

VARUN

Attendees: Dinesh, Sabita, Vallabh, Andi, Sathya
3rd December.

Agenda:

- Back ground and Short update on VARUN by Vallabh and Andi
- Dr. S.P. Singh contributions
- Activities and future directions
- Action Items

Current status Vallabh -bhai:

Plans to visit in 2nd half of december..

- A library has been setup in varun. Started library in 84 centers.
Regularly receiving reports from varun.

- 10 libraries 5 with Asha , 5 with Rajiv Gandhi

Background and Status from Andi:

Andi visited with 3 persons.

- Andi visited in July, 2006. This is the 2nd visit of VARUN. Last one was 2 years ago. This year we followed up on things discussed. .

- VARUN not very much approachable. Its not very easy. Others not allowed to go there.

- strong naxal activity. vallabh got permission. Once the villages are reached.. its pretty dry. not real civilization. its far and poor. education and general support activity are needed from bottom. Not all the kids can write or read.. there are no jobs, no food and no perspective.. VARUN project is very important for the children.

- SHG is very organized. It needs support from Singh. Bee Keeping and Honey Harvesting project is going on.

- Medical training and first aid boxes and tools provided to the villagers is also important to sustain.

- craft workshop is also running.

- Expanding the size of project is quite difficult. As the conditions are not very conducive. Do it really slow.and supervise it. Invest in quality than quantity. VARUN group is not interest in opening new schools.

Vallabh: Dr. Singh has been in this area for 9-10 years. He needs support and funds.

Sabita : question the naxalite situation.

Vallabh : It started 16 years back. It is very close to Bihar. The region is very remote and police cannot reach. The forests are also creating problems. The local governance is bad. The government funds are not reaching the people. The schools are there but without teachers.

The police are questioning every person coming from outside. They are allowed only with permission

VARUN is accepted by Naxals. They help VARUN. VARUN is not paying money. Zamindars do not create problems.

Dr. Singh has no political affiliation.

Dinesh - why govt is not doing much on the naxal movement and on ground level problems ?

Vallabh - govt. accepts that they are not able to do much in that region. But they support VARUN able to reach in this area.

Andy - I met with the govt. officials. Govt is very happy with VARUN. The idea should be to build a residential school.

On Teacher training

Vallabh - VARUN teachers undergo training once a year. "Play and learn" techniques are taught. Asha did one training. VARUN teachers are included in Ekalavya training.

VARUN has currently 8 teachers. Ekalavya methods are very established. Asha Kashi is not equipped to train teachers.

Dinesh: are teachers interested in training ?

Andy : teachers are very much interested in training.

Dinesh : make sure teachers are in the same page when comes to training...

Vallabh : 2 times they have come for training. They are excited about the exposure and

they are interested in getting more training.

Andy : happy to support the activity.

Action Items:

* Sathya: Dr. S.P. Singh Fellowship

* Vallabh : Will be visiting VARUN in 2nd Half of December.