

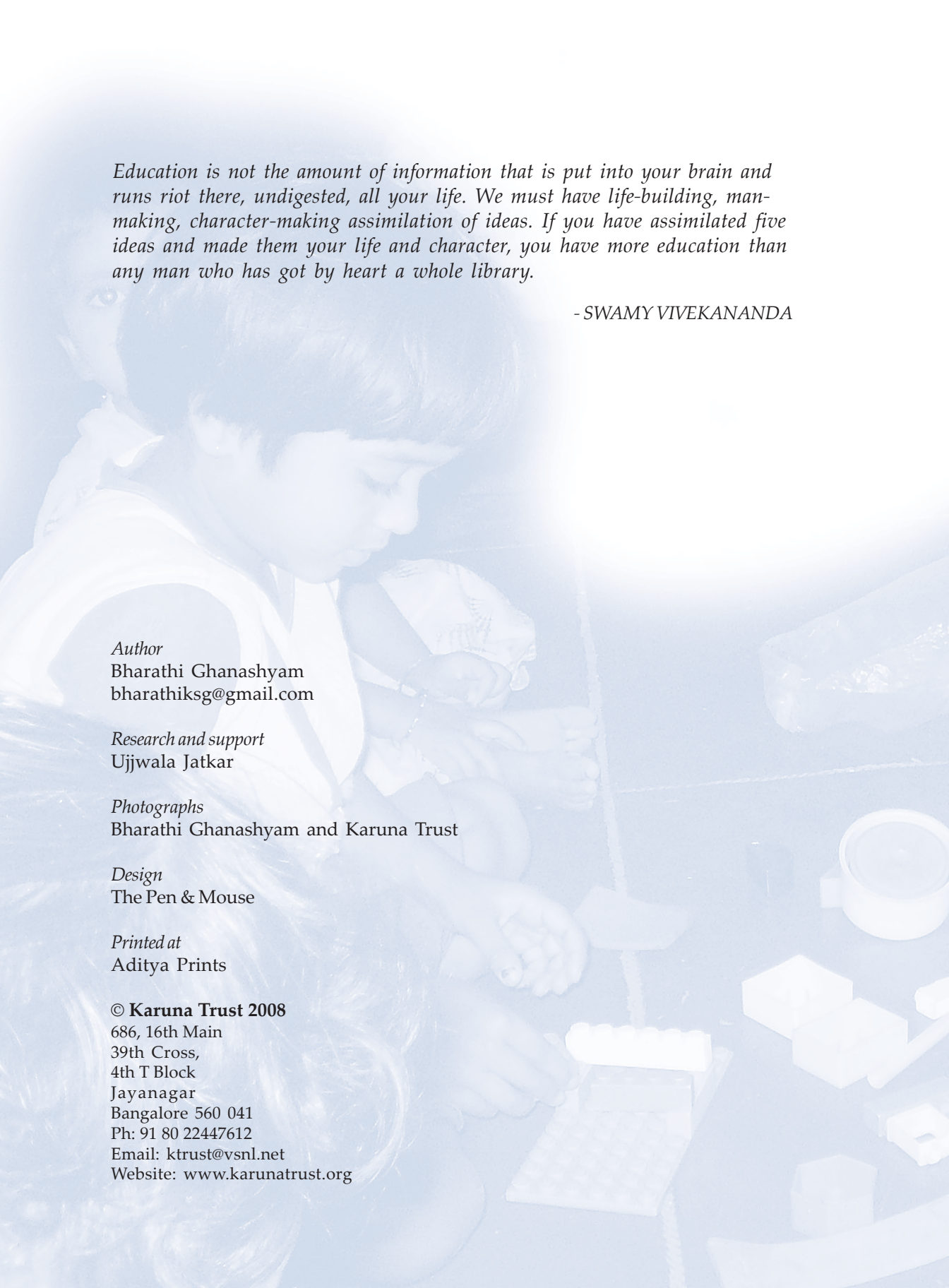


Convergence in education



The Samagra Shikshana Yojane approach





Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library.

- SWAMY VIVEKANANDA

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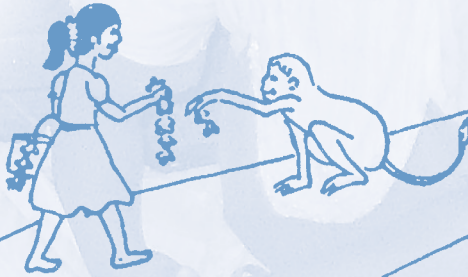
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The Samagra Shikshana Yojane approach



**KARUNA
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Contents

Chapter One

The land, the people, the issues

Page 1

Chapter Two

An integrated approach to education

Page 7

Chapter Three

SSY - a multi-layered process

Page 13

Chapter Four

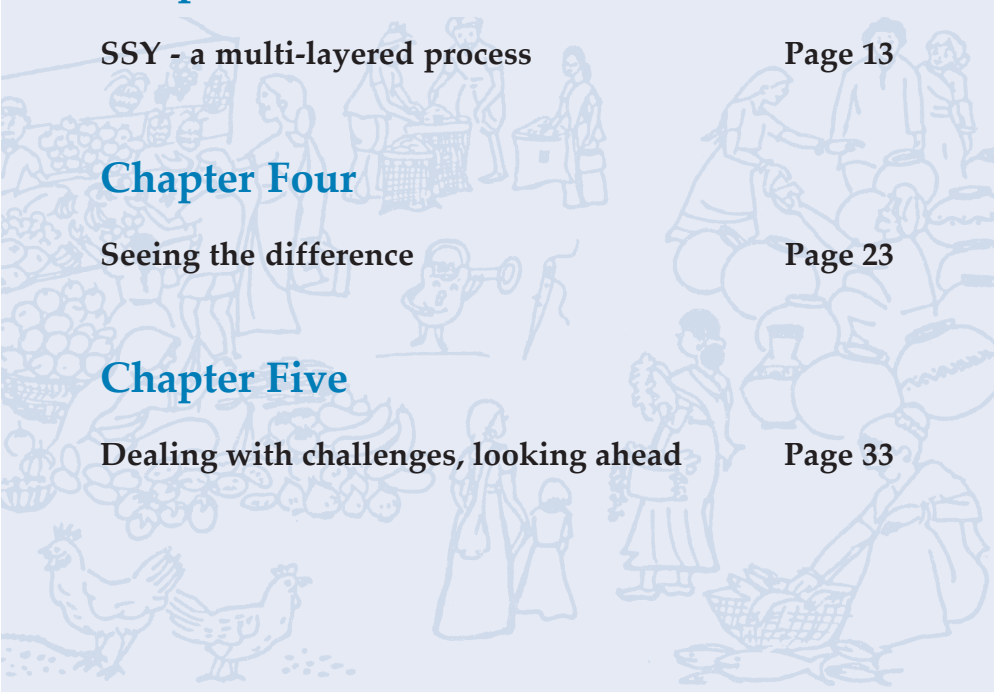
Seeing the difference

Page 23

Chapter Five

Dealing with challenges, looking ahead

Page 33



Preface

Karuna Trust has worked for the last two decades and a half on development programmes for the rural poor. Having begun with a programme on leprosy control in Yelandur taluk, we progressed to other health issues, education and livelihoods in response to the needs that became evident to us as the years progressed.

In the course of our work, we noticed that whether it was health, education or livelihoods, one factor which hampered real progress was the lack of convergence between the various departments of the government, even within specific areas such as health or education. These departments, because they were working as 'line' departments confined their work to limited and narrow mandates and were therefore able to only achieve limited impact.

When we began the Samagra Shikshana Yojane programme, it is this gap we wanted to first address. We had seen that the large section of adults in Yelandur taluk who were illiterate had been at some point, victims of this lack of convergence. Their education had not been addressed holistically and had pre-primary, primary and high school education been working in synergy, these individuals might not have dropped out and might have been able to achieve at least a minimum level of literacy. In all our areas of work, it was also becoming increasingly evident that the government alone could not address all development needs. There were some very good schemes and programmes that were available, but it was in the implementation that there were gaps.

What is really required is the coming together of multi stakeholders, who can work in partnership with the government to enable progress. For this we saw public private partnerships as a viable and effective means. We have attempted to facilitate just such a partnership in the Samagra Shikshana Yojane.

