

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF MPSM 2016-2017**

*“If it wasn’t for you  
The programmes we work at  
For learning and livelihood  
Just wouldn’t come through  
For children and youth  
farmers and women  
rural, remote, rearing to go  
the pace of development  
with tireless striving  
will never stay slow!”*

### **I. EDUCATION**

**1. LAPTOPS FOR LEARNING** continues to be an innovative learning experience for tribal and rural children in primary schools. We organized 65 Learning Centres in 4 Talukas of Nashik and Palghar - tribal areas- where every week our Computer Instructors took Audio Visual Education to the classrooms. Thanks to Dr.Arsiwala of the USA based HELP FOUNDATION we fielded 12 computer instructors to give tribal children hands-on learning with computers. The children had educational films especially for language learning screened on the laptops.

### **2. TUTORIALS FOR PRIMARY CHILDREN**

In 65 Learning Centres we recruited and trained local Adivasi Women to be Educators running Tutorials before the local ZP schools start. Gathering the children, helping them to revise basics of language and maths, communicating health messages and general awareness through picture learning using large coloured flex charts. And with the Laptops for Learning bringing modern educational technology right into remote and poor villages of Nashik and Palghar Districts’ Adivasi areas.

We covered more than 1000 Adivasi children in rural primary schools.

AFAL, Mumbai conducted a training programme for the Tutors in February 2018 to enhance their self expression and communication skills. Besides that regular monthly trainings and evaluations of the programme were held in village cluster centres. MPSM’s supervision teams from Ambatha subcentre and Nashik visited the far flung village tutorials to guide and support the tutors, provide stationery and teaching aids and to assess the learning of the children attending them.

### **3. HOSTEL FOR ADIVASI YOUTH**

For Adivasi youth from remote villages who need to access modern educational institutions we used all the vacant built up space we have to accommodate 180 youth in small and large dormitories, adjacent sheds for group cooking, a library and study hall, computer-internet room, playground and tree filled surroundings for quiet study. This invaluable base for studies enabled 20 of them to access Government jobs in the last one year. Many of the youth study hard for competitive exams leading to public service postings. The hostelites work to keep the campus “fairly” tidy – and clean. Action for Development of Adivasis (ADA)- SPAIN supports our Hostel in its service to Adivasi Youth Education.

### **4. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF RELEVANT TEACHING AIDS**

MPSM has a team of educationists working to research and develop suitable teaching aids for the rural Tutorials and for instruction of farmers and women’s groups. With the help of “Being Human – The Salman Khan Foundation” a series of 19 animated videos for English and Marathi learning were developed along with an innovative Marathi song DVD. Such audio-visuals make up somewhat for the lack of competent teachers in rural areas. This all adds to the compendium of more than 70 charts covering 8 topics of English, Marathi, Maths, Health, Social Themes, Organic Farming, Watershed, Farm Animal Care used in rural educational programmes meeting the needs of children, women and youth.

### **5. DIGITAL LEARNING PROGRAMMES**

Rural Education is poised to become more effective if the media is more utilised for learning. MPSM has drafted projects for the increased use of digital learning through laptops which are mobile, have battery back up and attract rural learners to any kind of educational programme.

## **II. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT PRESERVATION**

### **1. ORGANIC FARMING**

MPSM continues to deploy qualified experts (BSc. Agri.) in Sustainable Agriculture technologies – especially Organic Farming – to accompany agricultural operations of rural and Adivasi farmers in Nashik and Palghar Districts. Films on Organic Farming (“Akho Badli Gayo”), Animal Husbandry (“Sage Soyare Gure Vasare”) and Soil-Water Conservation (“Satvan Mati-Panyachi”) have been screened and poster exhibitions shown to farmers and women’s self-help groups to motivate and inform them on the technologies that are based on indigenous traditions. More and more farmers are receptive to MPSM’s campaign to restore sustainable

agricultural practices for healthier and in due course increased agricultural productivity.

## **2. INDIGENOUS HEALTH TRADITIONS**

MPSM's team of Adivasi health practitioners grows a Herbal Nursery and holds demonstrations on the processing of herbs to provide relief from elementary ailments like coughs, colds, sprains, hair depletion, stomach upsets, arthritic conditions, etc. More than the impact of these herbal remedies is the raising of awareness among Adivasis of their own medicinal and health traditions.

## **3. SEAD: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT & AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

MPSM's dynamic Assistant Director, Fr. Joel Noronha, SJ, a Graduate in Agriculture himself, has designed the SEAD programme being implemented on the lines of the NABARD Wadi programme. SEAD reached out to 300 poor farmers involving their efforts to grow fruit trees, green manure plants on field borders, practicing organic farming technologies, kitchen gardens, forming farmers' clubs and other innovative agricultural activities. SEAD was supported by the Holy Family Community, Andheri, Mumbai and the National Solidarity Centre, Byculla, Mumbai.

