Strengthening
Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) & National Service Scheme (NSS)
Documentation of Best Practices in Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh

THE RIPPLE PROJECT
EXCLUSIVE

Leading the Change
SIVA KUMAR

Sewing Hope
A Training in Tailoring
CFAR & ANP

Sewing Hope
A Training in Tailoring

06 08

20 Interviews

MINISTRY OF
YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS

UN VOlUNTEERS
AN INSIGHT INTO EDUCATION IN ANDHRA PRADESH

The recently released National Sample Survey data shows a hapless state of Telengana, Andhra Pradesh in terms of education. The report mentioned various flaws of the state education, and it pointed the key areas like literacy rate, dropped out school students, and other behind its penurious education condition.

Survey Report, a quick look:
• The literacy rate in the two states is second lowest in the country next to Bihar and lower than all India average of 69 percent.

• In Andhra Pradesh the percentage of dropped out school students is 58.9 while 67.2 in Telengana. Most of the dropped out students are from farmers’ families/families involved in agriculture.

• The computer knowing students in the age group of (14-29) is the lowest in Andhra Pradesh and Telengana compared to other Indian states.

• The students pursuing professional / technical courses per thousand is lowest in Andhra Pradesh and Telengana compared to other states. However, the number of students per thousand studying engineering is highest in Andhra Pradesh and Telengana. Moreover, the report suggests the states to promote medical education.

• As per the report, the figure for the number of students per thousand who are pursuing professional/technical courses, is among the lowest in AP (34) and Telangana (30), compared to states like Maharashtra (86), Kerala (156) and Punjab (100). However, number of students per thousand studying engineering is the highest in AP (579) and Telangana (599).

• The survey report shows students taking admission in the government institutions which is among the lowest in the country. However, the students taking admission in Andhra Pradesh and Telengana are the highest.

• The report says, the students preferred to study in private institutions over government as the institutions offered “better environment of learning” and it is really hard to get admission in Government institutions.

However, there were also some parameters both the states have performed well. AP is among the top five states with 335 out of thousand students have internet connections, with Telangana (185) standing at fourth position. It is also among the top states in the number of students per thousand pursuing technical courses.

Source: http://indiatoday.intoday.in/education/story/andhra-pradesh-education/1/649636.html
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Leading the Change: SIVA KUMAR
Know the story behind this UNV-DYC and his vision of Youth Work in Yadiki, Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh.

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Sewing Hope
How a training in tailoring, has woven a huge path of opportunities for the vulnerable in the community.

EXCLUSIVE

The Ripple Effect of taking inclusive Youth Work to the village of Yadiki. Get an insight into the programme, the processes, and the impact.

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Documentation Partner:
Rubaroo
6-3-903/A/3, 2nd Floor,
Surya Nagar Colony,
Raj Bhavan Road, Somajiguda,
Hyderabad - 500 082
Telangana
info@rubaroo.org
UNV-DYC D Siva Kumar has been working in the development sector for the past 12 years and has worked with various organizations like Adi Foundation, and Adarsh Community Development Trust, to name a few. Over the last year of 2016, he has been working as UNV-DYC [District Youth Coordinator] under the Project Strengthening NYKS and NSS, and is focused on bringing about a new spring of change in the district by working closely with the youth of Yadiki in Anantapuramu. Siva Kumar believes in identifying the needs and issues of any community and then bridging the gap by creating necessary processes.

So far, he has organized skill development trainings, adventure camps, blood grouping camps, seminars on yoga and meditation, and several other drives, seminars and trainings by partnering with various organizations, and for the overall development of the youth in the district.

His focus areas are development and inclusion. Some of the key projects that have brought about a dynamic movement in the district are as follows: Project Ripple – ‘Ripple’ or ‘Dhyeya,’ meaning goal in Telugu was used so that the program resonated with its vision in the community. Siva Kumar’s regular interaction with the youth groups and his need analysis gave birth to this program.

The youth club members in the district were unable to secure good jobs, although they met the necessary academic requirements. Siva realized that there was a scarcity of practical knowledge and confidence in the youth while interacting with others, especially in English.

Ripple, hence began on May 1, 2016 at Parishad School in Yadiki village, Anantpur District with 30 Youth Volunteers propagating the philosophy of ‘Each One, Teach Ten’. Eventually, 391 youth were reached out to, by 24 volunteers. The success of this project not only brought confidence amongst the community and the youth, but also to Siva Kumar who now envisions a greater outreach to many other villages.

Wherever there is discrimination, there is a
need for inclusion. Siva Kumar, constantly met local organisations working on the ground, to understand their processes and a possible need for an intervention. When Siva Kumar met president of ANP (Anantha Network of Positives) Mr. Veeranjeneyulu, and Secretary Mr. Ramanjeneyulu, who work solely for the care, treatment, counselling, and rehabilitation of people who have been indentified as HIV positive; he realised the need of inclusion and mainstreaming the youth living with an HIV positive status.

