

**ASSESSMENT**  
*and*  
**EVALUATION**  
**COMMITTEE**  

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**REPORT**

**1962**

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**KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL TRUST  
KASTURBAGRAM INDORE**

Report  
of  
**The Assessment & Evaluation Committee**

**KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL TRUST**

*Published by:*

**Kasturba Gandhi  
National Memorial  
Trust**  
Kasturbagram,  
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Indore.**

To,

Lady Premlila V. Thackersey,  
Chairman, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust,  
Kasturbagram, Distt. Indore, M.P.

Dear Lady Thackersey,

*The Trustees of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust were pleased to appoint this Committee to review the past 15 years' national service of the Trust and to suggest future plans of work. It is a proud privilege to be associated with the work and be of some service to the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, founded by the people of India under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. We are happy to submit today the Report embodying our recommendations based on the information supplied by the Provincial Pratinidhis and the Central Office of the Trust and our investigations during our tours.*

*In the course of our review we felt that though the Trust Deed and organisational matters arising out of it do not form part of our terms of reference, we should in the light of the changed circumstances suggest liberal interpretation of the main objects of the Trust.*

*With the formation of the Social Welfare Board and C. D. Projects the major part of the Kasturba work in the rural areas have been recognised and taken up by them. The Trust in view of its objectives of serving the lowliest and the lost amongst women and children, should turn its attention to the poorest in the urban areas also.*

*We have also emphasised that the Trust, instead of duplicating the activities of the C. S. W. B. and C. D. Project should work to bring about a social revolution in the rural areas by Shanti Sena and Gramswarai movements.*

*India of 1962 is very different from India of 1945. There are the new challenges and new demands. Therefore, it is natural, that the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust which played a vital role in developing women leadership, revises its programme of training and work.*

*Based on the experiences of the creditable service done by the Trust during the last 15 years, the Committee has suggested a programme of training and work to suit the present national conditions stressing the need to develop the Adivasi areas and very backward pockets in even well developed states and also laying greater emphasis on economic programme and on national integration.*

*On behalf of the members of the Assessment Committee and myself I would like to thank you and the Trustees for giving us this opportunity. It has proved instructive and educative to us. We also thank the staff of the Trust and numerous friends and co-workers who helped us unreservedly.*

*Pujya Kasturba was the symbol of Indian womanhood. She showed the way how with a will and dedication, an illiterate village woman can participate in the struggle for Independence and serve the people standing shoulder to shoulder with the tallest of men. We have every hope that, like her, Indian women will face to the challenge of creating a classless and casteless society. The fond memory of Pujya Kasturba will be the guiding star and inspire the woman march steadily towards this goal.*

T. S. SOUNDARAM RAMACHANDRAN

24th October, 1962.

Chairman

Assess : 10 Evaluation Committee.

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*The Committee*

Dr. Smt. T. S. Soundram Ramachandran	(Chairman)
„ Kalawati Tripathi	(Member)
„ Malati Choudhri	„
„ Nirmala Deshpande	„
„ Pushpavati Mehta	„
Shri Banwarilal Choudhri	„
„ M. Jagannadha Rao	„
Smt. V. Rajalakshmi	„
	(Secretary)

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## INTRODUCTION

### *The Genesis*

Kasturba Gandhi passed away as a prisoner of the British Government in the Aga Khan Palace, Poona on 22nd February, 1944. Mahatma Gandhi was also in the same prison at the time. The Nation was plunged in grief. There was hardly a home in India which did not share in the bereavement of the great partner, of the gentle but heroic woman who had passed away. Kasturba's place in the life of India was second to that of none among the women in the country. The cry for a suitable memorial came from every part of India. Shri Thakkar Bapa, Shri Devadas Gandhi and a few other distinguished leaders of public opinion took the initiative in sponsoring the collection of fund in honour of Kasturba's memory. A fervent appeal was issued over the signatures of several eminent citizens drawn from different walks of life. The appeal was for a fund of Rs. 75 lakhs in view of the fact that Gandhiji was completing his seventy-fifth year on 2nd October, 1944. It should be remembered that Gandhiji was still in prison when the appeal was issued. But luckily he was released on the 6th of May, 1944. Enthusiasm and devotion ran high and contributions to the fund literally poured in from all sides. While the appeal was for Rs. 75 lakhs only, the sum collected stood at Rs. 80,05,975.77 nP. on 2nd October, 1944 and this amount was presented to Gandhiji on his seventy-fifth birthday at Sevagram by Smt. Sarojini Naidu on behalf of the nation. Subsequently the collection swelled to Rs. 130 lakhs.

It was decided under the advice of Gandhiji to form a permanent Trust to be managed by a Board of Trustees with Gandhiji himself as Chairman. The fund was to be utilised for the welfare and education of the women and children of India. Gandhiji made it clear that as the Chairman of the Trust he would guide the Trustees in determining the object of the Fund and in regulating its utilisation from time to time.

### *The Trustees and the Trust deed*

The signatories who issued the first appeal for the Memorial Fund on the 8th of March, 1944 had already appointed a Committee to organise

collections and for the subsequent management of the Fund and the same was further authorised to function as the Trustees of the Fund with power to co-opt. Shri Thakkar Bapa was secretary of the Committee and Gandhiji after his release became the Chairman of the Fund and with the co-option of ten more members—the Board of Trustees was formed with 26 members. It is these 26 members who signed as the first Trustees in the Trust Deed. The Trust Deed itself was drawn up by a committee consisting of Shri K. M. Munshi, Shri Mangaldas Pakwasa, and Shri G. V. Mavalankar. The Trust Deed was executed on the 26th November, 1944 at Bombay paying a stamp duty of Rs. 90, 067/-.

Shri A. V. Thakkar was appointed as Secretary of the Board and Gandhiji continued to be its Chairman till his passing away on 30th January, 1948. Sardar Patel and Shri G. V. Mavalankar became Chairman subsequently; the present Chairman being Smt. Premlila V. Thackersey.

As long as Gandhiji was the Chairman he insisted that no scheme of work should be started under the Trust which would in any way be inappropriate to the memory of Kasturba. In fact a proviso was inserted in the Trust Deed ( Article 3—Proviso 4 ) which said, "That the Trustees shall not during the life time of the settlor ( Gandhiji ) proceed with any scheme or plan of work in connection with the objects of the Trust which is disapproved by the settlor". Quite apart from Gandhiji's own mind on this matter, it is inconceivable that the Kasturba Trust can at any time take up a piece of work inconsistent with the ideals for which Kasturba stood.

#### *Appointment of the Assessment Committee*

It is now 18 years since this great Trust Deed was drawn up and registered. A couple of decades is not a long period in the life of the people, but in the life of an Institution it is not without its significance. The first decade or two set the tone and pace for the growth of an Institution. In such a growth introspection and critical assessment from time to time play an important part. It was, therefore, appropriate that after sixteen years of work the Kasturba Trust thought it necessary to review the work done and plan for the work yet to be done. During these sixteen years India has not stood still. This period has been full of great events in our history. Apart from the winning of Independence, we have drawn up a noble Constitution for an Independent sovereign Republic. We have taken up the task of building up the internal strength of the country through a variety of nationwide programmes. The Kasturba Trust is no longer a solitary pioneering institution but finds itself in the company of sister institutions marching towards the same goal. There are also new problems and challenges created by freedom and these have to be faced perhaps in ways not originally contemplated by the Trust. It is in such a setting that the Trust appointed an Assessment Committee to



review the work so far done and to indicate future lines of development. By their Resolution No. 6 the Board of Trustees at their meeting held on the fourteenth of January, 1960 set up an Assessment Committee consisting not only of those inside the Trust but also of eminent social workers from outside. The Assessment Committee was authorised to secure the suggestions of eminent persons representing different schools of thought in the country in regard to the future plan and programmes which the Trust should undertake in the coming years in the light of the present and future needs of the nation as a whole.

#### **Terms of Reference of the Assessment Committee**

The following are the terms of reference for the Assessment committee as approved by the Board of Trustees—

- To note the prevailing circumstances in regard to women and children in rural areas at the time of starting of the activities of the Trust and to keep in view the ideology of the Trust in working out the programme in Social Education, Health Schemes, Economic aspect etc. and,
- (1) To evaluate the work of the village centres--Gram Seva and Arogya Seva, in respect to—
    - (a) Scope covered.
    - (b) Quantum of work done.
    - (c) Change brought in the outlook of village women and children in the above fields.
    - (d) Method of work, approach and achievement.
    - (e) The attitude of the villagers during the period and what are the physical and other changes brought during the period of work ?
  - (2) To evaluate the Gram Sevika, Balwadi, Prasuti Sevika and allied training programmes with reference to the village work that they are to undertake—
    - (a) Syllabus.
    - (b) Theoretical and practical training in the institutions and field training in the villages.
    - (c) The impact on the trainees.
    - (d) The duration of training period.
    - (e) Does the training programme need changes, if so, what they are ?
  - (3) To evaluate some of the special training programmes undertaken by the Trust—
    - (a) Mukhya Sevika Training at Kasturbagram, Indore, M. P.
    - (b) Condensed Course Training of C. S. W. B. in some provinces.

- (c) Kanya Ashram or Childrens' Home in one or two provinces.
- (4) To evaluate some of the other activities run by the Trust—
- (a) Displaced Womens' Homes.
  - (b) Kushta Nivaran Nilayam Mazhavanthangal, S. Arcot District.
  - (c) Maternity Homes and General dispensaries in the Rural settings.
- (5) To give suggestions for the future working of the Trust in the light of their experiences.

#### Composition of the Committee

The Chairman of the Trust who was authorised by the Trustees invited the following persons to constitute the Committee :

1. Dr. Mrs. T. S. Soundram Ramachandran, Joint Director, Gandhigram, Distt. Madurai, Madras State ( and now the Deputy Minister of Education, Government of India ).
2. Smt. V. Kercood, Deputy Director, Women's Welfare, U. P. Government, Lucknow, U. P.
3. Smt. Kalawati Tripathi, Chairman, Bihar State Social Welfare Advisory Board, Patna, Bihar.
4. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande, Assistant Secretary, Sarva Seva Sangh, Rajghat, Kashi, (Varanashi), U. P.
5. Smt. Malti Choudhri, President, Orissa State Board, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, Angul, Orissa.
6. Dr. Sushila Nayar, M. D., M. P. ( and now Health Minister, Government of India ), New Delhi.
7. Smt. Pushpaben Mehta, Chairman, Gujarat State Social Welfare Advisory Board, Ahmedabad.
8. Shri Banwarilal Choudhri, ( Advisor for Training, K. G. N. M. Trust) Village Nitaya, Post Raisalpur, Distt. Hoshangabad, M. P.
9. Shri M. Jagannath Rao, Constructive and Social Worker, Ashram, Seetanagaram, Distt. E. Godawari, Andhra.

Dr. Mrs. T. S. Soundram Ramachandran was requested to be the Chairman of the Committee.

Dr. Sushila Nayar and Smt. V. Kercood expressed their inability to serve on the Committee.

Dr. Mrs. T. S. Soundram Ramachandran visited Kasturbagram ( Indore ), the Headquarters of the Trust in the first week of February, 1961 for holding preliminary discussions with the Head Office of the Trust. Finally the Assessment Committee was formed with such above mentioned persons

who had agreed to serve on it with Smt. V. Rajalakshmi, Secretary of the K. G. N. M. Trust as its Member—Secretary and Convenor.

### Meetings

The Committee in its first meeting held at Kasturbagram, Indore on the 17th March, 1961 formulated the questionnaire, decided the technique and method of assessment and drew up the tentative programme of its work. Work was allotted to individual members on a zonal basis as under:

Members	Zone
1. Dr. Mrs. Soundram Ramachandran	Kerala, Mysore, Tamilnad and Kasturba Kushta Nivaran Nilayam, Mazhavanthangal.
2. Smt. Malti Devi Choudhri	Assam, Orissa and West Bengal.
3. Smt. Kalawati Tripathi	Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.
4. Smt. Pushpaben Mehta	Gujarat, Karnatak, Maharashtra and Vidarbha.
5. Shri Jagannath Rao	Andhra, Hyderabad and Orissa.
6. Shri Banwarilal Choudhri	Delhi, Himachal, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
7. Shri Nirmala Deshpande	Faridabad Home for displaced persons.

Due to practical difficulties a number of changes in the tour programmes of the members became necessary which are recorded below—

- (a) Kerala was visited by Shri Banwarilal Choudhri in place of Dr. Mrs. Soundram Ramachandran.
- (b) Tamilnad was visited by Dr. Soundram Ramachandran and was assisted by Shri Jagannath Rao.
- (c) On account of indisposition of Smt. Kalawati Tripathi, Uttar Pradesh was visited by Smt. Nirmala Deshpande and Shri Banwarilal Choudhri.

Karnatak could not be visited by the concerned Member of the Assessment Committee due to her preoccupations.

The Committee in its second meeting at Saswad (Poona) on 24th September, 1961 finalised a list of 60 persons from all over the country to form Local Assessment Committees to assist the zonal members in the overall assessment and evaluation of work. By this arrangement the Committee was able to get a picture of the work in many places through the service and co-operation of a good number of friends.

It was also decided in this meeting that the tours by the zonal members should be completed and reports submitted by the 15th December, 1961.

The Trust desired the Committee to finalise and submit its report by 2nd October, 1961 so that it could be discussed in the meetings of the Pratinidhis and the Executive Committee which was to be held in March, 1962 at the time of the All India Conference of the Trust workers (which however was not held at that time). But it was not possible to do so because of the vast area to be covered and the detailed nature of the work. A *via-media* in the form of "Interim Recommendations" was, therefore, considered necessary. Accordingly the Committee met for the 3rd time at Kasturbagram during the last week of December 1961, when recommendations pertaining to the various aspects of the working of the Trust were drawn and presented on 30th December, 1961 personally to the Chairman of the Trust who came specially to meet the Chairman and other members of the Committee.

This third meeting was quite important. By that time the members were able to finish most of their tours and were thus able to exchange their impressions of the Trust work. The outlines of the final report were also considered and approved. The Drafting Committee assisted by the Central Office of the K. G. N. M. Trust was directed to prepare the Draft Report.

The fourth meeting took place at the New Delhi residence of the Chairman of the Committee Dr. Mrs. T. S. Soundram Ramachandran from 23rd to 24th June, 1962 and the interim recommendations of the Assessment Committee were further scrutinised and then finalised.

The fifth final meeting was held at Kasturbagrams Indore on 24th October, 1962. It was this meeting which went through the whole report and approved and adopted it. All the recommendations as contained in the report were also approved fully.

#### *Method of Assessment*

The questionnaire was sent to nearly 400 institutions, organisations and individuals. As the work of the Trust except for a few of the Training Centres, is mostly in small and remote villages, it had remained long without any publicity. Even so, a good number of thoughtful replies were received.

The Pratinidhis and the Central Office of the Trust furnished exhaustive material on the progress of work during the last 17 years.

The notes suggesting the future plan of work submitted early by Miss Mridula Sarabhai and Shri Dharendra Mazumdar to the Trust were placed before the Committee and they were invited for personal discussions. Only Miss Mridula Sarabhai could come. The detailed discussions with her together with the notes were considered while drafting the 'Interim Recommendations'.

