

Mahita ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018



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Executive Summary

The year 2017, has seen many crimes against child especially girls and young women rights violations. Despite the Supreme Court of India gave a judgement criminalising sex with a child bride, underage marriages, especially of girls, are rising in urban India according to census data. Children as young as 6 years are being targeted, abused and trafficked. Mahita has been actively working on children and women issues in the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh since its inception. To meet its objectives in a holistic approach, Mahita has diversified its interventions.

The year 2017-18 has been very productive for Mahita. Through its interventions, Mahita has reached more than 22,236 direct beneficiaries from more than 500 villages of 10 districts in the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The major impact during the financial year has been 132 Gram Panchayats (160 Villages) from districts of Nalgonda and Rangareddy declaring **Child Labour Free**, which has been **certified** by the Labour Department, **Government of Telangana**.

More than 16,500 children, majority of them girls were benefited by educational support, health and nutritional support through the interventions of Mahita. Majority of the girls were on verge of discontinuing school due to lack of proper toilets and other infrastructure. Around 80 government schools were provided with infrastructure support like building or renovating toilets, construction of libraries and capacitating teachers. Our livelihood interventions, not only provided much need skills to 2,500 adolescent and young girls from the slums of Hyderabad, but also have lifted them out of poverty, reduced chances of early marriage and increase economically independence. More than 65% of our beneficiaries have either found job or initiated small business from their homes, with their new found confidence. For the first time, Mahita is working with Artisans from Adilabad and Nalgonda districts to promote their art and economic empowerment.

Mahita has also collaborated with research organisations to produce research studies to establish correlation between increase child marriages, adolescent girls and secondary education. The findings of the research would be used to advocate for promotion of secondary education for adolescent girls. Mahita has also advocated for effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) impacting children with the governments of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

The above mentioned impacts are the consequence of Mahita and its partners having moved towards common goal by influencing major legislation, policy makers, and exchanging knowledge among partners. In addition to leveraging the resources and expertise of our members, Mahita will continue to join forces with the government departments, private sector and academia to eliminate child labour, child marriages and promote women empowerment.

Ramesh Shekar Reddy
Program Director



EDUCATION

Education Through Empowerment Of Adolescent Girls

“ Sri Bhavani (16 years – name changed) is the elder child of her family and her father was a auto driver by profession. Bhavani completed 7th standard in school with much difficulty and days passed she realised that it is always gender bias that will rewrite her destiny. I was made to suffer by discontinuing classes which had impact on me, she says. “I requested them to join me in a government school, but my mother insisted on studying in the same school, where brother is”, she says. They were always partial to my brother and treated him like a precious thing, she adds. It was a painful thing to Laxmi to see her friends going school every day and pursue their dreams. That is when she decided to continue education and lead a good life. “I expressed my desire of studying to my grandparents and father which they understood and permitted me to go ahead”, she says. She started coming to Mahita open school centre since June 2017. “I was looking for a distance school education and one of the teachers from Mahita approached and explained about open school centre”, she says. She adds. “I am confident and will achieve my goal of becoming a lawyer”, she says. After coming to the centre, I saw many girls studying despite neck deep difficulties in life, mine are less when compared to them, she adds. She wants to advocate women rights and work for the causes that help them”.



Sri Bhavani is one among 300 adolescent girls have been enrolled in to 4 Community Based Educational Centres run by Mahita with the support of MYTRA Energies and UNICEF in thick and highly density populated areas of Borabanda Slums in Hyderabad. The project successfully reached 500 adolescent girls in the area in the year 2017-2018 and enrolled 300 adolescent girls in Telangana state open schooling scheme and the examinations for this academic year are scheduled in the month of April 2017.

However, all these 500 girls have been benefitted through various sensitisation programmes and capacity building programmes on; gender equality, child marriages, girl-child education, and gender based violence and on the clarity of their roles in addressing such gender issues to create gender balanced environment at home and work place.

.During the implementation period of the project, several trends were observed with different stakeholders associated with the project. There has been a relative transformation in the behavioural, attitudinal and psychological perspectives of the communities, parents and girls on the importance of girls education at large. The parents of the children are quite elated with the ongoing developments in the lives of their girls.

There is an education gap ranging from 2-3 years in most of the girls that is why their learning levels are very low and 10th class curriculum is very difficult for them to understand. To address the issue; Mahita developed Bridge Course Material for the subjects; Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, English. These material has been developed in Urdu, English and Telugu for developing the learning levels of the adolescent Girls. These books really played very important role in recapitulating their existing knowledge and bridging them to new leanings required for the Telangana Open School Society. The year 2017-18 has provided a huge space to reach these Adolescent Girls and develop their confidence levels as well as communication skills through constant training on Life Skill Training Programs.



Educational Centre For Children From Migrant Construction Workers

FACTS

- ❑ 89% of Children at the 5 construction sites have never enrolled in schools.
- ❑ 13% are children dropped out of school between 1 – 3rd classes.
- ❑ These children otherwise have no access to any education or recreation and completely denied childhood

IMPACT

- ❑ The project provided education to 478 children who otherwise would have been at risk of becoming child labour.

“Thanks to the educational centers our children are receiving quality education along with nutritious food and more importantly children are at a secure place”
-- Parents

In the modern world, people need education to prepare for work and for living fulfilling lives. India which is set to become world’s youngest country by 2020 with 64% of its population in the working age group, can’t afford to have illiterate youth. However, according to a report 47 million young men and women have dropped out of school. The dropout rate among children of migrant families is particularly high. To address the issue of children school dropouts among migrant labour families Plan India in collaboration with Punjab National Bank –Housing Finance Limited has initiated in 14 centers at 5 locations in the outskirts of Hyderabad city. A total of 478 children were provided education by setting up educational centers for children in the age group of 3 to 5 years and transit educational centers for 6 to 14 years age group.

