

## Vision Statement

**Empowering children to reach their dreams**



## Mission Statement

**The Nareshwadi Learning Centre nourishes the physical, intellectual, emotional as well as spiritual development of each child by providing an innovative education, caring home environment and fostering community involvement.**

Girivanvasi Educational Trust - Nareshwadi Learning Centre  
At Nareshwadi, Post Dundhalwadi, Taluka Dahanu 401606 District Thane

Phone: +91 02528 266184 Mobile: +91 99754 94211, 99754 94212

Email: [gvnet@somaiya.edu](mailto:gvnet@somaiya.edu). [www.nareshwadi.org](http://www.nareshwadi.org)



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## **1 Executive Summary**

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Girivanvasi Educational Trust (GVET) was founded by Padmabhushan Karamshi J Somaiya in 1991. It was his dream to provide quality education to the tribal community of Dahanu Taluka, Thane District. Post monsoon families would migrate for 8 months in the year returning in May to cultivate their meagre land holdings. Karamshibhai developed residential facilities for girls and boys to encourage parents to admit their children in school. Its campus is known as the Nareshwadi Learning Centre (NLC), an educational hub providing holistic education integrated with vocational training and healthcare for children on campus. In 2011 GVET partnered with the Women's Empowerment International Foundation (WEIF) to strengthen NLC's activities. WEIF facilitated support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to expand access to education and vocational training, health awareness in the community, village improvement activities to curb migration and establish small environment friendly ventures for NLC's sustainability. The project, **Yuvak - Apna Bhavishya (Youth - Our Future)** is designed as an intervention to improve the quality of life of the tribal communities of Dahanu Taluka.

The CIDA Project, as it is known, gives impetus to building the capacity of NLC teachers, who were trained in 2012 by the Rishi Valley Institute of Educational Resources (RIVER) in activity-based and project-based learning methodologies. They have adapted these approaches to teaching in the classroom. During the year, extra classes were held before and after school for additional practice. Students participated in inter-schools science competitions and won awards at the taluka (block) level. Infrastructure improvements were carried out in the General Hostel where girls and boys have separate residences. Construction of the dedicated Girls' Hostel progressed well as did the construction of the new school building. Children participated in sporting events and brought laurels in athletics in the inter-schools competitions at the divisional and state levels. More school children and unemployed village youth were enrolled in the Vocational Education & Training Centre (VETC) than the previous year.

Under the CIDA Project GVET engaged with students, teachers, and community members to implement the Yuvak Apna Bhavishya Project. Highlights are

- construction of the hostel for 250 girls progressed well. Bunk beds and linen were provided to 33% children living on campus
- teachers use improved teaching-learning methodologies and developed projects with children
- gender issues were discussed by teachers in class and through school events
- Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes were started in 8 villages with 144 children (54% girls and 46% boys) and training for the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch commenced with 9 trainees
- training for the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of 9 healthcare workers, with 8 girls and 1 boy, commenced in July 2013



- vocational training was imparted to 204 school children (124 girls and 80 boys), 25% over last year
- skill training was imparted to 127 village youth ((61 girls and 66 boys) registering 53% increase over last year
- 232 school children were trained in vegetable cultivation (104 girls and 128 boys) during the year producing 916 kg vegetables on 6000 square feet in the School Farm; the produce was used in the school kitchen for the children's meals
- Nareshwadi Ventures was set-up and 8 cows purchased during the year. A new wood shaping machine was added to the Warli art section and an over lock machine to the garment making section
- the 12<sup>th</sup> and last bore well was installed in Shetpada (Gadchincla) for clean drinking water. Last year we reported the installation of 11 bore wells
- 212 women farmers were provided with vegetable, mango, jasmine and marigold seeds and saplings and water storage drums. None of the women migrated during the year as they did before.

GVET's activities under the Village Improvement Programme (VIP) triggered the Gram Panchayat (GP) into repairing defunct bore wells, building approach roads and also providing 272 farmers with grants to build brick houses. As an outcome of the success of the VIP in Divshi and Gadchincla WEIF organised funding support for GVET from Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics to start the VIP in Village Ghadne in the Group Gram Panchayat of Bahare, 6 km from NLC. Three *padas* were selected in consultation with the community and the first batch comprised 102 women.

NLC as an education hub is attracting students from the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB) who are interested in engaging with GVET to provide solutions to the problems faced by the tribal community from inefficient cooking stoves to malnutrition. Students and teachers from foreign schools and universities such as Dowdales School, Cumbria, UK and Cornell University, USA showed interest in choosing NLC for student and teacher visits. NLC discussed plans to collaborate with Somaiya Vidyavihar and IITB to undertake environment friendly appropriate technology and energy saving initiatives and water conservation measures.

We received generous monetary support during the year towards the living and schooling expenses of our children and towards infrastructure development.



