

# From Sparsha Trust Annual Report for years 2017-18

## Child Development Projects/Programmes

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### C.1. Nisarga Grama (Nature village)

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#### Introduction

In Bangalore, there are several children who are living on the streets, as they were abandoned, or run away from home due to exploitation or deprivation or strained relationships. The lure of good work or good life made them come to the cities from small towns, and here they were forced into work, or were trafficked and became victims of different types of abuse. Some children are school drop outs, drug-addicts, and turn to begging, rag picking, and petty crimes. Many are children of single-parent homes, facing extreme poverty at home.

As part of its work, Sparsha Trust began to identify such children, and facilitated the process of their rescue and rehabilitation of children aged 6 to 18 years old. Recognizing the need for a 24/7 facility to ensure their protection and development, Sparsha Trust initiated work to build on Nisarga Grama (nature village) a state-of-the-art multi-dimensional development centre for neglected, abused and exploited children.

The construction of the multi-dimensional development Nisarga Grama at Hesarghatta, Bangalore began in October 2016. Designed to accommodate 300 children, the Centre was inaugurated in 2017. Presently, 120 students boys and girls are staying there. While boys are permitted to stay in Nisarga grama till their 7<sup>th</sup> standard, girls can stay till they move out due to higher education, work or marriage. Nisarga Grama is being supported by Individuals and corporates which includes Kennametal, Walmart, First American India, Netscot, Terex, Amruthanjan Health Care Ltd, Persistent Foundation.

#### Impact of Nisarga Grama

- **Children and families:** Children neglected by their parents have a safe place to live, study and progress, great benefit to single-parent family, and in those families where mother is the sole bread winner, rights of the children are protected
- **Community:** Children are engaged in productive activities, children have become socially sensitive, respectful towards elders and women, inculcate positive values and discipline.
- **Capacitated youth workforce for the country:** The children are growing up in a proper atmosphere, getting qualified to get proper sustainable jobs, thereby protecting themselves from forced under-employment.

## Case Study



Kanaka was residing in a slum near Rajajinagar, Bangalore. She had lost her mother in her very small age and father was an alcoholic and a patient. Kanaka was a child labourer working as a domestic labourer at Rajajinagar. During a survey to identify child labourers, Sparsha Trust found Kanaka and her two siblings and brought them to Nisarga Grama in 2011. Her aunt took the responsibility to

take care of her father.

In 2011, Kanaka was supported to enroll in school at 5<sup>th</sup> standard. Since then, Kanaka has won several accolades, having done very well in school. These include scoring 80% in her 10<sup>th</sup> Standard exams conducted by Karnataka Secondary Education Board. Adjudged the best student in her 2014-15, she also won an award for debate competition by IHR. She won the Best leader award from Child Rights Trust, 2016 as well as Art & craft award in 2016 and a Karnataka State level prize for the folk dance 'Dollukunitha'. With the support of KCPO and UNICEF, Kanaka who is now in 1<sup>st</sup> PUC) got an opportunity to give a speech in Parliament on November 20, 2017 on the occasion of the World Children's Day.

During 2017-2018, 120 children benefitted by staying in Nisarga Grama.

Children are trained in Dollu Kunita and Yakshagana. Children have given more than 20 performances at events organized by corporates and the Government. 7 children went to Ooty adventure camp. Conducting joy of learning programme and summer camp within Nisarga Grama. Oasis, an organization from Gujarat, organized a six day personality development for 100 children in Nisarga grama. These were children both from Sparsha and other NGOs. Children have planted more than 100 plants and they are taking care, growing all the vegetables in Nisarga Grama. Some of the children of Nisarga Grama are studying in two private schools and two Government schools, BGS and other colleges. The media has carried reports about the achievement of Nisarga Grama's children in print and electronic media.

### Academic performance of Sparsha Trust's projects' children

#### 10<sup>th</sup> Class exam:

- 15 children took the 10<sup>th</sup> standard exam
- Of these, 3 children have written direct exams (without attending school) and 12 are regular school going students. The 3 children are drop outs
- Of these 15 students, 10 passed their exams, and 4 of these 10 scored 70%, 6 scored before 60% and 5 failed. Now they are being supported for supplementary exams.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> PUC:

- 4 children wrote the exams, of these 2 children secured 70% and 1 children above 50% and 1 failed.

## **Case studies of students who have scored 70% and more**

### **Nagarathna**

16 years old Nagarathna comes from a poor family living in Raichur, working in Mestripalya. in North Karnataka. Her father is an alcoholic and works along with his wife in the construction sector as labourers. She has an elder sister who is married and 2 younger brothers. Her mother struggled to make ends meet but eventually, a young Nagarathna, who was taking care of her siblings, was forced by circumstances to earn by doing household work in 2 houses.

