

THE ART OF FACILITATION

At Manavodaya, the art of facilitation to deal with the problems of poverty and social injustice through self help was evolved, tested and perfected at village level over several years in the late eighties and the nineties. The method has been used to train thousands of social workers and professionals in NGOs, banks, government and international agencies for more than twenty years and has formed the basis of the self help movement in India that has affected the lives of several millions families living below poverty line.

Facilitation combines the process of looking within and enabling others to do so, often collectively. It combines reflection and action among persons including the marginalised groups to take decisions collectively, moving from misery and dependence to a new found freedom.

Facilitation incorporates the concept of “Conscientisation” introduced by Paulo Friere and takes it further to methods of collective self management. It leads to development of new collective rules of self management, new leadership, a sense of ownership and consequently to the empowerment of the poorest sections of the population.

The art of facilitation applies not only for the economically and socially disadvantaged persons but also for those working among them. At Manavodaya we have been training facilitators of change from both government and non government agencies using methods of reflection and practical skills development with encouraging results consistently over twenty years. Sample feedback from facilitators of different backgrounds is attached.

We believe that the art of facilitation is the key to solution of world’s problems not only in the area of reduction of poverty and inequality but for sustainable development through participation of all through a process of development from within.

We have been training trainers in this approach for a long time to help create a paradigm shift in working from the art of management to the art of facilitation. The art of facilitation needs to be researched, experimented in new contexts, and developed further in much detail like the art of management. We are hoping to develop a team of persons trained in the method and also produce suitable educational videos and films for the purpose.

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