Since, there is stigma and taboo associated with HIV, he sensitized the Youth Club members and RUDSETI / RSETI (Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute / Rural Self Employment Training Institute), so that they could work with them without being judgemental.

Similarly, a youth volunteer who works in Gooty Block, described the situation of the Scheduled Caste community. They were considered inferior and were looked down upon. The girls were not educated, nor were they allowed to move out of the village often. For both of these group of women, a training on tailoring was organised to help them become self-sustainable.

Two initiatives that are planned for the future:
1. Skill Development Trainings:
   To be promoted for youth of various sections in collaboration with respective departments.
2. GP level familiarizing campaign:
   This is to make NYK familiarized to all the Grama Panchayaths in Anantapuramu District.

It has only been a year, but Siva hopes that the grounds are shifting. He admits, that there are several challenges - be it the lethargic approach of the district administration on youth development programme or a lack of transportation to reach remote locations or to mobilize funds for carrying out various drives; but, he plans to positively move forward.

So far, Siva Kumar has organized skill development trainings, adventure camps, blood grouping camps, seminars on yoga and meditation, and several other drives, seminars and trainings by partnering with various organizations, and for the overall development of the youth in the district.
When you throw a stone in a stagnant pool of water, it disturbs it, and sets into motion a movement that is called a ‘Ripple’. Such was a change that D Siva Kumar envisioned when he created Project Ripple in Yadiki Village, Anantapuramu.

**The Need**
As a UNV-DYC, D Siva Kumar was constantly in touch with youth groups across different mandals in the district, implementing processes to strengthen and develop the youth.

When he realised that although the youth’s educational background maybe strong and they may have a Bachelors degree, or in some cases a Masters Degree, but they were low in confidence and they could not express themselves openly, or converse in English. As a result, although many companies would come to select candidates, majority of the youth were unable to get selected.

**The Model**
When he recognised the challenge of youth in his community, he gathered the youth and decided to start Project Ripple on 1st May 2016 at Parishad School, Yadiki, with a philosophy propagating ‘Each One, Teach Ten’. It was called ‘Dhyeyam’ (Meaning goal or aim in Telugu) within the community.

**The Process**
Utmost care was taken in selecting the volunteers (having moderate language skills and dedication), critical for the project. In the initial 4 days youth would be involved in various activities to be able to get rid of their shyness and fear of speaking in public. Each volunteer was to then, identify a group of at least 10 youth approved by the UNV-DYC and train them every day based on the inputs that they received.

During weekends, all the 30 identified youth and their 300 young people were trained by trainers other than the regular trainers on various aspects of leadership, confidence building, time management and many more. During the 4th week various competitions would be held.
The Monitoring
The UNV-DYC along with master trainer and NYVs were responsible for monitoring the project. The monitoring team made frequent visits to the places where the youth trainers were would train their youth groups. However, there was no formal documentation of monitoring or feedback.

The Project Activities & Time Frame:

PROJECT FRAMEWORK
Trainers and Trainees to become confident to communicate in English.

OBJECTIVES
1. To train 30 youth (trainers) on Employability Skills in terms of language.
2. Youth (trainers) should be in a position to communicate effectively.
3. Youth (Trainees) should have enough confidence to face interviews.
4. 300 trainees must have functional language skills to be utilized in day to day life.
5. To develop volunteerism in the life of youth.

Role of Youth in the Cause
Siva Kumar’s focus group is the youth, and hence he has paid special attention in involving as many local youth in the project. Moreover, he has initiated the process and the youth was responsible for carrying it forward.

The Project Components

1. MASTER TRAINER:
   Experienced Master trainer with at least 6 years of experience.

2. SELECTION OF YOUTH (TRAINERS):
   Youth with moderate knowledge of English were considered post discussion and suggestions of local officers.

3. SELECTION OF TRAINEES:
   Volunteers were given freedom to select their trainees and the place of training, visited by the Master Trainer, NYVs and UNV-DYC.
ROLE OF UNV-DYC:
UNV-DYC SIVA Kumar was the overall supervisor of the project in the mandal of the district.

ROLE OF NYVS:
NYVs supported in proper functioning of sessions at the level of Volunteers and at the level of trainees. In addition to this NYVs visited training locations in the mandal and report to the UNV-DYC on its functioning.

Various Youth were mobilized for this training. It started with 30 Youth who were ready to train further and take the programme forward. For the initiation, Trainer Mr Vijay Kumar Savala, and Mr Narasimha Anke were invited to motivate Youth. For the initial 6 days UNV-DYC Siva Kumar held sessions at No.2 Mandal Praja Parishad Primary School on confidence-building to enable them to be able to teach confidently further.

