

NGO Mela
While we live, we serve

23rd August 2013

Department of Social work, Christ University, Bangalore – 29.

Introduction

The Department of Social Work at Christ University, as part of its best practices, organised a gathering of distinguished non-governmental organizations in Bangalore at University campus. This initiative called “NGO Mela- While We Live, We Serve” held on 23rd August 2013, provided a common platform to the NGOs where they could interact with the students of Christ University and other schools of social work in Bangalore. The ‘NGO Mela’ began in the morning with an inauguration of the exhibition stalls of the NGOs, followed by a seminar in the afternoon enriched by the NGO representatives’ presentations about their best practices, success stories, internship and research opportunities.

Inauguration of NGO Mela Exhibition



Dr. Bino Thomas, Coordinator, Department of social work welcomed Dr. (Fr.) Jose C.C., Director of Programmes in Social Work, Prof. Mallika Krishna Swami, Dean Humanities and Social sciences, Christ University, representatives from various NGOs, Faculties and students from various Social work colleges

to the NGO Mela Exhibition inauguration. He said that NGO Mela is one of the pioneer efforts of its kind to establish a common platform for the student community and the Non Governmental Organizations working for various social causes in the city. He invited Prof. Mallika Krishna Swami, Dean Humanities and Social sciences, to inaugurate the



NGO Mela Exhibition stalls. In her inaugural address, she enlightened the gathering on the efforts of NGOs for the mankind. She inspired the students to focus more in organizing such socially responsible events. Later A small dove was released by Director Dr. (Fr.) Jose C.C. to spread the message of peace to precede any action symbolically.

The NGO Mela - Exhibition



The exhibition started after the inauguration at 9.30 am. Representatives from 22 NGOs were present in each stall to explain their contributions to the social cause. Each NGO stall was conveying the significance of different ways to serve people around us – While we live we serve. The vibrant

NGOs

participated in the exhibition were Afforestt, APD, Ashoka, Azim Premji Foundation, Bangalore Cares, BOSCO, CSIM, Dream a Dream, E-Cure, Green foundation, Green Peace, I Volunteer, Leonard Cheshire Disability, Makkala Jagruti, Rang De, Raza e & sws, Sochara, The Richmond



Fellowship Society, U&I, Vision India, Vishrathi Trust and Water Literacy Foundation. The students and faculties from the campus, MSW students and Faculties from Kristhu Jayanthi College and St. Joseph's

college were visited each stall and it was a contentment to the NGO representatives to advocate about their work. The exhibition continued till 5 pm.



The Final year MSW students conducted various activities related to social issues in one of the stalls. They named the

stall as social amoeba. All invitees of NGO Mela



exhibition actively participated in this gaming zone stall. It was contributing a great extent to the realities of the society.

The NGO Mela - Seminar



The introduction of the seminar on NGOs' interventions and best practices started at 2.15 pm with lighting the lamp by Dr. (Fr.) Jose C.C., Director, Dept. of Social work, Prof. Mallika Krishnaswami, Dean of Humanities and Social

Sciences, Dr. Bino Thomas, Coordinator, Prof. Suparna Kar and Dr. Sheeja Karalam. Dr. (Fr.) Jose C.C., in his

introductory session outlined the efforts of the NGOs in protecting the interests of people in difficulties. He appreciated the participants of the seminar for having gone through the NGO Mela meaningfully and making the event success.



Sessions of the seminar were moderated by Prof. Suparna Kar and Prof. Maya, Assistant Professors in Department of Sociology, Christ University.

The representatives of each of the NGOs made presentations about their respective organizations.

A brief introduction to the NGOs, major areas of focus/intervention and underlying strategies adopted for intervention,



research, placement and internship possibilities were the key themes brought out by the presenters. Presenters chose to show short films on their organisations and the kind of work they are involved in. The films conveyed the intended messages in an effective yet enjoyable manner to the audience.

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During the discussion session, audience wanted to know how the youth of today could be motivated to participate in social initiatives. The representative of 'E-Cure' responded to the question by talking about how young volunteers of his organisation were already



motivated and involved themselves in grass-root level work of the organisation. The organisation of an event such as 'NGO Mela' by a group of young enthusiastic students was also an evidence of the high motivational level of today's youth. On the formal conclusion of the discussion and programme, the audience and representatives of NGOs shared an informal interactive session and feedback on the event over tea at 4.30 pm.

A brief note on the NGOs and their participation in Mela.

CSIM : Centre for Social Initiative and Management, Bangalore (CSIM) is a pioneer in offering social entrepreneurship training programs in India that ensures, and enhances the quality of delivery in social change agents. CSIM pursues this mission by offering a wide range of training programs that advocates the principles and practices of social entrepreneurship. The exhibition was done using an innovative method by conducted quiz at the stall on social issues which attracted several students besides having banners, posters and brochures.

