Chapter - IV

ERADICATING CHILD LABOUR: A CRITICAL APPRAISAL ON THE ROLE OF THE STATE AND NGOs IN THE TWO CITIES OF ANDHRA PRADESH
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Andhra Pradesh is the fifth largest State in India having an area of 2,75,909 square kilometres (sq. kms) and a population of about 66.35 millions (1991). It is the biggest among all South Indian States in terms of both area and population. The twenty-three districts of the State are divided into three geographical regions known as the Circars or Costal Andhra, Rayalaseema and Telengana. On 1st November 1956, the State of Andhra Pradesh was formed by merging the above-mentioned three regions with Hyderabad as its capital. Telugu is predominant language of the State spoken by about 88 per cent of the population. It is followed by Urdu, which is spoken by about 7 per cent of the population. About 88 per cent of the State’s population are Hindus. Muslims and Christians constitute about 7 and 4 per cent respectively. Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Parsees together constitute about 1 per cent.

It is generally observed in the State of Andhra Pradesh that men are larger in number than women. The sex ratio (females per 1000 males) of the State is 972.

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according to the 1991 census. The average density of population is 241 persons per sq. km (1991). Andhra Pradesh, being an agricultural State, is essentially rural.

A large proportion of the populace (73.16 per cent) is still living in rural areas, while the remaining (26.64 per cent) live in urban areas. Literacy rate, the primary social indicator, reflects the economic prosperity, social status and cultural milieu of a class, community and ethnic group. The literacy and education accelerate the process of economic change and occupational structure and mobility of workforce from primary to secondary and tertiary activities, an evolutionary process successfully witnessed in many fast growing developing countries. The overall socio-economic development of the State cannot be facilitated without providing adequate educational facilities to its population. This is particularly true in the case of female literacy as it has a close bearing on fertility, mortality, marriage and the level of female participation in out-door economic activities.

Table 4.1. Literacy Population and Crude Literacy Rate in 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Literacy population</th>
<th>Crude Literacy Rate (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>24840456</td>
<td>15675060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anantapur</td>
<td>1136350</td>
<td>772428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittoor</td>
<td>1400905</td>
<td>887857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuddapah</td>
<td>938093</td>
<td>625729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Godavari</td>
<td>1878630</td>
<td>1063323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guntur</td>
<td>1662809</td>
<td>1017617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyderabad</td>
<td>1701503</td>
<td>997264</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, in certain districts like Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam and Nizamabad, the number of women exceeds that of men.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male Rate</th>
<th>Female Rate</th>
<th>Total Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khammam</td>
<td>750237</td>
<td>472053</td>
<td>278184</td>
<td>34.10</td>
<td>42.06</td>
<td>21.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krishna</td>
<td>1691917</td>
<td>979896</td>
<td>712021</td>
<td>45.81</td>
<td>52.19</td>
<td>39.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurnool</td>
<td>999055</td>
<td>676181</td>
<td>322874</td>
<td>33.60</td>
<td>44.47</td>
<td>22.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahaboobnagar</td>
<td>766338</td>
<td>524888</td>
<td>241450</td>
<td>24.95</td>
<td>33.71</td>
<td>15.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medak</td>
<td>622871</td>
<td>433721</td>
<td>189150</td>
<td>27.51</td>
<td>37.79</td>
<td>16.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nalgonda</td>
<td>916031</td>
<td>616006</td>
<td>300025</td>
<td>32.14</td>
<td>42.39</td>
<td>21.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nellore</td>
<td>987120</td>
<td>604055</td>
<td>383065</td>
<td>41.29</td>
<td>50.02</td>
<td>32.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prakasam</td>
<td>965318</td>
<td>637184</td>
<td>328134</td>
<td>35.10</td>
<td>45.71</td>
<td>24.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangareddi</td>
<td>1060645</td>
<td>664186</td>
<td>396459</td>
<td>41.95</td>
<td>50.91</td>
<td>32.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srikakulam</td>
<td>720496</td>
<td>477862</td>
<td>242634</td>
<td>31.13</td>
<td>41.59</td>
<td>20.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visakhapatnam</td>
<td>1289202</td>
<td>804470</td>
<td>484732</td>
<td>39.40</td>
<td>48.57</td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vizianagram</td>
<td>617195</td>
<td>411278</td>
<td>205917</td>
<td>29.37</td>
<td>39.14</td>
<td>19.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Godavari</td>
<td>1604543</td>
<td>897138</td>
<td>707405</td>
<td>45.66</td>
<td>50.93</td>
<td>40.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Literacy exclude children in the age group 0-6 who are treated as illiterates.

A close look at the literacy rate, shown in Table 4.1, in the State of Andhra Pradesh confirms that the issue of educating women has not been considered seriously. The crude literacy rate in Andhra Pradesh, according to the census of 1991, was 37.46 per cent. The crude literacy rates of males and females are 46.62 and 28.04 per cent respectively. In absolute terms an estimated 24,840,456 were literate, of which 15,675,060 were males and 9,165,396 were females. The women are largely neglected from the education system for various reasons. The imbalance between the men and women’s literacy rates needs to be rectified. It is, therefore, imperative to provide the access to educational facility to entire population of the State and efforts need to be made to accelerate the process of female education in various districts of the State.
(4.1) Child Labour in Andhra Pradesh:

The State of Andhra Pradesh has the dubious distinction of having the highest number of child labourers in the country. It is estimated that there are 1.66 million child labourers in Andhra Pradesh, which represent 14.7 per cent of India's labour force. The proportion of child labour in Andhra Pradesh level is considerably higher compared to other States that follow it. Of the 1.66 million child labourers in Andhra Pradesh, 91.7 per cent are working in rural areas and the rest 8.3 per cent work in urban areas (Table 4.2). An estimated 20 per cent of children in Andhra Pradesh work full time, while 60 per cent of the children, aged 5 to 14, never attend school. An interesting feature of child labour in Andhra Pradesh is that the girls account for a majority (51.5 per cent) of the child workers (Table 4.3). Child labour population in the State accounts for 2.5 per cent of the total population. They account for 7 per cent of the total child population in the State and 5.5 per cent of the total labour force, which is above the national average. The occupational structure of child labourers in Andhra Pradesh reveals that a majority (59.4 per cent) of child labourers are agricultural workers. They are also engaged in cultivation (19.6 per cent), manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs in household industry (4.1 per cent) with the rest (16.9 per cent) in other categories.