## **2 Message from GVET Trustee and Chairman Samir Somaiya**

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The Girivanvasi Education Trust (GVET) was created to help deliver the education mission of the Girivanvasi Pragati Mandal. Our founder, Shri K. J. Somaiya wanted to do much for the upliftment of the tribal community, and he did much in many parts of India. But Dahanu in Maharashtra, was the place where he decided to create a center, to focus on the upliftment in terms of education, healthcare, and livelihoods. His mission was carried forward by his son, Dr. S. K. Somaiya.

We are proud to be carrying on his mission.

GVET today has 671 students (371 boys and 300 girls) studying with us until the 10th standard, of which 449 are residents. Our students have been doing well, in spite of coming from difficult circumstances, and being mainly first generation learners. Our school currently teaches until the 10th standard, but we are considering whether we can provide education until the 12th.

We are part of the organizations managed and supported by the Somaiya Group, and have an active association with Somaiya Vidyavihar and K. J. Somaiya Medical Trust. Two of our students enrolled in the 11th standard there, and will be housed there, with a full scholarship that includes housing and food. Somaiya Vidyavihar is planning to construct new housing, some rooms of which, will be dedicated to students coming from rural and underprivileged backgrounds, especially those coming from our and our sister institutions. This will help those students who want to pursue education at Somaiya Vidyavihar, through which a wide spectrum of choices are available.

But education is not only about going to the city. It is about making all choices available to the students. In that vein, our program to integrate vocational education, as well as encourage Warli art and handicraft is doing very well. We believe that our students must be able to pursue livelihoods in a variety of fields, and also have pride in their language, culture, and art. Our students and teachers have even created an iPad book, that celebrates Warli art, culture, music and stories, and will be published soon. This has enabled our students to see, that their art and life, can be integrated into modern technology.

Education also has to be holistic, and we have recently appointed teachers in sports and music. Our teachers have also learned from Rishi Valley School.

Our program to provide Jasmine plants, so that families can earn additional income from the cultivation of Jasmine flowers, has also done well. Most families are now earning Rs. 200 per day, from the harvest of about 2 kg of Jasmine daily. We have also provided them mango saplings, so that in time, they have a further source of income.

We are grateful for the support we have received from CIDA, and from Nargis Jamal, of the Women's Empowerment International Foundation, who really helped us, take our initiatives forward. We also thank others such as Cognizant Technology Solutions, Youth for People and individual well wishers.

Samir Somaiya





### 3 Introduction

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GVET's school was started by Karamshibhai in 1983 in a small shack in Nareshwadi with 7 children. He would drive up from Mumbai 2 days in a week reaching early in the morning to be with the children and personally supervise their education. In 1991 he founded GVET and expanded the school all the way to the 10<sup>th</sup> std. Despite failing health he would spend time with the children and ensure Nareshwadi grew into a vibrant educational campus. GVET's campus, Nareshwadi Learning Centre (NLC), comprises a primary and secondary school with 671 children, student hostels, a Children's Home (Balgruh) for destitute children, the school farm, the school health centre and the vocational education and training centre (VETC). Dahanu Taluka in Thane District is a tribal belt of Warli, Kokani, Katkari and Dodhi communities, mostly marginal farmers with low literacy levels, where women and men work as migrant labour in nearby towns for most of the year.

After monsoons, entire families move to nearby industrial towns for work. Trapped in chronic poverty, the children are the most hit as malnourishment and chronic illness lowers their chance of even reaching primary school. With no means to feed their children, leave alone put them through formal education; parents take the children to their place of work, thus missing out on school making them vulnerable in unfamiliar surroundings. Older children often work with their parents to generate additional income or are left behind to tend to their siblings. One fifth of NLC's children are from Divshi and Gadchincla Villages, 45 km from Nareshwadi where GVET implements the Village Improvement Programme with Canadian support. Activities focus on improving the economic conditions of these families through the mothers of our children to curb migration.





#### **4 Partnerships and Support**

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Several organizations and individuals generously contributed to funding GVET's activities. Mainly, K J Somaiya Trust and the K J Somaiya & Sons Pvt Ltd without whose support it would have been extremely difficult to meet the escalating living and schooling expenses of 671 children. These 2 organisations have been a pillar of strength every year because of which it is possible for GVET to continue providing quality education to the children of the tribal communities in Dahanu. Samir Somaiya and the K.J.Somaiya (Delhi) Trust contributed to the construction of the new school building along with the Community Initiatives Program and Women's Empowerment International Foundation, Canada.

