



MAHITA ANNUAL REFLECTIONS.....  
2013-2014



## CONTENTS

From The Director

Summary

Mahita Focus

Geographical overview

Highlights of the year

- Educational Rights
- Economic Empowerment
- Building capacities
- Community mobilization
- Strengthening Institutions
- Advocacy and Networking



### **From The Director**

Reflections.....

Looking back from 20 years and reflecting the journey of Mahita, as the organization started its travelling of social development towards creating equity and education in 1994. Still, remembering the initial period of Mahita, started by an active group of socially concerned individuals with the vast experience in development sector, who teamed up to work for the betterment of the society through collective action. As a Organisation started in an informal way at a "Irani" Tea shop in the streets of Hyderabad and now working in 4 Districts of Telagana State and developed a strong partnership with the communities, Children and Government for playing a vital role towards social transformation.

What struck me as I gone through the history of the 20 year old Organisation - Mahita, successfully developed community partnerships. There are ups and downs and many challenges faced for shaping up the Organisation and converted the organization more professional and systematic. Following an almost clinical sensing at all levels, we revisited and revised our values and mission, thought of collective strategies touching every aspect of the organization for a desired future.

Mahita's mission is to reach high levels of achievement and to acquire the knowledge, skills and values the community needs to become a responsible part of a democratic society. We view education as not merely making the people literate but the one that awakens the mind and makes the individual a contributing responsible member of the community. With Universal Elementary Education as Mahita's vision, the commitment and skills of our staff, strive to ensure equity, accountability, accessibility and innovation.

Within the uniqueness and diversity of working areas, we have helped create learning environments that are respectful, safe, nurturing and positive. - A partnership of the community, family and Mahita. Mahita has been playing a crucial role in mobilizing grass root level NGOs in the state towards realizing child rights.

Mahita is indebted to all those who have contributed with quiet cooperation or active interference. Friends, supporters, colleagues, the community, the volunteers, partners and its board members have been a pillar of strength. The tireless and unrelenting efforts made jointly by the community, and the volunteers have resulted in our achievements and given us our strength move ahead in our endeavor towards the realization of accessing women and child rights. We are also thankful to all our colleagues who worked with us and contributed their energies, experiences and time for the betterment of the people.

In its endeavor to improve the situation of the human rights and child rights, Mahita has been associated with many agencies. Mahita gratefully acknowledges the continues support extended to it by Save the Children, UNICEF, Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, DKA Austria, Charity Aid Foundation-India, ACCENTURE, Aga Khan Foundation, Plan India, Human Dignity Foundation, Child Line Foundation, NABARD, United Way-Hyderabad and many visible and invisible supporters.

Ramesh Sekhar Reddy.P

Program Director

### **Summary**

Mahita works with minorities and migrants in Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts, with rural farming communities in Nalgonda and tribal communities in Adilabad, while networking and advocacy activities are spread across the 23 districts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. In the current year, the focus of our activities has been to strengthen Educational Rights of children by improving their learning levels and strengthening teachers' capacities. Training programs for teachers on Continuous & Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) and positive discipline mechanisms, child rights, and the Right to Education Act for teachers have infused enthusiasm regarding the changing classroom culture under the CCE and the teaching and learning process.

By adopting new approaches through Community Reading Camps, constant parents meetings, learning levels among students have improved significantly in Adilabad and to a lesser extent in Hyderabad.

#### **Prevention of child labor**

Mahita also played an active role in the prevention, rescue and rehabilitation of Child Labour in Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy Districts. In order to strengthen the civil society movement for child rights, Children's Groups / Forums and Child Labour Vigilance Committees (CLVCs) were established in these 2 districts. Their effectiveness in identifying and rescuing child labour can be gauged from the fact that Children's Forums identified and referred 45% of the total number of 4,496 child labourers, vulnerable children and out-of-school children while the Forums and CLVCs together account for 70% of the total identified cases. All the Children's Groups / Forums have received regular training on child rights and their new-found awareness has given them the ability to identify threats to child rights.

#### **Economic empowerment**

The Livelihood Programme for young women and mothers in Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy is on-going in 7 Mahita vocational centres that cover 25 slums. Training in trades that have good demand in local markets is provided by experienced and qualified instructors who are certified by the Jana Sikshana Samasthan (JSS) - a government body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Government linkages have been established with the Dept of Minorities Welfare and the GHMC in Hyderabad to provide loans for self employment. In Adilabad, the livelihood support programme has been launched in collaboration with the district ITDA, and the NABARD, to promote horticulture and so far, 300 acres of land have been brought under orchard plantations under this programme.

#### **Building capacities**

This year Mahita has been focused on building the capacities of various stakeholders. The capacity building has been intended to two types of stakeholders government officials like school teachers, Child Marriage Prohibition officers and other protection officials, and another side capacity building of SMC, CPC and PRI towards child protection issues.

