

# NEWSLETTER N° 45

2<sup>nd</sup> semester 2022

More information and news in our web

[www.adivasis.org](http://www.adivasis.org)



## *Education, at the center*

The main and foundational aim of ADA-Mon Adivasi has been to contribute to the integral development of the Adivasi population. Aware that we are a small organisation with limited resources, we had to choose the target of our efforts very well. Thus, we have always focused our help on three axes: women, empowerment and education. At specific moments we have also attended to emergencies in the face of difficult situations that threatened survival, such as natural disasters or the pandemic.

The target of our project has been women as a driving force for change in society for they support the family and the whole community; creating self-help groups (SHGs) to improve day-to-day conditions; setting up economic initiatives (microcredits); working on the awareness of their rights and seeking solutions adapted to their environment. SHGs have been at the centre of personal and community empowerment.

The third pillar is the education of children and young people. Public schools are far away from the poorly communicated villages; children often only speak their tribal language; parents, mostly illiterate, prefer children to help and work for family subsistence; early marriages; the low level of quality of public schooling... The SHGs are fostering parents' awareness in favour of sending boys and girls to school by means of teaching in the same villages, with teachers from the local community, to acquire the basic knowledge in language and mathematics and to reinforce the contents of public schools' curricula. But teachers need to be subsidised, trained and provided with continuing education programmes. The creation of specific educational materials and tools for the Adivasi community is also needed, not to forget the introduction, already in the villages, of computer technology.

This process of reflection and systematisation of educational methodology in the Adivasi environment has been the focus of SHM's work, led by Fr Godfrey, initially in Nashik and now from Shirpur. The academic results in public schools are improving and allowing an increase in the number of students accessing vocational or higher education. It should be noted that the improvement in the educational level of girls reduces early marriages and some of them are even able to continue their studies, often in the field of nursing. Improved self-esteem, working conditions, social awareness, etc. break the cycle of poverty.

Perhaps the weakest point in the chain is that a significant part of the young people who have been educated will prefer to look for their future far from their hometowns, even though they will help their families from afar and their influence in the community will continue.

We are pleased to contribute to this whole process, and despite the small budget we have, as you may read in this bulletin it ends up being a great contribution. And none of this would be possible like you.

**Once again, thank you very wishes for 2023!!**



up being a great contribution. And without all the friends of the Adivasis,

**much, Merry Christmas and best**

# Digitalisation and multimedia,



Digitalisation and multimedia are new technologies that encourage education and development in the Adivasis communities. To understand how this happened we will introduce you to the primary school educational model lead by Fr. Godfrey d'Lima which integrates with another model called **TE.A.C.H.**, "Teaching Adivasi Children at Home".

## Primary school educational model

When we think about schooling, we imagine our schools, small or large, but fully equipped, in a community of well-educated families and as part of a literate society. The wonderful work undertaken by Fr. Godfrey and others is better understood when we contextualise it in the Maharashtra state, whose capital is Mumbai. In its bushy mountains there are small and remote agriculture-based hamlets inhabited by the Adivasis. Adivasis are the Aboriginal Indian tribes. They have a different culture, living a sustainable lifestyle as nomads. Forests and ox-ploughed lands are their nutritional incomes. Adivasi's families usually don't receive formal education. They

struggle in their daily life to get basic requirements such as water and electricity. However, they are fighting for change and development within their communities.

Children's education in these communities relies on the Indian state. Too often public teachers do not attend their lessons or they arrive late, due to, in part, long journey distances and difficult access to hamlets. As a result, the Jesuits fulfil an important task in implementing a complementary educational system.

The aim of this model is to support and strengthen the education of children who are between 6 and 12 years old. For the past 35 years, Fr. Godfrey has been the leader of this project. It is based on "*Tutorials*" or supplementary classes: two and a half hours every day, 5 days a week, before starting "normal" school. The main subjects taught during these 2 hours are Maths, English and Marathi since Adivasi children usually just speak tribal languages. Lessons also cover hygiene, health

and basic agriculture knowledge, which is very useful for daily life and in supporting their families.