Other Interventions

- Every Month a medical doctor visited all seven educational centers to check to monitor the health condition of the children.
- Immunizations campaigns were also conducted and all children in the age group of 0 to 5 years were immunized.
- Lactating and Pregnant women at the construction sites were referred to the nearest primary health centers.
- The teachers also monitored the growth of the children every month.
- As part of the project, the 478 children from the 14 educational centers were provided nutritious supplements in form of Mid Day Meals every day through Aksahya Patra.
- Every month community meetings were organized with the parents of the children to update them on the educational and health status of their children.
- Awareness meetings on educational importance and hygiene and sanitation were conducted.

Strengthening Government Schools

Save the Children with the support of BVLGARI has initiated “Education to Empowerment: Pillars of Learning (POLE)” project to strengthen the government schools and anganwadi centers in a holistic approach.

The project is being implemented in 50 Anganwadi centers and 50 Government Elementary Schools in Adilabad rural and Bela mandals of Adilabad district. The project aims to help more children access to education along with strengthening the existing education setup, by providing training to teachers. As part of the program activities capacity programs were conducted to enhance the skills of anganwadi teachers and government school teachers, orientation and sensitization for anganwadi assistants, Training Learning Method kits to anganwadi centers, libraries were established, School Management Committees, Anganwadi Development Committees were strengthened, formation and strengthening of Child Cabinets/Children Groups, formation of reading buddies and conducting annual celebrations at schools

Project Reach

- 6075 children (3042 boys & 3033 girls) benefited.
- 50 anganwadi schools received TLM kits benefiting 840 children.
- 50 Child Clubs formed with 1182 children
- 50 Mothers Committees strengthened
- Libraries established at 50 schools benefiting 5235 children.
- 50 government school teachers are capacitated on specific pedagogy
- 50 Anganwadi teachers were capacitated on ECCE school readiness skills.
- 54 Anganwadi Assistants are capacitated.

Project Impact:

- The project has been able to build strong linkages with WD& CW Department and Education department in connection with the transition of children from anganwadi centres to primary schools. This led to increase in number of children in government schools.
- Reading Buddies program has helped in developing reading habits amongst the children. Through this activity we have successfully encountered the bilingual teaching & learning problem, improved learning levels of the children.
- SMC federations are succeeded in resolving the school level and anganwadi level issues through representations, meeting the Mandal level officials, Sarpanch, PRIs.
- Formation of innovative teachers groups resulted sharing of innovative teaching methods in the groups, adopting the innovative teaching methods from the sharing, Low cost and No cost TLM was prepared by the teachers for the Mathematics, English and Telugu, Education mela helped to prepare more TLM and to display which lead to increased learning levels of the children.

Project Objectives

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Strategies: Pillars of Learning



Education Support

Give As You Earn (GAYE) is a educational support project funded by Microsoft India (R&D) Pvt. Ltd.-(Microsoft MSIT& IDC) and facilitated by Charities Aid Foundation India (CAF). The project aims to provide educational support to children from economically weaker sections in Hyderabad.

Process

- Networking with the government officials and community leaders.
- Interaction with school officials and children to identify their needs.
- Interaction with the community leaders.

Activities

- Mahita identified 4 government schools where the dropout rate is high due to economic conditions of the families of students is weak.
- Based on the interactions with the schools and children, Mahita distributed educational kit consisting of Bag, Books, Pen, Pencil, Pouch and Box.



Impact

The project has benefited 819 children from 4 government schools, as well as one adolescent girl by paying her examination fee to further continue her education.

“The children in our locality and school are in much need for assistance in continuing and completing their education given their Families vulnerabilities. I am extremely thankful to all of you for having recognized this vulnerability and for having acted on it. These children will definitely benefit from the support you have extended and I request you to please continue to support our schools and our students”.

Mr. Al Saleem - SMC Chairman and Local Leader, Asif Nagar Mandal





CHILD PROTECTION

Anti-child Labour

“I come from a poor family and I used to go along with my friends every day in search of collecting waste to sell in the local market. My parents never felt education is important and hence, they have never enrolled me or of my siblings in school. This attitude towards education is quite common among the elders in our community. Hence, all the children in our community are expected to work from an early age to support their families economically. We spent most of our day roaming the streets to collect waste. We also visited the garbage dump yards to look out for items we can sell. Often the work environment was dirty, unhealthy and you are in constant threat of getting injured. Fortunately, I have been rescued and rehabilitated by government agencies. Today, I’m going to school and enjoying my childhood”.

---- Ramu (Name Changed), Rescued Child



Children are trafficked not just for sexual purposes but also for labour trafficking too. Mahita in collaboration with Plan India and Human Dignity Foundation is implementing Anti-Child Labour project to prevent, protect and rehabilitate 10,000 children in the age group of 6 to 14 years who are at risk of or subjected to trafficking for labour in Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy. The project spread across 235 habitations in Ranga Reddy and Nalgonda District and working 140 Anganwadi and 240 Government Schools.

