

ABATING THE POVERTY OF THE POOREST

WOMEN IN INDIA ARE STILL STRONGLY DISCRIMINATED BASIC KNOWLEDGE AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS AS NEW BASIS

The children mortality rate is high, medical care and hygiene are a catastrophe, hardly anyone can read and write: The Madhya Pradesh district in India is regarded as one of the poorest regions of India. Especially the rural female population - the Bhil and Bhilala are strongly affected thereby.

Malnutrition, lacking hygienic conditions when giving birth and concerning infant care and lacking access to basic education aggravates the living conditions especially of women drastically. One quarter of all female newborns do not survive their fifteenth birthday. Women have a low status in their families; they often don't visit schools and usually don't get paid for their work.

Knowledge is being conveyed to the children

The Barli Development Institute for Rural Women was established in 1985 in the megacity Indore in central India. In the focus of interest from the very beginning of this activity was to address the needs of the most underprivileged population stratum. Through the further education of women one thing is mainly guaranteed: that the knowledge is consequently conveyed to the children and other family settings.

The Barli development institute in this context acts on the maxim of help to self-help. One is concerned with the needs of the people in question. In a six-month stay free of charge, the girls and women learn reading and writing, hygiene and health precautions, agricultural cultivation as well as a craft. Barli attaches importance particularly to the fact that the craft finds buyers on the local market. It has become increasingly obvious that batik and tailoring are sources to generate income not only for the women but for supplying for whole families in Madhya Pradesh.

New principles generate feeling of self-worth

With the communication of universally recognized principles such as the equality of men and women, girls and women are helped to develop more self-confidence. Every year the Barli Institute trains approximately 170 girls and women. After the conclusion of the education program virtually all can read and write, use clean boiled drinking water and have an occupation that generates income. The population has great confidence in the organization.

Renewable energy in the household

Firewood for cooking is a scarce good in the region. Since they usually cook inside the premises, there are lung and eye ailments because of the development of smoke.

This circumstance is met by the Barli institute with the use of solar cooking appliances. These solar cooking appliances are also being used in the homes of former Barli participants.

New trainers

Many of the former students decide to be educated to become trainers. This way they can reshape their own lives. One of the greatest tributes given to the institute was the Global 500 Award presented by the United Nations in 1992, as well as being listed among the 81 most successful basic educational projects in the INNOV databank of the UNESCO.