### **Strengthening institutions**

Mahita's strategy of Strengthening Institutions involves the participation of children in Children's Groups, and women and the community at large through the School Monitoring Committees and Child Protection Committees. Mahita hosts the Childline Centre in Adilabad and this year, 300 Child Protection cases were referred to the concerned district departments such as the Women & Child Welfare department, Labour Department, Education Department and the Police.

### **Ensuring child participation through Bala Panchayats**

As promoting child participation is core theme of Mahita's development work, in order to ensure this Mahita launch Bala Panchayats in Guntur district as a pilot basis. The program implemented in 18 villages.

### **Knowledge sharing**

The Mahita Resource Centre is very keen in disseminating information, conducts research and documentation on child-related issues, develops IEC material on updated GOs and laws related to children, strengthens District Action Groups by conducting capacity building programs for Civil Society Organizations on Child Rights, liaises and interfaces with government programmes and officials, and facilitates stakeholder participation and state level consultations on Child Rights issues.

### **Advocacy and networking**

Advocacy and Networking activities to strengthen the civil society movement on child rights acquired a new look with the renaming of the AP Alliance for Child Rights (APACR) as the Alliance for Child Rights as a result of the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh.

### **Research studies**

Research Studies for Policy Advocacy on child rights were conducted in the current year, in collaboration with the Humara Bachpan Campaign, Dept of Women & Child Welfare Education Department, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, and UNICEF, Hyderabad. The studies on various issues like functioning of ICDS centers, IHA (One Full Meal program), child marriages, implementation of RTE, child labour etc.



# Annual Report 2013-14

## Geographical over view

### Mahita Geography & Outreach, 2013 - 14



#### HYDERABAD

Slums/Habitations: 80  
No of children covered: 6000  
No of adults covered: 3800  
adolescent girls and 350 families

#### RANGA REDDY

Slums/villages: 40  
No of children covered: 2500  
No of adults covered: 2300 and  
150 families economic support

#### ADILABAD

Villages covered: 54  
No of children covered: 4100  
No of adults covered: 500  
families

#### NALGONDA

Villages covered: 54  
No of children covered: 3000  
No of adults covered: 2000  
And 150 families economic

population for the geography covered by Mahita's activities is four districts with children in the 0 to 18 years group. There are a total of 18 Mahita Centres in the 4 districts which implement both child-centred and community-centred interventions. The Mahita Centres are the focal point of all interventions for the protection and strengthening of child rights - they host classes for students, vocational training for young women, meetings of the local SHGs, Child Protection Committees and Children's Groups. Some centres host all these activities while activities in the other centres is limited to improving the learning levels of children.

## **EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS**



The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn and change – Carl Rogers



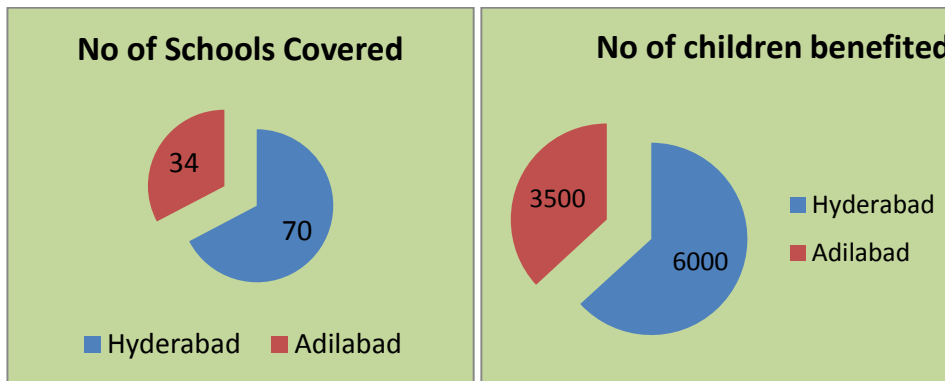
### Highlights of the year

Mahita's mission to shape a new life for women and young girls began in the Old City of Hyderabad in the 1990s when we responded to community demands to provide a "door step" school for out of school girls from the minority and migrant communities. The positive response to the first Motivational Centre soon led to the opening of more such Centres. Over the last decade, they have evolved into Resource Centres that enhance the learning levels of children studying in government schools, and ease the re-entry of out of school children and help them to complete their secondary education. Linkages and collaboration with government departments like the State Council for Education Research and Training (SCERT Centres), Rajiv Vidya Mission (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), District Education Officers and teachers helped in mobilizing resources for the Centres and upon their encouragement, workbooks for subjects such as Environmental Science, Urdu, and Mathematics have been developed, field tested by the Mahita resource team before being published. The strategy has been two-fold: To improve the learning levels of students in government schools, and, to prevent, rescue and rehabilitate child workers.

### Improving the Learning Levels of Children

The strategy required collaboration through the District Administration of Adilabad and the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA / RVM), to partner with government schools. Volunteers from the corporate sector gave additional support to the funding from the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) and Save the Children-BVLGARI. In Hyderabad, 10 Community Educational Centres have been established in the slums of the old city that are linked to 70 government schools that have an enrolment of 6,000 children.

