ANNUAL REPORT 2008

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1. Introduction

The year 2008 was a year of research and development at The Promise Foundation (TPF). All our teams were involved in reviewing earlier programmes and trial testing new interventions. Our work was for children in the early childhood and primary school years and for adolescents and young people. Our research and development work covered:

- *Stimulation Intervention Programmes* (SIP) for the early childhood years,
- *Programmes for Assisted Learning* (PAL) for children in the 6 to 10 years age band
- *Work Awareness and You* (WAY) for young people in the high school years.

These three programmes together - SIP, PAL and WAY, are The Promise Foundation's Core Programmes.

We mainly extended our work through material development and training programmes. We developed a comprehensive set of materials for the adolescent age group and continued curriculum change in our SIP and PAL interventions.

2. Stimulation Intervention Programme (SIP)

The pre-school child in poverty is one of youngest victims of deprivation and reduced opportunities. Living in difficult circumstances usually means that the child has lesser number of toys and may often be left unattended because parents and elders are busy earning a livelihood to survive. The Promise Foundation continues to look for quality methods that can quickly introduce an enriched learning space for such a child.

2.1. The Promise Shishukendra

Our preschool, the Promise Shishukendra, worked on a new curriculum over 2008. The Early Childhood curriculum attempted to interpret learning within the culture and day-to-day lives of the participating children. The curriculum introduced monthly themes around biology, zoology, history, numbers, culture and geography! The following sequences capture some of our most fun filled weeks over the last year!

Learning about numbers through...

Buying and selling	Measuring	Cooking

Learning about people around us by meeting the...

Autorickshaw Driver, *Flower-Seller* *Postman*

Laxmi, the principal of the pre-school led a team of one teacher, two assistant teachers and a group of volunteers to develop the new curriculum. The list of children who participated in the programme is given below, along with their parent's occupation.

Children attending the Promise Shishukendra

Name of child	Age	Occupation
Dilip Kumar	4 . 9	Father - painter / Mother - maid servant
Harish	4 . 9	Father - *coolie* / Mother - maid servant
Harini	4 . 11	Father – silk thread spinning/ Mother - tailor in garments
Harshita Mittal	4 . 2	Father - business
Manjunatha	4 .5	Father - book binding / Mother - maid servant
Mithun	4 . 8	Father - *coolie* / Mother - maid servant
Obilaxmi	5.3	Father & Mother – silk thread spinning
Pavithra	4.3	Father - *coolie* - Mother - NO
Raju	4 . 6	Father - plumber / Mother - maid servant
Ramya	3 .10	Father - screenprinting / Mother - maid servant
Rakshita	3 . 5	Father - office helper / Mother - maid servant
Roshanbi	5.5	Father – Carpenter/ mother is housewife
Santosh	5.1	Father - working in a food canteen/ mother is housewife
Tejaswini	5.1	Father – *coolie/* mother is housewife

(A coolie is a daily wage earner who is usually expected to do very hard physical work)

2.2. SIP Apprenticeships and Training Programmes

Over the years The Promise Foundation has offered apprenticeships to early childhood workers. Over 2008-09 we accepted ten such apprenticeships, each trainee working with our Shishukendra team for one month. In addition, one highlight of the SIP apprenticeship programme was the workshop cum exhibition that was set up for trainee pre-school teachers. Glimpses of this programme are given below.

SIP Training Programmes

3. Programmes for Assisted Learning (PAL)

Many nations struggle to keep children in school. India is one among them. Why do children drop out before they finish school? One key reason is because they experience failure – especially failure to read and write.   The Programmes for Assisted Learning (PAL) addresses this issue by developing interventions that can help children read and write better and more meaningfully.

