginning Manav Sadhna activities:

## Om Tat Sat Shri Narayan

Om Tat Sat Shri Naraayana tu, Purushottama Guru tu  
Siddh Buddh tu, Scand Vinayak, Savita Pavak tu  
Brahm Masad tu, Yahav Shakti tu, Isupita Prabhu tu  
Rudra Vishnu tu, Rama Krishna tu, Rahim tao tu  
Vasudeva go - Vishva Roopa tu, Chidananda Hari tu  
Adwitiya tu, Akal Nirabhay Atmalinga Shiva tu  
Om Tat Sat Shri Naraayana tu, Purushottama Guru tu

This prayer is about the many forms and names of the Almighty.

God you are the Hindu Gods, Narayan and Purushottama

God you are Buddha, you are you the sun and the fire (Parsis)

God you are from the Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian faiths

God you are in the form of Vasudeva and Vishva. You are in the form of happiness

God, you are only one.

## Asatyo Maheti

Asato ma sat gamay  
Tamaso ma Jyotir gamay  
Mrutyoma Amrutam gamay

God, take me from untruth to eternal truth  
From deep darkness, take me to eternal light  
From great death, take me to your sweet nectar  
I am without you, but give me your blessings

## Satya, Ahimsa

Satya, ahimsa, chori na karvi, vana jotu nav sangharvu  
Brahmacharya ne jate mahenat, koi ade nav abhadavavu  
Abhay, swadeshi, swad tyag ne, sarva dharma sarkha ghanava  
Ae agiyar a mahavratu samaji, namrapane dradh acharva

Speak the truth, practice non-violence of thoughts, speech, actions, do not steal, do not  
accumulate more than you need

Control all your senses, perform efforts on your own, do not believe in untouchability, all  
are equal

Do not have fear of anything, use things made in your own country, sacrifice tastes, all  
religions are equal

Practice these principals, bow down with respect and practice these things in your life





## Shanti Mantra

Sarvetra sukhi na santo, sarve san tuni Ramaya  
Sarve bhadrani pashyantu, ma kaschid dukh mapniyat  
Om shanti, shanti, shanti

All people become happy, become nirmaya  
Look out for everyone's well-being, there should be no sadness for anybody  
Peace, peace, peace

## Vaishnav Jana

Vaishnav jana to tene kahiye je peeda parayee jaane re  
Par dukhe upkar kare toye mana abhiman na aane re  
Vaishnav jana...

Sakala loka ma sauhne vande, ninda na kare kaynee re  
Vaach, kaach, man nishchal rakhe, dhan dhan jana nee tenee re  
Vaishnav jana...

Sama drushtee ne trushna tyagee par stree jene maate re  
Jeehvaa thakee asatya na bole, para dhana nava jale haath re  
Vaishnav jana...

Moh maya vyape nahi jene dradh vairagya jena manama re  
Ramanama shu talee lagee sakal teerath tena tanama re  
Vaishnav jana...

Vanolobhee ne kapat rahit che kaama krodh nivarya re  
Bhane narsaryo tenoo darshan karta kul ikoter tarya re  
Vaishnav jana...

# Wisdom Handicrafts

Mahatma Gandhi's life is a message. His name represents a universal ideology of peace, based on the strength of his principles and actions. In August 2004, Manav Sadhna launched a new line of products, Gandhi Wisdom Handicrafts, which make a humble effort to spread Mahatma Gandhi's message and motivate positive social action. These products are sold at cost and include items such as "see no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil" monkeys, *khadi* (handspun cotton) wall hangings, day planners, calendars, frames, sarva dharma pendants and pens carrying Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts and pictures.

See samples of these products at [www.manavsadhna.org](http://www.manavsadhna.org)



Even as a tree has a single trunk, but many branches and leaves, there is one religion-human religion-but any number of faiths.

-Mahatma Gandhi





Arvind, 15 years old, beams with confidence that children his age usually lack. Jayanti, Arvind's 10 year old brother, never passes a day without his infectious smile.

Arvind starts his day at nine in the morning by cleaning his house. He then walks to the main commercial street of Ahmedabad- CG Road, a road he lovingly refers to as his 'office'. Along his walk to the office, he shines shoes, which he keeps up until six in the evening. From his eight hours of labor, he earns 40 to 50 rupees. Afterwards, he returns home to help fetch water and do laundry for his entire household. After eating dinner and resting briefly, he leaves home at nine in the evening, spending the next four hours picking through and collecting garbage to sell. In between all of these tasks, Arvind finds time to attend the Street Child School, where he eagerly learns to read and write.