Project Objectives

- a.** To support effective implementation of child trafficking and child labour laws through sensitization and capacity building of community and government duty bearers for child protection.
- b.** To advocate for reforms in the Child trafficking and Child labour laws and schemes for rescued child labourers through engagement of Civil Society Organizations
- c.** To enroll and retain children who are rescued or prevented from child labour to continue their education and learning in formal schools in accordance with the Right to Education (RTE) law
- d.** To enhance economic status of families that are vulnerable to child trafficking and child labour

Process

- Identification and rescue of child labour and Prevent children from being vulnerable to trafficking for labour
- School enrollment drives for identification of out of school children
- Sensitization and capacity building of communities and duty bearers for promotion of child rights and prevention of child labour.
- Training of government officials from juvenile justice system, police and judiciary on safe rescue and rehabilitation of victims of child trafficking and child labour.
- Economic empowerment of most vulnerable parents/caregiver of child labourers/vulnerable to labour
- Vocational training support for parents/caregivers of children
- Capacity building of media persons at district and state level on prevention of child labour and trafficking for labour

Outcomes

- The project strengthened, “Child forums & Child Protection Committees in 320 villages as well as rescuing 6776 children and of which 5950 rehabilitated back to school.
- In the identified villages of Nalgonda and Rangareddy district, Mahita has been able to make the villages as Child Labour Free by Start Up Grant was provided to 1946 families of child labour and vulnerable children families. A total 98 most vulnerable families were identified and were supported for livelihood start-up grant during the current year.
- Government Scheme SHG loans, single women pension, postal savings, Sukanya Suraksha Yojana and Padanmantri Kushal Jevan Yojana was provided to 447 families.



Project Impact

- Mahita has made 160 villages from 132 Gram Panchyats in Nalgonda and Ranga Reddy districts as Child Labour Free and another 160 are in the process of declaring as Child Labour Free.
- To strengthen the child protection policy (CPP) and to incorporate CPP into schools, Mahita has collaborated with Sarva Siksha Abhyan (SSA) and developed a Child Participation Manual. The manual was launched by SSA on 21st November 2017.
- Mahita in Collaboration with SSA and Stare Recourse Centre (SRC), Education Department, Govt. Of Telangana, has revised School Management Committee (SMC) module with two new chapters incorporated. The revised version is in laymen's language. The SMC Manuel was published and launched with the support of the government.
- The Community Mobilization Officers (CMOs) from 31 districts of Telangana state, were oriented on the revised SMC on 21st November 2017.
- Mahita/Plan India developed a guide book for Enforcement authorities and stakeholders of the state of Telangana, on how to create child labour free areas. The guidebook was published and launched by Shri. Nayani Narsimha Reddy, Labour Minister, Telangana state on 12th June 2018. To orient Labour department officials from 31 districts of Telangana state on Create child labour free Telangana Handbook a training was organized on 26th June 2018.



Childline 1098

“Vishali is a 12 year old girl from Adilabad district. She moved into her grandparent’s house after the death of her parents. Her grandparents were poor and unable to support her education. Hence, Vishali dropped out of school and started working as a labourer in a cotton farm. When the School Management Committee came to know about Vishali, they informed about her to Mahita. Child Line team and Mahita immediately rescued her from the cotton fields. On the orders of Child Welfare Committee her family was counselled on Children Rights and she was given admission in KGBV, Tamsi. At present, Vishali is studying in 6th standard. She is happy to be back in school and making new friends”.

--Case Study

CHILDLINE is a project initiated by Ministry of Women and Child Development and implemented by local NGOs, State government and the corporate sector. It is a national 24-hour free phone emergency outreach service for children in need of care and protection and aims to link children to long-term services.

MAHITA is the collaborative organisation to implement CHILDLINE services in Adilabad. Through CHILDLINE, Mahita is able to rescue and rehabilitate children who are denied their rights, especially street children, child laborers, children who have been abused, child victims of the flesh trade, differently abled children, child addicts, children in conflict with law, children in institutions, mentally ill children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children affected by conflict and disorders, child political refugees, children whose families are in crisis. CHILDLINE provides emergency assistance and then refers the child to other organisations for long-term rehabilitation.

The project has received support and encouragement from line departments like police, revenue, ICDS, ICPS, DLSA, SSA, Education department, Railway, RTC, & NGOs, Youth groups, volunteers, the KGBVs and print and electronic media as well.



• Process

- Awareness programs at schools, public space (bus stop, railway stations, villages), anganwadi centers, self help groups etc about 1098.
- CHILDLINE reaches out to meet the child who dials 1098.

Major Outcomes

- Reached 29,321 people through awareness programs at schools, aganwadis, police stations, slums, villages etc
- Shelter provided to 22 children
- Rescued 131 children from becoming a child labourer or victim of child marriage
- Sponsorship provided to 21 children





Livelihood

Fluorosis mitigation and socio economic empowerment of indigenous (tribal) women

Fluorosis mitigation and socio economic empowerment of indigenous (tribal) women through access to safe drinking water, sanitation, nutrition and livelihood support services in narayanapur mandal of nalgonda district of telangana state, india

Facts

- Base line survey to identified 1819 families affected with Fluorosis
- Identification and strengthening of existing VWSCs and formation of new VWSCs
- 48 families were provided with livelihood support
- Most Symptoms of Fluorosis are not reversible
- Calcium deficiency aggravates Fluorosis
- Malnutrition makes Fluorosis worse
- Most symptoms of Fluorosis are not reversible



About Project

Fluorosis is a chronic condition caused by excessive intake of fluorine compounds, marked by mottling of teeth and, if severe, calcification of the ligaments. Fluorosis has been more than a decade long endemic problem in Smathan Naryanpur Mandal in the erstwhile Nalgonda district. Manos Unidas in association with Mahita has been working in 30 villages of Sansthan Narayanpur Mandala to mitigate Fluorosis in the region.

