

# • 9 to 90 Villages •

Experience of Annapoorna volunteers in the year 2015

## WEBINAR SERIES



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ8GvTNWXrE>

• <https://annapoorna.org.in> •

Good evening, everybody. At the outset, Let me offer my prayerful salutations to our supreme Master Bhagwan SRI Satya Sai Baba Who is the source of what we do, and to Satguru Sri Madhusudan Sai, the force behind all our activities be it educational, nutritional or health care.

A very warm Sairam to all and delighted to be a part of this webinar, and privileged to host today's session. My name is Krishna, Mohan. I am from Jamshedpur. I am an alumnus of Sri Satya Institute of Higher Learning. Having done my MBA from PrashantiNilayam 25 years back. In the last 25 years, I served Tata group companies in various positions, and demitted office last year to take up full-time volunteering, with a passion to take Sri Satya Sai Baba's, Nutrition, Educational and Health projects to be Bihar and Jharkhand. Welcome to this webinar.

## Krishna Mohan



❖ Mechanical Engineer and MBA from SSSIHL

❖ 25 Years of work experience in Tata Group

❖ Currently a full time Volunteer in His Service



On the Journey of Annapurna, a journey to eradicate hunger with the Motto that "No Child Goes to School Hungry Ever!!". I am sure you are all eager to listen to your analysts. Today, we have a distinguished panel of four youngsters, who will relive the precious moments of Annapoorna growth story, as it happened in 2015, as a journey title, "9 to 90 Villages - A 2015 Love Story ". Yeah, indeed a love story, the story which is about children and Annapoorna volunteers, which grew from 9 schools to 90 schools in less than 90 days.

## Welcome to our next WEB-isode!

- ❖ Journey to eradicate hunger with the motto that **No child goes to school hungry ever.**
- ❖ Panel consists of 4 youngsters: Girish Suryanarayana, Santosh Allath, Vybhav S and Ashish Bhardwaj
- ❖ Today's Session is about the journey of expansion from **9 to 90 Villages --- A 2015 Love Story.**



"Na Tapansi Na Teerthanaam Na Shaastranaam Japa Nahi , Samsaara Saagarodhaare Sajjanam Sevanam Vina " ,our scriptures say that, may the pilgrimages nor reading of scriptures, nor Penance will get any Redemption. The one in the only sure way for Redemption, Is serving the noble ones. What better Noble Souls than innocent and hungry children!! Blessed are the volunteers who serve them. On behalf of Team Annapoorna and on my own behalf, let me invite the panelists, Ashish Bharadwaj, Vibhav, Girish Suryanarayana and Santosh Allath for this program. Thank you for being with us this evening.

## Selfless Service is the Key

**Na Tapansi Na Theerthanam Na Shastranaam Japa Nahi  
Samsaara Sagarodharre Sajjanam Sevanam Vina.**

- ❖ Our scriptures say that neither pilgrimages nor reading of scriptures nor any amount of penance will redeem us.
- ❖ Selfless service to noble souls can truly redeem us



The first speaker for today evening is Ashish Bharadwaj. Ashish is a bundle of energy. And his energy is infectious. Ashish I am equally excited as the audience to listen from you brother, your part of 2015 expansion story, When Annapoorna grew from 9 to 90. Ashish is an MBA from symbiosis Pune, with a 17 year experience in the corporate world. Currently he is working in Oracle as a Senior Manager. We can say he is the People's Man at Annapoorna. Over to you Ashish.

## Ashish Bhardwaj



- ❖ MBA from Symbiosis, Pune
- ❖ 17 years of work experience in corporate world.
- ❖ Currently he is working in Oracle as a senior Manager.
- ❖ Rich experience in people Management and Quality Control



Aum Sri Sairam, Offering my humble pranaams at the Divine Lotus feet of our beloved Swami. Thanks to Krishna Mohan for a warm welcome. My salutations to all the viewers who are watching us online. It's a great privilege to talk to you. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to share my experiences with respect to the Annapoorna breakfast Seva program. Indeed, as quoted by Krishna Mohan brother, It's a positive, Loving infection of Seva, which is spreading and binding all of us together to help the society at large. Brothers and Sisters, if you remember last month we had a webinar, wherein Anand brother has explained to us how this Noble vision of serving breakfast started in 2012 from Doddabele Village. He also explained to us how the Centre got constructed with the help of villagers and volunteers to continue breakfast Seva for the students in that Village. Today, in our session, we are planning to share our experiences, with respect to expansion from 2015 onwards.

I am basically from a place called Ghaziabad, which is close to Delhi. And I got relocated to Bangalore in 2008. I had an utmost desire that I should be a part of the volunteer activity wherein I can serve the society. In May 2015, in a very miraculous Divine way, I came to know that there is something called breakfast Seva, and it's a volunteer activity, which is happening just four kilometers from my home.

## Start of a Journey

- ❖ Got relocated to Bangalore in 2008
- ❖ Desire to serve the society
- ❖ In 2015 heard about Breakfast Seva Program



To be very frank, I have never heard about breakfast Seva. Being in a Sai family I heard that Narayan Seva where we used to some Narayanas on a weekly or monthly basis. But this concept of breakfast Seva was quite unique to me. So no problem one day in June 2015, I still remember, I thought let me visit the place Doddabele and see what is happening there. And as I said that it is just four kilometers from my home, so in the early morning hours, I went there. When I reached Doddabele ,the first curiosity which I was having is, How will I find the centre? And the reason behind it is that I don't know the local language, Kannada. Anyway, I reached there, and I still remember the first villager, I just asked the words, Sri Sathya Sai Baba Breakfast Seva Centre. He pointed me towards a building and then I visited that place, there I saw, a group of students were there and a group of volunteers were there. So, volunteers were basically teaching some moral values sessions to the students.