Arvind and Jayanti's father died of alcoholism a few years ago. Their mother is mentally challenged. Their older brother drinks, working only when he is sober. Manav Sadhna has been working with this brother to help him give up drinking. Jayanti, too young to help earn, attends municipal school regularly. Arvind takes full responsibility for supporting his household.

Two years ago, Arvind was picking rags late one night when he found a box outside of a jewelry store. After arriving home, he sorted through the box and found several pure silver coins. Arvind could not sleep at night knowing that these coins did not belong to him. The next morning he noticed that the box held a letter with an address attached to it. Since Arvind's reading skills are limited, he asked an adult to read the address and took him to the jewelry store to return the items to the owner. The owner, taken aback by Arvind's honesty, felt compelled to give him a 500 rupee reward.

A child that earns less than 50 rupees a day, a child with such a dismal family situation, returned a box filled with treasures worth 100 times his daily earnings.





# Creative Development

Can childhood be complete without time to play and dream? We recognize that recreational development is a significant aspect of a child's life. It not only shapes a child's personality, but also boosts morale and confidence, instilling important life lessons such as leadership and teamwork. To fulfill this mission, Manav Sadhna has established numerous activities to promote learning and fun.

*Imagination is more  
important than knowledge  
- Albert Einstein*

# The Saturday Special

## Overview

One of the first needs we recognized when starting our work with disadvantaged children was the need to give children their childhood back. Many of these children in our community are forced to grow up before their time; they have to work to support their family at tender ages, they cannot go to school, and are often victims of abuse. These children miss out on some of their most precious years. Understanding this, Manav Sadhna started Saturday Special.



For two hours every Saturday, the children of the slums and the streets come to Manav Sadhna to pray and learn to respect all faiths, to participate in fun and games that teach them teamwork and leadership, and to eat a wholesome meal to combat malnutrition. It is a place where they can leave their worries behind and interact with peers and elders in a fun and safe environment. For those two hours, they can be children again. They get frequent visits from famous comedians, musicians, actors, and other interesting personalities. Often, Saturday Special is a child's first experience with the Manav Sadhna family. It is from interactions with children in this setting that other projects at Manav Sadhna have emerged over time.

## Highlights

- This year's Saturday Special guests included Doctor Dog from the Animal Help Foundation, an NGO in Ahmedabad that works with animal welfare. He paraded several dogs around the children while teaching them how to treat and respect animals. He stressed that animals, such as dogs, are our friends and that they help us more than they harm us. By popular demand he returned again, bringing new dogs and bigger smiles on the faces of the children.
- During exam time, we invited the mothers of our Saturday Special children. A total of 225 mothers, mostly rag pickers, turned up, enjoying four hours of songs, music, *garba* and meditation. Ishwar Kaka, the founder of ESI, spoke on personal hygiene, family planning and the value of education, which led to an interaction on why we should educate children. We finished the day with *bhel* and fresh mango ice cream. The women enjoyed the break and we had chance to grow closer to the families of our children.
- Every year we also hold a day-long *bal mela* or children's fair. This year close to 1,000 children attended, enjoying games, rides, popcorn, ice cream, a hearty lunch, cartoon movies, magicians and music. We utilized this time to cut their nails, comb their hair, promote personal hygiene and teach them to throw garbage in waste bins. The children came from all of Manav Sadhna's projects, other NGO's, schools from Ahmedabad and surrounding areas and from neighboring communities. The entire Saturday was dedicated to making sure these children had a chance to enjoy their childhood.

# the value of values



“One day a little boy, about six years old, came running to me. He held out his hand, with his fingers wrapped tightly around a small object. ‘Saheb, saheb,’ he yelled, holding out his palm, in the middle of which rested a nice watch. I exclaimed that it was a great watch. I asked whose it was. The little boy shrugged and replied that he did not know. He had found it lying on the ground. I asked him if his father had a watch. The little one innocently said, ‘No.’ Why don’t you to keep it for him, I asked. ‘It’s not his,’ he quickly retorted. Do you like the watch? ‘Yes!’ Then why don’t you keep it? The little boy stood there, his hand still extended towards me. The dirt on his face and patches on his shirt betrayed his poverty. Without any hesitation, he replied, because it is not mine. He put it in my hand and asked me to return it to its owner. After which, he ran to a group of children and started playing.”

*Jayesh, coordinator*







# Music, Dance and Drama

## Overview

Manav Sadhna's idea of a well-rounded education includes enriching lives through music, dance, and drama. As an important component of a child's development, these disciplines bring out latent talents and provide much-needed mediums of expression.