Strategy

The project strengthened the Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC) at all the 30 villages under the project area. The VWSCs were formed to discuss and address the issues related to water and sanitation of the village and advocate with the government officials for social security schemes to for the affected families. To achieve this, the project conducted the following activities;

Activities

- Quarterly meetings at mandal level on Nutrition and Water & Sanitation involving local communities, VWSCs' and relevant Government departments.
- Celebration of major events like Sanitation day, International women's' day, Global hand wash day, and Water day with local communities and schools.
- Linkages with government departments

Project Impact

- Awareness levels of villagers have improved regarding Fluorosis there by all of them taking precautions and preventions.
- VWSCs advocating for their rights for safe drinking water and sanitation with local government departments.
- 48 families have economically benefited from the livelihood support. Their income levels have increased.
- The project ensured to link victims as well as lactating and pregnant women of Fluorosis to relevant departments for economic and nutritional support.



Artisans Project

About Project

For the very first time Mahita is implementing a livelihood project with purely economic benefits as the main and only outcome. The Artisans project with the support of Plan India is being implemented in Adilabad and Nalgonda districts. Mahita plans to improve the economic situation of 200 artisans from Pochampally (Saree Weavers) and Adilabad (Dokra brass artefact makers) by providing them with technical advisory support at both pre and post production stages. The project is being implemented on pilot basis.



Process

- Interaction with community leaders of the artisans groups.
- Capacity building trainings to the artisans to help improve their economic status. The training is provided based on their skills and market need.
- Network with banks for loans and corporate sector for CSR activities.
- **The Strategies implemented to achieve the outcome are,**
- base line study to identify the beneficiaries and their needs and,
- strengthen and establish linkages with respective Government Departments and Corporates to access all the benefits and expand their market into new avenues.
- As it is the first year of the project the major activity of the project was to create inroads to gain trust of the artisans.

Activities

- Base-line study of the 200 artisans (100 ikat weavers and 100 dokra artisans) from Nalgonda and Adilabad district was conducted.
- Trainings to the weavers from nalgonda district was provided on dyeing process in association with Weavers Service Centre, Ministry of Textiles, Telangana State. Certificates were also issued from the Government department for the weavers who have undergone 1 week training program.

Reach

- The project has been able to identify 200 beneficiary artisans from Adilabad and Nalgonda district.
- The needs of the artisans have been identified and discussed with respective artisan groups for organising a training program in collaboration with the respective government departments.

Future Plan

- Develop marketing model.
- Identifying new market avenues.
- Exploring CSR activities of corporate sector to work with artisans



MITHRA” – FROM SKILLS TO SUCCESS

Livelihood training to adolescent girls in old city of hyderabad



“Ever since Nilofer Begum was a child, she dreamt of becoming an engineer, but due to financial condition of her family, she had to discontinue her education after completing 10th class. During this period, volunteers from Mahtia influenced her parents to allow Nilofer to take vocational course. With the training and support from Mahita, Nilofer started working as a Teacher at a local school and financially supporting her family. Mahita team has counselled my parents to continue her higher education. Nlofer’s parents are happy that she is able to financially support them. Now they encourage her to continue education. Today, she has a new aspiration, to become a qualified teacher”.

“Thanks to Mahita team and CAF for providing me opportunities and empowering me to dream again”

Nilofer Begum

About Project

The project Skills to Success targets 2400 Adolescent Girls and young women like Nilofer Begum especially from the urban slums of old city, Hyderabad through skill trainings there by creating employment avenues for overall development. The project is supported by Charities Aid Foundation (CAF). The primary objective of the Skill Training programs is to work for economic empowerment of communities by equipping adolescents with necessary knowledge and technical skills that could enhance their employment prospects, which would in turn reflect in improved social and economic status.

Process

- Establish 6 livelihood centers
- Awareness campaigns in the communities
- Networking with the corporate sector for exposure visit and facilitating livelihood opportunities.

