

The Promise Foundation Projects

Year 2002

1. Introduction

The Promise Foundation's work in India has continued with vigour and enthusiasm over the year 2002. The Promise Foundation's approach to development has always been a psychological one. We have attempted to contribute to the prevention of poverty not merely by material supports to needs of the poor. Instead we have attempted to address the mindsets and attitudes that the poor have toward themselves, their situation and their future. Taking a long-term perspective our programmes try to deal with foundational issues that haunt the generations of disadvantaged Indians who have remained caught up in the vicious cycle of poverty. This approach is in keeping with international methodologies that have attempted to deal with the issues of poverty all over the world. It is well accepted today that indicators of true human development go much beyond meeting material needs. Descriptions of development today refer to cultural, social and psychological factors operating within the community, that have a *less visible* but powerful impact on the disadvantaged child's development. It is the second set of conditions, namely, the educational and psychological factors that The Promise Foundation attempts to target.

2. Our Programmes

The Promise Foundation's interventions are based on the observation that socio-economic disadvantage could have a *cumulative* impact as the child's maturation progresses. Deprivation in cognitive stimulation in the *early childhood* years creates a disadvantage in learning foundations almost at the outset. Given the impoverished school environment, the learning skills disadvantage the child carries up from earlier years can worsen in the *primary and middle* school years and is manifested as educational failure. Later in the developmental sequence we find that these deprivations are further accentuated during the *high school years (adolescence)*, and manifested as low motivation and self-defeating attitudes. It seems possible that this *accumulation of disadvantage* as the child moves from one developmental stage to another,

could ultimately result in the individual *remaining* trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty. The Promise Foundation implements three programmes to address the needs of children in poverty.

The Stimulation Intervention Programme (SIP)

SIP addresses the needs of the young pre-school child. We directly reach 30 children from the local slum through our model pre-school – *Shishukendra*. The SIP method is also communicated to many other pre-school teachers through our *SIP-Training Programmes*.

Programmes for Assisted Learning (PAL)

We use some of the most sophisticated psychological and pedagogical techniques to identify children who are in primary and middle school who are risk to academic failure and dropping out of school. PAL is implemented in 5 schools and our assisted learning methods provide an enriched learning environment for these children.

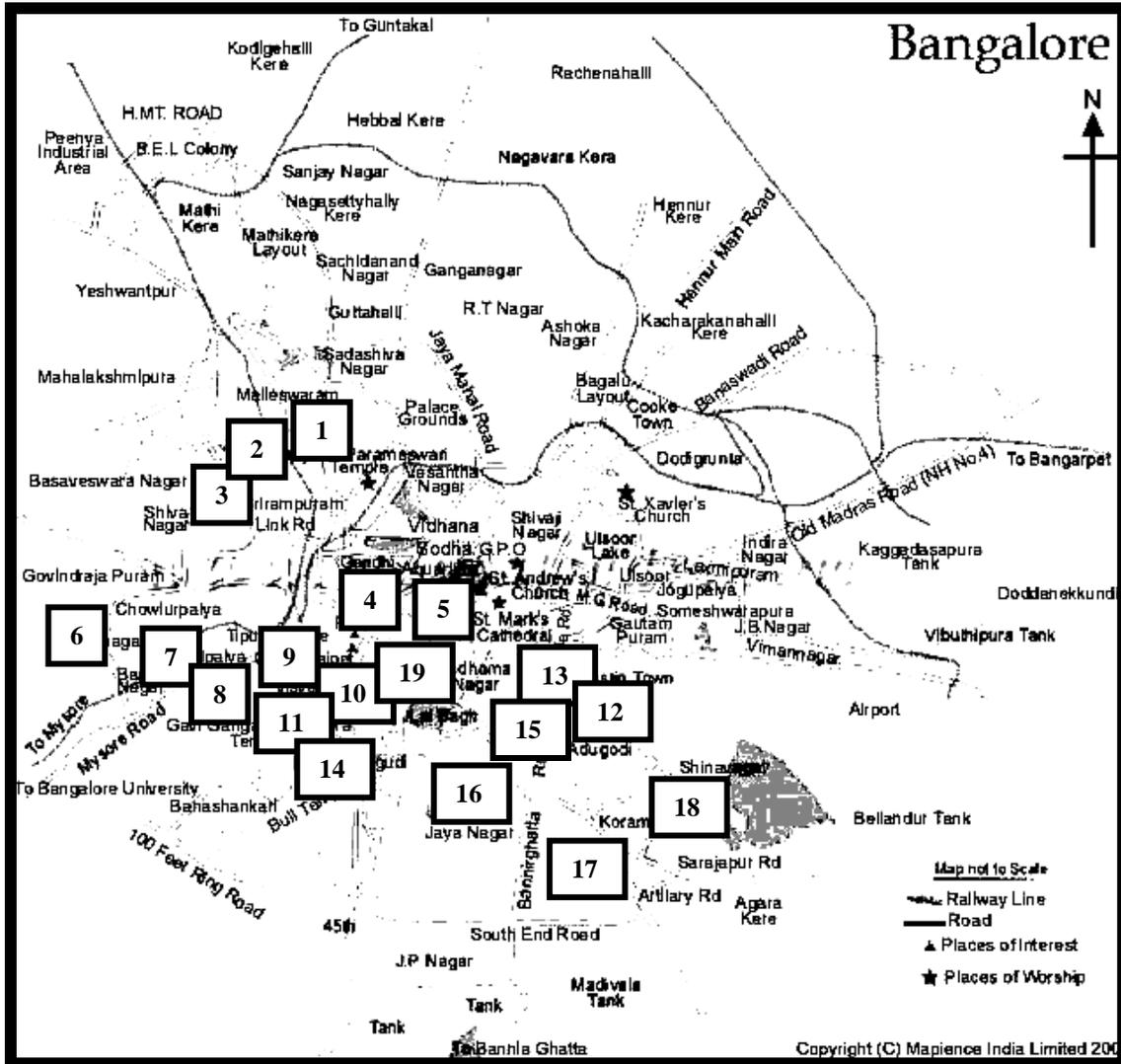
Work Awareness and You (WAY)

