

Expanding the project area

The urge to extend our village work to those in need is compelling as we are faced with the vulnerable realities of the people around. Maximum effort is done to reach out to more people. I suppose this is what many of us would do in the same situation !

In the year 2016, our field staff have taken up another 7 neighboring villages in the region of *Dugawar* to work for it's integrated development. The approximate population of these 7 villages are around 30 thousand. The living condition of these villagers, like in other villages around, is very poor, many of them live with a small piece of land or without even that, on odd jobs if they have one.

Making our way into new villages

As most of you may know, initially Anthony's Bread's field staff started working in few villages and each subsequent year, we have



been adding up few more *neighbouring* villages. Currently we are in 30 villages in the region of *Dugawar* within a population of more than 150,000 people. We work for the economic and social development of the entire villages, especially for the poorest of the poor. We focus on healthcare, adult education, sending all the children specially girl children to the existing local schools, empowerment of women, gender equality etc. All these initiatives have a big impact on the quality of life in the entire village.

Our coordinators are on the lookout to find suitable candidates to extend this program to the neighboring villages. We have employed few young women from the locality, who have done some schooling and seemed to be interested to work for the development of the villages. Though they started with a good will, it was difficult for them to make a difference in these villages and become successful.

So, our next step was to train the leaders of the group with whom we have been working for more than 5 years and make them more independent, so that they can work for their own development in their own villages. This participatory approach seem to work better.

Resource personals are invited to conduct training in Saint Anthony's School Dugawar.



Empowerment programs

Self help group consist of 11 to 12 members. Out of these 12 women, three are elected as president, vice-president and accountant. They are in-charge of manag-

Providing skills to women and educating their girls bring development in the whole society.



Village work done in 2016

Around 3000 women are part of the micro-credit program in the 30 villages in our *Dugawar* project. The total investment of this entire group since the beginning comes around 125 thousand euros. Each year, women take loans and do different income generation activities. In 2016 around 600 members have taken loans from the group (inter-lending) and from the bank to start income generation programs.

If anybody wants to take a bigger amount which is beyond the capacity of the group for inter-lending, the group pass a resolution to approach the bank.

Our vocational training centre plays a vital role in the economic empowerment of women. Many skill training programs were conducted throughout the year. After learning new skills, they take a loan and start up new income generation activities. Most of the women have joined hands with their husband and started new businesses locally. Many of them have also invested in improving their living condi-

ing the meetings, keeping the records and accounts.

Our coordinators and resource persons conduct training programs to empower the leaders and teach them to organise meetings and village works efficiently. After a period of observation, when they become efficient, our field staff withdraw from the group and they are on their own. However, our staff will still make surprise visits and reach them on request. The coordinators of the program bring many of these group leaders together to discuss and share their experience as well. This way they get more and more motivated and empowered. Normally they are very happy to gather together on different occasions and work together on a selected theme to improve the living condition of their villages.

Since many of these groups started to manage the programs efficiently, we have the possibility to extend our program to more villages.

Our coordinators help to make SHG groups and visit them in the villages to provide guidance as needed.





Today, *Bhagwati* has a better life. Thanks to the SHG's loan, she created a small business and can sustain her family and educate the children.

tions like making flush toilets, educating their children and improving their agricultural land. The success story of each woman is an inspiration for others and it is a challenge for them to do their best. They discover their own hidden talents in this process and lead a happier life !

Meet Bhagwati & Satish !

Satish with his wife *Bhagwati* and their four children live in the village *Asmoli*. They live in the house of *Satish's* parents along with

Satish's brother and his family and his widowed sister and her son. There are 13 of them under this same roof. However each of these families has a separate room with a kitchen.

Satish's father did not own any land and he made his living by selling snacks in the local markets. *Satish* also followed his fathers footsteps. When *Satish* had his family growing, it was almost impossible for him to sustain his wife and children with his income.

Like most of the women who have been struggling to find a way out, *Bhagawati* also

On market days, after school, *Satish's* children go to help their father.



joined the micro-credit program run by *Anthony's Bread*. She found herself in a better place to listen and to share her problems with other 11 members of this group each week. In November 2014, she took a loan of 40 thousand rupees (600 euros) to start a new cosmetic shop.

She used part of this money to build a small shop attached to their house. In 6 months time, she found her small business taking off. She had an income of 4 thousand rupees after paying back her monthly loan. Eventually she did a tailoring training in the vocational centre in the St. Anthony's School of *Dugawar* and also bought a tailoring machine and started her tailoring work also in this shop. Her good rapport with the customers helped her to pick up this work as well. Now she is earning Rs.7000 per month !

Bhagwati is spending a part of her income to send all her children to the local schools. She dreams about her children having a better future. She knows well that if her children finish their secondary school, they can join the Industrial training Centre of our organization and get a diploma and make a living with a professional job !

Uttar Pradesh election

India is a federal constitutional republic governed under a parliamentary system consisting of 29 states and 7 union territories. Parliamentary election at national level and State assembly election at State level is held each five years.

Uttar Pradesh is India's most populous state with more than 222 million people. If it were a separate country, it would be the fifth largest in the world, after China, India, US and Indonesia. The State assembly election has been held in seven phases from 11 February to 8 March 2017. The districts of *Moradabad*, *Amroha* and *Sambhal*, where our project area is situated held the election on 11th Feb.

During the election days, the government request our school building for providing accommodation to the election security guard. School vehicles are also taken for election

work. This time more than 200 security forces stayed in the primary school for three days.

Caste has a very major role to play in *Uttar Pradesh's* politics as most of the people have been illiterate. The voters used to vote to the party which gives benefits to their caste. The ruling party dominant are from the *Dalits* and *Yadav* castes (backward casts) which forms the majority of the population. However, slowly the scenario is changing, there is a strong demand to get better education, security and better life.



More than 200 soldiers camped in the school for three days...