Children at the ashram are taught vocal music in the form of basic notes and *ragas* (rhythms), *bhajans* (devotional songs), and folk music. Participation in drama and dance is also encouraged as many Saturday Specials provide a platform for these children to perform before their peers. In the past, our young dancers have represented India at the International Children's Folklore and Folkgame Festival in Taiwan. They won the 1st prize for their performance in 1999. The Ekta show is another resounding success story in which fourteen of our children went to America for three months to perform a dance-drama musical based on the values and lives of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King.



## Unekta Ma Ekta (All In One)

*Who is Hindu? Who is Muslim? When there is Ali in Diwali and Ram in Ramzan?*  
~ Mahatma Gandhi

Since its inception, Manav Sadhna has promoted communal harmony and encouraged peace by working with communities from all castes and creeds. Over the past four months Manav Sadhna has spearheaded a unique initiative to use music and drama to bridge the gap between Hindu and Muslim communities.



Sixteen Muslim and Hindu teenagers between the ages of 14 and 18 have been chosen to create a musical drama that reflects their experiences of living in riot-affected Ahmedabad and their vision of unity. The children are from the F.D. Municipal School in Juhapura and from Manav Sadhna. All of these children were selected through an audition based on their confidence, ability to sing, and interest in communal harmony. The parents of each child were also involved in the process, and were encouraged to ask questions and sit in the practice sessions with the children.



During a weekend retreat at the ESI training center, the children heard guest speakers talk about examples of peaceful and positive Muslim and Hindu interactions, participated in teambuilding activities, and worked to further develop the idea of their performance. Over the last months we have been creating the scripts and meeting regularly for practice. Their performances will begin in July of 2005, and continue on the weekends throughout the school year.

## communal harmony



“It was a packed Sunday afternoon in mid-March. I had spent the last four hours working with a group of Hindu and Muslim children from both Manav Sadhna and the F.D. Municipal School in Juhapura leading drama and music activities. When we finished for the day we walked towards my home in the Ashram for some rest and refreshment. I hung back a little, to recollect the sounds and thoughts of the day. I looked up, and saw all of these children hugging each other while joking, singing and laughing together. They had their arms and minds embraced around each other. Looking at them, I could not tell who was Muslim and who was Hindu, who was from Manav Sadhna and who was from Juhapura. They were just children, having fun and enjoying the walk home. I could not help but smile. These children are not working for communal harmony. They are living communal harmony.”

*Shivana, Indicorps Fellow*

The hope of Unekta Ma Ekta is in the message of the children. In their own words and with their own voices these children will reach the ears of the young and old throughout Ahmedabad. They will not only perform in the schools and streets of Ahmedabad, but also in riot affected areas. An extension of this project will also include a traveling exhibition that will help educate all those who come to see and experience the performance. In this way, the spectators will not just be an audience, but active participants in Unekta Ma Ekta.

## Project Ahimsa

### Overview

Music can enhance the life of a child by opening his heart and mind, encouraging discipline, building confidence and fostering creativity. Music education, therefore, can play an integral role in the growth of children. However, across the globe music education has taken a backseat in child development programs.

Manav Sadhna's desire to form a well-rounded child and to encourage talent manifests itself in music classes, among other things. These lessons are offered to all students interested in learning. They are not only encouraged to learn these arts, but also to perform them during Saturday Specials and during many of the festivals we celebrate. Some of our young musicians have grown up and made careers in the music industry, performing at weddings and various other occasions.



Recently Project Ahimsa, a USA-based organization working to promote peace through music and art, joined Manav Sadhna's efforts with the goal to encourage Indian classical music education across India. In 2002, Project Ahimsa donated a variety of musical instruments to 23 schools and organizations in Gujarat, including Manav Sadhna. They collaborated with Manav Sadhna in the following projects this past year:

- Teaching 15 children from Ramapir No Tekra and the Parikshitlal Ashram Shala the *tabla* (a traditional percussion instrument). Two of our exceptional students are in the process of being groomed for more individual attention as potential students of Pt. Divyang Vakil (a renowned *tabla* player) at Rhythm Riders, a music academy in Ahmedabad.
- Developing the vocal capacities of children at Manav Sadhna through classical vocal instruction provided by three trained teachers.
- Organizing the Unekta Ma Ekta program
- Constructing a music room at Manav Sadhna dedicated to music classes and the children's exploration of sound.



## meet Ketan



He looked scared at first. Ketan sat on stage, timidly, perched above the audience of 600 children, armed with a microphone and poised with his hands above his *tabla*. As he began to play, the restlessness of the audience silenced. It leaned forward to soak up the eternal pulse of the *taal*. Ketan's hands still shook when he looked up; he saw thousands of eyes closed shut, thousands of ears transfixed on his sound. In that moment he grew confident. He relied on his hands, trusting the time they had spent practicing. He believed in his ability, which he had developed over the months. He depended on his sound, which resonated from his innate talent. The crowd cheered as Ketan finished his final rhythm, as he took a final breath and smiled broadly.