3.1. PAL in the class room

The 2008 PAL was carried out in two schools in South Bangalore (Ellukunte and Dommasandra). An earlier review of 2006 and 2007 programmes had led the team to believe that there was urgent need to further fine-tune PAL. We particularly attempted to find strategies in the following areas:

- Actively bring vocabulary from the school textbook into the PAL sessions. For example, develop PAL sessions on themes from the language or environment science textbook.
- Offer a multi-ability group programme, tailoring an intervention for both the 'at risk' children and the severely underperforming children.
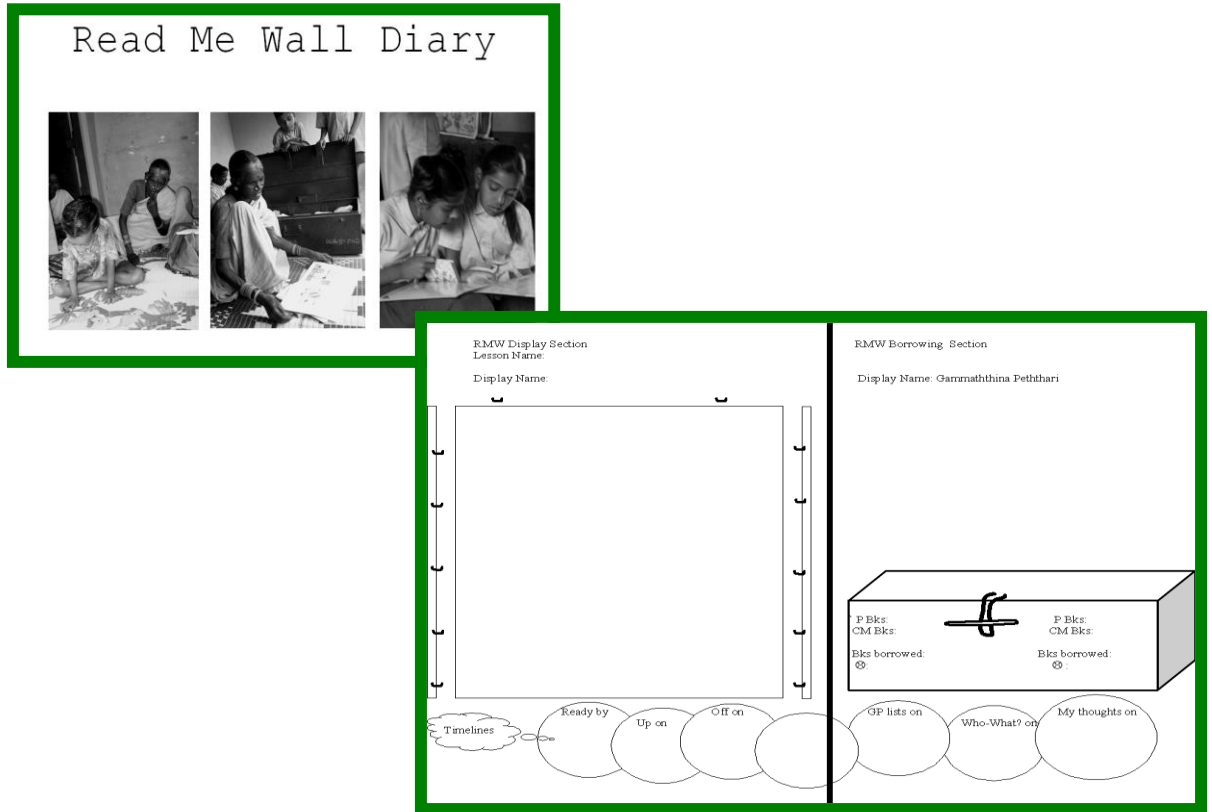
- The Read Me Wall is a space for displaying child authored books and other books. Make this wall larger and more central in PAL.
- Ensure there are many opportunities to explore connected texts. For example, introduce changing dialogue boxes on wall comics, write own stories and poems and being creative with the local language.

We also focussed on developing management systems that could help us to replicate the programme. A concept note was written out on the key aspects of the intervention. In addition, teacher resources were developed for planning and recording the PAL sessions. Given below is a sample of one such concept note and a teacher diary.

