

This year Udaan Welfare Foundation saw new achievements in terms of work conducted for senior citizens and for the environment. Several of the projects led to further strengthening of our presence in the field of child welfare, health and education. These projects in turn have helped improve the conditions of living within the several associations and parts of the city we have worked with over the years.

1. Child Welfare

Health

Almost all of Udaan's health-based projects this year were to fortify the areas of the city that we were constantly in touch with due to various developmental projects. The idea behind these camps was to ensure a constant check on the living conditions of the people residing here, especially the women and children. These projects also ensured a widespread awareness about health issues and how to prevent or deal with them.

While conducting health camps and checkups across the city, the Udaan team found an acute iron deficiency in children and women. To help diagnose the problem better, anaemia detection camps were conducted at different venues.

After having noted that several children at Ma Niketan were suffering from anaemia as far back as 2007, Udaan has been constantly conducting camps to keep the problem in check. After two successful camps in the previous years, another two-phased anaemia detection camp was conducted on the 3rd and 6th of April at the home. The event led to checkup of over 300 children who reside there. Notable change was noticed in the number of children who suffered from anaemia as compared to 2007.

A health check-up camp was held for the students of Anugrah Vidya Mandir that runs a school for poor children from neighbouring areas. The project was undertaken on 10th January, 2010. The check up led to detection of the deficiencies among the children and awareness was created amongst them about the several health problems they could suffer from, if they didn't take proper care of themselves. Thanks to attempts at providing nutrition for them through a daily meal, Udaan has managed to counter several problems that the children could face, including malnutrition. The exercise has also led to the understanding that such checkups should be conducted in educational institutions across all strata of society to ensure better health among the country's youth.

Keeping a tab on the health of students at the Anugrah Vidya Mandir, a two-phase Hepatitis-B immunization programme was held in the school premises on 10th January and 14th February, 2010. 131 children from Anugrah Vidya Mandir, Ambarnath were administered the first dose of Hepatitis B on 10th January. 91 Children were administered the second dose of Hepatitis B on 14th February, 2010. Some children could not attend the camp and were immunised after a week. Found in large numbers across the world and especially in Asia, Hepatitis B can lead to failure of the liver. The vaccination treatment has ensured that all those who have undergone it remain immune to Hepatitis B for at least 10 years.

A new water cooler was provided to the Mazi Aai Shikshan Ani Sangopan Sansthan in Thane on 7th April, 2010. Located on Ghodbunder Road, the organization is instrumental in running 4 educational institutions for underprivileged children at Patlipada. The donation has led to cleaner water and healthier living for the over 1000 underprivileged children who are beneficiaries of the institution's facilities.

Education

This year, children's welfare was an amalgam of awareness lectures and community-based projects. These were held to encourage underprivileged children in exploring aesthetics and creativity in everyday living through both academics and extra-curricular activities. Udaan's project for children's welfare was instrumental in providing better facilities and a wider platform for children who would otherwise not be able to come across them.

On 24th May, 2009 a textbook distribution ceremony was held at the institute to provide students with expensive but important textbooks that will help the students excel academically. The event also led to an update of Anugrah's children's library with both fiction and non-fiction books. Udaan's increasing involvement with the institute is to make sure that the children of the home and school are provided with an all-around development and to inculcate not just an interest in academic achievements but also leisure activities that enhance ones personality. The textbooks & workbooks for Std. 1 to 9 were procured from Trimurti School, Thane through the efforts of Mrs Varinder Kaur & Mr Satwinder Singh Rainu.

Keeping in mind the importance of education, Udaan has organized scholarships for several of the children at Anugrah Vidya Mandir. This is an initiative in memory of late Dr P S Ramanathan an esteemed member of Udaan Welfare Foundation and named after him as PSR Memorial Education Fund. Based on donations from within the group and from our dear friends, we managed to raise enough money to fully sponsor the education of 56 children from Anugrah Vidya Mandir, Ambarnath. These children will be sponsored until they leave the institution and if possible upto Xth Standard. A proper database is being compiled to monitor the performance,

attendance, achievements and health status of these children. The esteemed donors are also kept updated about the child's progress for whom they have sponsored. The effort has also led to an exercise where we invite well-wishers and donors to contribute a minimum of Rs. 3000 per year towards the education of an underprivileged child. Efforts are on to collect more funds so that we can support more children. We invite patrons to come forward to contribute for at least one child per year @ Rs. 3000 per year.

