



Newletter: April - June 2013



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This quarter has seen a number of new beginnings at Karm Marg. A new beginning for the children we were able to take in, a new beginning for the staff that have joined us and a new beginning for all of us together. We look to grow further over the days and weeks to come with the support of all our well-wishers.

After a long wait we finally received our license on the 24th of April. This is a major achievement for Karm Marg. It gives us the much-needed government sanction to run our home which in turn means that we can now help more children .



Settling in with the new children...

The license and the regular contact with CWC also brings new challenges with it. CWC are sending children regularly for short stays varying from 2 days to a couple of months.

These children have been through many situations of distress and trauma. Some of them have been trafficked, are lost, have runaway from home due to adverse circumstances, faced abuse or are in legal problems. They suffer from acute trauma, behavior problems and other emotional issues.

Since they stay with us for a very short period, we do not have the opportunity to provide them counseling or other long-term help. It also becomes difficult for us to engage them in other learning and productive activities for this reason. They need more time to deal with their trauma, to settle down and feel comfortable in our organization.

We have been trying creative play therapy to help them settle and bond with

the children already with us. It is also a nice way to break the ice and to gently learn more about their past and their background. We try and give them basic counseling to be able to cope slightly better, hoping it will make it easy for them to go back to their home and family. Some of them whose family cannot be traced will stay with us permanently.

In a way it is similar to the time when we started Karm Marg. We worked as an outreach program directly with children on the streets dealing with a lot of emotional, behavior, psychological needs and problems faced by runaway and missing children.

Our past experience tells us that these children too will need long-term counseling and trust building to stay voluntarily at a home like ours. In addition all these comings and goings has an affect on the children who are already living with us and we are doing our best to help them adjust to this new situation.

News at the Home

The boys have adjusted well to their new dormitory and are very happy there. Given the heat and humid weather, we have installed an inverter with new batteries and so they can also have electricity during power cuts.

June is the month of summer holidays. We organized regular activities so that the children are able to have fun and utilize their time productively by learning new skills at the same time. Some children went to their homes to meet their parents and relatives. For the children who do not have anywhere else to go, the holidays are a difficult time for them emotionally. We try and take extra care of them by keeping them engaged with lots of workshops, outings and by spending quality time with them so they don't miss their families as much.

		Girls	Boys	Total No. of Children
1	At Karm Marg in April 2013	14	17	31
2	Youth (above 18) for skill training and studies	3	2	5
3	New children -Short stay	3		3
4	New children- Permanent stay	1		1
	Total Number of direct beneficiaries	21	19	40

In May Rihana, Sanjana and Shabana were sent to us for short term stays by the CWC. All three of them are from Jharkhand and had been rescued by the police from homes where they were being forced to do domestic labor. They had a number of behavior problems and were in need of counseling and individual attention. Sanjana was rehabilitated with her parents in the beginning of June.

Adolescence is a difficult period in life and as usual we are facing a few problems, especially with the boys. They are not taking as much interest in their studies or other daily activities. We are trying our best to counsel them, as well as spend more time informally trying to establish better communication and understanding.

As per the child welfare guidelines we have formed a child protection committee at Karm Marg. This committee comprises of one child, one staff member and one member from the board. The committee's main duty and responsibility is to ensure the smooth running of the home and to protect the children from any kind of abuse. This is not something new, we have always been practicing this informally since we started our home; we used to come together every week to discuss all the problems democratically among the children with representation from the staff and founding members.

As per the government regulations, we will now be represented by this committee at monthly meetings organized for all the NGOs in our area to discuss and find solutions for common problems.

Health



A health camp was organized by BK Hospital on the 17th of April. A team of doctors including an eye doctor, a general physician, a gynecologist and a pediatrician visited our campus. The children received a general health checkup and were given medicines and tonics where needed. The results of the check up were duly recorded in each child's medical file.

In May two doctors from the same hospital visited again to check on and give suggestions regarding the importance and maintenance of cleanliness and hygiene in the campus.

An MSc (nutrition and health) student from Manav Rachna University conducted a workshop attended by all our children. The purpose of this workshop was to help the children understand the

importance of health and hygiene and to learn how good health is connected with good hygiene. They also learnt new ways to maintain personal and community health and hygiene.

Mahua and Anmol were admitted to the hospital on the 16th of May with high fever. They were diagnosed with Malaria and received the required treatment. Manu was also sent to Naz Foundation for a complete checkup.

Education and Career

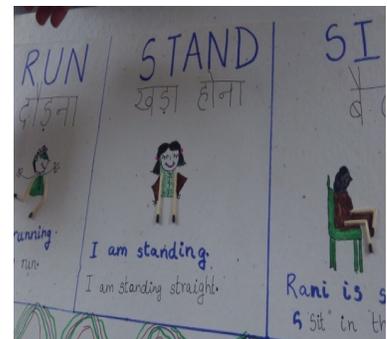
Pooja, Kusum and Jitender started with their middle school studies at the local government school after completing their



primary level education from the private school they were attending till now. It has been a little difficult for them to adjust to the new atmosphere, but they are now settling in. The newest and youngest member of our family, Geeta was admitted to lower KG at the private school,

Paramhansa where the other primary grade children also study.