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3 Other States that follow Andhra Pradesh, in order, are Uttar Pradesh (12.5 per cent); Madhya Pradesh (12 per cent); Maharashtra (9.5 per cent); Karnataka (8.6 per cent); and Bihar (8.3 per cent).

4 See Back to School Programme: An Evaluation, (Hyderabad: Centre for Public Policy Studies, undated).

Table 4.2. Spread of Child Labour (aged 10-14) in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Number (in 1000's)</th>
<th>Working Children (in %)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.P</td>
<td>1396</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>24.97</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>19.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11.93</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>11.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>8.79</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>7.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13.54</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>10.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.P</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>7.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>21.20</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>16.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.P</td>
<td>1160</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>19.81</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>15.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>15.72</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13.01</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>11.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.72</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>5.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>12.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>11.06</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>8.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>1107</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>8.23</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>7.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>9.80</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>8.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India*</td>
<td>9348</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>12.65</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *excluding Jammu and Kashmir.

Table 4.3. Participation Rates (in per cent) of Male and Female Children in Labour Force Across the States (1961-91)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Male children (in %)</th>
<th>Female children (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.P</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.P</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.P</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.N</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.P</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.B</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed from Census of India (from 1961-1991); Registrar General of India; All India Education Survey: Third (73), Fourth (78), Sixth (93), NCERT, New Delhi; Report of the Education Commission 1964-66, Supplementary Volume II Ministry of Education and Youth Service; Ministry of Human Resources Development, Annual Reports (various years).
In its effort to encourage children going to school and to avoid high rates of drop-out, the Andhra Pradesh Social Welfare Department initiated, in April 1997, a pilot back-to-school-programme for all 23 districts, where hostels operated by the department are converted into ‘camp schools’ for two months each year. An estimated 74 per cent of the students enrolled in the camps were subsequently admitted to formal schools. Each hostel has approximately 100 students and five teachers. The program identifies and enrols children, who never enrolled in school or who have dropped out early. Special emphasis is placed on bonded children, children working as domestic servants and children from lower castes and tribes or other socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The children attend classes for an average of six hours per day. Following classes, they participate in cultural activities, games and athletic activities. In its initial phase in 1997, the program successfully enrolled 37,000 children in schools. An evaluation of the programme at the conclusion of the first year found that 98.8 per cent of the children attended rated the camps as very good or good and 88 per cent of the parents thought the program was very good and useful to their children. About 71 per cent of teachers rated the program as very successful while 28 percent considered it moderately successful. Following its success with the children and their parents, the Social Welfare Department plans to enrol 100,000 students each year in the future.

(4.2) Hyderabad and Secunderabad:

The two cities, Hyderabad and Secunderabad, have been taken up as a field to study the issues concerning the NGOs efforts in eradicating the problems of

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6 op.cit. no.4.

184.
child labour in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The two cities, separated by Hussain Sagar, are known as the ‘Budapest of India’. The city of Secunderabad, named after the then Nizam Sikandar Jha, grew up as a cantonment city under the British. Hyderabad, the capital of the State of Andhra Pradesh today, was also the Nizam’s capital in the past. Hyderabad was ruled by Muslim Nawabs, when other South Indian regions were comprised of Hindu kingdoms. Though the city itself has a presence of Hindus, Islamic culture prevails in the minds of people. People speak Urdu along side Telugu. Though Hyderabad is fast becoming a modern industrial city, the houses bear signs of Persian architecture, reminiscent of Nizam’s rule. It is also the city with rich past reflected by its formidable forts, opulent buildings and magnificent mosques. Behind the pomp and glory lies a backward socio-economic society devoid of scientific education system, characterised by low social status of woman, child marriages and rampant child labour. As capital of the State, 60 per cent of its 31.46 lakh population are literate. The remaining 40 per cent are concentrated in 800 urban slums, which suffer from unhygienic surroundings. Though the Slum Development Programmes organised under Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) have brought considerable change in physical amenities in selected slums, the educational status largely remains more or less unchanged. The two cities have the largest urban population in the State being over 4.28 million with 55.03 per cent literacy rate.

Hyderabad and Secunderabad - the two cities of Andhra Pradesh - together have a population of 50,00,000. Of this a sizeable amount of this population live in slums. About 15-18 percent of this population are either middle class or upper class, who often employ domestic helpers especially girls. Another segment of
population are government and private employees. They also take the service of
girl children as domestic help.

The two cities Hyderabad and Secunderabad have numerous children
working as labourers in organised and unorganised, informal and unregulated
sectors of the economy. In unorganised sectors they are working as domestic
servants, helpers or assistants in hotels, restaurants, wayside shops dhabas,
canteens and similar establishments. Some are engaged in petty crimes and some
are addicted to drugs.

The larger groups of domestic child labour are from the slums. While both
parents try to make a livelihood, other children are left behind to look after their
siblings or take up working in the houses/apartments nearby as domestic workers.
They work on a part-time basis from an early age of 5 or 6 years. They do not get
the opportunities of education or any other vocational training that will improve
their situation. Education is not a priority of the parents or the community because
it seems to be useless for these children, particularly girl children, to be educated.
Yet another group of children, which comprises the domestic child labour, are
children sent by their parents from rural areas due to indebtedness or feudal
attitudes that still persist even in cities. These children work 24 hours a day having
no time for recreation, rest, leisure or education. They are often victims of abuse,
ill treatment and suffer ill health and have no one to take care of them when they
fall sick. This is an often-neglected area of child protection, where children work in
exploitative situations, having to do difficult tasks but are paid meagre amounts.
Contact with the family for these children is restricted to occasions only. There is
no scope of education for these children. They often grow up with the belief that this is their fate or become convinced that they need to support their family. Domestic child labour and home based work are the least visible and among the more difficult to detect and curb.