Edufest 09

Themed 'Path To Excellence', Edufest 09 was held on 31st October and 1st November, 2009. The 200 children who participated in the event were girls from children's homes across Maharashtra and Gujarat. The two-day event was held at Ma Niketan in Thane. Edufest '09 saw participation from not just the children but also the speakers and presenters who came together to craft the real message of the event – despite physical and mental barriers, education along with creativity and the willingness to strive are the true constituents to achieving excellence in all spheres of life. While there were several pep talks and speeches by young achievers to motivate the 200 children, several of the activities held over the two days encouraged the children's creativity, and pushed them to create and innovate - skills that help one gain confidence in oneself.

The children were blessed by luminaries - Mrs N. Rajam (Padma Vibhushan), Mrs Sindhutai Sapkal and Dr Tushar Guha. All of them motivated the children to become more focussed towards their goals in life and achieve great heights with their life experiences.

The evenings on both the days was a show of talents from within and outside. A breathtaking performance from the mentally challenged children of Pragati Kendra, Matunga was a real inspiration for the children. The children were also exposed to the various folk dances of India by the noted NGO "Nrityanjali" and was very exciting to watch Dr Tushar Guha (Founder President) enthraling the audience with his dance performances.

Continuing with our effort to help the quality of education provided in homes and educational institutes around the city, Udaan contributed 9 blackboards to Mahatma Jyotiba Tribal School, Kharbav, Bhiwandi. The project will ensure that 315 young tribal children studying can now study in their classrooms without straining their eyes. The donation was made in a ceremony held on 17th January, 2010.

As the first initiative in the direction of creating health awareness within urban settings, Udaan held the Childhood Obesity awareness program this year. Held at Sri Ma Bal Niketan on 8th February, 2010, it was a lecture conducted by Udaan member Dr. Pranjali Khot on recognition,

prevention and cure on an increasing problem within children of families within the higher income groups across the world.

To encourage the use of libraries in educational institutes, Udaan donated a cupboard on 7th April, 2010 to Mazi Aai Shikshan Ani Sangopan Sansthan in Thane so they may have a place to store their books. Though a small effort towards encouraging an interest in reading amongst the children, the donation has lead to better cataloguing of the institute's collection.

Nutrition

Udaan is also proud to announce that its daily breakfast programme for the children of Anugrah Children's Home in Ambernath has now completed **two successful years**. Considering how breakfast is the most important meal of the day, the drive has ensured a boost in the nutrition levels of 60 children who reside in the shelter.

Udaan also conducted a few activities and donation drives that would act as a boost to the overall education that a child must receive inculcating the importance of art within children.

Udaan brought to Ma Niketan a 3 part Marathi play, 'Kaka Kisacha'. Sponsored by our member Mr Anand Chhatre, the play was performed in the premises on 12th April, 2009. It saw the children and members laughing all the way.

Udaan provided for several necessary amenities to the Mumbai Mobile Creche, a play school for labourers' children at Hiranandani Estate. The effort began with distribution of new school uniforms to 62 children within the institute on April 16th, 2009. A ceiling fan and a cupboard were also provided to the institution. Old clothes were also distributed subsequently to the Mumbai Mobile Creche in Thane in May 2009,

In order to celebrate Christmas with the 330 children of Ma Niketan, a Children's Home at Thane, Udaan conducted a painting competition for the children. The event aimed at allowing the children to express their creativity and get into the true spirit of the festival. We received 150 registrations for the competition. The winning entries were awarded with exciting prizes that they could cherish in their everyday lives.

