

'NGO Mela' held on 17th September 2012
An initiative by the Department of Social Work

Introduction

The Department of Social Work as part of its innovative practises of networking with nongovernmental organizations, organized the **NGO MELA**, 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. NGO Mela turned out to be the spokesperson for



the core value of Social Responsibility acknowledged by Christ University. The occasion fostered the NGO's to spread awareness among the students about the social cause that they worked for and at the same time it provided an opportunity for the faculties as well as the students for exploring possibilities for developing service learning component in curriculum. This event facilitated an efficient liaison between the students and voluntary organizations which also broadened its gamut to include students from other colleges like St. Joseph's and CMR College.

The endeavour

NGO Mela was instrumental in increasing awareness and consciousness among the students about



the different social issues and the agencies working on those issues. It provided an opportunity for the NGO's to sensitize the students and at the same time strengthened the networking between various NGO's and the University, to benefit in future prospects as fieldwork programs and placements.

Participated Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

The program saw the active participation by 11 NGO's in the city working in the fields of Child Right; **BOSCO, Child Rights Trust, APSA** , Elderly; **Nightingale's Trust** , Mental Health; **The Richmond Fellowship Society**, Bonded Labourers; **International Justice Mission**, Education; **Azim Premji Foundation, Sukrupa**, Nutrition; **Akshayapatra**, Human Rights; **SICHREM**, and Social Work Literatures **Niratanka**. The NGO's had put up an exhibition in stalls arranged by the department which began at 8:30 in the morning and lasted till 5:00 pm. The NGO's also participated actively in the presentations at 2.00pm held at auditorium in central block, Christ University.

Students

The event was made a success with the participation of students from all streams within the campus as well as student delegates from other colleges in the city. There had been 8 students from the Department of Social Work, St. Joseph's College and 10 students from CMR institute of Management.

The student participation was also ensured in the Presentation session in the afternoon, which was attended by students and Faculty Members from the Department of Social Work, School of Law and Department of Sociology from Christ University along with student delegates from other colleges.

Activities

Preparations:

The preparations of the event had been in the form of forming a concept note on the program, allocation of tasks, logistics and preparation for exhibition stalls etc. preceding the programs. The day of the program began with the setting up of stalls at 7:30 a.m. by the respective NGO's assisted by student representatives for each NGO from the dept.

Registration:

The registration for the NGO Mela began at 8.30 am for students and NGOs. The Registration committee allotted the stalls to the Organisations and guided them to their respective stalls. The registration was succeeded by setting up of stalls by different agencies. The NGO representatives along with the student volunteers put banners and posters in the stalls along with the reading materials and pamphlets.



Exhibition:

The exhibition put up by the respective NGO's aimed at divulging their areas of involvement, intervention and their models of practice. All the NGO's had its own creative ways of exhibition and ways of attracting people. Charts, Flexes, Brochures, Exhibition of Books, literature, Slogan

competition etc were some of the techniques widely used. A detailed list of NGO's along with their respective exhibition is given below:

Niratanka: Niratanka is an NGO that work primarily with an emphasis on strengthening indigenous



resources on social work. The NGO acts as a strong database for different kinds of referrals and literatures pertaining to Social work and has produced a monthly bilingual journal. It has established its foothold on



referral services for employment, placement, literature and publications. The presentation had been made resourceful with the help of display of almost all the important publications released by the organization.

Association for Promoting Social Action (APSA): APSA is an NGO working in the field of Child rights



and community based development since 3 decades. It has a good collaboration with several other organizations both governmental and non-governmental. The organization focuses its interventions on child rights, urban poor,



homelessness and youth development. The exhibition from APSA, apart from charts and flexes on their issues was enhanced with a sale of garments which they used for fund raising.



Nightingales Trust: Nightingales Medical Trust (NMT) is a registered, non-profit, voluntary organisation working for the well-being of the elderly in and around Bangalore since 1998, through various innovative, family-based support systems for elders of different socio-economic groups. Professionally managed, every day, over 800 elders benefit from the services of Nightingales Medical Trust.

Some of Nightingales' projects have emerged as models and are being replicated in other parts of the country. Besides involving the community in all the programmes, Nightingales Medical Trust is successfully partnering with government agencies such as the National Institute of Social Defense, Bangalore City Police and Bangalore City Corporation.

Child Rights Trust (CRT): CRT is another NGO that has been working in the field of child rights



through research, education, training centre for several other organizations, campaigns, consultation



services etc. Registered under 12(A) and 80 G of the IT Act India (Granting Income tax exemption) Child Rights Trust is a public charitable organisation which works for and with children, without distinction of religion, caste, creed, gender or social status.

The objectives of CRT is to achieve and to consolidate the rightful position of children in general to the benefits and services to which they are entitled as children, and to a healthy and safe environment which is their due as human beings; to endeavor to protect, maintain and develop children's inherent right to peaceful existence and quality of life to which they are entitled; to sensitize civil society and the authorities on child rights; to carry out statistical research and research in social sciences relevant to children and their families; and to secure the effective use of the legal process to remedy children's grievances. The NGO shares a prime feature that it has achieved all these without an independent institution but through collaborative action with various other organizations. The presentation was informative in terms of actions that can be resorted to by the students in working for their cause.