## Visit to Doddabele Breakfast Seva Center

- ❖ Visited Doddabele Breakfast Seva Center
- ❖ Met Annapoorna volunteers
- ❖ Got insight of Breakfast Seva Program



I quietly sat there on the back side. I just listened to that. After that, they served hot breakfast to the students. After breakfast was served, the students had breakfast they left for the school. After that, I lovingly asked volunteers about this breakfast Seva. I still remember Mr. Hari Prasad sir, has lovingly explained to me at length about this breakfast Seva, How it got started and Why it is being done. And then, he told me that most of his students and their parents are working as a labourer. Mother may be working as a maid in any of the apartments, Father may be working in some garment Factory. They don't have the luxury to have breakfast. So, they usually go just like that to the school. The first food which they will be getting is at 12 o'clock. That is a midday meal. Just imagine what will go in their brain if nothing is there in the stomach? Immediately after hearing this, in my mind, I thought let me be a part of this group, let me be a part of this Seva.

In the initial phase, I thought let me go there on a weekly basis and to be very frank, I choose Saturday. And the reason is Saturday is my week off in the morning hours, I can go, I can serve there and the whole day I can take a rest. But as you know, we will be thinking something but God has some different plants. And finally, I started visiting the centre on a daily basis.

There are a couple of reasons for going there on a daily basis. First is, I could not resist myself from being a part of this Noble Seva, which is happening, just a stone through distance from my home. Secondly, the smile which brings the satisfaction which we get that is unmatched. From 2015 onwards, my daily routine has changed.

## Health and Water



## Medical Clinic & R.O. Plant



Now, I am getting up a bit early, going to the centre serving breakfast there and then I will be going to my office. My office is just 30 kilometers from my home. So you can understand but I am not feeling any tiredness. The reason is, I am getting positive vibes, positive energy from this Seva. So, Brothers and Sisters, in Doddabele we are not only doing Breakfast Seva, but we are taking care of Sunday Medical Clinic, we are even having an RO plant which has been set up by Annapoorna trust. So, if you will see all three aspects, that is, Nutrition, Health and Water all three aspects have been taken into account in Swami's Divine Mission.

After these many years of continuous breakfast seva, we can see a transformation which is happening to the students, villagers and volunteers also. Now we can see how these students are only leading The Breakfast Seva. In the morning, when we are reaching there, they will make sure the center is up to date. Moral value classes will be there and after that these boys or girls will only serve the breakfast. We just will be standing there like this as if we are just monitoring it.

Let me tell you about Sunday medical training. Sunday Medical Clinic also in the morning hours these kids will come. They will take the portable audio system and across the village they will go, they will do the announcement that a medical clinic is happening, so that patients who are looking forward they will come to the center they will get the medicines and will get treated.

## Children's enthusiasm is infective 😊



- ❖ Volunteering for Medical Clinic
- ❖ Announcement of Medical Clinic across the village



Now in this slide, you can see one of our smartest girls in breakfast seva Center. She is like my daughter. Her name is Meghana. Can you see her smile?! Now, I can see how she has transformed how disciplined she is now. She helps us in the medical clinic on Sundays. And very lovingly she will take the patient in the corner and very lovingly she will tell the do's and don'ts to the patient. She has learned everything from our doctor aunty. In this way, you can see that she is standing with our doctor aunty. She always told me. Uncle, I want to become a doctor and I also want to serve society. Don't you think it's a transformation?

## They are selfless..

- ❖ Helping in Medical Clinic
- ❖ Coordinating in Breakfast seva
- ❖ Guiding patients about Do's and Don'ts



Similarly, we have another story from another girl called Vedavati. Her father is an auto rickshaw driver. And her mother is an Asha worker. Vedavati studies in class 7th. And she has started coming to the breakfast seva center from class first on words. I can witness it very clearly. She is quite spiritually mature. And the reason is the Balvikas sessions, which our Gurus have taken during our breakfast Seva. She also takes care of Balvikas sessions, moral value classes for other students. Even her family is transformed now.

## Families too are transformed!

- ❖ Father : Auto rickshaw driver
- ❖ Mother : Asha worker
- ❖ Coordinating for breakfast seva activities



Let me give you one good example, What Annapoorna trust has started doing is, on Wednesday ,we will be distributing small Atta pouches and refined pouches to couple of students so that they can take it to their home and on Thursday morning their mothers can prepare chapatis, which can be served to their students, and the only reason behind is to imbibe the principle of seva in the villagers. Now considering this fact, let me tell you, Vedavati will make sure every week she will take Atta packet and her mother will wake up in the early hours to prepare chapati. This is the selfless Seva which they have also started doing now.

Let me tell you one, very nice story or transformation. In this picture, you can see we have our Doddabele cook, Mr. Prabhakar. And he is having two sons with the name Deepak and Kiran. Mr. Prabhakar is basically preparing breakfast for our Doddabele breakfast center from inception that is from 2012 onwards.

## Families too are transformed!



- ❖ Imbibe Seva :  
Distribution of Atta and refined oil pouches to the villagers



- ❖ Preparing Chapatis on Thursday for breakfast seva kids



When breakfast seva got started, our volunteers guided him that, why don't you send your kids to Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva Gurukulam Institutes, which are there. He just followed the steps which have been told by our Annapoorna volunteers. He sent his kids there. They have completed their schooling there and now you will be amazed to know that Deepak is doing his higher studies in Bangalore. He is doing BSC in Biotech. And Kiran is pursuing his Commerce stream. Brothers and sisters if this breakfast Seva would not have started in Doddabele, if our volunteers would not have guided him, if Swami's mission of Seva would not have been there, don't you think these kids would not have reached to the place where they are standing now?

