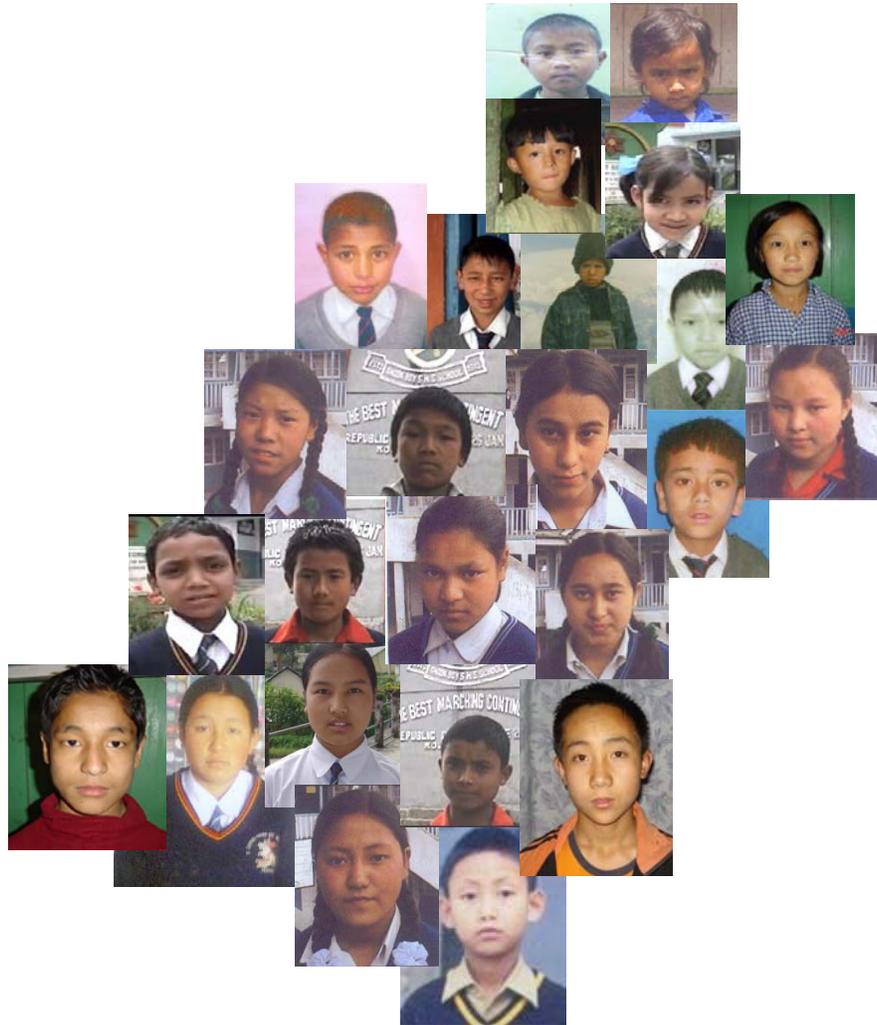




Annual Report 2007 - 2008



**Mankind in Action for Rural Growth
(MARG)**

Annual Report 2007 - 2008

It has been a challenging but a successful year for ***Mankind in Action for Rural Growth*** (MARG). At one time we nearly felt that MARG would collapse, however with the financial assistance and moral support received from various well wishers and sponsors, MARG has kept the flag high and firm.

For the very first time MARG organized a drawing competition in Darjeeling for its own children on Children's Day. The event was graced by Mr. Augustine Lepcha, Dy District Magistrate of Darjeeling. MARG also participated in the World AIDS day together with local NGOs at Hayden Hall Darjeeling.

During the month of September 07 the hills of North Bengal roared in support for its citizen at a national reality show but at the same time the rain came pouring down and doused the spirit of the people of the hills. The rain was a curse to some of the families of Darjeeling and Kalimpong. Many people lost their houses and some had to part away with their loved ones because of landslides. MARG with support from other local NGOs was quick in supporting them by distributing blankets.