International Justice Mission (IJM): A worldwide organization that works across five cities in India



with its emphasis on bonded laborers and sex trafficking victims. IJM Bangalore concerned with victim relief, victim aftercare, structural transformation and perpetrator accountability. The exhibition of IJM was designed creatively through meaningful explanations and using miniature tools indicating bonded laborers and their plight.

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. Azim Premji Foundation seeks to



address these inter-related domains while keeping Education as a core area of focus. The Foundation does this through an integrated approach that synergistically contributes to a dynamic response. A non-profit organization, Azim Premji Foundation focuses on improving quality of education and seeks to bring about change through institutions.

The Azim Premji University for this purpose has among its courses, MA.in Education and Development. The agency targets on providing higher educational opportunities and job opportunities in the social sector. The agency's exhibition was made attractive with brochures and a Slogan competition regarding my Dream School.

The Richmond Fellowship Society: A world wide NGO, The Richmond Fellowship Society in Bangalore works for the rehabilitation and psycho-social care of the mentally ill. The agency is well



known for its Therapeutic Community Approach and aims at mainstreaming the people with mental illness. It functions through **Asha** (rehabilitation for Schizophrenia patients) **Jyoti** (long stay home) **Chetana** (day care home) and also provides courses on counseling and other aspects of rehabilitation. The exhibition of the agency was made resourceful with informative

explanations and publications and other resources as published by the agency.

BOSCO: Bangalore Oniyevava Seva Coota (BOSCO) has been at the service of the young at risk for over 3



decades. The agency works relentlessly at re-integrating young street children with



their family and to the mainstream society. The NGO is well

connected to several other institutions. The exhibition of the NGO was made informative with charts and banners and explanation on their areas and mode of intervention.



Sukrupa: SUKRUPA means “Good Grace” in Sanskrit. Sukrupa defines our actions, and is the basis for our mission: to create a pathway to a dignified life for marginalized Indians who are below



the poverty line. Sukrupa is a 9 year old, registered non-profit charitable organization that addresses the socio-economic development of the disadvantaged in urban and rural Bangalore, India. The programs offered currently through Sukrupa include: Free Schooling from Pre-school through Class 10, Youth Training in life skills, distant learning and college education, Community and Rural Economic Development benefiting adults and families. The agency maintains a school “The Sukrupa Education Center” and undertakes couple of community development programs and youth training programs. The mothers are taught to make handicrafts and they provide money for the education of the children. The exhibition stall of Sukrupa was occupied with articles for sale made by the parents of the beneficiaries.



SICHREM: South Indian Cell for Human Rights Education and Monitoring (SICHREM) works for



the advocacy of human rights and helps people fight against the injustice done to them. The programs of the agency are focused on Promotion Prevention (from violation) and Restoration of Human Rights and implements through a variety of programs like Human Rights Centers, Legal clinics, Fact finding Reports, Training education, Campaigns etc.

The exhibition of the NGO comprised of a sale of books, journals, CD's and other resourceful material on the violation and need for prevention of human rights and informative charts and banners to make it informative.

Akshayapatra: Working with an aim of unlimited food for education, Akshayapatra works along with the state and central govt. in the mid day meal scheme, providing food for govt. schools in almost 19 states. The NGO has been successful through its activities in reducing absenteeism in schools and is credited to have facilitated and improved the health of the children by taking care of their nutritional needs. The exhibition stall of the NGO had been made effective with meaningful explanations on their major activities.



In November 28, 2001 the Supreme Court of India passed an order which mandated that: "Cooked mid-day meal is to be provided in all the government and government-aided primary schools in all the states." Akshaya Patra was called in to give testimonies to the Supreme Court in order to implement the mandate.



Presentation

The NGOs's were also invited to make a presentation on their own respective Organisation which was heartily welcomed by all the NGO's marking a resourceful presentation about their activities, target groups, unique features, areas and modes of intervention. The presentation had been

attended by students from Departments of Social Work, Sociology, School of Law, Management studies and students of social work from other colleges. The presentations gave the NGO's an opportunity to appeal the student community into action. The presentations were followed by questions and discussions which was marked by the active participation of students not only from social work but also from other backgrounds.



Major themes that underlined the discussion were need, prospects and inclusion of law students for interning in NGO's which was fairly agreed and appreciated by many NGO's. Another important aspect that sparked a discussion was the usage of foreign funds. The NGO's asserted that working with the govt. for funds were not difficult but a time consuming affair but that did not affect their adherence to govt. The usage of foreign funds for several projects was justified with the speedy access, lesser occurrence of such problems in western countries etc. At the same time it was also agreed that govt. funds could be utilized at a slower rate. Delivering speedy justice in Indian govt. as compared to the west was another point of discussion, in which everyone equally agreed on the hazards of red tapes but the Ngo's also encouraged to focus on the positives of the govt. and opined the need to convince them for one's cause.



Using Media, exercising the Right to Information and other means to be active and responsible citizens was the message conveyed by the NGO's which marked the end of discussion.

Conclusion

On the whole the program had been a success, given the fact that it had been an effort first of its kind. The exhibitions attracted many students and faculty members and thus helped to get exposed to a variety of NGOs's working in the city. The Presentation session was also useful in terms of giving a platform for NGO - student interaction in understanding ground reality and to hear from their experience and expertise.

Organising Committee Members of NGO Mela

1. Mr.Mathew CP (Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work)
2. Dr.Sheeja Remani B. Karalam (Associate Professor, Department of Social Work)
3. Mr. Deepu Abraham (Teaching Associate, Department of Social Work)

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