# Alternative Development

## Trips

To encourage a well-rounded development of our children and our staff, Manav Sadhna takes them out on trips to tourist spots, movies, and educational sites on a regular basis. This provideses them with a refreshing break from their daily surroundings, gives them memories to cherish forever, and exposes them to diverse environments that teach them more about the world. Due to financial limitations, most of the children we work with would rarely get a chance to go on such trips otherwise.



## Trek

During summer vacation we organized our third 4-day trek to Gandhinagar. Twenty eight children and one staff member carried a few pairs of clothes and cleaning supplies. They collected wood along the road and cooked their own meals. The children covered the expenses of the whole trip by selling *divas* during Diwali and saving money. During the trek they sang *bhajans*, picked up trash, played and cooked. The objectives of this trip included understanding the value of money and using it efficiently, building confidence and gaining leadership skills.

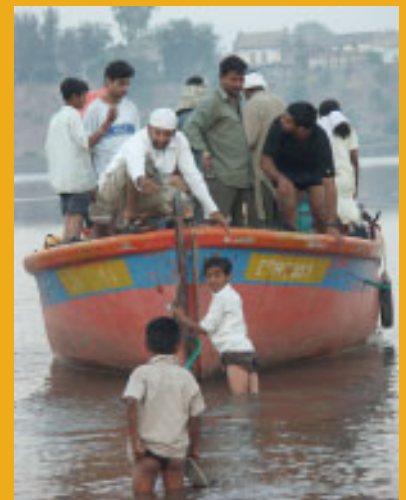


## Aman Mela - Peace Fair

Akhil Bharat Rachnatmak Samaj helped organize a peace fair in Jalandhar, Punjab from November 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> 2004, to promote peace between India and Pakistan. Hundreds of peace activists from both countries participated, including 43 members of the Manav Sadhna family. We also displayed an exhibition promoting Mahatma Gandhi's message of peace and non-violence.

## The Search for Good Yaatra

In the spirit of the Dandi Yaatra organized this year in commemoration of Mahatma's Gandhi's symbolic journey seventy-five years ago, we organized a *yaatra* (pilgrimage) with the theme "Searching for Good." A combination of staff and international volunteers started this 10-day *yaatra* at Kabhir Wad, and ended at the Ashram in Nareshwar. We held clean-up activities along the Narmada River and in Kabhir Wad, stayed in a village for three days to conduct small acts of service, such as trip to the Rural Sewa hospital, building a swing for the children, bathing and cutting the nails of the children and cooking for some of the villagers. We ended this trip with a stay at the Nareshwar Ashram, where we painted the guest center and cleaned up around the Ashram. This *yaatra* centered on finding the good that exists within and around us.



## Animal Help Foundation- Campaigning Respect for Animals

Animal Help Foundation organized a march in Ahmedabad to promote the respect for animals. Children from a number of schools and organizations paraded down a barricaded road, shouting slogans and holding up posters and costumes of various animals. Close to 100 Manav Sadhna children participated, picking up trash in addition to campaigning for fair treatment of animals.



## Swadesh - Movie Night

Manav Sadhna staff and children watched the premier of *Swadesh*, a Hindi film promoting volunteerism. Although the movie also provided entertainment value, the aim was to demonstrate the importance of social service.

## Staff Retreat

We subsidized a staff trip of 32 to Diu on the southern coastline of Gujarat. By spending time together outside of Manav Sadhna and interacting in activities outside of daily tasks, we aim to strengthen the bonds between our staff and to create a family atmosphere where our staff and volunteers look forward to working with one another and view service as a lifestyle.

## Staff Orientation

Each year, Manav Sadhna holds a retreat/orientation for its staff and volunteers. The purpose of these retreats is to encourage staff to take leadership, discuss problems, understand the operations of running an organization and foster a spirit of community and unity among everyone. During orientation this year, the staff and volunteers focused on how to improve their projects, and how to deal with children who are not demonstrating growth. Each member also provided a written agenda for the year and committed to thorough documentation of their projects.







The plain fact is that the planet does not need more successful people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every shape and form. It needs people who live well in their places. It needs people of moral courage willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane. And these needs have little to do with success as our culture has defined it.

-David Orr



# Disaster Management

Natural disasters strike unannounced, disturbing livelihoods, homes and worst of all, the faith of people. In the last four years, a terrible earthquake trembled Gujarat, killing thousands. Almost four years later, a Tsunami plundered the lives of thousands more on this continent. In our efforts to serve humanity, we cannot possibly reach out to everyone around the world. We can, however, offer our humble hands in addition to relief materials and funding to communities around us and help rebuild the lives of those who have temporarily lost their way.