As in previous years the employees of the Somaiya Group generously contributed one day's salary during the Mumbai Marathon 2014. The Department of Woman and Child Development (DWCD), Government of Maharashtra partially supported the costs of running the Balgruh. Cognizant Technology Solutions Pvt Ltd supported the salaries of 3 teachers for the Focused Learning Initiative (FLI). There are several individuals who contributed small but valuable sums and others who gave of their time towards meeting the needs of our children. GVET looks forward to collaborating with individuals and organizations that shares its values and philosophy.



## **5 School and General Hostel**

### **5.1 Enrolment**

The school year of 2013-14 had a 14% increase in school enrolment as in the previous year, with 671 children. Overall girls' enrollment was 45%. Of the 300 girls 202 live on campus and the rest are day scholars. Table 1 below gives disaggregated data for the year.

**Table 1 School Disaggregated Data 2013-2014**

Std	ENROLMENT			DAY SCHOLARS			HOSTEL RESIDENTS		
	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
1	21	25	46	7	5	12	15	20	35
2	27	25	52	11	15	26	15	10	25
3	30	19	49	8	5	13	22	14	36
4	21	24	45	6	6	12	16	18	34
5 (A)	29	16	45	13	6	19	0	0	0
5 (B)	29	15	44	11	6	17	33	19	52
6(A)	26	20	46	10	12	22	0	0	0
6 (B)	24	22	46	7	3	10	34	27	61
7	29	33	62	3	5	8	26	28	54
8 (A)	30	18	48	15	6	21	0	0	0
8 (B)	29	18	47	14	7	21	31	22	53
9(A)	20	19	39	4	7	11	0	0	0
9 (B)	22	16	38	8	9	17	29	19	48
10	34	30	64	8	5	13	26	25	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>449</b>
<b>2012-13</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>435*</b>

\* Note: 2 children dropped out because of illness

Teachers encourage students to undertake simple projects. Cognizant donated a LCD projector which is used to show children educational videos from the internet. Teachers also used additional resources such as Arvind Gupta's website ([www.arvindguptatoys.com](http://www.arvindguptatoys.com)) from 5<sup>th</sup> standard onwards to make simple projects. Arvind Gupta's site was much accessed as children enjoyed making his simple toys. Teachers explained the principles on which the toys are based so children could better understand the principles. The image on the right shows the delight on the child's face. Teachers also accessed Cornell University's website <http://www.cns.cornell.edu/cipt/> as advised by Samir Somaiya for improving science teaching.





Children participated in inter-schools science competitions held by the taluka (block) education authorities and won prizes for their entries. Their project on water harvesting in buildings won the 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the inter-schools science competition held by Cognizant. A team of school teachers and doctoral students from Cornell University visited NLC in February 2014. They showed the teachers and students simple projects to enhance their understanding of basic concepts in biology, chemistry and physics..



## **5.2 Gender integration**

Prior to the start of the academic year, NLC plans the number of girls and boys to be admitted to the hostel and the school. Over the past 5 years, girls' enrolment has doubled from 22% to 45% in 2013-14. The overall enrolment of girls in school is analyzed each year, as well as the enrolment for each standard and admissions planned accordingly. Student performance is analyzed at semester examinations to observe how girls and boys perform on each subject. For staff appointments, all things being equal, NLC gives preference to women from local tribal communities. NLC remunerates female and male staff equally based on their job profile and has an open reward system based on merit. NLC encourages women staff (not living on campus) to rejoin after maternity leave by providing facilities to bring their babies to work accompanied by a relative. Women thus have an equal opportunity to continue working even after starting a family.

## **5.3 Innovative teaching-learning methodologies**



All teachers were trained at RIVER in 2012 in using activity-based and project-based innovative teaching-learning methodologies. Two new teachers were sent to RIVER for training in December 2013. Likewise, all teachers participated in 3 workshops conducted by the Maharashtra Dyslexia Association (MDA)

to understand the needs of children with learning disabilities. Teachers report that the children are now more engaged in the learning

process and classroom time is enjoyable for the children and for teachers as there is no stress to complete the syllabus from the text book but to impart concepts that the child needs to learn in the respective standard. NLC's Focused Learning Initiative (FLI), discussed below, also had a positive impact in developing a strong foundation in language and math. As reported in

the last Annual Report the FLI methodology uses poems and stories from the local Warli language. It helps children transit easily to learning Marathi which is the medium of instruction of the school. The annual assessment for 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standard showed progress in language and math. This peer teacher assessment is done mid-term and end term and is correlated with the results obtained in the 1<sup>st</sup> term and final examination as assessed by the respective class teachers. The FLI class is conducted for 2 hours every day prior to regular school and has helped the class teacher when using RIVER methodologies.