Now let me tell you this transformation is not stopping in The Villages itself. Now it is going like crazy ,as quoted by Mr. Krishna Mohan at the start time working for Oracle. So on a monthly basis, we will be having an Oracle CSR event, wherein I will take the CSR event volunteers from Oracle to different Annapoorna volunteer centers, breakfast seva centers in Bangalore and Chikballapur. I have noticed that even Oracle volunteers are getting transformed now. They are seeing the selfless work which is being done by our volunteers that is our Annapoorna volunteers and now Oracle volunteers.

## Leading a Life with a purpose



- ❖ Caterer from Doddabele breakfast Seva Centers
- ❖ Two sons being beneficiaries from Swami's campuses



They themselves are coming forward. Nobody is telling them and they are sponsoring the books, stationary, medicines for the students of The Villages. This shows the Infectious transformation, which is happening in society. Brothers and Sisters, this Seva opportunity which we were rendering from 2012 at Doddabele, that transformations which we have observed, have given tremendous confidence that now it's time wherein we can expand it to different villages. After seeing these success stories, we all thought let this seva be expanded so that more students can get benefited out of it. Today, we have brother Girish, Santosh and Vaibhav along with us. I would request them, kindly share and we will listen to their experiences towards this journey of expansion. Thanks again for listening to me Sai Ram.

Thanks, Ashish. Those of you who are new to Annapoorna, Doddabele, is the first Breakfast Center started in 2012. Ashish, it was truly motivating you took us through on all the aspects of practical Annapoorna volunteerism. Annapoorna is not just a breakfast program. It encompasses a larger Emotional, Educational, Nutritional and Health needs of every child it touches. But the starting point is the stomach. You lucidly explain how Annapoorna not only brought changes in the little children and their parents but also transformed the other stakeholders like Teachers, Headmasters and more importantly the Volunteers serving them.

Thank you once again, sir, Ashish. It was a pleasure listening to you.

Our next speaker is brother Girish Suryanarayana. Girish is an Electrical and Electronics Engineer from Bits Pilani, with an MS., and PhD., in Computer Science from University of California, Irvine. Girish is currently working as principal key expert for Artificial Intelligence at Siemens. Despite busy work schedules, I appreciate your involvement in Annapoorna activities Girish. We will all love to hear from you, your journey specific to "9 to 90 Growth Story". Over to you Girish.

## Girish Suryanarayana



- ❖ Electrical & Electronics Engineer BITS, Pilani
- ❖ MS in Computer Software Engg and PHD in Software Architecture, Univ of Cal, Irvine.
- ❖ Principal Key Expert for AI at Siemens Tech and Services



Sairam Brother, thank you so much for the opportunity to share a few of my experiences. today, around this theme nine schools to 90 schools. Dear brothers and sisters who have joined this call from around the world, loving Sairams and a Heartfelt gratitude also to Ashish brother for the beautiful story of transformation, he shared with all of us. I would like to start today brother by saying that, there is a context for every Journey. And similarly, in my case this background and context was the street Narayana Seva which I got involved with in 2011. I was Distributing packets of hot food to underprivileged people on the streets of South Bangalore along with other volunteers. And slowly as I continued this service and overwhelming sense of compassion and love arose Within Me. The nameless people on the streets whom I typically use to avoid, on a daily basis, started to become familiar faces, and they seem to become like my own family, and they look forward to meeting them every weekend and giving them food.

## Narayan Seva in South Bangalore - 2011



And some of them like the old lady in the picture that I see here, even shared the grief with us. How life was difficult for them, how they were unsure of where they will get their next meal from and whether they will even get their next meal.

And touched by these interactions, I resolved then to come into a life of service. With this as a context, my journey with Annapoorna actually started in 2013 when I first visited Doddabele and participated in the Breakfast Seva. And as Ashish brother just now described, I also noticed how the school children all immaculately dressed would stand in queues under a tree Chant devotional song from all religions and later partake the hot delicious breakfast before departing for school. I was very inspired by this beautiful service and I also wondered if I also should start something similar, where I stayed, because Doddabele was quite far from where I lived. But I was very blessed that in less than a year, I had the opportunity to locate a slum on K Road in Bangalore where I stay. And along with some family members, I started the breakfast Seva, very similar to what happens in Doddabele. I would go and distribute biscuits, bananas and chocolates to about 25 children who are living in extreme poverty there, every weekend in the morning. After a few weeks of starting the Seva, I had a viral illness and so I was unable to go for the Seva for a couple weekends. So, on the third weekend, when it was time for me to actually resume the Seva, I thought it occurred to me that maybe the children have forgotten me, or maybe it doesn't matter if I do the Seva and I don't know if I am having any impact.

## First visit to Doddabele in 2013



But I anyway with all this apprehension, went to the slum area and there I had a very very pleasant surprise, because the moment I got out of my car, and, I; you know, I started removing the packets of food from the car, all the children came running to me. And they surrounded me, some of them were pulling my shirt, and they were seeking my love and attention. And I was very touched. When an older girl asked me, Anna? Why did you forget us for the last two weekends? And I almost broke down. I learned a very important lesson on the nature of love, that day. I realized that love is something that every human being expects, and I was only sharing my love offering love to all these children via food. It was not the food, I was Distributing but the love. And this strengthened in my resolve to continue to share my love with everyone, especially those from an underprivileged background. Fortunately, more volunteers also joined me and we started serving hot breakfast to the children. I continued this breakfast and in September 2015, I came to know the expansion of the breakfast ever to 90 schools. As many of you may be aware, the World Health Organization says that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and especially for children, because it helps Foster but physical and cognitive growth, finally they are the future of the country, So we need to take care of this. And like Ashish Brothers said a few minutes ago, This breakfast is very important for the children to focus on studies during classes and realizing this, the Sri Satya Sai Annapoorna trust was set up with the very Noble vision.