A ray of hope shown by Smile Foundation came crashing down as the project in Mim Tea Estate, Darjeeling did not materialize. This event did not dampen the spirit of MARG but made it even stronger in heart and mind. Hence MARG could ignite smiles for twenty four little children from Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong with the help received from its well wishers and sponsors. It is they who have been standing strong beside MARG during the time of crisis. I would like to thank all the sponsors and well wishers of MARG from the bottom of my heart and request you and your friends to continue to support MARG in the years to come. I am confident blessings will flow in abundance. Moreover, you would be glad to know that you have Ignited a Smile of an underprivileged child.

One of our children Mr. Bishu Nath had lost his father when he was very young. This year he lost his mother too. While all of us at MARG were deeply saddened by this tragedy, what was truly commendable was that not only Bishu coped with the grief bravely but he also gave us so much strength. Despite the personal tragedy, his hard work got him promoted to class seven. We at MARG are extremely proud of Bishu!!!

MARG going by its motto Igniting Smiles visited a small village named Dukka in the Kalimpong region where there are no roads and electricity. The villagers had got together in making a motor able road. MARG was the first NGO to extend its support to these villagers. This incident not only Ignited Smiles in the villagers but brought MARG in limelight through various local news papers.

It was dreams come true for MARG children on 29th April 2008 when an entrepreneur Mr. Rajesh Garg from Darjeeling decided to celebrate his daughter's birthday with MARG children. It was the first time in their life that children were introduced to Pizza, grilled sandwich etc. The grand finale was when Mrs. Garg handed a gift voucher from Big Bazar worth Rs 500/- to each MARG child. The children had no limit for joy.

Two of our children Ms Yanden and Sharmil appeared for class 10th board exams but unfortunately they got a compartment. They will again be sitting for their exams in September 2008. Out of 24 MARG children only three were not promoted in 2007. Most MARG students showed exemplary results in education and some even in extra curricular activities like football marathon etc.

Overall, it was a successful year and yes we did manage to Ignite Smiles for some children. Once again, I would like to thank MARG's well wishers and Sponsors for their generous donations and time and advice.



Meeting Bishu Nath

Bishu Nath is one of MARG's children who is studying in Turn Bull High School, Darjeeling. He lost his father when he was very young and his mother started working as a maid to support his education. Due to the nature of his mother's work and the cold climate in Darjeeling, she got addicted to alcohol.

On Bishu's verification visit I got an opportunity to visit his house which is in Toung soong, Darjeeling. The charming young lad came to receive me at the police out post in Chowrasta. Running in front of me through the narrow lanes of the hill he guided me to his house. On reaching I saw the place where he was staying with his mother. A single room on rent approx 8' x 10' in size together served as their kitchen, bed room and study room. I took a deep breath and wondered how they must be managing it. Though there was hardship this young lad had nothing to complain. He was ever smiling.

The previous day when I had met him at his school he told me that his mother was ill. This was the reason the house was empty when I visited. I thought that I should visit his mother as I was scheduled to return to Delhi the next day. On reaching Eden Hospital I enquired about her and the nurse on duty showed me her bed. As I slowly approached her I noticed that she had curled up like a prawn as she was having stomach pain. I introduced myself to her and told her about MARG, its activities and MARG's willingness to take up the responsibility of educating her child. With radiating twinkling eyes and folded hands she thanked me and promised me that she would never ever drink. After assuring her of MARG's support I met the Nurse in charge and enquired her health. I was informed that she was suffering from liver jaundice. I left the hospital after saying a short prayer in my mind.

On my recent visit to Turnbull High School with SMILE representatives I again got an opportunity to meet Bishu. The ever smiling innocent face again greeted me with a Namastey. I reciprocated his greeting and took no time in enquiring about his mother's health. He nodded his face and informed me that she was no more. Something cold ran through my spines and I could not believe it. I didn't have the courage to ask him again if this incident was true. A soft voice from his class teacher whispered into my ears that Bishu's mother had expired a month back.