### Total Coverage of the interventions



As innovative support to enhance school readiness among the pre-primary kids in 2013-14, Education Kits for 17 Anganwadi Centres were also supplied for the benefit of 600 children attending these Centres. The Anganwadi Workers were also trained on Mahita has also collaborated with the AP Open School Society and Government High Schools to facilitate teenage dropout girls to complete their secondary schooling through the Distance Education mode. In 2013-14, 300 girls in the age group of 16 years and above have benefitted from this facilitation in 5 slums of the old city.

### Impact

Student enrolment has increased in Narnoor, Adilabad, over the last 3 years, by 13% while attendance was regularized by 87%, and, 97% of the 1,265 target pupils improved their learning levels from Slow & Moderate level to Good & Excellent levels. There is also an increased expectation among students for extra-curricular activities as a result of the emphasis on co-scholastic activities in the Centres and the Children's Groups members have been the core groups to lead such activities in their schools.

### A best example for improved learning levels

My reading capacity has been improved through reading books in our library-Gneswar



"I like our school because of the encouragement of the teacher and the project team who motivate us to read books. Even I too love reading books. I read many small story books that are available in our library. Earlier we do not have library, since last year a small library was set up in our school and our teacher also encourage us to read the books. Due to this I used to attend school regularly and utilizing the library to improve my knowledge."

I 1 year old Gneswar a 5<sup>th</sup> standard child from Balanpur MPPS is very fond of reading story books. He used to spend his leisure time in reading small story books which were available in the school library set up by Mahita with the support of Save the Children. This helps in fulfilling his desire of reading books he likes.

### Images of children and teachers interventions towards CCE



Prevention, Rescue & Rehabilitation of Child Labour



### Labor is for adults. Let kids be kids. Let us Say “NO to child labour and yes to education”.

#### Prevention, Rescue & Rehabilitation of Child Labour in Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy Districts

A vulnerable household and social environment provides the ‘push’ for children to drop out of school as a result of even minor issues. Mahita has taken up a programme for the rescue and rehabilitation of child labour with the support of HDF and Plan India, covering 40 habitations each in the districts of Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy which account for a large number of - 13,000 - out of school children.

In Nalgonda, the vagaries of climate change and agriculture markets have driven many farming households into losses and debts which have forced them to become labourers who are then forced to send their children to work also in order to make ends meet. The stone crushing factories and other hazardous industries in the construction sector have a large demand for workers and employ a large number of child labourers on a short-term basis. In Ranga Reddy district, part of which is now in the GHMC, there are a large number of migrant families from the neighbouring districts whose children end up as scavengers while the adults find work in the construction or unorganised sector.

In order to identify vulnerable children and prevent them from becoming child labourers, Mahita’s strategy has been to establish **Community Vigilance Groups and Children’s Groups/Forums** and develop their capacities to become Peer Educators. A total of 80 Child Forums with 3,000 members and 40 Schools are involved in the process to rescue and rehabilitate child workers. Their effectiveness can be gauged from the fact that 70% of the child labour, vulnerable children and out-of-school children were identified and referred by the Child Forums and the CLVCs.

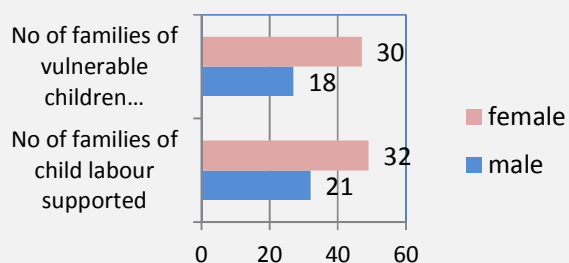


The rescue and rehabilitation components involve close monitoring of the Child Welfare Committee’s process to ensure that the best interests of the children are accorded priority in arriving at their decisions. It also involves maintaining linkages with the various NGOs that have

established Shelter Homes and with the schools.

The organisation’s strategy also has a livelihood support component which has provided 300 families with livelihood support to improve the school retention rates of vulnerable and rescued /rehabilitated children. Support includes funding livestock purchase or starting petty businesses such as cycle repair shops, women’s clothing, seasonal businesses,

**No of families supported through economic empowerment (%)**



## Annual Report 2013-14

pottery, flour mills, plastic flower making, milk and vegetable vending, fish net making, bore well repairs, materials etc. Apart from funding, Mahita also helps the families to open bank accounts and develop linkages in the market.

During 2013-14, Mahita has conducted a total of 80 meetings which include community interface with schools, and various public events to spread awareness about preventing Child Labour and the formation of Child Forums and CLVCs. A convergence action plan has been established with various Departments like the DCPU, Police, Child Line, NGOs, Women and Child Welfare Department, Labour, and SSA, among others.



Mahita has also offered training programs on protection of child rights and this year, a total of 319 duty bearers attended the training programs along with other NGOs, CBOs, social activists and volunteers. There were also 4 training programs offered on the safe rescue and rehabilitation of child labour in which 268 stakeholders participated.