The most important work was the visits to the Centres of the Trust when the assessors gained clear knowledge of the detailed work carried in the

villages and at the training centres. Three to four centres were selected in each province and the zonal members visited the same in company with the Local Assessment Committee Members.

In order to get a correct picture of the work rendered by Kasturba Centres, the Zonal Member alongwith the Local Assessment Committee met and discussed the work of the Centres with the staff, the Local Advisory Committees, prominent villagers and representatives of other agencies. On the basis of such studies the Zonal members gave their evaluation of the work and also formulated suggestions.

## STUDY OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE TRUST

Expounding his views of the objectives of the Trust Gandhiji said in July, 1944 that "Kasturba was a simple woman devoted to village life, actually living and serving among villages. The objects of the Fund should, therefore, very properly be the welfare of village women and children". In conformity with it the Trustees agreed to restrict the use of the Fund "For the welfare and education of poor and needy women and children in the rural areas of India".

He further elaborated his ideas and said that education meant Basic Education as promoted by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. Development and encouragement of primary education was therefore included in the Deed. The use of the Fund in towns and cities or in education abroad or even at the University level in India was excluded.

Gandhiji was clear in his mind that alongwith the welfare and education of women should be included the welfare and education of children, meaning girls of any age but of boys, below the age of seven. At first the age limit of male children for the purpose had been fixed at 12. But it was pointed out that in that case boys would get a disproportionate share, leaving the girls at a disadvantage and so the age limit for boys was reduced to 7 years.

At Gandhiji's instance the scope of the Fund was primarily restricted to needy and poor women in rural areas. The villages to be served should be comparatively poor and small, not exceeding 2,000 in population.

Gandhiji, who stood for the whole of humanity, was still more anxious and solicitous about the fate and plight of those who were most neglected and down-trodden. In his scheme of Sarvodaya, Antyodaya had priority over others and this line of thinking is clearly visible in defining and fixing the precise objects of the Trust.

It appears, Gandhiji specifically desired to establish institutions to be named 'Kasturba Sadans' for housing, maintaining and educating indigent

and destitute women and children of all communities in India, with a view to their social, moral and economic advancement and in order that they may earn an honest living. He envisaged a string of such Sadans all over India, from Central to Provincial, District and Tehsil levels. We do not find a specific reference to such a scheme in the Trust Deed, except for the words "Homes for women and/or children in the rural areas in India", in Section ii of clause 3 (b). In the clause dealing with the objects, we also note the omission of the word "Basic Education", though in the first appeal issued on 8th March, 1944 it is clearly mentioned that the funds to be collected should be used in the case of educational work for Basic Education.

Clause 3 (b) of the Trust Deed has laid down the following objectives of the Trust:

"Subject to the provisions of sub-clause (a) of this clause and the first, second, third and fourth provisions hereafter set forth, the Trustee shall hold the Trust Fund upon trust so that the income thereof and if necessary the corpus of any part thereof shall be used for all or any of the following charitable objects and purposes —

- (i) Conduct and promotion of such charitable activities as would conduce to the general welfare of the conditions of poor and needy women and children in the rural areas in India.
- (ii) Establishment and maintenance of Hospitals and Charitable Dispensaries for women and children, Maternity Homes, Child Welfare Centres and Institutions of similar nature and such as ante-natal and post-natal clinics, convalescent homes, sanatoria, leper colonies, etc. Homes for women and/or children in the rural areas in India.
- (iii) The provision of sanitary facilities for women and children and promoting of preventive measures affecting the health of women and children in the rural areas of India.
- (iv) Promotion and encouragement of primary education, training in handicrafts, cottage industries and other useful crafts and arts amongst the women and children in the rural areas in India.
- (v) The training of women for carrying out any of the aforesaid activities.
- (vi) Rendering help by grant and contribution to any existing institutions which have been carrying out or undertaking to carry on in the Rural areas of India work falling within all or any of the objects mentioned in the above sub-clauses (i) to (v) hereof for the purpose of carrying out any of the aforesaid objects.

- (vii) Any other activity incidental or germane to the aforesaid objects.

The assessment Committee in its questionnaire had invited opinion on whether the foregoing objects of the Trust need any change, amendment or modification or new interpretation in view of the changed national context and the Welfare State taking up social welfare and rural community development as an integral and important part of its work? Any such change proposed should, of course, be in consonance with the spirit underlying the Trust and the main objectives with which it was formed.

The consensus of opinion seems to be that the general objects are sufficiently wide and comprehensive to allow various kinds of social work for the welfare of women and children in rural areas and that no change is necessary. However a few modifications in the working of the Fund have been suggested (1) raising the age of a male child from 7 to 14 or atleast 12, (2) the inclusion of the poorest sections in urban areas among the beneficiaries of the Trust, and (3) enlarging the shape of 'promotion and encouragement of education' to the college level for girls in rural areas, polytechnic institute and socio-economic projects of the Government for women training and production in handicrafts and cottage industries etc.

It was also felt by some that the present work of the Trust is a mere duplication of the activities of the Social Welfare Board and the Community Development Wing of the Welfare State. Therefore a suggestion has been made that the Trust should work to bring about a social revolution in the rural areas by Shanti Sena and Gramswaraj movements.

This Committee is of view that while duplication of work should certainly be avoided, particularly in a poor country like ours where there is dearth and paucity of money as well as workers, it should not be forgotten that Voluntary Agencies undertaking social and educational work will long continue to have a definite place and serve a significant purpose in a Welfare State. They pioneer new fields of work and find out new avenues of approach. They form an ideal link between the Government and the public. We therefore, feel that the Trust should retain its present objects but can and must widen its scope of work in response to changed conditions and needs. Shanti Sena and Gramswaraj and Antyodya even now do find a place in the present work of the Trust as far as they relate to women and children. The tempo of work has, however, to be raised in the direction of greater awakening of women and making them fearless, self-reliant and strong to enable them to take their rightful place in building a just and peaceful social order.

With the progress of girls education and their social status, we think that the age limit for a male child to come under the scope of the



Trust may be raised to 12. As regards enlarging the scope of "promotion and encouragement of education", practical consideration must weigh and it should also be kept in mind that the Trust is not wholly an educational society though from the very start education of women and children was given a very prominent place. The services of the poorest sections like slum-dwellers etc., of urban areas did not find a place in the scope of work of the Trust probably because Gandhiji wanted the Trust to go out into remote areas, which were utterly neglected and which did not catch the eye of the rich and philanthropic town dweller. He might have sensed that there were enough persons and institutions to work in the towns and cities while no one listened to the far cry of the poor neglected villages. It is this that impelled the Trust to go to remote inaccessible rural areas in the spirit of service and love and thus play pioneer's part at that level. But changing times and needs may sometimes require a different emphasis and a widening of the field. We must now, therefore, turn our attention to the poorest in the urban areas also. Now that Social Welfare Organisations and other official and non-official agencies have turned their attention to rural areas, and to the slums in cities and towns, there is also the need for training more workers in this new field.

Perhaps these considerations coupled with the advice of Vinobaji, made the Trust take up such work as an experiment in Indore City and also for running a training centre at Sarania Ashram ( Gauhati ) for workers to serve in slum areas.

We feel that this expansion of the scope of our work is well covered by a liberal interpretation of the main objects of Trust and do not call for any major change in the Trust Deed.

### III

## ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

### *Board of Trustees*

In the Trust the Board of Trustees stand at the apex of the organisation. They are appointed for life. They are the final authority in all matters of policy and administration.

### *Holding Trustees and the Executive Committee:*

The Kasturba Trust has considerable properties of different types. Their day-to-day management and administration on sound and fruitful lines necessitated the setting up of the Holding Trustees. The properties were therefore vested in the individual names of Holding Trustees, who cannot be more than six and who were given specific powers and additional responsibilities in this behalf.

### *Executive Committee*

Next to the Board of Trustees is the Executive Committee consisting of a maximum of nine members elected at annual ordinary meeting of the Trustees from among themselves, besides the Chairman, Vice-chairman, and the Secretary of the Trust who are *ex-officio* members. It retires at the end of its term which is generally one year but functions until its successor is appointed.

The rules do not permit non-Trustees to be elected or co-opted to the Executive Committee. However, two Pratinidhis are selected each year and invited to the meeting of the Executive Committee.

### *Chairman and Vice-Chairman*

Mahatma Gandhi was the first Chairman of the Board of Trustees. As settlor he had overriding powers and authority which the subsequent chairmen did not possess. Under the constitution, the Chairman or Vice-chairman of the Trust need not play an active executive role. It all depends

on their personalities and grip over affairs of the Trust to mould and shape the trust policies and programmes as far as they are able. They are elected by the Trustees from among themselves for the period as decided and fixed from time to time, though generally the term is kept at three years.

### *Secretary*

The status and functions of the Secretary has been fully defined in the Trust Deed. In actual practice, however, a good deal has depended upon the persons occupying this place and the nature of the work then going. For instance we find that during the collection of the Funds there were two Joint Secretaries when Thakkar Bapa was the Secretary. There was also an Organising Secretary sometimes after. Later the Organising Secretary was designated as Deputy Secretary for a brief period. The present position is that there is a Secretary with an Office Secretary who has continued all the time.

Till some years ago some of the Members of the Board of Trustees, Advisory Medical Board and Local Advisory Boards (where they functioned) shared the work of touring and inspecting the training and village centres. This is hardly true now. The result is that the work of the Secretary has become heavier. This points to the necessity for a measure of decentralisation of responsibility at this level. We think it would be good to have two regional Organising Secretaries to assist the Secretary who may be put in-charge of Northern and Southern regions. It should be possible to lay down clearly their functions and their relationship to the Secretary and her Office.

### *Advisory Medical Board*

In order to advise the Trust in its medical policy and the specific health schemes the Trustees at their meeting held on 5th November, 1944 authorised Gandhiji to appoint an Advisory Medical Board. Accordingly the Chairman constituted a Board of 23 medical persons representing all schools of medicine. It had an Executive of eight besides a still smaller Examination Committee of three. The Board of nine members is still in existence though it has practically ceased to function.

### *Provincial Branches:*

The Provinces under the Trust Deed are "Such units of India as may be prescribed by the Executive Committee". For facility of administration and work, the unilinguistic principle was more or less followed by them. The Indian States had separate Governments at that time under different rulers and were therefore treated as separate provinces. This arrangement has been amended partly only recently.

*Pratinidhis*

Provincial and District Committees were first formed in 1944 for collection of funds. After the fund collection, it became necessary to create provincial organisation for starting and conducting the work. Provincial Committees, however, were formed everywhere except in N. W. F. Province and the Indian State of Hyderabad, for in these two areas the funds collected were not very large. The preliminary term of these committees was fixed as the end of the year 1945.

Shri Pyarelalji in his 'Mahatma Gandhi--last Phase' says that "Passionate sufferagist that he was, he insisted on the Executive of the organisation being composed exclusively of women. They should have the right, he explained, to ill-manage and mismanage an organisation which would be their own. It did not matter if women were ill-governed so long as they were self-governed. They must be taken out of the leading strings of men".

Writing in 'Harijan' of July 21st 1946, Gandhiji said "In the first instance, Provincial Committees were formed of both men and women members. Later, it was felt that it was women's work and should be run, as far as possible, by women agents. By such a course of action it is sought to give the requisite confidence to women workers, so that the responsibility of running the organisation eventually comes into their hands. All this must take time. There are difficulties to surmount but it is hoped that ultimately the work will grow and women will be prepared to shoulder the burden. Results will show whether the experiment is worthwhile". Thus, the Executive Committee appointed women agents in all Provinces from 1st January, 1946 to be in sole charge of work in their Provinces.

Gandhiji further insisted that the women workers of the Trust must be imbibed with the spirit of nonviolence which animated Kasturba and in other respects represented her outlook. Accordingly the Executive Committee felt that the Pratinidhis of the Kasturba Trust should have the following qualities—

- (१) बा के मानसवाली हो ।
- (२) आस्तिक हो और सर्व धर्म समानता में विश्वास करनेवाली हो
- (३) खादीचारी हो ।
- (४) कातने की अगली और पिछली क्रिया जानती हो ।
- (५) देहाती मानस की हो ।
- (६) किसी किस्म की दलबंदी में शरीक न हो ।
- (७) हिन्दुस्तानी जानती हो ।
- (८) अपने प्रान्त या फिरके में जानकार हो ।

- (६) जो घूमने फिरने और देहात में रहने लायक हो ।  
 (१०) अगर हिन्दू हो तो जात-पात या अस्पृश्यता को कलंक माननेवाली हो । \*

There are one or two considerations about the appointment and functions of the Pratinidhis which require clearer elucidation. The Pratinidhis had been given the option to have Advisory Committees to help them in their work *vide* Executive Committee resolution dated 25th November, 1945. But hardly in any single case did the Pratinidhi actually provide for a Provincial Advisory Committee though in a few District Committees were provided for. The prevalent idea appears to have been that an Advisory Committee may be of no real help at all and that the Pratinidhis could function more effectively without such committees. Perhaps such an arrangement had some advantage in the initial stage but with the passing of the years this had led to certain disadvantages also. The Pratinidhi and her workers became more and more isolated and cut off leadership at the State and District levels. No one except those actually working took any interest in the work. It also became difficult to find new Pratinidhis and other workers when their places fell vacant. There was also the lack of collective responsibility. The Pratinidhis carried on individually.

The time has now come to review the present policy of running the provincial work of the Turst exclusively through Pratinidhis. To infuse a new spirit and to widen the basis and structure of our work, the setting up of small compact-Advisory Committees has become imperative. This has already been done in Bihar, Tamilnad and Maharashtra. We must now systematize this procedure in all the provinces.

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- \* 1. In spirit she should be like Kasturba.  
 2. She should be firm believer in the existence of God and should have tolerance for all religions.  
 3. She should be habitual Khadi Wearer.  
 4. She should know all the process of spinning from beginning to end, that is ginning, carding, slivering and spinning.  
 5. She should be rural biased or rural minded.  
 6. She should be above all kind of partisan of party-politics.  
 7. She should know Hindustani.  
 8. She should be well-known in the area where she has to work.  
 9. She should be able to undertake tours and should further be able to live in villages.  
 10. If she is by caste a Hindu, she should have no faith in untouchability and casteism, rather she should consider them as blot on Hinduism.

It is gratifying to note that some of the former Sanchalikas of the Training Centres, Organisers and Correspondents have been promoted from time to time as Pratinidhis. A few of the Pratinidhis have also been appointed as Trustees. This has enabled the Trustees to have in their ranks experienced field workers and it has further provided continuity of relations with the earlier Pratinidhis.

It may be mentioned that some of the Pratinidhis even after being appointed Trustees have continued as Pratinidhis.

### *Elections*

It has been the accepted policy of the Trust from the beginning that its full-time workers should not take active part in politics nor stand for elections. Gandhiji was quite clear and firm on this matter. There is, however, in some quarters a feeling that in free India and particularly in view of the establishment of Panchayati Raj this matter may have to be reconsidered. While there is unanimity of opinion that no Pratinidhi should stand for election to Parliament or a State Legislature, a case was made out that Gram Sevikas at the village level may add to their usefulness by becoming members of Panchayat, provided the election is unanimous. On a full reconsideration of the whole matter we are of the view that it would be sounder and safer to stick to the policy already laid down that no full-time worker including Pratinidhis of the Trust should stand for any election.