What could I do that very moment? Except hold the young charming lad closely to myself and told him to study hard. The innocent smile and his determined look on his face told me that he would fight every odd in his life.

SMILE and MARG representative visit Mim Tea Estate, Darjeeling



On 20 September 2007 when whole of North Bengal was gearing up for the finals of Indian Idol, SMILE Foundation and MARG representatives visited Mim Tea Estate to seek a possibility of starting a Non Formal Education Centre for the children of Mim Tea Estate and its surrounding areas. With the help of Anugalaya a local NGO, MARG had organized a small gathering at Mim Tea Estate.

Around 35 to 40 children accompanied by their parents/guardians attended the meeting. The parents showed keen interest in sending their children to the centre to learn. SMILE Representative Ms Rima Beri then visited the proposed two sites where the centre would operate from. MARG assured that they will definitely help the children there. Till date no NGOs have reached Mim Tea Estate to offer help towards development and MARG along with SMILE's help would like to Ignite Smiles there.



The final project proposal for the same has been now forwarded to the managing committee of Smile Foundation for approval.

Burdung Village (Gangtok) Calls for Help

Burdung village lies above Sang khola on the way to Gangtok. It's a village where most of the villagers belong to backward sections of our Society.



People here live below the poverty line and there is no proper school. People living here are migrant labourers from near by places who have come for employment.

Most of the villagers do not have a land of their own and provide their manual services in the fields of landlords. Parents are not able to send their children to school as they cannot afford it with their meagre income.

During MARG's representative's recent visit it has been known that the villagers are very excited to have a non-formal education centre for their children and they have decided to provide us a land and their manual labour to construct a small non-formal education centre.

In this regard MARG is looking for potential partners for its support in igniting smile of the underprivileged children of Burdung village of Sang Khola.

Mid Term results of MARG Children

During my recent visit in September 2007 to the hills of Darjeeling, I got an opportunity to meet most of the School Principals where MARG's children are studying.

I was happy to know that most of the MARG children were performing well in their studies. Their individual results speak for themselves. There were only one or two who had not performed well in their mid term examination. On having a word with them I was told that the environment in which they were studying was not good. Finally I was assured that they would perform well in the final examination to be held between November and December 2007.

These few signs of commitment and development in our children give us hope and motivate us to work harder. I would sincerely like to thank all the sponsors in sponsoring the needy children and also request all sponsors to support us in future too. Your contribution has indeed ignited many smiles.

Nima Smiles



He stood with his hands at his back, shy and wondering why he had been called to the principal's office on our recent visit to Ghoom Boys High School, Darjeeling. As Nima saw me he gave me a sweet little smile. The smile spoke of everything he wanted to convey. He was happy. I was then informed by the teacher in charge that Nima was doing well in his studies. I was also told that he was very good in football and had won praises from students and teachers of that school during the recent inter class football tournament. It was so good to hear that MARG's children were showing exemplary results in extra curricular activities too. We pray and hope that Nima would one day play for the big clubs in India and make himself and his family proud.



Visit to Harsing, a beautiful old tea garden in Darjeeling

I was disheartened to hear that in the last raining season, Harsing, a beautiful old tea garden, had to suffer for our profanities of nature.

Landslides crashed through this village causing heavy losses. My friend Siddhartha Pradhan, one of the founder members of Mankind in Action for Rural Growth (MARG) and I decided to visit the place.

It was a bright Sunday morning when we set off. A fresh new blanket of snow covered the mighty Kanchenjunga, and the nearby hills surrounded the Darjeeling town like a mother embracing its baby.

I attended the Sunday morning mass and stood near Divya Vani, waiting for Siddarth, who so lovingly volunteered to take us down to Harsing in his personal car. Mr. Navin Tamang from DLR Perena and Mr. Montu Gurung from Cathedral of Immaculate Conception agreed to join us too.

The air was crisp. However, it got warmer as we descended from Darjeeling to Lebong and had to remove our jackets. On our way, we were greeted by children playing on the sides of the road, women washing clothes outside their houses and some on their way to Darjeeling. The road was narrow and steep. But Siddarth maneuvered well.