Dream A Dream : Dream A Dream envisions empowering young people from vulnerable backgrounds by developing life skills and at the same time sensitising the community through active volunteering leading to a non-discriminatory society where unique differences are appreciated. They exhibited their colourful banners, posters and pamphlets in the stall and it was represented by young individuals who could connect to the students easily and explain about their role in bringing about a change in the society.

Richmond Fellowship Society: The Richmond Fellowship Society (India) is a registered, charitable NGO providing rehabilitation services to persons with mental illness. The Fellowship facilities are run based on Therapeutic Community principles. The services include outreach programmes and rehabilitation activities through our halfway homes, long term care, day care with vocational training for persons with mental illness and Manpower development and research in the field of Mental Health; advocacy and creating public

awareness, organizing symposia and workshops and protecting the rights of persons with mental illness.

BOSCO : Bangalore Oniyavara Seva Coota (BOSCO) is a voluntary organization working with street and working children in Bangalore city for the last thirty years. The agency works relentlessly at re-integrating young street children with their family and to the mainstream society. Bosco has started a bakery science training institute for young individuals and the products (biscuits, cakes, etc) prepared by the children were exhibited at the stalls which had a huge demand from students.

SOCHARA:SOCHARA is involved in creating networks and linkages, working with campaigns and movements that bring the public back into public health and the voice of the community into the public health discourse. SOCHARA team is also involved in community health action, policy advocacy, dialogue and documentation on Community Health in India, action research, learning facilitation and documentation at local, national, regional and global levels. Several books on health and banners were exhibited at the stall. The books exhibited were very informative and caught the attention of several students by creating awareness on public health.

E-CURE : E-CURE is a non-profit organization started by few volunteers who have previously organized & participated in many environment friendly programs and planted thousands of trees in and around Bangalore city. The Purpose of forming this Trust is to focus on "Waste Management", especially Dry Waste, Wet Waste and Electronic Waste. The exhibition was done by the use of several banners and posters and the representatives played an active role in interacting with the students.

Bangalore Cares : Bangalore cares is a support NGO. They support non-governmental organisations especially promoting individual giving to enhance and diversify income and to promote NGO accountability. They promote individual giving because it is largest source of reliable philanthropic income and because it is an indicator of an individual's belief in an NGO's work and in the NGO's integrity. The exhibition promoted Joy of giving week that was a part of the organisation to encourage individuals and groups to contribute for the welfare of the NGOs and be a part in bringing about change in the society they live in.

Vision India :Vision India envisions building up of a new nation with a social order founded on Equality, Justice and Peace; devoid of all forms of disparities and thereby ensure peaceful coexistence of the entire humanity. It strives to optimize the potentials of the less endowed through measures of empowerment that would ensure the poor and marginalized economic independence and social dignity. Vision India believes that every human being, irrespective of caste or creed or colour, has a rightful share in the abundantly available resources. The

exhibition displayed banners and brochures related to the work the organisation was engaged in and the explanation from the representatives gave a proper insight to the students on their work and the role they play in bringing about a change in the society.

iVolunteer : iVolunteer is a support organisation that provides volunteers to the NGOs. It encourages volunteering activity for the young individuals and provides them a platform to support and work with the NGOs. The exhibition displayed brochures and cards which spoke about the organisations work and the interested students also were encouraged to give their names for volunteering.

Leonard Cheshire Disability: Cheshire disability is an NGO Caring for disabled girls and elderly women since 1961. They have a home that provides care for the physically challenged girls and women from the weaker sections of the society. Girls are given medical treatment, education, training and opportunity for personal development while they are with them, preparing them for independent or semi-independent living. The exhibition displayed several handmade art and craft material for sale besides the posters, banners and pamphlets. The art and craft material exhibited was made by the girls and women of the home.

Azim Premji Foundation: Azim Premji Foundation is a not-for-profit organization with an overarching goal to contribute to a just, equitable, humane and sustainable society in India. We strive to facilitate deep, large scale and long-term impact on the quality and equity of education in India, along with related development areas such as child health, nutrition, governance and ecology. The foundation seeks to address these inter-related domains while keeping Education as a core area of focus. The exhibition was made attractive with colorful banners and brochures along with some activities for the students.

Makkala Jagruti :*Makkala Jagriti* (“Awakening of Children”) is a Non-Government Organization (NGO) that seeks to create a holistic learning environment **for** emotionally and economically deprived children. Their mission is to make a positive difference to a child’s quality of learning and development. They bring together a diverse group of people, committed to this shared purpose. They facilitate (non-formal) education and development of children by augmenting the child’s school education through diverse learning opportunities. They also work closely with their parents, teachers and the community as a whole to make the learning experience that much more enriching. The exhibition displayed colorful banners, art work done by their children, posters, etc.