### *Budgets*

We note that within the limits of sanctioned schemes and budget, Pratinidhis have freedom in day to day work not only in implementing the schemes but also in incurring the expenditure. There is thus internal autonomy in the work.

### *Meetings*

Every year the Pratinidhis meet together to exchange ideas, compare notes and formulate ways and means for improving the work. The Executive Committee Members also attend these annual meetings of the Pratinidhis. The result has been always good for the work.

While considering the general work of the Trust at the provincial level, there are a few suggestions which we wish to put forward. These are—

1. The present boundaries of the provinces under the Trust have to be redrawn in accordance with the new set up of the States. This is all the more necessary because of the financial assistance from State Governments which we receive and because of our increased contracts with bodies like State Social Welfare Boards

and the State Boards for Khadi and Village Industries. This might also lead to some reduction in administrative expenditure.

2. A Pratinidhi should be provided for Madhya Pradesh combining the present Provinces of Madhya Bharat and Mahakoshal. Though the Trust Headquarters is located in this State itself, the work in this region has not progressed with the exception of that in Raipur and West Nimar Districts.
3. In Bihar a local Pratinidhi should be found and appointed.
4. The Pratinidhi should stay at the Provincial Headquarters of the Trust, and the Headquarters should be located in rural areas where the present provincial training centres are run. This would be convenient and economical, too, from the administrative point of view, besides creating the necessary atmosphere for the training centres.

#### *Administration*

At the centre is the office of the Secretary with the Secretary as its head. An Office Secretary with members of staff carry on the routine work of this office from day to day. Maintenance of proper accounts and their audit are constitutional obligations under the Trust Deed. The Central Office has had four internal auditors called "INSPECTOR OF ACCOUNTS". Each one of them has charge of 4 to 5 provincial branches. The practice has been that these inspectors check up the accounts of every provincial branch twice a year. The central accounts, however, are every year audited by a firm of Chartered Accountants specially appointed for the purpose by the Board of Trustees.

While inspection of accounts has thus been systematic and continuous, it cannot be said that there has been such inspection of the actual work itself under different headings. It should be remembered that the provincial training centres constitute a very important part of our work. It was, therefore, necessary that the work at these training centres should be inspected from time to time. Therefore in 1959 two steps were taken in regard to this special problem. One was the appointment of a Gramsevika Central Examination Committee and the other, the appointment of a Director for training (Now designated as Advisor for training). Since these steps were taken the work of the Vidyalayas has come under careful review from time to time.

There still remains the question of the inspection of the Village work Centres and the Arogya Centres. This has been left to the Pratinidhis and their organisers. It may be necessary for the Centre itself to undertake direct inspection of such works at least once a year,

In the case of the six maternity hospitals and the Leprosy Home run by the Trust, there is again the need for a direct annual check up of the whole work by a competent person deputed by the Centre for this purpose. This will also ensure certain minimum standards to be maintained, in the whole, of this widespread work.

It is necessary to add a word about the provincial offices. These offices are under the Pratinidhis. In a number of Provinces there has been an additional functionary called Account-cum-Office Secretary. In some cases there have been two separate persons doing this work in the same office. There has not been generally a uniform standard or posts at the Provincial level. It is now necessary to regularise the set up at the provincial level and maintain certain uniform standards. It would be good in every case to have an office secretary and an accountant separately. However, much will depend on the quantum of work and resources available to meet the administrative expenses.

#### *Pay Scales and Service Grades and Rules*

The Central Office of the Trust has fixed the grades of a few of its workers with pay scales attached. It is, however, necessary to take up this work more fully to cover not only all the office and other staff but such categories as peons, malis etc. The grant of increments still remain not regularised. As a result of a specific recommendation in this regard made by this committee in the course of its interim proposals the Executive Committee has already appointed a small committee of three persons to frame service rules for all categories of workers under the Trust and this has also been approved by the Board of Trustees.

#### *Publication, Research and Liason*

We feel that the Trust should not deny itself legitimate opportunities to give publicity to its work. The audited accounts, the brief proceedings of the meetings of the Trustees, Executive Committee and the Pratinidhis, and the annual reports should be published from time to time. Annual reports and audited accounts have not been published since 1956. We feel that they should be regularly published and the public kept in the know of things. For this, publication work should be properly organised from now on. 22nd February, the death anniversary of Ba may be made an occasion to broadcast information about the work of the Trust.

There is no research work at all under the Trust. For the efficiency of the training programmes and field work of the Trust, the workers should be kept regularly informed of the latest techniques and methods concerning their work. Without this, the work tends to fall into a beaten track. A research



Centre will collect and collate all such information and get it published not only in the Trusts' quarterly magazine but other periodicals also.

The Kasturba Trust aiming and trying to do constructive work among women and children in rural areas cannot and should not isolate itself from other streams of similar work. Therefore, it is now necessary to go further in establishing closer liason with sister organisations. There is sometimes the erroneous idea that there is a gulf between our constructive work and the work of organisations doing what is called social service. It would, therefore, be advantageous for the Trust to establish close relation with bodies like the Indian Conference of Social Work, the all India Women's Conference and other similar bodies. It is necessary, however, to add that the Trust has had fairly close relations with the Sarva Seva Sangh, the Gandhi Smarak Nindi, the Central Social Welfare Board, and the Bharat Sevak Samaj. We have no doubt that increased and widened collaboration will considerably strengthen and enlarge the work of the Trust.

## IV

### TRAINING CONCEPT AND METHODS

As already stated the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, when it started functioning, had to do pioneering work for women and children in rural areas and that through women workers. Therefore the question of training women workers were considered to be of vital importance from the start. Looking over the past years, it might almost be said that more care and attention was given to training programme than to anything else.

A number of steps were, therefore, taken from time to time to systematise and improve training programmes under the Trust.

#### *Short Term Camps*

An all India training camp for one month was organised at Borivilli near Bombay from the 5th of April to the 4th of May in 1945. It was at this camp that the first batch of provincial instructors was trained. The object was that after training these instructors would conduct similar training camps in their own different provinces. Much stress was laid on Community life and discipline of the Ashram type which Gandhiji had initiated. The provincial instructors, therefore, got not only training in crafts and subjects but in the organisation of community life on a new basis. 80 candidates received this training out of which 76 were women.

3 more camps of 4 to 6 months duration were conducted in Mysore, Maharashtra and Bihar during 1945-46 in which 77 Gramsevikas were given training. It was this group of 77 trained workers who began the programme of village work centres, in their respective provinces under the Trust.

#### *Gramsevika Training*

On the basis of the experience gained in these camps, the Executive Committee appointed a sub-committee under the Chairmanship of Shri G. V. Mavalankar with five other members *vide* their resolution dated 19th August, 1945 with main terms of reference as under —

1. Whether such temporary camps should be continued or permanent Vidyalayas should be substituted ?

2. What should be the exact aims and objects of training given in such camps or institutions ?
3. To determine the approach and methods of training of women workers to be provided all over the country by the Trust.

The committee submitted an unanimous report.

As the report of the sub-committee laid down the future course of development and expansion of non-medical training programme of the Trust, some of their important recommendations are quoted below —

1. The training institutions shall not be organised on temporary basis having periodical existence only but shall be organised as institutions with a continuous existence for training. This does not mean that we do not visualise the necessity of training through short term camps. But the training institutes will be, hereafter, permanent Vidyalayas.
2. The objects of the Trust has been set forth in class 3 of the Trust Deed. Keeping them in view, the Committee holds that the background and basis on which each worker under the Trust should work, irrespective of particular mode in which the work is carried on, would be to give all-round service to the village.
3. As the object of training is the service of the rural population, it is essential that the trainees must live in rural surroundings, and should be in touch with the work for the population even while they were trained. The training institution should, therefore, be located in rural areas and should, have absolutely rural atmosphere and surroundings.
4. The field work centres which are visualised as the concrete form of approach may be roughly classified as follows :
  - (a) Health ( Sanitation and medical etc. )
  - (b) Education ( Pre-basic, basic, adult, culture )
  - (c) Cottage Industries (Crafts, weaving, sewing and handicrafts locally prevalent etc. )
  - (d) Miscellaneous ( Kitchen, gardening, care of cattle etc. )

The training should, therefore, be attuned to provide such kind of workers who can manage and conduct such centres.

The general training called as Gram Pravesh shall be one year's course and it shall be compulsory for all Sevikas. Any further specialisation in other branches such as Nursing and Midwifery, Basic education, Village crafts etc. shall be given thereafter at any recognised institution for such training.

Two sub-committees one after another were set up, first to draw up a curriculum and then to draw the syllabus of first year course respectively. Both these sub-committees worked under the Chairmanship of Shri Shrikrishna Das Jaju.

As soon as the modes of training and the basic principles were fixed and formulated, every linguistic province took steps to start its own Vidyalayas and by the end of 1947 almost all provinces had their own Vidyalayas for Gram Pravesh training under their jurisdiction.

However, during this period from 1944 to 1947, training in the second year in specialised subjects could not be provided in all the provinces, first, for want of trained teachers and secondly for want of syllabi. In view of this, Sevikas after the completion of one year course were deputed to the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Santiniketan, Nutan Balshikshan Sangh, Bordi and other institutions for the second year of training.

In the light of various other difficulties such as dearth of teaching staff as well as the low educational standard of trainees and the experience gained in this field it became imperative to appoint a new Committee to review the whole situation obtaining at that time. Accordingly a Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Dhirendra Mazumdar and with Smt. Susheela Pai and Dr. Mrs. Soundram Ramachandran as members were appointed on December, 1947. The Committee submitted its report in the early months of 1948 and classified a new specialised courses and made certain changes, and also extended the period of courses in view of non-availability of trained teaching staff as well as the low qualifications and standards of the trainees.

Following were the new list of courses:—

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| ( a ) Purva Buniyadi ( Balwadi or pre-basic ) |                        |
| teachers                                      | .. One year            |
| ( b ) Basic Teachers                          | .. One year.           |
| ( c ) Udyog Instructors                       | .. One and half years. |
| ( d ) Midwifery                               | .. One and half years. |
| ( e ) Nursing                                 | .. Two and half years. |

The Committee also suggested the syllabi of the first three courses and recommended the adoption of the syllabi for the last two subjects as recommended by the Advisory Medical Board of the Trust.

These syllabi with some modifications gained in the light of actual experience have continued till to-day.

#### *Examinations*

From the very beginning there was an Advisory Medical Board with a smaller committee to supervise the Auxiliary Nurses and Midwifery

examination in various States. There was some such arrangement for the Gramsevika training examination also. However during the intervening years the Central Examination Committee ceased function. In view of this the Executive Committee constituted another committee in the year 1959 to supervise and regularise the examination work of the Gramsevika Vidyalayas.

The previous Gramseva Pravesh and Gramsevika training Pariksha Samiti formulated certain procedure for examinations and allowed the individual training centres to hold examinations accordingly, through their local examination committees. The system of examination depended more on written tests, though for subjects like Udyog and Craft practical tests were arranged. It was the earnest desire of the Pariksha Samiti to introduce continuous assessment method of examination as far as possible. But it could be fully adopted only in the year 1959.

Attempts were also made to bring uniformity in respect of teaching methods and commencement and closing of the sessions, maintenance of records, fixation of hours for different subjects. But no appreciable success in this direction could be achieved till 1959 because of the following reasons—

- (a) Each Vidyalaya had its own session.
- (b) The general educational standard of the candidates differed from Vidyalaya to Vidyalaya.
- (c) Differences in the method and approach of instruction.
- (d) No common literature could be suggested.

### *Medical Training*

The next important training which the Trust undertook was that of midwives and nurses. An Advisory Medical Board was accordingly constituted which prepared a number of syllabi with reference to the needs of rural areas. The most important of these were —

- |                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| (a) First Aid and Home Nursing | .. Three months.   |
| (b) Village Midwives           | .. Fifteen months. |
| (c) Village Nurses             | .. Two years.      |

The Advisory Medical Board recommended that the courses of First Aid and Home Nursing be made compulsory for all Sevikas. However the Mavalankar Training Committee later recommended one year compulsory Gram Pravesh Course for all Sevikas and this was accepted.

The Indian Nursing Council recognised the Midwifery Diploma of the Trust which necessitated the adoption of a new syllabus as framed for Auxiliary Nurses and Midwives Course. Hence since 1953 the new training course required complete two years duration.

The training of Arogya Sevikas ( Auxiliary Nurse Midwives) was rather a more difficult problem. It required hospitals. Looking to the huge finances involved in setting up such teaching hospitals and that, too, in the earlier stages, it was beyond the Trusts' capacity and, therefore, was out of question. In view of this the Trust negotiated with a number of such Maternity Homes and General Hospitals who were ready to admit and impart the training to the Trust Sevikas according to the syllabus prescribed by the Trust. This arrangement served well till the Trust could run its own hospital at Kasturbagram ( Indore ) and Ras ( Gujarat ) for midwifery section of the training in the year 1954 and 1955 respectively.

From the records of the meetings of the Advisory Medical Board we found the following recommendations worth mentioning :

1. A general hospital with 50 beds fully equipped with surgical, medical and maternity departments and adapted to village conditions and conducted as a part of medical training should be established at Kasturbagram, Indore.
2. The Hospitals at Saragaon, Belsonda, Sitanagaram, Ras and Singanallur should be developed for midwifery training.
3. A Medical Secretary with her headquarters at Kasturbagram should be appointed who shall be responsible for the supervision of medical field work conducted in village centres and hospitals. She will also look after the medical training work of the Trust.
4. Research in cheaper remedies efficacious in minor ailments as also the use of materials and implements which may be easily procurable and profitably utilised in rural areas.

The hospitals at Ras, Singanallur and Kasturbagram are now utilised for Midwifery training. Rest of them are not yet utilised. A Medical Secretary has yet to be appointed though medical inspectors were twice appointed. It has not been found possible to start 50 bedded general hospital at Kasturbagram, Indore and there is practically no research in cheaper drugs.

The hospitals could not also be developed in the desired directions on account of paucity of doctors, especially women doctors to run them and to teach at the same time. The Trust, on the recommendations of the Advisory Medical Board, instituted a scheme of medical scholarships at the rate of Rs. 75.00 p.m. to be paid for six years to each of 5 women candidates going in for M.B.B.S. course and pledging themselves to serve the rural areas under the Trust for 3 to 5 years after completion of their studies. Two out of them did not join the service of the Trust at all. Two others joined for nearly two years and resigned. Still another joined but resigned after a service of few months. They took advantage of the clause in the contract which freed them

from the obligation of serving the Trust, after payment of the stipends paid to them in proportion of services rendered by them if any.

Upto 1955, before taking up the training of the Gram Sevikas for the Central Social Welfare Board, the Trust had trained the following workers:

Gram Pravesh	..	..	..	1420
Pre-basic and Basic Teachers	..	..	..	111
Midwives	..	..	..	302
Khadi workers	..	..	..	59
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	47
				1939

The Trust thus sent out a large number of workers to rural areas either under its own auspices or under some other agencies.