Go to the people, live with them, learn from them, love them, start with what they know, build on what they have and when it is done, they will say we did it ourselves.

-Lao Tzu

# Tsunami Relief

On Dec 26, 2004 a Tsunami raced across the ocean, striking the eastern coast of India and shocking thousands of lives. Immediately after the Tsunami, Manav Sadhna acted as a collection center for Ahmedabad and surrounding areas. We created relief kits for 1,500 households, which included cooking utensils, rice, grains, lentils, spices, oil, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, *saris*, *lungis* and other necessary items for the victims. Each of these kits would allow a family to sustain themselves for two weeks. The kits filled an entire train cabin when sent to Tamil Nadu.



Due to the Tsunami, Perunduraikuppam, a village in Tamil Nadu about two hours south of Chennai, faced a serious blow to their boats and nets, completely upsetting their livelihood. Manav Sadhna sent a team to Tamil Nadu to work with Harijan Sevak Sangh of Tamil Nadu and Rachnatmak Bharati Samaj, both local NGOs, to provide relief to the villagers. Relief work consisted of a seven-day experiment in software relief - connecting with the people, understanding their pain and mobilizing them to work towards community development. This process served as a therapy for alleviating the grief caused by the Tsunami and looking forward to the next phase of life. After the seven days, the local NGOs moved in to provide hardware relief. Manav Sadhna donated two boats and two sets of nets to the village. Additionally, the Share and Care Foundation also supported our initiative by providing more nets and an additional 18 boats for the village. Today the villagers have returned to the ocean and their way of life.

Manav Sadhna plans to remain connected to this village and work towards total development by providing support to the local NGOs, making regular trips to Perunduraikkupam and providing other aid as necessary.





# Earthquake Rehabilitation

The major earthquake of January 26, 2001 caused devastation in Gujarat. Manav Sadhna offered its assistance by distributing donated items swiftly and efficiently around the state and adopting a village in Kachchh near the Indo-Pakistani border called Ludiya. Due to large numbers of migration, Hindus are the minority in Ludiya today. After the earthquake, the locals had nothing left and felt inclined to relocate in places where they would no longer be in the minority. This change would lead to the loss of their unique way of life and traditional handicrafts.



Through Manav Sadhna's efforts, the local Muslim community joined hands with this Hindu community to encourage them to remain in Ludiya and rebuild their lives there. Based on the Gandhian principle of *Gram Swaraj* (independence at the village level), we aimed at rebuilding a self sustainable village that catered to 2,500 inhabitants spread over 10 km. In less than

three months, the villagers were back on their feet living in 455 new *bhungas* (traditional mud huts), utilizing 90 toilet and bath blocks, six fully equipped primary schools and seven pre-primary schools, three check dams, two water ponds, five underground water tanks, three community centers, a health center, a fodder bank, a bus stand, and a temple.

Today, we continue to work with the villagers in the field of water management, preservation and marketing of traditional handicraft work, education, and communal harmony. Manav Sadhna raised more than 1.4 crore rupees to use for Ludiya. Many national and international organizations, individual donors, supporters and volunteers partnered with us to make this project a success.

In 2002, Manav Sadhna and Indicorps collaborated. Through this partnership, six international volunteers have spent a year each for the last three years in Ludiya working in the areas of watershed management and handicraft development. Through the watershed project, the volunteer worked with locals to build wells and check dams to create longstanding sources for water in each hamlet. In a three-year project to preserve, develop and market traditional embroidery and patchwork of the region, Indicorps volunteers established and ran a Rural Design School (RDS) to encourage

## meet Jasu Ben

Jasu Ben Baloo, a progressive thinker in a community where traditional practices of *purdah* (seclusion of women) still prevail, took the initiative to run the *balmandir* in Navavas, the village next to Ludiya. She attended a two-day training in Ahmedabad, a task unheard of for most women in this particular region of Kachchh. She also advocated the need for education, especially among girls in her community when addressing a mixed group of women from Ahmedabad and her own village. She spoke passionately about the need to move out of illiteracy and towards education and reform.

The children attend the preschool for two hours each day, receive a nutritional snack and learn value-based songs and stories. In a region where 90 percent of the population struggles with illiteracy, a *balmandir* signifies a stepping stone towards positive change.

creativity and personal development among female embroidery artisans. The RDS aimed to help preserve the traditional craft of embroidery by encouraging the women to innovate on their designs and help them establish a sustainable, self-initiated marketing outlet to secure a sturdy source of income.