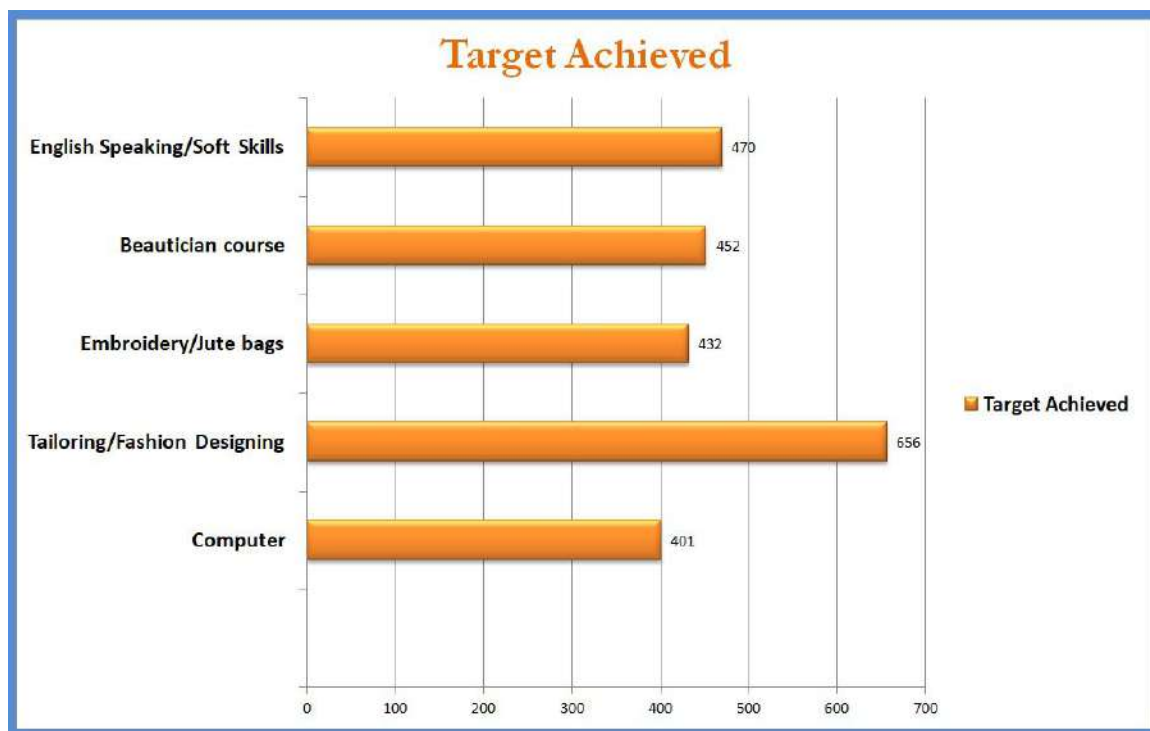
• Strategy

In our interactions with the Adolescent girls it was found that most of them expressed desire to learn Tailoring/Fashion designing or Beautician course. Along with the mentioned courses Computer, English speaking and Embroidery/Jute Bag making courses were found to be more in demand. Hence, these courses were identified for short-term training. The skill training will not only provide them adequate opportunities of employment but also empower them to start up their own units/enterprises. The Courses includes; Computer Training, Fashion Designing, Beautician Course, Handmade thread Greetings Cards etc., The courses were offered at all the 6 livelihood centers (karawan, jhira, kishan bagh, tallagadda, yakuthpura and bst[bhadurpura]).



Activities

- Awareness campaigns
- Identification and registration of beneficiaries
- Curriculum development.
- Skill Development Trainings



Project Impact

- About 2411 girls enrolled and completed the vocational training, arming them to be capable of contributing to their family income
- The girls have gained confidence to negotiate and navigate with the ways of life with much more ease and self assuredness.



EMPOWERING YOUNG GIRLS:

through providing Employable Skills for enhancing the Family Income in 15 slums of Hyderabad City

The project is funded by DAK Austria, and the main objective of the project is to provide vocational and employment skills to for the disadvantaged minority adolescents who are out of school and deprived of all government welfare programs, so that they can lead a dignity and quality of life as there is a huge demand from the communities. The beneficiaries of the project are from 15 slum areas of Karawan and Kishanbagh areas of Hyderabad District. The project provides space for the adolescent and young girls to participate and benefit from the improved opportunities and the choices in their lives, with enhanced incomes due to skills learnt and increased physical mobility and exposure to the developmental world. The project targets to reach 1800 adolescent girls over the period of three years. Additionally, 300 community members will be also oriented on child protection issues. These 1800 adolescents and youth will become as 'peer educators/role models' in their communities and provide worldview for other young girls and boys. The interventions will also develop lot of government and community partnerships and create opportunities to break the generational limits for employment above the most basic levels and meet the aspirations of youth and adolescent girls.



Process

- Establishment and functioning of 3 training centers in the project area.
- Networking and relationship building with community members.
- Development of foundation course curriculum; Life Skills training and vocational courses.
- Interaction with the government departments and private companies for linkages.
- Interaction with the local communises.

Strategy

- The project was launched in January 2018, and the courses offered are;
- Computer Training
- Tailoring/Fashion Designing/Jute bags, and
- Beautician/Mehandi.
- The average duration of the course is 3 to 6 months. For year one the target is 600 Adolescents will complete their Livelihood Skill Training Program and 100 Community members will be oriented on child protection issues.

Activities

- Courses identified
- Awareness campaigns of courses in the community
- Beneficiaries identified and registered for the courses
- Training of the first batch is in progress



NABARD- TDF (MAATHOTA)

About Project

The Tribal Development Fund (TDF) Project is a unique welfare project which integrates both environmental and social aspects with an objective of provision of sustainable livelihood for the tribal communities.

It is conceptualized, funded and supported by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for the development of 500 tribal families and 500 acres of horticulture plantations in Narnoor Mandal of Adilabad district. MAHITA was sanctioned this project under which each participant tribal family is supported by an acre of fruit plantation (drought tolerant species of Mango and Amla).

The core of the program is development of orchard (locally known as MATHOTA/ WADI) in the degraded lands of tribal regions. The program also includes activities of women empowerment, community health, drinking water supply, hygiene, sanitation and capacity building. The inter cultivation of useful vegetables, fodder, and other herbal medicines is also undertaken.



Activities

- Identified Mango and Alma as core plantation which are more suitable for local climatic conditions.
- To increase income, introduced boundary plantations like teak, drum stick, custard apple and Indian blackberry (jamoon)
- Introduced the farmers to the concepts of Intercropping, wadi fencing and soil conservation work.
- Conducted health camps and cattle development camps.
- Need based trainings were conducted for the TDF farmers with the support of DDM NABARD through ITDA, Krishi Vignana Kendra and agriculture departments.