Our thanks are due to India Literacy Project, who saw enough value in the concept and supported us. We thank the education department and its officials who gave us all the cooperation we required to implement our programme on the ground and demonstrate the value of convergence and partnerships. I want to place on record my appreciation for the Karuna Trust who worked tirelessly to translate a concept into reality on the ground. And most importantly my appreciation goes out to the community who responded with enthusiasm and participated wholeheartedly.

The value of this programme lies in the fact that it is easily replicable and this document has been written in the hope that other agencies will pick up the concept and enable 'education for all' in the same manner.

Dr. H Sudarshan

Hon. Secretary & Founder, Karuna Trust

March 2008

From the Author

Communicating on development by itself is a challenging task. Documenting programmes like the Samagra Shikshana Yojane (SSY) is even more so. It challenges the skills of the writer. Doing justice to the programme entails a thorough understanding of the concepts at work; of the key drivers that ensure the programme actually works on the ground and the ability to communicate those elements to the reader.

SSY has a vital element built into it, and that is convergence. Convergence is a word that is being increasingly used in current development programmes, and the SSY programme has actually taken it beyond the concept and made it work. By looking at education in Yelandur taluk of Chamrajnagar district through the lens of convergence rather than as segmented sections that pertain separately to pre-primary, primary, or adult literacy, it has ensured that education becomes a 'reality for all' in the true sense.

Documenting the programme has been a very special experience. It gave me the opportunity to actually meet and interact with the persons that the programme has touched. The pride on a woman's face when she talks of having acquired basic literacy when she is well into adulthood, watching her confidently stride into a bank to transact business, or seeing a pre-schooler happily attend the village anganwadi has been the inspiration that drove me to document this intervention.

I hope the reader is able to see all these elements in the book.

Bharathi Ghanashyam

March 2008

Chapter one

The land, the people, the issues

Normal life has been disrupted in Yelandur taluk for over two days owing to the incessant rains, but in a small anganwadi in Uppinamole village it is a day like any other. Despite the rain, almost all the children enrolled in the anganwadi are present. They are happily engaged in drawing pictures on the black-painted lower walls. A child, barely five years old has drawn the picture of a tambourine by looking at the one he holds in his hand and the teacher gives him a pat of encouragement. The upper walls of the anganwadi are brightly painted with pictures of birds, animals and the Kannada and English alphabets and the kitchen by the classroom is a study in cleanliness. Around mid-day the helper prepares palm-sized balls out of an energy food powder and places them before the children who eat them with relish.

In the Higher Primary School (HPS), in the same village, a School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) meeting is in progress. The members present are discussing the inauguration of the two new rooms which have been added to the school. The rooms have been built to house the computers and science equipment. The Head Master proudly displays the space where platforms will be installed and the equipment placed, so that students can freely access them. The rooms have been built under the supervision of the SDMC members, and with active cooperation from the community, who have contributed in the form of labour as well as resources.

In Yergamballi, women have gathered together in the evening hours after their day's work is done and are engaged keenly in learning to read and write. A village volunteer helps them and guides them through the reader. Lakshamma looks up and says happily, "By learning to read, I can read the numbers listed on



buses and do not have to ask anyone for help. I have become independent and can move around on my own.”

Uppinamole and Yergamballi are situated in Yelandur taluk in Chamrajnagar district of Karnataka state. Home to just over a thousand people each, the villages have an adequate number of anganwadis and schools for lower and higher primary education. In spite of this the state of education in the past was not healthy. Absenteeism from teachers, as well as students was rampant. Drop-out rates were very high, girl child attendance in higher primary schools was meagre and the general attitude towards education was one of apathy and negligence. The reasons for this were many.

Yelandur – a backward taluk

Yelandur taluk is one of four taluks situated in Chamrajnagar district, which is the southernmost district of South India. Hemmed in by the Nilgiri hill tracts to the south, the district is inaccessible and has therefore remained backward and underdeveloped.

The population of Yelandur taluk engages mostly in agriculture. A majority of them are small landowners, or landless farmers, who depend on daily wages for a livelihood. Poverty and unemployment are challenges they have to constantly cope with. The men often migrate in search of employment, and take their families with them. Children often contribute to the family income and are kept back from school to graze cattle and sheep, or to work on farms on daily wages.

Yelandur district - some statistics

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| No. of Gram Panchayats | : 12 |
| Total population | : 77967 |
| Male | : 36717 |
| Female | : 38250 |
| Main occupation | : Agriculture |
| Average annual rainfall | : 600mm |
| Crops grown | : Paddy, sugarcane, mulberry and ragi |
| Non-literate | : 43524 |
| Non-literate men | : 19558 |
| Non-literate women | : 23966 |
| Literacy rate | : 44.17 |



Literacy percentage in Karnataka

| | Total | Male | Female |
|----------------------|-------|-------|--------|
| Karnataka State | 67.04 | 76.29 | 57.45 |
| Mysore Dist | 63.69 | 71.30 | 55.81 |
| Chamarajanagar Dist. | 51.26 | 59.25 | 43.02 |
| Yelandur taluk | 44.17 | 50.75 | 37.34 |

Infrastructure available for education in Yelandur taluk - 2003

| Type of school (anganwadi, LPS or HPS) | No. | No. of children they cater to | Teacher/student ratio |
|--|-----|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Anganwadis | 79 | 6231 | Not available |
| LPS | 23 | 1253 | 1/27 |
| HPS | 36 | 7731 | 1/33 |
| High schools (government and private) | 11 | 3412 | Not available |





The state of education in India - some facts

- 1 While over 93 per cent of the 180 million children are enrolled in schools in India, half the children in Std V cannot read a Std II text or solve division sums. The number of children reaching adulthood without the basic skills of reading, writing and basic arithmetic is a staggering 60 million.
- 2 On a national average about 50% of school-going children in government schools, across the country, do not know their basic 3R's even after four years of schooling.

Source: www.pratham.org

Illiteracy is rampant among the adult population and girl child education is particularly neglected. Yelandur taluk is inhabited by a large number of people belonging to the *Oppara* caste. Traditional beliefs among them prevent girl children from going out of the house after puberty. This results in their dropping out of school at a very young age and also accounts for the large-scale adult illiteracy in the taluk. Illiteracy among adults and the lack of awareness thereafter also results in education getting very low priority.

The situation in education

Despite the infrastructure for education being available in Yelandur taluk, the low priority accorded to education had resulted in a large number of children dropping out of education. "The responsibility for education lies as much with the community as with the system. On the one hand, mere provision of infrastructure and availability of schools is not an end by itself. The performance of the schools, and the quality of education imparted is what makes the difference. On the other hand, high levels of motivation from the community are required to make education a priority for children. For this it is also important that there is a minimum level of literacy among the adults of the community so that they can then make education a non-negotiable requirement for their children," says Dr H Sudarshan, Honorary Secretary, and Founder of Karuna Trust.

The schools in Yelandur were working to minimal efficiency. Teacher absenteeism, frequent transfers of teachers, poor state of schools, lack of drinking water and toilets in schools and indifference from the department were some of the reasons for this. "The situation was worsened by the fact that the community did not hold the schools accountable for their performance, or lack of it. As they were not paying for education they were apprehensive about approaching the authorities when they perceived gaps. That it was their right to demand better services was not known to them," remarks Dr Sudarshan.



Even among those accessing education, actual levels of learning were poor. It was often the case that owing to the poor quality of education imparted in the schools, students dropped out, and there were no efforts to track them and bring them back into schools. These drop-outs then went on to become illiterate adults.



In an effort to address the gaps in education, motivate the community and enable education for all, Karuna Trust, in partnership with the State Resource Centre, and India Literacy Project, initiated a project entitled Samagra Shikshana Yojane (SSY) in 2003. The project was implemented in all 40 villages of Yelandur taluk, including nine tribal podus of B R Hills and envisaged a decentralized learning process which would be locale specific, include local innovations and high levels of stake-holder participation. The programme also envisaged a process of convergence that would facilitate maximum utilisation of existing education systems, community ownership in education and other development programmes.