## Highlights

- In the spring of 2005, 22 women from Ludiya came to Ahmedabad for two days to learn about marketing and to receive exposure to various places related to their craft. They visited the Calico Museum, a state of the art collection of traditional Indian textile handicrafts, and several department stores to observe market trends for embroidery. They ran an exhibition each morning, which served to provide hands on learning while selling the wares they created through the RDS. The women also participated in discussions with the Gramshree women about their roles and lifestyles and they visited a few tourist spots.
- Manav Sadhna still advocates education in Ludiya by promoting the importance of literacy especially among females. We have also established a *balmandir* in Navavas, a village near Ludiya, that works with around 15 infants. Manav Sadhna is also overseeing the repair of a local check dam and the maintenance of other watershed facilities.



True compassion does not come from wanting  
to help out those less fortunate than ourselves but  
from realizing our kinship with all beings.

-pema (hodron

# Looking Forward

Manav Sadhna takes great pride in the fact that none of our projects were ever designed in a meeting. Each one arose out of the needs and wishes of the community or from suggestions of our staff. In the coming year we look forward to strengthening our current projects, further expanding our reach and undertaking new projects that work towards our mission.

Major projects for the upcoming year include building a new community center, establishing a co-operative marketing center for our sister organization, Gramshree, and developing the Seva Café, an experiment in service.

## Community Center

For the last 13 years we have been working in Ramapir No Tekra. Today, we feel that we have established a strong rapport with the community and the people understand our mission. We want to build an extensive community center to further our efforts to reach more people. The creation of this center would act as the catalyst for our community work to focus on family, the next destination in our vision. With its ashram environment, the community center will represent our mission in the following ways: improve current programs run by Manav Sadhna in the Tekra; maximize services provided to the children and their families; and encourage neighborhood participation to work towards community empowerment. We hope the center will become an example of community revitalization and a model for improving slums from within. This year, thanks to the dedicated efforts of our international volunteers we received 29 lakh rupees in donation to build a proper Community Center in the Tekra.



## Gramshree Retail Center and Seva Cafe

Our sister NGO, Gramshree, works to empower women through income generation, awareness and self-reliance. To further this mission it is opening a marketing outlet on C.G. road in Ahmedabad where it will promote the products made by Gramshree and Manav Sadhna. In addition to this goal, this retail space will also promote the work and products of other NGOs. By working together and helping one another, we can make a stronger impact in our relative areas of development while making a united statement of service to humanity.

Adjoining the Gramshree store, Seva Café will serve as an experiment in service, learning to see the “guest as God.” One of the radical ideas behind Seva Café is offering food to our guests purely as a gift and allowing them to pay from their hearts. We intend to provide wholesome food and an inspiring environment designed to foster the spirit of service in the larger community.



living is giving



# Strengthening Bonds

## Partner Organizations

### ■ **Indian Council ([www.indiancouncil.org](http://www.indiancouncil.org)):**

An NGO based in Los Angeles, that focuses on promoting computer education to institutes in India. They provide new and used computers to urban and rural schools and hostels. Manav Sadhna is a nodal agency for implementing Indian Council's computer programs in Gujarat.

### ■ **Mega Circuit ([www.megacircuit.com](http://www.megacircuit.com)):**

A circuit board company in Addison, Illinois, whose partners have supported Manav Sadhna from the beginning, and helped start the medical center in the Tekra.

### ■ **Arzoo:**

An NGO based in Mohandarji Nu Challi in Ahmedabad that works with riot affected children. They provide love and guidance to the children to help them break the cycle of communal violence and hate and channel the children's attention towards building skills and working for a brighter future.

### ■ **Utthan:**

An Ahmedabad based NGO working to support mentally challenged children through skill training, general knowledge, income generation, emotional support, love and guidance. Dedicated to their mission for more than 25 years, Utthan is looking to expand its facilities very soon.

### ■ **Service Association for the Blind:**

Chaired by Viren Joshi and Ishwar Patel, this organization runs a residential school in Gandhinagar for 56 blind children from Gujarat villages for the first to tenth standards. Many of its activities are funded, guided and supported by Manav Sadhna. It also receives partial funding from the government.

### ■ **Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University (BAOU):**

Located in Ahmedabad, this institute provides distance learning to those who cannot attend school full time due to other obligations. They use satellite technology to connect centers around Gujarat with TV lecturers and experts. BAOU has a total of 142 centers (66 of which have satellite facilities) in villages and cities around Gujarat.

### ■ **Akanksha ([www.akanksha.org](http://www.akanksha.org)):**

An NGO based in Mumbai that works towards impacting the lives of about 2,700 underprivileged children by providing them with a solid educational foundation, developing their self-esteem, preparing them so that they can get a job and fostering fun activities for them to enjoy.





■ **Akhil Bharati Rachnatmak Samaj:**

An NGO founded by Nirmala Deshpande, a strong Gandhian, to mobilize networking in the country for social action through Gandhian principles. They also conduct various experiments based on Gandhian models for social development.