(4.3) Andhra Pradesh Vision 2020:

The State of Andhra Pradesh, advanced in many ways, is still rather backward in many other aspects. In this regard, the State has set itself an ambitious vision, known as Andhra Pradesh Vision 2020, according to which the State will have achieved a level of development that will provide its people tremendous opportunity to achieve prosperity and well-being and enjoy a high quality of life by year 2020. To attain this level of development, the State will have to embark on a vigorous effort to create dynamic economic growth. Development, particularly social development, will require the creation of economic opportunity, mainly through the growth of the economy. Economic growth, in turn, will stimulate development in two ways. First, it will increase incomes for the people by creating employment opportunities. Second, it will generate additional resources for the government. The government will invest these additional resources mainly in social development, such as in its efforts to eradicate poverty, improving education and health, promoting rural and urban development, and providing services such as housing, water, power and transportation. The Andhra Pradesh government believes that this can be achieved only with the active participation of its people. The government, therefore, looks to the people to become its partners in progress, striving together to achieve the level of development that Vision 2020 stands for.
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To achieve its Vision 2020, Andhra Pradesh’s first priority will be to provide its people with the means to develop their capabilities and the opportunities to put these capabilities to good use. The first step in this endeavour will be to eradicate poverty and eliminate current inequalities that prevent the members of some of its social groups from realising their full potential. Every society has social groups that are vulnerable to risks or circumstances that adversely affect the quality of their life, including their ability to participate in the economy. In Andhra Pradesh these groups are SCs and STs, BCs, minority communities, the poor and the disabled. In addition, women and certain groups of children are also adversely affected by social and economic exclusion. The State, according to Vision 2020, will play a proactive and aggressive role in empowering and protecting all disadvantaged groups, including the women and children, thereby bringing in all disadvantaged section of the society into the mainstream economy and societal activities. To achieve this vision, the government has decided to actively promote the following initiatives:

(i) Eradicating poverty by: (a) strengthening public employment schemes; (b) implementing a focused public distribution system; and (c) improving pension schemes for the aged, disabled and widowed;

(ii) Developing disadvantaged groups through specific strategies to build their capabilities; providing access to State and civil institutions; and enacting and enforcing legislation to protect the interests of vulnerable groups;

(iii) Developing backward areas through a special focus on initiatives to improve development indicators such as in education and health;
(iv) Protecting the rights of the child through specific programmes to ensure equal opportunity and freedom from discrimination and want;

(v) Empowering women by (a) increasing gender-sensitivity through training; (b) addressing gender inequalities in education and employment; (c) increasing gender sensitivity in health programmes; and (d) preventing atrocities against women; and

(vi) Ensuring equal opportunity and the full participation of the disabled in the economy and society.

(4.4) Eliminating Child Labour:

At the time of the 1981 census, nearly 13 per cent of all working children in India lived in Andhra Pradesh. Today, at least 60 per cent of the State’s children do not attend school. Not only are these children denied the basic right to develop their full potential and be protected against exploitation, they work under the most adverse conditions. A major element of achieving Vision 2020 is, therefore, to eliminate child labour in Andhra Pradesh. To ensure this, the State has decided to rigorously enforce the ban on child labour and to prevent the practice by addressing the problem on different dimensions.

(4.4.1) Protecting Rights of the Child:

Andhra Pradesh firmly believes that children are its most valuable asset. It is, therefore, committed to protecting the basic rights of the child to equality, including equal opportunity and freedom from exploitation, and accepts its
obligation to act in the best interests of the child. A major element of the strategy to achieve Vision 2020, therefore, will be to work towards removing all the environmental and structural constraints that inhibit the fullest development of Andhra Pradesh’s children. The State has already made progress in many areas of concern such as infant child mortality, malnutrition and primary school enrolment. But many problems still need to be addressed effectively. These fall into the broad categories of child and maternal healthcare, nutrition, education, drinking water, sanitation, child labour and the special problems of the girl child, disabled children, slum and street children.

(4.4.2) Ensuring Education for Every Child:

Andhra Pradesh understands the importance of education in the socio-economic development of the child. The State, therefore, has decided to protect the child’s right to education by ensuring universal enrolment, retention and achievement of the minimum levels of learning. The State in its endeavour to protect the children’s rights has designed the following specific goals:

(i) The Universal enrolment and completion of five years of primary education by all children in the 6-11 age group;

(ii) The sharp reduction in drop-out rates; and

(iii) The reduction in disparities in literacy levels of girls and children belonging to disadvantaged groups such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, backward classes and minorities.
(4.4.3) Banning Child Labour:

The State, according to Vision 2020, will enforce the child labour abolition act in all factories and industries with greater vigour. A well-defined work plan is to be prepared to eliminate child labour, particularly in hazardous activities and industries in which it is currently prevalent. Along with notification of the rules under this act, the government will ensure that the enforcement machinery is strengthened and special courts be established in child labour intensive areas.

(4.4.4) Preventing the Practice of Child Labour:

To eradicate the practice of child labour, the State will ensure that all vulnerable children have access to education and that the community is mobilised against the child labour. Special schools will be established under the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) and NGOs will be encouraged to provide non-formal education. Primary education will be made compulsory, particularly in child-labour intensive areas, and parents will be made responsible for ensuring that their children go to school.

(4.4.5) Caring for Children in Difficult Circumstances:

Some children suffer from particularly severe problems. They are subjected to child abuse, neglect, abandonment and exploitation. These problems are usually the fallout of poverty, family disintegration and a deteriorating social environment in poor urban neighbourhoods. Andhra Pradesh will ensure the physical and emotional well being of children in difficult circumstances through community and family interventions and will attack the root cause by achieving all sectoral goals.
that promote the well being of all sections of society. A major element of achieving Vision 2020 is to eliminate child labour in Andhra Pradesh.

(4.5) Andhra Pradesh Government’s Agenda for Education:

Education has a critical role to play in development. Recognising this, Andhra Pradesh firmly believes that outlays on education are an investment and not expenditure. It says that education allows an individual to develop the knowledge and skills to capture economic opportunities and thus increase his or her income. This provides the basis to capture further opportunities. Education also leads to improvement in other critical areas such as health and family planning. This is particularly true in the case of female literacy. Studies have shown that educated women can take better decisions about nutrition and healthcare for their families. They are also more open to family planning and have fewer children. In addition, greater literacy and basic education help people understand their needs and demand services. This expands facilities for the public and, at the same time, improves the utilisation of these facilities. Education, thus, empowers the individual.

