

GUJARAT

SPANDAN

NOVEMBER 2022

The Facts of **GUJARAT MODEL ...**

Since several years now, Gujarat has been seen as a model State which other states of the country want to imitate. This could not be further from the truth. There are several indicators to expose the grim reality in Gujarat today. Whilst Gujarat can certainly boast of producing some of the richest persons in the world, the fact is that vast sections of the society still do not have access to roti-kapada-makan and the other basic

amenities of life; many still are below the poverty line. The gap between the rich and the poor grows wider everyday.



the years. The anti-conversion law of Gujarat is one of the most draconian in the country and clearly unconstitutional. Several government and other official policies are basically anti minority. Women are at the receiving end of the society which is very patriarchal. Not long ago a Gujarati woman who was on Amir Khan's programme which highlighted the way she was treated by her in-laws because she did not have a male child. Human trafficking is rampant. Child labor and bonded labor exists in the state even today.

Communalism is there for all to see. Gujarat used to be called laboratory of Hindutva. Today it is the real thing from the proliferation of temples to the ascendancy of RSS.

Corruption is mainstreamed in the state; particularly nothing can be done without greasing the palms of those at the control wheels.

The environment is in shambles. The destruction of precious forest lands and biodiversity to cater to so-called development projects contribute immensely to the climate change.

The Adivasis, who constitute a sizeable section of the population of the state are denied their jal-jungle-zameen and other legitimate rights. Thousands of them are displaced because of mega projects like Narmada Dam, the Statue of Unity etc. Primary education in remote tribal villages is non-existent and so also medical-care; a large percentage of the tribals have to migrate to urban areas/other states in search of employments. They are exploited.

Minorities in Gujarat particularly the Muslims and Christian have been systematically targeted over

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OUR RESPONSE

FROM AHMEDABAD COMMUNITY

Synodality has become a reality to me as i work with the Apostolic Carmel society, Ahmedabad. I collaborate in the administration work, pre-primary school and spoken English for a group of students from marginalized community

It is a good experience to work and associate with the lay people and religious [of other congregation]. The creativity in teaching the tiny tots is challenging and inspiring, especially the way they treat and teach them, i am surprised that at this tender age they are taught about their environment and personal cleanliness, they teach how to use of mikes and be disciplined in their behaviour,.

In my process of dealing with them the students are helped to grow in self-reliance and motivate them towards abetter future.

This involvement challenges and strengthens me; I appreciate my community for giving me this opportunity.

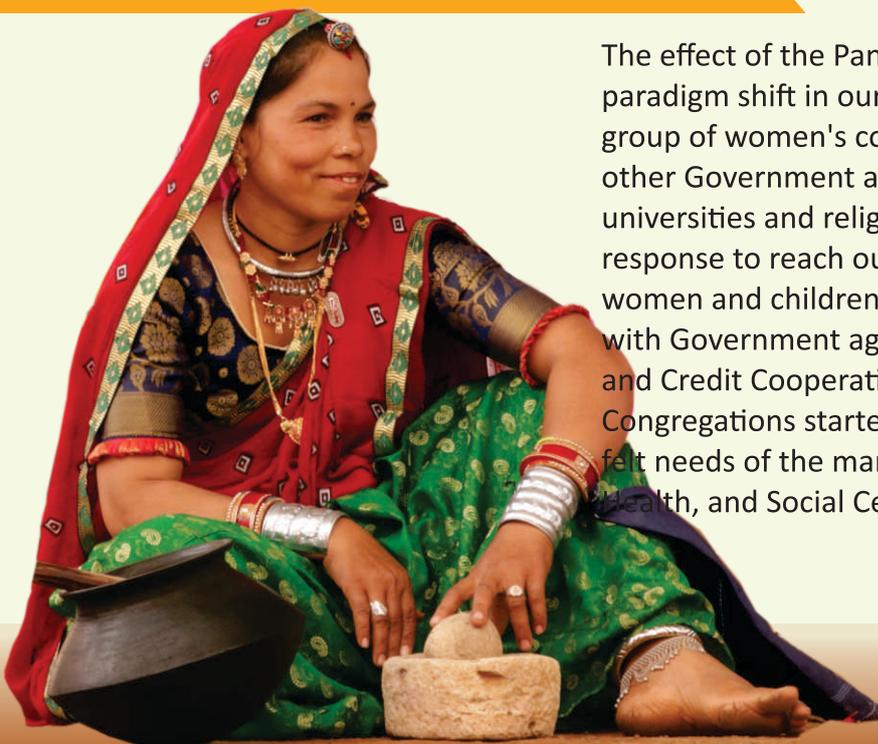
– by Carmen Gomes

As a community we in Ahmedabad responds to the situation, through education, and developmental work. Attending to students and accompanying them had been my mission over the past few years, I specially attend to the young men and women of St.Xavier's College. Besides counselling I take special care of the differently abled students. Over the years the number of such students seeking admission to the college has increased as the parents know that they are specially attended to in this college. It is a meaningful journey as students are eager to seek guidance. I note a marked change in the students, their trust and transparency inspires me.