And as you also showed in a slide Brother, "No child should go to school hungry, Ever!". With this expansion, so far we had been doing nine schools in Bangalore, the plan was to now, scale and provide milk and bananas to 6,000 school children, in government schools across 90 villages in Chikkaballapur Taluk.

## Launch in Chikkaballapur

- ❖ *Breakfast is the most important meal of the day and is essential for the physical and cognitive growth of a child – World Health Org.*
- ❖ Creation of Sri Sathya Sai Annapoorna Trust with the vision "**No child should go to school hungry ever!**"
- ❖ Provide **bananas** and **dairy milk** to Govt school children before start of classes
- ❖ Cover **6000 school children across Govt schools in 90 villages**
- ❖ Launched on **24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2015**



However, as you can imagine there were a number of challenges that we had to surmount during the scaling process. First, since we were utterly unfamiliar, with what lay beyond the airport, so we were not sure about where Chikkaballapur was, what was its geography, how many villages it had. And so, we had to open up maps. press Kutcha and Pucca roads and identify potential Villages whose government schools could be approached. Next to paralyze the survey efforts, because we had only a couple months and we needed to reach out to all these villages, These Villages were divided into clusters by us, based on the direction in which they lay and the roads along which these Villages may. You can see this in the slide. And then what we did next was, you know, once you identified these clusters, we actually allocated volunteers to these clusters. And in every cluster, there was an orientation about how to survey the schools and Villages, how to talk to the villagers and seek their cooperation regarding the start of pictures. Well, this was all fun in the planning part, next began the real hard practical part. And this was the visit to The Villages. So, equipped with maps and these guidelines volunteers visited villages in their clusters. In every visit, they could only cover two to three villages.

## Pre-launch Activities (1/3)

Identify villages around Muddenahalli using maps



Categorize villages into clusters based on direction and roads



Allocate volunteers to clusters and provide guidelines for survey



## Pre-launch Activities (2/3)

Volunteers visit villages in allocated cluster, and survey village & school



Volunteers convince Panchayat, SDMC members, school staff and cooks



Volunteers explore and identify local banana vendors and dairy contacts in each village



## Pre-launch Activities (3/3)

Volunteers submit report containing school and vendor details and village contacts



Orientation meet organized for school staff and cooks



Volunteers coordinate with school staff and cooks for breakfast seva launch



And because we would go early in the morning, and the schools only started at 10 am, and we had to talk to a number of people in every village, So in every visit, probably our two maybe if you're lucky about three villages, and so number of visits needed to be made as you can imagine to cover all the villages in that cluster.

So Brother in every village first, you know our volunteers would Mark the route taken to arrive at the Village because some of these Villages were really remote and we were pretty sure that, you know, the next day if we try to get back to the Village we would lose our way, so we would first, you know, Mark how we got to this village from the previous village. We would also note down the statistics related to The Village, the number of children there, the number of Teachers and cooks and then our volunteers would approach The Village panchayat members to seek their blessings, the school development management committee had for the permissions the Headmaster,s as you can see in the pictures. We talked to a number of Headmasters and the teachers in the course and informed all these key stakeholders about Our intention to start breakfast Seva for the school children. And of course, we couldn't do it without the cooperation and support of these key stakeholders. And I have to say that, we were very happy that most of these people were very supportive and appreciative. Of course, Some of them were doubtful how we would sustain this for a long time, but we would assure them of our commitment. Also, since our objective was to grow the rural economy, we had planned to Source the bananas and milk from the village itself.

## **A Practical Adventure in Faith**

There were a number of doubts and challenges, including

- Should we be doing Govt's job?
- How to convince school staff, cooks, villagers and vendors?
- How to manage the service activities while being in Bangalore?
- How to balance work and family responsibilities with this service?
- What if the milk gets spoilt? How to ensure sustainability?



So what we would do, at the end after talking to all the school staff is, we would actually go around walking in the Villages, it a field for how the village was try and locate the appropriate local banana vendor and the daily secretary, and having located them, we would talk to them and try to finalize the supply and delivery Logistics. And after every visit a volunteer would compile the report with all the school and Village details and upload it in our Logistics database so we could plan better. I also remember that we organized an orientation meet. In the second week of November for all the school staff and this is where all the reports that we created, really helped because we had all their information and we could call them all to a central place. And this was important, this orientation meet because trust could be established with all these school and School staff and Cooks. And this was necessary to ensure the smooth rollout of the program on November 24. 2015. And as well as to ensure the future sustainability of the program. And our volunteers continue to be in daily contact with them to coordinate all these key launch activities and also to ensure that once a program got launched, we would get daily feedback about the quality of milk, and the quality of the bananas. You know, we for us, it was the God in the children that we were serving and we wanted to keep the quality very high.

Now when I described so far, the generic plan and our activities, from a personal perspective brother if you were to ask me to summarize the entire episode of scaling to 90 schools. In one sentence, I would have to say, it was a practical Adventure in faith. Not a theoretical Adventure, where we can where one can think about and deliberate upon the various nuances of the word "faith", but a practical head first plunge into the void that lies Beyond Reason and why I say this is because at the outset all of us volunteers will beset with several questions.

Is it not the government's job to provide the breakfast just like the midday means , then why will we getting involved in this, how could and and and even if we wanted to do this, how could we convince the headmaster's, teachers and Cooks who had never seen us, and whom we had never met before, to sacrifice that comfort and take this extra step and support us. How could we convince the banana vendors and the daily people who were supplying milk to trust us, and without any deposit provide their goods for an entire month until and wait till the end of the month to be paid. And more critically the milk was supposed to be collected at 5 am, and heated by the cooks in the school premises but only distributed to the children at 10 AM when the classes start and this was done so that the milk doesn't get spoiled.

But if there was some mistake or error that happened, and if some child drank some spoiled milk and got sick, it would bring disrepute to us. So, how could we volunteers from Bangalore, so far manage this activity and most of us haven't seen this Villages or even Converse in the local language. How would this sustain and am able to find answers to these questions.