To achieve the Vision 2020, Andhra Pradesh needs to make education a dynamic and vibrant sector, keeping pace with the changing needs of the State’s economy and society. This calls for the strengthening, transforming and expanding of elementary and higher education, including the revamping of their management, curriculum and teaching methods. In other words, Andhra Pradesh will need to transform the current educational system comprising elementary education so that it can play a role of catalyst in the economy and society. The emphasis is on
providing high quality education to the poor to correct the current unequal situation in which a quality school and college education is available only to better off in society.

(4.5.1) Ensuring Full Literacy:

Literacy is the foundation for building an enlightened, self-reliant society and a skilled workforce. However, today, one out of two people in Andhra Pradesh is illiterate and Andhra Pradesh ranks 26th in terms of literacy among the 32 states and Union Territories in the country. Furthermore, as noted earlier, there are considerable disparities between the literacy levels of specific groups such as rural women, SCs, STs, BCs and minorities, and the rest of the population. The main causes of low literacy are poverty, lack of access to schools, an adverse student-teacher ratio, poor infrastructure, low enrolment and large dropout rates. For example, between class I and VII, dropout rates are as high as 66 per cent. This means that, on average, only 35 per cent of the State's children complete elementary education. Among the SCs and STs the dropout rate is even higher - as much as 73 per cent and 82 per cent respectively.

(4.5.2) Providing More Teachers and Training:

A major element of the approach to strengthening primary education will be to improve current learning levels by lowering the teachers-pupil ratio. Under the World Bank funded Andhra Pradesh Economic Restructuring Programme (APERP), the government has already committed itself to filling all existing
primary teacher vacancies and sanctioning the additional posts necessary to achieve a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:45 by 2002.

(4.5.3) Building More Schools and Classrooms:

Growing enrolment in primary education in recent years has led to a shortage of schools and classrooms. Currently, the State has 30-40 percent of the classrooms required. Furthermore, facilities such as water supply and toilets are either limited or non-existent. This has a great impact than realised as, for instance, the parents are reluctant to send girls to school since there are either no separate toilets for girls or no toilets at all. Recognising the importance of an appropriate physical environment for effective learning and to induce children to remain in school, the State will seek to provide the number of schools the much-needed classrooms and other infrastructure required. Under the APERP, the State aims to build at least 25,000 school buildings. Already, 1,112 new primary schools have been established in backward areas to increase access to primary education.

(4.5.4) Increasing the Number of Residential Schools:

The State has set up residential schools to offer quality school education to poor and talented rural children. The Andhra Pradesh Residential Educational Institutions Society (APREIS) is now running 137 such schools and the Andhra Pradesh Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (APSWREIS) is running 180 schools. The special feature of these schools is a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:30, which is higher than the norm of 1:50. This programme will be further strengthened and expanded to achieve the goal of strengthening institutional
capacity to ensure that children from socially disadvantaged groups complete a primary education of appropriate quality. The goal is to set up one such school for every mandal.

(4.5.5) Redesigning Curriculum:

To significantly raise literacy levels, the children must be motivated into staying at school for at least 5 to 7 years. At present, children dropout of school in large numbers because they find learning unappealing. They also find the education to be rigid, formal and unrelated to their lives. The curriculum will thus be made more interesting for and relevant to the children. In this regard the government has to initiate efforts to redesign the curriculum. This effort will be piloted in identified schools and then extended all over the State in phases. Additionally, once the curriculum is changed, teachers will need to be equipped to teach it. The training infrastructure that exists in each district will have to be strengthened and expanded to include training.

(4.5.6) Expanding Early Childhood Care and Education:

A major factor behind the high dropout rates in elementary school is children’s lack of preparation for formal schooling. To successfully cope with the demands of formal schooling, children under the age six need to have adequate nutrition and an introduction to learning through informal methods such as playway learning. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme, implemented through the Anganwadi centres, has been introduced nationwide to meet this need. To achieve the Vision 2020 goals, the ECCE scheme will be
expanded to cover all children under the age six. Important elements of this initiative will include increasing the number of Anganwadi centres; providing practical training to Anganwadi workers; providing materials such as picture books, posters, and play material. In addition, the State will need to synchronise the timings of elementary schools and Anganwadi centres so that infants are provided for throughout the time their sibling caregivers are in school.

(4.5.7) Strengthening Programmes to Bring Drop-outs Back to School:

The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), launched all over India in 1993, provides interventions for improving the primary school system by training teachers, constructing and improving school buildings, and making school activities more attractive to induce children to stay in school. It also addresses the problem of how to bring the dropped out children back to school. The DPEP strategy includes innovative approaches such as using the services of ‘Education Volunteers’. Andhra Pradesh has successfully used these local volunteers to persuade parents to send their children back to school. The experiment showed that these activists were more successful than other interveners because, being from the same background, they were able to use effective persuasion methods in addition to presenting a powerful demonstration effect through the improvement education had brought to their own position. This approach will have to be backed by a mechanism to facilitate the re-entry of dropouts into school at levels appropriate to their ages. One mechanism, the back to school programme, has already been successfully established in the State. This programme comprises bridge courses to bring dropouts up to the standard required for re-entry into formal education. Such
courses will be particularly useful for girls of different age groups who have been forced to dropout to take care of household chores or siblings. To strengthen the programme, different approaches tailored to various age groups, will be developed. Thus, for the age group five to eight, round-the-year bridge courses and transition classes within the school complex will be appropriate. However, for the 9-12 age group, short or long duration education camps will be required. The State has made a firm commitment to eliminate child labour. The back to school programme will be a critical intervention in helping these children re-enter formal education.