The *Read Me Wall*
Excerpt from our In-house Concept Note

What? (targets)	How? (activities)	With what? (materials, TLMs)
For more reading	Access to books	Child and Teacher made books
With relevant materials	Local materials (local area, home language, community practices)	Variety of published books Borrowing books
For own interpretations	Independent reading without adult supervision/ in own time. '*Nanna Arivu*" displays	With role models With 'local materials
With curiosity about language	'*Chandida Chutuku'* displays Talk period using books from RMW	
For sharing and communication	Publish period materials for RMW Publishing child's writings	

The *Read Me Wall* diary for teachers to plan

Read Me Wall Diary

RMW Display Section
Lesson Name:

Display Name:

RMW Borrowing Section

Display Name: Gammaththina Peththari

P Bks:
CM Bks:

P Bks:
CM Bks:

Bks borrowed:
⊗:

Bks borrowed:
⊗:

Timelines

Ready by

Up on

Off on

GP lists on

Who-What? on

My thoughts on

3.2. Sharing of PAL Research

Even as we continue the development work of the PAL sessions, some of our learnings from the core research have now been disseminated for public knowledge. For example, our Kannada research is now available on the following weblink:

http://www.york.ac.uk/res/crl/britishacademy.html

4. Work Awareness and You (WAY)

WAY is our careers guidance and career counselling programme for high school students. These are students who go to government schools and they come from the poorest and most disadvantaged backgrounds. Last year saw us reviewing and updating the WAY programme. The following actions have been taken in this regard:

- We mounted a small research project that traced young people who have gone through the WAY programme in the past and examined the impact of WAY on their lives.
- A consistent feedback received from heads of institutions was that the programme was too short. We therefore re-cast the WAY format.

Given below is a brief report of these two activities:

4.1. The Impact of WAY

About 30% of students who have gone through the WAY programme stay in touch with us by writing to us on post cards. Since 2005, we have received nearly 800 such cards from students who have completed school and gone on with their lives. Mohan Das the WAY project coordinator, led a small study that traced these young people, interviewed them and assessed the long term impact of the WAY programme. The details of our findings are as follows:

4.1.1. The sample

Out of the 800 cards 214 had clear addresses that we could identify. Out
of this list, we were able to meet a total of 61 students. The details are as
follows:

Way Impact Study: The sample

Year in which the student received the WAY programme	Male	Female	Total
2005	3	6	9
2006	10	12	22
2007	14	16	30
Total	*27*	*34*	*61*

We also included a small control group of 20 students who had not
received the WAY programme. The students who received the WAY
programme will be called Way Students and those who did not receive the
programme will be called Non-Way Students.

4.1.2. Our Observations

The 61 Way Students and the 20 Non-Way students were interviewed to
collect information about the impact of the WAY programme. Our
findings were as follows:

Way Impact Study: Our observations

Observations points	2005		2006		2007	
	Way	Non-Way	Way	Non-Way	Way	Non-Way
Existence of a career plan	77%	2%	70%	1%	75%	3%
Implementation of career plan	45%	0%	53%	0%	59%	0%
Following the same career path that emerged from the WAY workshops	28%	Not relevant	32%	Not relevant	30%	Not relevant
Presently in a stable job or course	44%	0.5%	49%	0%	59%	0%
Improvement in studies	80%	0%	81%	0%	80%	0%
General report of well being and sense of self-direction	61%	1%	72%	1%	70%	1%

The teachers and headmasters of the Way-Students students were also interviewed. Their feedback indicated the following:

- After the WAY programme, students' motivation increases sharply. Students become more engaged with their studies since they have a goal and know how to reach the goal.

- All heads of institutions reported that the number of students who passed the final high school exam increased in each school where WAY was conducted. Further, the overall mark obtained by WAY students also increased from their earlier exams.

4.1.3. Summary

Based on these observations it maybe stated that the WAY programme has a strong and definite impact on students. Although all students may not follow the specific career that emerged from the workshop their overall sense of self-direction and planfulness seems to increase. A further impact is on students' study orientation. Way-students seem to perform better in studies after the WAY programme.