*Central Social Welfare Board Trainees:*

The Central Social Welfare Board was established by the Government of India in 1953. As they wanted in the first instance to establish 330 welfare extension projects at the rate of one in each district throughout the country, they negotiated with the Trust for implementation of their one year Gram Sevika Training Programme in the year 1955. The Trust had by this time an experience of nearly 8 years to take up the responsibility and drew up a revised syllabus for the purpose. The provincial training centres of the Trust were expanded and developed further with capital aid from the Board, which was utilised to provide additional accommodation as well as to have new furniture and other equipments necessary for the job. The Trust trained from 1955 to 1960 the following number of candidates for the Central Social Welfare Board:

1955-56	..	..	616
1956-57	..	..	973
1957-58	..	..	979
1958-59	..	..	619
1959-60	..	..	753
			3940

The entire cost of training was borne by the Board. The Central Social Welfare Board informed the Trust in April, 1960 that owing to introduction of Panchayati Raj in a number of States, they had proposed to transfer their projects to the official and non-official agencies in the various States and, therefore, expressed their inability to continue their training programme of the Gram Sevikas on their behalf.

In addition to these, the Trust has taken up some other specialised training also to serve the special needs of some provinces.

*Specialised Training Programme*

- (i) *Labour Welfare Workers for tea gardens in Assam:*  
The Training was started at Mezenga in Sibsagar District in 1952 and is still continuing.
- (ii) *Adivasi Welfare Training at Waini in Bihar:*  
This training was given to two batches, ten in all.
- (iii) *Training of Leprosy Workers:*  
At Kushta Nivaran Nilayam, Mazhavanthangal, in South Arcot District various types of Kusta workers were imparted training as and when necessary. This has been recognised by the State Government also.
- (vi) *Instructors training at Kasturbagram, Indore:*  
A batch of 9 trainees from 5 provinces were given Instructors training at Kasturbagram, Indore in the year 1957-58. After completion of training they went back to their provinces and worked as Instructors in Gram Sevika Vidyalyas of the Trust. A similar camp was conducted in the year 1947 and 1948 at Renewa in Fezabad District in U.P.
- (v) *Shanti Sena Training:*  
This training was taken up in 1960, the duration of training being 5 months. Sevikas of the Trust and women workers of Sarvodaya Mandals were deputed for this. Total trained in the three batches was 62.

Besides these the Trust has taken up training programme on behalf of the Central Social Welfare Board, State Governments and other agencies.

1. Gram Sevika Training for Central Social Welfare Board was started in the year 1955 and lasted till 1960. The training was of one year's duration. Total number trained was 3940.
2. *Home Science wing at Kasturbagram, Indore:*  
This was started in the year 1955, the duration of training is one year and the number trained so far is 66. Another such centre has also been started at Koba in Gujarat during the year 1962.
3. *Mukhya Sevika Training at Kasturbagram Indore:*  
This was started in 1957. The course was of 5 months duration in the beginning, but since 1959 it has been raised to 1 year. The total trained so far is 169.
4. *Pre-basic Teachers training at Kasturbagram, Tamilnad:*  
This was started in the year 1949. It is still continuing. The training is of 2 years duration and is recognised by the State Government. Total number trained so far—358.



5. *Spinning Organisers course for the State Government at Kasturbagram, Tamilnad:*  
This was conducted in the year 1954 and 1955 in two batches of 6 months duration. Total trained was 44.
6. *Short term course (Four months duration)*  
At Gram Sevika training centre at Delhi for the Central Social Welfare Board conducted in the year 1959, two such courses were conducted.
7. *Sanskar Prasikshan training* to workers of Gramdan villages conducted in Bihar, Maharashtra and Orissa from 1958 to 1961.
8. Training of women members of the Panchayats at Koba in Gujarat.
9. Weaving and Ambar Charkha courses of the Khadi Commission in Tamilnad, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Duration 6 months to 9 months.
10. Midwifery training at Ras Hospital, Gujarat.

#### *Sevikashram*

The Sevikashram was started as a programme for educating destitute women for VIII standard public examination. According to their aptitude some were given vocational training. It should be noted here that for the first time women were given fieldmen training in bee-keeping at Seetanagram in Andhra. In Tamilnad it was handed over to Gandhigram in the year 1949 and in Andhra it is still continuing under the Trust.

#### *Present Position*

During the year Gram Sevika Training was going on at Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, and Delhi and Pre-basic teachers Training in Tamilnad. Condensed course of the Central Social Welfare Board was taken up in Bihar, Punjab, Rajasthan, Andhra, Tamilnad, Hyderabad, Maharashtra, Vidarbha, Gujarat and now Orissa also. In Himachal Pradesh, an Ashram for Tibetan girls is being run on behalf of the Government.

#### *Assessment*

A few specific questions were included in the questionnaire on the following subjects and results based on the replies are summarised herewith—

#### **I. Impact of the training:**

1. The Trainees learn to live community life and work in co-operation.
2. They realise the dignity of manual work.
3. They become enduring, self-confident and self-reliant.
4. They become free from the notions of caste, community, creed etc.
5. They cultivate reverence and a feeling of tolerance for all religions.

6. Their outlook on life is widened.
7. They get a perspective of Gram Seva as a whole.

There are of course variations in all these from individual to individual depending on her background, attitude, social status and qualifications.

## II. Salient features of the Trust training Programme:

1. Training is for definite and specific purpose.
2. Trainees are mostly volunteers.
3. Individual attention more than for a group
4. Training for all-round development of the worker.
5. Training to develop that which is best in the individual concerned.
6. Training in a craft (essential).
7. Training and field work were always kept close together.

## III. Nature of trainees:

1. Women mostly widows, forsaken or destitutes.
2. From poor families, accustomed to hard life and manual work.
3. Women with low educational standards.
4. From villages or of village mentality.
5. From families of workers associated with the constructive programmes of Gandhiji.
6. From the families of those who had taken part in the national movement for freedom.

## IV. Quality of staff:

The Mavalankar Training Committee even in 1945 was able to foresee the difficulty which the Trust was going to face with regard to getting suitable teaching staff. The Committee pointed out that it is necessary that arrangement should be made for training of the staff required for the Provincial Vidyalyayas. With a view to have an uniformity of outlook and to ensure proper training, it is necessary that the Central Office should organise the training of teachers so required. In view of linguistic variety in the country these arrangements have to be made at more than one place. Such central teaching organisations should also be permanent institutions and not merely periodical or temporary.

After that the Trust not only organised two such courses (mentioned above already) but deputed from provinces a number of women to the all India Spinners' Association, the Talimi Sangh, Shantiniketan, Maganwadi, etc.

However the position on the whole except in a few provinces has remained unsatisfactory. A number of Zonal members of the Assessment Committee have pointed out these facts. Some of these urgent steps have been suggested by us in the Chapter on 'Central Kasturbagram and State Kasturbagram'.

## V. Syllabus:

1. The main idea was is to train and educate woman workers in the ideology of the Trust i.e. Sarvodaya and Antyodaya.

2. Emphasis was/is on craft and practical work.
3. Make them thorough in what they have to do in the villages.
4. Course of training to be two to three years.
5. Refreshers' Course of 15 days duration.

#### VI. Techniques of training:

1. Nai-Talim method, teaching through work and co-related teaching.
2. Emphasis on community living.

#### *Refresher Course*

In the body of the report we have more than once referred to the utility of 'Refresher Course' for the teaching staff as well as for the field workers. It will be advisable to include in this category the medical personnel such as doctors and Arogya Sevikas to accustom them with the current principles and practices.

We cannot do better than to revert back to the report of the Training Committee under Shri G.V. Mavalankar. It touches almost all aspects of the training programmes of the Trust. It *inter-alia* says as follows about the refresher courses:

1. It is necessary to have short duration camps (say for a month or so) or short duration courses to give the workers required grounding in the aims and work of the Trust.
2. With a view to keep the Sevikas up-to-date in their out-look and knowledge, it would be necessary both for the Provincial as well as Central Training Institute to organise refresher courses from time to time.—

We have further elucidated this idea in our 'Final Recommendations'. The following represents our opinion and suggestion.

1. The Gram Seva Syllabus is balanced and suitable. The trainees are found at varying standards and much effort and energy will be required to bring them all to a certain optimum standard. More stress should be given to practical work and its specific problems of women and children. The technique of training should be that of Nai Talim.
2. There is no necessity to alter the training programme. What is needed is—
  - (a) Service spirited, well educated, teaching staff imbued with the Gandhian ideology and whose minimum needs the Trust should meet.
  - (b) Selection of trainees with ideals of service to people and necessary educational qualifications, preferably matric pass.
  - (c) The duration of all types of training should be of 2 years.
  - (d) All types of training which are complementary to one another should be given at the same training centre, so that workers and trainees could imbibe the spirit of Samagra Gram Seva. The

field training of longer duration should be at the field level at the Gram Seva centres in batches.

- (e) The Kasturba Trust may train Gram Sevikas for their own work. But for other types of training, it is better to get Government recognition so that suitably qualified girls may be available for training and this recognition will give a sense of security.
3. As already stated the Trust has trained thousands of workers. Most of these are working under the Trust and other agencies. Some are married and settled down and some remain without active employment. It will be good to keep a list of all such ex-trainees and maintain contact with them so that whenever necessary and possible, their services can be used for the Trust extension work in any part of India.
  4. Short term camps and training courses in the various talukas and districts should be conducted as was done earlier in some provinces.
  5. Refresher courses for Trust Sevikas are conducted in some provinces. This must be made regular and uniform.
  6. Pre-basic teachers training should be taken up in all provinces and it should be extended to include the first two years of the junior basic.
  7. In our midwifery or auxiliary nurses training we have a preliminary Gram-Pravesh course for ten and a half months. This may be split up into 2 portions, one before the midwifery or auxiliary nurse training to give them a rural grounding and make them keep the needs of rural people in view while undergoing the main part of the training and the other after the main training is over, so that they may be equipped with appropriate techniques to work in the villages and to lay stress on the felt needs of villages. As they have to do general propaganda also during their home-visits, and help the Gram Sevikas whenever necessary, this could also serve as a refresher course in Gram Seva.
  8. Trainees from the locality should also be admitted at Ras Hospital for undergoing midwifery training.
  9. Balsevika teachers training according to the syllabi of the Indian Council of Child Welfare should be taken up where pre-basic training is not taken up.
  10. Hostels for girls known as Kanya Ashrams should be started in centres where we have Vidyalayas and in such village centres also where facilities such as buildings and supervisory personnel are available.
  11. Greater importance should be given in the syllabus of Gram Sevika training to handicrafts and cottage industries popular in the local area,

such as coir-arts in Kerala, or Dari, Carpet weaving and embroidery in Punjab etc.

12. In running the condensed course community life based on Gandhian ideals should not be neglected.
13. With the general progress and extension of women's education it has also become necessary for the Trust to take up further condensed course for matriculation examination. This would also further benefit the students appearing for VIII standard under the present condensed courses of the Trust.
14. As in Gujrat, short term courses for women members of the Panchayat and Panchayat Samiti to educate them in their functions and about their role in these bodies should be undertaken.
15. Training to Maternity Assistants and Auxiliary Nurses in simple compounding and dispensing of medicines should be given to make their work more useful.

It will be thus seen that the Trust has undertaken a variety of training courses to meet different needs in the broad programme for women's progress in the country. The Trust has been vigilant to find out mistakes and deficiencies and rectify them from time to time.

## VILLAGE WORK CENTRES

### *Factual Study and Observations*

The village work centres of the Trust have all along constituted the backbone of the work of the Trust in the country. In fact the field of work to be covered and the main items of services to be done arise directly from the objectives which the Trust placed before itself from the start. The aim of the Trust was not simply to relieve village women from insanitation, poverty, disease and ignorance but to develop in them the qualities of self-reliance, courage and resourcefulness enabling them to take their rightful place in every sphere of national reconstruction and progress. This is primarily meant to bring about a change in the out-look of the village women. This was no easy thing to do and even now the task remains unfinished. But every village work centre of the Trust has certainly contributed its mite towards the realisation of this great aim. Actual field work at the village level came under 3 broad headings:

1. Arogya Centres.
2. Gram Seva Centres.
3. Composite Centres with both Arogya and Gram Seva programmes.

At the time of this assesment there were under the Trust 95 village work centres, 42 Arogya centres and 80 composite centres. This does not include the seven hospitals and one leprosy home conducted by the Trust.

Arogya Centres undertook health services including sanitation, prevention of diseases, home nursing, child welfare and maternity and medical work. In 1959 the total number of patients treated 2,92,191, the number of antenatal cases 18,089, post-natal cases 10,428, institutional deliveries 3,031 and domiciliary deliveries 3,176.

In the seven regular hospitals run by the Trust in rural areas the record shows general indoor cases 1,092 , outdoor patients 69,127, minor surgical operation 361, pre-natal cases 6,960 , post-natal cases 4,370 , indoor deliveries 1,111 and domiciliary deliveries 121.

Gram Seva Centres undertook a comprehensive programme of village work. This included Balwadi, adult education, personal and collective sanitation, cottage and village industries, Mahila Sabhas and Mahila Seva Dals, propagation of Hindi, cultural and social activities to encourage prohibition and to give up untouchability Purdah etc. Treatment of minor ailments and rendering help to patients generally were done at all Gram Seva Centres,

The average daily attendance in the Balwadis, adult education classes and craft classes was 4580, 2747 and 3747 respectively.

Sevikas organised relief work in times of famine and floods when these effected the areas around their centres as in Tamilnad, Andhra, West Bengal, Orissa, Assam etc. The Sevikas also generally co-operated in programmes of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Community Development and of the Social Welfare Board in their areas. Village camps, exhibitions and Shramdan activities have been organised by the Sevikas in several places in collaboration with the Block Development workers. They have also tackled various kinds of taboos and superstitions. We have several concrete examples of such types before us. Harassment by the usurers, land-lords and others was dealt with fearlessly by the Gram Sevikas which won the confidence of the people.

In the composite centres where Gram Sevikas and Arogya Sevikas work together the programme has been fuller and more successful. If finances and availability of trained workers are in hand, it would be good to have as large number of composite centres as possible.

The achievements of the last 17 years of the Gram Seva Centres and the Arogya Centres in the field of education and health are not at all insignificant. The impact of this work has led to an awakening and an improvement in the life of the village concerned. In regard to personal and collective sanitation the provision of sanitary facilities for women and children has not kept pace with the needs and the awakening. It is only when there is a change in habits coupled with adequate provision of amenities that a real improvement in sanitation can take place. It has happened that there are centres where a change of outlook has been partly effected but adequate amenities have not been secured or where amenities have come in, the necessary change of outlook has not been achieved. Nevertheless, there has undoubtedly been a change for the better in sanitation at many of the villages where Trust centres are working. The change in habits can

come only gradually and specially through the Balwadis, the Basic Schools and Adult education.

In a few cases Gram Sevikas have introduced ordinary latrines and even a few flush latrines but this has not touched even a fringe of the problem. What is necessary is the organisation of systematic follow-up programmes involving the adults in villages for better sanitation. Without such sustained efforts people go back to the older bad habits after a period of improvement.