WAY is a careers education programme for high school students. It helps them identify their personal talents and then make career choices that will lead to fruitful employment.

The Promise Foundation's programmes therefore are linked together and try to deal with the barriers that children and young people face at crucial stages in their development.

3. The Location of our programmes in the city of Bangalore

The *school-based* programmes of The Promise Foundation were conducted in 18 schools around the city of Bangalore. These were mainly our PAL and WAY programmes.

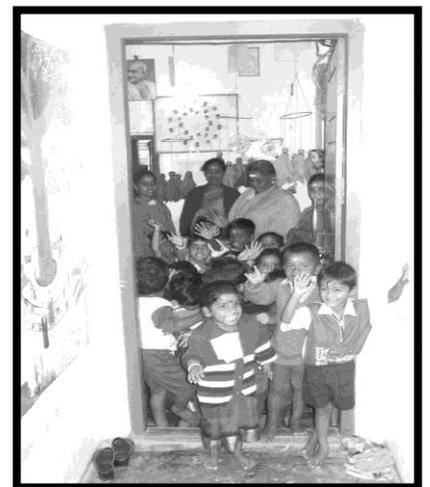
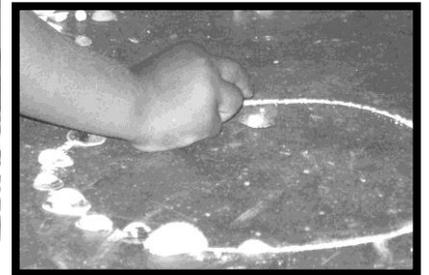


 Location of schools where The Promise Foundation's programmes have been conducted.

4. *The SIP Programme – laying strong foundations*

The Promise Foundation runs a model pre-school called *The Promise Foundation Shishukendra*.

This pre-school reaches 30 children every year. Here are some of our young students.



5. The impact of SIP

This year we conducted a small research to check whether SIP actually makes any difference. 12 of the children who had been in our pre-school for 2 years ‘graduated’ this year and left us. We followed up these children and their families. Our observations were as follows:

Desire to continue education:

Quite often children who leave a pre-school do not move up into the primary school if their pre-school experience has not been good. Reasons such as distance to the primary school, the small fee that has to be paid, cost of uniforms and books and so on sometimes prevent families from allowing their young children to continue education. The reaction of the 12 families who had gone through The Promise Foundation pre-school was very different and positive. All these families were very keen that their children continue to go to school. All children were enrolled into the local primary school by their families.

Teacher reports:

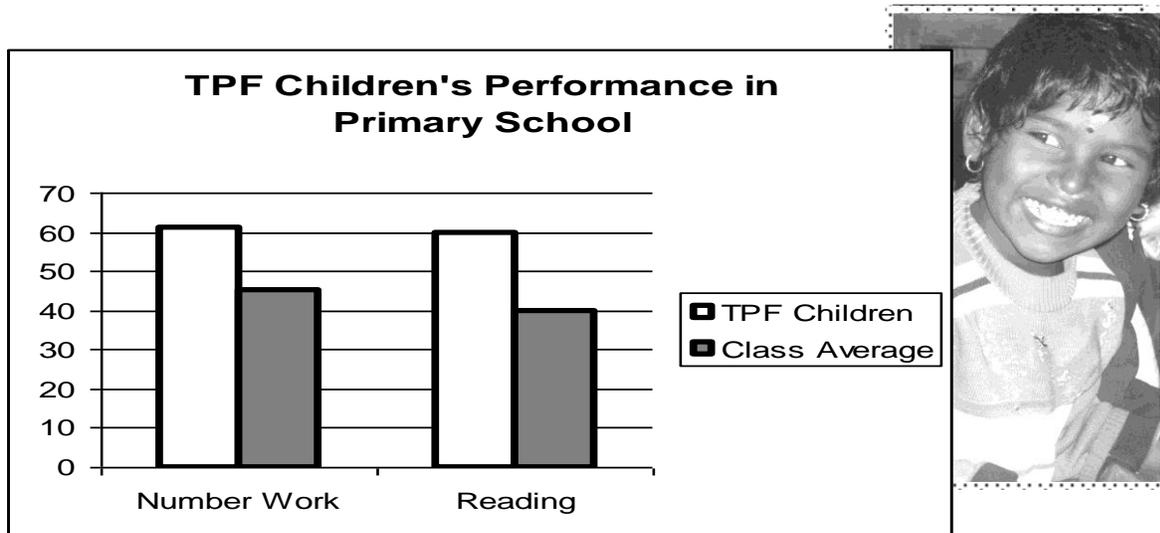
We interviewed the teachers of our 12 children who had been enrolled into primary schools.