There was no formal module or curriculum that was used, and the training was done through various exercises. The youth were motivated and realized their potential in terms of confidence, language skills, their ability to analyse and they started to valued their skills. They were ready to train further and take sessions. Sri Razak, President of Leo club distributed free study material for trainers and for their trainees - black boards and chalk.

During the 6 days, the Youth were involved in
- Ice breakers
- Elocution
- Role-plays
- Group Discussions
- Basics of Grammar – parts of speech, noun, pronoun etc

Initially, the process aimed at training 30 Youth from the community, however, 6 youth dropped out because of various reasons and a core group of 24 Youth was then created. This group had issues in the beginning but they continued. They were asked to train according to their convenience may be at their house, at a temple, a school etc. For those who had problems UNV-DYC Siva Kumar negotiated with two private schools to make the youth train further in the premises of private schools, which was welcomed by the school managements as it was for the first time that these kind of classes were conducted in the village and the management also recommended trainees to be a part of the programme. This group was then able to reach out to 391 youth from their respective community.
Janshee  
26 years

“I work as an SGT in Tadipatri village, I teach all subjects to students of Standard 1. I love singing and listening to songs, old melodious ones, my brother introduced me to this course.

Through this programme, I have learnt to communicate better; I have learnt about the world today. I also want students to prefer values more than just focussing studies.”

Rafi  
26 years

“I have done my PG in English from Rayalseema University, I work as a Tutor in Mahatma Junior College in Guthi. I like playing ball badminton, my favourite food is idli with chutney!

I have totally changed through this course, I had stage fear, I could not talk in front of a lot of people. And in my college, I now take seminars with as many as 80 people! I aspire to become a teacher and teach in rural places.”
V Joshua
16 years

“I am studying in XII. My father is a weaver and we are a family of 6. I like reading books, playing indoor games like skipping rope.

Before this programme, we did not have good teachers for English, I was not able to express my feelings. I heard about this project from Janshee, we went through a lot of exercises during the course, role plays through films, I learnt English through fun ways, and also how to speak freely. Thanks to NYK through which my village could learn English”

Mamila Hema Latha
21 years

“Undergoing the training and then, teaching further, I realised that I want to become a teacher, I am really happy that I figured out my life.”

Geeta
21 years

“I teach in a Vaghdevi High School, and until last year I could only teach Mathematics but this year I teach English as well. I used to conduct tuition classes at my home with very few students, but when people heard that I have undergone this course, I had an inflow of more students”
V Madhu
16 years

“After coming here, I learnt how to be, how to take decisions, and how to speak well.

We would wait for Sunday because that was the best day of the week. There was an instance where a friend of mine who fears a lot, said ‘Madhu, I’m bored with life, what should I do’, I told him, ‘You come with me, I will show you what life is’

Siva sir taught me how beautiful life is, and I wanted to show and tell my friend, “Eeranna, this is life, there’s so much to do’. I think because I motivate people, they call me “Sri Sri” in my village.

K.Sai Kumar
17 years

“I am a very curious person, and through this programme, I definitely improved a lot. I feel more confident while talking to friends rather than talking on the stage.

After what I learned here, I could see the difference between the English lessons in my college and this programme.”

Jagadeeshwari

The programme ‘Each One, Teach Ten’ was really good and I gained many skills. I never had an opportunity to attend a campaign, such. It helped me gain the confidence to talk to anyone, which I lacked before. My fluency in language has also improved. I really thank Siva Kumar Sir for providing me such a platform”
Sandhya Rani

“I got to know about this campaign through a friend of mine who was already a part of this. As soon as I got to know about this I felt like this is a wonderful opportunity and I should utilize it. I was very keen in learning English but due to my family’s economic background, I was never encouraged to join an institute. I observed a difference in me after this campaign. Before this, I used to by-heart (cram) the language just for the sake of marks. But, now I am making efforts to understand it. Also, I am trying to communicate in English as far as possible, in order to improve my fluency.”

B Sri Latha

“I am working as a Teacher in Vaagdevi High School. I like teaching children and adults who stay at home, because they cannot afford to go to a school or an institute.

“I got to know about the campaign through the Head Master of Zilla Parishad High School, Yaadiki, Anantapuram district. Apart from learning, we had to go through other activities like talking in front of many people, debating, elocutions, etc. I was not used to this. The training helped me lose my fear of conversing with people. Also, interaction with new people helped me learn something from everyone.

We previously have never had any access to campaigns like this.

Despite our interest in learning English, we couldn’t afford something like this.

