

2010 PPI Project Trip Report

I visited Vikasana's "Sustainable Agriculture" project at villages near Tarikere on Feb 16th and Chintana Foundation's "One child/100 trees" project at schools near Ajjampura, on Feb 17th. Chaya and my sister Shanti were on this trip.

Also went to Mysore on Feb 21st to see Pragathi's "Low cost housing construction" project. All the three projects are in Karnataka.

I did give a copy of our guidelines for the Carbon credit project to Vikasana, Chintana Foundation and Pragathi. I emphasized the need for detailed monitoring of each tree planting. They said they review the guidelines in detail and make proper proposals. Vikasana showed me a model of the smokeless Chula they have used. I have included a photo of it. Their proposal may include this also.

Here is my trip report.

Sustainable Agriculture, VIKASANA, Tarikere, Karnataka:

First, we went to the office at Tarikere where Mr. Varghees made a presentation of the PPI project updates for 2009. The work they have done is quite exemplary. He has given me a CD of his presentation. I'll download it and send it separately.

We visited farmer meetings at Kodihalli village first and then Aarehalli village with stops to see the work in the fields. Vikasana's main mode of work on sustainable agriculture is multi-fold. The farmer training involves; vermi compost and normal compost pits, azola cultivation, jeevamrutha (organic pesticide) preparation, wall writing on the village walls describing the benefits, livestock management and community seed bank for the farmers. There were about 30 farmers from four villages nearby and their families at the meeting. They seemed to be quite enthused about having converted to organic farming and are eager to get their certificates after three years of organic cultivation. Vikasana had made several large welded metal containers for storing grains. They made me donate these containers to the farmers. We also saw a couple of farmer's fields where they had implemented all the aspects of sustainable agriculture. The second field we saw is almost a model farm of 4 acres owned by farmer Rajappa and his wife Deviramma which had vermin-compost and normal compost pits, azola pit, organic pesticide all in a close nearby area of the sustainable farming field.

At the end of day, we stopped by the orphanage bridge school for about 100 kids that Vikasana is running with funding from a German group and Asha of Seattle.

One Child/100 Trees Project, Chintana Foundation, Ajjampura, Karnataka:

On Feb 17th, we went Ajjampura to see the progress at the Channapura school site. First, we went to the school where the school officials welcomed us and the children entertained with some songs. Then we went to the project site, where the plants are two school owned sites with proper stone/wire fencing. All the plantings looked healthy and haven't taken root. Building the tank and making arrangements for watering during the summer months really helped in surviving the plants. Fenced walls on both sides of

the road, has helped in protecting the plants. The schools officials are very proud of what has been accomplished so far. They have another 2 acres of land nearby the school and want to use it to plant fruit trees to generate some income for the school. Channappa wants to take this as this year's activity for our project. They will fence the site and ensure adequate water for the plants during the initial period. There is considerable interest in Chintana Foundation to expand the project to other schools. I told him to complete the current project first and then propose a new project for other schools.

Then, we went to Karadipura village school which has about 25 kids mainly from the lambani tribe. Since the school has a good supply of water, a keen staff and a large track of land, Mr. Channappa chose this school. They have planted about 1300 plants and most of them have taken root. The teachers and kids have taken ownership of the plants and water the plants daily.

Low Cost Housing Construction Training Project, PRAGATHI, Mysore, Karnataka:

I visited Mr. Sharanappa of PRAGATHI, Mysore on Feb 22nd. We went to the tribal kids orphanage school near outskirts of Mysore, where the hydraulic brick making machine is being installed. My concern about the progress of our project was relieved when I saw what has been done so far. He has acquired the MEC 10600 Hydraulic Press machine, a concrete mixer, power supply, a larger 25KVA transformer and a Kirloskar diesel generator and after months of haggling with the city electricity board officials, he has finally been able to get the power for the machines. The generator was donated by a well wisher when he saw the work plan in progress. Since power cutoff is most a daily feature here, having a back up generator will come handy. He has poured a large area about 60'x80' feet to prepare and store the bricks. He is waiting for the electric meter installation and should be able to start the training work soon with the older kids from the orphanage and other tribal youth. The bricks made by the kids will be utilized to build the walls of a solid brick building at the orphanage for about 100 kids. This way, the tribal kids will learn to make the bricks and also use it in construction. The foundation for rooms, kitchen, dining and prayer hall has been completed with support from a French organization. They now have about 42 girls and 30 boys at the orphanage. He is building about 10 rooms (20'x25' size) and is looking for donors to fund construction of the rooms. Each room will cost about 2 lakhs. In return, the donors will have their names and photos on the walls. Mr. Sharanappa plans to also use these bricks to help build more secure homes for tribals in their respective villages. In the long run, this will become an income generating unit for Pragathi, Orphanage and provide economic support to the tribal youth.