<i>Prevention, Rescue &amp; Rehabilitation of Child Labour in Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy Districts</i>						
#	Description	Achievements				
		Child Labour		Vulnerable to Labour		Total
		M	F	M	F	
1	No of Children Rescued & Prevented from labour	680	575	164	148	<b>1567</b>
2	No of child labourers/vulnerable children enrolled into school	438	444	38	45	965
3	Out of school children identified	1162		802		1964
4	Out of school children enrolled into school	421		349		770
5	Community level sensitization programs	80				<b>80</b>
6	No of Participants Community level sensitization programs	1557		547		2104
7	District level capacity building programs for duty bearers / Training on Safe Rescue & Rehabilitation	8 / 4				
8	No of participants in the district level trainings	319				
9	Formation & strengthening of child forums / No of Members	80 / 3130				
10	No of School enrollment drives conducted / No of out of school children identified	80 / 522				

# Annual Report 2013-14

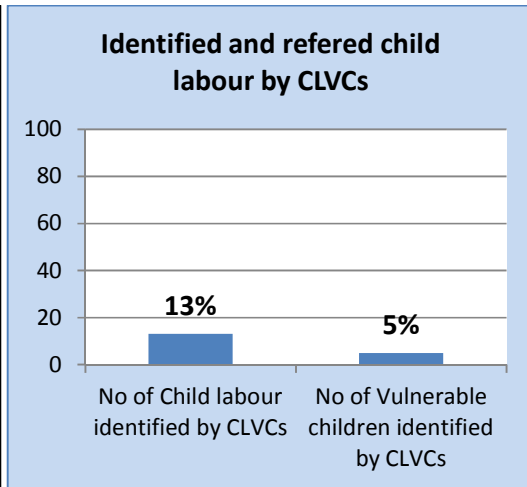
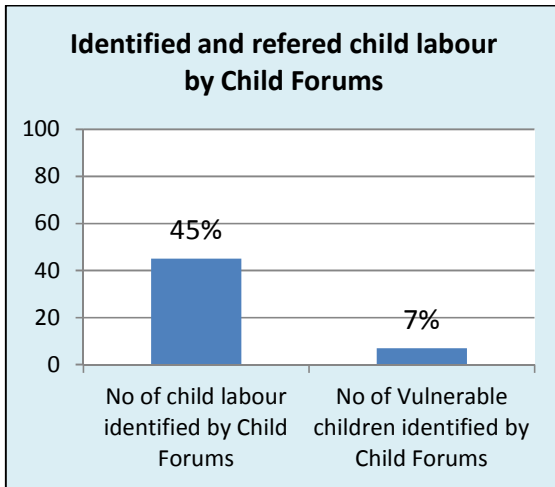
11	No of children (CL/VTL/OSC) who successfully completed year 1 of schooling	1682
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### Children's Groups/ Forums

Children's Groups have been formed with the help of one teacher from each school and the Mahita team takes the responsibility of monitoring the performance of the children's groups along with the teachers. All the groups have received training on child rights and their new-found awareness has given them the ability to identify threats to child rights. In Adilabad, children's group members have reported that the number of dropouts



remained a problem due to corporal punishment in schools. Members in all groups are aware of the Child Line number - 1098 - and some of them have called up the number to report instances of child rights violations. Children's Forums in Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy have been very effective in identifying 45% of 1200-odd child labourers who were rescued.



## నలుగురు బాలకార్మికులకు విముక్తి

తాంధూరు రూరల్, హ్యూస్టన్ లో: వెబ్సైట్ కి సుందీ నలుగురు బాలకార్మికులను స్వచ్ఛంద సంస్థ ప్రతినిధులు విముక్తి కల్పించి పాఠశాలలో చేర్పించారు. వివరాలు, మంగళవారం మండల పరిషత్ లోని కరెన్ కోట్, డిప్యూటీ గ్రామంలో హ్యూమన్ డిజిటల్ ఫౌండేషన్ (హైదరాబాద్), ప్లాన్ ఇండియా, మహాత్త సంస్థల ప్రతినిధులు పాల్గొన్నారు. ఈ రెండు గ్రామాల్లో పనిచేస్తున్న నలుగురు బాల కార్మికులను గుర్తించి వారిని స్థానిక ప్రభుత్వ పాఠశాలలో చేర్పించారు. పిల్లలను పనికి పంపకూడదని, బడికి పంపించి వారి బంగారు పనిస్తుతుకు బాటలు వేయాలని బాల కార్మికుల తల్లిదండ్రులను కో- ఆర్డినేటర్ సంగమేశ్వర్, కరెన్ కోట్ ప్రభుత్వ కౌన్సిలింగ్ సిర్కులారారు. కార్యక్రమంలో సర్పంచ్ శివకుమార్, పాఠశాల ఎస్ఎంబీ చైర్మన్ మహాత్త సంస్థ రంగారెడ్డి ఆర్డీ కో- ఆర్డినేటర్ శ్రీధర్, రాములు తదితరులున్నారు.