When I look at the past few months the highlights have been identifying the differently abled students of the college after the reopening of the college post pandemic. Besides I have been able to induct some other students as volunteers who will help the differently abled students to read, write and even guide them when need be. A special programme was arranged-.'VISION IN THE DARK' TO SENSITISE the students to the reality and life of a visually impaired persons.The journey continues and I am happy to be enriched by the youth each day

– by Mary James

Gujarat Women's Cooperative Network



The effect of the Pandemic situation impelled us to have a paradigm shift in our approach to our current mission as a group of women's cooperatives. It motivated us to network with other Government agencies, forest departments, agricultural universities and religious congregations. It also triggered in us a response to reach out to the most marginalized group of women and children. New and innovative ways of networking with Government agencies and women connected with Savings and Credit Cooperatives run by 14 different religious Congregations started sharing resources in reaching out to the felt needs of the marginalized population through Cooperatives, Health, and Social Centers.

Our mission focuses on three main components

1. Twenty-six Cooperatives, have network with other Cooperatives by way of direct intervention to strengthen their capacity by providing support to each other and engaging in common advocacy programs.
2. Five Cooperatives and Health Centers have focus on social action.
3. Five Cooperatives have focus on livelihood generation programs.

THE HIGHLIGHTS OF LAST THREE MONTHS

The outreach program and its Impact:

1. Good Governance: Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP):

- Attend the Village meeting and Implementation of the Panchayat Budget work and Formulate the Scheme under GPDP EGramSwaraj
- The women received work and wages and create employment under NREGA. (National Rural Employment Guaranty Act)
- Health Program: Nutrition in Adolescent Women and their emotional needs, Change through Health Education.
- Under the PMJAY Card (Pradan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana) 9000 Beneficiary cards were allocated with the help of the Sarpanch. PHC & CHC (Primary Health Center & Community Health Center).

2. Livelihood-Networking with Krushi Vikash Kendra & Krushi Vikash University Intervention:

- Women received the different training on Organic agriculture practices like Crop diversity, Soil & Weed Management, The use of traditional farm tools.
- Reduction cost of cultivation
- Using the chemical free vegetables and grains





3. Social Interventions

- Focused on reproductive health and understanding of gender (boy-girl)
- The Cooperatives have provided incentives for women's education and higher education.
- Identified and systematically addressed the cases of domestic violence in different parts of Gujarat.

As we march forward towards living our Mission, we need to give quality time to constantly review our mission as our priority. We need to focus on self-awareness to know more about ourselves, and take steps to integrate our weaknesses and failures, and to seek direction and counsel, befriending and networking with others. We want to take seriously the call to acquire a discipline that can lead us towards integrity and effectiveness in reaching our goal.

- By Jacinta Canis

FROM TANKHLA COMMUNITY

Jagruti Kendra - Tanakhala mission started in Garudeshwer Taluka of Narmada district in 1984. They initiated their work among Bill Adivasis by providing Health services in remote villages of Garudeshwer Taluka, where Government Health Services failed to reach the tribal villages, working in the field of education by setting up remedial classes (giving tuition classes in villages) and started boarding facilities for promoting girl child education. Later on, they started working with tribal women in the field by forming Self Help Groups, and now it turned into a Cooperative Bank. Tanakhala community has 6 sisters, and each sister is in-charge of the mission entrusted to

them. We have integrated project of Health, Education, Socio-Economic development of women, Skilled Education-Tailoring etc. Community's spiritual experiences after the post Assembly: after the sharing of assembly documents, we as community together reflected and wrote the community project. We realised that there are many aspects that we need to look into and re-live. That is – 7 pallor's, and decalogue. We need to practice more listening, loving, accepting, forgiving and caring, which helps us to live our commitment. We share values of Jesus by living among our people, by listening and standing with them regardless of any discrimination.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR WORKS

HEALTH

we, have organized various seminars, trainings. Activities have been carried out with the help of Village Health Workers.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building for adolescent girls(Kishori), by Lopaben and other colleague from District Child Development Office. They gave an understanding of POSCO Act, (information of laws protecting children and their rights). 76 girls took part in this programme.