Teacher reports about The Promise Foundation children were as follows:

- They had no difficulties in settling down into the school routine.
- Their attendance was regular.
- Their personal hygiene was much better than the other children.
- They showed higher interpersonal skills. Almost all The Promise Foundation children became class leaders!
- The parents of these 12 children showed a much higher participation in the school life of the child.
- Parent involvement in the life of the child at home also seemed to continue. In other words, the training that parents received about home based stimulation when they were with The Promise Foundation Shishukendra, seemed to have become a habit.
- Parents showed no hesitation in setting aside a part of the meagre family resources for the child’s education.

Performance in School

About six months after our 12 children had been attending primary school we checked on their actual performance in the subjects they were studying. We mainly assessed their performance in number work (mathematics) and reading skills. We were very pleased to find that in all cases The Promise Foundation children were above the class average in their performance. The figure below shows the difference in the performances between The Promise Foundation children and the Class Average.



These indicators were very gratifying and assured us that The Promise Foundation’s methods were on the right track both at the level of social skills as well as preparing children for adequate performance when they left our Shishukendra to enter the main stream of education.

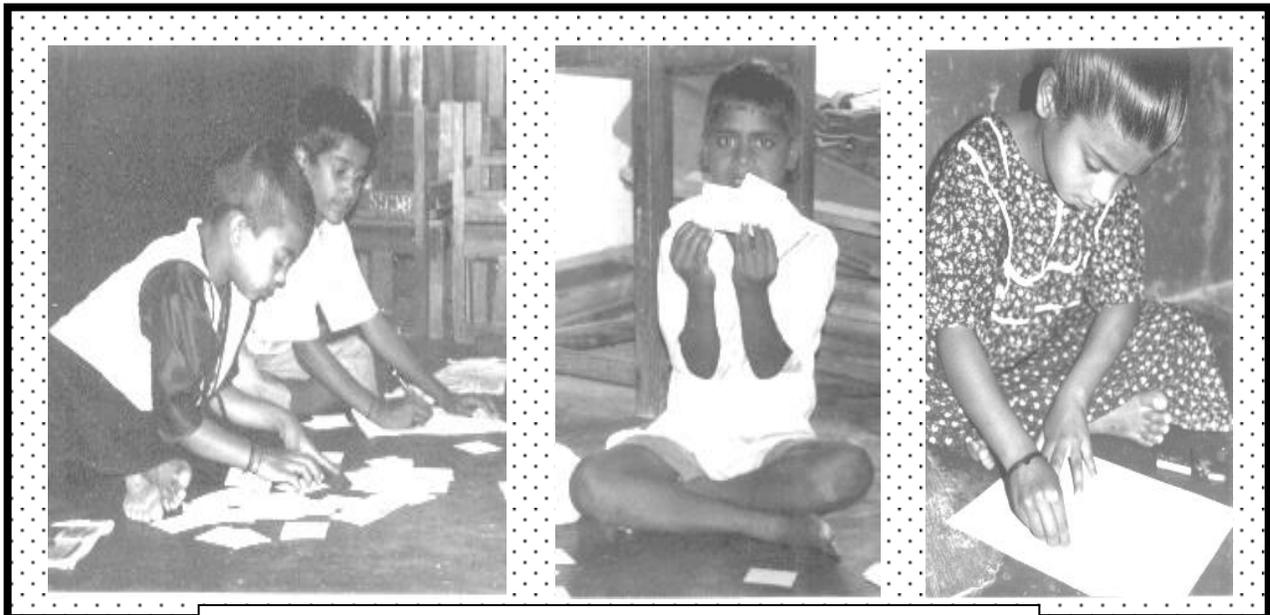
6. The PAL Intervention - preventing drop out

PAL is The Promise Foundation’s intervention for children who are already in Primary and Middle School. PAL targets children who are performing poorly in school



and are at high risk to failing in school. Once children fail, they are most likely to drop out of school. The Promise Foundation has developed a special intervention that

identifies children at risk for failure and drop out. The children who are the ‘bottom’ of the class are selected and brought into the PAL intervention. PAL ‘assists’ these children, and strengthens their learning foundations to bring them up the expected class level.



PAL activities in progress

7. *The Impact of PAL*

Our PAL interventions are carefully monitored to follow up on progress that students achieve. Our research indicated that one of the crucial areas of input that children benefit from is in the area of *reading skills*. PAL therefore lays particularly emphasis on *learning to read*.

