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**VIDE -
Leading
India to
Progress**

Volume 1 Issue 1
May 2002



Volunteers for India Development and Empowerment

(A chapter of **Sustainable Economic and Educational Development Society, Inc**)

Dear Donor,

The volunteers and beneficiaries of VIDE avail this opportunity to greet you and your family. We, at VIDE, are deeply appreciative of your support.

VIDE is a volunteer organization committed to multi-faceted developmental work in India. VIDE identifies and partners with grass root NGOs in India to implement long term, sustainable projects beneficial to the local community, with minimal overhead. VIDE is an open, volunteer-run organization and has members from all parts of India.

This newsletter is to keep you, our valued donor, informed of our efforts over the past one year. As you might well remember, a devastating earthquake struck on January 26th, 2001 with its epicenter at Bhuj, Gujarat. Nearly 20,000 lives were lost and billions of dollars of property destroyed. Thanks to the generosity of its donors, VIDE was able to raise over \$520,000 in just 2 weeks, and the Cisco Foundation matched those donations with another \$330,000, raising the total collections from the Earthquake drive to over \$850,000.

VIDE has put in a tremendous effort in identifying committed NGOs in Gujarat and supporting them in their relief and rehabilitative projects to help the devastated communities. Aimed at overall development, the selected rehabilitative projects encompass the areas of health, reconstruction, education, employment generation and disaster management. VIDE has already disbursed/allocated over \$600,000 to approved projects, achieving a disbursement ratio of over 70% in little over a year.

In this newsletter, you shall find summaries of the major projects that are underway in Gujarat. You shall also find information about our ongoing projects in other parts of India. Please do not hesitate to contact us, if you have any questions or comments (contact@indiadev.net).

Thanks and Regards,
Volunteers for India Development and Empowerment

Immediate Relief Work



VIDE carried out initial relief work through Sri Kutchi Bhanushali Seva Samaj Trust (SKBSST).

SKBSST carried out immediate relief work after the earthquake which included 5,000 people being fed through community kitchens for the first two months, 30 doctors deployed from the first day, food and medicine distributed to Bhuj and surrounding affected areas.

VIDE funded \$10,000 for the above effort.



earthquake victims who had lost their limbs and help them become self-reliant.

The BVP out-reach program decided to buy a van, and convert it in to a Mobile Workshop. This Mobile Workshop would serve about 2,000 people in 2 years around Bhachau and would continue to operate and serve the needy people beyond the two years with the help of future donations. VIDE's commitment to this project is to fund the Mobile Van and workshop and bear the cost for two years. VIDE is sponsoring this project with an estimated cost of \$22,000.

The Mobile Medical van has so far traveled more than 5,000 KMs and served more than 1,000 victims of the earthquake in very remote parts of Bhuj and nearby areas. More than 3,000 patients have been examined. Crutches, lower limbs, upper limbs, calipers, ortho-shoes, tricycles, walkers etc. have been provided to the needy people, apart from taking measurements and doing operations as and where necessary. The resounding success of this project was cov-



BVP - Mobilizing the Handicapped

Bharath Vikas Parishad is an International Voluntary organization having around 650 branches in 29 states of India.

The goal of this project is to rehabilitate



VIDE (SEEDS) is incorporated in the state of Oregon as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



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Gyan Shala - Education for Empowerment

As is common knowledge, illiteracy and poor quality of available education are among the most burning issues in India. With a special note that primary education is the most neglected area in education, the Education Support Organization (ESO) came up with the idea of Gyan Shala.

Gyan Shala is a project that focuses on providing high-quality primary education for disadvantaged children. Their aim is to target as many primary level children (initially class I,II,III) as possible and provide them with quality education at a minimum cost. Once they complete these 3 years, these children will be good enough to compete with the children in regular schools.



