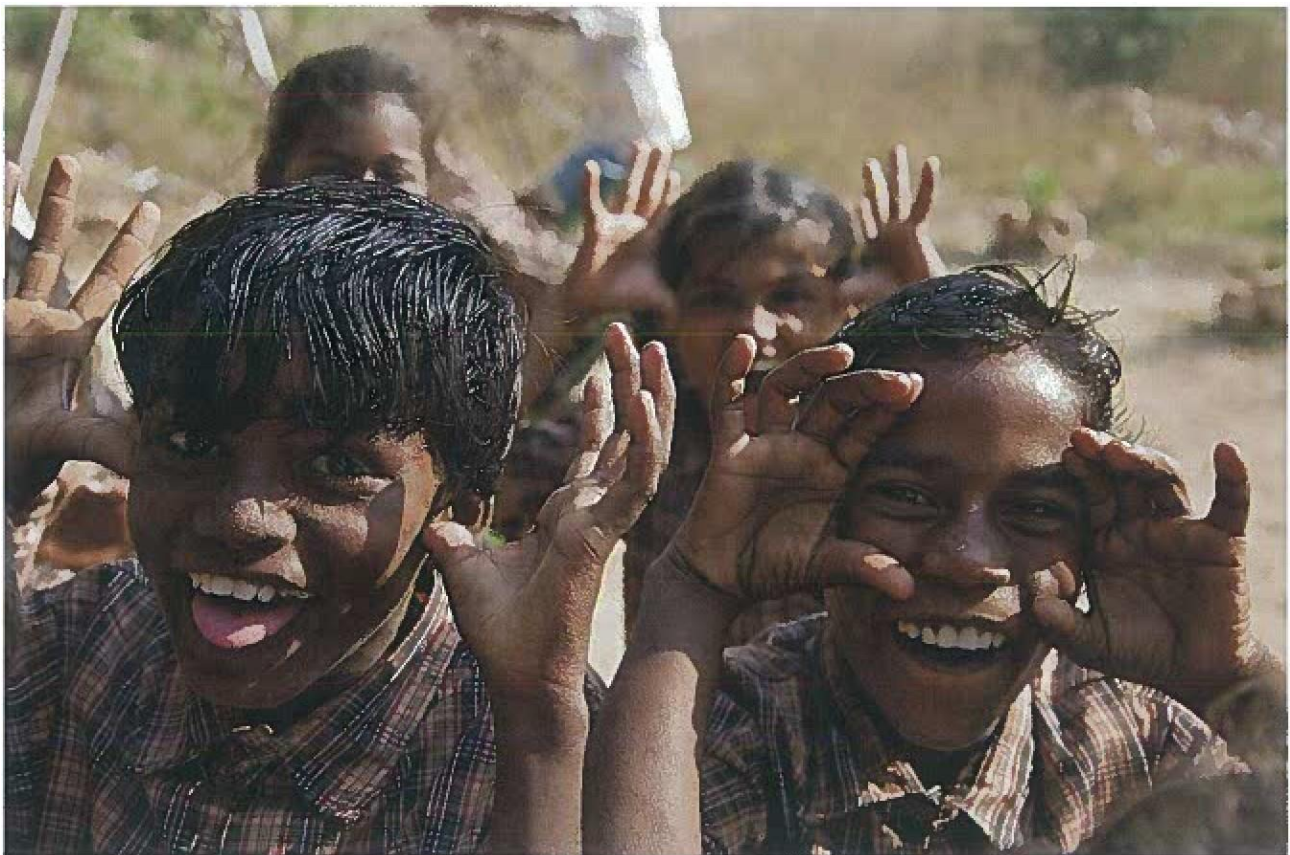




Magneti Marelli and Cesvi for the children of India

**2013/2014 report on Case del Sorriso (Houses of Smile) Cesvi in Tamil
Nadu**



The commitment of Cesvi in India began in 1998, with the launch of a social programme to promote women's rights. Cesvi followed up with projects to tackle the major emergencies of the super-cyclone in Orissa (1999), of the earthquake in Gujarat (2001) and of the Tsunami (2004).

Since 2002, Cesvi has been at work in India with child protection projects, above all in Tamil Nadu. In 2006, three Case del Sorriso (Houses of Smile) were built: the 'Boys Home', managed by the local partner Don Bosco, in the district of Nagapattinam; the 'Nambikkai Centre' of EKTA, in the district of Cuddalore; the 'Ananda Illam' shelter home, in the district of Thiruvallur managed by Jeeva Jyothi.



The principal goal of the activities carried out within Case del Sorriso is to provide a safe and protected environment for orphaned children or for minors in difficulty because they are deprived of basic needs such as education, nutrition and family support.

The shelter homes accommodate children remained orphans following the Tsunami, children forced to work to alleviate the poverty of their family and minors living in difficult family situations (victims of abuse, children of sick parents or parents who suffer from alcoholism).

