

Punarchith review report

- A high level perspective

By SUSTHIRA

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Introduction

With its single-minded focus on providing alternative perspectives and solutions for an equitable & just rural society, Punarchith has been working in the Punanjur panchayat for the last 3 years. Its flagship project, *an alternative learning program for the young minds*, which has been conceived and experimented successfully in the last few years, has grown to be launched as a full fledged program in the immediate future.

This external review is being commissioned with the following objectives:

- I. PUNARCHITH's approach and philosophy? How viable and relevant? What challenges have been faced? What shifts have been necessary?
- II. Team: Work-culture, functioning, democracy and decision-making, leadership etc. Role and contributions of Trustees; Importance of self-development and collective responsibility.
- III. Programs and Activities: Development and Delivery; Resource Persons; Impact and Assessment.
- IV. Documentation of all work: Processes; Programs, Field Notes; Monthly Reports, Annual Reports.
- V. Funding: First Phase; current; contributors, challenges; future, FCRA, team financial security.
- VI. Location: Challenges at Mukhanpalya; Future and plans (processes).
- VII. New Campus: Development, Residential facilities; management etc.

Review Methodology

As part of the review, a daylong interview session was conducted with the Punarchith team at their resource centre in Mukhanpalya premises. A visit to the nearby farm where organic farming is initiated under the guidance of Punarchith was also undertaken. The review questionnaire was primarily focussed on the following 3 topics:

1. **Modus Operandi:** To review and portray the strategy & approach undertaken by Punarchith in fulfilling its vision and goals
2. **Social Impact:** Highlighting the effect of the programmes organized by Punarchith in the region of its operation
3. **Organizational Excellence:** Study of the organizational structure, project delivery mechanisms, documentation and other best practices followed

Considering the time and effort planned for the review, the report summaries the broad outline and patterns from a birds' eye view and does not go into the details of it. The Review is undertaken by C. Balachandran from Susthira Trust, Mysore

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Review Report

Modus Operandi

This section outlines some of the key aspects of Punarchith's approach that has added strength and value to the organization:

Open-mindedness: Initiatives and actions are planned based on discussions with a diverse set of people and forums & a 360 degree view of the situation is gathered before decisions are made. By engaging experts who had worked in Chamrajnagar area for a long time, Punarchith has been able to build a deeper and broader perspective about the ground realities of the place.

Small & Effective: Punarchith seems to believe in focused small gatherings to make a real impact. The youth discussions, English courses, school support activities, Yuva Chintana are all small events designed with attention to detail to create a deep ripple. This approach is evident in its funding pattern also, where sponsorships are obtained for specific objectives in a decentralized way.

Laser sharp focus: The focus on rural youth in the context of an agrarian community has been unwavering and pin-pointed. This helps in channelizing its energy well & succeed on its experiments in seeking to develop an alternative education system.

Social Impact

Building human trust requires sacrifice, hard work and time. On this regard, Punarchith has been slowly and steadily winning the trust of a small segment of the people in the Punanjur panchayat through its organized events and humble approach. A few incidences of youths staying back in the villages to pursue their livelihoods are the direct indication of the positive impact of Punarchith's work. Some of the key challenges faced by Punarchith team on this regard are:

- With 26 scattered hamlets, containing migrant communities of Soligas and Lambanis, Badigas, Lingayats - the diverse background of the society brings in challenges in designing outreach programs that can have an equitable impact on the society
- The anti-agricultural attitudes of the rural youth arising out of the current educational system
- The restricted movement of the girls and the rigid familial vigilance prevents enrolment of girls in youth programs organized by Punarchith

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One of the key achievements till date has been the awareness created amongst the masses regarding Punarchith, its honesty and sincerity at work. The dedicated effort of the Punarchith team has helped build goodwill among the community, especially the youth and the children. Capitalizing this goodwill to drive change in the society should be the agenda for the coming years.

Organizational Excellence

The Team

The Punarchith team is a carefully carved group of individuals with distinct talent and skill in different spheres of life - Art, Science, Humanities, Engineering and more. The diversity in the group brings in the much required robustness and colour to the organization. Over the years, the team size has increased more organically than ever. The open and candid relationship amongst the group is gradually establishing a culture that shall become the cornerstone of the organization in the years to come. The flatness of the organization structure helps build a symbiotic relationship inside and outside of the organization.

Documentation:

Being in the educational space, content collation becomes a key aspect. On this regard, Punarchith's excellence in documentation methods and the level of details in documentation is helping to establish a good learning ground for the youth.

Finance & Accounting:

The work and activities of PUNARCHITH are drawn on personal funds of the Trust members and from small sponsors and donors who came through friends and supporters. No large scale funds from private organizations have been solicited. However, the good work done on the ground is slowly attracting attention and the much needed monetary help has started to flow in recent times.

Carbon footprint:

In its resource centre, mode of transportation, conducting of events and many other aspects, Punarchith scores as a role model in its low carbon approach. The ecological footprint of the organization is always kept to a minimal. Or in simple words, Punarchith gives more than it takes, a lesson for all institutions and establishments, especially those working in the social space.

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Recommendations

While the moral compass of Punarchith has always kept the direction of the journey relevant, some of the following overarching principles that can be considered for prioritization:

- Unifying the community: Retaining the diversity of the society and environment, if the community can be unified for a common greater cause, it shall result in a win-win situation for all.
- Connecting the dots: Keeping the core vision and values intact, reaching out to other social organizations working in the same region on overlapping causes would enable collaboration at various levels, leading to the overall upliftment of all. Demonstrating inclusiveness across institutions can be considered for a greater cause of providing livelihood support to the community.

Conclusion

With the long journey ahead in mind, the small but significant steps made today are slowly starting to bear fruit in the region. The comprehensiveness visible in all the initiatives and actions shall become the hallmark of this Organization.

By the collective Will of all its stakeholders, Let the speed and scale of Punarchith's growth be in exponential form, in the coming future!