■ **Safai Vidyalay - Environmental Sanitation Insitute ([www.esi.org.in](http://www.esi.org.in)):**

The Environmental Sanitation Institute (ESI) is a training facility for environmental and sanitation awareness. It guides rural areas in the best methods to maintain sanitary conditions while also focusing on drainage facilities that cater to the cultures of the various communities. ESI inspired the idea of Manav Sadhna and continues to influence our operations.

■ **Charity Focus ([www.charityfocus.org](http://www.charityfocus.org)):**

A Silicon Valley based volunteer run organization that helps build web soultions for nonprofit organizations. In 2002, they hosted and supported our Ekta tour and then set up an online portal ([www.cShops.org](http://www.cShops.org)) to market Manav Sadhna and Gramshree handicrafts. Furthermore, by connecting many volunteers and donors to Manav Sadhna, Charity Focus is a partner in promoting the spirit of service.

■ **Be the Cause ([www.bethecause.org](http://www.bethecause.org)):**

This organization works to inspire volunteerism in America and hosts inspirational events to raise funds for service projects. Be the Cause supports our nutrition project and also joins hands with us to spread the spirit of service.

■ **Indicorps ([www.indicorps.org](http://www.indicorps.org)):**

An Ahmedabad-based NGO that provides one-year service fellowships to people of Indian origin living abroad. They aim to help these fellows connect with their roots while serving India in areas such as healthcare, education, rural development, capacity building, etc. Indicorps is an extension of the Manav Sadhna family, whose support and volunteers strengthen our mission.

■ **Gramshree ([www.gramshree.org](http://www.gramshree.org)):**

The sister NGO of Manav Sadhna, this cooperative encourages the holistic development of underprivileged women through projects such as income generation, skill training, creative development, savings, health awareness and education, all of which foster integrity and self-reliance. Manav Sadhna and Gramshree work interdependently in our mission to serve mankind.

- **Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh:**

This organization works towards the removal of caste discrimination and the upliftment of the poor. They have established a number of hostels such as the Parikshitlal Ashram Shala, which cares for 107 children from the scavenger community. Manav Sadhna began its efforts with this Ashram Shala and continues to help support and maintain all of the hostels.

- **Animal Help Foundation ([www.ahfindia.org](http://www.ahfindia.org)):**

An Ahmedabad-based organization that cares for injured animals and promotes respect for animals through a variety of projects.

- **Project Ahimsa ([www.projectahimsa.org](http://www.projectahimsa.org)):**

A USA based NGO that aims to bring musical education via classical instruction to students in India. They have initiated and supported two projects with us in which we take the role of the implementors.

- **Sabarmati Harijan Ashram Trust:**

This trust operates educational institutions such as the Vinay Mandir and the Primary Teachers College. Manav Sadhna has been involved with the repair, renovation, and building of these complexes and old residential and educational buildings across the Gandhi Ashram with the support of this Trust.

- **Share and Care Foundation ([www.shareandcare.org](http://www.shareandcare.org)):**

A USA based organization run by people of Indian origin that grants financial support to many NGOs around India. They continue to support many of our projects and work with us in helping support other NGOs and service efforts.

- **Vastu-Shilp Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design ([www.vastushilp.org](http://www.vastushilp.org)):**

This is an international architectural institute based in Ahmedabad. During the Ludiya Rehabilitation in 2001, we worked very closely with them. Involvement with them continues as they are designing the Community Center in the Tekra. It will be a unique project made entirely out of locally available materials and through voluntary labor of the community and Manav Sadhna.





# Finances

<b>Expenses</b>	<i>in rupees</i>	<i>in dollars*</i>
Basic Education	3,692,829	85,880
Empowerment and Financial Stability	1,248,388	29,032
Health and Hygiene	272,302	6,333
Societal Harmony	149,147	3,469
Disaster Management	473,473	11,011
Creative Development	99,474	2,313
Supporting Other NGOs	19,524	454
Other	3,130,743	72,808
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,085,880</b>	<b>211,300</b>

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<b>Income</b>	<i>in rupees</i>	<i>in dollars*</i>
Government Grants	987,809	22,972
Private Grants from India	32,260	750
Private Grants from USA	3,62,271	8,000
International Donations (FCRA)	3,772,032	87,722
Indian Donations	896,104	20,840
Profit from from Manav Sadhna Income Generation Projects (returned to the project)	1,449,623	33,712
Interest Income	166,793	3,879
<b>Total</b>	<b>76,66,892</b>	<b>1,77,875</b>