I would just console myself saying, maybe this activity is for others to do and I you know, how can I do this when balancing a full-time corporate job and family responsibilities? Moreover, I would never be to Village or converse with any villagers. But I have to admit brother here, and what I saw was something amazing. I saw an amazing transformation in all our volunteers, we just ordinary people. There is a popular saying, "Cometh the hour, cometh the men with Love in their hearts" and in a similar vein if I can take the liberty of altering that what I saw was verily Cometh the hour, cometh the men with love in the hearts. I saw the volunteers, who were just ordinary people, Sacrifice comfort, time, money and even their ego with utmost faith and conviction in this Noble work.

***“Cometh the hour, cometh the men with  
love in their hearts”***

❖ Mere mortals transformed into spiritual powerhouses



And this transformation was such that mere mortals became spiritual powerhouses inspiring teachers, Headmasters, cooks and students. I am sure none of these volunteers imagined that all this change and transformation would happen in them.

And as I recollect this amazing phase, the very powerful words uttered by our Master Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba come to mind, and he said, "If not at this time, it won't happen at any other time. If not here, It won't happen anywhere else. And if not this way, it won't happen any other way". And this is how the start of Annapoorna happened in 2015 in Chikkaballapur and by providing bananas and milk to 6,000 children across government schools in the 1980s. In Conclusion, I would also like to share some personal experiences during this October-November time frame. The thing is I had so many doubts about my commitment. But it was amazing to see how everything just worked out and I could be actively involved.

## **Expansion to 90 schools**

***"If not at this time, it won't happen at any other time.  
If not here, it won't happen anywhere else.  
If not this way, it won't happen any other way"***

***- Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba***



For starters, my work laptop suddenly stopped working one day, and so my leave got approved at work, and I could easily take a few days off, to visit Villages and talk to villagers, to initiate the breakfast seva. I used to wonder the two-and-a-half-hour drive from Bangalore to Chikballapur and back, you know, it would cause back problems and neck problems, but these kinds of problems and any self-doubts that were remaining were Swept Away by search of energy and confidence. each visit to Village, rejuvenated us ,as though our blood had become a new, you know, and the faces of the children, you know, we would meet them and in the faces of the children would continue to linger in our minds even after we returned to Bangalore and actually motivated us to continue ourselves.

## Glimpses of pre-launch activities



Volunteers visited 90 schools & interacted with school staff, cooks and children



Attachment to comfort, money, sleep was just disappearing naturally and the hardest of all You know, the attachment to Ego our own personal opinions, our ideas were nullified for the Love for God and the thought that we are serving God in all these children. Though in reality today, I can share whether that it was for our own good that we were doing. And my denouement, if I can use that word, happened on D-Day November 24th. Until that time, we had planned well and we thought we were on top of things and we had done it all very well. On that early morning, I was supposed to transport thousands of bananas in a vehicle to schools in 22 Villages, and there was a set route.

## Launch Day – 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2015



And had optimized the route and so much planning had gone in, when, something had not expected happened, the vehicle broke down in the middle of nowhere. We are surrounded by beautiful mountains and ponds on any other day and would have enjoyed the view but on that day, I was feeling extremely helpless and that there's a little place because there was not a soul inside early in the morning to help fix the vehicle. I realized we were going to be severely delayed in delivering the bananas. I felt extremely disheartened. And, I felt sad thinking, imagining the faces of all those children who would be expecting bananas between them. And so I did what anybody else would have probably done.

I closed my eyes. I uttered a small heartfelt prayer to God and I said, Oh God!! please help us here. Maybe some do worship and ego has arisen in me, because of which we are stuck here. But please let my ego not come the way of our children receiving these bananas. Please help us, and with this thought I gave up trying to do anything about it, and just completely sat inside the vehicle and surrendered to the consulate. And when the feeling of the doer ship collapsed, you know and the driver just tried the ignition for one last time, the vehicle immediately started miraculously. There are many miraculous wonderful experiences we had during this phase.

But one thing we all learned is that when the objective is noble and selfless the whole universe comes forward to help sustain it. I want to actually repeat this because I want to encourage those who are in the audience listening to us and whom I want to do the selfless activities, but are worried, that please don't worry just dive deep into it, and the Universe would support it. And I would like to pause here brother and I know we have Santosh and Vibhav, our other speakers who are also part of our core volunteers' group. And I am sure the audience would like to hear their perspective and experiences as well. So once again, thank you very much Krishna Mohan brother for inviting me. And over to you brother, Sairam. Thank you, Girish, for taking us to your personal Journey with Annapoorna in 2015. And God experiences you had on multiple occasions proves that Annapoorna is designed for bigger growth in future years. Certainly, an inspiration to many youngsters and also others who want to make a visible change in the society. Your personal transformation journey of, Letting Go and letting God, is exciting and hope and pray that God gives you enough strength to carry his mission forward. Thank you very much Girish. That was a wonderful presentation.

## Launch Day – 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2015



## Launch Day – 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 2015



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Now, let me call upon brother Santosh Allath, to share his perspective. Now, let me call upon brother Santosh Allath, to share his perspective. Santosh is a chemical engineer by profession with an MBA in operations management. It has 14 years of work experience in the manufacturing industry. However, you chose to follow his heart to serve His Master. He is currently the national manager of Annapoorna trust and oversees and executes its expansion plans. Santosh it's all yours.

