



L.I.B. Newsletter



July 2011

Letter from the Board



THE FIRST OF MANY

Looking back at the year, I can confidently confess that we are as excited today if not more since the day we started and introduced L.I.B International. The year was filled with new beginnings, great partnerships, new learnings and some amazing support from the community.

To start at the beginning, we traveled to Delhi, India where we set up our very first Learning Centre in the slum area of Shanti Nagar (which means “Peace City”). We had the opportunity to see first hand the projects our local partner organization was running and understand the impact it was having on the people of the slums. We identified areas of improvement and are happy to say we were able to secure a facility that allows for the realization and expansion of our collective ideas.

The Learning Centre supports 33 children between the ages of 3 years and 14 years. We have also started our first sewing ministry for young women who did not have the opportunity to complete their schooling. This is a great opportunity for them to develop their skills and enter the workforce. Our long term commitment to this new endeavor is to help develop a product line that we can market locally and internationally. We are looking forward to sharing these improvements in the community by organizing our first volunteer trip where people will have the opportunity to learn about our initiatives and engage in developing the community while immersing themselves in the culture of the place.

Whilst developing our community initiative, we were also exploring fair trade opportunities in India which led us to the hills of Kumaon and the beautiful handiwork of the crafts people there featured in the Newsletter. Our partner organization has been working in the region for a number of years supporting the community on all fronts. Our collective goal is to decrease the forced migration of individuals and families to a larger city center by creating sustainable jobs in the villages. We have invested in our first shipment of Himjoli fair trade products with the aim of transforming lives through fair trade, not aid.

It was during this time, that our application for our charity status was accepted and we are proud to say that L.I.B International is now a recognized charity in Canada. We celebrated our hard work and milestones at our first “Beauty of India” fundraising event in March of this year which helped raise close to \$1000 for our Learning Centre in Delhi, India.

I would like to thank you on behalf of the Board of Directors, as we could have never imagined the support we have received; the contribution you have made by attending an event, donating to our causes or by simply connecting us to more people. Our projects continue to improve because of your investment in humanity and L.I.B and we continue to be inspired by you and the people around us!



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By: Sameera Mehra



LOCAL PERSPECTIVE - EDUCATION IN INDIA

It is often said of India that things can stay the way they are for years, even decades, much to everyone's frustration. Then suddenly, for no apparent reason at all, or because of a variety of unrelated ones, all hell can break loose overnight. And then there is no holding back.

For years, the shining example of this sort was the state of the economy itself. Languishing in a state-controlled socialist setting, India has made rapid strides ever since the economic liberalisation of 1991. In the past two decades, the economic performance - and even potential - has been remarkable, and growth has been rapid. For those who waited and watched the decades of inaction, the last few years must have come as sweet reward.

Yet, for those with an eye on the future, there are some major obstacles to sustained - and all-inclusive - economic growth. The biggest obstacle must surely be the state of education in the country. According to some measures, nearly 35% of India's population is still illiterate. Only 15% of Indian students reach high school, and just 7% graduate.

Yet, things are not as bad as they seem. India has made decent progress in the past few years, especially in terms of increasing primary education attendance rate and expanding literacy as far as it has. The state remains deeply involved. Nearly 80% of all elementary recognized schools are government run or supported, making it the largest provider of education in the country. Private educational institutions have grown, and are now estimated to be worth between \$40-60 billion, but are still small in comparison.

Policies too are favourable to growing literacy and education. The Indian government lays emphasis to primary education up to the age of fourteen years. Child labour is also officially banned, in order to encourage children to go to school. Education has also been made free for children for six to 16 years of age or up to grade 10 under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009. But these are all cases of things staying more or less the same. After all, encouraging education has been a cornerstone of government policy ever since Independence. So what, if anything, is different now? Can we really expect all hell to break loose?

There are several reasons to think that, yes, now is the time.