NLC encourages its teachers to participate in activities that strengthen a holistic approach to teaching-learning. Mahesh Mahale, English teacher of the senior school was selected by the British Council among a select few English teachers in Maharashtra, for further in-service training over a one year period in teaching English to non English speaking children. In May 2013 GVET sent 2 staff (1 female and 1 male) for the 1 month gender training in Visthar. In December 2013, 2 staff participated in the workshop on gender sensitization. NLC's Gender Group (GG) now comprises 4 male and 1 female staff trained by Visthar for one month on Gender Diversity and Social Transformation, accredited by the Xavier Institute of Social Services (XISS), Ranchi, Jharkhand. The GG with Prasad Gokhale as the Point Person conducted the gender attitude survey for students of 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standard, the ECE, HC and VETC trainees. Most respondents felt that both girls and boys should have equal opportunities for education and employment. However, when it came to child rearing most felt that women are better suited for this role. The GG held a debate in class on the responses with children discussing for and against selected topics such as, "A woman should only go out of the house with her father's or husband's prior permission" and "Boys should eat more food than girls as they need to be strong when they grow up". These topics were hotly debated. Students said that this seemed to be the practice in other places but not in their community as they believed women and men are equal.

An event was organized from January 3 to 26, 2014 under the leadership of teacher Nikita Patil (trained by Visthar) to celebrate the pioneering spirit of Savitribai Phule to highlight gender equality in education and social practice. Savitribai was born on January 3 1831 and was taught to read and write by her husband, the great Indian reformer and leader. She was nine years old when she married him and he was thirteen. She opened the first school for girls in Pune, India, in 1848. NLC children from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> drew *rangolis* to depict women's position in India. Julia Nucci of Cornell University judged the winners.

#### **5.4 Vocational Training**

Vocational training progressed well with an increase in the number of school children as well as village youth learning various skills. Besides training in the VETC children also learnt vegetable cultivation, dairy and



vermiculture on the School Farm. The table below shows the number of children and village youth enrolled during the year. On completing the course trainees are issued certificates by the K J Somaiya Polytechnic under the Community Polytechnic scheme.

Right – Village youth learn Warli painting.

**Table 2- Disaggregated data of school children and village youth trained in VETC in various courses and obtaining certificates in 2013-14**

Village Youth Trained					Certificates given		Total certificates
	Course	Total	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
1	Computer	40	18	22	02	06	08
2	Plumbing	04	0	04	0	4	04
3	Garment Making	33	29	04	08	0	08
4	Warli Painting	12	02	10	0	0	0
	Total	89	49	40	10	10	20
	Ongoing - will complete in April 2014	38	12	26			
	Total trained in 13-14	127	61	66			
	Total trained in 2012-13	83	43	40			
	% increase over 12-13	53%	42%	65%			
School Children Trained							
	Course		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
1	Computer	62	34	28	17	15	32
2	Plumbing	32	16	16	0	14	14
3	Garment Making	37	37	0	0	0	0
	Total	131	87	44	17	29	46
	Ongoing will complete in April 2014	73	37	36			
	Total trained in 13-14	204	124	80			
	Total trained in 2012-13	163	82	81			
	% increase over 12-13	25%	51%	01%			

### 5.5 Early Childhood Education Programme

The ECE programme is now well equipped with educational aids made by the trainees and NLC instructors. The Centre has become synonymous with Warli resource materials developed by NLC based on Warli poems and stories. This material is used for the balwadi and 1<sup>st</sup> standard children to provide them a familiar environment with no fear of attending school. Alphabets and words are introduced first in Warli using the Devnagari script gradually transiting to Marathi which is the medium of instruction at school. The repertoire of Warli poems and songs



being collated under the programme got a boost with Samir Somaiya purchasing a MacBook for preparing a book of Warli songs and stories to be uploaded for iPads. NLC computer instructors were trained at Somaiya Vidyvihar in Photoshop. The outcome is a delightful little book with animation based on paintings by the Warli art instructor. This creative solution of using local materials helps bridge the gap for first generation learners between the home language Warli, which has no script and the medium of instruction Marathi which is learnt at school.

### **5.6 Focused Learning Initiative**

The Focused Learning Initiative (FLI) was started in 2011-12 for the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4th standard to strengthen the children's foundation in language and math. Children spend 2 hours from 9am to 11am, Monday through Friday doing activities in reading, writing and math not based on the class syllabus but on age appropriate competencies. FLI is a result of our observation that children entering NLC in the 1<sup>st</sup> standard are mostly first generation learners. This is their first exposure to school having had no access to pre-school in their village. Marathi is an unfamiliar language for the children hence learning through their mother tongue helps them adjust at school.

Cognizant Technology Solutions India Pvt Ltd supported salaries of 3 dedicated teachers for the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> std for the focused learning class. Assessment is done twice per term before the mid term and terminal exams. No child is made to feel that s/he is lagging in the class. Children are assessed for what they know and not for what they do not know. This gives them a sense of achievement. Various teaching aids have also been developed by the teachers from low cost and waste materials. These teachers also received training at RIVER which greatly helped in strengthening the activities they did in the class.

