

ACB News Quarterly magazine - n'77 4th quarter 2022

« Educating the children for a better world »



Missing Land in Jadwar

In the Newsletter 74 we had mentioned that we will try our best to welcome children in the new St. Anthony's School of Jadwar by July 2022. It was possible if everything went to our plan. While buying land for our first two projects in the villages of Dugawar and Rahrai, we faced lot of difficulties because there were multiple owners. In Jadwar, it went smoothly because the land had only one owner. However, when we started preparing the building plans, we realized that around 1000 m² were missing compared to the data written on the sale documents. As per our request, the local authority measured the neighboring lands and reported that our missing land was in fact in the possession of our neighbors.

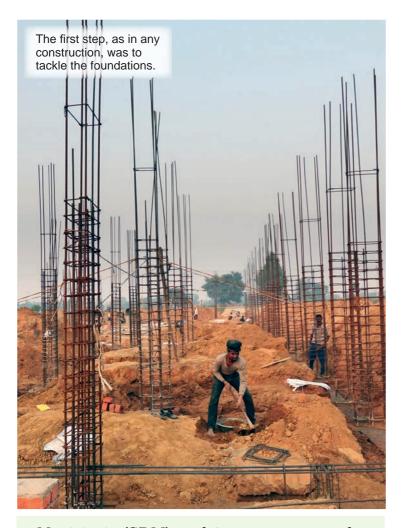
How did it happen? People from the cities buy lands from the villagers for a very low price as an investment and when a main road is build in front by the government, they sell the lands for a high price. Meanwhile, these lands are given on lease for cultivation. This situation is exploited by the neighbors encroaching the land. The owner from whom we bought the land never even noticed the missing part.

For us it is very important to get the full land as we need enough surface for the future school playground so we filed a complaint to get the missing land. We had been behind the officers recklessly to move the file from one table to other. *Molly Sebastian* personally went to meet the advocate and the *Sub-District Magistrate* in July and he promised to speed up the process.

Our first concern was to properly demarcate the land we purchased for the school.

We also met the neighbors and explained to them that our missing land might be in their possession. They agreed to measure their land and promised to return our part but when all the officials came for the land demarcation, they objected to the measuring. The *Patwari*, who is the person in charge of the land demarcation informed the *Sub District*

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Magistrate (SDM) and to our surprise, he came immediately! He explained the situation to the neighbors, that the land had to go back to the real owner. He stayed on the spot and ordered to measure the land in his presence and demarcate it with fences. Knowing the nature of our work and our organization, he himself was determined to get it done there and then. This process could have taken even years in a normal case. We are really grateful to the SDM for his support.

Our next step was even more delicate, to convert this agricultural land into « commercial » land because school building falls under that category. Laws concerning agricultural lands are fast changing and recently this process has become more difficult. The district authorities have the power to sanction it or refuse it on certain conditions. This situation is often exploited. With much negotiation, we got this work also done. While this process went on, we got ready the groundwork for the building construction. By the end of October all the paper works were cleared and we were ready for the construction.

The worksite in action

In *Jadwar*, the main electric line is passing by the side of the main road and to avail electricity for our construction, we had to install a transformer with the capacity of 25 KVA. The cost of the transformer including its installation was around 5.000 Euro.

Many villagers have personal tube wells installed. Most of the time these wells are very swallow, just touching the ground water level ranging from 20 m to 40 m. In order to provide better quality water for the children of the new *Saint-Anthony's School*, the depth of our well has brought down to 90 m, until it reached the rock. The cost of this tube wells installation came around 1.000 Euro.

All four sides of the land are open and it was advisable to have a compound wall all around. Taking into account of the budget needed for the construction of the upcoming school, we limited the compound wall only at the back side which is really necessary and we plan to have some fencing done for the other sides. It cost us around 10.000 Euro to finish the wall at the back and to make a storage room at the side of it.

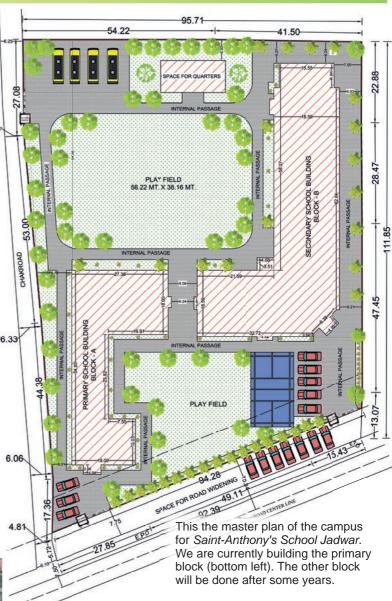
The building is supported by pillar structure and the foundation work for the whole primary block is now at the final stage. The speed of the work depends on the materials made available on time to the contractor. Most



of the labours come from the neighboring villages. At night watchman is staying at the site. After the completion of the foundation, work will be concentrated on the administrative block and few classrooms for children from nursery to class primary one (3 to 7 years old). We hope to start classes from July 2023. The remaining work will be continued gradually.