Integration: India's economy is much more internally integrated than it has ever been in the past. According to some statistics, more than 40 per cent of the urban labour force comprises out-of-towners. In manufacturing, the supply chains for many products span multiple states, leading to greater industrial linkages across regional boundaries. The Great Indian Dream is underway. And this is not even including the rapid growth of the services sector. While catalysing the labour force, such integration also leads to the growing use of a common language, English.

Anglicisation: According to the Census of 2001, India has 29 languages that are spoken by more than a million native speakers, and a further 122 languages spoken by more than 10,000. But few languages have the power to change the education system that English does. More importantly, in the new globalised world we live in, the knowledge of English is becoming a key requirement for most urban jobs. Anecdotal evidence suggests that minimum qualifications now include the knowledge of English. Thus the demand for English training, particularly from schools, becomes stronger every day.

Communication: Being informed is a prerequisite to being empowered. The growth of the mobile phone market is one of the more remarkable industry stories from around the world. There is an abundance of stories of farmers getting up-to-date market prices on their phones, and fisherwomen getting weather reports on theirs. Add to this the rapid growth in internet usage, and the number of TV news channels. It isn't long before the massive weight of public information is used to get results on the ground.

New generation: Underlying all these changes is a generational shift. Children born in the last two decades have grown up in an environment very different from their parents and grandparents - mostly free of memories of war, more aware of their rights, more at home in the world of technology and on the international stage. And in another generation, the literacy rates will rise even further.

The growth of private education is unstoppable. A sector characterised thus far by insufficient supply may now be about to be transformed by an explosion in demand. After all, as parents of small children, as well as politicians in raucous constituencies, know all too well - loudly demanded is best provided.

Author: Madhav Raghavan

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URBANIZATION IN FAIR TRADE

Urbanization is extremely diverse in its many forms and effects (both positive and negative). It can be defined as the physical growth of urban areas as a result of global change¹. In any form it does play a huge role in the 3rd world development (or lack thereof). We continually see the physical effects and the negative cycle of poverty resulting from social decay and lack of resources in developing communities; this in part is due to the unsustainable population growth, typically in major urban centres. A major factor contributing to this extreme and unsustainable growth in urban centres is due to the “rural urban migration”.

In the rural urban migration philosophy, people essentially migrate to cities from the country side in hopes to gain a better job/ wage to provide a better life for their family. The wages in urban centres are higher due to urbanization and the creation of material for international markets. For example, “an urban steel worker in India earns 8.4 times the rural wage”².

At best the person/family that is moving to the urban centres is taking a gamble for economic freedom as they are not guaranteed a permanent job or one with a high enough wage that will support the entire family. Without the means to secure proper housing, people have no free choice but to live in a slum area or shanty town while they are waiting for their chance to change their life but at the cost of increased poverty and social issues (ie. education, health, sanitation etc.). Some scenarios that normally occur during this move to the urban centres are:

- The man of the house leaves and is the only one that travels to the city. This could pose a potential threat to the livelihood of the family. The absence of a father figure in the lives of the children could lead to emotional stress on the family.
- Parents are sending their young children to work away from home to help the family’s economic and social situation. This is very emotional for the child to endure as they are forced to leave home and fend for themselves in a new atmosphere at an immature age. In addition, this decreases the chance of education for the child.
- A whole family is uprooted from their

rural community and end up in a slum area in the urban centre. Social issues increase for the family and the opportunity to get out of poverty decreases. Children are at risk of becoming victims of work and prostitution. The slum area can be a breeding ground for diseases and the access to drugs and alcohol is more prevalent.

The need to bring economic and social opportunities to rural areas to create a prosperous countryside is even more crucial as urbanization takes control in developing countries.

The Road to “Ruralization”

To be clear this idea or theory is not to urbanize the rural areas rather provide jobs and social care to these remote areas so that people are not forced to migrate to larger city centres and live in a dire situation. Stronger and sustained economic growth in the rural areas can provide the resources to invest in the social development of the area, ie. proper education opportunities for the children, increase in health, sanitation and water, ultimately breaking the cycle of poverty and empowering the people to improve their situation and livelihood.