This campaign’s motive is to attract as many people towards it because there are many others like us who have thought of the possibilities of something like this.

For me, this was definitely worth attending because I have never imagined myself speaking this way in English in front of many people.”
Sewing Hope

How a training in tailoring has woven a huge path of opportunities for the vulnerable in the community

Discrimination is the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex. We may think that the world is less ignorant due to the advanced use of social media and is being sensitized each day about people around, and we may be living in oblivion if we believe for this to be true.

We share some stories from two different vulnerable groups in Anantapuramu, one being HIV positive and the other belonging to a Scheduled caste community. What brings them together, you may think - A sewing machine to stitch together their dreams and aspirations of being independent. These young women, who did not have any source of hope to tread on the path of a better life. Coming from varied backgrounds, what binds them together is the seeking spirit to learn and the will to change their present and work towards creating a financially secure future for themselves and their families. Through Siva Kumar’s efforts two vulnerable group of young women were trained in tailoring.
People living with HIV more commonly known as PLHIV, face challenges from the moment that they are diagnosed. They are considered outcastes, both within their families and the world outside, what begins is a perplexing struggle in everyday life. When Siva Kumar UNV-DYC met the representatives of ANP (Anantha Network of Positives), he realised that there are very few opportunities for PLHIV to work and sustain themselves. Siva Kumar arranged for a tailoring training through RUDSETI / RSETI for 25 young women in the month of September and October 2016.

The HIV positive women attended the program called ‘Dress Designing for Women’ and the advance training too. Some of the sessions that they underwent were:
- Why Self Employment
- Entrepreneurial Competencies
- Basics of Stitching and Measurement (petticoat, night dress, school uniform, etc.)
- Advance stitching (dress, churidar, blouses, designing)
- Tower Building – Decision making and creating a sense of independence
- Banking
- Steps in launching an enterprise

We met some of the beneficiaries and here are some stories.
SUTP Trainees through ANP

Trainee 1:
I used to suffer from regular fever and on the advice of my neighbour, I went to the hospital and post the test, I was identified as HIV positive. At first, I felt very nervous and told only my mother about it, she asked me whether it was a contagious disease. The moment people got to know that I was positive they would avoid talking to me and would murmur that I may have been a sex worker. I felt like dying, all my desires to live were dead.

People do not understand that there are various reasons for a person to be affected by HIV virus. They would not even allow me to touch their children. For them, I suddenly became an untouchable. My family also behaved in a similar manner, they did not want to give explanations to the world and wanted me to move out and stay on my own. I left my house and started living in another place. My only hope to survive and battle this world was my 5 year old child. I could find no work initially. I needed to earn to be able to take care of my health and my child.

The tailoring program by NYK and ANP changed things for me. I am now a skilled tailor, and in fact, I teach tailoring too. This transition has taught me a lot of things, it made me independent and something within me has changed, I don't get bothered by what people say anymore. I am stronger than before.

Trainee 2
It is not about being HIV positive and living in a remote area like ours, you have to battle many things each day. Even, if you want to hide it from others, everyone gets to know. When I got to know that I am HIV positive, my husband was scared the most, but post the counselling sessions with ANP, he supports me. I was a farmer and the earnings were slow and less since Anantapuramu is a drought prone area we can never predict how the crops will turn out. I was fortunate to be associated with ANP and that's how I got to know about the tailoring training that NYK did; I am a tailor now, I work in a gents garment store all day, then I come back home and stitch blouses to make extra money. I plan to expand and open up a tailoring shop where I can employ others. This dream of mine has challenges of its own, but I am happier, I am on a progressive path, I am independent and wish to live happily.

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Tailoring Training for Girls from Kristapadu Village

Girls From SC Community, Tadipatri
A volunteer from Gooty Block comes from the Scheduled Caste (SC) colony of the village Kristapadu, who informed us of the conditions of SC community. Like any other village, people who belong to this community are looked down upon and are not respected. Far from being treated as an equal human being, the situation only gets worse for the girls as they are only permitted to leave the village other on two occasions in the year - the mandal headquarters and a neighbouring village for annual fair.

Being fully aware of the situation, Siva Kumar negotiated with the RUDSETI / RSETI to conduct an awareness drive on skill development and entrepreneurship in the village for youth. The drive happened in the month of October and post this, 3 young women attended the tailoring training. The tailoring program was conducted as part of NYKS program, SUTP – Skill Upgradation Training Program, for which the girls travelled to Anantapuramu, for one of them. It was the first time she had gotten the opportunity to travel outside her village. This tailoring program was a 21-day course on tailoring where they learnt the basics of tailoring - stitching, hem, fall, cutting, measurement, and constructing simple dresses for women.