As we reached Harsing, the local youth team gathered to welcome us. They were helping the landslide victims in constructing new houses. We parked and Mr. Tamang, the captain of the ship guided us up the hill through the narrow path. What a breathtaking experience!! Though we've been born and brought up in Darjeeling, it was difficult for us to keep pace with our other local friends.

Soon we reached the first site. And what a sight it was! Around ten to fifteen villagers were building the house of a fellow neighbour. Some were busy cutting mud, while others were cutting stones. I couldn't see the house which had been there earlier. On enquiry, I was told that the landslide had destroyed the house completely.

A landslide brings down more than land. It disrupts farms, homes and more importantly, lives.

The second site where Mr. Tamang took us was a beautiful mud house with local flowers around it. But its beauty was undone as soon as I entered the house. There was a deep crack right in the middle of the house, breaking it into two. It was deeply saddening. The last site was a badly damaged house which till date, hangs from a hill.

My heart was weeping but yet hopeful. And the people that gave us

hope were none other than the villagers themselves. They displayed courage and friendliness which shook us all.

One family member of each house in that village gave his or her time to construct a house for the affected people. It was a rousing example of teamwork. Even though there were hardships, the faces of the villagers didn't show any disillusionment. They welcomed us with glowing smiles and an open heart.

However, the hills welcomed us with nothing but echoes of silence. Reverberations of woes. Who do we blame for the tragedy? Everyone knows the answer, but are we really doing something to stop this? This is our wake up call. Let us respect our nature, save our hills.

I noticed the work of DLR Purna and Anugalya and was truly impressed and moved. They work silently, not for fame. This year too, they are re-constructing thirty one new houses which were damaged in the hills of North Bengal.

After the visit was over we were taken to the nearby house and were offered tea with so much of love and respect.

Mankind in Action for Rural Growth (MARG) would like to thank Mr. Roshan Rai, Director, DLR Prerna, Mr. Ashish Rai, Mr. Navin Tamang, Mr. Montu Gurung, Shankar Daju and his team (Shankar Foundation Darjeeling) for involving MARG in Saving the Hills. MARG would also like to thank Mr. Hemant Bhutani and Ms. Kamlesh Takkar from New Delhi for donating blankets which were handed to the landslide victims during our visit.

Let us all stand up and pledge to Save the Hills and save precious lives. Today we are lucky for not having been effected by these vicious landslides. We are lucky for still having a home. Some were not that lucky. Remember that.



Villagers from Dukka and Tandrebong seek help!!

In the hills of North Bengal under the Kalimpong region lays a tiny village of Dukka and Tandrebong where most of the villagers are farmers. Here the main crop is cardamom and ginger which is their cash crop, but lately it has not been giving a good yield because of the prevailing local virus called "Suirey". This has been a great setback for the economy there.



Nothing can stop the villagers of Dukka and Tandrebong NOW...



MARG team distributes refreshments to the villagers

Although mankind has been rapidly moving towards development, there are certain places where it has taken a U turn because of the rough terrain, peoples' attitude towards villages and the corruption. YES, the villagers of Dukka and Tandrebong are bearing this wound since a long time. Till date this village is left without a motor able road and electricity which is the basic need towards development.

After getting no response and help from the government, the local panchayat and other authorities, the villagers of Dukka and Tandrebong have stood up and have joined hands in constructing a motor able road which would connect Dukka and Tandrebong to the nearest small town Algarah and make life easier for the villagers living there. This road would be a lifeline for Dukka and Tandrebong.

Since 24th Nov 07 every month the villagers gather in a group of 200 and give one day of their manual labour in constructing the road which passes through the rough terrain of cardamom fields, streams and cliff. The day starts early on that specific day and friends and relatives of that neighboring village walk for approx two to three hours to give a helping hand to the villagers of Dukka and Tandrebong.