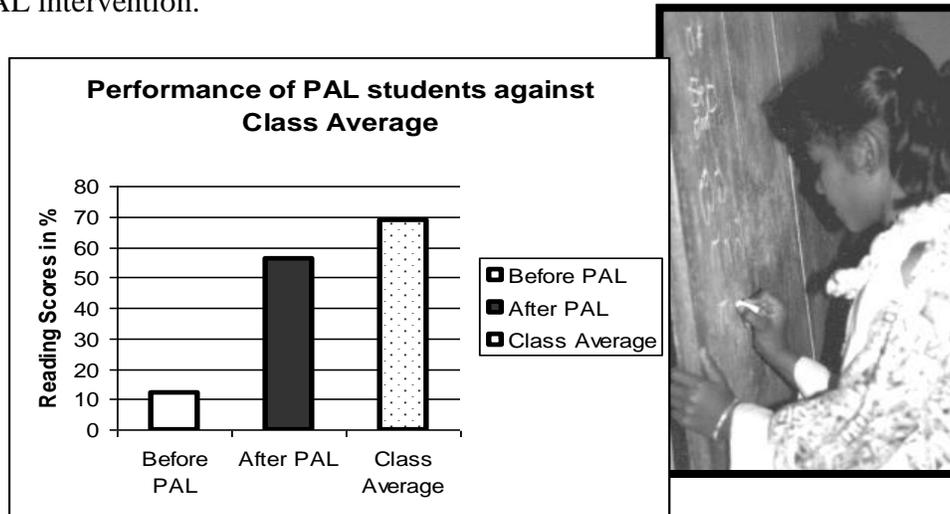
Number of children

PAL currently works in 5 schools and programmes are implemented at two levels:

- Intensive one-to-one interventions are reaching 124 students this year.
- Group based intervention are reaching about 500 children this year.

Assessment of progress

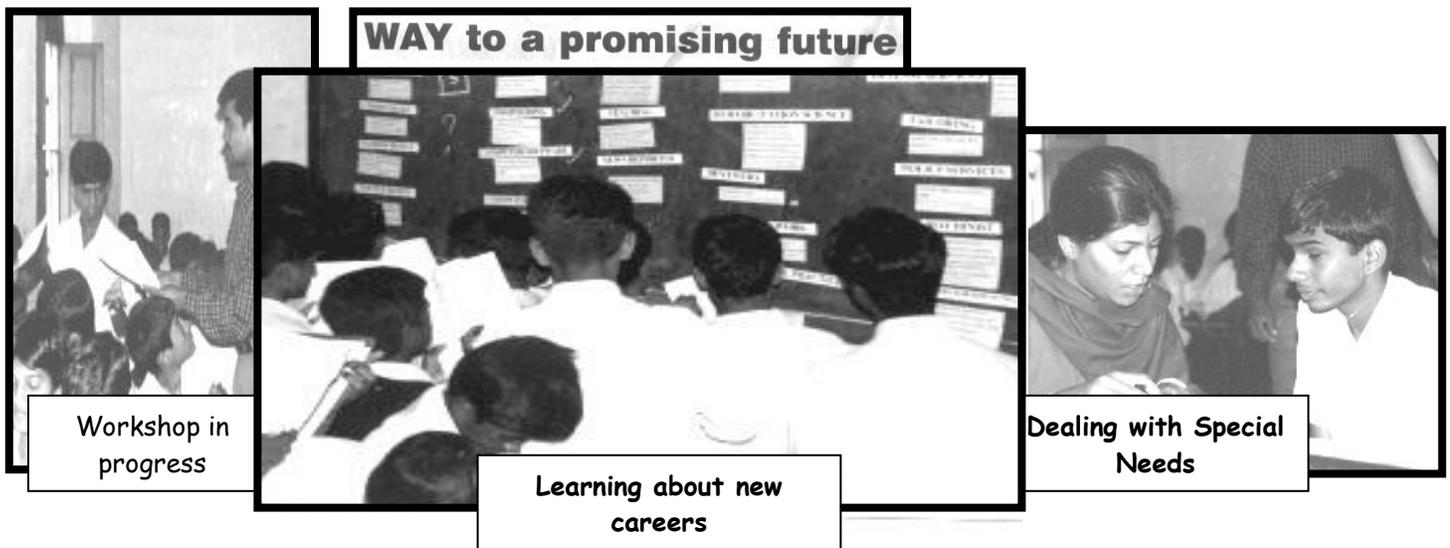
Our assessment of the progress of children in the intensive programme shows a steady improvement in their reading skills. The figure below shows their reading levels before and after the PAL intervention.



While it is clear that PAL students do have much catching up to do, the intervention has put them on the right track toward reaching the class average and perhaps even going beyond.

8. The WAY Programme – pathways to the future

WAY is our careers education programme. WAY has been specially developed to meet the career development needs of high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Driven by economic necessity young people from backgrounds of poverty tend to enter the world of work as unskilled labourers. They have a low orientation to the future and live for the day. WAY addresses these special career development needs. In the recent past WAY has been receiving increasing publicity and there is a massive increase in the demand for our services.