4.2. WAY School workshops during 2009:

In response to feedback from our regular WAY schools, we re-cast the WAY programme and into 8 modules conducted over a period of 3 months. Each module is 90 minutes long. We included new activities and concepts into the WAY curriculum. The new format is as follows:

WAY: The new format

Module	Content
1	• Introduction • Base line assessment of career preparation status
2	• Study Skills • Orientation to the future
3	• History of work • My position in the world of work today
4	• Self Understanding
5	• Understanding the world of work • Understanding career paths • Opportunities and possibilities offered by the government
6	• Careers Day: An opportunity to meet professionals from different fields
7	• Developing Career Alternatives • Plotting a career path
8	• Skills to obtain the documents necessary to avail of government schemes • Making a career plan
9	• Workshop for parents • Conclusion

Some of the highlights of the new format are:

- A careers day when students meet professionals and interact with them. This gives them an opportunity to understand the details about the world of work through people who actually practice these professions.

- The government offers a wide range of schemes, scholarships, loans and different kinds of support for students from lower income groups. The new WAY format exposed students to these various service available for them.

- Parents play the most important role in career planning. This year we included a workshop for parents at the end of the WAY sessions. Parents were encouraged ensure that their children acquired formal skills training before they entered the world of work. The feedback indicated that this input was much appreciated by parents.

Given overleaf are glimpses into the WAY 2008 programme.

Glimpses into WAY workshops

Learning through work sheets   **Small group discussions and peer learning**

Careers Day

5. SIP- PAL Partnership Project: IBM KidSmart Early Learning Programme (2002 – 2008)

The Promise Foundation has partnered with the IBM International Foundation to develop a locally relevant model for early childhood and primary school settings. Over the six years of partnerships more than 100 teachers have received training in what ahs come to be known as the Three Corner Model. This is essentially a model that has gained from amalgamating the methods of SIP and PAL. We have gained crucial insights about the Model from eight annual roll-outs of the programme in six states and with four other NGO/Government partners. It is against the backdrop of this learning that The Promise Foundation and IBM International Foundation have now embarked on writing a Handbook on Early Learning for Teachers.   Given below is a sample from some of the artworks that will compose the Handbook.

Handbook on Early Learning for Teachers: Sample Artworks

6.   JIVA: The Career Counselling and Livelihood Planning Project

Jiva is one of TPF's extension projects. It is based on our learnings from WAY and is designed to train career counsellors all over the country on the skills for conducting career counselling and establishing career resource centres.

Over 2008, the following were achieved through the Jiva Project:

- Material developed through WAY was adapted and mass produced as the **Jiva Kit**. This is a compendium of career development resources for the Indian context. The kit includes a data base of careers information, student worksheets, learning cards, career information cards, career dictionary, flip charts and a training manual.

- Five Career Resource Centres were established in schools in Bangalore.

- An MPhil degree in career and livelihood planning has been formulated. Five Master Career Counsellors Trainers are presently undergoing training and if they are successful will graduate in August 2009. *They will be the first Career Psychologists for India!*

- A certificate course in Basic Skills for career counselling has been developed. This is a 10 day course that is based on the Jiva Kit. The Master Career Counsellor Trainers will train careers facilitators through this course. The Basic Skills for Career Counselling course has so far reached 34 persons.

7. PAL Research study sponsored by TPF

Over 2007 – 2008 The Promise Foundation funded a research project that focused on learning to read in Bengali. Bengali is spoken mainly in West Bengal. It is also the main language in Bangladesh and there are many speakers of Bengali settled in the UK, USA and parts of Europe. Any research on how children learn to read would be of interest to governments offering Bengali as a school language.

The report on this research was released in Kolkata by Padmashree S. M. Cyril (the Padmashree is one of India's highest civilian awards given by the President of India to persons of eminence in their field). Well known educators, NGO workers and government officials attended the Report Release. The programme of the day also included a discussion on the issues of poor reading and writing in Bengali schools. Methods developed under Programmes of Assisted Learning (PAL) were shared with the audience.

Learning to Read in Bengali: A report of a survey of five Kolkata primary schools

(Excerpt from the cover page of the report)

8. Invitations and Partnerships

We summarise below new enquiries that TPF received over 2008.

8.1. New enquiries

We have received the following enquiries and requests for partnerships:

- The Government of Karnataka has set up a task force to look at Education. The Promise Foundation has received a request to share a white paper on the findings of our PAL research.