CARRIER GUIDANCE

Carrier Guidance programme for boys & girls, in which the information was given about the courses after 12th standard and about different universities of Gujarat. Around 78 boys & girls took part in it.

SEMINAR FOR MARRIED COUPLES

Sr. Mantserri Martorell, Mary Lopes, Prima, Christina Das, Louise Mary started a program for women who were having delayed child bearing. This special initiative impacted many couples and it continued even when the nurse sister was not present. It was marvellous to see from 2021 to 2022 , there were 12 women who delivered healthy babies and 5 others were pregnant. Almost 70 (35 couple) took part in it.

MALNAURISHED CHILDREN

Around 56 children came along with their parents to attend this program where Dr. Ashok explained about the reason, prevention of malnourishment. At the end of the seminar, we distributed multigrain for the children. We have decided to provide the grain for three months and then we will evaluate by checking their weight.



Two sisters are involved in the Pre-Primary School – Sr. Mary S'colaco and Sr. Tejana G Momin.

The school reopened in June 13. We have 30 admissions - 10 girls and 20 boys. Some national and religious feasts were celebrated. Raksha Bandhan explaining the meaning and value of brothers and sisters love. 15th of August a national feast. India's Independence Day. The chief guest was the senior citizen one of the students' grandfathers who is very active in the village and lots of interest in educating the girls. Senior children spoke a few words about the nation. Children sang the national anthem and saluted the flag. Sr. Mary spoke about the importance of education and thanked the parents.

We have 18 study centers in 18 villages on a regular basis. In each class we have 20 to 25 children. Regular tuition classes are carried out in the villages, by the teacher. Every month there is evaluation and planning done by the teachers and the sister in charge. Together with academic curriculum we have extra curriculum activities. Meeting with parents are held. Teachers' are given trainings. This month the training was held on new Education Policy of India. The progress of the children is monitored.

we have started the tailoring center after COVID-19 pandemic, heeding to the request from the women, since men have lost their jobs in towns and cities. We have a 4 months course. Every month we have 25 to 30 young girls for the tailoring course. We are blessed to have an excellent teacher to teach. A certificate is given to those who complete this training, this helps them to avail govet scheme such as getting sewing machine.

WOMEN'S COOPERATIVE

The Savings and Credit Cooperative and Narmada Mahila Manav Adhikar Manch (CBO)

The Nandod Adivasi Mahila Saving and Credit Cooperative Ltd, Gunetha" having 5500 members with deposit of 3 crores. The Women's Cooperative is known in villages as they have taken up economic and social issues. They have fought for the rights of the people and help to solved the problems. The cooperative worked on many local issues and helped to access government schemes such as widow pension, old age pension, scholarships, bus passes, disability certificates etc., the cooperative is successful in reaching around 25000 people, directly or indirectly.

August 23rd, we organized the Annual gathering of the cooperative, around 2000 women were present. We distributed the Mango and Coconuts plants to appreciate their work towards the society. The women have also registered the Prakrutik Farming cooperative too. Tankhala mission is collaborates with other Jesuits NGO which reaches out to over twenty fine thousand women in 8 districts of Gujarat, in the field of Socio-economic development.

- By Pratisksha Parmar, Mary D Coloco, Louise Mary,
Monica Tawares, Roshni Xalxo, Tejjani G Momin



DEVGADH MISSION (the Unit of Tanakhla)

The mission of Devgad (in South Gujarat) was taken up by us, the Missionaries of Christ Jesus on March 17th, 2017.

AIM AND VISION OF SCHOOL :