Chapter two

An integrated approach to education

Karuna Trust entered Yelandur taluk over two decades ago with a leprosy control programme and has since been working on enabling better health facilities for the community. Over the years, while working with the community on health, an understanding had built up within the organisation that the community had needs other than health. Education was one of them.

Dr Sudarshan explains Karuna Trust's foray into education, "Our efforts in education are not a shift away from, but actually very closely linked to health. Education is actually one of the key determinants of health. Awareness on health issues comes through education. When the community and particularly women within it are educated, they access health services more readily."

He continues, "We saw that Yelandur taluk had a substantial budget for education, and yet the state of education in the taluk was far from efficient. Accountability and transparency were not even expected. The community and the authorities shared no rapport." "Convergence between the various departments was totally absent and they were each working independent of each other in a linear fashion. We knew that with some effort and minimal resources we could bring about that much needed rapport and convergence. This would in turn ensure that the entire budget was used optimally," he sums up while explaining the rationale behind the education programme of Karuna Trust.



Vivekananda Girijana Kalyana Kendra (VGKK), of which Karuna Trust is an associate, had already worked on education for the tribals at B R Hills and gained considerable expertise in the field of education. It was this experience that it brought to Yelandur taluk through Karuna Trust while initiating education among the rural population.





The SSY programme was also in many ways an adaptation of the learnings that Karuna Trust had got with its Public Private Partnership (PPP) initiative with Primary Health Centres (PHCs) across Karnataka. Karuna Trust had adopted PHCs across the state and was running them to optimum efficiency in an effort to demonstrate that with active participation from external stakeholders it was possible to work with government infrastructure and achieve enhanced efficiency and accountability. SSY therefore was established as a PPP of sorts in education. It was also intended as a pilot that would lead to replication over larger areas over time.

SSY – enabling education with a difference

SSY made a distinction between mere schooling and real education. By addressing adult, pre-school, lower and upper primary education, it attempted to enable a holistic approach towards learning. SSY set in motion a process that helped the community to give importance and priority to education and consider it as a non-negotiable element of their lives.

Objectives

This approach called for innovative methods that would address each section separately, and yet enable convergence of all the initiatives at some point. The project was begun with the objectives of:

- Eliminating residual illiteracy in Yelandur Taluk in the productive age group of 15 - 21 years and 22 - 35 years.
- Ensuring that all the children in the age group of 0-3, 3-6 years are in the anganawadi system and accessing nutrition-based, cognitive development and ensuring 100 per cent coverage in future.
- Ensuring that all the children in the age group of 6 – 9 and 10-14 years are in school and ensuring zero drop out rate.
- Developing a model of integrated education cum literacy approach for sustainable development.



Sensitizing the community

“The community had become accustomed to depending on children to bring in additional income. When they needed extra help for harvesting, or to graze cattle, or other similar chores, they did not hesitate to stop children from going to school for several days at a stretch. These prolonged absences from school hindered their progress as they missed out on chunks of lessons that were held when they were absent. When they returned to school, the children naturally lagged behind, and unable to catch up, eventually dropped out,” says Mr Shivanna Gowda, Programme Coordinator, SSY, Karuna Trust.



This situation pointed out to a need for involving the entire community in the education process. It was evident that merely getting children back into school would address only part of the problem. Unless the entire community was sensitized to the importance of education and began to believe that education was a vital requirement for their children the problem of drop-outs would continue. But working with a largely illiterate population would yield little results. If the community had to appreciate the value of education there had to be a minimum level of literacy among them. This led to the promotion of adult literacy.

Addressing the pre-school section came from the understanding that this was the most important phase in a child's life. The years that a child spent in the anganwadi were intended to prepare the child for school. If this foundation was not properly laid, the child would enter school unprepared and unable to cope with academic pressures. Over time the child lost interest in school.

The approach

In order to help sustain the child's interest in school, it was important to work in partnership with teachers, SDMC members and other stakeholders in the education process to improve the overall quality of education.

This called for a multi-pronged approach towards education. SSY therefore was designed to address the three target groups and integrate them into one



comprehensive process. It also envisaged involved utilizing:

- The existing infrastructure (material and human) of Karuna Trust in Yelandur Taluk.
- The resource strength of State Resource Centre- Karnataka in adult literacy programmes.
- The district government machinery - adult education (Zilla Sakshara Samithi), primary education (department of education and Sarva Shiksha Abiyana), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) which runs the Anganwadi centers.
- The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)
- The community as a whole
- Other resource groups and interest groups

“It was important for us to work with the existing system and use the infrastructure the State had already created for education. We therefore drew the various departments into the programme to ensure optimum utilization of the infrastructure,” says Mr Satyanarayana Hegde, Project Coordinator SSY, Karuna Trust.

What evolved was an extended partnership between Karuna Trust and the community, teachers, gram panchayat members, SHGs, SDMC members, the different official departments etc.

Each section brought value into the programme. “We foresaw that by addressing the community through SHGs and other community platforms, we would have also addressed the parents. This would give us the much-needed parental support for keeping children in school,” points out Mr Hegde.

“Each of the other groups we addressed such as gram panchayat members, teachers, SDMC members etc had the authority vested in them to make a difference to education in the area. It only meant motivating them to take active interest in the process,” adds Mr Shivanna Gowda.



A survey to assess the current Status of Education (ASER 2006) was conducted in 28 states in India in the months of October and November. One of the key findings of this survey was that in Std V, 47 per cent children could not even read a Std II text fluently. Specifically,

- In Std I, 38.2% cannot read alphabets and 53.7% cannot identify numbers
- In Std II, 76.7% cannot read Std I text, and 75.0% cannot do subtraction
- In Std V, 47.0% cannot read Std II text, and 54.6% cannot do division.

ASER 2006 indicates that half of all children in the country start lagging behind in Std I and continue to lag behind in the achievement of expected competencies in Std III, and Std V.

Source: www.pratham.org

Difficulties on the ground

The approach, simple while it seemed, posed several challenges in implementation. It was not only illiteracy that had to be addressed, it was also attitudes within the community. There were cultural biases against education for the girl child; there was poverty, which often made parents send children to work albeit unwillingly and above all, there was a complete lack of motivation on the part of parents to educate their children. The system as it existed did not help either. Rendered decrepit, the infrastructure, the staff and in fact the entire infrastructure had become a disincentive of sorts to education.

“It was evident that in order to make a difference, a committed team would have to be built up with committed workers from the community itself. This would help make inroads faster, and support from the community would be more readily forthcoming,” says Mr Shivanna Gowda.

The team was formed with volunteers from the villages of Yelandur taluk and constituted the spine of the programme and. The team actively helped to implement the strategies on the ground.

The strategies were planned based on community-based needs that had become



evident from the baseline survey conducted prior to beginning the activities.

They were designed to:

- Involve and motivate the community to consider education as vital for progress
- Build capacity at various levels
- Focus on strengthening existing system as against establishing parallel structures
- Emphasise on quality education through trainings for teachers on innovative teaching methods
- Enable convergence between the various departments



The SSY project initiated activities that emerged from the strategies. These were more in the nature of a process that would lead to a pre-defined goal, as the mandate was to use facilities that already existed and not build a parallel structure. Therefore the focus was on building up and strengthening human resources, enabling an awakening as it were in the community, and building bridges between the various stakeholders. The task while it was extensive, and difficult, was also invisible in many ways and not quantifiable in hard terms. It meant dealing with attitudes, breaking mindsets, gaining confidence and building rapport. It meant working at different levels, understanding the needs of each level and responding to them. The process was multi-layered and the activities required time, perseverance and commitment. All qualities that the team demonstrated in ample measure...



Chapter three

SSY – a multi-layered process

The mathematics period is in progress and the children of Class 111 in a lower primary school in Yelandur are listening to the radio and singing songs along with the announcer! Soon it becomes evident that it is not all about entertainment. They are listening to a programme called Chinnara Chukki, an innovative method of learning maths through an interactive session being broadcast by All India Radio. The teacher and the students, jointly with the anchor of the programme are learning the concept of fractions through a mix of exercises, music and activities.

Chinnara Chukki is a government run and sponsored radio programme and is one of many innovative measures existing within the education system to make learning more effective. Ensuring that they actually reach the children for whom it is meant has been one of SSY's key functions.