### **5.7 School Health Centre**

During the year the number of visits made by the children to the School Health Centre (SHC) was 3025 with December, the coldest month in Nareshwadi, recording 496 visits. Mostly children complained of cough, cold and fever. In earlier years when the SHC was not set up children would go home and attendance at school would be affected. Being treated on campus ensures that children do not miss many school days. Children are de-wormed every six months and health exams conducted every term. Once a year eye exams are held by Government doctors and children are given free glasses if they need it. The Government also held a check up for sickle cell anemia and 5 children were suspected of having the disease. The SHC along with the Government Primary Health Centre (PHC) monitors their treatment. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> term the children's haemoglobin (Hb) levels were checked by technicians from the K J Somaiya Hospital under the guidance of Dr Shobha Kowli, head, Community Medicine. Twenty percent children were under 10 Hb level and were started on iron folic acid supplementation on a daily basis and those above were given prophylactic treatment once a week. This is done by the school nurse along with the house parents.



### **5.8 Healthcare Training**

The SHC was expanded to carry out healthcare training for village youth who wished to be trained as healthcare workers (Arogya Sevak). This activity is implemented under the CIDA Project and graduated trainees conducted health information sessions in their respective villages as well as in Divshi, Gadchincla and Ghadne. Training is conducted at the SHC for 6 months and 6 months hands on training at the K J Somaiya Hospital. All 12 girls of the first batch enrolling in July 2012 completed their training in June 2013 and found employment in nursing homes in Dahanu. The 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of one boy and 8 girls, enrolled in June 2013, are undergoing training which will be completed in June 2014.

### **5.9 School Farm and Dairy**

Waste land surrounding the School Farm was cleared and brought under cultivation. Pumpkin, ash gourd, okra etc were grown during the year for the children's meals. Six gunthas, about 6000 sq ft was cultivated and 916 kg vegetables produced which was used for the children's meals. The rest of the school farm, about 1.20 acres, was put under green fodder for the school cows as green fodder is in short supply and was urgently required for the cows. Napier grass and other nutrient rich fodder was cultivated and produced an yield of 120,250 kg during the year which met the green fodder needs of the cows. As part of their vocational training children continued to spend 2 hours each day in the school farm and dairy. The school dairy now has 15 cows and 18 calves. Total annual milk production was 7863 litres which was given to the school children. All cows are insured and their health monitored by the local government veterinary doctor. The dairy staff received 1 day's training in improving the health of cows which was conducted by the government veterinarian..

### **5.10 Sports**

NLC's athletics coach left for a Government job so training was affected a bit though the physical education teacher did continue basic training as well as organized the children's participation in the various inter-schools competitions in both athletics as well as in khabbadi and kho-kho. NLC's star athlete Darshana Gavli participated in several long distance events and Sachin Dolare did well in the boys under 17 years long distance events. In the relay girls and boys teams were placed within the top 5 rankings at the State level. NLC's kabbadi teams reached the district level.

## **6 Balgruh – Children's Home**

The Balgruh is approved by the DWCD for 100 children whose placement is done by the Children's Welfare Committee (CWC) under the Juvenile Justice Act. For 2013-14 the CWC placed 89 children, 49 boys and 40 girls. These children have no families or come from single parent homes from the local tribal communities and the streets of urban areas. GVET meets all living expenses, schooling and vocational training etc of these children with partial support from DWCD for 50 children. During the year Balgruh children participated in various co and extra curricular activities in school as well as inter- Balgruh activities organized at the district





level by the DWCD. There are about 16 Balgruh's in Thane District and Nareshwadi's Balgruh children shone in several events. In athletics the boys relay team under 14 years stood 1<sup>st</sup> and the under 17 team stood 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Kabbadi girls team stood 2<sup>nd</sup> and the khokho boys team stood 2<sup>nd</sup> as well. In the painting competition Pinki Pathale got the 3<sup>rd</sup> prize. The inclusive education and integration on NLC campus provides these children the caring environment they so miss in their personal lives. Living together with other children on campus gives them the opportunity to cooperate and compete - essential parameters for a successful future. Balgruh children have done well on leaving NLC, are in college through Help a Child and other sponsorships arranged by GVET and are well on their way to becoming self reliant.