During the summer vacation we worked on strengthening the basic knowledge through non-formal education especially for the new children. Indu made various types of games to help the children learn new words, improve grammar and vocabulary as well as basic mathematical operations such as addition, subtraction and multiplication. They made up fun games to help them with punctuality, planning their own schedules, reading maps, learning country names and finding out names of birds and plants found within the KM campus. They also learnt how to use a dictionary to find a particular word and its meaning in English and Hindi.



Activities and Celebrations

There were a number of learning activities for the children. In May, Rukshar, Pooja and Babli participated in a story reading session organized by the Hindustan Times.



Our special children, Anamika, Mahua, Poonam, Raju and Manu built on their cooking skills and learnt new recipes.



All the children learnt how to make *namakpare*, *sambhar-vada*, *pakodas* and salads. Most of the recipes used ingredients from our own organic vegetable garden.



The 'Let's Walk Gurgaon' group organized a nature walk in the Aravalis that included a trek down to Bhardwaj Lake. The children were treated to a sumptuous lunch and camel rides.



Everyone had lots of fun interacting, singing and dancing.



Indu and Pooja with the help of Veena organized a series of workshops for the summer holidays.



Abdul, Bharat, Geeta, Pooja, Raju, Rihana and Manu went through vocabulary building exercises.

We made games out of wasted computer keyboards.



The children attended workshops for making toys with scraps and embroidery.



Pooja and Indu helped the children complete their holiday homework.

We also conducted a workshop about 'Handling Emotions Effectively'.

Volunteers and Visitors

Karm Marg also had a host of interesting visitors who came with a number of creative ideas and activities for the children.

Our old and dear friend Ramavtar came visiting in the second half of June. His visits engage the children with nature and their environment in a very productive way. The children accompanied him into the village and the neighboring areas to learn about the medicinal value of herbs and trees. They learnt how to make antiseptic creams, eye drops, hair oil, mosquito repellent and digestives *churans* out of ingredients found within our campus.

Ramavtar also helped the children identify the birds in our area. He told them about their habits, what they eat, what their nests look like,

breeding times and gave them tips on how to handle injured birds. He also held a workshop with the older children and our gardener about the benefits of organic and natural farming. He taught them how to make compost from different kinds of biodegradable waste.



Ankit Chadha conducted a story telling workshop where the children learned how to make and tell stories. The children were divided into different age groups and they made up stories, which they shared with their group. They enjoyed the workshop so much that they still continue to make up new stories on their own now.

Vidushi, a mass communication student, came to Karm Marg to do her internship. She taught the children to make finger puppets and to tell stories with the help of puppets. The children were divided into four groups, each group developing and presenting one story. The children had a lot of fun and learnt many new lessons through these stories.

Beate Arnold from Germany stayed with us for two months starting from the second half of April. She led a number of fun activities like juggling, sports, trampoline jumping and meditation with the children. She also conducted outdoor sports activities. Beate has a lot of experience with children and she blended in very well at Karm Marg.



Neha and Jaspreet came to celebrate their son's birthday at KM.

Khedi villagers organized a lunch specially for the our children and Mr. Mittal from Palwal treated them all to a dinner.



Skill Training and Jugaad

Laxmi joined Aurobindo Ashram for a vocational course in food processing and baking. She was earlier working at a café in Hauz Khas.

Deepak has completed his first year at the Art College.

Ruby, Payal and Basant got another 6-month extension for their respective training programs in advance courses.

Meena from the SOS village visited us with two of her wards to learn about adapting the much talked about and innovative *Jugaad* model to their organization.

A lot of renovation and maintenance work has been done since the beginning of April. We are planning to make more space available for new skill training programs.

We have also begun trial runs with our new oven.

Admin and Staff

Thomas joined as an English teacher. Basic English skills are key to finding better jobs in today's world. As Thomas is also a music teacher we thought that it would be a good idea for him to teach music to the kids who are interested. He now comes thrice a week, two days for English and one day for music.

Our staff members, Pooja and Amrendra, attended the training session about 'National Tracking System' for missing and vulnerable children conducted by the Child Welfare Committee. KM is formally registered and now has its own home page on this system. This is a very good initiative by the government. By training NGO's working in the field, they have made it more effective. The system can be used to trace missing and vulnerable children, to maintain all the data like the number of children in each home etc and prevent any misuse.

Other Highlights

Veena visited Europe for raising awareness and funds for Karm Marg.

She conducted paper bag making workshops at the Capsicum Shop in Amsterdam.



She visited Marnix College and interacted with the children who are collecting funds for the higher education and skill training of youth at KM.

She also interacted with the many members of the Soroptimist Club who have been supporting our programmes in the past.

In England she visited the Mukti foundation one of our long time supporters. She promoted Jugaad everywhere she went and found new avenues to sell Jugaad products.

