

AIFO India Bi-Annual Meeting 5th to 7th of November 2007:

The AIFO India Biennial Meeting took place from the 5th to 7th of November 2007 at the St. Joseph's Service Society – Chandpur, Haryana. Ms. Emanuela Minotti (AIFO Vice President) and Dr. Giovanni Gazzoli (Head of Project Office) – Bologna, and Dr. Daisy Kandathil Chairperson of Amici Trust presence were special for the occasion. The AIFO supported project Representatives attended the meeting. All arrangements for the programme were well appreciated despite all limitations by Fr. Jose Edassery of St. Joseph's Service Society project and his team.

The messages from the President of AIFO, views of the Vice President and the Head of Project office were presented and made their views clear that Leprosy will always remain a Priority. References were made about Raoul Follereau his vision of Civilization of Love at Universal level through their presentations. The participants were divided into groups to discuss about the activities undertaken, while a group leader would present the summary of the discussions in the plenary sessions.

Mr. Jayanth Kumar the CBR coordinator conducted a mini workshop related to the UN conventions related to Disabilities and a report was presented after group work.

Dr. Manimozhi presented the present Leprosy situation at various levels, the future strategies specifically with reference to the DPMR and the role of AIFO projects as Referral Centres participating in the Referral System to provide Sustainable Quality Leprosy Services to the leprosy affected persons in support to the NLEP (under the preview of the Memorandum of Understanding - signed by ILEP with the Central Leprosy Division – Government of India) .The thematic areas of ILEP support for NLEP was stressed and made clear again that the Leprosy problem still exists and will remain a priority for AIFO.

Mr.M.V.Jose in his presentation detailed about the role of managers in the programme and made clear that all the projects would take an account of the situation of leprosy and modify them selves to provide sustainable quality Leprosy services to all those affected by the disease.

There were some lighter moments like cultural programme by the children of the School and interactions with the staff of the project.

The Biennial meeting concluded with remarks from all the participants especially from the non-leprosy projects making remarks about their possibility of their support to Leprosy cause.



Young Elderly and others participation in the programmes:

Ms. Emanuela Minotti (AIFO Vice President) and Dr. Giovanni Gazzoli (Head of Project Office) Two major sensations we experienced during our visit in India -

1. To participate in the bi annual meeting in Chandpur (Haryana State):

2. It is clear the real commitment of the responsibilities of the actions supported by AIFO in India:

Their work is not a "routine", they are real "artists", able to adopt their skills to the needs present at the field level, using participatory approaches. Finally it is clear that the components of AIFO family in India "never are working alone in their work", all the efforts are channelled in one direction to "build a civilization of Love".



And this is what others want to say about the meeting:

Sr.Prasanna
St.Catald – Tiruvuru - Nuzivid Andhra Pradesh

It was an enriching experience where we could share each other the ideas, views and on going programme of each project. The support and encouragement of AIFO family is imparting much more strength and courage to re dedicate ourselves in our responsibilities. Group wise sharing and presentation is very good meeting each other is always joyful, because we AIFO partners are under one roof and belongs to one family. So we feel the belongingness and understanding of each other specially the undertaking of each project.

Ms.Anima Baa
Simdega

Regarding Biennial meeting, I would like to express my views honestly that it was a great opportunity for me to be at Sanjoe Puram Children's village, Chandpur.It was a key message for all those who work for disability – the session on UN Convention / UNCRPD facilitated by Mr. Jayanth. And after the session facilitated by Dr. Manimozhi on Leprosy situation and NLEP future strategies, I realized that the Leprosy program is very important for us. So we should now give more attention to Leprosy program along with CBR program.

The words of Mr. Jose that the Role and responsibilities of each project person should be defined more clearly touched me, it is necessary to control the human resource. It is in practice but may be that is not sufficient at present. So we will redefine and start our work in CBR field with Leprosy program.



A glimps of photographs during the biennial meeting at Hariyana, Chanpur New Delhi.

WORKSHOPS ON UNCRPD IN KARNATAKA STATE

"Persons with Disabilities from all over the world are celebrating the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disability and disabled persons from Karnataka state are also part of this celebration."