SSY functioned as the vital bridge between the facilities and schemes available with the various departments and their actual implementation on the ground. This bridging process was the result of detailed planning and design, and involved consultations with the various stakeholders in the education system. Several other activities were designed for the community, as well as for those directly involved in education such as teachers, SDMC members and department officials. "Whatever we planned had one non-negotiable factor. It

had to address education as a whole and be inclusive of adult literacy, pre-primary and primary education. It was also a priority that the community be an integral part of the whole process." says Mr Shivanna Gowda.

Over a period of three years, SSY sought to enable a process of consolidation and application of literacy skills to the actual living and working conditions of the people. It aimed to create an atmosphere where education providers and the people would come together to address issues related to education. The project



envisaged a positive change in attitudes among the community and a confidence among learners to be able to upgrade and use their skills for individual development on a sustained basis.

Behind the process

The aim from inception of the project was to enable convergence between the various stakeholders in education, be it the different departments engaged with education, or the community itself. SSY had set for itself the role of bringing them all together to work in synergy for the overall purpose of enhancing the state of education in Yelandur taluk.

Dr Sudarshan elaborates, “Through our health programmes it had become evident to us that lack of convergence between the various departments was one of the chief reasons for inefficient functioning, and delivery of health services to the community.

The present, linear system, with different departments being responsible for different areas of health, offers no room for integration and convergence of programmes. The situation in education is no different.”

The Women and Child Welfare Department looks after pre-primary education, the Education Department is in charge of primary education and the Zilla Saksharata Samiti looks after

adult education. This leads to each department working independently of the other and the total absence of coordination results in stand-alone programmes that have very little impact on the larger issue of education for all. Therefore, through a series of consultations at the state and district levels, systems were put in place, which would provide and support an environment for the various departments to work together.

State and district level consultations

SSY began by holding state-level consultations in order to enable interaction between the various departments, as convergence was the basis on which the programme rested. Three vital levels of education were addressed through the consultations i.e. pre-primary, primary and adult literacy. With facilitation



from Karuna Trust, the consultations helped to conceptualise an integrated education programme at the village level. The programme was designed to enhance the quality of education being imparted, motivate the community as well as ensure that there was complete coverage of the population for adult, pre-primary and primary level education.

The participants in the consultations were drawn from all the concerned departments, as well as from UNICEF and India Literacy Project, the State Resource Centre and Karuna Trust.

The state level consultations led to the formation of a district-level advisory committee in Chamrajnagar. The committee put in place a partnership that included

representatives from the Zilla Shaksharata Samiti (ZSS), the Department of Education, and the

ICDS, as well as Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Yelandur. The role of the committee was to give directional support to the project and to ensure smooth functioning of the project activities.



Baseline survey

Prior to designing and implementing SSY, a baseline survey was carried out in 18 villages of Yelandur taluk with the objectives of:

- Analysing the socio-economic and literacy status
- The facilities available for acquiring literacy and continuing education
- The status of literacy in the selected villages
- Confirming the literacy status as claimed in the previous census, with age, gender, caste break up and geographical distribution
- Enabling a process of determining village and sub-group wise methodologies for literacy and continuing education
- Forming the baseline for comparing outcomes at the end of the project and to study impact, as well as suggest amendments in strategies





The findings from the survey clearly pointed to the several gaps that existed in the education scenario on Yelandur taluk. Chief among those were:

- That the literacy rate was caste sensitive
- The apathy among the community with regard to education arose from a feeling that the facilities were not being put to good use
- Though 10 per cent of the children from the school going age were out of school, the level of literacy among those who were going to school was no better than those out of school. This indicated the need for urgent measures to improve the quality of education imparted

Building a cadre of village level volunteers

SSY was a community based project that envisaged a high level of involvement and support from the community. To enable this, an all-women group of volunteers from within the community, who had basic education, were identified and their capacities were built up. Women were preferred as many of the community-based activities involved interaction with women from the community. They were involved in every activity of the project, including the baseline survey. This helped them get a hands-on understanding of the problems as well as the solutions being planned.

The Village Education Volunteers (VEVs) were oriented to the vision of the project, trained on the vital components and then sent to the field. Sannamma a VEV says, "Before we could begin work on the field, we ourselves had to get a good understanding of the system and how it worked. We attended a series of trainings on several aspects such as how to approach parents and motivate them, the roles of different departments in education, and the role of SDMCs etc. This helped us to look at the larger picture of education, and we were able to understand that the value of education went far beyond mere literacy."

Shanta Kumari adds, "I was involved in the baseline survey and hence knew the problems we would face. And yet, when we actually met the community, there were difficulties, as parents were not willing to even listen in the beginning. They were not convinced about the importance of education for children. Without thinking twice, they would stop children from going to school and send them to graze cattle or do other work. It took a long time to gain their confidence and convince them about what we were saying."

The VEVs were in many ways the spine of the SSY project as they were the ones who actually interacted with the community in order to change attitudes towards education. Additionally they were given various other responsibilities which involved interacting with school teachers, anganwadi workers, SDMC members etc.



Using community spaces

Nandini remembers, “Anganwadis were not functioning properly, the children had no idea about hygiene and cleanliness, and the anganwadi workers made no effort to improve matters. We began by first educating mothers on these aspects and used every space that was available to us. SHG meetings were really helpful as that was one place where mothers gathered regularly.”

The community was largely unaware about their rights and hesitated to question anganwadi workers or teachers when they absented themselves. “We carefully nurtured a spirit of cooperation between the community and the teachers so that the overall of education for the children would improve for the better. It was important to create a non-confrontational atmosphere,” recalls Shivamma.

Motivating adults to attend literacy classes was to prove the most challenging part of SSY. As Nandini says, “There were several women who were hesitant of stepping out of their houses. They were apprehensive about how the rest of the community would react. Several of them however were willing to learn and we had to find ways to approach them in a way they were comfortable with. In many instances we went to their houses and taught them.” After the initial reluctance from the community, the response was good and they began attending classes. The classes were held at times convenient to, and depending on the needs of the women.

Shanta Kumari says, “We did not expect big changes. Our intention was to convey to the adult population that there was value in learning, and to enable them to perform simple tasks like reading the daily newspapers, be able to do their house-hold accounts and be aware of the importance of educating their children.”

Puttatayamma of Y K Mole says, “It was very embarrassing and we felt shy to tell people that we were going to study. We were often asked by our neighbours why it was important to study at our age. But I realised that if children have to study and progress, it is important for mothers to be educated. Education also helps us in our day to day work such as marketing and handling money. In the past, we used to get easily cheated by shopkeepers who knew we did not know how to count.”

Street theatre and jathas

Communicating with the community in ways they could identify with was important while spreading awareness on education. Hence, street theatre was extensively used. The street plays were themed not only around education and illiteracy, but also focussed on social problems like alcoholism, girl child education and others. Shanta Kumari recalls, “We would regularly stage plays



in villages and they were so popular that people stayed back after the performance to speak with us or ask questions. We often had parents pledging they would not neglect their children's education henceforth."

Jathas were held to coincide with festivals and other special occasions to spread awareness on education, health, hygiene and other social issues. The purpose was to use methods that were non-threatening to the community so that messages would percolate to them faster and more effectively. The community enjoyed participating in the jathas and eventually absorbed the key messages on education and other issues.



Capacity building at different levels

The SSY project was a public-private partnership in the real sense of the word. By using the understanding it had acquired over two decades of development initiatives in Yelandur, Karuna Trust worked to fill in the gaps it had perceived in the system. One of these gaps was the lack of understanding of their roles, and capacity among elected representatives such as panchayat members, SDMC members, school teachers etc.

Therefore priority was given to capacity building at various levels. Mr Shivanna Gowda reiterates, "We were not directly doing anything. We were only the bridge between the departments related to education, and the stakeholders in education. Therefore it was vital for all stakeholders to know what their roles were to be able to fulfil them well. Whether they were SDMC members, Gram Panchayat members, school teachers, anganwadi workers or community members, it was essential for them to know their duties and responsibilities. We therefore treated training and capacity building as priorities."