## **4. ADIVASI COMMUNITY MANAGED SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME (ACSLEP)**

This programme complemented the SEAD strategy in other areas where MPSM works with Adivasi farmers. Vital issues of saving and enhancing degraded natural resources of forest, soil and water are being worked at. The focus of the programme is poor farmers especially Adivasi farmers with small land holdings. This 3 Year programme will cover 500 Adivasi families beginning from 2017-18.

## **5.. EXTENSION ASSISTANCE TO OTHER DISTRICT CENTRES**

MPSM's agricultural and educational strategies were shared with the following organizations: Shanti Seva Mandal, Manor, Palghar Dt.; Baglan Educational Society, Nandurbar Dt.; Shirpur Vishwa Mandal Sevashram, Shirpur, Dt. Dhule; Bhandaraj Social Centre, Amravati; Vichardhara Foundation, Nandurbar, etc. These social centres were motivated to promote organic farming practices which are low cost and easily practiced. MPSM's Organic Farming Poster Exhibition, its agricultural videos and handbooks were very much appreciated.

## **6. FARMERS' PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS (FPOs)**

As a followup to the now completed WADI programme of NABARD, MPSM launched a Farmers' Producer Organisation in the Mokhanal area where villages had participated in the WADI programme. The next step in their development was seen to be formation of a marketing federation for improved bargaining of the FPO members. Guidance from YUVA MITRA, Sinnar, in the FPO formation helped

the lengthy and tedious process of registering the FPO. The experience of FPO formation and workings would be important for similar ventures in other areas of MPSM involvement with farmers.

### **III ADIVASI WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES OF MPSM**

#### **1. SHGs OF AMBATHA**

The SHG movement in Ambatha, a village centre 100 Kms North-West of Nashik has crossed 25 years. Meetings are regularly held with the Women's Core Team based at Prabodhan Mulinche Vastigriha, Ambatha, to plan activities that would benefit women in small villages; eg. Linking with Govt. agencies, awareness of indigenous health traditions, income generation activities, savings and credit, solidarity among village women, etc.

#### **2. WOMEN'S FARMERS' CLUB**

In the Harsul area to encourage Adivasi Women to take greater leadership in organising and operating their group activities MPSM's field staff rallied a Women's group to work on organic agricultural methods by themselves. This group functions with greater self confidence and interest in cooperating in village activities.

#### **3. WOMEN AND INDIGENOUS HEALTH TRADITIONS**

Adivasi Women's Groups in Surgana Taluka meet to learn about Indigenous Health Traditions. Some of them process basic remedies from leaves, barks, seeds of medicinal plants which abound in the area although the forests degrade. MPSM's Women's Core Team in Ambatha has been successful in motivating women to prepare basic herbal remedies for routine ailments: fevers, stomach upsets, arthritic pains, etc.

MPSM has obtained permission from the Delhi NGO: Society for Promotion of Wasteland Development to republish a book, compiled by Dr. Marie DSouza formerly of Janseva Mandal Nandurbar, from Adivasi Medicine Practitioners' herbal remedies.

#### **4. WOMEN AND ORGANIC FARMING TECHNOLOGY**

MPSM's Adivasi Women's Groups have been instructed in organic farming practices and have demonstrated their effectiveness in their agricultural operations. In particular compost pits, 10-plant insect repellent, nutrient slurries were prepared for field application with good results.

#### **5. THE AMBATHA ADIVASI GIRLS' BOARDING**

The Prabodhan Muleenche Vastigriha, Ambatha, run by MPSM enables 150 Adivasi girls in primary and middle school to access quality education in the Jesuit

run educational complex in Village Ambatha. Besides school teaching the girls receive special attention from the Sisters of the Daughters of the Cross who make every effort to offer growth opportunities to the girls: computer learning, art and craft workshops, audio visuals, cultural sessions with yoga, dance and street play performances, sharing responsibilities in the boarding, leadership training, etc.

#### **6. EDUCATIONAL EXTENSION FROM WOMEN'S CENTRE AMBATHA**

The MPSM Women's Core Team in Ambatha covers 30 villages in Surgana Taluka with Women's activities, organising tutorial centres, taking laptops to village learning programmes and linking activities with government departments.

#### **IV ACCOMPANYING THE POOR**

The greatest service to social transformation is accompanying the march of People in every way they work out their development. MPSM seeks to be present with the Adivasi communities of Peth, Surgana, Dindori, Trimbakeshwar, Mokhada and Khodala not merely executing programmes for development but closely following the life journeys of these communities in order to enhance their own options and decisions for development.

#### **V. THANKS TO OUR COLLABORATORS AND SUPPORTERS**

MPSM has been greatly helped in turn by individuals and institutions in India and abroad to make a positive impact on the lives and destinies of Adivasi communities in the areas worked in. We specially thank the Bombay Jesuit Province for every kind of assistance. Our benefactors demand no publicity but are happy to invest in the efforts of MPSM towards a better future for all. With such support nothing is impossible.

#### **Reported by:-**

Fr. Godfrey DLima, SJ

Director

Maharashtra Prabodhan Seva Mandal

Lokmanya Nagar, Gangapur Road

Nashik 422002

Mobile: 9420374911; Landline 02532316062

Email: dlimagodfrey@gmail.com