We visited the house of one of the girls and got to meet all 3 of them, they narrated their experiences.

I was so happy that we would get to go to Anantapuramu. It would be my first time outside my village. Someday, I would then go to Hyderabad. I am a Tenth Grade dropout and had to leave my studies to support my family. I would work as a labour on construction sites.

Thanks to the training, I received through NYKS, I will never have to go back to work as a labourer. I am more courageous than I was before. People would question me, ‘what will you learn?’ I didn’t know what to say then, but I know that I have learnt to be independent. I am happy, also because my family is happy too, with this choice of mine.

~ Savitri, 19 years
When I was young, my father passed away and I had to start working from an early age. I never went to school even once, but I wanted to become a doctor and it’s all in vain now. I had no idea what and how tailoring is done, but I grabbed the opportunity to learn something new. I am not great at it, but I practice and I know I will get better. The biggest challenge is to be able to get customers. Hopefully, I become a better tailor and get more work in future.

~ Gowri, 19 years

I have studied upto Tenth Grade in my village and couldn’t continue my studies further due to various reasons. I joined this training because of a volunteer from NYKS who provoked me and two others of our village. The villagers were completely against us attending this training. They kept telling us that ‘it took years for us to learn tailoring, what would you girls learn in 21 days. You are going to merely waste your time and you should learn farming like the others’. My parents were supportive and hence I could attend the training. I am a tailor now. I had never imagined this, I am very happy working on my own as it saves some money for our family too.

In the training, I learnt to not only stitch different dresses but in different styles too. I got to go out of my village, meet new people, interact with strangers and all of this was a big thing for me. I felt free. We live at a place which is far from the main village just because we belong to the Scheduled Caste community. This is an age old practice and is being followed in our village till date. I hope that our generation is able to break these barriers and I look forward to live in harmony without any discrimination.

~ Suma Latha, 18 years
UNV-DYC’s Partnership with Centre For Advocacy & Research

CFAR - Centre for advocacy and research is an NGO that works nationwide in 12 different states with a commitment to mainstream marginalized communities - sex workers, transgender and other sexual minorities, forums of single women, networks of HIV positive persons, injecting drug users, people living with disabilities, the urban and rural poor and the girl child - so that their issues can be understood and their concerns shared.

In Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh, they work towards social inclusion and mainstreaming the marginalised community of sex workers through a programme called ‘Single Window’ - a one stop centre for multiple service. We met the District Coordinator of Anantapuramu, Mr Upendra to understand their process and the association with D Siva Kumar and NYK (Nehru Yuva Kendra).

He said, “when we started the ground level work of this project in September 2013, we focused on empowering them towards understanding social inclusion and main streaming them. But the choice of whether they wanted to continue the profession or not was left to them. We slowly started working to narrow down the possibilities of them going towards risk. We tried to pitch with the departments to provide a meaningful rehabilitation.

We cannot put a woman under a home for 2 years, separating her from her family. This isn't a meaningful rehabilitation.

We have seen the entire circumference of her family; be it her mother, father, children, also a partner in some cases.

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We have seen the entire circumference of her family; be it her mother, father, children, also a partner in some cases.”
CFAR has also worked to create a supportive environment for them by supporting them with the following:

- A health service, creating awareness about STDs and health issues.
- Training of 45 women as Paralegals because the ITPA (Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act) is sometimes misused
- By getting them enrolled for Aadhar cards, since they had no proof of identity
- Training a community coordinator from within, with the motto 'by sex workers for the sex workers'.

“We wanted to include the children and we requested D Siva Kumar to intervene in our process and a meeting was held with some of them. Siva Kumar briefed them about NYK activities, various career opportunities and the courses that they could undergo. The girls expressed an interest to learn the basics of computers as they realised it is an important skill in the current scenario and a need to study and learn. Siva Kumar partnered with TICT (Technical Institute of Computer Training) and 6 girls attended the computer training in the month of August. They were elated and wanted to then learn Spoken English in the following holidays. Siva Kumar is working towards organising a course.

Siva Kumar also successfully has supported the rehabilitation of one of the girls who was a sex worker and got her admission in an Undergraduate College. The girl is now pursuing her Bachelor’s in Commerce, and she wants to work in a bank someday.

The association with Siva Kumar has been brief but meaningful and although, quantitatively we only reached out to 6 girls, but we believe that each life matters. We hope to collaborate extensively in the coming year and create newer progressions.”
When Siva Kumar UNV-DYC met the representatives of Anantha Network of Positives (ANP) in a meeting conducted at District Medical and Health Office in the month of June, he came to know about the departments working with People Living with HIV (PLHIV). He realised that they were focusing more on various Government Schemes related to PLHIV, and schemes in general that could not be availed by PLHIV. It was very clear that youth living with HIV were not supported either with Skill Development or Self Employment (Entrepreneurship). Thus, in the month of July there was a meeting conducted at ANP’s office for motivating the outreach workers of ANP.