*Asmita Bharbare of Village Punjave came to Balgruh when she was in the 1<sup>st</sup> standard. She had lost her father and her mother remarried abandoning Asmita and her 3 younger siblings. The children are raised by their paternal grandmother, a daily wage labourer, with occasional financial support from her 2 paternal uncles. She stood 1<sup>st</sup> among NLC girls in the Secondary School Certificate examination of March 2013. Asmita scored 75.20 per cent and is now studying science in Bordi. Her brother Sachin, a 9<sup>th</sup> standard student, is the best Warli artist in school.*

## 7 The CIDA Project – “Yuvak Apna Bhavishya”

The CIDA Project commenced on May 16 2012 and spans a period of 3 years. The 2<sup>nd</sup> year began from May 16 2013. There are 6 sub-projects with activities to be implemented over each year with expected outcomes. The overall goal of the project is to improve the quality of life of men and women, girls and boys through expanding access to education, healthcare and livelihood for the tribal communities of Dahanu Taluka. The sub-projects are:

### 7.1 Increase number of girls and boys that are engaged in an innovative gender sensitive teaching and learning environment

The construction of the new hostel for 250 girls progressed well. Moving to their own hostel has been a dream that all the girls staying at Nareshwadi have had for years! To improve the condition of the old hostel for boys Samir Somaiya funded renovations which stopped leakage during monsoon. Under CIDA, bunk beds were made and fitted with new mattresses and bed linen. The boys are very happy that though they do not have a new hostel they have bunk beds, new mattresses and bed linen.





**7.2 Expand early childhood education (ECE) for children between the age of 3.5 and 5 years in 30 rural locations by training 30 village youth (Female and Male) as Early Childhood Education teachers.**

The first batch of 8 trainees started ECE classes in the June 2013 in their respective villages enrolling 144 children. The community has been appreciative of these young persons starting ECE classes in their own village. Drinking water facility is provided by the community, old sheds have been cleaned and renovated to house the ECE class. In Gadadpada (Divshi) a proper structure was constructed by the GP for a balwadi which was never started. The GP allowed the ECE class to run in this facility. WEIF provided a small stipend for all the trainees for 2013-14 to enable them demonstrate to the community the value of the ECE class. This is supposed to motivate the parents to pay a small fee to the teacher from the next year on. During the year the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch learned to make simple educational materials which they would use when they set up their ECE class in June 2014. NLC arranged an exposure visit of 11 days to various institutions in Mumbai from a college of education and ECE classes in slums to elite schools in Mumbai

**7.3 Increase economic opportunity and sustainability among tribal youth (F/M) and their families through vocational training.**

All vocational courses are free for NLC's school children and village youth pay a small fee. The computer course is the most sought after followed by garment making. Warli art also has a good response but interest in plumbing is lagging. During the year, 204 school children (Girls 124/Boys 80) and 127 village youth (Female 61 Male 66) were trained in the centre as can be seen in Table 2 above. Healthcare trainees are admitted to the computer course and ECE trainees to the garment making course to add to their employability. A job bank and referral service with a list of potential employers was introduced and jobs offered to trainees on completion of their training. Some garment manufacturers visited Nareshwadi and spoke with the trainees and also arranged transportation for trainees to visit their manufacturing unit in Umbergaon. Twenty five female and 5 male graduates took up jobs. Several trainees are still in college.

**7.4 Build GVET's institutional capacity for long term economic sustainability by setting up a domestic and an export market for 'Nareshwadi Ventures' (NV), which generate revenue through the sale of goods produced from Warli (tribal) art, dairy farming and garment-making.**

The 3 environment friendly income generating activities set up during 2012-13 as part of NLC's long-term sustainability plan with support from CIDA, gradually stabilized during the year. The 3 activities under Nareshwadi Ventures are Dairy, Warli Art and Garment making. They notched a gross earnings of Rs 1,021,938.00 (**See Table 3 below**) and provided employment to 19 persons from the community.



**Table 3 shows gross earnings from April 2013 to March 2014.**

<b>Sr.No</b>	<b>Nareshwadi Ventures</b>	<b>Gross earnings Rs</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Warli painting</b>	<b>47,642.00</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Warli wood craft</b>	<b>1,69,180.00</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Garment making</b>	<b>13,248.00</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Dairy in litres</b>	<b>791,868.00</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,021,938.00</b>



**Warli Art:** A local Warli youth with a diploma in teaching art was identified by NLC for the wood craft unit. An additional sanding machine was added in July 2013 to increase production and NLC participated in various exhibitions to market the products. A designer was engaged by GVET and she designed 15 Warli products and held 3 training workshops during the year, identified wholesale vendors for raw materials for both Warli and garment making and helped the NV Project Coordinator cost each product and develop a marketing strategy. Students of the K J Somaiya Institute of Management Studies and Research (SIMSR) also help in marketing.