Project Impact

- Arrested migration and developed keen interest in developing the lands from barren to green lush lands
- The productivity of the land has been increased by retaining the soil fertility
- Soil erosion checked and soil moisture retained
- Farmers adopted organic farming methods
- Women have become confident and self dependent.



Success Story:

Pusam Nago Rao is a farmer from Mallangi Gond Guda Village, Mallangi gram Panvhayat, Narnoor Mandal. Mr.Nago Rao came to know about the MAATHOTA programme in the year 2013-14 through as part of TDF project interventions by the project implementing agency MAHITA. He attended the meeting organized by MAHITA & NABARD in his village as part of TDF awareness programmes. In Mallangi village two village level committees were formed with 24 members for implementing Maathota programme. As part of the TDF programme horticulture plantation was done in their fields. Mango and Amla was planted as the core plantation and per acre 48 Mango and 33 Amla plants were planted. As per advise of PIA Nago Rao has taken intercrop in his field and cultivated onion, vegetables like Brinjal, Tomato, spinach and other vegetables in half acre of land. He has built a small hut in his farm and used to stay at the farm. This was the first experience for NagoRao for cultivating vegetables. He was happy that along with vegetables he could successfully cultivate onion under intercrop. With the guidance and support of MAHITA staff and his own interest and efforts in adoption of this new technique of vegetable/spices cultivation, he succeeded in maintaining vegetable and onion. From September 2017 to 1st week of January 2018 he has sold the vegetables valuing a total of Rs. 25,000. With intercropping of onion over 0.5 acre of land with fruit plants, he earned an income of Rs. 15,000, Though Onion from September 2017 to January 2018, he has earned Rs.40,000/ in one acre of land through intercrop. The cost of seeds was 950 rupees and he earned 40,000/- in 4-5 months along with his regular farming. He is also using Jeevamritam for his horticulture plantation as well as his other crops also. He spend income earned through vegetables and spices on meeting out day to day family expenses like food, education, medicine and expenses on various farm activities. Nago Rao not only works for his family he also helps other farmers in preparing jeevamritam and other farm related works. He regularly organizes VLC meetings in his village.





SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Toilets Change Lives

Children have rights to basic facilities such as access to toilets at schools and clean surroundings. Sanitation at schools can create an enabling environment which secures child's dignity, safety, health and attendance in classes.

Unfortunately, majority of the government schools in India are facing issues due to lack of proper sanitation facilities. IInd Lancer School, a government run school based in the outskirts of the city has also similar issue. The school has no resources to repair toilets and hence seen lot of students especially girls dropping out of school. The project is supported of Kimberly Clarke Cooperation (KCC)/ CAF-India. The program **TOILET CHANGE LIVES** aims to repair and maintain toilets in 30 Government Schools of Rangareddy & Hyderabad.



Process

- Network with the Education Department
- Community Engagement.
- Assessment of beneficiary schools infrastructure especially washrooms of children.
- Repair and Maintenance of toilets.
- Awareness on WASH to children.

Project activity focused on strengthening WASH Awareness of the direct beneficiaries to ensure healthy behaviour is practiced all the time. Intervention also focused on ensuring Repair and Maintenance of these toilets for its regular use.

Due to the initiatives of the project, the school strength has increased especially, the girl students. The project has influenced children to become change agents by influencing their communities in adhering to hygiene practices.



Impact

- In 30 schools toilets were constructed or renovated
- Strength of 8 schools has increased
- 8681 Children especially girl child
- are attending school regularly



ADVOCACY & RESEARCH

Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA)



About Project

GAA project is a 5 years project initiated in the year 2016. It is a global initiative of Plan International – Plan Netherlands, Terre des Hommes – Netherlands and Defence for Children – ECPAT Netherlands aims at contributing to equal rights and opportunities to girls and young women. In India, this initiative is led by Plan India in collaboration with Mahita in 6 districts of Telanaga state and 3 districts of Andhra Pradesh. The project targets Girls in the age group from 11-18 years and young women below the age of 35. Our efforts, in the initial period have been concerted in building the network of 352 NGOs in the 6 districts of Telangana and 3 districts in Andhra Pradesh. The network of organizations is currently being capacitated on the issues of child marriage, child trafficking, secondary education and JOVT, so as to be able to advocate with the district and state administration and the communities on the issues pertinent to GAA.

Achievement During the year 2017-18:

- Key leaders 3056 of them including religious leaders PRIs, Caste based leaders, SHG members, Women's federations have been oriented, sensitized and have built capacities to respond to the issues of the CM, CT and SE in their congregations. These leaders have also provided with written commitment to address the issues and are currently actively challenging the social norms that promote child marriages and are also enforcing the law of the land.
- About 150 Gram Panchayats [village administration units] in Yadadri, Vikarabad, Sanga Reddy, Adilabad, Krishna, Vizag, Kurnool and districts of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states have expressed their commitment in writing to prevent and act on child marriage and child trafficking incidents.



- Consolidated and involved 350 CSOs across two states with regular GAA activities. In perseverance of GAA themes among CSOs, effort for adoption of policies to protect children and young women at work place were campaigned around CSOs to resolve at their organization level. Hence 190 organizations have accepted and the policies have now translated into a practice among few.
- Sought by the DWCD, Telangana to develop the state manual for VLCP establishment and strengthening in collaboration with DWCD. This would strengthen the child protection mechanisms at the village level. The manual would be crucial in building the capacities of VLCPC members on CM and CT along with gender based violence and the complaint mechanisms.
- Successfully facilitated a celebrity engagement between the Department of Women and Child Welfare, Govt. of Telangana and Ms. Rakul Preet Singh, a famous Actress in South India, to appoint her as the brand ambassador for 'Beti bachao and Beti Padaov', a campaign for girl children. As a measure to widely disseminate messages on girls especially around CM and CT, we engaged with her on the Occasion of International Day of the Girl Child and supported Govt to take it forward. Through these engagements of GAA with the department, we were also able to push the GAA thematic issues into this Campaign as a State level campaign. Towards this end two videos on CM and CT are being developed for dissemination. This shows that the high level of APT engagement on CM and CT recognised by the Government which has resulted in the integration of issues in the BBBP campaign. Under the campaign, we have developed hoardings, audios, and other IEC materials.