9. The Impact of the WAY Programme

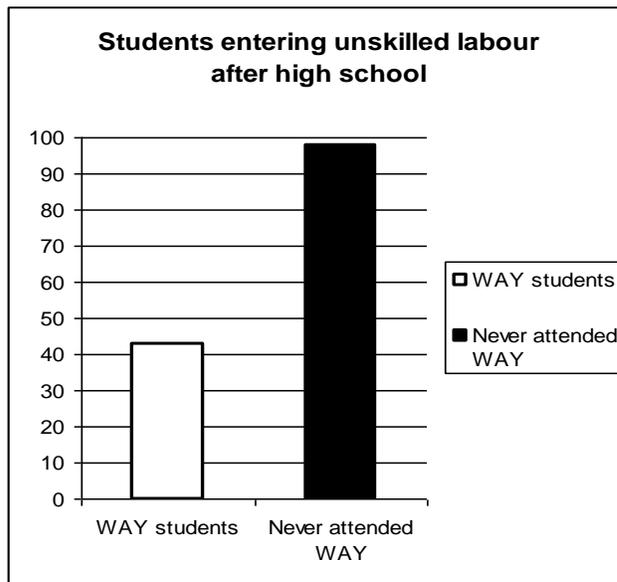
Number of students:

WAY is conducted in 40 Government and Corporation schools in Bangalore. This year our programmes reached 1795 high school boys and girls.

Assessment of impact

The real impact of the WAY intervention can be assessed only after students have completed high school. This year we followed up 100 of the students who had attended the WAY programme last year. Letters were written to these students asking them to indicate what they were doing after completing high school. Similar letters were also written to 100 students who

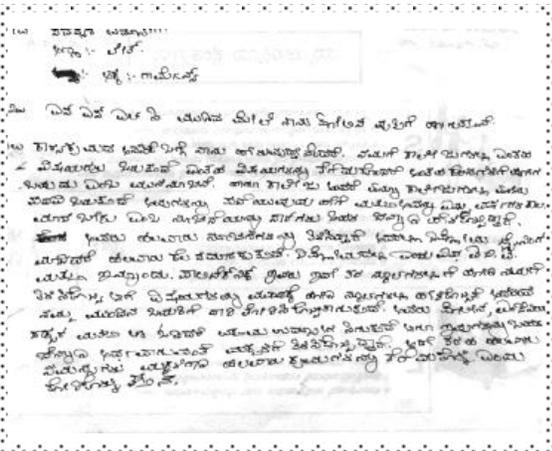
have never attended the WAY programme. As indicated in the figure below, the responses were striking.



One of the important targets of the WAY programme is to prevent students from entering the world of work without a skill and to provide them with viable career options. As shown by the figure above, a much smaller number of students who attended WAY chose to work as unskilled labourers after high school. Closer investigations indicated that students who had never attended the WAY intervention had no clear career plan and were just trying to meet survival needs. WAY students who were not unskilled labour were in short term skills courses, had entered college or had already completed a skills course and were working. Some students were working and studying in the evenings.

Student feedback

Given below are excerpts from feedback given to us by students about the WAY intervention.



The image shows a handwritten letter in Kannada. The student expresses their desire to join the police force and mentions receiving career guidance from the WAY program. They state they became aware of the link between courses offered and related jobs, and that they learned about many courses. They conclude by asking to visit other schools and guide students with this program, which they found very useful.

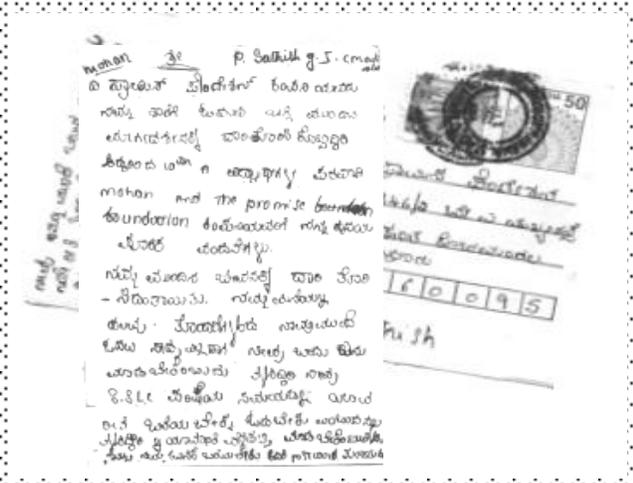
I would like to join the police force. We received career guidance from this WAY programme. I became aware of the link between courses offered and related jobs. I learned about many courses. Please visit other schools and guide students with this programme, which I have found very useful.

**P. Praveen Kumar, Government High School,
Hombegowda Nagar, Bangalore.**

A letter from a student who went through WAY earlier

The WAY programme showed me the future path for my life. I have many difficulties in my home and was not planning to study further. But through WAY I learned what to do. It has helped me a lot. Please do the WAY programme for others also.

Satish.P



The image shows a handwritten letter in Kannada. The student, Satish.P, describes how the WAY program helped them see a future path despite home difficulties. They mention learning what to do and request the program be shared with others. The letter includes a circular stamp and a date stamp '16/09/15'.