It is in regard to economic improvement that the programme of the Trust has been weak and inadequate. In some centres the Ambar Charkha programme has come in or the Hand-pounding of rice. In such cases the result has been encouraging but they are few and far between. It is very necessary from now on to take up either directly or in collaboration with organisations like Khadi and Village Industries Commission schemes of economic betterment. The Trust should give careful consideration to this suggestion.

It is of course realised that it is not simply the devotion of even trained workers that can achieve results. The other side necessary is the willing participation of the women in the villages helped by the men. We have to create this receptivity also. It will, therefore be necessary to have short term camps in the rural areas for the main purpose of contacting women, telling them of the working of the Trust and progressively involving them in some way or other in the work. Such short term camps did give good results in earlier years in Tamilnad and at present in the Adivasi areas of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra etc.

It is also to be noted that generally speaking the work of the Trust has touched the middle and lower middle classes of the villages and not so much the people at the very bottom who constitute the weaker or the weakest section of the community. Unless this section is also touched, we shall not have the reality of Sarvodaya service. The Trust should give serious consideration for evolving programmes taking education, services and love to the weakest section wherever it is working. Generally the Harijans, the tribal people and the most backward communities will come under the category of the weakest sections of the community. No doubt some work has been done at this level but what has been done is not at all adequate. This work cannot be sporadic but has to be systematic and continuous to get any result worth the name.

### *Sevikas*

The educational standard of the Sevikas has come in for review. It may be admitted that on the whole the educational standards, which have



varied from State to State, have not been satisfactory. In the earlier years care was given to select devoted candidates who would be humble enough to live and work in the villages. As already stated the minimum qualification was fixed as a pass certificate after 8 years of elementary education. Even this minimum qualification was not available in the case of many of the Sevikas in Mysore, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh etc. But the insistence of the Trust on 2 years hard and sustained training made up somewhat for the lack of educational qualification. The girls during training developed the capacity for hard work, learnt spinning and weaving fairly thoroughly and to live co-operatively in a working community of teachers and students and generally developed the right attitudes of service self-help, untouchability and fearlessness. Nevertheless the time has come to make strenuous effort to obtain women workers with pass certificates in Matriculation or S.S.L.C. or Higher Secondary. With the rapid expansion of the education of girls in the country this should not be impossible. It is now not enough at all to do good work in a restricted area but it is equally necessary to give the theory and knowledge which necessitate our programmes. Without creating such mental conviction we cannot expand our work effectively.

#### *Local Help*

Gandhiji from the very beginning laid down that the work of the Trust should go to the smaller village because he felt that it was the millions in these smaller villages who were most neglected. He, therefore, stipulated that a village for the work of the Trust should not have a population of more than 2000 and should be atleast 10 miles away from the nearest town. Also, from the earliest period of work of the Trust there was the idea that village work centres should become self-supporting as far as possible within 5 years. This meant that the centres should have their roots in local support and the co-operation of the people in the area. What was aimed at was not an arithmetical self-sufficiency but one securing the maximum of participation by the local community in different ways.

It may be admitted that on the whole it has not been possible to attain any worthwhile measure of self-sufficiency at our work centres. At one centre in Orissa and another in Gujrat the Gram Sevikas depend entirely for their own upkeep and for a large share of the expenses of the work they do on donations, in cash and kind, from the local people. In Mysore where landed properties were gifted to the centres self-sufficiency reached nearly 50%.

#### *Closure of Centres*

In a number of States round about 50 per cent of the older centres closed down after 2 to 3 years of work. This was due to a variety

of reasons including local factions, want of accommodation, resignation of Gram Sevikas and above all because of the introduction of compulsory primary education which made the Balwadis and even the Basic Scheme under the Trust often superfluous. There is nothing much to regret about this because after the Trust had pioneered with its own work several other agencies including those of Governments have entered the field and have taken over the responsibilities which once rested with our Sevikas.

However, in some of the States the closure of older and fairly well established centres of work in favour of new centres to carry out new programmes has not altogether led to good results. In one State, for instance, a large number of old centres were closed to start new centres in Gramdan areas. Theoretically this appeared to be a sound proposition but in practice the result was almost a breakdown of the whole work. In another Province, care might have been taken to hand over the older centres to local agencies willing to carry them on rather to close them down. Yet in another Province a good number of old centres were closed and a few new ones started round about the Provincial training centre and this created some heart-burning in the areas where the old centres were closed.

#### *Transfer of Centres*

There was also a phenomenon of the transfer of some of our centres to other agencies under agreement. The number of such transfer was 52 including 18 in Tamilnad and 14 in Punjab, itself. It is also proved that in certain provinces the work centres of the Trust have been continuing even while other agencies have set up their own centres of work in these areas. This only proves that even with all the collected efforts of all the agencies at work there is still so much more work to do.

#### *Developments*

Sometime in the course of the work of the Trust two trends became important. The first trend was that it would be better to concentrate in small compact areas to get the maximum results. This happened in Tamilnad, Gujrat and Vidharbha. The second trend was that the Trust should enter into areas of services hitherto only very little touched or not touched at all by other agencies as tribal belts, border areas and very backward places. This trend asserted in Assam, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Vidarbha, Maharashtra, Mysore, Bihar, Bengal and one or two other provinces. The Trust welcomed this trend which came out of its experience and encouraged the development of new types of work under these trends. While it may be admitted on the one hand that the high ideals and objectives of the Trust have not been largely achieved and that the pace of development has been slow, it would be good to remember that Gandhiji said in this connection. "Nothing can be achieved without cultivation of the

friendship of the women in the villages. This is the first and basic desideratum". There is no doubt that the Gram Sevikas of the Trust were able to negotiate this very difficult first step. Again to quote Gandhiji, "The task is to develop in our women the qualities of fearlessness, strength and self-reliance." The Trust succeeded largely in developing women workers with these qualities which is no mean achievement. From the workers these qualities have spread and radiated slowly and in limited manner to the women of the villages. Even here a measure of success was registered, but how much exactly is not possible to measure.

### *Impact*

The Kasturba Trust began its work in 1944. Some eight years after came the national programme of Community Development and one year later still, came the work of Central Social Welfare Board. Both these movements respected the pioneering work of the Kasturba Trust and took advantage of its experience in their own training programmes. From 1955 onwards the Community Development Programme entrusted the training of some of their Gramsevikas to the headquarters of the Kasturba Trust in Indore. From 1957 onwards a number of Mukhya Sevikas have continually been trained at the same place of the Trust. In Tamilnad the training of women spinning organisers was entrusted to the Tamilnad Kasturba Trust in 1954 and 1955. Recently the co-operation of the Trust has been taken in Gujrat in the training of the women members of Panchayats and Home Science Workers. The Central Social Welfare Board from 1955 to 1960 took full advantage of the provincial training centres of the Trust to train their Gram Sevikas. This close liason in training between the Trust's training centres and the Central Social Welfare Board strengthened on the one hand the former and on the other hand gave the new programme of Social Welfare Board its first trained women personnel for the rural areas. This arrangement continued for 5 years giving all the trained personnel to the Social Welfare Board during this period.

It will thus be seen that the pioneering work of the Trust in the training of women workers for rural areas and in the organisation of village work centres run by women for women did have its impact on the Community Development Programme and on the work of the Central Social Welfare Board. These new movements with all the resources at their disposal have expanded the work all over the country. The Trust can still give a lead by entering into new areas of service affecting the weakest and most neglected sections of the community.

### *Supervision*

It would be good at this stage to give some thought to provision for supervision and guidance of field workers. The work of the Sevikas at

the work centres is supervised now by the Provincial organiser or Sanchalika and at times by the Pratinidhi. There is also some supervision by the members of the Local Advisory Committees and in a few States by the District representatives. In a few provinces there are also provincial Advisory Bodies to help the agents and the organisers in solving the many problems that arise in the course of the work and in improving the work. We think therefore that the existing arrangement for supervision and guidance are good and suited to the organisation and structure of the Trust work. It would be necessary to make refresher camps for Sevikas a regular annual feature in every province. It would be good also to provide for exchange visits of selected Sevikas from centre to centre or from province to province for brief periods. It is not good for the Sevikas not to know the field conditions and problems in neighbouring centres of work. Such mutual visits will help to tone up the work in general. But whatever supervision now goes on is concerned largely with the Balwadis and the general work of the Gram Sevikas. Something has to be done without delay to supervise the work of the Arogya centres where they are separate and the Arogya work in the composite centres by those qualified and competent to do so. This supervision should also extend to the work of the hospitals. In this work it should not be difficult to utilise the doctors in charge of the hospitals who may be instructed to visit work centres within areas which would not take them away from their hospitals for more than a week. This may fill up the gap for some time in the supervision of Arogya work. But sometime earlier the better, it would be necessary to set up minimum machinery consisting of competent medical personnel to undertake this work systematically. It should not be forgotten that Arogya seva is one of the major items of the work of the Trust.

#### *Bhoodan and Gramdan*

During the last ten years one of the significant things in rural India has been the Bhoodan movement. This movement was an advance in the right direction from the point at which the Gandhian constructive programme was left by the Master. There is no doubt at all that Bhoodan and Gramdan movement has added substance and strength to every item of the constructive programme. The Trust had, however, to face certain difficulties. It is good that the Gram Sevikas and Arogya Sevikas lent their full support to the Bhoodan programme when it reached their own area of service, thus adding Bhoodan to their work and making it their own in their respective areas. It also happened in a few cases that Sevikas joined the Bhoodan movement completely neglecting the centre work they were doing. In one province, for instance, most of the Sevikas joined the Bhoodan movement and even declared courageously for Nidhi Mukhti. Afterwards when the Bhoodan movement slowed down, some of the Sevikas were left in the lurch and a number of them joined the service of the State Social

Welfare Board. Thus lack of planning affected good working of few centres here and there and also losing a few good workers. It was bound to happen.

However, we feel that if Kasturba Trust work was properly planned, the Trust could have taken more advantage of this movement. The Trust has, therefore, to plan early and effectively to co-ordinate similar programmes to add strength and substance to its own programme.

Equally, it is good to start as many new centres as possible in Gramdan areas but this must not be at the cost of closing down good and effective centres of work already in the picture.

#### *Gram Ekai Scheme*

Some two years ago the Khadi and Village Industries Commission took up what is called, the Gram Ekai programme. This is simply a programme of Samagra Gram Seva with Khadi and Village Industries at the centre. All village work has to become increasingly an integrated programme touching village life on as many sides as possible simultaneously. The Kasturba Trust can well advance towards the Gram Ekai Programme from its own foundation of Balwadis, Sanitation and Midwifery work. This means that the work centres of the Trust should add the minimum economic programme to its existing work to complete it. One significant step in this direction was taken in Vidarbha in 1960, *i.e.* after the closure of many scattered centres in the area. 12 new centres of work have been started in Madhan (Vidarbha) which are geared to the objective of Gram Ekai. This work is still in its infancy but to the extent it has proceeded it has resulted in closer contacts with the people in 40 villages and in securing more understanding and participation. In accordance with the suggestion made by Shri Acharya Vinobaji such intensive and integrated work is being planned in six States *i. e.* Vidarbha, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamilnad, Gujrat and Orissa. Vidarbha branch has already started in this direction. In order to make this advance in the work successful, it would be advantageous to call together in these States representatives of various agencies promoting rural development like the Khadi Commission, the Sarva Seva Sangh, the Gandhi Smark Nidhi, the Bharat Sevak Samaj etc. Without the understanding co-operation of all these bodies there will be unnecessary duplication and less good results.

#### *Balwadis*

In the whole field of education the most neglected part still continues to be that relating to the Nursery School level. This is called the pre-basic school level. The Kasturba Trust may well take up the building of a chain of pre-basic schools in the different States and also

under-take the training of teachers of this sector in a few selected centres. At present there is only one such centre *i.e.* near Erode in Tamilnad. More and more, this question has come to the fore in India and we are of the view that the Kasturba Trust can make a contribution at this point in educational reconstruction in the country.

### *Training of Dais*

The trained midwives of the Trust working specially at the domiciliary centres have too large a volume of work to cope with. Village women are increasingly taking advantage of rural midwifery service. It is a matter for consideration therefore, that the Dais who are available in almost all villages may be given a short course of training and then utilised as accessory workers helping the trained midwives. If this is done our midwifery work can expand with the minimum of additional personnel and expenditure. The prejudice, justified in a way, against the Dais should not be carried to the extent of neglecting them altogether in the quickly expanding programme of rural midwifery service.

### *Child Welfare*

The close relationship between the midwifery service and child-welfare work has not been yet fully utilised or developed in rural work. These two are really inseparable and must be treated as such more and more. This means that more stress should be laid on child health work and on conducting child clinics wherever possible. If this is done rural maternity service itself will get added strength and support locally.

### *Accommodation*

One of the problems of the Gram Sevikas has been the difficulty of getting suitable accommodation for themselves and their work in distant villages. But in Tamilnad, Kerala, Karnatak, Mysore, Hyderabad, Orissa, Assam, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and to some extent in Rajasthan suitable accommodation has been secured with local help and Government aid. It is necessary that this pattern is spread in all the States. There is no question of the Trust spending from its own funds but local resources and Government aid should be fully canvassed.

Suitable accommodation for Sevikas and their work is a desideratum for efficient work. Suitable accommodation necessarily implies accommodation consistent with the village conditions.

Work in villages can never be spectacular or give quick results. All village work is long range work. All village work also must necessarily mean increasingly work by villagers for villagers and through villagers. The Trust has always kept this ideal in front of it. The Trust does not

claim that it has achieved any big over-all results. Its claim is that the methods it has employed can still stand to test of scrutiny. The Gram Sevikas and Arogya Sevikas successfully disproved once and for all that Indian women do not have the courage or conviction or resourcefulness to settle down in remote rural areas and start and continue to do useful work in such areas. The direction of the work has also been correct and whole-some. It is true that after Indian Independence there are other organisations penetrating the rural areas with more resources and more Government Aid. The Trust welcomes this development and has always been willing to co-operate with other agencies. What the Trust can legitimately claim is that its several hundreds of workers totalling more than 700 have gained through many years of rural service at the earth level, a large measure of useful experience and knowledge in regard to the approach and techniques of work among village women. The Trust workers have not simply served villagers but identified themselves with the life of the village people. It is for the National Government and the people now to take hold of this experience and knowledge and utilise them to build up a peaceful and just social order and thus make India strong, prosperous and happy.

## SPECIAL SCHEMES OF WORK : FACTUAL STUDY AND OBSERVATIONS

We have considered in the present chapter different other activities of the Trust each of which is in a class by itself and requires to be dealt with separately. Work amongst Adivasis ( Tribals ), destitutes, leprosy patients and displaced persons from Pakistan are some of the items of social service which have received the attention of the Trust.

It may be stated here, that these activities do not directly come under the scope of the Trust but are covered by " Conduct and promotion of such activities as would conduce to the General Welfare of the condition of poor and needy women and children in the rural areas ".

### *Work amongst Adivasis*

Soon after the country attained Independence, the necessity for developing the neglected tribal areas and bringing their inhabitants on par with other citizens has been recognised. Kasturba Trust took up this work as pilot projects in Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Vidarbha, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Mysore and Andhra.