## Santosh Allath



- Chemical Engineer and MBA
- 14 years of experience in Manufacturing industry.
- National Manager of Annapoorna Trust



Sairam Everyone, Thank you so much for the warm welcome. Am very happy to be part of this webinar today. My journey with Annapurna started in the year 2012 when I first visited Doddabele village. I Was very impressed with the activities there and I made sure that I volunteered whenever I could find time. The next breakfast seva started in Vinayak Nagar. I also enthusiastically joined the breakfast service there. I used to feel quite fortunate, to serve God in the form of these tiny tots. Later on, I joined JP Nagar breakfast service because it was close to my place. One experience I would like to get here. Since the breakfast seva was being done in an open area, volunteers used to get one to two liters of drinking water in case the children had forgotten to get them.

It so happened, one day I traveled half the distance when I realized that I'd forgotten the water bottle dual mentality setting, but ultimately based on my inner conscience, prompted me to go back and get the water bottle. To my utter disbelief, that day, none of the children had got a water bottle and the entire water bottle got empty. This incident made me realize that God is always there with us to remind us whenever we undertake such selfless service.

From 2012 to early 2015 We had expanded to nine breakfast centers. When I heard about the breakfast service being expanded to 90 more schools, I had mixed emotions. Being part of breakfast service for the last three years, I was very eager to expand the breakfast service to reach out to more children. I personally realized that I derived a lot of joy and internal satisfaction while doing the breakfast seva. Specifically, the way the children would curiously look at us. They eagerly ate the food being served. Sparkle in their eyes and the happiness in the faces, when they eat breakfast. Observing the impact on their health would give me immense satisfaction. However, the sudden expansion to 90 schools seemed impossible to my mind. But my faith in Swami's words, "You take one step towards me. I shall take 100 steps towards you" made me realize that if the purpose is selfless, God's Grace will be overflowing and definitely there will be success.

Fortunately, for me in 2015, I had a lot of flexibility in my job, which helped me participate in this activity. Now if I look back, I can definitely tell that it was all Divinely ordained. "Paropakaraarthan Idam Shareeram" , this body has been given to serve others. In the months of October and November along with two dedicated volunteers, I visited many villages and interacted with many teachers and Headmasters about the start of breakfast Seva in the form of bananas and milk.

## Destiny had this in store

- ❖ Divinely ordained to be a part this activity
- ❖ **Paropakaraartham Idam Shareeram: This body has been given to serve others.**



## First Breakfast Seva center - Doddabele



## First breakfast seva center-Doddabele



## Second Breakfast center Vinayaknagar



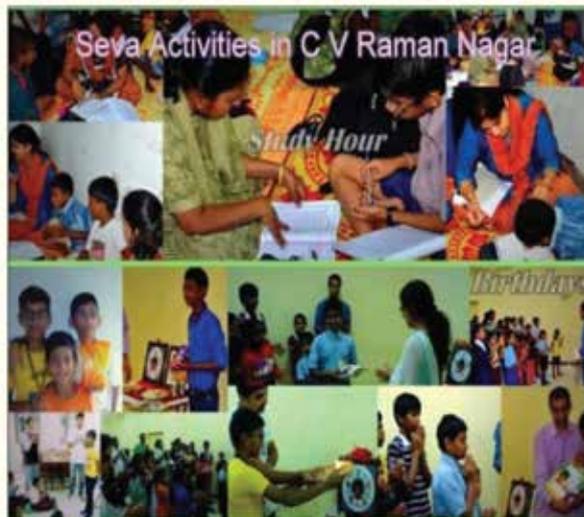
## JP Nagar breakfast Seva



## Serving Breakfast with Care!



## C V Raman Nagar Seva



From 2012 to early 2015 – some more breakfast centers were born



There were many like-minded vendors, especially in Mottaluru village ensured, who assured us that the bananas were of good quality would be given and that to a lower cost. Even the HM of the Thippenahalli village was very kind enough and Cooperative to deliver the bananas to the school by taking it from the Bender. I have many nice experiences during the survey of villages. Most of the villagers were remote and in interior region and was quite an adventure to find them. It so happened at one day. I it was hot afternoon and when we found that we were lost. And we were in an isolated area. We are trying to reach out to someone but could not find anyone and finally we decided we should get back. Immediately, person came from nowhere and guided us to the next Village. This showed that whenever of intent is pure, the forces of nature will come into action. Many times, the roads were also not good. But I wouldn't mind that since I really enjoyed interacting with the teachers and the school children.

## Executing on Ground

- ❖ Survey of finding villages
- ❖ Interaction with Teachers and HM's
- ❖ Govt approvals via a MOU
- ❖ Children looking around for their first meal- Mid day meals.



While most of the teachers were accommodative and open to the idea of breakfast service, Somewhere also quite anxious about the possible questions arising out of the paper of seva. With full faith in God, I used to assure them that our volunteers would take care of all the logistics and any problems or problems which would arise. We were also already in the process of getting government approvals via MOU. We only wanted their support and cooperation. And volunteers do all the remaining work. Many teachers were also appreciative that the Annapoorna volunteers are coming all the way from Bangalore to serve their children at the remote villages.

This helped from a strong trust relationship between Annapoorna volunteers and the school staff. Personally, I really enjoyed talking to the school children. Casually, I would enquire what they have for breakfast. I realized that many of the children were coming on empty stomachs. And every time they would be looking around at the clock for a lunch hour to arrive so that they can have their first meal of the day in the form of midday meals.

This really moved me, and made me more convinced that this breakfast is really needed for these children so that they can focus on the studies at school. As we started the breakfast seva at every school, we used to tell the children that we wanted to serve them bananas and milk, at the first,(early morning time) when they came to school .We were very happy and to see them enthusiasm in the children, that they turned up to school on time ,every day without fail to have this simple meal, which we wanted to offer. We heard about brothers Girish and Ashish, speaking about the transformation in the children and the caterer. But, here I would like to say that, due to the breakfast seva an immense transformation has happened in me.

That is, it has increased my patience and reduced my ego. As a parting thought, I would like to share these beautiful words from the Divine Master Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, "For the hands, the Real Decoration or Adoration is Charity". Thank you, Jai Sairam.