On 12th April 08, villagers from Dukka and Tandrebong had gathered again. This was the 7th time they had come together to construct the road. Members from Mankind in Action for Rural Growth (MARG) a local NGO from Darjeeling along with some volunteers set up early from Darjeeling on that very day to encourage and support the villagers working in constructing the road.

The villagers comprising of men and women, old and young were very happy and thankful to MARG for coming and supporting and encouraging them. It was the first time ever that an NGO had come forward to support their cause. The refreshment which was sponsored by the MARG team for the villagers was appreciated by them and in return the elders of the village thanked MARG and its volunteers by offering Khadas.

We all are so engrossed in our own lives that sometimes, we fail to realize the pain of our brothers and sisters in the far flung remote villages in the hills are facing. Let us come forward and support and guide them in whatever way we can. Your small initiative can IGNITE a SMILE.

MARG in a special way would like to thank Mr. Sagar Pradhan (Ex Tea Garden Manager), Mr. Arun Pradhan (Secretary Pradhan Samaj Darjeeling), Mr. Manish Pradhan, Mr. Ranjan Pradhan, Mr. Sudip Tamang, Dorjee and Edu Chettri for volunteering to go to Dukka and supporting the villagers.

If you would like to send in your contribution to the villagers of Dukka and Tandrebong then please contact MARG at inform.marg@gmail.com or nirnay.john@gmail.com.

MARG felicitates its children who excelled in studies in the academic year 2007



Nima Thendup Bhutia of Ghoom Boys High Secondary School Darjeeling receiving a gift from the Head Master



Soma Subba, Prerna Tamang and Sapna Thapa from Ghoom Girls High Secondary School Darjeeling receiving gifts from the Head Mistress

A dream come true!!

Indeed it was a dream come true for most of the children of Mankind in Action for Rural Growth (MARG) Darjeeling, on 29th April 2008. It was the birthday of a little girl named "Bhumika", younger daughter of Mr. / Mrs. Rajesh Garg respectful citizens of Darjeeling and the owner of the most happening place in Darjeeling. The shopping Mall.



Mrs. Garg interacting with MARG children at Cafe Coffee Day

I was filled with joy and happiness when Mr. Rajesh Garg told me that he wanted to celebrate his younger daughter's birthday with MARG children on our first meeting. Wow!! Was my reaction. Without wasting any time I rang up the school principals and informed them about this gathering. Accordingly MARG children were informed to assemble on certain locations.

Mr. Sagar Pradhan and Mr. Albert John volunteered to usher the children of Turnbull HS School Darjeeling to the shopping mall where we all were supposed to assemble. I took a vehicle to Ghoom railway station to pick up MARG children from Ghoom Boys High H S School and Ghoom Girls' H S School. We were right in time at 4:30pm. At one corner MARG children from Turnbull High H S School were waiting for us eagerly. My old friend Mr. Vikram well known as Viki was there to make us feel comfortable.

Mrs. Garg and her father were there to welcome the children. After few minutes they were joined by Mr. Rajesh Garg. The children were then ushered to the near by coffee house (Café Coffee Day). MARG children had glow on their faces, some were shy, some were nervous and some were quite. What can we expect from them? I thought I should spend some time with them and started chatting and cracking jokes. Very soon all their nervousness vanished and they were sitting like any other confident boys and girls reading the menu card in the cafe. Café Coffee Day team was very hospitable as they always are. I am sure the children didn't feel awkward with their service which was with full of love.

After the snacks were over MARG children sang and wished Bhumika a very Happy Birthday. A Birthday card with all the children signature was handed to Bhumika by one of the MARG children. They also showed their gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Rajesh Garg and others present in the café by offering the sacred scarf (Khada).

As a return gift MARG children were given a shopping voucher worth Rs 500/- each of Big Bazar which was handed to them by Mrs. Garg. Children had no boundaries for joy and this was showing on their faces. They were running from one corner to the other, from the ground floor to the first floor looking for items to buy.