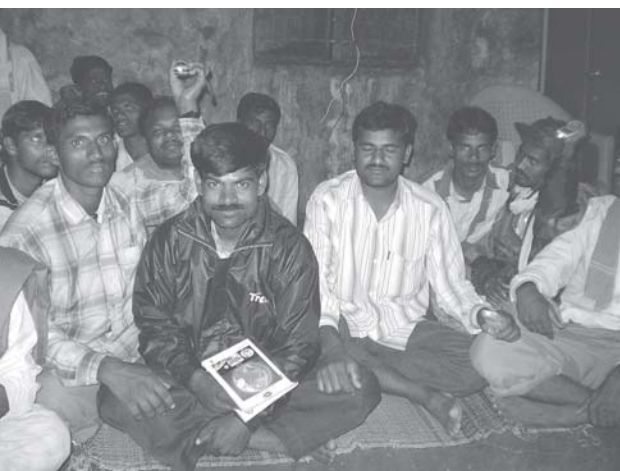
The process of capacity building however had to be designed separately to address the needs of each stakeholder group, as the duties of each were different. "When we addressed anganwadi workers, we had to impress on them that they occupied a very special place, not only in the anganwadi, but outside of it as well. They held the important responsibility of reaching out to the community, addressing mothers on health issues, and actually changing



attitudes,” says Gram Panchayat Education Coordinator (GPECO), SSY.

The Bala Vikas Samiti (BVS) mandate was different. The members had to be sensitized to the fact that it was their duty to ensure that anganwadis functioned as they should. Chikkatayamma of Y. K. Mole says, “My child goes to the anganwadi and I had taken it for granted that it ran well. If the teacher did not come to work, I did not know that I had the right to ask why. Training has taught us that we have a right, as well as a duty to ensure that hygiene is maintained, the anganwadi workers do not absent themselves, and the anganwadi functions well.”

Trainings were conducted for SDMC members, with the objective of nurturing in them a sense of responsibility, as also a spirit of cooperation with which to work with the teachers and Head Masters of schools. “Though they had the powers to question them, what we attempted to convey was that cooperating and working along with the teachers and other school authorities would be more effective. This is what we emphasised on strongly through our trainings,” says Gram Panchayat Education Coordinator (GPECO), SSY.



“That we have a responsibility to our children, not only to feed and clothe them, but also to ensure they are educated well was a new concept. We had never visited the village school before. As an SDMC member, when I visit my son’s school, I

know that I also have an equal responsibility towards all the other children studying there,” says Chikkaputtaiah, SDMC member of Uppinamole Higher Primary School.

External partnerships to enhance quality of education

In addition to creating partnerships between the various departments within the education system the SSY project looked at external organisations that could bring value into the learning process. Mr Shivanna Gowda reflects, “While enhancing the status of education as a whole, merely improving infrastructure and ensuring children and teachers attend school is inadequate. It is also important to ensure that children are actively engaged in the learning process. We had seen through the baseline survey that even among the children who were regularly attending school, actual learning was very poor. This involves the use of creative teaching methods.”



Organisations who were working in the field of education were drawn into the programme to bring in their experience and skills. Suvidya, an organisation that had expertise in teaching mathematics and science through creative teaching aids was one of these. A series of training programmes were held for teachers. At these programmes, a set of low-cost teaching aids that made teaching, as well as learning of maths easy were given to the teachers and training given to them on how to use the kits.

Mr N Diwakar of the Alkere Agrahara Higher Primary School happily demonstrates the use of sticks to teach tables. "The real challenge of teaching mathematics is to be able to teach concepts to children. This helps them to really understand and love the subject. It also helps them to shed fear of mathematics. By using these aids that is what we will be able to do."

K Kumararadhya displays a clock made out of cardboard that helps in teaching addition and adds, "This clock need not be limited to mathematics alone. We can adapt it to other subjects as well. It can be made with low-cost materials and the children themselves can be involved in the preparation."

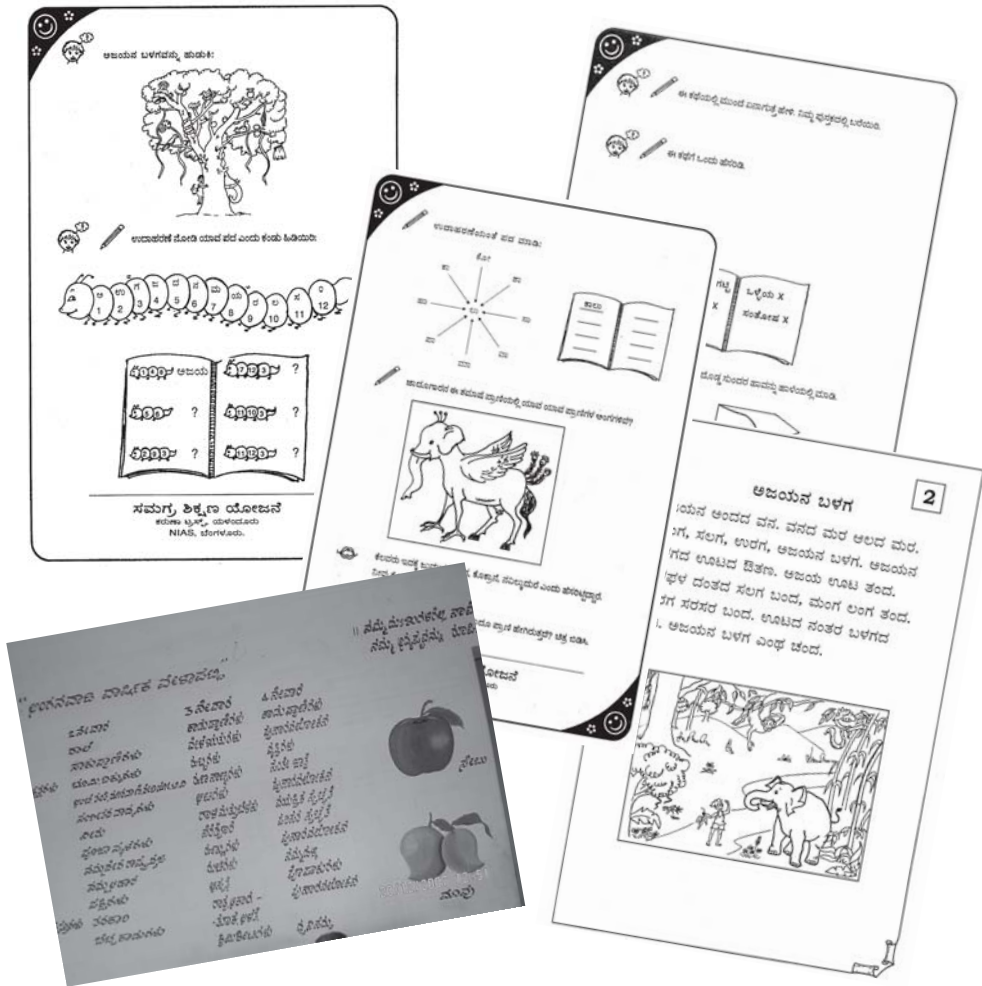
A similar partnership with National Institute for Advanced Studies (NIAS) helped to make the teaching of Kannada easier. Colourfully designed cards that used a mix of activities and simple reading exercises were designed. The uniqueness of these cards was that the children themselves could use them and improve on their reading skills.

As Mr Parashivamurthy, a teacher Kestur First Higher Primary School observes, "Text books are only a route to learning and not the destination itself. We need aids and methods that will complement the textbooks. These reading cards and mathematics aids are very useful and can make learning fun. What the students learn through these will stay longer in their memory."

Monitoring performance

Monitoring the performance of schools formed a part of the SSY programme. "Monitoring the performance of schools was not an effort to pin blame or judgmental in nature. Rather it was an effort to recognize good efforts where relevant, and to motivate those who had not performed well to improve," says Mr Hegde.





Performance of schools was appraised as per some indicators formulated by the SSY team. Based on their performance, some schools were identified as 'Best practice schools' and given special incentives such as science kits and other materials in order to help them perform better. There were separate criteria laid down for teachers as well as students.

Schools were further graded as A, B or C. These indicators helped to indicate which schools needed more attention, and in which area. The criteria for this were:

- Low or no drop-outs
- Regular attendance of teachers and students
- Efficient functioning of SDMCs





The grading was thereafter used for volunteers to devote more time and attention to improve gaps that the grading had identified.