**Dairy:** The 8 cows purchased with CIDA funding did well. The total milk produced during the year was 20636 litres of which 17997 litres were sold. The balance 2639 litres was added to the school cows milk production of 7863 litres for the children's consumption. As some of the school cows were pregnant there was a shortfall in milk production by the cows reared exclusively for the children. To meet the requirement of green fodder NLC cultivated 3 types of fodder grass on approximately 1.5 acres in the school farm. The total production of green fodder during the year was 12 tons, 9 tons is required for the CIDA cows per year and the balance 3 tons is used for the school dairy. Over and above this the cows are fed rich nutrients like oil cake and other supplementary nutritious diets to ensure that they are healthy and to increase milk yields. The cows are not subjected to hormones or antibiotics. The milking machine is used most of the time except during power outage.

**Garment-making:** NLC employed a young lady with a diploma in fashion designing in December 2013. She has motivated trainees to take up simple production work such as mattress covers which requires only a straight stitch. This gives the trainees practice on the sewing machine. The garment-making unit also makes uniforms and dresses for Balgruh children at competitive market rate giving the trainees further training as well as the opportunity to earn some income.



### **7.5 Village Improvement Programme**

- a) Promote gender equality, food security, and curb migration among 200 women through income-generating activities in agriculture.**
- b) Reduce water borne diseases in neighbouring villages by digging 12 bore wells which will provide clean drinking water.**

In June 2013 the Village Improvement Programme (VIP) staff conducted surveys for baseline household data and Progress out of Poverty Index (PPI) for the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of 104 women in Divshi and Gadchinchala villages. The women prepared plots for vegetable cultivation and for mogra plantation, fenced the plots with thorny bushes, and participated in the trainings provided/arranged by NLC staff. They were given vegetable seeds and saplings and collectively produced 10768 kg vegetables. They marketed 43% (4618 kg) at Rs 35/- average market rate in the nearby town of Khanvel and used 57% (6150 kg) for home consumption. Post monsoon there is the major problem of irrigation as the water in the open wells and streams recede. As per project plan water storage drums were given to all 104 women of the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch as well which was a big boon for irrigating the vegetable plots as well as the mogra plantation. All 212 women of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> batch stayed in the village to work on their mogra plantation with the husbands of only 37 women migrating for work to nearby towns. As more mothers stayed back in the village to work there was increased enrolment of children in the village school.

The impact of the VIP was seen in the GP undertaking development activities in the village for the first time.

- 1) Road repair work In Chamalpada, Patilpada and Chinchpada of Village Divshi and in Cholherpada and Patilpada of Village Gadchinchla
- 2) Eleven bore wells sanctioned and will be installed by May end
- 3) Sixteen solar street lamps installed in the *padas*

### **7.6 Increase access to healthcare services and knowledge for villagers (F/M) through the expansion of the HC, training 30 youth (F/M) as healthcare workers, and health information sessions in disease control, hygiene, sanitation, nutrition, and maternal and childcare practices.**

A nurse from the Warli community was appointed to coordinate training at NLC. The Department of Community Medicine of the K J Somaiya Medical College, the K J Somaiya Hospital and the K J Somaiya Nursing College have been very supportive in providing hands-on training to the HC trainees.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of HC trainees conducted information sessions in their respective villages during the Divali vacation as part of their training. They focused on hygiene and sanitation, maternal and child healthcare practices. They also conducted health information sessions in D and Gd



villages and in NLC for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> standard children. The 12 HC trainees of the 1<sup>st</sup> batch received their certificates issued by the K J Somaiya Hospital. Of these 3 enrolled in a nursing college for their diploma in nursing. The remaining 9 trainees are employed with a well known private nursing home in Dahanu. Training for the 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of 9 trainees commenced in July 2013.

## **8 Lush Village Improvement Programme (Lush Project)**

Observing the impact of the VIP in D and Gd villages GVET wished to expand VIP activities to villages nearer Nareshwadi to help women set up livelihood activities in their own villages so they did not have to look for work on far away construction sites taking their little children with them. For GVET the VIP is driven by the goal to have more children in school. GVET approached WEIF for funding to start VIP in Village Ghadne of Bahare Group Gram Panchayat, 6 km from Nareshwadi. Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics agreed to give funding support and 104 poorest women were selected by the community. Three *padas*, Patilpada, Shivpada and Zhadipada, participated in the programme cultivating vegetables, mogra and mango plantation. Seeds and saplings and water storage drums were provided to the women as part of the livelihood activities. Six bore wells were also provided in the 3 *padas* for clean drinking water. GVET organized 5 training workshops during the year in Ghadne: two on vegetable cultivation and mogra plantation by Pradeep Bhoje, Secretary of the Bharatiya Agro Industries Foundation (BAIF) Mitra and one on hand-pump maintenance by a local resource person. The HC trainees held health sessions in the *padas* on mother and child health, hygiene and sanitation and on gender sensitization by Valvi and Prajwal both trained by Visthar.

