

# *CVP Mid Year report -May 2006-*

***Name of Project:*** Calcutta Village Project

***Type of the project:*** Village Concept Project

***Involved NMOs:*** SISM (Italy), ANEMF (France), IMCC (Denmark), FiMSIC (Finland), BVMD (Germany)

***Countries of implementation:*** India, West Bengal

***IFMSA related Standing Committees:*** SCOPH

## ***Name of Project Coordinators:***

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National Coordinators:

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***Date of recognition as IFMSA official project:*** 1996

## ***Short Introduction to the project***

The aim of the project is to **support the activities of an Indian NGO, the Institute for Indian Mother and Child (IIMC)**, funded more than 10 years ago by Dr. Sujit Mandal to promote and improve the living conditions of villagers of the rural areas sited at the Southern part of Calcutta. The Project works daily for its aim promoting community participation in different programs (Medical, Educational, Micro-credit etc.) and educating the population on hygiene and health problems in general.

In the meantime CVP works in Europe, in Italy, has in the other affiliated countries. **Medical students work to provide knowledge** to western people, students above all, **on International Cooperation for Development** and the Sanitarian situation in Developing Countries.

Every month, at least 5 Medical Students, from many different countries, fly to Calcutta to **participate in the local activities** of the NGO, getting to know how a Project of International Cooperation Works and **giving his little but useful help** to Indian Population.

### ***Activity report for the past half year:***

#### **IN INDIA**

- ◆ **As always from 4 to 7 Medical Students per month** have been selected as volunteers to work and support the "Institute for Indian Mother and Child", in Calcutta. In the last months, above all, some older medical Student have been involved in more "medical" activities such as Health Promotion and Health Workers Training; this is just the beginning of a process during which we'd like to involve, more and more, last years medical students; we believe that the project can benefit from their knowledge and they can be really involved in medical, and not only nursing action.
- ◆ **Two Guest Houses** are available for IIMC volunteers; Medical Students share the guest houses with "Business" students and young English Teachers. The selection of all the volunteers, anyway, is an only responsibility of the Milano Selection Group, in close contact with SISM coordinators.
- ◆ From the month of October 2005 to March 2006, an **Italian experienced Professional Nurse** has been participating to the Calcutta Village Project. The idea of this mission came out from the need, felt by our group together with Associazione Calcutta ONLUS and Dr Sujit, to improve the Hygiene situation in the Indoor. During her stay, Mrs Edda contributed to create a nicer environment for the patients that are admitted in the small indoor clinic putting a bedside table for every bed and a table for lunch; she reorganized the drugs' cupboard and , for the outdoors, she taught to create a more private area for some delicate injections and she made all the volunteers have a label with their name on them, so that Indian volunteers could call them by name and remember them. Together with these things, Edda tried to improve the Hygiene status of the nursing, reminding and refreshing some basis.
- ◆ Our **Microcredit & Microsaving Program** has increased the number of branches from 3 to 4 and is planned to create a 5<sup>th</sup> one in 2007. So far 3000 Women are getting the loan but nearly 20.000 are included in the program. The difference comes from the fact that women are organized in groups of 20 in which not all get the loan at the same

time. This program is completely self-sustainable, independent from foreign economical support.

- ◆ The “**Tsunami Rehabilitation Program**” that had been started in Andaman islands in December 2004 has recently been modified, after the Governmental plan of reconstruction has been started. So far IIMC has singled out, inside the Andaman’s population, 3 people that will be responsible for the 2 actions of IIMC in loco: first of all, the selection of 260 children that will benefit from special Sponsorship Program from the families of a town in Northern Italy and, the selection of 16-20 years old students that are interested in becoming Health Workers that will attend a training course in Calcutta in IIMC.
- ◆ 33 is the number of Non Governmental Organizations that, thanks to the **Network program**, are following IIMC Health Educational Trainings in IIMC, program in which also last years Medical Students are strongly involved.
- ◆ “**Dhaki Project**”, that our IFMSA group has recognized as 2005-2006 project to support, has received a good finance from Regione Lombardia that gives us the real possibility to contribute to the complete funding of the New Health Center!
- ◆ Other Projects, under the supervision of “Associazione Progetto Calcutta ONLUS” have been run and are getting started: **Cheese production** in Hogolkuria is going well and the selling of this cheese contributes to the running costs of the whole NGO. The same could be the aim of a new activity, **Honey Production**, that, at the moment, is still in phase of study of the feasibility. **Tegharia Polispecialistic outdoor** construction is going on . In the next plans there are the construction of **2 more schools and 2 more microcredit branches** and is in state of assessment the creation of a **Rehabilitation Center for Women in Need**.

## **IN EUROPE**

- ◆ Our group in **Finland** has collected 550€ for Dhaki project through the selling of cakes and calendars produced with the pictures taken in India
- ◆ Our group in **Saint Etienne, France**, after the big event of October that contributed with 5733€ to the construction of Dhaki, has worked for the recognition of the Calcutta Village Project in their university. Only thanks to this, medical students will be allowed to participate to

the project in India, during their Medical Course. The group coordinator, Thomas, is ready to go to India, in August, with communication students from Paris to shoot a video on the project.

- ◆ **In Italy** the SISM groups involved have been working, organizing selling and moments in general to promote the project in schools and in universities.
- ◆ From 7<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of May 2006 Dr Sujit will do his annual Italian tour that, for the first time, will be a **French – Italian tour**, since on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May he will visit Saint Etienne. At the moment the different cities are busy in organizing the event!