**బాల కార్మికులను పాఠశాలలో చేర్చుతున్న దృశ్యం**

### **Best example of a girl rescuing from trafficking for labour – A Case study**

#### **Saved from the risk of migration and trafficking to Pune and continuing education**

**Name of the girl: Anitha.**

**Age: 14 years**

**Parents details: Father: Tukya, Mother: Chandai Bai**

**Residence: Gorigunta Thanda, Kusumasamudram.**

**Education: 8<sup>th</sup> (Drop out)**

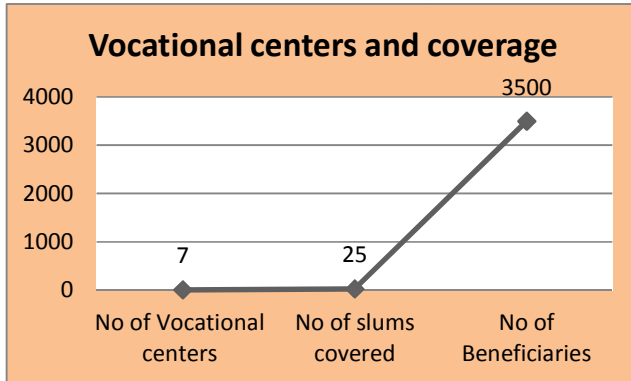
Anitha studied up to 7<sup>th</sup> class. After 7<sup>th</sup> her parents stopped her education and sent her to work in the agricultural fields. She has one brother and two elder sisters. Brother is disabled. Her parents have been working as agricultural labour. Entire family involved in daily labour including the children for their survival. Due to her elders sisters' marriage and medical expenses for her disabled brother her parents borrowed some loan from their relatives. To repay the loan they decided to send their two daughters to Pune to work as construction labour.

The project team came to know this through CLVC and the team identified the girl and with the CLVC, SMC and HM of the High School in the village they counseled her parents and prevented them from the harm of trafficking. While counseling to them her parents resisted and asked the team what they can give for the improvement of their economic situation. Then the team decided to provide livelihood support for the family. They were given Rs.4000. They bought two goats by adding their own contribution too.

Now the girl has been continuing her education and she has written her 8<sup>th</sup> standard final exams in the month of April. She felt very happy for continuing education and expressed her gratitude towards Plan and Mahita Interventions which helps to get a good opportunity to her and her family as well for improvement of their economic status.

## Livelihood Empowerment

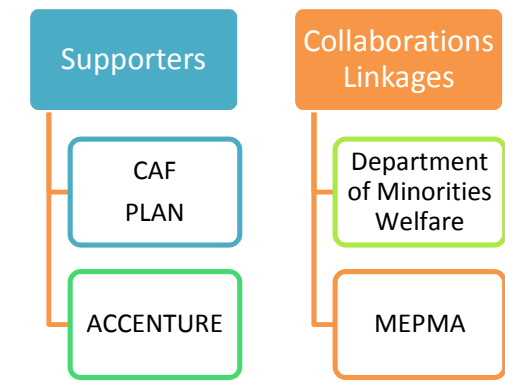
Our work in the initial years made us realize that it was essential to extend support to the women and mothers in the communities if the young girls had to continue with their education. Consequently a livelihood programme was launched for young women and mothers and has expanded its scope to offer training in a wide array of skills ranging from embroidery to information technology services.



In Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts, there are 7 Mahita vocational centres in 25 slums that so far have provided employable skill training programmes for 3,500 adolescent girls and young women. Government collaborations and linkages have been established with the departments of Minorities Welfare and Mission for Elimination of Poverty in Municipal Areas (MEPMA) both of which work through the GHMC in Hyderabad. Trades with good market demand such as

‘zaradozi’ or zari embroidery work, machine embroidery, fashion designing, soft toys manufacture, and beauticians’ courses have been offered, and the training is provided by experienced and qualified instructors who are certified by the Jana Sikshana Samasthan (JSS) - a government body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

The support of volunteers, corporate agencies like ACCENTURE and funding agencies like Charity Aid Foundation (CAF) has been vital to launching the livelihood empowerment programme.





In Adilabad, the livelihood support programme has been launched in collaboration with NABARD and the district ITDA, to promote horticulture and so far, 300 acres of land have been brought under orchard plantations under this programme.



### Livelihood support that saves precious childhood – A Case study of Navya

Manjula has three daughters. Navya is the eldest of all. Four years ago her father committed suicide considering it to be a bad fate to be a father of three daughters. Her mother forced Navya to work and support the family financially. She and her mother worked in a farm and earned \$3.5 (exchange rate 60) per day. Seasonally they worked in cotton fields too. Navya wanted to study but her mother never allowed her to go to school as she needed her help. She used to walk with her mother to the field, whatever the distance was. They would usually start for the fields by 7 in the morning and come back by 6 in the evening. She not only helped her mother in the field but also supported her in household chores.