**For the Hands,the Real Decoration  
or Adoration is Charity.**

**Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**



Thank you, Santosh, for that wonderful perspective and the operational challenges you encountered during those initial days of scaling up. What a journey it was! Hats off to you and others involved at the time. For the faith and courage, you had in yourselves while chatting into unknown territories. Your chemical engineering background has certainly helped you to establish seamless chemistry with various government agencies headmasters and teachers of schools and most importantly, the children. Thank you, Santosh, for your inputs.

## First day of expansion to 90 schools



## First day of expansion to 90 villages



❖ Bananas and Milk



The last speaker for this evening is Mr. Vibhav. Like me, he is an alumni of Sri Satya Sai educational institutions. He is an Electronics and Communications Engineer from RVC Bangalore. He has 11 years of work experience in semiconductor industry, with global giants like Synopsis, Broadcom and, before being bitten by the volunteerism bug, Vibhav I am sure, Seva is a natural part of your life as per your Master's message, "Love All Serve All". Can you now share your part of the scaling of the story at Annapurna, From 9 to 90, and the small incidents which touched your life and transformed you from a part-time volunteer to your full-time volunteer. Over to you Vibhav. Thank you, Krishna brother. Thank you very much. Hello everyone. It's a great opportunity and I am very happy to share my very satisfying experience I had with Annapoorna in the year 2015. In 2015, I attended a youth meeting where youth volunteers had organized this event.

## Vybhava S



- ❖ Alumnus of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions.
- ❖ Electronics and Communications Engineer from RVCE, Bangalore.
- ❖ 11 years experience in semiconductor industry.--- Synopsys, Broadcom and Qualcomm.
- ❖ An active Annapoorna Volunteer and Coordinator of e1e1 foundation



And youth from many countries have participated in this program. I too was fortunate to be the participant. On the last day of the event, the Youth presented the breakfast program which they were doing since 2015. I saw the presentation very carefully with the great details. I was amazed by their dedication to the program, which was benefiting the school growing needy children. What I saw in those volunteers was significant. The cause was larger than their own career and family. Unity among the volunteers, total commitment towards the cause, responsibility to work the society. Last but not the least, the team has sustained the program for more than three years, which is amazing, which is highly significant!! I realized immediately, that here this is a platform to serve the society which may not come again.

The secret of success is to be ready



when your opportunity comes.



In the same year, the breakfast severity was starting this program in 9 different places in Bangalore. I joined JP Nagar breakfast Seva, which was happening in one of the slums. Before going to the Seva, I was very clear that this seva is for my own transformation, where need is cool going children will get benefit of the fact. With that in mind, what I wanted to ensure was that I should sustain this program for a longer duration of time. Because sustaining any good work requires a lot of commitment. So, with these points in mind I started going to Seva. The volunteers who came for Seva, are all from a very good background. Most of them are from Engineers, Doctors, Chartered Accountants and Businessmen. They are all of a similar mindset. Fortunately, I was able to sustain in the Seva for more than six months. After doing this seva for more than six months, I went through a significant transformation.

I was able to overcome many personal problems and obstacles. I was able to connect with the children naturally. I was able to unitedly work with the people and do Seva. Last but not the least, my strength - faith in God strengthened. As the program grew and spread, many senior youths in the breakfast seva team were starting a similar program in 90 government schools in remote villages. I heard about this program. The moment I heard about this program, I started inquiring about it. What is this all about? They explained to me that it is a program where needy school children will be served milk and banana. The project specification was highly demanding. It has to be a decentralized model. Complete benefit should go to the villagers and Village children. And it should be started within a span of four months.

## Breakfast Seva Presentation in YOUTH meet



1. Cause is bigger than career and family
2. Unity among the volunteers
3. Total commitment towards the cause
4. Responsibility towards the society
5. The team's consistent efforts to have sustained the program for more than three years



With the six months of experience in JPNagar Seva, and the bonding with the volunteers the way it has evolved, I was very sure that even this will be successful. With that confidence, I jumped into the program. We started doing surveys in villages around the surrounding Muddenahalli. Villages were located very deep inside the forest. In many villages buses were going only twice a day.

## JP Nagar Breakfast program



- Unity among the volunteers
- Natural connect with children
- Faith in GOD



## Breakfast in 90 govt. schools around Muddenahalli



- Decentralized
- Benefit should reach to the village children and villagers
- Villagers should run day to day operations

“This is testimony to what unit among youth can achieve”



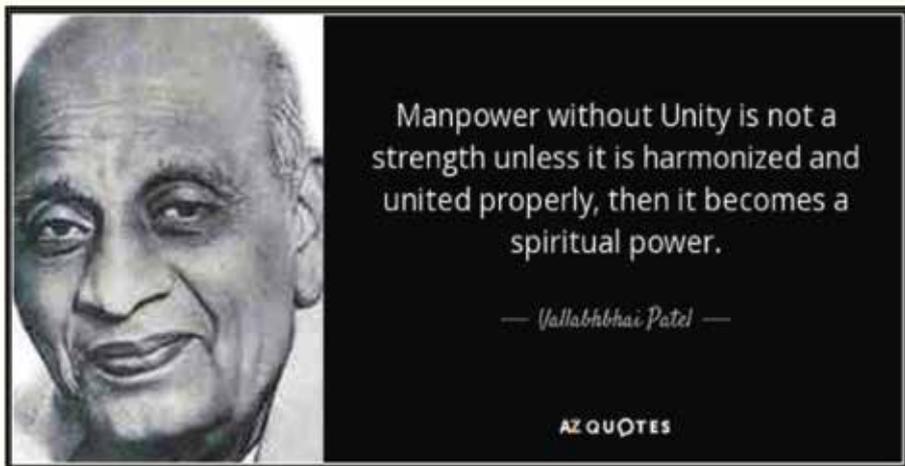
## Breakfast in 90 govt. schools around Muddenahalli



While doing this survey in these kinds of government schools, in these kinds of villages, the headmaster told us that many children come to school without breakfast. And we observed children in most of the government schools. They are all malnourished. After hearing this, we are all shocked. and many of us we all discussed and myself, my focus towards the cost sharpened. We continue doing the survey, and we overcome many obstacles.