(4.5.8) Focusing on Specific Disadvantaged Groups and Locations:

To achieve total literacy by 2020, the State has decided to pursue special initiatives to reduce the gaps between specific disadvantaged groups and backward areas and the mainstream sections of the population. The low literacy levels of these groups result from specific problems they face, problems that prevent their children from entering the education system and cause them to dropout. There are also other problems such as the economic constraints, lack of access to schools, the distance between dwellings and the nearest school, the lack of facilities and social taboos about girls mingling with boys. Without specific interventions to tackle their problems, these groups are in danger of being left out of the programme to develop the State’s people. To address these problems, State must have to ensure access to schools for SCs, STs, Backward classes, minorities, girls and children with special educational needs.
(4.5.9) Providing Non-formal Education:

To achieve total literacy, the State must need to provide for the large number of children, who have never had the opportunity to go to school, the access to educational facilities. Non-formal education is one main way to accomplish this. For children, the State is firmly committed to providing Non-Formal Education (NFE) with a clear objective of bringing dropout children back into mainstream education. The current NFE programmes have been allowed to continue for years together without any such emphasis. As a result, NFE is becoming a parallel, but inadequate, system of education with no linkages to the formal system. Recognising the need to change the approach, Andhra Pradesh is now using a more effective model of NFE, based on a successful UNICEF experiment in Mahaboobnagar district. The State has adopted a new bridge course curriculum that is being run at each NFE centre. Instructors have been provided with clear targets to admit children who have dropped out of school and prepare them for re-entry into school. The initial target for each NFE centre is to admit 10 dropout children into primary school after each bridge course. Further more, NFE centres now function within primary schools. This allows them to use the existing education infrastructure and ensure supervision by formal primary school teachers.

(4.5.10) Involving the Community in Increasing Enrolment and Improving Retention:

Low enrolment in school and low retention rates are often caused by socio-economic problems. Therefore, approaches to solving these problems need to be
rooted in specific local conditions such as raising awareness, providing incentives to attend school and providing free text books. Andhra Pradesh has also decided to make education a people's movement and enlist the support of local leaders, NGOs and teachers in creating awareness about the need to be educated. Furthermore, under the DPEP, School Committees comprising four parent members - elected by the parents of the school's Parent Teachers Association (PTA), and the principal of the school - have been chartered with the task of improving enrolment by undertaking suitable measures to encourage parents to send their children to school and instituting incentives and disincentives to wipe out child labour.

(4.5.11) Instituting Management Systems:

The first step in strengthening the management of the education system will have to be decentralising the management of primary and secondary education. The School Committees and the Panchayat Education Committees will have to manage schools with the help of local bodies at village, mandal, and district level. The responsibilities of these bodies will include:

(i) Undertaking appropriate measures to encourage parents to send their children to school, including incentives for keeping children in school and disincentives for making children work;

(ii) Ensuring enrolment and retention of all children;

(iii) Ensuring good performance by the school and students;
(iv) Encouraging local youth to become education volunteers, perhaps on payment of a fixed honorarium;

(v) Determining the school calendar and school timings subject to guidelines from the education department and the District Education Board;

(vi) Helping to augment infrastructure and supplement school resources;

(vii) Reviewing and monitoring all school programmes.

Apart from rationalising management, reducing duplication and improving coordination, this approach will also foster community participation. Since the State always plays a role in education, its policy-making capability needs to be strengthened. Furthermore, all education will have to be integrated into one department, and information systems to track performance, for instance, on increasing literacy, will have to be set up. This information will then have to be communicated to the public to ensure that performance remains up to standard. Priorities will need to be rigorously and consciously planned every year. A major element of achieving vision 2020 is to eliminate child labour in Andhra Pradesh by creating a progressive and well-managed education system. It also expects that Andhra Pradesh transforms itself into a knowledge-based society and provide child labour free society and huge impetus to economic growth.

(4.5.12) Trade Unionism and Child Labour in Andhra Pradesh:

For the first time in the country, six trade unions have formed an exclusive organisations aimed at eliminating child labour widely prevalent in many sectors of
Andhra Pradesh. The newly formed Andhra Pradesh Federation of Trade Unions for the Elimination of Child Labour (APFTUCL) has decided on projects focussed mainly on the uplift of child labourers in the state's five districts of Karimnagar, Nellore, Prakasam, Rangareddy and Srikakulam. The pioneering union comprises of AITUC (All India Trade Union Congress), BMS (Bharathiya Mastur Sabha), CITU (Centre for Indian Trade Unions), HMS (Hind Mazdoor Sangh), INTUC (Indian National Trade Union Congress) and TNTUC (Telugu Nadu Trade Union Congress). The APFTUCL attempts to create the capacity within the unions to reduce the number of child labour in the State. An intensive programme is to be undertaken to create a workforce that is informed on child labour (and) is sensitised and trained to act at work places, homes, neighbourhood and community, where the children are found to be working. The second part of the programme is to undertake awareness campaigns on child labour by targeting parents of child labourers, community leaders and opinion makers in various districts. The unions, with their proximity to the families, are to spread the message of preventing and ending the child labour.

(4.5.13) Child Labour Project:

A pilot project assisted by UNICEF entitled 'universalisation of quality primary education for all children with special focus on working children is being implemented by AP DPEP with view to prevent child labour. The aims of the project are to:

(i) To see that 100 per cent of the children of the age group 5+ to 6+ plus are not only enrolled in schools but also continue till they complete class V;
(ii) To clear the backlog of over aged children, i.e., classes I to V by providing transitional classes to enable them to progress to quick track by means of joyful multigrade self learning methods and join the classes suitable to their ages.

In order to accomplish their aims to abolish the child labour in the State, the following strategies are adopted by the State:

(i) To increase the awareness among the community on the issue of child labour and get them involved in the education of the children;

(ii) To strengthen the community based mechanisms for school management and support; and

(iii) To strengthen the primary school to ensure universal enrolment, attendance retention and achievement.

The government’s community mobilisation programme is aimed to ensure active participation of the local community through empowerment of parents, volunteers and forums for the elimination of child labour. The Bala Karmika Vimochana Vedika (BKVV) forum is one such organisation fighting for the liberation of the child labour. The BKVV is in a unique position to be trainers on behalf of the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the State council of Educational Research and Training on issues relating to teachers and elimination of child labour. The agenda of the BKVV are as follows: (i) to mobilise child labour into schools; (ii) to offer intensive bridge courses for newly enrolled older children; (iv) to train the education volunteers; (v) to instil and motivate other teachers, peer
groups and teachers’ union on the child labour programme; and (vi) to set up database for all children in the 5-14 age group in every village.