In 2011, volunteers identified her, and enrolled her in the centre where she is staying since then. Sparsha ensured she got maximum care and support towards her educational requirements. Nagarathna started going to school and really blossomed with all the support she got. A determined child to achieve new heights, she learnt folk music , dance and also concentrated on her studies with great enthusiasm. She scored a 1<sup>st</sup> class division with 77.92 percentage marks in SSLC.

### **Lakshman**

18 years old Lakshman belongs to a family of 7 members. He studied up to 6<sup>th</sup> standard and then discontinued his studies to work as a shepherd in his village. After his sister's marriage, the family migrated to Bangalore for the purpose of work along with this child. When he was working as a child laborer, he was found by Sparsha staff.

He was admitted in Sparsha's shelter in 2013 and enrolled to 8<sup>th</sup> standard in a local government school. Mrs. Vanamala Kiran, a supporter of Sparsha Trust, always encourages under-privileged children to build their future in a better manner. With her guidance and support of Sparsha Trust, Lakshman took commerce in PUC and continued his education in St. Joseph evening college.

During the time he attended evening college, Lakshman used to earn by distributing news papers in the morning, and work as an intern at Janya Ventures during the day. He became the president of the college students association and also won the outstanding student award for the years 2016-2018...It's a proud moment for all those who worked to see him growing...He has been a very dedicated student and a child who always wanted to reach the peaks. Today his success is attributed firstly to him and then his respectable teachers who were really a great support to him ... He has been a great inspiration to other kids at Sparsha

Now, we are proud to announce he has completed PUC, scoring 78%. His dream is to do MBA.

## C.2 Alumni For Villages Integrated Development (AVID), an initiative by Sparsha Trust

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Many of India's successful people belong to villages and small towns. These people, who have made a name for themselves in their respective fields, have a strong social conscience that makes them want to give back in whatever way possible. Through AVID (Alumni For Villages Integrated Development) the alumni of the village will get the opportunity to participate and support in the development in their native village. The development could be that of a school, or hospital or the overall development in their village.

The project will tap the potential of the alumni, who are living in large cities, within and outside India, and facilitate the process for their involvement in sustainable village development, especially in education, health, environment and infrastructure with the support of local stakeholders.

### **Outcome of pilot phase implementation of AVID in Manchiganahalli**

In a pilot phase or pre-project implementation phase of AVID, the alumni of Mulbagal aimed to develop the only primary school of Manchiganahalli into a model school. The alumni, mobilized by Gopinath, Managing Trustee of Sparsha Trust, worked for a year (2017-2018) networked with various stakeholders including the parents, school, Government officials and corporates.

As a result of its work, it was able to bring new energy into the educational system. The number of school children enrollment increased from 18 to 38, while the number of children in the Anganawadi (early child care centre) increased from 8 to 18.

### **Highlights of the pilot phase achievements (overall)**

- Collected the resources and finance from the alumni members of the village
- **set up library with 1500 books, computer lab and study room** for all the children at **Manchiganahalli**. Operational for the past seven months, children have started using these facilities.
- **A health camp** was conducted on **March 11, 2018**. During the camp, **10 people** were referred for **Cataract Surgery**, **spectacles** were issued to **40 people** and **6 people** were referred for further **check up for breast cancer and mouth cancer**.
- Increasing the attendance in the school: Presently, there are only 25 children in school up to 5<sup>th</sup> standard. The remaining 100 children are going to private schools. The Alumni had a meeting with the village community, where they committed to pay about Rs. 5,000/- per year per child, which will go into developing the school. This will attract more students.

### **Plans for the future**

- Getting approval from the Government to extend classes from 5<sup>th</sup> Standard to 7<sup>th</sup> Standard.
- To enroll an additional 80 – 100 children within a year.
- To increase the staff strength from 2 to 5
- Employing one English teacher, one computer and one science teacher.

### C.3 Jnana Mitra (Friend of Knowledge)

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Started in 2010, Jnana Mitra is a library for underprivileged children that began with about 50 story books for the children to develop their reading abilities. Till last year (2016-17), the ILP was supporting Jnana Mitra library which is running at two places, Chikkajala, Byannahalli, and Sanjeevini Nagar. This year, Sparsha Trust is managing Jnana Mitra on its own so that children can continue to read the book. Apart from reading, the children are also engaging in craft and cultural activities. About 70 to 80 children were taken on exposure trips to Lal Bagh, Cubbon Park, Science lab, museum, art gallery and to Bannerughatta National Park. At present, there are nearly 20000 books in the libraries.