There was an ongoing effort to keep in touch with the community to assess what additional support was required. Initially it was left to the volunteers to do this. Gradually, as the community saw the commitment with which they worked, support was readily forthcoming and the effort became a joint one.

H Shivaram, SDMC President, Y K Mole says, "We visited all the houses to find out what problems the children were facing and assured the community our support was with them. In some instances children had stopped going to school as they did not have notebooks, elsewhere, it was lack of money to pay for bus fare. We got together to look into these problems and find solutions together."

SSY worked to the objective of making education in Yelandur a movement that would involve the community, the children, teachers, anganwadi workers, the education department, and bring them under one common umbrella. It worked to a plan of bringing the various groups together to look at education in an integrated manner, and not one that was compartmentalised into pre-primary, or primary or any other. The ultimate result envisaged was motivation from the community as well as the teachers and other stakeholders to bring up the standards of education in the taluk and reduce illiteracy.



Chapter four

Seeing the difference

The SSY project envisaged both short-term and long-term changes in the education scenario in Yelandur. It also sought to change attitudes within the community towards education.

While it is early to quantify impact in exact numbers and terms, there are trends which are emerging and clearly visible. These trends augur well for education in Yelandur. There is impact both at the tangible and intangible levels. Owing to the convergence, where the various stakeholders have come together for the overall cause of education, the results are showing in various ways. Adult education has resulted in general awareness and instilled a sense of responsibility in the community towards education. Strengthening of SDMCs has enabled greater cooperation between the teachers and parents, and as a result there is greater involvement from the parents in school activities. More importantly, SSY has enabled dialogue between the various stakeholders and a process of mutual dependence and help.

Tangible difference

Increased enrolment and reduced dropout rate

There is increased enrolment in schools and anganwadis, owing to the intensive tracking and follow-up efforts made by the VEVs and other team members of the SSY project. The community has also responded with equal enthusiasm. The adult literacy component of SSY has helped in that parents are aware of the value of education and ensure their children are enrolled in the anganwadi or school at the appropriate time.

Girl child enrolment has been given special emphasis and is showing a steady increase.

Puttatayamma says, “We were illiterate, and therefore did not know or realize how important education for our children was. Now that we have basic literacy, and know how much of a





Reduction in dropouts - some cases

Kumara Swamy son of Nanjashetty studying in 5th standard of Basapura LPS School had stopped attending school for over four months. He had been kept back from school to mind the cattle and sheep reared by his family. His brother is also a school dropout and currently employed as a daily wage labourer in Bangalore. Kumara Swamy's parents are daily wage workers and go to work early every morning and return late in the evening. This prevents them from devoting any care to their children.

All efforts from his parents and teachers in the past, to send Kumara Swamy back to school had failed. It took continuous efforts from the Karuna Trust team for over a week and several meetings with the parents and with Kumara Swamy before he could be convinced to go back to school. During this time, the team also worked with the parents to reinforce on the parents that they had a responsibility towards the education of their son.

These efforts have ensured that Kumara Swamy rejoins school. The encouraging part was that the parents were willing to forgo several days of earning just to stay back with their son and ensure that he was attending school regularly. Kumara Swamy has been supported with extra tuitions to bring him up to date on his studies and is regularly attending school, and more importantly, with renewed enthusiasm. The Karuna Trust team constantly monitors his progress to ensure he does not lost interest in going to school and that he does not drop out again.

Shashikala a student of 4th standard despite being interested in studies and being a studious student had dropped out of school. Her dropping out of school was mainly due to pressure from her father who did not believe in girls getting educated. Both her parents are illiterates and live on daily wages. Shashikala was kept back at home to attend to household chores, and was on the verge of being married off when she was merely 11 years. The VEVs of Karuna Trust took it on themselves to change this situation and conveyed the legal implications of getting their daughter married so early. Along with this, there were efforts to motivate the family as well as the child for restarting her education. Shashikala is at present attending school regularly and doing well.

difference it can make to our daily life, we will ensure all our children, especially girls go to school.”

The reduction in dropout rates is one of the most positive indicators of the success of the SSY programme. From a number of 513 students who had dropped out when the programme began, the dropout rates currently stand at just 98.



Enrollment and attendance at anganwadis

| | 2004 | | | | | | 2006 | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|
| | 0-3 | | | 3-6 | | | 0-3 | | | 3-6 | | |
| | M | F | Total | M | F | Total | M | F | Total | M | F | Total |
| Children enrolled | 1550 | 1444 | 2964 | 1068 | 1060 | 2128 | 1784 | 1684 | 3468 | 1139 | 1121 | 2260 |
| Children attending regularly | 802 | 648 | 1450 | 655 | 639 | 1294 | 1581 | 1414 | 2995 | 990 | 1025 | 2015 |

Regular attendance of students and teachers

Attendance in schools and anganwadis has improved and this is true for both children and teachers. Parents have realized the importance of sending their children to school regularly. Shanta Kumari says, "It took a long time for us to convince parents that keeping their children away from school was not good for their progress, and even three days resulted in loss of continuity and then they lagged behind in studies."

Chikkaputtaiah, an SDMC member says, "Now that we go and visit the school regularly, we know what actually happens during classes. We realize the importance of regular attendance. This is important for teachers as well as students. We are alert and ensure regularity from both."

Attendance at anganwadis has increased as well. The mid-day meal that is now regularly cooked and served in hygienic conditions is working as an added incentive for parents to send their children to the anganwadis. Through the SSY project toys and play materials have been provided to the anganwadis. This further helps to keep the children engaged and happy while they are there.

Improved infrastructure in schools and anganwadis

The SSY project has devoted considerable time and effort to bring up standards of infrastructure available in the



| Infrastructure improvements | Number |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| New school buildings constructed | 02 |
| Drinking water facilities provided | All schools |
| Toilet facilities provided | -do- |
| Compound wall constructed | 58 |
| Electrification provided | All schools |
| Additional rooms constructed | In eight schools |
| New schools constructed | 01 |



Status of anganwadis in Yelandur taluk - 2007

| Name of Panchayat | No. of Anganwadis | A Grade | B Grade | C Grade |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Mamballi | 6 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| Agara | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Yariyur | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| Maddur | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Yalandur | 8 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| Ambale | 7 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Gumballi | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Yeragamballi | 7 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Gowdahalli | 7 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Kestur | 10 | - | - | - |
| Honnur | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Duggahatti | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| B.R. Hills | 8 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 91 | 31 | 28 | 22 |



schools and anganwadis. With support from SDMCs, BVS, and the staff, classrooms, playgrounds and toilets have been improved or added as per the requirements. Parents are now proud of the schools in their villages and have contributed with labour as well as resources to improve the infrastructure.

The community at Y K Mole has got together to build a new school on a piece of land that had been set aside for a cemetery but had not been used at all.

Chikkarangamma, Gram Panchayat President, says, "The present premises was not enough, so we have all come together to build a new school. We will pool all our resources, use what the department gives and build a school that the village can be proud of and the children will enjoy going to."

Chikkatayamma says, "We take turns to go to the anganwadis in the village and ensure the food prepared is hygienic and the premises are kept clean."

Shilpa, BVS Member Ambale II Higher Primary School says, "Our anganwadi leaks when it rains and it is difficult for children to attend. The community has decided to contribute both labour and funds to repair the leaky roof."

SDMC and BVS meetings

SDMCs and BVSs meet regularly in all the villages to discuss and take decisions regarding the schools and anganwadis. Trainings for these members have helped them understand their duties and responsibilities. Kamalamma says, "There was a time when we were scared to approach the school teachers and head master. Now we know it is not only our right, but also duty. If our children have to progress, we have to take active interest in their education."

R Basavanna, Village Yajaman, and SDMC member says, "The government has provided everything. We have schools, teachers are appointed, there are funds

available, and we have even been given the right to be part of the education system. It is now up to us to ensure that everything works well and our children benefit from it. This is what the SSY trainings have helped us to realize."

Intangible difference

At the intangible level there is a visible change in attitudes among the various stakeholders. Whether it is among the community, the teachers, SDMC members, Gram Panchayat members, the difference is one of ownership. There is a general feeling of involvement with





the education process and the awareness that education is one of the primary requisites for progress.