Plan-Mahita team learned about Navya and counselled her mother for more than three months on the importance of education and child rights. Perseverance of project team & school head master assisted her mother in agreeing to send Navya to school along with her two sisters. Navya never had time to play with friends as she was occupied with work every day. Now she says that she is happy to go to school and that she can come back home and play with her friends.

She is provided special training in the school to catch up with her studies. Navya is now a member of child forum and takes an active part in encouraging her neighbours to attend school.

The family is now provided with a goat to fetch additional income in the family. Her mother is happy that she is provided with a goat and says that she will not stop her daughters from going to school and will work hard for improved earning and spend it for her daughters' education. The project helped in restoring precious childhood to the children and realise their right to education. The project team supported Navya's mother in getting NREGS (employment scheme) card.

**Community mobilization**



### Community Mobilization

The participation of women and young girls in the activities of the Mahita Centres has become the basis for mobilizing the community and turning its focus towards child protection, identifying the required convergence of services and the gaps in having an integrated and effective child protection system. Mahita's strategy of strengthening institutions involves the participation of children in Children's Groups, and women and the community at large through the School Monitoring Committees and Child Protection Committees.

### School Monitoring Committees

Mahita has sought to strengthen the School Management Committees for monitoring school activities and for the preparation of School Development Plans. Capacity building and training sessions on RTE were conducted for the SMCs and orientation sessions were held for supporting Resource Centres. Successful SMCs have managed to deal with the complex web of linkages between various Line Departments that implement school improvement works.

### Child Protection Committees

Village-level involvement has been sought to be promoted through the formation and strengthening of Child Protection Committees. All CPCs have been beneficiaries of capacity building training sessions on RTE and orientation sessions were held for the supporting Resource Centres. In Adilabad, the CPCs have been instrumental in helping Mahita to organise PRI Meetings, felicitate newly elected PRIs and organize a stakeholders' analysis on child protection mechanisms at the district level.



The CPCs look at issues of children's safety in their villages / localities, preventing early marriages and migration by maintaining a rapport with the parents of vulnerable children, and playing an active role in the development of the local school. In Adilabad, the CPCs also monitor the well being of girls and boys from their village who are studying in the nearby Tribal Welfare Residential Schools and maintain contact with the parents. Self-funded school development and village development activities have also been taken up in Adilabad such as recruiting Vidya Volunteers as a result of the mandal department's inability to appoint teachers, building of temporary boundary walls, planting of trees in the school premises and whitewashing of school buildings.

### Formation and strengthening of CLVCs

Community Level Vigilance Committees with the membership of various profile people in the communities were formed to track the child labour issues and assist in the prevention of the child trafficking for labour. here also we follow the same strategy of involving SHGs as they have already have their agenda of prevention of women and child trafficking in their Social Action Committees. The members of CLVCs were identified some out of school children in their surroundings.



### Building Voices of Excluded Families

With the support of Save the Children under IPAP, 350 families with 600 children (6 to 14 years) in the 25 slums in the old city have been linked to various welfare programs through the District Administration and the GHMC while the children have been enrolled to complete their schooling through the AP Open Schools Society.

#### Voices of excluded families

*"I will not let my daughter go through what I lived. She will study like my son. Both have equal rights and should be treated equally. It is as important for girls to get educated as it is for boys." - Heena, a single, young mother of two children.*

*"Financial problems at home increased so much that we too had to work in spite of our brothers' objections. Earlier, we used to take loans to pay the rent and then be under stress to repay the loans. Now with us sisters taking tuition classes for children, we don't have that pressure anymore. I am doing my 1<sup>st</sup> year computer science through distance education thanks to the guidance given by the Mahita Madam." - Yasmin*

*"Initially, my husband did not allow me to attend the Mahita meetings and claimed that they were a waste of time. But it's been 3 years now and I can feel that there has been a change in me. I got my daughters to demand from their father that they should be allowed to study even after high school. They are now in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grades." - Alia*

*"I did not know about this disability pension for my daughter (hunchbacked). Then the Mahita teachers helped me to apply for the pension and it is under process. She also joined the Mahita group and got a loan to start 'gota' (sequin stitching) work. She will complete her 10<sup>th</sup> exams from the APOSS and she wants to study further." - Shahana's mother, Member of Gulzar SHG*

Building Capacities and Strengthening Institutions

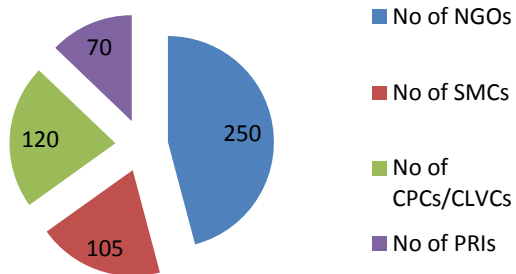


Capacity building of Govt Officials

- No of Teachers trained
- No of CMPOs
- No of Anganwadi workers
- No of other government officials