### ***Evaluation:***

Comparing the detailed plan of action of the previous report with what has actually been done, we can say that the most of it has been actually realized or keeps being in progress. Unfortunately the lack of participation to the Chile meeting hasn't allowed us to get in contact with new NGOs but 2006 will be a year of great chances for these contacts since together with the Serbia GA, we'll participate to the Italian Sub Regional Meeting which will give big attention to International Cooperation.

For the rest we can keep saying that the project becomes every year, bigger and bigger also thanks to the fact that in Italy it has acquired the status of ONLUS that allows us to have access to some funds of the Government.

Volunteers' reports keep being positive and enthusiastic; in the past we noticed complaining by non Italian Students on the poor English of the selected Italian Volunteers. In the selections, the English knowledge has become a fundamental requirement. For the last 4 months we have practiced the method of asking for English Assessment for Italians, to be done together with the exam for IFMSA exchanges and it looks to work.

Our Project has received a lot of recognitions in India and in Italy too; both Governments have recognized Calcutta Village Project and IIMC as serious organizations which are really effective for the development of the villages in the rural areas of Calcutta.

### ***Update on the present political and security situation in the country of the project:***

Everything considered, the political situation in India is calm; there were no significant changes in the last six months. The international situation is not having a big impact on the project. The area in which the project works is not disturbed by the tensions that still exist between India and Pakistan, particularly in the borderlands.

Calcutta is a safe city; the only major problem is theft: this is why we inform all our participants to be careful with their money and their documents. Apart from this, everything is alright.

Sometimes the area can be struck by hurricanes, but they usually involve Bangladesh more, and they can be dangerous just in the remote villages; anyway the volunteers sleep in the city where the situation is absolutely safe.

### ***Updated general plan of action:***

The General Plan of Action of Calcutta Village Project is to improve the life conditions in some Rural Villages situated in southern Calcutta, to promote the development and to guarantee the access to Primary Health Care and Education. As International Coordinators we wish to enlarge the number of NMOs involved in the project and, in the same time we want CVP to be an example of "International Cooperation for Development in action" for all the NMOs in IFMSA who wish to start a new project.

### ***Detailed plan of action for the coming half year:***

The activities planned by the project for the coming year are:

#### **IN INDIA:**

- Start a program to enforce the **TB program** of IIMC and evaluate the possibility of starting an **HIV – AIDS education program** in the villages;
- Evaluate the possibility to organize **courses, kept by Indian Professors, for the Health Workers of IIMC**;
- Keep on with the construction of the new Health Centre in **Dhaki** and start sending students in Dhaki for more than 1 day;
- Start with the **Honey Production Program**;
- Carry on with the **Network Program** and the missions of Dr. Griso for the training of Health Workers;
- Keep increasing the number of loans in the **Microcredit Project** and of sponsored children for the **Educational Program**.

#### **IN IFMSA:**

- Make **Sujit's Italian- French tour** fruitful and enthusiastic!
- Participate to the next International meetings: **GA** in Serbia and also the "**World in Progress**", next sub-regional meeting to improve the knowledge of IFMSA about our Project and feel even more close to the Federation and other Medical Students;
- For the Italian Coordination Group we'll work to improve our **administration** for the management expenses (flight and train tickets) and improve the service we give to Volunteers, providing them all the useful information for their experience.

### ***Updated general budget:***

As CVP – SISM group, coordinator of the whole Calcutta Village Project, we are creating our own bank account where we'll create a little base for the management expenses (that will come from not more than 15% of the money we collect for the project ) so...work in progress.

In the mean time, the money we collect for the specific projects go, completely and specifically to IIMC in India through the Associazione Progetto Calcutta ONLUS.

### ***Detailed budget for the coming half year:***

So far a detailed Budget is not available, the expenses will be mainly for the journeys of the International Coordinators the August GA and for the journeys of the Italian coordinator to the National Meetings.

### ***Problems faced in the past half year:***

Two have been the main problems we have faced and we actually face for the project.

The Italian group, CVP –SISM, is trying to be economically independent from Associazione Progetto Calcutta ONLUS and in this year we had some problems in the constitution of the new bank account but we hope that in the next months we'll start to have a real complete control of the movements of money for our expenses.

The second problem we are facing at the moment has something to do with the Improvement of the sanitarian part of our Project. As we said before, an Italian Professional Nurse has been in India; unfortunately she had problems getting on with doctor Sujit: because of a mutual incomprehension concerning some of the aspects of the Sanitary Program, the two by mutual consent decided to stop their collaboration. Nevertheless, the Sanitary Program didn't feel the effects of this problem, on the contrary Mrs Edda's activity had a major importance in the improvement of the Program itself, and the important changes she brought will certainly be kept. This incomprehension problem has just slowed down and hasn't stopped our plans.

### ***Specific expectations from the Projects Support Division:***

As we said in the last report:

Project Support Division should be a bridge between Project coordination and NPOs also out from the International Meetings.

From Project Support Division we also expect to receive all the help possible to find the money needed to really keep the Internationality of our Project: Phone-calls, Flight tickets, Production of material to be sold Internationally to fund rise for the project.

***Ideas and suggestions on how to improve the projects' situation in IFMSA:***

As we said in the last report:

We think that IFMSA recognizes the importance of Projects as source of visibility for the Federation and the institution of a Project Support Division has been a good tactic to encourage this activities.

We made an IFMSA Projects Donation System, let's make it visible!!

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