Women have realized the need to educate their children after having been exposed to it themselves. Through the adult literacy programme the value of education has percolated to them. They feel a sense of pride in their own ability to read and write.

There is active cooperation between SDMC and BVS members, and teachers and anganwadi workers. There is a mutual sense of responsibility rather than the previous, one-sided expectation from the community for services to be delivered. Teachers are motivated owing to the increased interest from the community and are keen to deliver more than expected of them.

Owing to the increased interaction between anganwadi workers and mothers, there is increased awareness on matters related to health, both their own, and that of their children. This relates to immunization, the importance of breast feeding, hygiene, family planning, ante-natal checkups during pregnancy etc.

The attitude of the community towards girls being employed is changing. Mr Hegde says, "When we initially attempted to recruit volunteers for the programme, not many families were keen on letting their women work. After some girls were recruited and given intensive training, and the community saw that they were involved in meaningful work, it was easy to recruit more."

Presently, around 200-250 girls from Yelandur taluk have obtained jobs in garment industries in Bangalore, five have been appointed as *anganwadi* workers and some of the VEVs have been selected as ASHAs under the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) scheme. One VEV has received a State Award as the Best Adult Education Volunteer.

The opportunities for interaction between the various entities with regard to education has become evident and it is common to find the anganwadi worker helping out at the adult literacy classes, or the VEV helping to give extra classes for children who are lagging behind in some subject. Parents contributing their labour, SHGs donating resources, or the community at large coming forward with donations to improve infrastructure at schools is common. This has happened because of the awareness that has come into them on the importance of education in their lives.



Janara Helike

What the people say

N Diwakar, Teacher, Government Higher Primary School, Alkere Agraphara

“ A textbook is not the ultimate destination; it is a tool for learning. Learning must happen through several routes. Children must be motivated to ask questions. Tools that promote joyful learning bring excitement into education. When children touch and feel and learn, they remember what they have learnt.”

M Natarajappa, Head Master, Sarkari Hiriya Prathamika Shale, Malligehalli

“ Our work was very one-sided. We have all come together now. The SDMCs add value to our work and we work in a spirit of cooperation. The volunteers and SDMC members help by visiting students in their houses to find out their problems and then we jointly solve them. This has helped to reduce dropouts. Our school has no dropouts.”

M Raju, GPECO, SSY, Karuna Trust

“ Our biggest satisfaction comes from the fact that we have managed to enroll so many dropouts back into school. It is also a matter of pride for us when we see the confidence in women who were completely illiterate, but know how to read and write now. It is however a little discouraging that we did not have the same success in motivating men to become literate. We will be trying harder in future.”

K Mahadevamma, GPECO, SSY, B R Hills

“ Tribals are by nature shy and reclusive. Through the SSY programme we have managed to involve them actively in adult literacy, as also the SDMCs and other committees. It is very encouraging to see them confidently attending meetings and interacting with teachers and anganwadi workers.”





SSY at a glance

Accomplishments

Effective Utilization of Funds (2003-2006)

- Government Funds
(Rs. 11, 99,99,953) **97.63%**
- ILP Funding
(Rs. 29,13,771) **2.37%**
- First convergence model in Karnataka covering 40 villages in 12 gram panchayaths with 59 primary schools and 79 Anganawadis
- 100% Enrollment in the 3-6 years age group (1993 children)
- 100% transition from pre-school to primary
- 99% enrollment in 6-14 years age group
- 80% attendance

Source: ILP

A participatory interim impact/ assessment review conducted by ILP in February 2006 made a set of recommendations and observations. Some of them are set out below:

Observations

- Enrolment to primary school is 100% in all the villages.
- The attendance monitoring and retaining children and reenrolling drop outs and long absentees are done systematically and on a war footing by VEV's.
- SDMCs are active in all the villages and activities are conducted to retain children in schools.
- Teachers' discipline is ensured by the SDMCs.
- Karuna Trust is a member of SDMCs in around 90% of the schools.
- SDMCs have reached a level where they can receive more content on education management.
- Children with special needs or differently-abled students are covered with the help of IED/CBR teachers but stricter monitoring is required.



- Karuna Trust has successfully mobilized communities to avail the services of ICDS programmes, and has also established functional BVS in all the project villages.
- VEV's play a supportive role in assisting anganwadi staff and in mobilizing parents to attend BVS meetings.
- Members from the PHCs visit anganwadis once every 3 months to review immunization status and conduct medical check ups for the children.

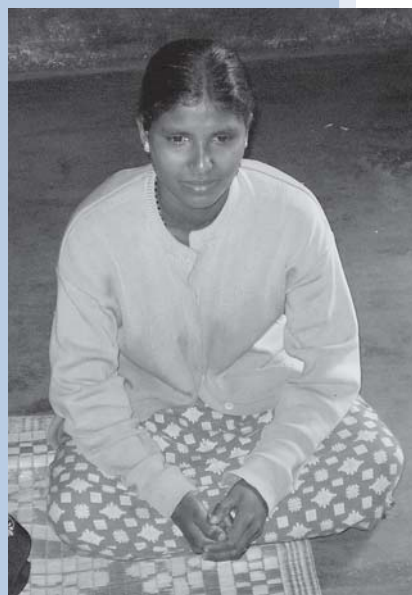
Recommendations

- BVS members should ensure that adequate toilets and safe drinking water facilities are provided at all anganwadis.
- Systems need to be put in place to maintain adequate stocks and supply of provisions and teaching aids.
- The emphasis on cognitive development over rote learning needs to be understood and emphasized in every anganwadi and BVS group.
- Absenteeism needs to be studied further to understand its causes and patterns.
- It is usually the headmaster who attends SDMC meetings. Initiative to develop a second line should be considered.
- There is need to focus more on children who are slow learners.
- *Podus* are more inaccessible than villages and older girls dropped out of higher education in this scenario. Cycling can be taught to them in order to provide them greater independence and self reliance for later life.
- There are several female adult learning groups but none for male members. A more detailed analysis for this disparity needs to be examined and a specific strategy evolved.
- Community members are keen that the frequency of visits by PHC health workers be increased and parental participation be encouraged.
- Considering the collaborative nature of the project, the communities, state, and other organizations that are part of the project implementation must also play their role effectively for accomplishment of project goals.



Khaleemullah Khan, gram panchayat member, SDMC President, Yerragamballi panchayat

"The SSY has changed our entire perspective on education. By making us aware of our responsibilities and duties, it has ensured sustained change towards education in our areas. Even when the project ends, the awareness created will not. We will continue the work which has begun, evince interest in the activities of the school and build on the work that has already been done. Women have become literate and this will ensure that children in the future get educated. It is also a good sign that men are becoming more interested in their families."



Rathnamma, VEV, SSY

"Initially we faced a lot of opposition from the community. The women even resented the fact that we were trying to teach them to read and write. But when we visit them now, they give us so much of respect. They also come to us frequently for advice. This makes us very proud."

Mahadevi, SHG member

"I was very hesitant about learning to read and write. But now I realize I can do so many things I could not do earlier. I am able to visit a bank, speak with officials, go to my child's school and talk to the teachers. Most of all, I am able to read along with my child."

The impact that has been achieved needs to be sustained and SSY has given thought to building in components that will ensure the community takes on the responsibility for education, based on the experience and awareness they have gained through the project.



Chapter five

Dealing with challenges, looking ahead

The SSY programme envisaged changes that would impact education as a whole and not remain segmented to any one area of schooling. It began by addressing the community, working in tandem with officials of the education department, and the staff members of schools and angangwadis and involving a group of volunteers who could make inroads into the community. The mandate was to enable convergence and get all stakeholders to look at education from an entirely different perspective. The challenges involved were considerable and it took determination on the part of the Karuna Trust team to overcome them.

“We did expect that the work at hand would not be easy. We were dealing with mindsets that had been in existence for decades and there were deep feelings of apathy among the community towards education,” recalls Mr Hegde.