Over the years, the role of the government school teacher and indeed of any teacher in the rural Indian context has been limited to imparting education to whoever comes to school. In other words the teacher’s role commences only after a child reaches the school and all children outside school including school drop-outs are not specifically the concern of the teacher. The BKVV is a forum established in 1996, comprising government school teachers, who stress the fact that the teachers’ role has to extend beyond the school and up to the household if they are to deal with working children. As educationists, the BKVV’s definition of child labour encompasses all children who are out of schools. The BKVV has taken up the responsibility to protect child rights and especially ensure that no child is subjected to the drudgery of work and exploitation. Apart from withdrawing children from work and retaining them through bridge courses run by them within schools, the BKVV is developing as a lobby for protection of child rights. They are playing a role in highlighting issues relating to girl child education, early child marriages and bonded labour.

The BKVV recognises schools as effective and the only institutions that keep children out of work. The schools perform the radical function of enabling the children break with their tradition of backwardness and the teachers become the harbingers of freedom, equity and justice. In order to encourage working children access schools, the teachers have established processes to reach out to the parents and give them the confidence to send their children to schools. They have enthused
the villagers to contribute generously to building the infrastructure in schools. The needs of the school such as more teachers and accommodation, education material, have thus become community issues. Once the teachers extended their domain to cover children out of schools, not only are they in greater control of the process of getting children into school, but they also enhance their own status within the community.

In addition, the BKVV looks into modifying the policies of admissions, promotions and retention and attendance to make them simpler and more sensitive to the social and cultural background of the children. They realise that the poor children go through an every day struggle to stay in schools and that it is their responsibility to make it as easy as possible for them to remain in schools. Further, they recognise that the older children require special attention to prepare for studentship and bring them on par with other children of similar age group in school. The teachers find that their capabilities are better tested while dealing with working children since they have to fine tune their own skills and adopt innovative methods of teaching to be more effective. In short, this new activity raises the teachers' self esteem and results in genuinely empowering them as teachers.

(4.6) Methodology:

In this research an effort has been made to appraise the role of the State and NGOs in eradicating the problems of the child labour in the two cities of Andhra Pradesh. Three prominent NGOs working in the two cities, exclusively on issues of child labour, MVF, Balajyothi and Divya Disha, have been taken into analysis to study their role along with that of the State in redressing the issues surrounding the
child labour. The principles, objectives, structure, source and pattern of funding and other operational nature of these NGOs have been studied in detail. The NGOs contribution to the community has also been studied in detail.

In my field area of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, I have interviewed 100 child labourers to assess the reasons behind the social problem of child labour. The 'interview method' has been administered to gather the data to observe whether factors such as poverty, illiteracy, migration and social inequalities are the root cause of child labour in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The working children have been selected randomly taking into account the religious and caste distribution of the child labour (Table 4.4). The social background of the family has also been taken into account while choosing the working children (Table 4.5).

**Table 4.4. Religious and Caste Distribution of Respondents (in numbers; out of 100)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Christians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.5. Family Background of Respondents (in numbers)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Various factors responsible for the cause of child labour in the State of Andhra Pradesh have been analysed in detail. It has also critically examined the role of the State in eradicating the problems of the child labour. The effectiveness of the tools used by the State to redress the issues of the child labour has also been studied. The analysis of the tools used by the State confirms that the State of Andhra Pradesh has serious plans to deal with issues of concern to the society. However it also seeks the active participation of the NGOs in its effort to deal with the problems of eradicating child labour. However as discussed in previous chapters, the State’s role is limited for various reasons. In this chapter the roles of three NGOs have been studied in detail. It studies, in detail, the objectives and the scope of the NGOs in dealing with the problems of the child labour. It also analyses the role and contribution of three NGOs - MV Foundation, Balajyothi and Divya Disha - in preventing the problems of child labour in Andhra Pradesh.

(4.7) Study of M.V Foundation:

(4.7.1) Introduction:

The Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF) is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) working for the development of rural community with special emphasis on the elimination of child labour and the universalisation of basic education. It was established in 1981 in memory of Prof. M.Venkataramaiya. It was registered as a trust and began its work as a research and publishing institution. The trust is located at 28, Road No-1, West Meerdapally, Secundrabad-500026, Andhra Pradesh.
(4.7.2) Objectives of MVF:

The MVF has two important objectives: (i) the abolition of child labour; and (ii) the enrolment of all the children in schools. All activities of MVF are directed towards these two basic objectives. In the process of achieving these objectives, the activities of the MVF seek to create awareness among the disadvantaged sections regarding their social, economic and political predicament. Furthermore it also aims to facilitate the processes towards the building of a civil society through collective action, participation and community-based initiatives.

(4.7.3) Perspectives on Child Labour:

The MVF believes that all non-school going children are either potential child labourers or hard-core working children. In its view, going to school every day is itself an education not only for the child but also for the parents. Apart from this, going to school is an exercise in breaking away from the tradition of backwardness. Formal education, especially in the formative years of child, i.e. the age-group of 6-14 years, has an intrinsic value that cannot be provided by or replaced by any other means be it the non-formal or the vocational education.

For providing basic education, the MVF emphasises the strengthening of Government schools. The MVF is critical of the 'poverty argument' that children need to work to supplement the incomes of their parents and therefore formal schooling of such children is not possible. According to the MVF, poverty is not the crucial limiting factor, but there are other non-economic factors, which play a major role in influencing the decision of the parents to send a child to work or to
school. The reasons, which compelled parents to send their children to work rather than to school were, in fact social and cultural in nature. Access to school, was another major determinant. Poverty comes next to these two factors in order of importance.

According to MVF, there is a parental demand for educating their children and sending them to schools. They respond to a serious message for schooling their children and are willing to make adjustments in the work and also take on some more hardship.