Capacity building of NGOs & CBOs



## Annual Report 2013-14

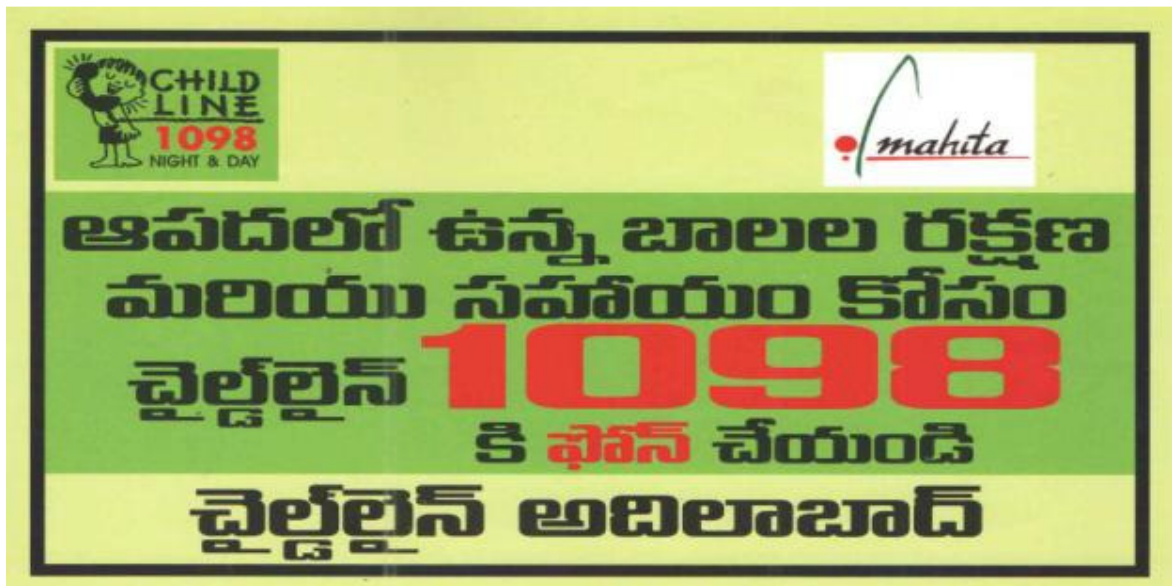
### Childline

Childline is a national, 24 hour, free, emergency phone outreach service for children in need and care protection. Mahita hosts the CHILDLINE network in Adilabad with a focus on a wide variety of vulnerable children like street children and youth living alone on the streets, child laborers working in the un-organized and organized sectors, domestic help, especially girl domestic workers, children affected by physical / sexual / emotional abuse in family, schools or institutions, and children in need of emotional support and guidance. In 2013-14, 300 Child Protection cases were referred to the concerned district departments such as the Women & Child Welfare department, Labour Department, Education Department and the Police.



### Development of IEC Material

Mahita is also keen in developing materials on children issues not only to aware the communities and to sensitize educate the employers, officials who are unaware of children issues. Pamphlets, stickers, leaflets, booklets and posters to spread the information about Child Line in Adilabad district, RTE provisions, SMC roles and responsibilities and so on.



### **Advocacy and Networking**

Networking activities to strengthen the civil society movement on child rights acquired a new look with the renaming of the AP Alliance for Child Rights (APACR) as the Alliance for Child Rights as a result of the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh. With activities funded by DKA-Austria and UNICEF, the network continues to cover the 23 districts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh with a base membership of 690 NGOs and other networks. During the reporting year, capacity building programs were conducted for 350 NGOs.

Knowledge sharing and updating information- Mahita Resource Centre efforts

The Mahita Resource Centre coordinates network activities and disseminates information, conducts research and documentation on child-related issues, develops IEC material on updated GOs and laws related to children, strengthens District Action Groups by conducting capacity building programs for Civil Society Organizations on Child Rights, liaises and interfaces with government programmes and officials, and facilitates stakeholder participation and state level consultations on Child Rights issues.

### **State regional and district level consultations**

In collaboration with WD&CW, RTE and ITDA the APACR has been organized several consultations on various issues like child marriages, functioning of ICDS Centres, Regional Stock Takings on RTE consultations with ITDA officials etc. District consultations with district administrations also held to launch BalaPanchayats in Guntur district.

### **Research and Studies on policy implementations**

Research Studies for Policy Advocacy on child rights were conducted in the current year, in collaboration with the Dept of Women & Child Welfare Education Department, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, and UNICEF, Hyderabad.

A study was conducted for the **Humara Bachpan Campaign on Hyderabad city to understand the policies and functioning of urban local bodies (ULBs)** with regard to children's issues, and how they can prioritize the needs of children in urban policy planning and implementation. A toolkit for district administrations to launch Bal Panchayats was also developed for UNICEF, Hyderabad and released in Guntur.

### **Research study on Child Marriages**

As two years have passed, since the united AP government passed GO.13 for the implementation of Child Marriages Prohibition Act 2006. To trace out the bottlenecks in the implementation of both Central Act and State GO 13 Mahita has planned a research study in two states through Alliance for Child Rights.