In Assam all major Hill Tribes are served by nine Trust centres. Six of them are in the interior hills and three centres are serving the Tribals in the plains. These are mostly village service centres.

In each of these centres training facilities in good living, sanitation, home management, child care and handicrafts are provided for a number of girls numbering four to six who are resident inside. The Government of Assam is giving financial assistance for the centres.

The Adivasi service centre in Orissa has given special attention to the eradication of the disease known as Yaws in the area. Specially trained



Sevikas by following preventive and curative methods have successfully reduced the incidence of the disease. Tamtia centre in Rajasthan and an Adivasi centre in Vidarbha are also rendering valuable service. The hospitals at Saragaon and Belsonda in Madhya Pradesh are also being taken advantage of by the Adivasis.

In Madhya Bharat ( now part of M. P. State ) an Ashram centre known as Kasturba Vanvasi Kanya Ashram is being run by the Trust at Niwali in West Nimar District since 1953. A residential school upto VIII standard for Adivasi girls, two Balwadis, one medical centre and adult classes are its features. Recently, new buildings have been constructed at the centre to expand its accommodation capacity. The centre is helped by the M. P. Government, the State Social Welfare Board and the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.

There are 45 girls in the hostel. Six girls from previous batches have undergone further specialised training in Balwadi and Auxiliary Nurse Midwifery Courses. They are working at this centre. 4 more are under training. One of the members of our Local Assessment Committee suggested raising the educational facilities to High School Classes in the Ashram, and taking up a comprehensive multi purpose training programme of Adivasi women.

Besides there are 3 centres in Bihar, 1 centre in West Bengal and 1 in Maharashtra among the Adivasis. One very good centre in the formerly Polavaram Agency Area of Andhra State also worked for a number of years but is now closed.

The Trust, we feel, should concentrate its activities on educational programmes in this area giving priority to adult education and training in craft for women. We feel that the Trust should pursue its policy of working in backward, interior hilly areas more vigorously, starting more centres. It should also utilise this experience in tackling problems in areas of tension like border areas which are also neglected and backward. We note that some work in this direction is being done in Himachal Pradesh. This should be extended and strengthened.

#### *Destitute Women and Children*

The rehabilitation of destitute women and children is not taken up by the Trust as an integral part of its planned programme. Still this is indirectly achieved to some extent through the training centres run by the Trust where preference is always given to destitutes, widows and the forsaken women. So far 971 widows and deserted wives have taken training in the various training centres of the Trust. A Sevashram at Seetanagaram for destitutes and orphans is also maintained.

The Kasturba Ashram in Seetanagaram in Andhra has a vocational training institution for destitutes and needy women. 25 to 30 candidates are

admitted for a three years' course. They are also given the minimum educational qualification of VIII standard. Durgapur (Himachal Pradesh) is running a Balikashram for the last two years. Recently 15 displaced Tibetan women have also been admitted to a reorientation course in teaching. This work was very much appreciated by the Zonal Committee.

### *Leprosy Work*

Leprosy is one of those diseases which is most stigmatised because it brings deformities and disfigurement to the human body.

Women leprosy patients are the worst sufferers not only physically but socially also. It was, therefore, very appropriate that Mahatma Gandhi lent powerful support to eradicate leprosy. He included it as one of the items of the constructive programme. And later through the good offices of Shri Thakkar Bapa and Shri T. N. Jagadisan and supported by Gandhiji Leprosy Relief found a place among the aims and objects of the Trust. The services undertaken by the Kasturba Trust in this field, are as under—

1. Convening an all India Leprosy Workers' Conference at Wardha in 1947 under the auspices of the Maharogi Seva Mandal.
2. Financial annual grant of about Rs. 40,000/—to the Maharogi Seva Mandal from 1946 to 1951.
3. The establishment of an institution called Kasturba Kushta Nivaran Nilayam in 1945 through the efforts of Shri T. N. Jagadisan is the main activity of the Trust in this field. It is at Mazavanthangal in South Arcot District of Madras State in the midst of heavy endemic area. In the beginning the work was mainly amongst women and children but with financial help from other sources this was later extended to men patients as well.

The main features of the work are as follows:

- (1) In order to avoid in future the problem of rehabilitation and adjustments, in-patients are encouraged to go back to their homes and get further treatment from out-patient clinics. This section has so far treated 154 women and 75 new patients over a period of years.
- (2) The in-patients are provided every opportunity for education and to develop their latent talents through a number of cottage and village industries. This enables them to partly earn their livelihood after discharge.
- (3) The Nilayam also attends to the physical rehabilitation of patients by physiotherapy and surgery, which is done at the Christian Medical College, Vellore.
- (4) The centre has placed great emphasis on conducting periodical surveys in the villages with a view to find out the incidence of the disease

and the effects of treatment and educational work on patients. This work requires further strengthening.

- (5) Besides the general out-patient ward which has so far served 8403 patients, the centre also operates two sub-clinics in nearby villages.
- (6) One of the most important items of work is the 'Intensive village treatment scheme' covering 26 villages with a population of 35,615. Preliminary surveys are first made in an area and then DDS is given to every patient by para-medical workers under expert guidance. Every patient is kept under close observation for further check-up. This work is done with financial aid from the Government.

The Trust is contributing approximately Rs. 15,000/—per annum from its funds and the rest is raised through local efforts from various sources, governmental and non-governmental. The Gandhi Leprosy Foundation also helped the centre from 1954 to 1961 to the extent of Rs. 15,000/—per annum. We feel that the work at Mazavanthangal deserves all support, moral as well as financial from all sides.

As the work at the Nilayam is specialised in nature, it was assessed by Dr. Julius Savarirayan, Superintendent of the Scudder Hospital, Ranipet (North Arcot) along with Dr. Mrs. T. S. Soundram Ramachandran. They were very deeply impressed with the scope and quality of the work of the Nilayam. Their specific recommendations are—

1. To serve some more villages in the hilly and forest areas which need badly, treatment for widely prevalent leprosy.
2. To further re-educate and rehabilitate those afflicted with leprosy, especially women and children.
3. To undertake training of leprosy workers on a more extensive scale than hitherto done.
4. To appoint a sociologist and statistician who may conduct surveys in the area *vis-a-vis* the Trust. This is suggested as a temporary programme.

The Nilayam is already moving in those directions. Our idea is to re-emphasise them.

#### *Work among Displaced Persons*

A new township consisting of displaced persons from the N. W. Frontier was in the making in Faridabad near Delhi in the year 1947. The educational activities in the new township were entrusted to the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram under the general guidance of Smt. Ashadevi Aryanayakam. At her suggestion the Executive Committee of the Trust authorised her and Smt. Rameswari Nehru to start a Kasturba centre in the township for the welfare of

women and children. The Trust fund earmarked for N.W.F. Province, about Rs. 10,000/—was diverted to this activity. In spite of lack of funds and trained personnel the achievement in the field of rehabilitating the women and children was noteworthy.

The Trust work amongst the displaced persons falls under the following heads:

1. Management of four Homes for displaced persons.
2. Work in villages.
3. Training of young girls.
4. Work in East Bengal.
5. Help to Institutions.

### *Management of Homes*

The most important work in this field undertaken by the Trust was the management of four Homes for displaced and unattached women and children. In response to the request of Government of India, the Trust first took charge of Rajpura Homes (Pepsu) later named as Kasturba Sevashram. Rajapura was a new township established mainly for Bahawalpur (Sindh) displaced persons.

The Government of India being impressed by the successful management of the Rajpura Home entrusted the Trust with the responsibilities of—

1. Sardarnagar Home (Ahmedabad) in December, 1952.
2. Veliwada camp (Kolhapur) in February, 1953.
3. Faridabad Home (Punjab) in July, 1953.

The Government of India agreed to bear the entire non-recurring costs of the Homes, and also provided for giving cash doles to the inmates numbering 4603 on 1st January, 1953 which rose to 5737 on 31st December, the same year.

When these Homes were taken over by the Trust, they were in quite a chaotic condition. Panic and lawlessness reigned everywhere. Any step to set these right were resented by the inmates. The Sevikas however gradually won their confidence. Through service and love they made the inmates to realise the value of community life, hygienic living, discipline and the dignity of labour. The morning and evening prayers proved of great value in achieving this. Steps for economic rehabilitation of adults and arrangement for education of children were also soon taken up. The Homes at Veliwada and Rajpura were handed over to State Governments in the year 1955 and 1959 respectively.

The members of the Assessment and Evaluation Committee visiting the remaining two Homes are of the opinion that they be handed over to the respective Governments. The problem of the displaced persons being now completely solved at the national level the services of the Trust are no more necessary.

### *Work in Villages*

Representations were made to the Trust that a considerable number of displaced persons have settled in rural areas, especially in Alwar District of Rajasthan. It was, therefore, decided to start four village centres in that district.

These centres are situated within a compact area of 10 miles. The Sevikas of the centres have developed their work in a spirit befitting the Trust. There is ample local response and a number of activities like Balwadi, training in crafts, adult education, basic schools and medical work are all going on in each centre.

Two similar centres in Gangapur District were also run for some years by the Trust. They are now closed. One Arogya Seva and one Gram Seva Centre are conducted at Fakhrabad under Hyderabad Branch in Andhra Pradesh.

### *Training of Young Girls*

Smt. Rameshwari Nehru utilised in 1947-1948 the services of Balniketan, Delhi for training of young displaced girls. The institution was not actually under the Trust but was conducted on the Trust pattern. 90 girls received training under this arrangement. They were later sent to different places for further training after which they were absorbed in gainful occupations.

The Trusts' own training centre at Radaur (District Karnal) in Punjab provided facilities for 20 trainees annually from displaced persons' families. They were awarded scholarship @35/—per month. This arrangement started in 1950 and came to a close in 1960. A number of trainees from this Vidyalaya were later sent either for Midwifery or for Balwadi training at different Trust centres. Government stipendary grant of Rs. 45.00 per month for girls undergoing two years midwifery training were made available. This is also discontinued now.

### *Work in West Bengal*

A relief camp at Dabilia for displaced persons from East Bengal was run for a short time by the Bengal Branch of the Trust in the year 1949. The main work was to distribute milk to children and patients and clothes to needy persons. The trainees of Balrampur Vidyalaya of the Trust conducted adult classes, Safai work etc. in the camp.

### *Help to Institutions*

Owing to peculiar circumstances, and later due to the partition of the country no work was done in Sindh though there was a good amount of fund collected from that province. The plight of Sindhi women and children has given birth to a Trust for their welfare. Its headquarters is in Delhi. This Trust was recognised by the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

as its agency for helping the displaced persons from Sindh. Since 1940 nearly Rs. 2 lakhs have been paid to the Sindhi Trust for running Narishalas, Harijan centres, Balmandirs etc. The Sindh Fund of the Trust has now dwindled to a negligible proportion. Yet Rs. 3,000/—to Rs. 4,000/—is paid to them annually by the Trust to run a centre in Alwar District.

For some years grants were also paid @ Rs. 150/—and Rs. 50/—per month respectively for the Balmandirs at Thakkar Bapa Nagar and Gandhi Nagar colonies in Ahmedabad.

## VII

### THE CENTRAL KASTURBAGRAM AT INDORE AND KASTURBAGRAMS IN THE STATES

Till now we have reviewed the field work under the Trust on a broad basis. In this chapter we wish to consider the work at the Kasturbagram in Indore and the same type of institutions at the State level in the different States. It is on the whole the picture of a net work of Kasturbagrams throughout the country with which we shall be concerned in this chapter. The Kasturbagram in Indore is the National and Central one and it is here that we have the headquarters of the Kasturba Trust itself. At the provincial or State level some of these institutions are not actually called Kasturbagram but have functioned in the same capacity. The following are the Kasturbagrams at the State level and the other institutions playing the same role:

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Kerala Kasturbagram        | Kanimangalam near Trichur.                |
| 2. Tamilnad Kasturbagram      | Near Erode in Coimbatore District.        |
| 3. Hyderabad Kasturbagram     | At Hydershakote near Hyderabad.           |
| 4. Mysore Kasturbagram        | At Arsikere in Distt. Hassan.             |
| 5. Andhra Kasturbagram.       | At Seetanagram in East Godavari District. |
| 6. Maharashtra Kasturbagram   | At Saswad in Poona District.              |
| 7. Vidarbha Kasturbagram      | At Madhan in Amravati District.           |
| 8. Gujarat Kasturbagram       | At Koba near Ahmedabad.                   |
| 9. Delhi Kasturbagram         | Bakthawarpur near Delhi.                  |
| 10. Rajasthan State Vidyalaya | At Shahpura in Bhilwara District.         |
| 11. Punjab State Vidyalaya    | At Radaur in Karnal District.             |

Other similar institutions:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. The Sarania Ashram          | Assam, near Gauhati.                              |
| 2. The Satyabhamapur Vidyalaya | Orissa, in Cuttack District.                      |
| 3. The Balarampur Vidyalaya    | West Bengal, near Kharagpur in Midnapur District. |

- |                           |                                    |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 4. The Waini Vidyalaya    | Bihar in Darbhanga District.       |
| 5. The Ramrepur Vidyalaya | Uttar Pradesh, near Varanasi cant. |
| 6. The Durgapur Vidyalaya | Himachal Pradesh, near Simla.      |

Note.—The main difference between these two types of institutions is that while in the former it completely belongs to the Trust, in the latter property belongs to others though in the occupation of the Trust.

#### *The Central Kasturbagram Indore*

The Scheme for a Central Training Institute with auxiliary activities at a Central Kasturbagram was drawn up as early as in 1945. But it was in 1950 that the scheme was actually started in Kasturbagram near Indore and an allotment of Rs. 20 lakhs was made from the Central Fund of the Trust to this work in 1953. As this particular scheme developed some financial aid came also from the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, the Central Social Welfare Board, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and the Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation. The total amount of such aid came to about Rs. 10 lakhs. The amount standing to the credit of this account on the 31st March, 1961 was Rs. 17,38,377/- This means that the amounts spent so far at Kasturbagram at Indore on capital account is about Rs. 15 lakhs. It does not include the interest earned on the Kasturbagram Fund which was mainly spent on maintenance of activities.

As already stated the National Headquarters of the Kasturba Trust is located in this Kasturbagram. The different training institutions located here are the Shanti Sena, a Home Science Wing, a Mukhya Sevika Training Centre, a three year training course of education-cum-village industries for the Hindi speaking States, rural medical service with a hospital of 20 beds, 2 sub-centres and a Mobile Unit, a basic school, a Condensed Course of 2 years for women, a Lok Karya Kshetra covering 15 villages and a small farm in which the trainees work. Besides there are also the auxiliary nurses and midwifery training course and the training of Balwadi teachers. It will be thus seen that this Central institution caters a variety of training programmes and has also its own direct schemes of work. Among the latter is a scheme of work in the city of Indore under Shri Vinobaji's advice to make the city people Sarvodaya minded.