Another important feature of this system is the training of tutors, mainly women, from the community itself. Upon recruitment, tutors are trained and materially supported throughout, which includes teaching material. Their day-to-day work is supervised by a group of teachers with whom they meet on a monthly basis. Regular meetings support continuous education and assist with structuring and developing teaching. The positive impact of tutors is considerable as they live in the community; they are not affected by road blocks or monsoons. This is the essence of the programme previously mentioned: **TE.A.C.H.**

Since the introduction of these two programmes, parents' attitudes towards education have positively changed: parents have opened up to talk about the importance of education and various social problems affecting Adivasi communities.

During COVID lockdown, millions of labourer's migrants returned to their homes and governmental teachers were not able to provide face to face teaching. Tutors filled the gap by ensuring ongoing education during this challenging period.

One of the advantages of this educational model is that there are no particular infrastructure nor furniture requirements as lessons are taught in "public school".

## Audiovisual technologies

Fr. Godfrey and his team recently began experimenting with new technologies to better facilitate their educational programme. Twenty years ago, short films were introduced for tutor training sessions and a limited number of

# adivasis' educational revolution

= Claudio Sopeña =



computers was distributed. Three years ago, there was a qualitative leap in Nandurbar: every tutorial had its own computer. Since then

and with the introduction of photos, films, videos, in the daily teaching process, there has been an improvement in education, which translated in more further education possibilities.

Audio-visual material draw the attention and spark curiosity not just of boys and girls, but from the entire family. Despite its clear benefits, it is hard enough to get all the necessary appliances, install them and to ensure continuous electrical supply. In the past, learning materials used to be print maps, books and posters. Nowadays, all this old teaching material has been digitalized and accessed via computers.

In Nandurbar and Nashik there is at least 50 tutorials that are already using these materials, and hopefully this programme will be extended in the surrounding 150 villages.

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## *Another important feature of this system is the training of tutors, mainly women*

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One good example of the benefits of these new teaching materials is in the field of language acquisition. In the past, students used to learn English and Marathi from their tutors whose pronunciation skill was not strong alongside poor general language knowledge. In contrast, nowadays students learn from audio-visual content and their pronunciation is much improved.

### **Beneficiaries: 3.000 children of 6-12 years of age**

This challenging project will take place in 5 different districts in Maharashtra: Nandurbar, Nashik (Nashik, Ambata and Manmad), Dhule (Shirpur), Raigad (Tara) and Palghar (Manor). Each tutorial will have 20 students. This is supported by a 200 strong educational team, including 150 tutors with the remainder made up of teachers, IT tech-

nicians, admin staff and project leaders.

### **Equipment**

The electronic equipment necessary for this project, such as PC, telephones and routers, requires substantial investment. This has been done in the last few years, in parallel with the creation of the educational organization. Going forward, the focus will be on the development and improvement of audio-visual content (music, images, etc), as well as texts.

### **Costs and on-going investment**

In Fundacio ADA-Mon Adivasi we are proud to take part in this project, which so far has been very well received in the communities. Outcomes

have been very positive. Currently, we are funding three other projects in Na-shik, Nandurbar and Shirpur that aim to implement new technologies for the next 3 years. We would like to thank all members of Fundacio ADA-Mon Adivasi in their support of all these educational projects.

### **Future**

The success of this ongoing project has drawn the attention of other education-focussed NGOs that are in contact with us to learn about good practice. We hope that the primary educational system will grow in size and wisdom.

**We would like to offer our most sincerely congratulations to Fr. Godfrey D'Lima, Joel Noronda (Nasik), Wesley D'Acosta (Nasik), Paul Raj (Ambatha), Wencesl Lemos (Manmad), Joseph Poshapir (Tara) and Patrick Vaz (Manor). Their magnificent task and joined efforts are the pillars for this primary school educational model.**

# Learning solar energy technology:



## Focus

India, like many other countries in the world, has been going through perilous times in the aftermath of the ravaging pandemic; moreover, the pandemic has been distributing suffering across social classes, reproducing and exacerbating the country's pre-existing inequalities. As we take due cognizance of these pathologies, we may also turn to look for what can be done right, since an alternative, indeed, is the best criticism. This brief note is about looking for such an alternative, about taking small steps in the direction of re-conceptualising and using science and technology to empower people, especially those who are at the social margin.