### **Research study on implementation of RTE Act**

To map out the functioning of School Management Committees newly formed as per GO.41 we planned a research study on the implementation of RTE Act with a special focus on GO.41.

### **Study/Rapid Assessment on IAH & Study on functioning of ICDS (Concurrent Monitoring)**

Other than the studies mentioned above we also collected the data from 10 Anganwadi Centres from each district every month, consolidated the data and shared the reports with both the department of WD&CW and UNICEF. This is meant for tracing out the status of nutrition of children in the state. Apart from this we also part of Rapid Assessment of IAH One Full Meal program initiated by the government for improving nutrition level among pregnant and lactating mothers. The assessment has done in three districts and the findings of the data also shared.

### **Challenges faced**

All the outcomes and achievements mentioned above are the great efforts of our team work in view of many challenges occurred while operating several interventions in the field. Few of them are ignorance and age old attitudes of communities, rigidity among minority communities, insensitivity of the government functionaries and lack of awareness among many CBOs are some social causes for facing us challenges to bringing the change and another side remoteness of the operational areas in Adilabad and Nalgonda districts are geographical constraints in operating our interventions. The strategies adopted to mitigate these challenges are recruiting the staff from the local communities and commitment of our team, lot of guidance and support from the Director and core group of the organization helped in overcoming these constraints.

### **Looking Ahead**

The previous year has filled with lot of inspiration in the form of nice collaborations with various departments, institutions and organizations both in government and non government. We would like to continue the same in order to ensure the child participation in all our programs and best interest of the children. In the coming years, Mahita's focus will be on the following areas

- Replicate our experiences in Education, Skills Development and Child Rights in other parts of the state.
- Work closely with the government, to extend technical assistance and sustain existing programs.
- Develop and sustain quality assurance and improvement across Mahita's programs - strengthen monitoring and evaluation including MIS; develop staff capacities; efficiency in programmes etc.
- Extension of work with the corporate sector to improve the quality of our education programs.



## Board & Management

### Legal Details

- ❖ The Organization was registered as Non-governmental Organization, under Public Societies Registration Act, 1340, Government of Andhra Pradesh on 22nd October, 1994 and was issued the Registration No: 5238/94. The Organization was also registered with Ministry of Home Affairs for receiving foreign funds under Registration No.: 010230388.
- ❖ The Organization registered with Income Tax Department, Government of India on 29-1-1998 as a non-profit Organization and the Registration No: I/12A&80G/435/97-98, for tax exemption and the Department of Income Tax, Government of India, sanctioned the Income Tax Exemption under Section 80G (5) (VI) of the IT Act, 1961.

### Board Members

1. Prof. Kethu Vishwanadha Reddy, PRESIDENT. Retired Professor from Dr. Ambedkar University and a prominent Telugu Poet and short story writer. Address: Plot No.61, Flat 11, Siddarthanagar, Hyderabad-39.
2. Ms.Geetha Ramaswamy, VICE-PRESIDENT, Prominent Human Rights Activist and Book Publisher, C/o HBT Flat No.85, Balaji Nagar, Gudi Malakapur, Hyderabad-28.
3. Mr.Ramesh Sekhar Reddy.P , GENERAL SECRETARY, Social Worker and member of many agencies both government and nongovernmental organizations. H.No.1-9-312/1, Flat No.205, VN Rao Residency, Vidyanagar, Hyderabad-44.
4. Dr.Ch.Mastan Rao, JOINT SECRETARY, Scientist associated with many research projects as Hydro Geology, Natural Resource Management. 1-1-283/13/14, Aravindnagar, Hyderabad-20.
5. Mr.Uma Shankar, TREASURER, Software professional associated with Multinational Software development firm , Flat No.202, Siri Sampada Apartment, Vidayanagar, Hyderabad-44.
6. Ms.Tanuja Shammohan, EXECUTIVE MEMBER, Social Activist and associated with many projects, Plot No.10, Radha Somi Society, Secunderabad-3.
7. Sis. Swarna, EXECUTIVE MEMBER, Social Worker, Head of Community Health Department, Vijaya Marie Hospital and associated with many NGOs and Networks. Vijaya Marie Hospital, Chintalabasti, Hyderabad-42.

### Management Team

1. Ramesh Sekhar Reddy. P, Program Director (M.A. in Sociology) Main Responsibilities: Planning, Monitoring, Project Management
2. Swaroop Kumar, Program Administrator, (B.A. B.S.W) Main Responsibilities: Management, monitoring and evaluation, Trainings
3. Padma, State Network Coordinator, (M.S.W., P.G.D.S.M) Main Responsibilities: Documentation, NGO networking
4. Rafiya Nausheen, Program Coordinator, (M.A.) Main Responsibilities: Project coordination and management, Liasoning.
5. P. Mallikharjuna Reddy, Finance Controller (B.Com) Main Resonsibilities: Financial Management and accounts.