L.I.B. is Investing in Rural Areas of India

Through our fair trade program and our commitment to support entrepreneurs in developing countries, we have partnered with Himjoli, a non-government organization in the hills of Kumaon, India.

Himjoli, which means “Friend in the Land of Ice”, is a non government organization that works with producer groups in Kumaon (a mountain region in Uttarakhand). Their mission is to reduce migration to cities by creating sustainable jobs in the villages. The organization works in 5 districts covering 7211 villages with the aim of transforming lives through trade, not aid. They are a bridge between the community, NGOs and larger market, working at the grassroots level to develop and market local products.

They also partner with NGO’s working across several areas like education, healthcare, sustainable livelihoods, natural resource management and alternative renewable energy to further their goals of sustainable development.

Available Himjoli products in L.I.B.’s Fair Trade store: www.libinternational.com/libstore.html

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1 Urbanization, Wikipedia. Viewed source on June 26, 2011: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urbanization>
2 Urbanisation and Migration in the Third World. (Reproduced from the Economic Review, 14(2), November 1996).



Bulletin Board

EVENTS/FUNDRAISERS:

L.I.B. kicked off 2011 with their “Beauty of India” event. It was an amazing night filled with the flavours, colours, music and dance of India. We also were able to share information and pictures on our Learning Centre in Delhi!

Silverwing Links Golf Course (3434-48th Avenue NE) has donated 8-18 hole golf passes for L.I.B. to sell to help raise funds for our projects in India and in fair trade. Golf Pass: \$65.00 (includes a 18-hole golf game any day of the week...yes that includes prime time weekends!) To purchase a golf pass please call Heather Hild at (403) 880.3754 or e-mail info@libinternational.com. As we only have limited passes call quick to get yours!

We have some exciting opportunities to support L.I.B.:

- L.I.B “Fundraising Friend” - Join us on our pursuit of raising \$20,000 in 2011! Email info@libinternational.com if you are interested in learning more. Information about the program will be sent via email in August.
- L.I.B. Fair “Trading Post” - Starting in September we will be hosting a market in Calgary. Information will be sent out prior to each market to our supporters...come check out our fair trade line as well as other business entrepreneurs. If you have products and would like to be apart of this event please contact L.I.B.

DONATE NOW

visit www.libinternational.com
Donations of \$20+ will get a tax receipt.

L.I.B. CONTEST:

As we believe that “two heads are better than one”...we would love to hear your thoughts on one or more of the following:

1. What would your utopic world look like?
2. How would you inspire humanity?
3. How would you improve world aid?

Send your ideas to:
info@libinternational.com.

All submissions will be posted on our social media sites. The most inspiring submission will win a Silk Tea Light lamp from our fair trade line.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

L.I.B. International would like to give a special THANKS to our corporate sponsors this year:

- Parlee Mclaws
- Multi Culture Travel
- Fusion Bollywood
- Studio Bollywood I Dance
- Hyped Events
- Tekamar Mortgages, Corine Hild
- Kristal burgess Photography
- Ranchman’s Cookhouse & Dancehall
- Newport Grill Inc.
- Little Rock Document Services Ltd.
- Coast Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre
- Rising Women Magazine
- JCI Calgary

Thank you to our many volunteers for their help on our events and general activities:

- Aditya Pattanaik
- Hayley Williamson
- James Early
- Veronika Miloshenko
- Bryon Mcinroy
- Michael Hillman
- Kathryn Vincent
- Raj Rangayyan
- Harjit Singh

L.I.B. Is heading to India in 2012!

We will be bringing a team of 15 volunteers to India to work in our community. We will be adding value to our learning centre, engaging with the community, experiencing cultural beauty while making a difference! Information on this will be sent in January 2012.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- Grant Writer: Every non-profit organization experiences difficulty in raising money and therefore grants are essential. We are looking for someone with an understanding of how grant applications work. However, if you are interested with no experience and are up for the challenge we want you too!
- Accountant: We are looking for a person to join our team and look after our monthly financials.
- Interested in volunteering call (403) 880-3754!



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