A blanket donation drive was conducted at the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Adivasi Seva Mandal in Bhiwandi on 17th January 2010. The institute provides education and hostel facilities to over 300 children at Kharbhav, Bhiwandi. 25 blankets were donated to the institute's hostel. It was part of a larger drive to facilitate the institution with amenities that will help it serve its faculty and students better.

Women's Welfare

Connected to the upkeep of a family, a woman often neglects her own health for the sake of her close ones. Keeping this in mind, team Udaan's activities for women revolved around inculcating in a woman, awareness about the need for her own upkeep and how it is beneficial to not just her but her entire family.

Health

An anaemia detection camp was held at the village Kokanipada in Thane. Home to several daily-wage workers and their families, this camp conducted in February 2009 led to 100 women being checked for anaemia. A nutritionist and Udaan member, Dr. Pranjali Khot presented a lecture on healthy cooking to enable the women to get on a better diet and hence improve not just theirs, but also their family's health. Iron and calcium tablets were distributed free of cost to the anaemic women. The project's success was noted in a follow-up camp held on 12th April, 2009 as there was a notable rise in the women's haemoglobin levels.

In the series of health check-up camps held at Konkanipada were the Diabetes and Cancer Detection camps on 12th April, 2009. The diabetes detection camp was held for the 100 ladies who reside at Konkanipada. The project was held as part of the initiative to help improve women's health in the village. Four women were detected with diabetes as a result of the check-up. The effort was followed up with constant monitoring of the women's health and tips on how to live a safe and healthy life despite diabetes.

46 ladies were tested under the Cancer Detection Camp on 19th April, 2009. The event was held in association with Vasantha Memorial Cancer Trust, Mumbai. While no cases were detected for breast/cervical/oral cancer, it has led to a renewed approach towards one's health amongst the women of the village.

Education

A pressing worldwide issue is that of Cervical and Breast cancer among women. 'The Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness in Women: Myth and Realities' programme was held on Women's Day at Sri Ma Hall in association with CPAA. A lecture-cum-discussion, the event was headlined by Dr Vani Parmar – Associate Professor and Surgeon, Breast Unit, Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai and Dr. Prashant Nyati, Consultant Gynecologist Oncosurgeon, Jupiter Hospitals, Thane. After bursting several commonly held myths, the two speakers encouraged people who were undergoing treatment for either cancers to speak to the audience that comprised of women, accompanied by their husbands and children. The event was an eye-opener and helped inculcate

within over 250 women who were present that though dangerous, the cancers were very easily preventable if a few precautionary measures were strictly taken by them. It was held on 7th March, 2010 on World Women's Day.

Blood Donation Camp

Among the activities that Udaan has been conducting with Capgemini over the past three years was the blood donation camp. Held on February 2010, it was an invitation to the several employees of the institution to contribute for a good cause. The blood collected was donated for the patients at Sion Hospital, Mumbai. It was a great success as the drive led to the collection of 152 bottles of blood.

Senior Citizens

One of the most neglected age groups, senior citizens in the city received a treat at 'Harmony Inside Out'. The programme was designed to help those above 60 rediscover the joys of living and to cope with new found freedom and time. It saw participation from almost 100 people over the age of 60 who had come from all across Thane. Beginning with an interactive section designed by leadership trainers Karuna Chavan & Sachin Chavan, where their creativity was encouraged, the event was rounded up post a discussion with senior psychologist, Dr Shubha Thatte who has managed to remain an active senior citizen. The enthusiasm from the participants ensured that the event was a success and will definitely lead to more events with senior citizens homes and clubs across the city.

Launch of Udaan's new website

Since a website is increasingly becoming the face of any organization, Udaan, with the help of several of its enthusiastic supporters has managed to create a new avatar online. The redesign is based on our motive to make Udaan and its activities more accessible to those interested in knowing more about it. With regular updates on projects and specific sections devoted to queries, our various alliances and information for interested donors, we hope that the website will help create a buzz about the organization among enthusiastic, socially aware members of the society.