

The year 2010 -2011 saw Udaan reaching new milestones. Committed participation of members reflected in the confidence and trust shown by many of our benefactors and volunteers. We have consistently achieved greater strides in reaching out to the needy.

Our initiatives in the various segments of our work were as follows:

Children

Education

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 led to better cataloguing of the institute's collection. This donation was possible through the efforts of Mr Vinesh Elavana.

Another milestone was achieved on 1st July 2010 with the inauguration of our own **“Udaan Day Care Centre”** at Ambernath. Funded by Udaan Welfare Foundation, the centre is run by Anugrah Seva Trust at Ambernath. Udaan Day Care Centre caters to about 60 children who have both working parents or economically weak or who are weak in their studies. Left alone in the house after school hours these children would have otherwise wasted their time in front of TV or streets. Udaan carefully thought about the opportunity to utilise the time of these children productively and help guide them towards a more fruitful life. Appreciated by all the parents it has shown remarkable improvements in the performance of these children. This initiative has also transformed three families. Udaan has appointed three teachers to take these children on the journey to make their lives and career. Apart from completing their home work with guidance from teachers, they get an opportunity to read books from the library set up by Udaan, play games (primarily indoors, occasionally outdoors). Health of these children has improved due to the provision of healthy nutritious breakfast by Udaan.

This Day Care Centre is set to become another flagship project of Udaan in the years to come.

Library (Read Me Project)

UWF has set up another project to collect good books in Hindi, English and Marathi and donate it to different schools and children's Homes. Under the auspices of this project Udaan donated more than 1500 books for the library at Udaan Day Care Centre, collected from different schools like Lok Puram Public School, Trimurti English School, Thane and personal donations by members.

Edufest 2010 – A successful flagship project since three years was again hosted for the children of Ma Niketan and 12 different children's home on 13th & 14th Nov. Nearly 200 children from 9th to 12th Std. participated from these homes. The theme of the Edufest 2010 was “Youngistan Ki Udaan”. The concept was to make each child aware of its own potential and recognise the Genius in her. With a formal inauguration by Dr (Mrs) Sangeeta Shanker, an eminent Educationist and Violinist, the program got to an earnest start with Mr Murali Aiyer and his team taking the centre stage. Active participation by the children gave a good feeling of satisfaction. All the Faculty members, guests and

participating volunteers appreciated the efforts. The children left enriched with this program and felt heavy at heart to leave after this two day stint.

Ecotour

Under the leadership of Mrs Rama Chandrasekhar, an Eco study tour was conducted for 30 children of Anugraha Vidya Mandir, Ambarnath on 26th January 2011. These children were taken to Murbad and were shown the different flora and fauna of the site. This was a memorable day in the lives of children as they thoroughly enjoyed the activity with lots of games, paper bag making skills and other activities. After picking the children from their home they were given snacks on the bus. These were sponsored by Mr Narayanan who was also sponsored of the whole program. On reaching the venue the first activity was saluting the National Flag followed by a nature trail of one and a half km till we reached the river Ulhas which flows through this area. On the way to the river the children were given a lot of information on the various plants & trees by Mr Bharat the resource person with their characteristics & their uses. It was very informative. Upon reaching the river they were informed about the process of weathering & soil erosion. The children enjoyed gathering shells and stones from the river bed. Then there was a session of songs.

On our return to the base camp, lunch was provided followed by a session of Origami & paper bag making taught by Mr Amol. Then the children were taken around the camp and introduced to the variety of medicinal and other plants, as well as bio-composting and a chart exhibition on the safe way to celebrate Holi festival. The children were very interactive. On the way back they were given Frooti and biscuits. On reaching the Home the new clothes were distributed and the books were handed over.

PSR Education Project

Another flagship project of Udaan has been the PSR Education fund, running successfully since 2008. We started supporting the education fees of 5 children and this year we sponsored the education of 70 children at a cost of Rs 3000/pa per child at Anugraha Vidya Mandir, Ambarnath. Many donors came forward to support this initiative and some have sponsored multiple children, while others have sponsored children for the next 10 years in advance. The children's performances, attendance and health status are monitored quarterly and the sponsors are also kept informed about the status of the child being sponsored. This feedback has given a lot of satisfaction and confidence to the donors and have motivated them to continue to sponsor the child assigned to them.

Health

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 donation has led to cleaner water and healthier living for the over 1000 underprivileged children who are beneficiaries of the institution's facilities.

Clothes distribution

We were fortunate to get a big consignment of New clothes from FABINDIA. This gave us an opportunity to reach out to different children's and senior citizen's Homes. We donated the clothes in turn to the following Homes until March 2011 to:

Mukta Jivan, Vehloli (AIDS children, Senior Citizens, Leprosy Rehabilitated persons)

Ma Niketan Children's Home, Thane

Anugrah Children's Home, Ambernath

Anugrah Vidya Mandir, Ambernath

We were still left with several clothes and it was decided to identify more homes and distribute them accordingly. The team led by Mrs Suseela Joish organised the whole distribution.

Nutrition Project

Yet another project started since the inception of Udaan in 2008 is the nutrition project. We started sponsoring breakfast of 50 children of The Anugraha Children's Home, Ambernath and in 2010 – 2011 it was built up to 60 children.