### C.4 Model Anganawadi Centres – Early child care centres (0-6 years children)

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Sparsha Trust conceptualized the development of model anganawadi centres or early child care centres by improving their infrastructure and functioning for better care of small children from poor families. Initially, with the aim to improve them, Sparsha Trust, with the support of United Way, Bangalore and Government, identified 10 Anganawadi centres with poor infrastructure and due to which, families were not very keen to send their children to these centres. Located in central Bangalore area, these Anganawadi centres were at Wilson garden, Corporation, City market and Avenue road area. With the support of United Way, Bangalore, Sparsha Trust transformed these Anganawadi Centres by upgrading their infrastructure in every way - repairing electricity connections, painting, creating proper spaces for learning, cooking and serving area, rest area etc. Seeing the good response to the upgraded Anganawadi Centres, in January 2018, United Way came forward to support Sparsha Trust to upgrade the infrastructure of 20 more Anganawadis (early child care centres) in areas in Belanduru and Oodi. Till date, around 500 children have benefitted through the Anganawadi centres as they are spending their time in a meaningful manner, in a safe and comfortable atmosphere. Sparsha Trust is also engaging with parents and community regularly in order to mobilize their support towards the development of the Anganawadi centres. At present, survey work is being done. In addition, other activities included, giving awareness in the community, engaging parents in the daily activities, supporting the Anganawadi teachers to maintain the centres etc are being done.

### C.5 Development of Government school in Devalinganapalya to a model school, supported by Toyota Kirloskar Foundation Pvt Ltd

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## **Introduction**

Although government schools are very important in ensuring education for children from low income groups across the country, there are many issues of concern. Some of them are:

- Continued drop outs, especially among girls
- Quality in Government schools not considered to be upto the mark
- Qualification, experience and quality of teachers affect the teaching in Government schools
- Vacancy leading to shortage of teachers in Government education system

## **About the project: Support from Toyota Kirloskar Foundation Pvt Ltd to develop Government school in Devalinganapalya, into model school**

In December 2017, Sparsha Trust began to work on developing the Government school in Devalinganapalya, Hejjala, Bidadi into a model school. Supported by Toyota Kirloskar Foundation Pvt Ltd, the project aims to benefit not only the 40 children studying in the school but also the village community. The following are the highlights of the work done between December 2017 to March 2018:

### **Baseline survey**

Survey of about 613 households in the area, data entry work and analysis was done by the Sparsha team, youth from Nisarga Grama and students of Acharya college. The data was analysed by Sparsha team with the support of TKMS staff.

### **Social campaign**

Various communication material such banners, admission posters, pamphlets about admission into model school were prepared. Through these communication aids, the community, which is already aware of the model school, is showing interest to contact the school to get more information, and is indicative of their interest to get their children admitted to the school.

### **Children assessment**

The children have been assessed for all the subjects in all the classes. It is good to note that the basic foundation or concepts is improving among the children. There has been a marginal increase in the marks scored by children. This is first ever test conducted in English for the children. Overall, children's interest and involvement in studies have increased.

### **English Course**

The level of English understanding, reading, speaking as well as writing has improved among the children. The children are trained in Lion King drama by Rupa Mahajan and have performed at events at District level.

### **Curriculum Development**

- Created a powerpoint model related to subject and lessons after collecting photos and videos
- Teachers were provided relevant and innovative inputs to improve the teaching approach.
- Involvement of academic experts from ILP for curriculum development in addition to Sparsha staff, Toyota Kirloskas team and teachers of the school.

### **Extra-curricular activities and science related activities**

The children's theoretical as well as practical knowledge about science has improved as the school is explaining various science related concepts through experiments. The children conducted about 15 science experiments during which they clarify about scientific concepts and practices.

The project of model school also involves developing a model community, model village and model anganawadi as part of a 6 years project plan, supported by Toyota Kirloskar.

## **Future Projects/Programmes**

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**Kishora Grama – A multi-dimensional residential centre for boys in need of care and protection**

### **Proposed objectives of Kishora grama**

- Sparsha Trust is planning to construct Kishora Grama which is a 300 capacity multi-dimensional residential centre for boys in Devenahalli Taluk,
- Community based interventions such as referrals to schools and colleges, along with support wherever possible, will also given for children and adolescents living in the area.
- To relocate the boys of the Shivaji Nagar Centre to Kishora Grama where they will live and learn along with other boys.
- (girls of the area can be accommodated at Sparsha's Nisarga Grama in Hesarghatta as Government rules that adolescent boys and girls cannot live in the same shelter)
- AVID – reaching out 50 villages in 2018-2019.
- Initiating a pilot phase of the child friendly villages concept.