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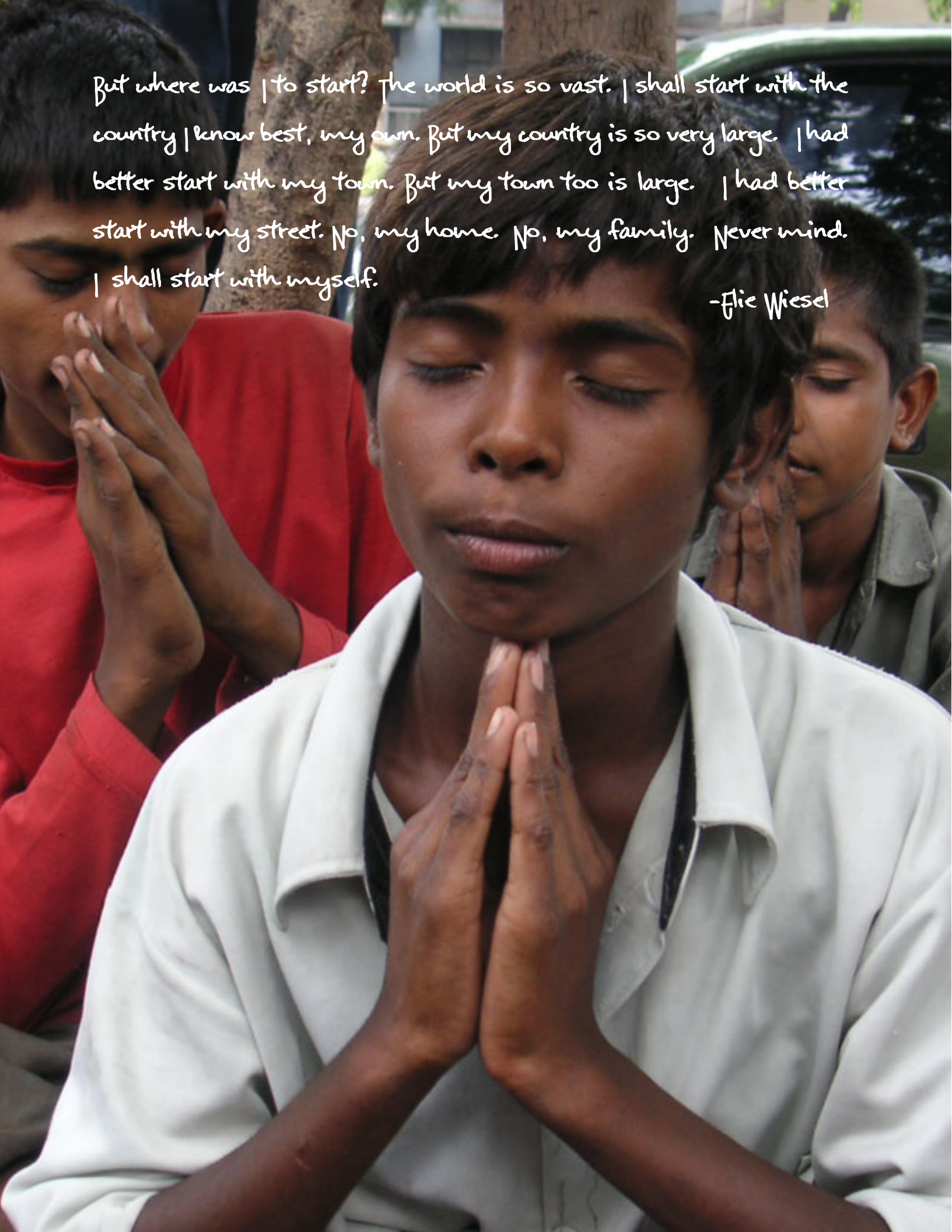
*\*All dollar figures have been converted at the following rate: 43 INR to 1 USD*

# Thanks to Our Contributors

We would like to take this time and space to thank every individual who has contributed donations, time or effort to Manav Sadhna. By giving selflessly you help serve humanity. Our work would be impossible without your kind support and generosity. We look forward to joining hands with you and continuing on this journey of service for mankind.





A photograph of three young boys of African descent. The boy in the center is wearing a white collared shirt and has his hands pressed together in a prayer gesture, with his eyes closed. To his left, another boy in a red shirt is also in a similar pose. To the right, a third boy in a grey shirt is partially visible, also with his hands clasped. The background shows a tree trunk and a green car.

But where was I to start? The world is so vast. I shall start with the country I know best, my own. But my country is so very large. I had better start with my town. But my town too is large. I had better start with my street. No, my home. No, my family. Never mind. I shall start with myself.

-Elie Wiesel









SERVICE TO THE UNDERPRIVILEGED – THE GANDHIAN WAY