One of the myriad social challenges that are crying out for urgent attention at this juncture is the poverty of employment and livelihood opportunities faced by young women and men around us in the lockdown and post-lockdown days. Therefore, training the youth, especially young girls, for their skills formation may serve as a way out of their acute job and income penury. In

addition to offering an economic protection, such a project may simultaneously aim to generate climate-consciousness and be socially empowering. In other words, the idea is to develop, in small footsteps, a training programme that integrates in its design elements of economic opportunities, climate-sensitive use of science and technology, and of empowerment of young women from disadvantaged sections of society.

To that end, *Pratichi (India) Trust* has begun, in collaboration with Deeniyat Muallima College and with support from *Global Greengrants Fund*, a modest initiative to train a small group of young women and men at the outskirts of the Indian city of Kolkata, to learn the nuts and bolts of basic solar energy technology, so that they can use such energy in an independent, decentralised and democratic manner in their own homes, neighbourhoods, and local institutions. This may also pave the way for micro-level climate entrepreneurship leading to new concepts of and avenues for a solar economy.

Above all, this project is primarily though not exclusively oriented towards empowering, with skills of science and technology, those young girls and women who are relegated to the margin, simply because they are born into a wrong 'gender', wrong 'class', wrong 'caste', wrong 'tribe', or wrong 'religion'. In short, scientific knowledge and social justice orientation need to team up.

## A peek into the classroom

Hands-on training is being provided using solar panels, batteries, LED bulbs, SMD-LED lights, BLDC fans, C-spectrum UV LEDs for solar water purification, and solar cookers. The training involves using basic electronic tools like multimeters, soldering irons, and devices like diodes and transistors.

The participants are also getting training to measure currents and voltages using multimeters, panels and batteries and various solar-powered devices under different circumstances. The trainees will be able to set up solar panels on rooftops at homes, on their own, and also maintain associated equipment, so that, under favourable circumstances, they may think of a start-up solar electricity company in remote areas, thus adding to the local economy.

# barefoot 'scientists' from the margin

=Manabi Majumdar=

This approach intends to use the greatest individual freedom afforded by solar energy enabling all to become self-reliant in energy in a democratic fashion. There is a major difference between shock-hazard free, low cost, low voltage solar devices promoted under this initiative and the conventional grid-tied and solar-park supplied 220 V AC, with its associated expenses, shock hazards and concerns of viability. Inspired by

yield tangible results invite us to rethink many of our misplaced perceptions about women as lacking in scientific temper, as hesitant to take entrepreneurial role and as lacking an agency to break social barriers to public participation.

The young women and men undergoing this training clearly identify both the personal opportunity aspect of this project as well as the social dimension of

including their role in understanding and use of basic and advanced science, may expand not only their own horizon but also of all the people.

The women's question in science- especially of the marginalized women – is therefore a universal problem requiring collective engagement.

Only when women and the entire population participate in such



Amartya Sen's seminal idea of the social organization of technology, this project seeks to advocate social and democratic use of scientific knowledge.

## **Seeds of empowerment**

The trainees, mainly young women from minority communities, travel long distances to attend training classes with unfailing regularity, after having completed many competing demands of their daily routine. Their eagerness to learn basic solar technology skills with confidence, to interact with fellow learners and trainers with ease, and their own assessment of this programme as having some potential to