- IBM International Foundation made an enquiry for extending the Handbook on KidSmart with an international chapter where the focus will be the ASEAN countries of Malaysia, Indonesia, Korea, Singapore and Vietnam. TPF accepted the request and discussions have begun for finalising the profile of Early Childhood and IBM's initiatives in these countries.

- Our NGO partners Gokuldas, Samvada and Kartnataka Council for Child Welfare have made enquiries for further SIP-PAL training programmes.

- Several NGOs, government institutions and individuals have made enquiries for WAY-Jiva programmes.

8.2. Jiva Conference

TPF has been invited by the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) to host the next international conference. The conference will be held in Bangalore, on the 8th, 9th and 10th of October. Since this will also mark the culmination of the Jiva Project, the

conference has been called the IAEVG-Jiva Conference. It is expected that about 1000 delegates would attend from 60 different countries.

8.3. TPF Campus

We have acquired a small piece of land to house The Promise Foundation's office and training halls. The new campus will have a basement and three floors. Ms. Sherin Balachandran. Trustee of The Promise Foundation, will be eh architect of the new campus. Given below is a picture of the campus.

The Future: TPF Campus!

9. Visitors

TPF was happy to host the following visitors over 2008:

- ***Thabile Butheleiz:***   Thabile is a student of Counselling psychology from South Africa. She was with us for 4 weeks and participated in SIP, PAL and WAY.
- ***Hazel Reid:***   Hazel is the director of Centre for Career and Personal Development, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK. She was with us as a faculty member for the Jiva MPhil course.

10. Financials

10.1. Overview

The Promise Foundation worked on multiple projects over 2008. For all of these projects, the Foundation was supported by Grants and Donations from institutions, individuals and friends of the Foundation. The table below gives details.

Project Costs and Source of Funds: Year 2007

Project	In Rupees	Project Status
TPF Direct Programmes: SIP, PAL and WAY	*Cost of the Project*: 12,25.000 *Source of Funds:* F-TPF	Ongoing, will continue as core to all projects.
Jiva: A Career Counselling and Livelihood Planning Project: an extention project of WAY	*Cost of the Project*: 83,30,000 *Source of Funds:* Jacobs Foundation	A three year project that began in April, 2007. Funding support assured for all three years from Jacobs Foundation.
National Child Labour Project	*Cost of the Project*: 40,425 *Source of Funds:* National Child Labour Project	A capacity building project, this is the final stage of the 2006-07 Handbook produced by ILO, Geneva with authors from TPF.
TPF Training Programme: The IBM KidSmart Programme: Early Learning Centers	*Cost of Project:* 551,075 *Source of Funds:* IBM International Foundation.	Will be completed in July, 2009. The project focussed on the Chennai region.
TPF Training Programme: IBM Handbook	*Cost of Project:* CHF 21,55,650 *Source of Funds:* IBM International Foundation	This is a one time request. Project completed successfully.

The Promise Foundation acknowledges the donations given to TPF projects by Chandayya Hegde Foundation, student volunteers who interned at TPF, partner schools who drew upon our expertise and six year old Jonathan and his school mates.

Over the years we have also encouraged TPF teams to generate incomes through paid services. A new finance rule in the country however suggests that offering services for which a fee is charged may not be suitable for a Charity. In view of this, TPF teams focussed all their time on Grant-driven projects rather than on services offered at a fee.

13. Conclusion

We are over the last few years beginning to see the impact of SIP, PAL and WAY – the Core Projects we have implemented. Our assessment WAY for example shows that our programmes to have a long term impact on attitudes and mind sets. It is also clear that children who go through our SIP programme do better in school. The PAL project not only shows a clear improvement in children's reading skills but also lays foundations for them to leave us as independent learners.

Furthermore, the Core Projects have been a strong foundation for the many Extension Projects that we have been able to undertake.

Dr. Gideon Arulmani and Dr. Sonali Nag,
The Promise Foundation.
with inputs from the Promise Teams in Bangalore and Chennai.
2nd June, 2009.