During the last 10 years and more this central Kasturbagram has set the tone and pattern of work for all the Kasturbagrams and similar institutions. To it has come again and again workers of the Trust at different levels for refresher courses, for studies and discussions, for consultation and advice and generally for inspiration and guidance. It has now established a place for itself in the entire programme of National reconstruction as envisaged by Gandhiji. Through its training and work programmes it has carried the image and spirit of Kasturba Gandhi directly to atleast 3000 villages and indirectly to many thousands more,



Looking at the original terms of reference for establishing a central Kasturbagram and the present various items of work going on in and around under the institution, there are a few observations we wish to make—

1. Basic education was given a central place in the original programme. This would have meant basic teachers training and a small compact area of good basic schools and at least one post-basic school. But even the one school in Kasturbagram is not a full fledged basic school. Particularly now, when everybody is talking of the failure of basic education it becomes the duty of organisations like Kasturba Trust and Gandhi Smarak Nidhi to recover the lost ground and to show that Gandhiji's scheme of Basic Education is relevant even today and can be promoted in the proper way making all necessary adjustment to suit the new conditions in India. We therefore earnestly suggest that this programme should be given immediate consideration by the Trust and the Executive Committee.
2. In regard to rural medical work and training of nurses and midwives, for the same hospital with 50 beds remain yet to be built. It is because of the lack of a suitable hospital that the training of nurses and midwives has to be partly carried on elsewhere. There are now only 2 sub-centres in the villages under the present hospital. This should be increased to atleast 5. Though a small public health scheme is even now under way with the help of a mobile medical unit, it becomes necessary to intensify and extend this work. It should be remembered that what is necessary is to emphasize preventive health than curative medical work. Though there is much theoretical support to preventive medical work it continues to be pushed back by curative medical work. The Kasturba Trust at Indore might well undertake a Pilot Project of rural health involving more preventive work than curative.

Some research also should be undertaken in cheaper remedies for common ailments. Ayurvedic, Unani and Nature cure sections may be attached to the Central hospital, particularly Nature cure which was so dear to the heart of Gandhiji.

3. Not only at Kasturbagram at Indore but in the whole work of the Trust there is hardly any importance, except in a few cases given to Cottage and Village Industries. This will represent the economic programme of organisations like the Trust. Cottage and Village Industries may certainly be organised with improved and scientific techniques. Kasturbagram should set the example and train workers and organisers with the help, if necessary, of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission and Sarva Seva Sangh. If this is done

this headquarter's institution will find itself more fully integrated with the advancing constructive work throughout India. It is interesting to note that the idea of womens' polytechnic is gaining ground. This shows the need for a specialised institution for training women organisers and technicians.

4. It would be good to take early steps to train a small cadre of central inspectors and supervisors who can go round and inspect and check work and not merely accounts and thus keep the centre in full possession of the details of work in the States.
  
5. In the original terms of reference there was a proposal that there should be a good farm and dairy at Kasturbagram. Evidently later on when the Kasturba Trust handed over more than 300 acres to the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi for running a farm and a dairy, the idea of the Kasturba Trust directly running these institutions was given up. But more than one reason today should lead to a re-thinking of this matter. The population in Kasturbagram is steadily increasing and if a Rural Institute also comes in, it will increase still further. There will thus be the issue raised once again for the maximum possible self-sufficiency in food requirements. Moreover training of women in agricultural practices and in Gopalan can no longer be avoided in any comprehensive programme of village reconstruction. The time, therefore, has come for the Kasturba Trust to negotiate with the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi to make available the farm and the dairy for the above purposes of the Trust or for the Trust itself to organise a farm and a dairy with such lands and facilities as may now be made available under the circumstances.

*Other Kasturbagram and Similar Institutions:*

The common feature in all these institutions is the Gram Sevika Vidyalaya for the training of Gram Sevikas. But this training programme is not now in force in many of the Vidyalayas; the earlier programme has now been replaced generally by what is called the Condensed Course for adult women. This is for 2 years, at the end of which the candidates appear for the middle school final examination. The Central Social Welfare Board pays the entire cost of this programme. A little more than 200 adult women are now under training under this scheme. There is generally also each of these places a Balwadi and a maternity centre. Most of these institutions are ten years old. We have a feeling that they have all settled down to a certain pattern of work for women and children. They have a good foundation and therefore it will not be very difficult for them to

break such new ground. We wish to make one or two suggestions in this connection:

1. Except in one or two of these institutions there is no serious attempt to take up any economic improvement programme for women. Such a programme of economic improvement has necessarily to be one of cottage and village industries. We understand that some attempts were made to take up this programme but was given up later. This should now be undertaken on a firm basis. Every Kasturbagram and similar other institutions should have a work-shop where selected village girls should be given training in cottage and village industries like spinning on Ambar Charkhas, food processing and preservation, tailoring, soap making, bee keeping, hand pounding, toy making, poultry farming etc.
2. Training of pre-basic teachers should be undertaken at all these institutions as is being done in Tamilnad. Pre-basic teachers training would be really nursery school teachers training and such teachers are in demand more and more with the advance of primary education. The Trust should specialise in training the pre-basic teachers for rural areas.
3. These institutions should not develop only institutionally inside their walls. They should take up intensive area's development in the surrounding villages. Such an intensive area will greatly help in making the areas more realistic.
4. Training in Cottage and Village Industries should be made an integral part of adult education for women so that side by side with the training in handicraft there will be also a general education in regard to sanitation, nutrition and child care. This will attract the mothers, more than an isolated crafts training programme.
5. Wherever the Pratinidhis live in these institutions the work has gained in quality and volume. It would be good therefore if in every case the Pratinidhi, who is a full time worker, is persuaded to stay inside these institutions.

We should take notice in this connection of certain specific recommendations which have come from the zonal committees in regard to some of these institutions individually—

- (1) The present 20 bedded hospital at Sitanagaram may be expanded to have 50 beds for restarting the training of Auxiliary nurses and midwives.
- (2) Irrigation facilities should be made adequate at Arsikere and the Kanya Ashram should be taken over directly by the institution.
- (3) More land has become absolutely necessary for the Vidyalaya at Hydershakote.

- (4) The 112 acre farm at Erode should be developed to its full capacity under a qualified expert to enable the Tamilnad branch of the Trust to earn a sizable income from it, particularly in view of the fact that the Tamilnad branch is running on an annual deficit.
- (5) The 45 acre farm and the attached dairy at Koba, which is running at big deficit, should be strengthened and improved to be atleast self-sufficient.
- (6) The Satyabhamapur institution continues to remain weak. It must be improved and strengthened and particularly the Balwadi.
- (7) The finances of the Balarampur institution are in a bad way. Steps should be taken immediately to improve this situation and to enable the institution to progress on the lines indicated by us for all such institutions.
- (8) At Radaur in Punjab it would be advisable to restart the Gram Sevika training.
- (9) At Durgapur in Himachal Pradesh, it would be good to and short term courses for women in sanitation, nutrition, child care, and against superstitions and unhealthy social parctices current in the area.

The training of Tibetan girls now going on here should cretainly be continued. Perhaps also the normal Gram Sevika Training ought to be amended to become more a multi-purpose training programme in this area.

- (10) More than one zonal committee have raised the question of the academic and other qualifications of instructors at the State Vidyalayas. It has to be admitted that with a few exceptions it is certainly be desirable to have more qualified instructors. While it may be difficult to secure trainees themselves with adequate qualifications, there should not be any difficulty at the present time and from now on to get duly qualified instructors. This matter ought to be given consideration. The Pratinidhis and Sanchalikas in different States may be asked to report to the headquarters if the present instructors have adequate academic and other qualifications. Such instructors as do possess the necessary academic qualifications may be asked to be deputed for training at the Mukhya Sevika Training centre at Indore. In the case of those not possessing sufficient qualifications they may have to be substituted with proper persons. So much depends upon the staff of the State Vidyalayas that there should no longer be any room left for any criticism that they are not adequately qualified.

Quite apart from the above proposal, it would be a good idea to summon all the existing staff for a short term camp of one month at Indore. This will give an opportunity to the highly qualified staff at Indore to check on the qualifications and capacity of the staff in the Vidyalayas.

The Central Kasturbagram at Indore and the other institutions mentioned in this chapter have certainly made a considerable impact on the whole work of the Trust. We are not thinking only of the training programmes. Each one of these institutions represent to some extent the body and spirit of the Trust. They have established a pattern of community living based on co-operative effort. They have popularised the concept of Sarva Dharma Sama bhava (equal respect for all religion) through systematic congregational prayers. The significance of Khadi and Village Industries are cherished in these centres and this has spread to others. Particularly, the differences of caste and untouchability have been eradicated in the life of these communities. These are all major gains.

## VIII

### FINANCE : A REVIEW OF POSITION

#### *Original Collections*

Besides the Central Committee of the persons formed by the signatories of the appeal for raising Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Fund, provincial Committees were also set up in 1944. Similar committees were set up in Indian States and two special committees were formed for the cities of Calcutta and Bombay.

The progress in collections was maintained and with the release of Gandhiji on 6th May, 1944 the tempo was further accelerated and by 2nd October, 1944, the day on which the purse was presented to Gandhiji on his 75th birthday, Rs. 80,05,975 and odd was collected. This was far beyond the original expectations. It was an indication of the noble cause and the great respect the nation had for Kasturba Gandhi. Though the last official date for closing the Fund collection was 3rd October, 1944, money continued to pour in and the total collection was Rs. 1,31,79,373.

#### *Allocations of Funds*

Out of the total collection of Rs. 1,31,79,373 a sum of Rs. 99,01,210 were collected in the different provinces and States of India and Rs. 32,78,162 in the two industrial cities of Bombay and Calcutta. On Gandhiji's initiation the Fund for convenient management was split into 'Central' and 'State' funds. The Central Fund consisted of the total collections of Bombay and Calcutta and 25 % of the Provincial collection. States were allotted 75% of their collection to be used in their areas. Provision for this has been made in the Trust Deed under provisos 1 and 2 of Clause 3.

All these provisions were considered applicable to the original collection only. It was decided not to impose them on new amounts collected thereafter. The picture as finally emerged is as follows:

Details	Total collections	State fund	Central Fund
1. Provinces	99,01,210	74,25,907	24,75,303
2. Two Cities	32,78,163		32,78,163
Total	1,31,79,373	74,25,907	57,53,466

Since then upto 31st March, 1961 the following sums have been received by way of grants and donations:

1. Original Collections	1,31,79,373
2. Since received upto 31-3-61	1,45,94,394
3. Total amount	2,77,73,767
4. Total expenses upto 31-3-61	1,88,97,949
5. Balance of the Fund as on 31-3-61	88,75,818

The main details of balance amount are as follows:

(a) Central Fund	31,84,553
(b) State Funds	27,19,808
(c) Provincial Deficit Fund	12,33,080
(d) Kasturbagram Fund	17,38,377
	88,75,818

There are also several other minor funds received afterwards for specific purposes amounting to Rs. 3,42,232.

#### *The Investment of Funds*

The Holding Trustees having obtained Gandhiji's consent, and approval made the first investment of Rs. 1,15,00,000/- in various Government loan papers and kept Rs. 10/- lakhs in Fixed Deposits of scheduled banks and the rest in current accounts to meet day to day needs of the organisation. At the end of 31st March, 1961 the following were the major investments:

Investment	Rs.
1. Government securities	75,87,620
2. Call and Fixed Deposits	15,54,646
	91,42,266

**Liquid Funds**

1. Current and saving accounts	4,99,464
2. In hand and transit	58,917
	<u>5,58,381</u>
Total	97,00,647

Against this the liabilities are as follows:

1. Central Fund	37,84,553
2. State Fund	27,19,808
3. Kasturbagram (Indore) Fund	17,38,377
4. Provincial Deficit Fund	12,33,080
5. Building depreciation Reserve Fund	1,32,436
6. Specific Funds	3,42,232
7. Miscellaneous liabilities	3,50,161
	<u>97,00,647</u>

***Nature of Funds***

The following activities are financed from the Central Fund:

1. The expenses of the Central Office of the Trust.
2. Adviser, Training.
3. Publication of Kasturba Darshan.
4. Sevika's children allowances.
5. Maintenance of Ba and Mahadev Bhai's Samadhis at Aga Khan Palace Poona.
6. Maintenance of Shanti Sena Vidyalaya at Kasturbagram Indore.
7. Other schemes of temporary nature.

From 31st March, 1953 a sum of Rs. 20,00,000 was transferred to Kasturbagram Fund to finance the training and other programmes of the All India Centre at Kasturbagram, Indore.

Likewise a sum of Rs. 1,50,000/- has been earmarked from the Central Fund for the maintenance of Ba and Mahadev Bhai's Samadhi at the Aga Khan Palace, Poona.

***Provincial Deficit Fund***

As a number of provinces began to exhaust their State Funds one by one, it was considered necessary to maintain their activities by financing from the Central Fund.

For this the Trustees decided to open a new Fund named "Provincial Deficit Fund" to which the interest which every year the Trust was



adding to the 'State Funds' would be redirected. During 1960-61 a sum of Rs. 10 lakhs was transferred to this fund from the Central Fund to make it substantial, 1. Assam, 2. Himachal Pradesh, 3. Kerala, 4. Mahakoshal, 5. Mysore, 6. Orissa, 7. Vidarbha, 8. West Bengal, 9. Hyderabad, 10. Kasturba Kushta Nivaran Nilayam, Mazawanthangal are now financed from this fund.

#### *State Funds*

At present Delhi, Gujrat, Maharashtra, Tamilnad and Uttar Pradesh have fairly substantial State Funds. In case of others they are not considerable and may also be soon exhausted. Some financial assistance is received from the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi for the deficit States *i. e.* Assam, West Bengal, Orissa, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Mahakoshal.

Since 1955, the Central Social Welfare Board has also helped the village centres to the extent of 25 to 30 per cent of their actual expenditure.

#### *Specific Funds:*

There are certain other small Funds earmarked by the donors for specific local activities and they are included under 'Specific Funds'.

#### *Building and Dead Stock Fund*

The position of these funds are as under:

Funds and Liabilities	Amount
1. Building fund	32,56,710
2. Dead, live stock and equipment	4,90,022
	<hr/>
	37,46,732
Assets and Properties	
1. Lands and buildings	32,76,539
2. Dead and Live Stock and vehicles	4,95,664
	<hr/>
	37,72,203

There is already an over expenditure over these items than their respective Funds.

#### *Current Finances*

The annual recurring expenses have gradually increased from 3 lakhs in 1946 to 16 lakhs in 1961. Due to discontinuance of C.S.W. Board Training it will be now approximately Rs. 12 lakhs to 13 lakhs a year. The main expenditure is on Gram Seva Centres which has increased from Rs. seventy three thousand in 1946 to five and a half lakhs in 1961. The next items of importance are expenses on hospitals and Gram Sevika Training of the Trust. The administrative expenses take the last place in precedence.

The main sources of income are—

1. Interest on investment which at present comes to about Rs 3 lakhs a year.
2. Grants from Gandhi Smarak Nidhi for the activities of low-fund provinces from 1951. This is being generally reduced.
3. Grants from the Central Social Welfare Board to the tune of 25 to 30% of the actual expenses on village centres. This has gradually increased from Rs. 46,000/— in 1954 to about 2,00,000/— in 1961.
4. Aid from State and Central Government for their specific projects undertaken through the Trust.
5. Donation and collection by the village centres. It is insignificant except from the hospitals and health centres.