- The Secretary of Women and Child Welfare Department has agreed to take the capacity building of all the Gram Panchayat Sarpanches on CM and CT, after he attended one of the State Level event organised under GAA. This is reflective of the influence of the GAA advocacy, that to be able to influence the strategies of the government for addressing the CM and CT
- The Telangana CID-Police Department along with APT organizations conducted a sensitization workshop for 200 police personnel on 30th July as part of the observation days. The workshop was able to demonstrate a need for similar sessions for the police department aimed at not just sensitizing but also on the process of Rescue operations of the Police. The event saw the attendance from DIG Police, IG- CID, Commissioner of Police - Rachakonda (US Trafficking in Persons Report awardee). Department of Prosecution too was part of the training and has expressed similar sessions in regard to the prosecution of cases.

- Hyderabad City Police in collaboration with the APT also organized an event (flash mob) to raise awareness on the issue of trafficking for sexual and commercial exploitation on March 3rd (World Day of Fight Against Sexual Exploitation). This event was organized at the Secunderabad Railway Station on the request of police department, as it is a major trafficking hub (identified by the City Police) to raise awareness amongst the general public who frequently access the railway station.

- Knowledge hub creation has been a major focus We have commissioned studies on child marriages, secondary education in the last year. The report of which will be disseminated in the current year.



Project Impact:

- Engaging with the religious leaders was an effective action leading to commitment of the religious leaders to stand against child marriages.
- Creating platform for the non-child rights organisations as well as child right organizations to be active on GAA and building capacity and influencing them to integrate the GAA themes in their regular programmes.
- Effective use of media to sensitize the government to prioritize the issues of GAA [trafficking]. Various forms of media have a vast reach to the community. APT has ensured to use all relevant media forms to reach out to the communities so as to generate awareness among the communities.
- Engagement of the police towards sensitizing the public on GAA themes has been one major impact especially since the police has been able to realize their own role in sensitizing the public.



- Constant lobby with the state government officials from women development and child welfare [AP & TS] resulting in issue of orders to all District Child Protection Units to prioritise addressing the GAA themes while engaging with them to develop VLCPC manual, IEC which would help them in responding to the issues of GAA in all the 31 districts.
- Engaging a celebrity to widely disseminate messages around the GAA thematic issues in the state of Telangana. Involvement of the celebrity in state level interventions has ensured that her messages has been relayed in print, electronic and radio Medias.
- Observation Days have been used as a platform to gain maximum visibility through media and the state government while also reaching out to communities and CSOs. IEC materials are used extensively for these observation Days and have employed various strategies and engaged with different departments for each of the observations.

Success Story:

Religious and Caste communities constitute crucial drivers in arresting child marriages happening in the communities. They are potential to play a key role in speaking out against child marriage and child trafficking. They have the power to change community attitudes, especially towards the girl child. In communities where religious and traditional leaders play a prominent role in decision-making or influencing the prevailing norms, targeted interventions can support them to become positive advocates for change who fully understand the implications of child marriage for girls and their families. The religious leaders were also made aware of the legal provisions, especially PCMA 2006 since they have an active role in solemnization of marriage and are liable for conviction as per the law.

Sensitizing them is very crucial as they hold very orthodox beliefs. The existence of the fact is that the religious priests or caste leaders believe that people in the community are practicing, hence such practices can't be opposed or withheld by them and people also think that they can't oppose the caste leaders and religious leaders as they feel that they cannot violate the sanctions of the religious or sanctions of the caste leaders. It's a visa versa. If the caste and religion stand together in a village then there could no marriages takes place in the villages.

Hence with a view to bring changes in the mind set of religious and traditional leaders set of the activities organized at State and District level has contributed to realization of GAA outcome by bring multi stakeholders within caste and religions. The activities saw an active participation from of Christians (represented various denominations Catholics, Protestants) Hindus Pujaris (from Matams) Muslims Mullahs (different sects) and also from caste groups, primarily from sub caste which are considered extremely low (subaltern) in strata and have major incidences of child marriages. The leaders of those castes were identified and called for the meetings to encourage them to tackle child marriages within their communities.



The caste and religious leaders have been spirited, strong and vivid in accepting child marriages were wrong and they promised that they in return would prevent child marriages taking place. The leaders spoke against Child Marriages and favoured for girls education. A state level program with Sarpanches on the International Day of the Elimination of Violence against Girls and Young women from 95 Village on 25th November 2017 has instilled confidence for the effort that is being put in the field for the last one year. Conceptual understanding on the GAA issues has taken a shift from a mere health perspective to addressing gender based violence is taking place slowly and steadily fast.

Most of the leaders irrespective of religion have agreed and pinioned that child marriages should not be encouraged at any cost as well they should promote education with a focus on secondary education for girls should be stressed upon. The cast and religious leaders have expressed that gathering together for a common purpose gives them confidence to address issues affecting girl children. Though there exists good intention among them due to fear factor “what others feel” letting down. The capacitating program organized by GAA instils a new paradigm shift on understanding of the issues with IEC materials.