The total covered area of the primary block will be around 3.000 m² and the estimate for one square meter is 12.000 rupees. The total amount for the completion of this three-floor building comes around 400.000 Euro. It has 27 classrooms and three administrative rooms and has the capacity to accommodate around 1.200 students. The construction work is given on labour contract, it means that we pay only the labour charges and the materials are provided to the contractors directly by us. This way, we can directly supervise the cost and quality of the materials delivered and used. We hired the same contractor as the school of *Rahrai*.





Staff Residence for Rahrai

We had mentioned in the past that two classrooms in the school of *Rahrai* have been converted into a residence for the lady teachers. At the moment, around 10 staff members are residing there.

We need to find a more permanent solution because we require more classrooms in the near future and also the strenght of our staff is growing. Recently we have appointed a new principal. She will soon be shifting to the school campus with her husband who is also a teacher and their two kids, aged 1 and 4.

For these reasons, we plan to create a separate building. We are still at the early stage of plan design.

The school will have calsses up to 9 next academic year. We are preparing the administration work for the affiliation from the Central Board (CBSE).

Le témoignage de Corentin

Je m'appelle Corentin Baar, j'ai eu la chance d'être adopté de l'Inde par une famille belge provenant de la région de Spa.

Via l'intermédiaire d'une personne qui m'est proche, j'ai eu la possibilité de rencontrer Molly il y a maintenant 2 années lors d'un passage à Bruxelles. Cette même personne m'a invité à visiter l'école Saint-Antoine en Inde dans le nord de New Delhi. en Uttar Pradesh.

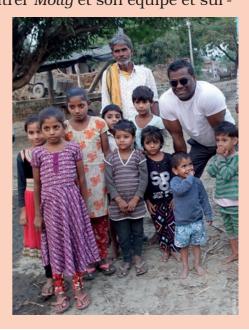
Suite à une première visite en décembre 2021, j'ai pu me rendre compte du travail incroyable que Molly et son équipe ont entrepris depuis tant d'années. Des enfants depuis le plus jeune âge jusqu'à l'âge adulte, bénéficiant pour les aînés de



formation à un métier, c'était vraiment intéressant pour moi de visiter cette école et de pouvoir comparer avec d'autres que j'avais pu visiter dans mon passé en Inde.

J'ai été particulièrement impressionné par la gentillesse des professeurs rencontrés lors de mon premier passage. Il y a une ambiance d'école, mais aussi un besoin ressenti de faire de ces enfants de jeunes adultes travailleurs, ce qui n'est malheureusement pas toujours le cas en Inde.

Je suis retourné à l'école en novembre dernier afin de rencontrer Molly et son équipe et surtout de pouvoir avoir la chance de découvrir le lieu de leur future nouvelle école. Au milieu de nombreux villages, pour moi la situation géographique est intéressante, car là-bas, nous parlons de villages très pauvres, remplis d'enfants de tout âge. La nécessité et surtout la chance de voir une école à côté de leur domicile, est plus qu'immense, car il est clair qu'au milieu de ces villages en pleine campagne, ces enfants n'auraient aucune chance de pouvoir un jour étudier et même de prétendre à un travail hors celui d'être fermiers et encore! Ces enfants auraient été voués à la misère, la pauvreté tant financière qu'intellectuelle. Ce nouveau projet que Molly et son équipe entreprennent est à la fois magique, mais tellement nécessaire pour des dizaines de villages aux alentours, car ils sortiront progressivement de la réelle misère qui est encore trop oubliée et même inconnue de beaucoup en Inde. Comme expliqué, je crois, vraiment que ce projet va « sauver » toute une région autour de cette future école, bravo à eux!





As the new school building comes up, the people in *Jadwar* region see their future in making. It is possible because of you. We sincerely thank each of you for your trust and continued support. We pray for your good health, happiness and God's blessings on you! Let your Christmas be filled with Peace and Joy that stay with you and your dear ones throughout the new Year 2023!