The Trust has a Budget sub-committee appointed by the Executive Committee and consisting of the Chairman, the Secretary, the Office Secretary and one of the Trustees. This meets once in a year for scrutinising the annual estimates of the provinces as well as of the other centres and specific activities.

#### *Remarks and recommendations*

The present administrative expenditure of the Trust though kept at minimum and appears to be irreducible is high in proportion to welfare expenses. It is, therefore, suggested that main activities of the Trust should be enlarged without further increasing the administrative expenses. In order to continue its beneficial and unique services of National importance, we feel that the Trust should get *ad hoc* grants from the Planning Commission. For this purpose, a Five Year Plan for improving the quality of existing activities of the Trust and also for starting new activities which are generally acceptable to the Planning Commission should be drawn and presented. As the third Five Year Plan has already begun, the programme in the Trust Plan may be drawn only for the remaining Plan period, so as to fit into the present Five Year Plan and its allocations. If this is pursued successfully the Trust can develop its work and the nation will derive the benefit of the experience gained by the Trust in working for the welfare and education of women and children in rural areas, and in the training of women social workers in this field.

## IX

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *Organisation*

Under the terms of reference of the Assessment and Evaluation Committee, we are not expected to suggest changes and modifications in the organisational set up of the Trust. However, we feel that for better working of the Trust some modifications and suggestions are necessary, which are not inconsistent with the main objectives of the Trust.

We, therefore, commend the following to the Trustees for their consideration and such action as they may deem fit:

#### 1. Board of Trustees:

As the Trust work has a special emphasis on the welfare of women and children, and its work has to be made more effective, while therefore, making further appointments of the Trustees, women with an understanding and background of rural work, who can give and devote more time to the Trust work may be taken. As far as possible persons from unrepresented regions may be appointed.

#### 2. Executive Committee:

We note with satisfaction that the majority of members of the Executive Committee are women. We however, feel that it would be healthier and more effective for strengthening the work in the States, if, as far as possible while electing the members of the Executive Committee, due consideration is given for regional representation. In addition to such representation in Executive Committee, the Chairmen of the State Boards (as suggested hereafter) of the regions not represented may also be invited. The term of such invited Chairmen may be one year. The members of the Executive Committee should be actively associated with the work of the Trust in States.

In the opinion of the members the Board of Trustees should be constituted in such a way that only active women workers (of the Kasturba Trust as well as from outside) should be elected to the Executive Committee.

### 3. Kasturbagram, Indore:

(a) The suggestion of having an Advisory Committee to strengthen and guide Kasturbagram activities may be considered.

(b) We suggest that in addition to the Office Secretary, two organising secretaries be appointed in order to assist the Secretary in the discharge of her responsibilities. These organising secretaries will be one for the North and the other for the South. The Secretary, while in over all charge should also be responsible for the conduct of all the activities at Kasturbagram, Indore.

In this context we would also like to suggest that one of the Kasturbagram Centres in the Southern region may be developed. Kasturbagram, Indore should have staff from other regions also and implement Vinobaji's programme of "Antar Bharati" for national and emotional integration. In the Kasturbagram which may be developed in the South, Hindi should be a compulsory subject. English may also be the medium of instruction in addition to the regional languages for sometime. Staff should be a mixed one drawn up from various Southern States. It would be a healthy practice to have interchange of students of North and South Kasturbagrams.

### 4. State:

The present practice of entrusting the work to the Pratinidhis is good. But we strongly recommend that State Boards be constituted to help in strengthening and expanding the work. The Board should consist mostly of women with a few men who have experience in social and constructive fields. In constituting the State Boards, representation may be given to similar organisations and agencies including the Government. The Pratinidhis will send a panel of names to the Central Office, to be approved under the authority of the Executive Committee. The Board may have members, not exceeding twelve.

In addition to that the Trustees and the invitees to the Executive Committee residing in the State will also be the *Ex Officio* members.

The Chairmen of the State Board will be elected by the members and the Pratinidhi will be the *Ex Officio* secretary. We are strongly of the opinion that the Pratinidhi who executes the work of the Trust should not be the Chairman of the State Board. The term of the Board will be for two years.

The Pratinidhis will hold office for three years.

It would be preferable not to renominate the members of the Board for more than three terms and the Pratinidhis for more than two terms. This will give a better opportunity in developing leadership.

The Central and State Governments and all India Voluntary Organisations with their State and regional branches may be requested to give representation to the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust at the Central and State levels in implementing the welfare programme for women and children in the rural areas.

The Pratinidhis should not contest election for legislatures and Panchayats. But they should take active part and in co-operation with the Panchayats formulate and implement their programmes for the welfare of women and children.

5. The time has come to give a sense of security to our workers and also provide them with certain facilities. We understand the Sevikas are getting certain facilities.

- (a) We suggest insuring the life of Sevikas trained by the Trust or so recognised by the Trust to an amount not exceeding three thousands. The premium to be paid should be shared by the Sevika and the Trust. This will apply only to those Sevikas who have served the Trust for three years and more.
- (b) We note that the children allowance is also paid to the Sevikas. We would suggest enhancement and increase of the amount from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 to each child not exceeding three.
- (c) Service rules should be framed.
- (d) The above facilities may be extended to all other staff getting a salary of Rs. 100 or less.

### *Programme*

1. There is a great need to expand and revitalise the activities of the Trust, so that it can play its part fully and effectively in promoting the welfare of women and children in rural areas in educational, social and economic spheres.

2. The first charge on the K. G. N. M. Trust should be the service and the welfare of the Adivasis and the weaker sections of the society and the Trust should also take up the work in the border areas and the areas of tensions.

3. (a) The K. G. N. M. Trust should take up its own programme of work based on its concept and experience.

- (b) It should co-operate with other voluntary agencies in implementing similar programmes.
- (c) It should co-operate with the Government in their development activities for the welfare of women and children. Here also we suggest that though K. G. N. M. Trust may take up several Government aided training and other work programmes, the Trust should develop at least one institution where training and work programme of a pioneering nature may be started and developed which may enrich the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust work.

4. Emphasis should be on economic programmes, so that people will get useful employment. The Programme should be planned with the local available raw material.

Our Gram Seva and Arogya Centres have done very good work promoting health and socio-economic programmes in rural areas. Therefore, such centres should be strengthened.

#### *Details of Work.*

##### **1. Training of workers at various levels.**

There is a great dearth of personnel in administrative and training sections of the Trust at the Centre as well as in the States. This is a serious handicap in the proper implementation of the programme of the Trust. All efforts should, therefore, be made to recruit suitable people and also train them. No programme can succeed unless this is done.

The idea of establishing an All India cadre for the teaching staff of the various Vidyalyayas may be considered. The salary pattern for those drawing less than Rs. 150/- may be as far as possible equal to that of the State Governments. Though retired persons of experience may be helpful, every effort should be made to recruit younger people and train them.

Short term camps lasting from three days to two weeks can play a vital role in mobilising co-operation of public in implementing the programme, especially at this stage of democratic decentralisation. Preference be given to Kattins (women spinners) as suggested by Shri Dharendra Mazumdar. In this programme of creating Lok Shakti the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust can co-operate with all the agencies.

##### **2. Specific Training Programme:**

###### **(a) Home Science and Gram Sevika Training**

We feel that as Kasturbagram, Indore is having a Gram Sevika (Home Science) training scheme sponsored by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture

the Trust should not run its own Gram Sevika Course specially as the syllabus of both these trainings are the same ( The purpose is to avoid duplication )

**( b ) Auxiliary Nurse Midwife Course**

Adequate services for welfare of mothers and children are not available in many parts of India especially in Adivasi and backward areas. The K. G. N. M. Trust maternity assistants who had Gram Sevika Training in addition to midwifery training proved that they could serve their areas better than those trained on Midwifery only.

Therefore, the K. G. N. M. Trust in its Headquarters and in States should take up training programme for Auxiliary nurse midwives so that an adequate number of trained personnel would be available for service in backward and in Adivasi areas.

**( c ) Orientation Programme**

The Programme of orientation of all the Trust and other workers should be conducted on State basis. The course may be one to three months duration. It should be a must-once in two years or so.

**( d ) Shanti Sena**

The Trust did the right thing in a right moment by starting the Shanti Sena Vidyalaya according to Vinobaji's suggestion. It was Gandhi's last wish that all constructive workers should take up Shanti Sena work and build the power of non-violence. Shanti Sena Vidyalaya Training includes the theoretical knowledge of the philosophy of Sarvodaya, basic principles of all religions, history of revolutions and India's contribution to the theory and practice of revolution.

In view of the nature of Shanti Sena Training we are of the opinion that it should not be permanently located at one place or in one province but should be mobile. It is suggested that this training may be conducted in different States and in areas of tension.

Kasturbagram, Indore and Kasturbagrams in the States should develop full fledged Basic schools from the Pre-basic to Post-basic stages to demonstrate the pattern and efficiency of Basic Education. They should also run hostels for the students so as to train them in community life.

Wherever possible, Pre-basic and Basic teachers' training and similar training may be undertaken.

The Central Social Welfare Board has introduced Condensed Course education programme similar to the Sevikaashram programme of the Kasturba

Trust so as to educate women and get qualified teachers and workers. The Kasturba Trust should take full advantage of this programme linking it up with Trust training programmes.

A refresher course for Sevikas should be a must after every two years. In this respect more than one State may be grouped.

#### *Other Programmes*

##### **Research**

It is necessary to conduct research—

- (a) In rural health, Sanitation and dietetics.
- (b) In industries to be taken up in villages.
- (c) In behaviour pattern and change of attitudes, because of the work. To facilitate this it is advisable to have a preliminary survey before starting new work.

##### **Publication Section**

To disseminate knowledge and information on an all India basis concerning the Trust work, a publication section should be organised. The KASTURBA DARSHAN may also be handled by this section. It should from time to time issue a news letter, booklets and articles on work and also on subjects dealing with the welfare of women and children. It would be helpful if the news letter is printed in various regional languages.

##### *Finances*

We earnestly suggest that the Trust in addition to its own funds and public contributions may persuade the Planning Commission to allot a sizable amount to the Kasturba Trust in this Third Five Year Plan for working out the above training and field work programmes. This may be met from the funds allotted to the Adivasi Welfare, Harijan Welfare, Development of Border areas etc. If this is done then the State Development, Departments, Social Welfare Boards and other agencies also will contribute and co-operate in this vital programme of work.



## CONCLUSION

We do not claim that this report is as precise and comprehensive a document of assessment as it should have been. The gathering of facts, the recording of impressions, opinions and criticisms and then the compiling of this report after further discussions among ourselves, have all taken more than 18 months. The members were mostly busy persons with heavy day to day work of their own. Nevertheless we are grateful we have completed it and are now handing it over to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

It will be noticed that we have neither made any startling discoveries nor startling recommendations. This is so because the work of the Trust has been reviewed in one way or another from time to time and short comings and mistakes were corrected as far as possible. We have had the advantage of such a process of self-assessment which the Trust had continually promoted. We had many valuable records before us and we drew unreservedly from them.

No living institution or movement can afford to fall into ruts of work however good. Equally, it is unavoidable that several items of work will become routinised in any big institutions or organisations. The problem is, how to conserve the good work already done keeping its aims intact and infuse into the whole work a dynamism leading on to better and more effective implementation of the programme. Constructive work, particularly, has to be achieved by this balance in Independent India. While many of the basic facts and realities of India continue to be the same as when Mahatma Gandhi lived and led the people of India, there is no question that new problems, and challenges have come up in the wake of political freedom. Several of the items of the Gandhian constructive programme strenuously propagated and built up by voluntary and non-official agencies, have now been adopted by the Government as their new programmes. This necessarily involves changes in the administrative and implementation patterns. Who can deny that the whole of the Community Development Programme is

Gandhiji's Samagra Gramseva movement under new conditions created by freedom ?

The Central Social Welfare Board also drew inspiration from the Kasturba Trust. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission is the new incarnation of the older Charkha Sangh and Gramodyog Sangh which Gandhiji had started and built up with the co-operation of experts and workers. Constructive workers who had worked under Gandhiji should be happy that these changes have taken place. Otherwise, there would be no meaning in India's political freedom. There is however one word of caution that must be uttered in this connection. In making changes and amendments to the earlier programmes, we must not cast away their fundamental objectives and basic principles. Gandhiji wanted the freedom of India in order that the lowest in India also will share that freedom. He did not want to replace the white bureaucracy with an Indian one. He wanted the freedom to reach the humblest cottages in our villages. It was this concept of his which he called Sarvodaya and which he has left to India as the greatest legacy.

Much of National Reconstruction Work now going on in India fails to reach those whom our great poet Rabindranath Tagore called, 'the poorest, the lowliest and the lost'. The Kasturba Trust may claim with some justification that in all its work it has tried to keep in front of it the service of this 'unto the last' section of community. It is in a deeper integration through service with this section of the Indian people that the Trust must now move forward. That is why we have stressed the service of tribal millions, Harijans including Bhangis and the people in the least developed areas. To do this the Trust need not give up its past work or turn away from it but only go deeper and more fully into its own ideals and traditions of work. The Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees should go into this matter thoroughly when considering this report.

It is no longer possible for any organisation in India to go on ploughing its own furrows. All around us others would be ploughing their furrows and moving in the same direction. The Kasturba Trust should therefore consider the question of establishing a liaison committee at the highest level in order that the leaders of the Trust and the leaders of the other similar bodies may sit together, plan and coordinate work programmes so as to avoid duplication of effort and expenditure. Gandhiji and Ba were symbols of unity and service. How often has it not been said that Ba completed and fulfilled Bapu. In a larger sense this represents the role of women in National Reconstruction in India. One cause, more than any other, which is slowing down progress in India in many directions is the lack of education and training of women of India. This matter is now getting more and more attention in the Nation's Educational Programme. We must educate and train women for full citizenship

and full participation in nation building. What the Kasturba Trust has proved is that, given the opportunity, the women of India's villages are quite capable of joining hands effectively with their men folk to create a more prosperous and happier India. Kasturba in spite of the limitations of her personal education and any special training proved this more than any one of our country. That is why her image and her example must continue to inspire us, even as we widen and deepen the scope of our work. It is through the work of every one, from the field worker to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Let every one therefore re-dedicate himself or herself more fully and unreservedly to the many sided programmes of the Trust. We have no doubt that the sweet and great spirit of Ba will bless the whole work as it advances from step to step.

(Mrs.) T. S. Soundram Ramachandran  
(Chairman)

Pushpaben Mehta  
Kalawati Tripathi  
Malati Choudhri  
M. Jagannadha Rao  
Nirmala Deshpande  
Banwarilal Choudhari  
V. Rajalakshmi

(Secretary)

Kasturbagram, Indore,  
24th October, 1962

## A NOTE OF DISSENT

I submit my dissent with regard to the suggestion as given on page 30 that the Kasturba Trust should seek recognition of its general training programmes from Government to give trainees a sense of security. I have no objection as far as medical or other type of technical training programmes are concerned, because that is unavoidable. The very intention of providing a sense of security is against the spirit of service and dedication. The organisations like Kasturba Trust have an unfailing duty to foster and promote this sense of service and dedication rather than sense of security which is against the grain of Bapu's ideals.

*Malati Devi Choudhri*  
*Member, Assessment and*  
*Evaluation Committee.*

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