The leaders across the six districts wherein we have conducted this program have consented to speak against child marriages and child trafficking while promoting secondary education for girls in their respective communities.



Engaging Children and CSOs in the SDGs:

Sustainable Development Goals in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana States.

About Project

Alliance for Child Rights a conglomerate of NGOs working in the state of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh collaborated with UNICEF to start a campaign to arm the children with knowledge and awareness of their rights and entitlements vis-a vis SDGs so that they could advocate effectively for the fulfilment of the same by the policy makers/duty bearers. The campaign would be instrumental in bringing out the first ever SDG baseline report by children in the two states which would capture the current scenario, achievements, as well as the concerns vis-à-vis SDG realization.



The Campaign:

The whole process of SDG Campaign by Mahita has been taken in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. CSOs and representatives of children from the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh were armed with knowledge and awareness of their rights and entitlements vis-a vis SDGs so that they could advocate effectively for the fulfilment of the same by the policy makers/duty bearers. Both the actors were capacitated through the proposed program so they can engage effectively in their concerned geographies to bring focus to and achieve the SDG and targets. The program was instrumental in bringing out the first ever SDG baseline report by children in the two states which would capture the current scenario, achievements, as well as the concerns vis-à-vis SDG realization.



Project Reach

- A total of 69 NGOs from both the states were identified based on their experience of working with children.
- Orientation on SDGs - Representatives from 665 NGOs benefited from the program.
- Facilitators from both states 20 from Telangana and 26 facilitators from Andhra Pradesh were identified to take the process to Mandal level.
- A total of 1396 children from both the states (46 Mandals from 23 districts) were part of the campaign.
- To facilitate discussions 46 NGO were identified based on their past experience working with children, work ethics and location.



The campaign which began in the month of May 2017 finally reached to its pinnacle by submitting the children's charter of demands to the Assembly speakers of both the states. The entire exercise enabled children to aware of SDGs. The outcome is also valuable to the ruling political parties of both the states to understand the concerns of the children with regard to SDGs and get real picture about the current implementation status of SDGs their lacunas and what actions to be taken to successfully complete SDGs by 2030.





OTHER INTERVENTIONS

Volunteers

As part of Corporate Citizenship commitments Accenture encourages their employees to volunteer for any cause they care about. As Mahita is implementing Accenture's Corporate Social Responsibility project, "Skills to Succeed" in the slums of Hyderabad the Accenture employees volunteer their time and skills with the beneficiaries of the project.

Volunteers from Accenture would come to centers and teach the students basic spoken English / Mathematics / Computers / Personality development and life skills. Since many of these adolescent girls do not have good communication skills and their English language skills are non-existent, these classes by volunteers help them to learn skills which would help them to face the world with renewed confidence. Many volunteers also shared their experiences to encourage and motivate the students to continue their education, their vocational skills to earn their livelihood and be independent. Experience sharing of Accenture volunteers helped to boost morale and confidence among the students at the centers.



Capacity Development

Mahita sees capacity building of staff as an important and essential part for overall development. Hence, Mahita keeps conducting capacity building workshops to its core team to enhance their skills as well as improve their knowledge in the latest developments within its area of work. Over the year, Mahita has conducted over all 7 capacity building workshops to its staff. The workshops focused on topics like Gender sensitivity, Gender sensitization and gender programming, Child Protection, Education, Advocacy strategies with emphasis on girls and women programme, Theory of Change and Fund raising strategy.



WAYFORWARD

It has been 23 years since its inception Mahita has been actively working for the empowerment of women, children and human rights issues. These 23 years has been exciting, challenging as well as fruitful. In the coming year Mahita looks forward to explore new areas, create new opportunities and form new partnerships.

In the New Year, apart from the regular projects, Mahita will be focusing extensively on Research, Advocacy and Networking. Mahtia recognises how Networks are invaluable in advocacy because they help to create structure and strengthen the objectives and goals of its initiatives.

In partnership with likeminded NGOs, Mahita aims at moving towards setting up of digital centers which will provide additional educational support to children especially girls from Government schools as well as dropped out girl students who are planning to complete Secondary School Certificate (SSC) inform of free web based tuitions on all subjects. To ensure no youth is unemployed, Mahita in collaboration with the private sector would continue to provide skill development programs to youth (both men and women) and guarantee they are placed in a job and contribute to the local economy.

To advocate successfully with the government for policy change, research plays a major role. Hence, in the coming year Mahita plans to take up research activities particularly on issues related to secondary education, girl children and young women. As part of its continuing advocacy programs, Mahita will continue to advocate with the district and state administration and the communities on the issues pertinent to Girls Advocacy Alliance and promote secondary education and Job Oriented Vocational Trainings to adolescent girls and young women so that they lead as life with dignity and economic independence.

Mahita would also take foreword the advocacy campaign by children to ensure Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are met by the respective states and also make sure political parties make children issues as part of their election manifesto.

Mahita will invest in the capacity building process of its staff to make certain they reach high levels of achievement and to acquire skills, knowledge and values the community needs to become a responsible part of democratic society.

We believe that Mahita has the commitment and support from its partner NGOs and Government departments, to make sure its goal of every child especially girls in school and women empowerment can be realised. Mahita appreciates the support of Board members, funding partners and its friends and well wishers. As always, Mahita will remain firmly committed to its vision in the year 2018-19.





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