Some bought school bags some dictionary, some bought stationery items, some were looking for t shirts, some slippers, and I did see some boys buy hair gels and face creams too. Some were very wise enough and decided to come after few days to use their voucher. What a wonderful sight was it to see them happy and running around in the mall. Though I know it's was a momentary joy I am sure this day will be carved in their memories for a long time.

Finally since it was getting dark and some children had to trek back home We all gathered outside the Big Bazar and thanked Mr./Mrs Garg for their noble idea of celebrating their daughter's birthday with MARG children. Yes, Mr./Mrs. Rajesh you have truly IGNITED SMILES of many children.

MARG family would like to thank you from the bottom of our heart for giving us this opportunity.

Children's Day Celebration with MARG's children 07

With the object to inspire and motivate its children, Mankind in Action for Rural Growth (MARG), a local NGO, which supports the underprivileged children, celebrated Children's Day with its children at Divya Vani, Darjeeling.

The programme was presided over by Mr. Augustine Lepcha, Deputy Magistrate, DM office. Members of MARG and social workers were present on the occasion, where an overview of MARG was highlighted by Mr. Nirnay John Chhetri, general secretary of MARG.

The programme also conducted drawing competition, which was held with the slogan "Save Environment" among the MARG sponsored children from different regions of Darjeeling hills.

The drawings were reviewed by the panel of MARG members and attended guests, Ms Prerna Tamang of Ghoom girls' higher secondary school stood first in the competition. Chief Guest handed over prizes to winners of the competition.



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED ON 31ST MARCH, 2008

31/03/2007 AMOUNT (RS)	PARTICULARS	31/03/08 AMOUNT (RS)	31/03/07 AMOUNT (RS)	PARTICULARS	31/03/08 AMOUNT (RS)
12700.00	To Scholarship	35320.00	26750.00	By Donation Received	76940.00
303.00	To Bank Charges	116.00			
0.00	To Publicity Expenses	900.00			
0.00	To Conveyance Expenses	1752.00			
0.00	To Printing & Stationery	2250.00			
0.00	To Telephone and Internet Expenses	5783.00			
0.00	To Programme Implementation Exps.	5500.00			
0.00	To Misc. Expenses	433.00			
2809.00	To Auditors' Remuneration	2809.00			
6552.00	To Depreciation	4121.00			
4386.00	To Excess of Income over Expenditure	17956.00			
26750.00		76940.00	26750.00		76940.00

BALANCE SHEET
AS ON 31/03/08

31/03/07 AMOUNT (RS)	LIBALITIES	31/03/08 AMOUNT (RS)	31/03/07 AMOUNT (RS)	ASSETS	31/03/08 AMOUNT (RS)
	<u>CAPITAL FUND</u>			<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>	
	Opening Balance	22886.00			
	Add:		10920.00	Computer	4368.00
18500.00	Life Membership Fee Received	0.00	6552.00	Less: Depreciation	2621.00
4386.00	Excess of Income over Expenditure	17956.00	4368.00		1747.00
22886.00		40842.00		Printer	2500.00
	<u>UNSECURED LOAN</u>		0.00	Less: Depreciation	1500.00
10000.00	Mr. Rajan Takkar (Treasurer)	10000.00			1000.00
	<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>			<u>CURRENT ASSETS, LOANS & ADVANCES</u>	
2809.00	Expenses Payable	5618.00		Balance with Scheduled Bank	
10920.00	Payable against Computer	10920.00			
			42247.00	Central Bank on India	51128.00
			0.00	Cheques in Hand	9200.00
			0.00	Cash in Hand	4305.00
46615.00		67380.00	46615.00		67380.00

Mankind in Action for Rural Growth

Registered Office: C-292,293, Khyala DDA Colony, New Delhi – 110018

Communicating Address: 1409, Regalia Heights, Shipra Sun City, Indirapuram – 201010, Delhi NCR, Ghaziabad, UP, India

Project Office: 14/B, Dali Fatak, Dali, Darjeeling – 734101, West Bengal, India

Phone, website & email: +91-11-9868617783, <http://www.marg.org.in>, inform.marg@gmail.com