One of the big challenges we work and make successful was that, make the program completely decentralized, where all the benefits will go to the Villages. And we will be coordinating from the cities. By God's grace, we were able to launch the program on 24th, November 2015 having overcome all challenges encountered. This model later became the foundation for the breakfast seva program and started spreading across different districts of Karnataka. Slowly penetrated in several other states in India, now, it is spreading across the world.

Dear friends, this is a testimony to what Unity among youth can achieve, I repeat, "This is the testimony to what Unity among youth can achieve". As Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel said, "Manpower without Unity is not a strength unless it is harmonized and United properly, then it becomes the spiritual power". See this 9 to 90 Breakfast Seva program is a testimony to this quote. One of my experiences that I would like to share is, from the village Gauchenahalli, where majority of the children are from the below poverty line. During one of my visits to the Village during the breakfast seva time, I was talking to the Headmaster, how is the program going? Are there any challenges? Is there any help required, Is the vendor supporting properly? And we continued our discussion. Then the Headmaster told me, "Sir, please observe children carefully". And I was looking at the children and they are very very very focused while eating biscuit and milk. And they are very very happy. And then the Headmaster told me that "Sir, this is more than a luxury for many of the children here.



## Gowchenahalli



First day of their meetings in the government and after having the midday meal many of them go back and may not have dinner. They again come next evening empty stomach". The moment after hearing this I decided, then and there that, for the rest of my life, I want to commit to this cause. Dear friends, having volunteered in this cause, I realized that we can make a huge difference in a society, with a small act of kindness and selflessness. Many of us are of the notion that we have to spend lots of money, We have to spend a lot of time, we have to do it after retirement, But, that is not the case, We have to start now, the moment we feel or hear about the good work. Good work is God's work. Hence, it is our work. As Baba said "Engage yourself in a service activity. Consider service to mankind as a service to God. This is the best way to love God and Serve God and Love all Serve All", thank you. Thank you all.



**Good work is  
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**Engage yourselves in service activities.  
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serve God. Love all serve all**

**- Baba**



Thank you Vibhav for enlightening us on what it takes to work on the ground too in rural India. It was amazing to see the days of hard work, you and others at the time have put in, to make Annapoorna what it is today. Your passion is worth noting. Selfless volunteers like you are the backbone of Annapoorna. We look forward to many more years of volunteering at Annapoorna. It was such a feeling of Joy listening to you. Thank you so much. Thank you to all the panellists. It was a wonderful session. It was great pleasure, hosting all of you and listening to your wonderful stories of practical spirituality. I am sure the audience would have got inspired as much as I am.

In fact, taking inspiration from such unassuming volunteers, like you, I myself started a breakfast program with a handful of volunteers from Bihar and Jharkhand. In 2018, in a small way with 30 children, in a village Today we served nearly 1300 children in 11 schools. What started as a breakfast program has now blossomed into a full-time education Revolution with the participation of Tata steel CSR and Tata Pro engage. Thanks to the Tatas for supporting us. If Annapoorna is serving today, daily breakfast to file like children in 17 States and three union territories, it is all because of the Zeal with which a handful of volunteers like you, who work selflessly to make the world of our Master, a reality. Annapoorna is a perfect example of collaboration between Sarkar, the government, Samaj, the schools and the villagers, and Samstha, the Annapoorna Trust. 2015 is truly a foundation year for Annapoorna.

## Annapoorna in Bihar & Jharkhand

- ❖ Started in Apr 2018 with 30 students
- ❖ Currently serving nearly 1300 students in 7 schools in Jharkhand and 4 schools in Bihar
- ❖ Got Govt permission to start SaiSure distribution as a pilot for children in one block each in Bihar and Jharkhand.



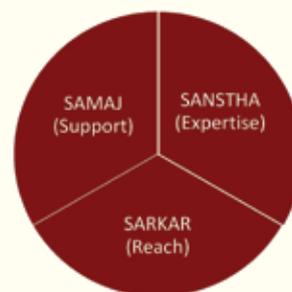
## Annapoorna Bihar & Jharkhand Story

- ❖ Periodic Medical Check up camps
- ❖ Infrastructure upgradation
- ❖ Computer Education through Tata Steel Foundation
- ❖ Weekly Professional coaching by Tata ProEngage Volunteers



## Annapoorna's 3S principle

Advocates the role of Sarkar (Government), Samstha (Good Institutions) & Samaja (Society & Individuals at large) in tackling large scale, and often, vexing problems in the country today.



## True Sacrifice

- Time is never a constraint if there is a will to serve others
- Na Karmana Na Prajya Dhanena Thyage Naike Amrutatva Manashuhu  
– Through Sacrifice alone one can attain immortality



I salute you panelists for such dedication and commitment, day after day, for more than five years. If there is one takeaway for all of us, it is the time management from these young professionals. They have collectively proved that time is never a constraint if there is a will to serve others. "Na Karmana Na Prajaya Dhanena Thyage Naike Amrutatva Manashuhu", which means, by service alone, One can attain immortality. Your service of time, energy and Comforts sums up your Annapoorna Journey. Thank you all from around the world for your time and patience for having joined us to listen to those wonderful panellists. Before I sign off, let me alert you on our next webinar series. Which is scheduled for 2nd, October on Gandhi Jayanti day at 8 pm. Thank you. Once again. Stay safe, Wear mask and Maintain Social distancing. Have a great evening.