Additionally we have provided nutritive breakfast to all the 170 children of Anugraha Vidya Mandir including the children attending the Udaan Day Care Centre in 2010 -11.

Plans are afoot to sponsor the evening snacks for the 60 children of Udaan Day Care Centre.

Women's Health Check up

By popular demand, Udaan was again invited to conduct the Health Check-up Camp for the women members of Capgemini Women's Council (Winspire) at Vikhroli and Airoli. This activity was organised as part of International Women's Day. About 500 odd women and men participated in the event which was conducted for four days. Blood was tested for Complete Blood Count, Thyroid and Blood Sugar. A full cancer checkup was conducted for the females by 6 Gynaecologists led by Dr Prasanna Menon. Dr Anup Shirsat from Pooja Laboratory, Thane provided the blood testing and Pap smear testing facilities at subsidised rates. Bone Mineral Density test was conducted for all the participants by Abbott Laboratories. Awareness session saw an enthusiastic participation on the talks given by Dr Padma Menon on "Thyroid Disorders" and Dr Bipin Daxini on "Heart Diseases due to lifestyle changes".

Senior Citizens

One of the most neglected age groups, senior citizens in the city received a treat at 'Harmony Inside Out' on 18th April, 2010. 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

Environment

Creating awareness about the environment is a passion of all Udaanians. We succeeded in conducting a seminar on “Rainwater Harvesting” at Hiranandani Estate Thane on 27th June 2010. About 70 people participated and interacted fruitfully with the faculty Dr Ajit Gokhale of “Natural Solutions”.

Rain water Harvesting – Another major project accomplished with the technical support of Udaan was completed at Mukta Jivan, Vehloli. Funded by the parent institution, Udaan brought the support of Dr Ajit Gokhale of Natural Solutions to create a reservoir of water in the hilly terrain of the Trust property. This project has helped conserve about 200 - 250 million litres of water per season. This has already enhanced the greenery in the hills around. We plan to study the vegetation prospects in the campus following availability of water.

Waste Water recycling - Dr Ajit Gokhale again designed and implemented another big project at Ma Niketan. Termed to be the largest waste water recycling project in Thane District, it is recycling 80000 – 100000 litres of water every day. The recycling is being done by natural means with the help of Plants and fish. No chemicals are added to purify the water. There is no smell around the area and the water is as clean as tap water after recycling. Funded by Ma Niketan, Udaan was instrumental in coordinating and supporting the project right from inception to completion. This project was inaugurated on 14th November 2010 and given to the children as a gift on Children’s Day.

Other initiatives

Blood donation: As a part of their CSR activities Capgemini Ltd. organised several blood camps and gave us the opportunity to conduct Two Blood Donation drives in their Airoli Office on 23rd Nov. 2010 and Feb. 2011. 157 and 173 units of blood were donated to the Blood Bank of Sion Hospital Mumbai.

Future Projects:

Buoyed by the support given by all the members and our supporters, the Executive Committee has made confident strides to develop innovative and sustainable projects in the coming years. We have embarked on the path to take bigger projects and have got enthusiastic support from some of our donors. Udaan is proud to announce that now we are one of the official CSR partners to Capgemini. Our teams need a hand of applause and commendation. Their hard work, commitment and dedication has shown the results.

Two new projects are on the anvil – 1) Computer Lab project – This is a major project with the support of Capgemini and SNS REAAL Bank, Netherlands, to be implemented for the children of Ma Niketan. Initial assessment of location, designing of the layout and interiors are in advanced planning stages and we hope to kick-start the project by February 2012. Full time/Part time teachers will be employed

to impart training to all age group of children. Curriculum will be designed by the team of Capgemini, SNS REAAL Bank, RIG group from IGate Patni Computers and likeminded persons. The curriculum is planned to be totally interactive and practice oriented. Audio-visual facilities will enhance the learning experience. Efforts are on to procure interactive learning systems.

2) Mobile Science Lab/VAN

Science is a subject which many children fear. Since science is a practical subject, students learn only when they get hands on learning with experiments. Once this type of training is imparted the fear of science changes to a joy of learning. However, today's science curriculum emphasises on learning by rote without making the basis of science clear. With a clear objective Udaan has decided to touch upon the basics of science through interactive activities and toys to eliminate the fear of science and to create an awareness of the existence of science in our day to day activities. Our endeavour would be to generate the curiosity amongst the children and reignite the process of questioning – why, how, where, when etc. Unless we so called enlightened persons do not reach out to the masses with innovative ideas, science will die from a country that gave stalwarts in science.

Udaan therefore wishes to embark on a mobile science lab and reach out to the children in Municipal schools in and around Thane to begin with and thereafter to the rural masses in and around Thane district. Plans are afoot to study the whole methodologies and systems of working and will hopefully start the project by December.

3) Our cancer chemotherapy project saw some happy developments with an opening to associate with the Lions Club. Unfortunately it could not see the light of the day. We are now looking forward to associate with other likeminded institutions and seek support from all members to come forward with ideas and suggestions to do so.

I once again thank all the Udaanians, supporters, sponsors and volunteers for making the outgoing year eventful and amply satisfying. We now look forward to achieving more milestones in the coming years.