Each shelter home has been designed to offer a variety of services to hundreds of children; they have been equipped with a large recreational area, kitchen with appliances and crockery, library and study space, dormitories, spaces for watchmen and cooks, rooms dedicated to training courses (I.T., electronics and dressmaking).

The staff of each shelter home have a figure of reference who, trained in children's rights, possesses the necessary competences to understand and respond to the specific problems of the children, providing them with motivational support and guiding them to choices and opportunities for a better life in terms of education and sanitation.

During the school year, the children attend the local public schools and regularly follow the courses. When the lessons and homework are finished, different extracurricular activities are organised within the Case (team games, drawing, dancing, popular arts) which allow the boys and girls to nurture their talents and express their emotions.

The children accommodated in the facilities come from the same villages in which the shelter homes are built; this also allows continuous contact with family and closest relatives and is a basis on which to create the long term sustainability of the project. In fact, once the school cycle has finished, the boys and girls leave the shelter home to return to live with their family. Consequently, each year, other children who are identified by the operators or reported through references are accommodated in Case del Sorriso and given the possibility to receive nutritional, educational and psycho-social support.

During 2013, thanks to the contribution of Magneti Marelli, the routine services of canteen, sanitary control and distribution of educational material have continued. The training activity has been accompanied by group sessions with the goal of providing psycho-social support to minors and provide specific assistance to the most problematic cases. Meetings with the parents and/or home visits have been organised on a periodic basis.

These have been supported by additional targeted initiatives, supported by each of the 3 Case del Sorriso, which can be briefly listed and summarised as follows.

'Ananda Illam' shelter home managed by Jeeva Jyothi

In early 2013, the shelter home of Jeeva Jyothi organised voluntary initiatives involving the students of Disha College in animation days dedicated to the children.



In February, the children accommodated in the shelter home took part in a sporting event organised by the students of Loyola College. The awarding of symbolic prizes was accompanied by the distribution of didactic material to all participants.

In May, Jeeva Joythi organised a training workshop on children's rights. The course, held in residential form, was attended by 30 boys and girls who worked together in groups with the trainers over a three-day period. At the end of the workshop, 4 children and 3 staff members were selected to take part in a one-week training programme on Children's Rights, organised by YUVA in Mumbai. It was an invaluable opportunity to meet other children and teenagers and participate in different moments of interaction.

A special event was organised which invited past guests to the shelter home, with the goal of sharing their positive experience with the current child guests.

'Nambikkai Centre' managed by Ekta

This year Ekta has again organised the so-called "Children's committees", discussion, animation, and play committees composed exclusively of children and which have the purpose of giving confidence to minors in the awareness of their value and rights.

The I.T. literacy programme promoted by Ekta in this Casa del Sorriso has continued successfully. It is a six-month course which offers a Diploma in applied I.T., useful for adolescents who have finished the school cycle or have abandoned the last classes of primary school. These boys and girls, from rural families, of fishermen or farmers, receive the useful competencies during the course to develop their personality and leadership qualities. Among the students who have attained the diploma in recent years, 73 have been continuing their training, specialising at universities, while another 50 have found work in companies, bodies and associations or schools which focus on training.

This year Ekta staff also took part in a training course organised by the Children's Rights District Office in Cuddalore, an event in which the participants shared the need to register all the juvenile residential facilities at the Juvenile's Justice Office. During the course the staff was also trained on the current child protection laws, on their implementation, and on the different players involved in the sector.

Finally, the Casa del Sorriso of Ekta received a visit from Mrs. Nithya, Crime Prevention representative of the Children's Protection Office who, eager to visit the Nambikkai shelter home and to become acquainted with its activities to children, was able to appreciate the good practices.

'Boys Home' managed by the local partner Don Bosco

January is the month of Don Bosco, holy founder of the institution and protector of boys in difficulty. The boys of this shelter home spent an intense month of celebrations and events participating in games, cultural performances, tournaments and competitions which ended with a final celebration on 31st January.

On 4th March, the guests of the Don Bosco shelter home went to Chennai, to the shelter home of Jeeva Jyothi, to participate in the event organised by Cesvi for all the children of the 3 Case del Sorriso. Along



the way, the boys stopped off in Mahabalipuram, a famous city for the sculptures of Pallava, and spent a few hours at Marina Beach in the afternoon. On the way back they visited Pudcherry and its Cathedral of the Sacred Heart.

In May, a summer camp was organised. It was not a moment of relax but rather intense days dedicated to learning in a different and creative way. The boys had the opportunity to try their hand at popular arts such as Paraiyattam, Oyil, Kolattam, Kummi and Bharathanattiyam and learn the techniques. During the summer camp, the children were also involved in more regular activities such as team games, cineforum, yoga, cooking competitions, dancing, acting and debates, in addition to a big treasure hunt. The children then demonstrated their “ecological sensitivity” by planting trees and keeping the places clean.

An important development involving Casa del Sorriso of Don Bosco this year is that the local partner has achieved financial and managerial independence. 8 years after the foundation of the shelter home, Don Bosco will commit itself to guaranteeing the operation of the shelter home with its own means.