The difference of this organization is in its approach. Instead of building a full fledged school, rooms will be rented that are spacious enough to hold a teacher and 30 children. The syllabus is specially designed so that they will be at par with state and central syllabi. Junior and Senior (High School) students are equipped to teach younger students and are employed to do so. Hence, there is ample opportunity to impart education and to perpetuate the project on a low cost basis. Such an approach also provides necessary employment to the unemployed youth as teachers. The children's parents will be charged a nominal fee to maintain electricity and rent costs.



Thirty classes have been started in 24 villages of the Dhrangdhra and Patdi talukas of Surendranagar dist. This district was also affected by the earthquake. Around 1000 children have already been attending classes since June. The cost of this project is estimated to be USD 105,000 for 3 years. This is the second project being conducted by ESO in India having started schools in the slums of Ahmedabad about 2 years ago. The schools in Ahmedabad have been a resounding success. Please note that the Gyan Shala concept has already been successfully implemented in Bangladesh with over 50,000 children being educated in this manner. Dr.Pankaj Jain,the head of ESO, was the consultant expert for that project. He also performed some research studies there that have been published.

VIDE has agreed to fund this project in stages. Funding is contingent upon satisfactory execution by Education Support Organization. Progress of the project is monitored every 6 months in the form of visits by independent monitors, photos, videos etc.

Blood Bank Project

This project is to build a Blood Bank that will serve the people of regions severely affected by earthquake. This will be the only of its kind in the area, it has been decided to be built in Bhuj which is the epi-center for a advance Medical needs of people of Kutch

The Blood Bank is supposed to turn self sustaining after initial 2 years of funding by VIDE through its own process as well as local donations. VIDE is funding the construction, infrastructure and blood screening for initial 2 years for USD 67,000.

Providing Help for Deaf and Dumb Students

Mata Lachmi Rotary Charitable Society has been running an institute for the Deaf and Dumb children in Adipur, Kutch since 1985.The institute provides primary and vocational education to the poor deaf and dumb children in the surrounding area within a 10km radius. The institute also provides free transportation to and from the school every day.

The institute lays stress not just on training using hearing aids but also has tools to let the children train their voice and hearing to a better level without any hearing aids. In addition, the children learn vocational skills like screen printing, embroidery, mushroom cultivation along with regular education to help with their livelihood.

The institute's buildings and equipment were damaged in the earth quake. The building was reconstructed by SBI and HP at the cost of Rs21 lakhs. The institute required help from VIDE for their equipment. The total cost involved is about USD 11,800. Empowerment being a strong part of this project, VIDE decided to go ahead with this project. This would help about 8-10 deaf and dumb students on a yearly basis to get their education, vocational training and stand on their own feet in their lives.



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Keshav Village School Rehabilitation

Ramakrishna Mission was founded in Calcutta to spread the spiritual message of Swami Vivekananda but has diversified extensively to help the needy. It works in areas such as providing relief, service, mass-education, technical education, setting up mutts for women, promoting village and tribal welfare, agricultural development through scientific method, translating scriptures such as the Upanishads into different languages, providing medical aid and, lastly, bridging the gap between the East and the West.



As a result of the earthquake, a few villages near Porbandar District were badly damaged. RK Mission embarked on the task of rebuilding the destroyed schools in 11 villages including Keshav. The plan was to build an 8-room school with earthquake retrofits capable of providing education for 300 children from grades 1st to 7th. RK mission chose Larsen & Toubro (L&T), which is known for quality of its work, as the partner for procuring pre-casted structures for the building.

VIDE worked with the RK mission and provided USD 33,000 for the reconstruction of the School.

VHERDS - Adhoi Hospital Reconstruction

The hospital at Adhoi village, Bachaau taluk, Bhuj district was the primary health care facility for over 15,000 people in that village and 11 other surrounding villages. It suffered significant destruction in the earthquake of January 2001. The locals of Adhoi village expressed that there was an urgent need for expanding and improving the medical facilities in that region.

VHERDS (Voluntary Health, Education and Rural Development Society) is a Chennai based NGO. VHERDS' holistic approach towards comprehensive rural development, has yielded very good results in Tamil Nadu. One of VHERDS' primary methodologies is to take up Government sponsored programs, provide quality leadership and implement projects keeping the local community involved. VIDE finds this very much inline with its goal of empowerment and sustainable development.