As part of the phasing out strategy of the VIP the women are supported to form Self Help Groups (SHGs) to carry on VIP activities. Seven SHGs have been formed and all 104 women have opened bank accounts. The students of SIMSR conducted financial literacy workshops for the women. The women produced 10301 kg vegetables and marketed 52% saving 48% for home consumption thereby improving family diet. GVET helped the women market part of their produce in the IIT Farmer's market at much higher prices than the local market. GVET also purchased vegetables from the women for the school children's meals. This led to improved family income, curbed migration and increased school enrolment as mothers worked from home. None of the women left the village for work but the husbands of 56 women went on deep sea fishing trawlers as they were under contract. The others preferred to stay home and work on the mogra



and vegetables farms. As in the case of D and Gd the VIP triggered the Gram Panchayat into action and several works were undertaken in the 3 *padas*.

- a compound was constructed for the village school in Patilpada
- road works undertaken
- street solar lamps installed

This spin off of the VIP gives the community greater confidence in their own action spurring them on to undertake more village improvement activities like making concrete platforms around the bore wells, expanding their vegetable crops saving seeds of the previous year, devising simple low cost methods to conserve water and irrigate mogra saplings as can be seen in the image on the right, ensure more children are enrolled in school as mothers stay home and work on their own farms. One of the women is elected to the Gram Panchayat and is an active decision maker.

## **9 Governance and human resources**

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### **9.1 Board of Trustees**

The GVET Board of Trustees comprise persons with professional backgrounds from engineering/business/entrepreneurship to social work, legal, educational management and art. They are deeply committed to GVET's mission as laid down by its founder Padmabhushan Pujya Karamshibhai J Somaiya. The Board meets twice a year every six months to review and approve projects, discuss implementation updates, and transact business. Besides board meetings, GVET's Chairman and trustees visit NLC and interact with children, staff and the community.

#### **The Board**

1. Samir S. Somaiya Chairperson
2. Leelaben Madhavjibhai Kotak
3. Chandraraj Bothra
4. Amrita S. Somaiya
5. Harinakshi S. Somaiya

### **9.2 Staff, interns and volunteers**

GVET ensures equal opportunities for female and male staff to carry out their duties to the best of their abilities. 47% of NLC staff is women and 45% are from tribal heritage. About 25% have post graduate qualifications. During the year NLC had several student volunteers from various educational institutions and one intern from overseas. Regular students of the K J Somaiya Institute of Management Studies and Research (SIMSR) conducted 2 workshops on financial literacy for the women farmers of Divshi and Gadchinla. Part-time employed students of SIMSR also engage in activities with the children and donate school supplies, sports equipment etc every year on August 15 under their banner Chota Sikka. St John Institute of Management and Research, Palghar, placed 5 students at NLC for their internship. They helped VIP to form Self Help Groups. Two final year students of the Nirmala Niketan College of Social





Work (one Bachelor's and one Masters) did their field placement at NLC during the year working on the ECE and VIP programmes. Faculty and students of the Centre for Technology Alternatives in Rural Areas (CTARA) of the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, visited NLC in December 2013 for a discussion on placing final year Masters in Technology students for 9 weeks internship. Kimberlee Massing of the University of Alberta, Canada, did her Masters of Social Work placement for 3 months from May to August 2013 on a scholarship from WEIF. She carried out orientation sessions on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) for VIP staff and helped put systems in place for holding meetings and report writing. She worked with GVET's CEO Patricia Gokhale to ensure that the PRA methodology (mainly Focused Group Discussion) employed by VIP staff stays collaborative and anti-oppressive in the work they are doing.

**Patricia Gokhale PhD**  
**CEO**  
**Nareshwadi Learning Centre**



**Team Nareshwadi**



## **10 List of abbreviations**

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BAIF	Bharatiya Agro Industries Foundation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIP	Community Initiatives Programme
CWC	Children's Welfare Committee
DWCD	Department of Woman and Child Development
D	Divshi
ECE	Early Child Education
F	Female
Gd	Gadchinclla
GG	Gender Group
GP	Gram Panchayat
GVET	Girivanvasi Educational Trust
GVPM	Girivanvasi Pragati Mandal
Hb	Haemoglobin
HC	Healthcare
KJSP	K J Somaiya Polytechnic
KJSVTI	K J Somaiya Vocational Training Institute
M	Male
MDA	Maharashtra Dyslexia Association
NLC	Nareshwadi Learning Centre
NV	Nareshwadi Ventures
PHC	Primary Health Centre
PMF	Performance Measurement Framework
PPI	Progress Out of Poverty Index
RIVER	Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources
SG	Somaiya Group
SHG	Self Help Group
SIMSR	Somaiya Institute for Management Studies and Research
SVV	Somaiya Vidyavihar
VETC	Vocational Education and Training Centre
VIP	Village Improvement Programme
WEIF	Women's Empowerment International Foundation
XISS	Xavier Institute of Social Services