10. Training Programmes

One of The Promise Foundation's most important objectives is to train other child care workers, so that many other children would benefit from the programmes we have developed.

The SIP Training Programme

The SIP method has been widely used and we have over the last few years developed and standardised various training programmes for those involved with early childhood education. This year also our SIP training has continued with great effectiveness and attained a wider reach. Given below are the details of those who attended the SIP training this year.

Participating Agency	Number of trainees	Theme
National Institute for Public Co-operation and Child Development – NIPCCD (A Government Organisation)	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Techniques for infant stimulation• Early Childhood Care and Education• All round development
SOS Villages: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• South India• North India	25 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using contemporary learning techniques for children from traumatised backgrounds
People’s Trust	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learning skills evaluation
Outreach	45	Level 1 training of the SIP method
NIPCCD	18	Early Warning Signals of Child Labour
Gramavikas	7	Preparation of Early Childhood Stimulation Kit
Gokaldas Images	7	
Gramavikas	10	Activities for all round development of pre-school children
AVAS	4	
Gokaldas Images	22	
Deena Seva Sangha	5	
Kreedangana	2	
MAYA	4	Developing Reading Skills
Humane Touch	2	
People’s Trust	1	
World Vision – India	1	
TOTAL	226	

The SIP training programme has become increasingly popular. Other Non Governmental Organisations as well as Government Departments have begun to seek training from The Promise Foundation regularly.

PAL Training Programme

For the first time we developed a training programme for Primary and Middle School teachers on the PAL methodology. This was done on the invitation of the Government after Government officials examined the PAL intervention conducted for children in schools. Based on this

11. Prevention of Child Labour

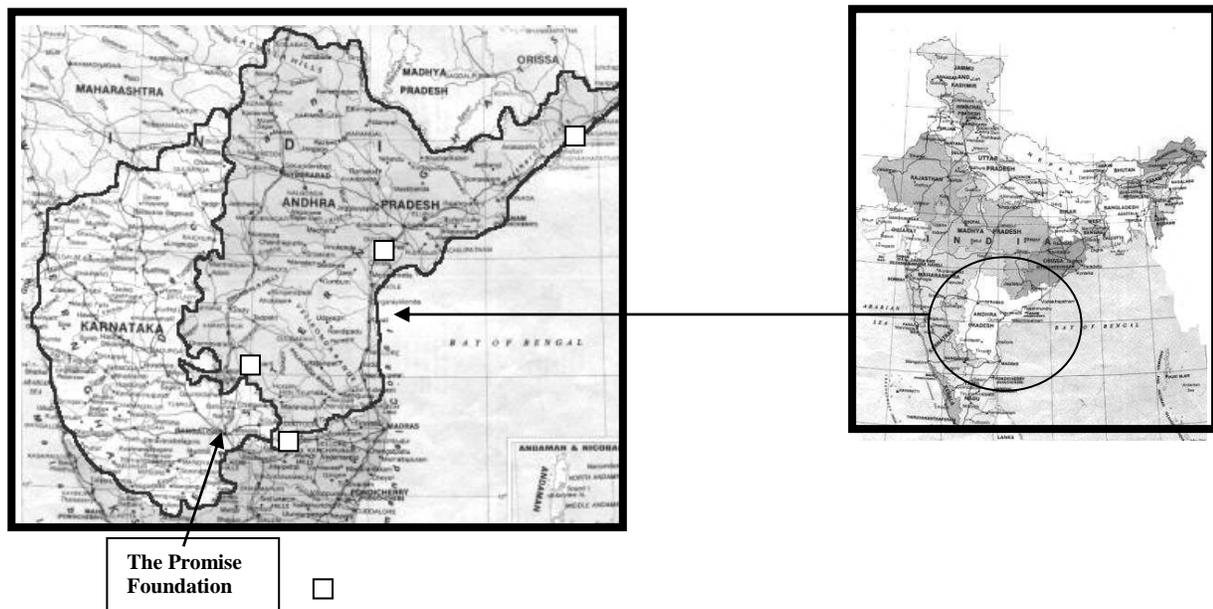
A new extension of our PAL-SIP programmes

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has been working closely with the Government of India to eradicate the problem of child labour in India. Andhra Pradesh – a neighbouring state from Karnataka (where The Promise Foundation has its headquarters) has been identified as a region with one of the highest rates of child labour in the world. The Government of Andhra Pradesh and the ILO have entered into a partnership to eradicate child labour in the state.

The Promise Foundation's approach to the problem child labour has been one that has emphasised *prevention* as being the only long-term solution. Based on reports about The Promise Foundation's work, we were identified by the ILO and the Government of India to be the *training agency* for this project.

Project Location

The maps below give an idea of the location of the training centres.



As indicated on the map, this project is located in four areas of Andhra Pradesh.

Vishakapatnam is the northernmost location and is about 1200 kilometres away from

Bangalore. Markapur is a town south of Vishakapatnam. Kuppam and Hindupar are two small towns about 200 kilometres away from Bangalore. The Promise Foundation teams travel to each of these locations for training the local teachers.