Keeping above factors in mind, VIDE decided to support VHERDS' reconstruction effort of the hospital in Adhoi village. VIDE shall be supporting the reconstruction of 5 rooms to the existing hospital, replacement of necessary furniture, ambulance-cum-medical van and purchase of several essential medical equipment. The total cost comes to USD 47,000.

Equal Opportunities for the Handicapped

NASEOH (National Society For Equal Opportunities For The Handicapped) is an organization that was founded over 3 decades ago to help improve the lot of handicapped people in India. Their activities include providing education and job training for the disabled. They have made tremendous efforts in sensitizing the government and industrial organization about problems faced by the disabled.



After the Gujarat earthquake, a team of medical personnel conducted camps in the affected areas to provide medical attention to those who were injured and found the need for orthotics amongst the disabled. VIDE is providing NASEOH with funds for 125 triwheelers and 20 wheelchairs. Some of them are manufactured by disabled people at NASEOH workshops. The total funding came to USD 11,700.

**VIDE would like to thank
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SEWA: Using Craft to Rebuild Livelihood

The Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), which consists of 300,000 poor, self-employed women members, has been working in these drought prone (and now earthquake devastated) areas for the past 10 years. SEWA has been working towards creating employment opportunities for the poor while preserving and promoting the traditional craft skills of the local artisans.

In one of their current program, each artisan family is provided with a craft kit/bag with the necessary raw materials for one week's worth of work. The artisans are made spot payments for the work done (about Rs. 40 per day). The payment is partly in cash and partly in kind. The components for payment in kind include food grains or clothes or other family needs. This has been finalized after consultation with the local artisans.

The artisans will be paid for three months under this program. This will provide them livelihood-security to withstand and rebuild their lives both from earthquake and drought. Total of Rs. 50,00,000 has been generated up to 31st May 2001 through sales of these products in exhibitions and by online marketing. All the revenue generated is redeployed into a revolving fund for helping other artisans. Thus, the program is self-sustaining. VIDE will be supporting 500 artisan families for a total cost of up to USD 53,000 for a period of three months. The project shall be executed in Radhanpur.

Providing Simple Living, High-Thinking Education



Shri Sarvodaya Saraswati Mandir (SSSM) inculcates simple living, high thinking, self-confidence, social awareness and self-reliance. SSSM has been running an efficient school system for many years in Babapura, a rural area of Saurashtra, in Gujarat. Due to the earthquake, lots of the building were damaged.

VIDE is working with Meghani Foundation to provide assistance to SSSM for the repair of damaged buildings and replacement of equipment of these schools. Over the next 18 months, 9 buildings will be repaired at the cost of USD 20,000.

Veerayatan Vocational Training Center

Veerayatan, a well-known socio-religious organization, head quartered in Bihar, has provided unflinching service in the fields of community health, education and employment for the past 29 years. One of the many projects they are working in Gujarat, is centered in the town of Jakhania, Kutch. This project's main goal is to assist and enrich the lives of those affected by the Gujarat Earthquake, especially in the field of primary through senior high school education and vocational training.

VIDE is working with Veerayatan in constructing a vocational training center for adults (men and women) to empower them. This vocational training center will be equipped with tools and supplies to provide training in the areas of sewing/tailoring, Motor Winding, Electrical fittings, TV/VCR Repair, Refrigerator Repair, Teacher Training, Screen Printing, Carpentry and Nursing. They will also be trained to market the produce. The sale of the items will subsidize the cost of the training program. This center will have 8 training rooms. On an average 1200 people will benefit annually from this center.



The total cost of this project is about USD 50,000 of which USD 35,000 will go towards constructing the center and the remaining USD 15,000 will go towards acquiring the equipment necessary to run it. VIDE will be working primarily with Veerayatan International (USA) and will only be involved in the construction of the center and providing the equipments. The sustainable aspect of this project will be handled in full by Veerayatan India and Veerayatan International (USA).