Siva introduced them to a wide range of opportunities available for skill training and that these trainings would certainly help them to enhance their skills and earn a living. During the interaction he also understood that the PLHIV did not have an opportunity to have nutritious food to be able to live healthier and have a good life span. They were supported by ART but for food they had to depend on their own. Siva realised their urgent need to earn and support themselves. He promised ANP that under Nehru Yuva Kendra’s (NYK) Skill Upgradation Training Programme (SUTP) he would organise a tailoring training for them.

The training took place at RUDSETI / RSETI for two months in September and October. 25 young women living with HIV attended the programme and are now working as tailors, some at a shop and some independently. During the course 2 experienced tailors (both, women) living with HIV trained in advance tailoring and marketing skills.

Rubaroo’s team went to visit ANP’s office and had a chat with Mr Veeranjaneyulu, the founder of ANP. He warmly welcomed us in his office to share how Anantha Network for Positives (ANP) was founded and the work that they do. Excerpts from the interview can be read further.

**Interviewer (I): Why did you start ANP?**

Mr Veeranjaneyulu (Mr V): In December 2003, me and my wife were diagnosed with HIV. Though we both were positives, our child is a negative and is healthy. He is now studying in Ninth Grade. Discrimination in the society was one of the main reasons for me to set up this organisation. The society looks at persons who are HIV positive a certain way. Even after knowing that HIV is not spread through contact, people still shun the ones who are positive. I wanted to change the perspectives to support the positives to lead a dignified life, as everyone else.

**I: So, what does ANP do?**
Mr V: We work on various aspects. Anantapuramu has 63 mandals and we have one volunteer for every mandal. The number of people identified by outreach workers is 6700 today, though, it was hard to get even one person back in 2004.

We conduct awareness campaigns through our trained volunteers so that no patient drops out from the treatment. We work on para legal issues as well along with treatment. We also create employment through our organisation. Currently, we are able to provide employment to 50 members and in fact, barring a few people in the administration and accounts team, most of the people in ANP's team are HIV positive.

I: Have there been any challenges? And if yes, what have they been?

Mr V: When you start a process like ours, it's slow and gradual, you cannot change how people think in a day. Me and wife too, have undergone this discriminatory treatment and we understand what a person goes through. We have had many cases where we had to intervene. Some of those are - rehabilitating the child, if the parents pass away, the relatives try to claim the property. People also don't cremate the dead body because the person was HIV positive.

In 2006, we fought for the rights of the positives, most of them were being discriminated even in the Highcourt. To share an incident with you, there were police recruitments that were being held in Anantapuramu. 40 members were selected and the medical tests were going on. A young boy was found to be HIV positive and was rejected for the recruitment. Despite, his strengths and his active participation he wasn't recruited. This boy approached ANP and we collectively fought against this in the court. We won and he got recruited to his job. A government order has also now been passed that an HIV test is not necessary in police recruitments.

I: Tell us about your association with NYK.

Mr V: Our organization has been associated with NYKS with an objective to improve the life of the HIV positives. The first thing is to sensitize the youth about the issues of an HIV positive person. The other is to provide life skills to women and create a more inclusive space. With the support of NYKS, we were able to train them in tailoring, for a period of two months. Post which, they have started working on their own. It is an achievement, both for ANP and NYK that we are able to bring about a positive transformation in their lives. Apart from training, we also look forward to provide them the sewing machines for work.

I: What advice would you give to someone who is diagnosed as positive?

Mr V: The positives can also lead a happy life like others. There needs to be a strong and supportive environment around the person. The moment somebody gets to know of any life threatening disease, the person is flooded with various emotions of fear, worry and sadness. So, to tackle the situation the willpower or self-confidence is the most necessary aspect. Only 50% depends on the treatment, the remaining 50% depends on how strongly they can build up their self-confidence, in order to lead a healthy and long life. For this, constant support and counselling is imperative.

Mr Veeranjaneyulu's spirit and dedication is visible in the work that he has done in all these years. He showed us around the office and introduced us to his staff. We could also see some of the reading materials, samples of nutrition materials and then we went on to meet few of the beneficiaries who underwent the training program.
HEARTFULNESS
MEDITATION

In today’s world of ever-growing stress, meditation is one of the most prescribed medication. Founded by Sri Ramachandra, the practice of heartfulness meditation believes that heart is the vital part of the body. By tuning into our heart, we learn to be centered in our highest self. Heartfulness meditation is simply taking the time every day to tune into that internal presence.