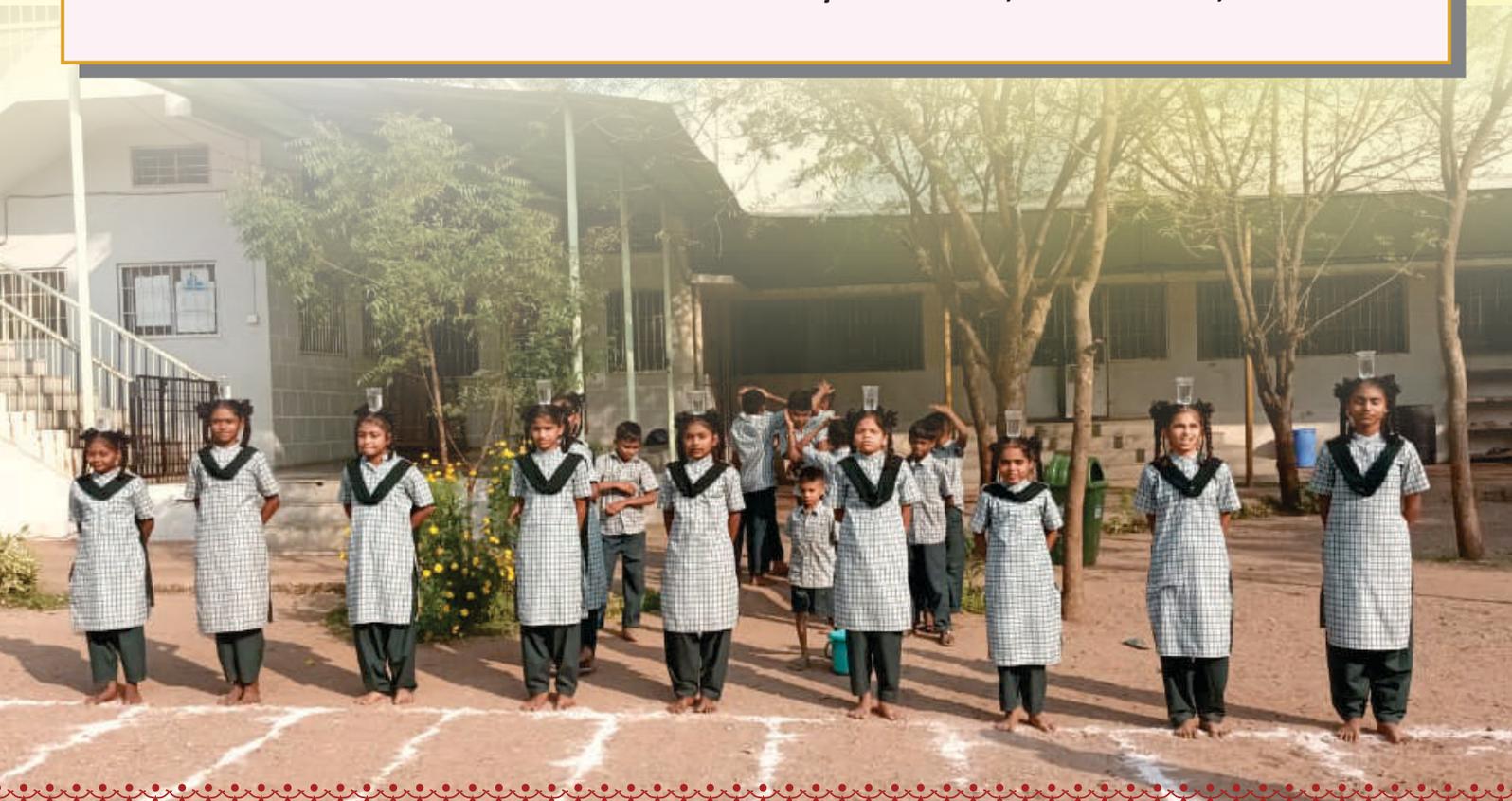
Catholic Church Zankhvav, looks forward to a collaborative venture in Educational apostolate between the Missionaries of Christ Jesus and the Society of Jesus, in running the Vanvihar Ashramshala, (Residential school) Devgad. The main aim of this collaborative venture is to work as a team for the Church in Gujarat, in the Diocese of Vadodara.

FAITH ASPECT :

We have Eucharistic celebration twice a week (Wednesday for the Sisters and Sundays with the Children). On Feast days and special occasions, we join in the parish and villages for the Eucharistic celebration. We also share our joy with the staffs and the religious celebrating our feast (14th March), Christmas etc. Hence we take the opportunity to inculcate the Catholic faith in the hearts of the little children as they are with us right from their early age. We collaborate in the Church Activities held during summer and Diwali holidays. Such as catechism, summer camp etc. Our presence in this mission has been effective in every aspect.

Integrating ourselves with the people we collaborate in various celebration. In the School we celebrated International Indigenous people day with great joy and enthusiasm which shows our unity with the people. The month of September was declared as Rastriya Poshan Maah (National Nutrition month) by the government, where we had various activities related to health. The Children and the staff collaborated with great interest.

- By Amrita Julie, Gloria Kerketa, Sutha Sauvari





A word of gratitude to Priyanka and Roshni for rendering their whole hearted service to Gujarat. We wish them God's blessing as they take up their new assignments.

Hearty Welcome to Sutha, Tejjana, and Teresa Lopes to MCJ family of Gujarat