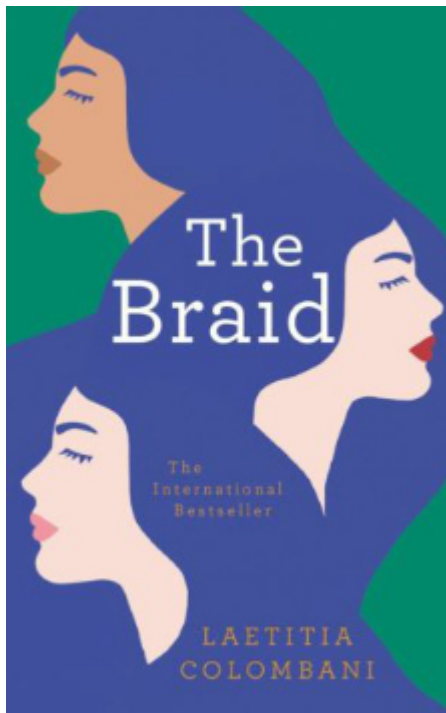
this exercise: 'This training will hopefully help me to start a venture of my own; and also this will help all of us to protect our environment'. This is a common response among most of the trainees, suggesting a mature appreciation on their part of the dual use of scientific knowledge - for individual prosperity as well as for shared progress.

Whether the seeds of possibilities – both at the practical and ideational level – that have been sown through this initiative will start taking strong roots and eventually germinate into sustained participation of these people in endeavours that connect science with society, is yet to be seen. But what looms large is that women's agency,

ventures to make their own electrical energy from sunlight, can India declare to be a true participant in the war against the climate crisis.

# The Braid, Laetitia Colombani

= Lila Thomàs and Andreu =



*The Braid* is a novel that has been a great success since its release, five years ago, in 2017. A moving narrative starring three women from three quite faraway places on the planet. A publishing success that has had its theatrical version with Clara Segura, Cristina Genebat, Marta Marco and Carlota Olcina at the Goya Theatre in Barcelona from 13 September to 18 December this year.

Of the three women, untouchable **Smita** in Badlapur, India, survives by collecting the excrements of a superior caste. She is very clear about the fact that her daughter will not be like her, she will go to school, she will have a dignified life. A striking portrait of the life of this woman at the lowest social stratum of caste society in India.

**Giulia**, in Italy, in Palermo to be more precise, works in the family workshop, making handmade wigs with real hair. She bravely faces the hardships she has to live through when her father has an accident.

**Sarah** in Canada, in Montreal, is a successful lawyer who has had to overcome all the obstacles to get where she is, two failed marriages and three children whom she has not seen grow up. At one point in her life, when she is diagnosed with breast cancer, she must choose what is truly important to her.

Three stories of three women who do not know each other but have in common what makes them move forward, courage and resolution, as have so many women who have said enough to what has been decided for them for being women. A novel that will fascinate you, that will hook you from the very first lines.

A story of sisterhood, of feminism. The story of Smita, set in India, is the crudest, for it clearly shows what this society is like, based on castes that determine the lives of people, especially women.

I have read reviews of the theatrical adaptation that highlight the good direction by Clara Segura and the work of the actresses. If you have the chance, go to the theatre, regardless of having read the story before.

The author, Laetitia Colombani, born in Bordeaux in 1976, has been a film director, scriptwriter and actress. She has also written *The Flight of the Kite (El vol de l'estel)*, also set in India, which I commented on in another newsletter. She has been able to show the contrast between the different lives of the three protagonists, located in different parts of our world in a profoundly unjust, unsupportive and patriarchal society.

I end with the author's own words, a fragment of the epilogue of the novel, which I also make my own:

*I dedicate my work to these women*

*United by their heads,*

*Like a great network of souls.*

*To those who love, bring up, wait,*

*Fall a thousand times and get back on their feet again.*

*They bend but do not give up.*

*I know their struggles,*

*I share their tears and joys,*

*Somehow, I am each one of them.*

# Financial Report

The annual accounts for the 2020-2021 period have been obtained from the Foundation's accounting records.