Association for People with Disability (APD) : The Association for People with Disability (APD) has been working since 1959 for children, youth and adults with various types of disabilities — primarily those with physical disability, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injury, development delay, and speech and multiple disabilities. APD displayed the various aids to

help the different types of disabilities such as prosthetics, orthotics and wheel chairs so that people would be more aware of the availability of help.

U&I :U & I is a charitable trust who focuses on educating underprivileged communities and equips them with the skills and confidence to pursue their dreams. They displayed a variety of posters, pamphlets, t-shirts, mugs, badges and a video of the work they have accomplished to help the people have a quick glance at what the organisation does.

Green Peace :Greenpeace India has been working on various issues related to the environment since 2001. Their work in India is focused on four broad campaigns namely, stop climate change, sustainable agriculture, preserving the oceans and preventing another nuclear catastrophe. Green peace, with their fired youth had videos, banners and pamphlets about their organisation.

Green Foundation: Green Foundation works toward a well-preserved, diverse ecosystem that will sustain the rural livelihoods of the present generation without eroding the resource base of the future. The organisation brought in samples of the organic farming from the rural areas to show the work done by the farmers.

Rang De : Rang De is a web based social initiative that supports rural entrepreneurs from low income households with cost-effective loans to either set up or run their business. Rang De's vision is to Knock out Poverty from India by providing access to low cost microcredit. Since Rang De is mostly a web based organisation, posters and visiting cards were provided to increase the awareness of the organisation.

Raza Educational & social welfare society : Raza e & sws is a social organization dedicated to help the poor and deprived children and their families to overcome poverty, illiteracy and to attain a better standard of living. The organisation displayed stuffed toys, cards and other handmade items, made by the beneficiaries themselves. Apart from these, banners were placed.

Water Literacy Foundation: The organisation is committed to creating awareness about water conservation and groundwater rejuvenation to combat hunger exploitation and poverty. The stall was filled with posters, banners, success stories, cards and pamphlets for student is to read easy.

Afforestt: Afforestt creates wild, native, natural, maintenance free forests at the lowest possible cost, both to us and the planet. At Afforestt, a highly qualified and self-motivated team of professionals, ranging from environmental engineers, bio-diversity experts and architects work passionately on and off-site to provide the best solutions at the lowest possible cost. They believe that the Earth has not been irrevocably damaged, and the

countless forests that we have lost over the years are not gone forever. Afforestt believes we can bring our forests back, and we do this by creating them. It believes that we are at a stage where we cannot afford to just talk about saving the planet, but to actually save it.

Ashoka : Ashoka is leading a profound transformation in society. In the past three decades, the global citizen sector, led by social entrepreneurs, has grown exponentially. Just as the business sector experienced a tremendous spurt in productivity over the last century, the citizen sector is experiencing a similar revolution, with the number and sophistication of citizen organizations increasing dramatically. Ashoka envisions an “Everyone A Change maker world”. A world that responds quickly and effectively to social challenges, and where each individual has the freedom, confidence and societal support to address any social problem and drive change.

Vishranthi Trust: Vishranthi is a multi faceted facility for senior citizens, orphanage, primary and vocational training centre for the rural poor, near Jagidenahalli on Hoskote, Malur Road in Bangalore. The main objective is to serve, love and care for the elders, to give support to the orphans both physically and emotionally, to spread literacy among rural children, to impart non agricultural based skill development programs like tailoring, baking and catering to rural women so as to empower them and also to enhance harmony in the village by teaching yoga and meditation.

Participants from other colleges in Bangalore

The event proved to be a much sought after one as students of Christ University from all streams visited the stalls set up by the participating NGOs. Further colour was added to the event, by the visit of 29 social work students from Kristu Jayanti College, 8 from St. Josephs College and trainees of CSIM. The students along with their faculty members visited the stalls and attended the seminar presentations held in the latter half of the day.

Sponsors:

The event was sponsored by Titan Industries Pvt. Ltd as part of their CSR activity and Centre of Social Initiative and Management (CSIM), Bangalore. Both of them sponsored an amount of Rs. 5000 each

Conclusion

The NGO Mela exhibition and seminar sessions were expedient in terms of giving a platform for NGO - student interaction in understanding ground reality and to hear from their experience



and expertise. All participants constructively used the possibilities of future placement opportunities in the developmental sector. This event supported to improve the interactions between the students of various schools of social work in Bangalore and Christ University. The overwhelming response of students and NGOs made assured that the several days of this program planning that went into organizing the event bore fruit – While we live we serve.