

Best Practice 2

1. Title of the practice: **Social Service and Outreach**

2. The context:

The College, built after the vision and ideology of Swami Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Sarada Mission, has always believed in imparting holistic education. Students here receive an inclusive value-based training that is not limited to dissemination and acquisition of knowledge, or setting up and achieving career goals. They are taught the immense value of giving back to society in all possible forms, beginning early with their induction to the various kinds of outreach programmes organized by the college and the NSS units. The twin pledges of “Be and Make” (College Motto), and “Not Me, But You” (NSS Motto), gear the students towards selfless social service.

3. Objectives:

The outreach programmes are becoming increasingly relevant in today’s world, where children, often products of nuclear families, are taught to focus solely on themselves, expected to excel in every sphere, and become more and more self centered as they join the rat race of cut throat competition. The fiercely competitive society is creating a youth blinkered to everything other than self-betterment, self-aggrandizement, and self-promotion, with little concern for the larger society. The outreach programmes try to steer the younger generation away from the self-centeredness, inculcate a strong sense of social responsibility and empathy, and direct them towards creating a society based on equality and inclusiveness.

4. The Practice:

The college has quite a few underprivileged neighbourhoods around its vicinity. The following **Community oriented Programmes** are carried out for the benefit of its members:

- Basic Education (for children between 5 and 10 years of age)
- Value Education (for girls of the 6-19 age group)
- Computer classes for local underprivileged children
- The basic needs of the students are taken care of, like books and stationeries, school uniforms, school bags, and nutritional supplements. The children are also initiated to educational tools and physical activities.
- Tailoring classes for women from the nearby slums
- Charitable dispensary in the College premises, with facility of free health check-up by two homoeopathy doctors and distribution of medicines twice a week.
- Miscellaneous welfare activities, like relief work, eye camp, medical camp etc. are also conducted round the year
- Every year during festivals, new sarees and garments are distributed among poor local ladies and children. Blankets, umbrellas, shoes, and books and stationeries are also distributed.

Students of the College regularly volunteer in these programmes.

Donation Drive: Beginning September 2014, a collection campaign is organized annually to collect spare clothes, books, toys and stationeries from teachers, staff and students. These are sorted by student volunteers and distributed among the neighbouring slum dwellers. This sharing creates a sense of fellow feeling among the students, and encourages sharing of resources.

The **Menstrual Health and Hygiene Awareness Programme** is a unique community programme conducted by student volunteers. Every year a group of student volunteers meet teen and pre teen girls and their mothers from the neighbourhood, and conduct a Menstrual Health and Hygiene Awareness campaign with posters, presentations, and hands on training on sanitary napkin use and disposal. The workshop includes a doctor to answer the queries of the participants.

NSS: A variety of community oriented activities and awareness campaigns have been conducted by the NSS wing of the college, since its activation in August 2019. An Anti-Plastic campaign to arouse a consciousness amongst the local citizens, a Dengue awareness walk and door to door campaign, virtual Covid awareness campaigns, are some of the community oriented activities carried out by the NSS. A programme on the significance of the Republic Day was organized for the neighbourhood children on 26th January 2021.

Amphan and Yaas Relief work: During the Covid-induced lockdown, and the aftermath of the super cyclone Amphan, RKSMVV extended help and support to about 500 unprivileged families in the neighbourhood from April to August 2020. Relief, including food and essentials items worth Rs. Two lakhs, were distributed.

Organ and Blood donation Awareness and Blood donation Camps: The College organizes a Blood Donation Camp every year to instill a sense of social responsibility among the students. The number of enthusiastic donors has increased from 50 to 100 since the first of the camps was held in 2015. The camp is now organized by the NSS, the donors include students and teaching and non-teaching staff. The camp is preceded by a motivating Orientation programme on Organ and Blood Donation.

5. Obstacles faced (if any):

None. Enthusiastic participation and a lot of positive inputs are received from the students.

6. Impact of the practice:

The strongest impact of the practice is perhaps reflected in the philanthropic activities carried out by the alumni of the institution, both through the RKSMVV Alumni Association, as well as in individual capacities. Any appeal for help – monetary or otherwise – is met with enthusiastic response from RKSMVV students scattered all over the world. Numerous ex students are attached with nonprofit and charitable organizations, and regularly support or sponsor underprivileged students of their alma mater. The institution is proud to have created a large

body of self-reliant and free thinking women, responsible citizens with a strong sense of social duties.

Current students coming up with a suggestion to build a Book Bank for their underprivileged juniors, with donated text books and reference materials, is yet another evidence of success.

7. Resources: Funds, mostly donations from the stakeholders and well-wishers.