(4.7.4) Principles Specific to MVF:

The basic principles of the MVF specifically related to the child labour and education are:

1. All children must attend full time formal day schools. Neither night schools nor non-formal education centres are of much use;

2. Any child out of school is a child labourer. The definition of the child labour encompasses every non-school going child irrespective of whether she or he is engaged in wage work or non-wage work, self-employed or working for others, employed in hazardous or non-hazardous occupations, employed on daily wage or on a contract basis as bonded labourers;

3. All work and labour is hazardous and harms the overall growth of the child;

4. There must be total abolition of child labour;

5. Any law regulating child work is unacceptable; and
6. Any justification perpetuating the existence of child labour must be condemned.

(4.7.5) Structure of MVF:

The MVF is a family trustee. The family members of Mamidipudi Venkatarangaya are the members of the board of trustees. The secretary of the trustee is the overall in-charge of the organisation. Below the secretary is the project co-ordinator, who is a key person in the organisational structure. The main functions of the co-ordinator are to plan and execute the projects related to child labour and basic education.

Since the project area is about 50 kilometres away from the headquarters, MVF has its personnel at the project area also. There are in-charges for Mandals, where MVF has been actively involved. Below Mandal in-charge is the filed supervisor who is in-charge of the 4 to 5 villages in the Mandal. In each village there is a volunteer who also acts as a teacher and education activist.

Besides these staff members there are personnel to run the camps and undertake the trainings for various functionaries. For each camp there is one-in-charge, below him or her is the warden to look after the boarding and lodging facilities. Then there is the teaching and non-teaching staff in each camp. There is a training institute to give continuous training to persons at various levels. One person is the over all in-charge of the training, below which there are trainers.
(4.7.6) Organisational Chart of MVF:

![Organisational Structure of M.V. Foundation]

- M.V. Foundation
  - Managing Trustees
  - Secretary Trustees
  - Board of Trustees
  - Project Co-ordinator

  - Training In-Charge
    - Trainees
    - Non-Teaching Staff
  - Camp In-Charge
    - Wardens
  - Mandal In-Charge
    - Teachers
    - Supervisors
    - Village Volunteers/Teachers

(4.7.7) Source and Pattern of Funding:

The MVF finances its activities through several sources. The overseas contributions form about 60 per cent of total funds with another 20 per cent comes from the central government. The Government of Andhra Pradesh meets another 10 per cent. The remaining 10 per cent of funds are self-generated in the form of charity and public contribution.
The main funding agencies of the MVF are: (i) HIVOS, Netherlands; (ii) UNICEF; (iii) OXFAM (India); (iv) Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD), Government of India; (v) Department of social welfare, Government of Andhra Pradesh; and (vi) District Rural Development Agency, Rangareddy District.

(4.7.8) Contribution of MVF:

The main objective of the MVF is the elimination of child labour and universalisation of elementary education. As a result, the activities and programmes of the MVF are geared towards accomplishing these objectives.

(4.7.8.1) Classification of Children:

The MVF in its desire to achieve the objectives, broadly classify the children into three categories. They are (a) the children in school, (b) the idle children; and (c) the working children.

(a) The children in school are defined as:

- The children of dominant sections, who are already educated;
- The children of the Backward Classes who do not have the tradition of going to school but whose parents are motivated;
- The children who themselves are highly motivated.

(b) The idle children are perceived as potential child labourers:
• Children who have dropped out of school because of lack of attention at school;

• Children who are too young to be sent to work but whose parents do not have the perseverance or the skill to send them to school;

• The children of the lower castes who do not have the tradition of literacy.

(c) The working children are:

• Those children, who witness soft drop-outs;

• The children, who have never been enrolled in school mainly due to their lower caste origin;

• The children belonging to families, whose parent’s think that children must be out to work as a natural course of life.

In formulating the strategies for the achievement of the goals of abolishing child labour and the universal enrolment of children, the MVF has the following understanding.

• All the non-school going children are either potential child labourers or hardcore working children;

• Specific strategies have to be designed for withdrawing the children from work in accordance with their age and nature of work they are engaged in;
• There is a need to strengthen the existing government structures such as the schools and social welfare hostels through community pressure and not create any permanent parallel structures.

Keeping the above in view the MVF has further classified the children into three age groups. They are (i) 5 to 8 years; (ii) 9 to 11 years; and (iii) 12 to 14 years.

(4.7.8.2) Strategies Adopted for Various Age Groups:

The MVF has worked out a list of activities towards the abolition of child labour and successful enrolment into local schools. However the strategies, adopted by the MVF, seem to differ from one age group to another. These strategies could be discussed elaborately below.

(4.7.8.3) Strategy for the Age Group of 5 to 8 Years:

Children in this age group are largely engaged in non-wage earning work, domestic work, tending livestock of one's own family etc. Some of the children are also found to be idle at home doing just about nothing. Since these children are not as yet hardcore working children who would earn a wage income, the MVF works towards their enrolment into local government schools. For this, intensive motivation and awareness programmes are conducted to encourage parents to send their children to schools. Every individual family and the child are reached out for this purpose. The MVF volunteers also mobilise parents and community members to form Parent Committees (PCs) and Village Education Committees (VECs).
These organised bodies take up the responsibility of running the government schools and ensuring its systematic functioning.

The local government schools also need to be strengthened to accommodate large influx of students due to the enrolment drive taken up by the MVF. For this purpose Parent Teacher Association (PTAs) and Mandal Education Committees (MECs) are being formed. The PTA in every school raises funds for the appointment of additional teachers on behalf of the community. The MEC would act as a lobby to resolve problems, which have not been sorted out at a village level. The local school teachers are given support by the MVF to improve the quality of education. This is accomplished by providing training in alternative methods of teaching.

(4.7.8.4) Strategy for the Age Group of 9 to 11 Years:

This is the most difficult age group to deal with. Most of the activities of the MVF are centred on this group. These children are already involved in hardcore child labour and many of them have been bonded workers. It is here that the question of hardcore child labour is addressed where the children need to be first withdrawn from work and brought into mainstream by enrolling them in regular schools. For this group the MVF’s task is threefold:

1. The first task is to convince the parents that their attitude towards education requires a change. For this purpose, the MVF youth workers reach out to each and every parent and try to convince them that they should educate their children. This however is not an easy change for the parents.
2. The second task is to convince the child workers and give them the confidence that it is possible for them to study and get away from the drudgery of work. In addition, they need to develop confidence in themselves and believe that they too can join their peers and study in schools.