Headquartered in Chennai, and run by Ramachandra Mission, it was brought to Anantapuramu by NYKS and promoted by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

K Pakkirappa, one of the preceptors (instructor) of heartfulness meditation talks about his experience of being an instructor and practicing it in everyday life. “I have been practising this meditation for the past 10 years and 6 months ago, I became a preceptor. I was going through a terrible situation in my life and I attempted suicide, someone introduced me to this meditation and today I am strong enough to face any situation”

Describing the practice in detail he says, the mind has 50,000 thoughts but we only utilise less than 1000 thoughts and the remaining are wasted. Most of these thoughts are negative thoughts which lead to stress. Thus, we don't move in the right direction, be it our job of family. Heartfulness meditation regulates our thoughts and views which increases our conscience level.

The practice says we have 3 types of bodies – physical, causal (the soul) and micro.

Sukshma or Micro Body is divided into 4 parts – mind, conscience, intellect, and ego. So whenever we control the ego, intellect, and mind, automatically the conscience will be controlled. The mind gets controlled by the heart. The thoughts will become feelings, whenever we feel positive in our heart, the mind will be positive and we will be able to identify the right choices for us.

8 Sessions have been done from August till December 2016 which were attended by youth between the age of 15-25 years consisting of both boys and girls. They have reached out to approximately 600 people. Throughout the district people are coming back to attend the program.

What the youth has to say:

Noor Mohammed, pursuing his M Tech at JNTU, Anantapuramu, attended the Heartfulness Meditation campaign in the first week of December for 3 days for 1 hr in the evening with few of his classmates. He says that the most important aspect he could observe through practicing meditation was “gaining more in less time”. It also helped him lead a happy and peaceful life and reduced his anger. He could also build and sustain relationships.

Praveen Chinta, pursuing his B tech third year from JNTU, Kurnool, attended the first session in August 2016 and has attended 3 sessions since. According to him, meditation is something different from the academic and co-curricular. He learnt a lot of relaxation techniques and how to avoid negative thoughts. There was a new found acceptance in him for the things happening around him. Everyone, especially the youth, regardless of religion has to take this initiative of learning it.

Noorulla, has completed his MBA in HR Marketing from PVKK College, Anantapuramu. He talks about the heartfulness meditation and says ‘I have also been to the Heartfulness
Meditation camp and learnt a new definition to Yoga and Meditation. I had a wrong perspective and thought that only those who belonged to a particular religion (Hindu), practiced it, but I realized that Meditation doesn’t belong to a particular sector of society. Instead it should be practiced by every individual for their betterment. As we exercise our external body through gym, the same way our internal body should be exercised through Yoga and Meditation.

ADVENTURE CAMPS

NYKS has organized many activities, one of which also included the ‘Adventure Camp’. They have been to different places as a part of this. In 2015, it was held in the Training Academic Area on the outskirts of Chittoor district with 48 people taking part in it for 10 days in the month of May. In 2016, it was held in Penukonda of Anantapuramu district for 7 days in the month of February. Camp spaces usually have activities like Trekking or Rope Hailing, but the main aim of this camp was to spread ethical values among people. Developing a humanitarian attitude, a sense of responsibility, helping or supporting the fellow beings at times of need or danger, etc. However, these camps also create a space to have fun, apart from the learning.

We interacted with a youth group member, who attended the camp and gave us an insight and shared his experience. A youth volunteer with NYKS, Noorulla who pursues his MBA in HR Marketing shares, “I have attended the camps both in 2015 & 2016 as well. It was a completely new experience. In the first camp, I was just a participant but in the second one I was to lead the team and co-ordinate the members. We did certain adventurous activities like trekking and had lots of fun. The most important takeaway from the camp was that I developed compassion and patience towards others.

Another group member also shared her views about the camp. “Being a young woman I had some inhibitions in participating in the Adventure Camp organised by Nehru Yuva Kendra, Anantapuramu. As a youth volunteer I met UNV - District Youth Coordinator, Mr. Siva Kumar in February 2016, as I shared my ideas and activities he mentioned about the upcoming programme on Adventure Camp. I hesitantly accepted to be a part of the camp, but the UNV-DYC followed up and informed me about the date of the camp. I took a decision to go ahead with the camp as this would be the first time I would be participating in NYK activities. If I lose the opportunity it may be difficult to approach NYK further. I motivated a friend of mine to join the camp and it was accepted by NYK. In the camp there were many young men and a few young women but I decided to continue with the confidence given by UNV-DYC. During the camp I participated in many activities like Trekking, Rock Climbing, Rope Climbing, Rappling, Camping, First-Aid etc. During the camp I was afraid initially as the activities were watched on Movies and Television but I never thought I would do all these kind of activities in my life. I was motivated and given confidence to perform and I could do it. The camp really boosted my confidence by participating in various activities. I feel that I can face any challenges in life with the confidence I gained in this camp.” - Brahmani Vadla.
DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Disaster management is the creation of plans through which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters. It doesn’t eliminate the threats, but focuses on creating plans to decrease the effect of disasters.