1. INCOME.....	83.348,52euros
<b>1. Service benefitsos.....</b>	509,02
<b>2. Regular incomes ADA's friends.....</b>	43.410.50
<b>2. Activities.....</b>	39.429,00
- COVID emergency-INDIA.....	20.034
- Donation Vila-Llorens.....	5.740
- Lotery sale.....	8.655
- 2021 Lotery Price.....	5.000
<b>3. Public subsidies.....</b>	0
2. EXPENDITURE.....	- 70.467euros
<b>Grands awarded.....</b>	-70.467
- Vasai Project .....	-19.738
- Mangaon Project .....	-10.400
- Shirpur Project .....	3.428
- Nandurbarr Project .....	7.400
- Nashik Project .....	-7.900
- Varazgaon Project .....	-8.101
- COVID Emergency-INDIA.....	-13.500
<b>Running costs.....</b>	- 3.755.68euros
- Bank's fees.....	- 2.463.25
- Publicity, web, stationery.....	-1.077.43
- Pinacoteca's return from other NGO.....	-215
<b>Lotery</b>	
- Lotery + price's devolutions.....	-7.898
<b>Total year 2020-2021.....</b>	<b>1.227,84euros</b>

During the period 2021/22 5.82% of the expenditures have been used for the running of the Foundation. The excedent of 1.277,84 euros will be used in the following fiscal year destina al ejercicio siguiente. Nonetheless, we have Foundation Funds (30.000euros), which in particular moments have allow us to have available money.

The funds collected for **COVID Emergency-India** exceed our expectations and with the unused rest (6.354e) we have created a **femergency fund for health emergencies in India**.

The lotery's balance has been very positive (5.755 euros) and, consequently, ADA-Món Adivasi granted an add-on fund to Vasai's educational project.

As you know, we have a collaborator in India, Clarence J Robert, who supervises the projects on a quarterly basis. Clarence's expenses are included in the project expenses, as his supervision enables us to keep the projects running and the link with ADA-Món Adivasi.

The bank charges are fees charged to us for making transfers, which we have been unable to reduce, despite having explained to the bank the charitable nature of the association.

## *Cucumber's Raita recipe (cucumber salad),*

*by Reyes Rigo*

Geeta's Kirkire recipe, close friend and great cook

This fresh salad is often served with curry dishes: the cucumber is refreshing and the yoghurt helps those who do not tolerate well spicy food, so that they can eat it without tears falling down.

**INGREDIENTS:** - 1 medium cucumber grated and squeezed to get all the water out. - 4 tablespoons of unsweetened Greek yoghurt. - ½ pomegranate seeds. - 2 tablespoons chopped mint. - 1 tablespoon lemon juice. - Salt and pepper to taste

**INSTRUCCIONS:** Mix all the ingredients in a bowl. Garnish with some pomegranate seeds and mint. Serve cold.



## PAST

Since last **25th of July** India has a new **president**. Her name is **Droupadi Murmu**, she is a woman from Santhals' tribe, from Orisha district. **Adivasis are transforming** India from all over!

## FUTURE



We would like to see you on the **26th of January** in the conference room of Jesuit's residence in Barcelona (c/25 Caspe) to enjoy together of the movie **White Tiger**. At 7pm ¡Come by!

If you haven't yet visited the **Pinacoteca Solidària** (Solidarity Art Gallery) with the works by Carme Llorens and Jordi Vila, don't wait any longer! They are the perfect gift for Christmas celebrations and the Adivasis will thank you, too!

Do you already have **Christmas lottery**, or **La Grossa**? Do you know that one out of your 5 euros contribution will go surely to the Adivasis!

**Remember:** contributions made before December 31<sup>st</sup> are tax deductible in the next income tax declaration. **Think of ADA!**



*The wait*

.....  
*They are waiting for us to become civilised,  
While we are waiting for them to turn human.*

*Jacinta Kerketta, adivasi poet*



**Short videos** online to get to know Adviasis's reality.



←Kathkaris, adivasis from Maharashtra

Waris and their art→



# Happy Christmas!!

Send the below form to Fundació ADA-Mon Adivasi . C/ Francisco Giner 42 àtic. 08012- Barcelona. Phone: 697 395 144.

ADA-Mon Adivasi Foundation is registered in "Entitats jurídiques de la GENCAT" (N.Registre 2248, NIF: G64281579)

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