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Vacchrajpur - Rebuilding a Destroyed Village

Sewa Bharti Gujarat is an NGO organization founded in 1979 with a vision statement "Social services for the prosperity of the nation".

VIDE has partnered with Sewa Bharati for the reconstruction of the Vacchrajpur village in Patadi taluka of Gujarat. Around 350 families of salt workers were affected. Sewa Bharati surveyed the village and came up with a composite plan to rehabilitate the village to sustain any future calamities.

As part of the partnership with Sewa Bharati, VIDE is funding the reconstruction of the 15 homes, electricity and associated infrastructure, water tank with supply system and sanitary infrastructure at a total cost of USD 108400.

Eye Care Project for Salt Workers

Jamnagar and Kutch are coastal districts of Gujarat. People living in this area are economically backwards, most of them are salt workers.

The aim of the project is :

1. To eradicate night blindness.
2. Vision testing and glass distribution.
3. Vitamin 'A' distribution as preventive measure.
4. To bring diagnosed patients of cataract & other diseases to base hospital for operative procedures.

A medical van with social workers, students, staff will regularly visit the remote areas on (previously) schedule dates regularly. The checking and screening will be done at the places decided by the local executive committee and those patients requiring surgical treatment will be brought to the base hospital in Jamnagar.

VIDE will be funding the Mobile Van and expenses for a year at a total cost of USD 21000.

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Nandigram Project

This project is aimed at reducing the existing digital divide in society by giving access to modern technology to youth from tribal and disadvantaged backgrounds. This project will help tribal youth by imparting employment skills and giving them internet access and hence the vast information that is available thus potentially transforming their lives and bringing them to the mainstream.



The project is located in Dharampur Zilla, Valsad district, Gujarat. This project is being run by the Meghani Foundation. VIDE is funding the cost of equipment (power generator + a/c) at USD 2500.

Providing Education To Underprivileged

Sri Saraswati Vidya Peetham(SSVP) is an NGO that works to provide education to the underprivileged. Teachers of the schools run by SSVP work in tribal and backward areas, stressing the importance of education to both children and their parents. These schools provide high quality education at low cost, with a nationalistic perspective.

VIDE's project with SSVP covers the construction and operating cost of two schools in Lingapur and Pachipenta villages in Andra Pradesh. The total project cost is USD 9400.

Non Gujarat Projects

Affordable Healthcare using Modern Alternate Medical Methods

IRIIM (Indian Research Institute for Integrated Medicine) employs alternate methods of treatment using Yoga, Naturopathy and Acupuncture, combining at the same time, the most recent medical developments in these areas.

IRIIM came up with a novel project of developing a digital database of photos of patients' tongues. They correlated the color and the texture of the ailing persons tongue with their ailment and found that almost always they could diagnose a person just by comparing his/her present tongue conditions with existing images in the database.

This database was then electronically circulated among other doctors in far-flung areas, who used it to diagnose patients without any invasive testing. The requirements for this project was digital camera and accessories, totaling a cost of USD 1000. VIDE supported this expense.

Please donate generously by taking advantage of employee matching programs.

Pathakota School Project

The project aims to improve the quality of education in Pathakota Village in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh by supporting teachers for math and science in the Sompalli Zilla Parishad High School.

The Village School currently has 700 students enrolled, but just 3 teachers! As a result, students often go to board exams without having had a math/science teacher for the entire year. This has seriously effected the quality of education and consequently chances of a better life for the children in this village. This project aims to improve the quality of education in this village and surrounding areas.

VIDE shall be providing for the salary of the teachers for a period of three years at a cost of \$4500.

VIDE would particularly like to thank Cisco Foundation and the management at Cisco for all their encouragement to VIDE's efforts.

VIDE would also like to thank all its volunteers for their tireless efforts in making this endeavor a success.



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kamaye dukhataptanam
praninamarthinashanam**

*I do not want to rule over a state
neither to enjoy life in heaven nor salvation
but I want only the end of sufferings
of all the afflicted living beings*