India has a sizeable population of persons with disability (6-7 Million) and majority of them live in rural areas. As the country makes industrial progress, their number is likely to grow. Age and lifestyle-related disabilities and those due to traffic accidents are expected to rise sharply. Internationally, the highest reported disability rates are in the developing countries. Societal attitudes and stigma, often within their own families, limits disabled people from participating fully in social and economic life. Disabled children are less likely to be in school, adults are more likely to be unemployed, and

families with a disabled member are worse off than average. Employment rates for the disabled have fallen between the 1990s and early 2000s even in the midst of economic growth. With better education, health and more access to jobs, people with disabilities can also contribute for the development of their country. But many times the dream becomes far reaching and remains on the paper.

India has a growing disability rights movement and one of the more progressive policy frameworks in the developing world. It has also just ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. However, a lot more needs to be done in terms of implementation and “getting the basics right”. This includes deepening preventive health programs, screening all children at a young age, empowering disabled young adults with employable skills, encouraging the private sector to employ people with disabilities, ensuring inclusion by overcoming stigma, policy practice, better coordination of programs, and improving the measurement of disability to ensure that the scale of disability in India is better understood. Most importantly, persons with disabilities should themselves be made active participants in the development process.

As the country became one of the signatories to the UN convention on 30th March 2007 and ratified it on 1st October 2007, the disability sector in India was very keen in following all the developments and taken immediate measures to celebrate the convention. In this context, there was a 2-day National Level Consultation was organised by NCPEDP on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This Consultation was held in New Delhi on the 27th and 28th of July 2007 in which representatives from Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, RCI, NLSAR were part of the Indian Delegation for the consultative meeting and there were few of the leading disability activists and organisations from across the country. AIFO India, CBR Forum, Actionaid India and other agencies from Bengalooru were also part of the 2 days deliberations. Following this consultation, Mr. Jose, from AIFO, Mr. Nicolas from CBR Forum and others felt the importance of creating awareness on the convention especially in rural areas. As a result, the group decided to organise 1 day workshops at grass root level (In rural Karnataka) to create awareness on UNCRPD. There were 4 such programmes jointly conducted with small budget allocation of Rs.10000 /-to12000/- including translation and printing of the UNCRPD document in Kannada, regional language of Karnataka state.

The objective of this workshop was to enable Persons with Disabilities, their federations, families and NGO staff to get an overall understanding on; Links between disability and rights, background of UNCRPD, India's position with respect to the UN Convention, understanding on key Articles , relationships between UNCRPD and PWD's act in India etc.

The joint action group has conducted 4 successful workshops at Raichur, Bengalooru, Mandya and Hawari. All the 4 programmes together covered 22 districts and about 500 participants actively took part in the programmes. The organisation involved in the programmes had their respective roles in planning, organising, facilitating and reporting of the programmes. Mr. Victor Actionaid, Mr. Mahesh CBR Forum and Mr. Jayanth AIFO facilitated the sessions. Some of the co-facilitators from other organisations were also involved to conduct the sessions. Mr. Suresh Kushtagi and his team from Samuha group was successfully translated the UNCRPD into Kannada language. While translating in Kannada language, that the spirit of the Articles in the UN Convention is captured appropriately in order to make the reader understand the convention. Based on the feedback and the need, AIFO has already made copies for the 4 workshops and agreed to print more copies of the UNCRPD in Kannada version. At the end of each workshop, the participants has developed action plan for their respective regions to raise more awareness on UNCRPD and will be monitored by the local NGOs.

Jayanth Kumar/CBR coordinator

AIFO Bangalore

Mr and Mrs Patrick celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary
We wish them a very long happy and joyful family life



Silver Jubilee Celebrations

(Mr.A.Patrick is working as Accounts Manager AIFO Office - Bangalore

Mr. M.V. Jose visits:

- 8-11 November 2007 – Silchar Assam Project visit along with Ms. Emanuela Minotti (AF O Vice President) and Dr. Giovanni Gazzoli (Head of Project Office)
- 20-22 November 2007 – ILU meeting Pune
- 30th November – Delhi – UP ILEP coordination meeting
- 8 – 19 December 2007 General Assembly Meeting – AFO Bologna

Dr.N.Manimozhi visits:

- NLEP – Programme Review and Planning Workshop for North Eastern States held at Gangtok/Sikkim on 6th – 7th December 2007
- Hyderabad - AP/Orissa ILEP support to NLEP discussions.

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