Our Approach

We have approached this important training project at three levels:

- Teacher Training
- A Training News Letter
- A Stimulation Kit

Teacher Training

The objective is to train 110 pre-school teachers on skills to prevent child labour. Our training modules combine the SIP and PAL methodologies. As indicated in the maps, training is conducted in 4 regions of Andhra Pradesh. Three sessions of training are held at each location over the course of 18 months. We have completed 2 of the training programmes with the final module planned for January 2003. Teacher training has the following targets:

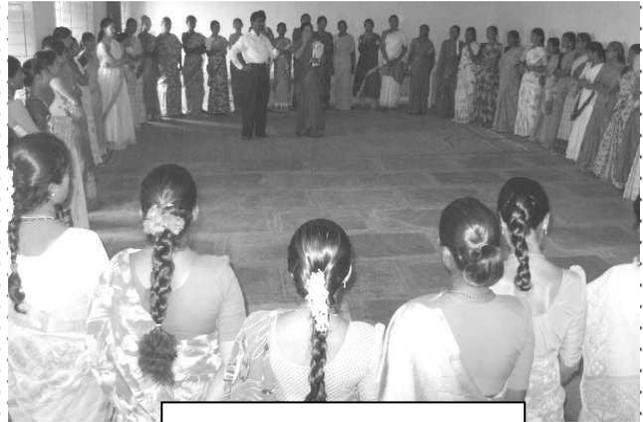
- Skills to make the pre-school an attractive place for children and their families to *want* to attend.
- Skills to identify children who are at risk to becoming child labourers.
- Skills to sensitise parents to the dangers of dropping out of school and allowing their children to become child labourers.
- Skills to link the pre-school with the primary, middle and higher levels of education to ensure that the continuity in the child's education is maintained over time.
- Skills to sensitise other members of the community / village regarding the problems of child labour.

Give over leaf are some images of the teacher training programmes in progress.

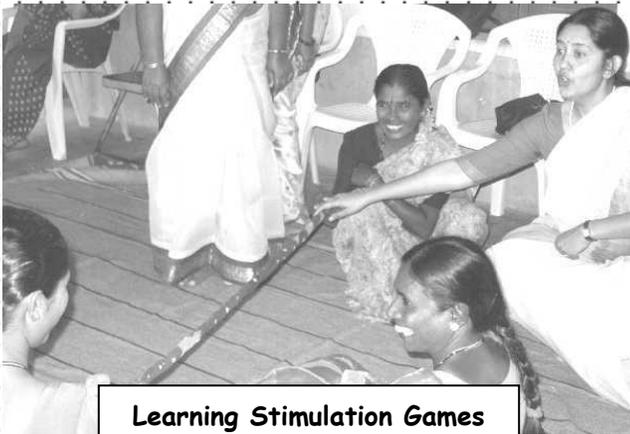
Prevention of child labour – Teacher Training Programmes in progress