NYK and its association with Red Cross and Youth Service had conducted a 5-day session regarding Disaster management at a Model School in Yadiki, Anantapuramu. The session focused on provision of support to people who lost their shelter as well as their hope in times of disaster. It enabled an understanding of appropriate first aid and the mental strength required. The session also helped the participants on ways to approach government authorities. There were more than 100 people who had attended the session.

BLOOD GROUPING

Enabling individuals to help themselves is the best help that can be given. Especially in cases of health, it is imperative.

A multi-specialty hospital in Prasanti Nilayam or Puttaparthi of Anantapuramu district is a landmark where many patients make a visit to be treated. Many a times situations occur where patients require blood to go ahead for treatment. The hospital often is able to provide blood to limited persons and they would then ask the attendants of patients to arrange for blood.

Attendants come in from different parts of the country and often become restricted and exploited by middlemen, when trying to arrange for blood. Some middle men ask for money or demand for valuables in exchange. When one woman approached a middleman seeking blood, he asked for money in exchange. Unable to pay him, she was asked to spend a night with him, in return, for arranging blood. In order to save her husband’s life, the lady had to accept the only situation in front of her.

Since this incident was shared by Sri. Amarnath Reddy, who had been conducting blood camps for 22 years, the UNV-DYC took it up as his
endeavour to bring awareness of each others’ blood group in the village. It would help them in times of a dire need as they would then be in a position to help themselves.

When the project began initially, the idea was to conduct Blood Grouping for all the students of High School and Primary School in collaboration with Pragati Patham Youth Club. The message that Blood Grouping was happening in the school, was known to the community and some of them appreciated the work. An elderly person Sri. Venkata Narayana Dasari of 67 years, but young in spirit, reached the place with a blank cheque and observed the things happening in the school and mentioned that "I wish that the whole village is aware of their blood group so that it would be helpful to each of them".

The UNV-DYC took the challenge and motivated the youth club members to go ahead with blood grouping for all the villagers and held camps for 1500 persons in a day which is a world record. The amount sponsored by the donor was Rs. 17000/- for the project to happen.

For this to happen 12 technicians and 60 volunteers were required to manage the things on the day. Sri Amarnath Reddy provided 5 technicians and Sri. Dhanunay, Head of the Department, Micro Biology provided 2 technicians, Smt. Pallavi, National Cadet Corps (NCC), Associated NCC Officer provided 2 technicians and 3 youth who were trained and motivated came forward to help the project.

In addition to this UNV-DYC approached Srinivasa College of Management and National Service Scheme (NSS) Programme Officer, Smt. Brunda for engaging volunteers who willingly accepted and supported the project.

All volunteers and technicians were presented certificates and the Sri. Venkata Narayana Dasari and Sri Amarnath Reddy were felicitated on the day.
To ensure replicability and scalability of the model adopted in Andhra Pradesh, some of the additional ideas are suggested below, based on the research done on the ground by the team of Rubaroo.

1. Creating a specific format as a need analysis to the project, should it be adopted at any other location. Suggestions from the analyses should be charted out in a document for anyone adopting the model to learn and understand the nuances of the project.

2. A structured curriculum to be designed, that can be shared for anyone who would want to replicate the model in their communities. This curriculum itself can then serve as a replicable structure that can be implemented anywhere.

    Based on the experience of collecting data in this project, we couldn't find modules that were handed down either in the capacity-building segment, or even the tools used in English learning.

3. Capacity building of community youth leaders or volunteers on project implementation [along with what to teach in the English language]. It would help the volunteers understand how to work with classroom spaces and how to influence their peers while being 'teachers' to them.

4. Create avenues that promote a mindset change process which would help in running sustainable projects. As simple as getting groups to interact and have exposure opportunities for their youth to be able to now just learn the language, but build confidence along the way, and break the boundaries of fear while interacting with different groups.

5. Integrating a component of self-awareness, which would help the participants reach out and connect with each other and create a support system for themselves. This would also help in building a good network of invested people.
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ANP : Anantha Network of Positives
CFAR : Centre for Advocacy and Research
NYKS : Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan
NYV : National Youth Volunteer
RSETI : Rural Self Employment Training Institute
RUDSETI : Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute
SUTP : Skill Upgradation Training Program
TICT : Techno Institute of Computer Technology
UNDP : United Nations Development Programme
UNV- DYC : United Nations Volunteer, District Youth Coordinator