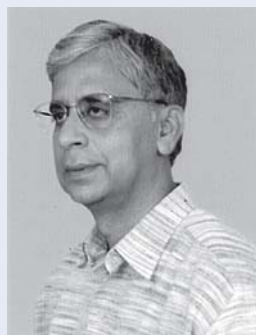
“Addressing each section was accompanied by challenges of its own. Motivating adults to come back into the education fold was difficult. Initially they were almost hostile and very resistant to the thought of studying,” says Shanta Kumari.

Parents who sent their children to work instead of sending them to school had doubts of the value of education and what assurances could be given for

employment after that. Conveying the value of education and delinking the process from employment took time. “It was important to convey to the community that education improved the general quality of life and did not merely lead to employment. We demonstrated to them that education enabled better health, prevented exploitation and had so many other benefits,” says Mr Shivanna Gowda.



In conversation with Dr H Sudarshan



What are the main challenges with regard to primary education in India today?

Primary education in India poses many challenges in the form of very low girl child enrolment and children from SC/ST communities. Drop out rates are very high and the system of single teacher schools impacts negatively on the quality of education imparted.

Education and not mere literacy is the need of the hour. How can this be achieved?

Mere literacy among adults is not enough. The aim should be to enable people to use their literacy skills for better livelihoods. Prevention is better than cure and hence the percentage of illiterates needs to be reduced along with enhancement of quality of education. Compulsory primary education and an integrated approach where pre-school, primary and adult literacy are addressed together is the solution.

What is the synergy between education and other development priorities such as health?

Health indicators are found to be better where women are educated, like in Kerala. There is a close link between education and health as education helps awareness and awareness leads to better health and hygiene. Preventive health is possible only when people are aware of health issues. This can happen only through education.

What are the policy changes required if the education system in India is to be revamped/strengthened?

There have been several efforts in the country to improve Elementary/Primary education. The District Primary Education Program (DPEP) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) are two examples. In spite of these efforts however, the rates of the enrolment and dropouts in preschool and primary school continue to be major problems and ultimately lead to large scale illiteracy. The Pre-school, primary school and adult literacy programmes are managed by three different line departments i.e. Women and Child Welfare Department, the Education Department and the Mass Education department. There is no convergence and very little effort has been made to integrate them. There is a vital need to integrate these departments and look at education in a holistic manner.



Teachers and anganwadi workers initially felt threatened by the SSY programme. “They were apprehensive that we might incite the community against them. It took time to convince them that we were there to work with, rather than against them. It was only when we began to help at schools by identifying and helping weak students to cope and helped at anganwadis when they were short staffed that they saw we were there to help,” says Sannamma.

There was general lack of motivation among the teachers owing to lack of enthusiasm from the community. “When the community began evincing interest in education, the teachers and anganwadi workers responded very well and the difference showed, both in attendance and the quality of work they were putting in,” says Mr Shivanna Gowda.

Frequent transfers of officials of the education department were and continue to be a challenge as convergence is the crux on which the programme rests. The process gets frequently disturbed as it takes time for the new incumbent to understand the programme and participate in it.

The SSY programme has yielded valuable learnings, which will help Karuna Trust to upscale and improve the programme in several ways. The most valuable learning has been that it is possible to work along with, rather than in confrontation with government systems. Cooperation achieves more tangible and faster results. The other has been that unless the approach is community driven whether it is with education or in health the impact is weak. SSY has established the value of PPPs in education and there are plans to replicate similar programmes in other taluks of the district.

Dr Sudarshan says, “When there is impact in a smaller area, it is possible to gradually upscale a programme and widen the operational areas so it touches a larger number of people. There are plans to apply this model to other taluks in the district. Sustainability is another factor we will be concentrating on. The GSS’ which have been formed will be strengthened and enabled to carry the work forward. We also have a very strong cadre of village level volunteers who have a very strong rapport with the community. We will definitely be using their services for not only education, but for other development initiatives such as health.”

Karuna Trust has worked closely with the education and other departments and built up strong partnerships with them. Mr Narayan, Block Education Officer, Yelandur block says, “It is only through sincere efforts made jointly by the government and organizations that quality education can be imparted. When governments implement programmes, there are challenges that come with them. Organizations working in the area can help address them owing to the rapport they enjoy with the community and the experience they have in addressing particular issues. “ “More importantly, in Yelandur taluk Karuna





Trust has enabled overall education by addressing adult education, primary and pre-primary education in an integrated manner. They have given special importance to girl child education, and dropouts. Their efforts to spread awareness among the community through grama sabhas and other initiatives have resulted in considerable reduction in the dropout rate and an increase in girl child enrolment in schools. This work must be replicated in more taluks and in fact across the state for greater impact," he concludes.

SSY in this phase has concentrated mainly on adult literacy, pre-primary and primary education. There are plans to include high school education as well in order to ensure children stay in school till they complete higher secondary education.

More efforts will be made to ensure that there are zero dropout rates in the taluk and that more girl children enter the fold of education. Men's participation in the programme, as well as in the adult literacy programme has been weak. Efforts will be made to increase their participation.

SSY has established the value of education in Yelandur taluk and motivated all sections of the community. Parents, teachers, anganwadi workers, government officials and other stakeholders in education have been sensitised to the issues within and the importance of education. It is evident the Yelandur taluk will in the future, see education as vital for progress and the coming generations will consider it a non-negotiable requirement...



Karuna Trust

Karuna Trust is a voluntary organisation established in 1987 with the objective of facilitating integrated development among the poor and marginalised people both rural and urban, through health, education, vocation training and socio-economic programmes. It has also empowered the rural poor to organise themselves and work towards achieving self-reliance.

The operational areas of Karuna Trust span 40 villages in Yelandur taluk of Chamarajnar district, and 207 villages of T Narasipura taluk of Mysore district.

In Yelandur, Karuna Trust has several ongoing programmes related to health, education, sanitation, and other areas of development. These are chiefly in the areas of:

- Health – leprosy, epilepsy, tuberculosis control, community mental health, community-based eye care, community dental health, community-based rehabilitation (CBR)
- Drinking water and sanitation
- School adoption – adoption of government schools to improve the quality of teaching, facilitate community participation and provide safe drinking water
- Integrated education programme to enable convergence between the various stakeholders in education and improve the overall status of education in Yelandur
- Economic programmes – promotion of Self Help Groups (SHGs) and micro-financing, vocational training, income generation programmes
- Human resource development – centre to motivate and train social workers with emphasis on development of physical, mental and spiritual potential
- Community health insurance
- Model Primary Health Centre (PHC) – adoption of government PHCs to facilitate improved quality of service

In T Narasipura Karuna Trust has been working since 1996 in the areas of:

- Health
- Community development – promotion of Self Help Groups (SHGs) and micro-financing, vocational training, income generation programmes
- Community convergent action (CCA) – formation of Village Development Committees (VDCs) and convergence of all services at the village
- Education – adoption of government schools to improve the quality of teaching, facilitating community participation and providing safe drinking water
- Community health insurance



About India Literacy Project (ILP)

India Literacy Project (ILP) was founded in 1990 in the USA by a group of young Non-Resident Indians. With its mission to be 'A Catalyst for 100% literacy in India', ILP is a developmental support organization that works in partnership with local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and networks in India to play the role of a catalyst for literacy. ILP's main role is to enable and support the implementing partner (NGO) in its processes of strengthening the community, to identify and address the gaps in the delivery of education services, and to bring about systemic changes through advocacy.

ILP India

Realizing that for improved effectiveness and efficiency, ILP would need to have its own presence in India, ILP decided to set up the ILP India Trust. The ILP India Trust was registered in India in January 2000, to facilitate identification of projects, develop intervention strategies. ILP India has developed a comprehensive on-site participatory evaluation and monitoring process which has helped strengthen, sustain and improved the success rates of programs funds.

The ILP India Trust provided the much needed non-financial support to grass-root NGOs.

Goals

The goals of the ILP India Trust are to:

- Play a consultative role in identifying and reviewing programs of existing and potential partners in India.
- Build capacity of our partners in furthering the cause of literacy.
- Cross-pollinate best practices, innovative ideas and methodology in literacy and education between NGOs.
- Identify and Pilot innovative models
- Network with Government departments and formal institutions working in the area of literacy, education, women and child development.
- Promote volunteerism: Build a pool of volunteers who could supplement the skills and resources of grassroots NGOs and field workers.

India Literacy Project

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