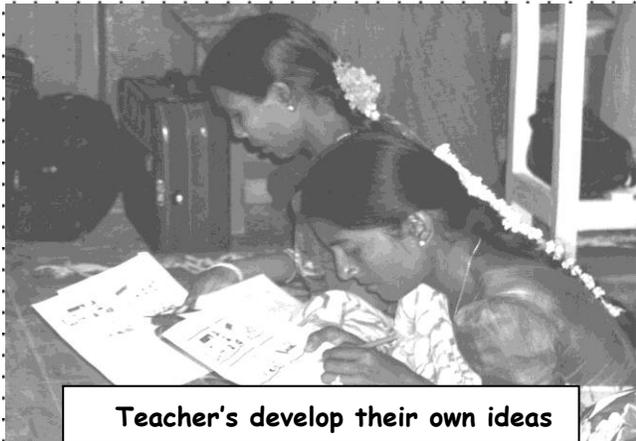
Training session in progress



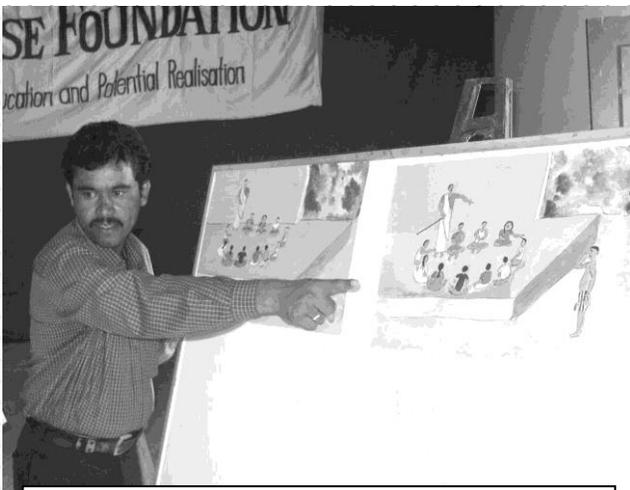
A group training activity



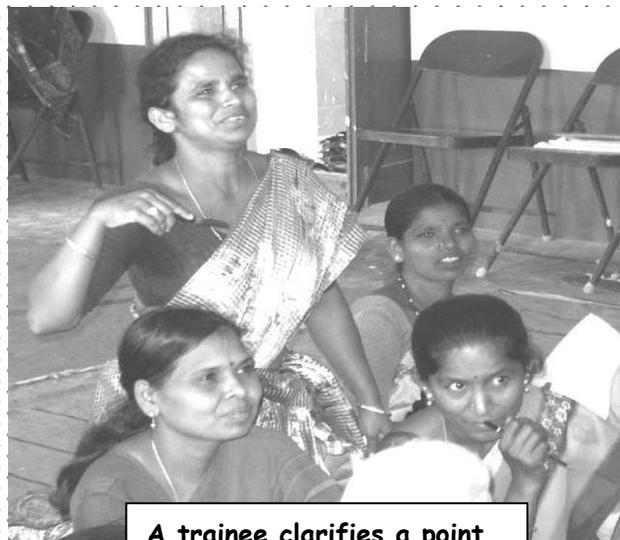
Learning Stimulation Games



Teacher's develop their own ideas



Insights into the causes of child labour



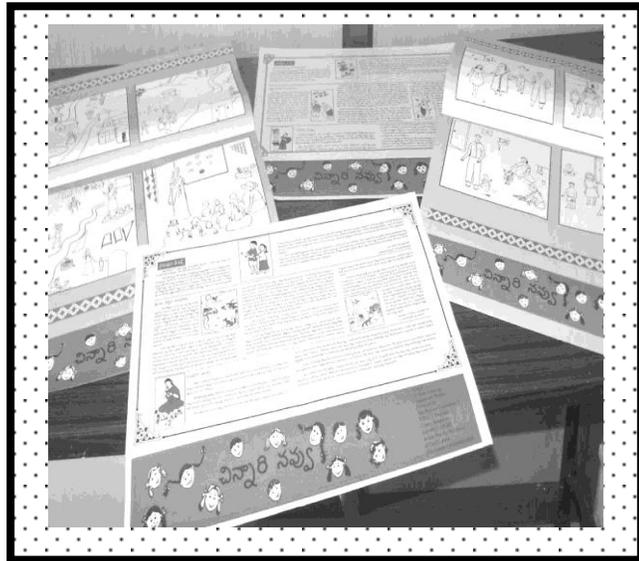
A trainee clarifies a point

Channari Navvu - The Training News Letter

According to our design training inputs for teachers continue even *between* training modules. This is done through our training newsletter. The newsletter has the following objectives:

1. To reinforce the training inputs given during the training programmes.
2. To encourage teachers to contribute their ideas which are printed in the newsletter.
3. To network the 110 teachers in the programmes through the newsletter.
4. To use the newsletter as a teaching tool in the pre-schools.
5. To inculcate the reading habit amongst *teachers!*

The name of the newsletter is *Channari Navvu* – the *Smile of the Child*. One issue is brought out ever month. We have brought out 4 issues so far. Trainees have already started contributing to the newsletter.



A unique feature of this newsletter is the *poster* it carries. The inside of the newsletter folds out to become a poster. Teachers put up the poster in their classrooms and use it as a teaching tool as well.

About 40% of the content of the newsletter comprises contributions from trainees and it has become very popular – and an effective training tool.

The Stimulation Kit

The final component of the training programme is a Stimulation Kit that we have developed for teachers to use in their pre-schools after the training is completed. In addition to giving material for early childhood stimulation this Kit is designed to provide the teacher with scientifically validated material that address the child's learning needs in the areas of *Reading, Writing* and *Number* skills. Therefore, the Stimulation Kit also functions as a *School Readiness Programme* for older children in the pre-schools.



Dice and Domino Cards



'Find Me' Books



Pattern Drawing Cards



Giant Books for Story Telling



Ready-to-use- Stencils



The Stimulation Kit

12. Visitors

The year 2002 saw closer links with The Friends of The Promise Foundation. We had two visitors from Liechtenstein and Austria who spent time with us in India. The first was **Kurt Wachter**. Here are some images of his visit to The Promise Foundation.



Traditional welcome



Performance by children



Chocolates from Schaan!



Kurt at a WAY workshop

Kurt's visit led to the possibility of an exchange programme between The Promise Foundation and pre-school teachers from Liechtenstein. **Elizabeth Kathan** – a senior pre-school teacher was the first to participate in this exchange. The time she spent at the Promise Foundation was

fruitful both for her as well as for us. She made significant contributions to the Stimulation Kit and helped in its production. Elizabeth was also an active participant in the SIP and PAL programmes. She was especially active in our annual children's fair – Chili Pili Mela. Here are some images of Elizabeth at the Chili Pili Mela.



13. Conclusion

Social and economic development in India is a paradox. Over the last few years India economic policies have moved toward globalisation and an open market. This had brought in a spurt in

production. At the surface it seems there is good deal of economic progress and development. The reality however is that the benefits of this progress do not percolate down the lower levels of our socio-economic structure. The situation in India is one where there are new opportunities but these opportunities are not immediately accessible to those who most need it – the poor.

Submitted by,

Gideon Arulmani,

Managing Trustee,

The Promise Foundation,

Bangalore, India.

Date: December 5th 2002