3. The third task is to take the children away from their homes and away from their work and bridge the gap between these children and the school-going children in terms of academic abilities. The MVF does this via bridge course and summer camp.

(4.7.8.5) Strategy for the Age Group of 12 to 14 Years:

It is the children of this age group who have missed the opportunity of going to school and now they are too old to join a primary school. Therefore, these children are put in long duration camps after their withdrawal from work. The MVF’s effort is to help them pass class 7 examination and join the secondary school in class 8 and Social Welfare Hostels.

(4.7.8.6) Bridge Course:

According to the MVF there is a fundamental flaw in many of the existing programmes to re-enrol the children into schools. No orientation is given to the child to cope with the change. The need to ensure that older children are not made to attend the classes along with the children several years younger to them is often over looked. The MVF’s bridge course fills this particular lacuna.
Under the bridge course the children withdrawn from work are brought to stay in camps for about four months of intensive training. The teachers also stay in the camp with the children for the entire duration of the programme. The training given to the children ensures that at the end of the camp period these children are equipped to join the class corresponding to their age. Following the camp, the children are admitted into government schools and hostels. This is possible because both the children and the teachers are highly motivated.

The camp also provides an opportunity for ‘glorifying’ schools and creating confidence in parents about their children’s capacity to learn. It provides a milieu for students to share their experiences and acts as a bridge between the parents and the community. In the camp there are about 200 students. The camps, which are held in the months of April and July, are residential in nature. At the camp children are involved in group activities from morning to evening. Although the teachers organise and manage these activities in the beginning, the children start doing their activities independently by the third week. Through rotational committees, the children themselves manage the general workings of the committees.

The camp is run in three phases. Each phase plays an important role in the academic development and social adjustment of the child. In the first phase of the camp, the child is made to feel comfortable in his or her new environment. A learning atmosphere is created so that he or she is prepared for his or her first full time learning experience. This period orients the child to shift from being a labourer to being a student, and from working alone to working as a member of a peer group. In this stage the child is also introduced to numbers, and basics of
reading and writing skills like recognition of alphabets, generation of words, sentences and stories.

In the second phase reading, writing and mathematical skills are imparted through activities. There is a strong emphasis placed on developing reading as a hobby and a habit. The child’s quest for more and more books is met by the libraries that are set up in the camps. Mathematical operations are taught and their interrelationships explained. The concepts are practiced through the use of local material.

The main objective of the third phase is to shift the child to the existing school curriculum and system of learning. During this phase the text books for the different subjects are used and the child’s understanding in different areas is developed.

(4.7.8.7) Pedagogy:

Teaching methodology used at the camp emphases keeping the child interested to quicken the process of learning. The method used also prepares the child to be able to shift to the formal school syllabus as soon as possible.

On completion of bridge course, the children are ready to enter appropriate class for their age in the government schools some of the students become ready for class 4 and some even for class 5.
(4.7.8.8) Assessment of Bridge Course:

Thus the bridge course is the essence of the MVF’s strategy of withdrawing children from work and putting them into formal schools. The bridge course plays a crucial role in transforming the child from a worker to a student. But it is not the child alone who is influenced by the bridge course. It is also instrumental in facilitating the conversion of parents from the parents of child labourers to the parents of a student. This is extremely crucial for the success of the programme, given the key role, which parents play. In fact, bridge course is also the main strategy of MVF for converting the village society’s attitude from ‘indifference’ to whether child is going to school or to work to one of ‘Pride and Prestige’ in sending all children in the village to school. No other programme dealing with child labour or illiteracy has bothered with the processes that need to be set up to convert a child from a labourer to a student. The processes, which involve not only the children but also their parents, employees, teachers, government officials and politicians, are important. The manner in which the bridge courses conducted is important. In this regard, the manner in which the bridge courses are run by MVF ensures that all these processes are in place.

At a more basic level, the bridge course takes care of a fundamental requirement of the older children. They make sure that the knowledge that these children have already gained during the course of their work is fully utilised and when, at the end of the bridge course, they go to school, they not only have the necessary confidence to deal with the lessons but are also admitted to higher classes, which are commensurate with their age. What the bridge courses
ultimately demonstrate is that while it is very important to set up schools, it will be a wasted effort if meaningful access to schools is not provided for. What one means by meaningful access is that processes have to be set in place, which facilitates the transition of the child from a labourer to a student. In the protracted battle against child labour, running bridge courses and strengthening the formal school reinforce each other to become an integrated process.

(4.7.8.9) Bridge Courses in Government Schools:

The MVF has encouraged the starting of bridge courses in regular government schools as many of the enrolled children were quite old and required special attention. The problem was therefore in designing a strategy to retain them and prepare the older children to go into classes corresponding to their age.

The problem of children who remained in class-1 for two to three years was particularly found to be disturbing. These children remained in the same class and continued to do so even after they reached 8 years of age. For lack of attention there was no improvement in their studies and thus they got pushed out of schools.

To implement bridge Courses in class-1 teachers at a ratio of 1:40 were appointed for class-1 alone. At the end of the programme it is envisaged that all children in class-1 are prepared for higher class according to their age, and that none are dropped out or retained. In the next new academic year children in 5+ age group alone are in class-1. This programme is also referred to as 'class-1 Khali Karo' Programme.
(4.7.8.10) Post-camp Activities:

The children, who come for the camp are from the backward communities. They are the first generation learners in their families to go to school. There is no proper support from the parents for the children to study and there is the fear of children dropping out. Therefore, the MVF assists in admitting these children into Social Welfare hostels where they are provided with academic and social support in the hope that they will stay in school at least up to class 10.

A teacher who acts also as a counsellor is assigned to each hostel to assist the students who are trying to cope with living in the hostel and going to school. The teacher helps the children in solving their educational and social problems, and tries to ensure their retention in school. Similar to follow-up arrangement for hostellers, all children in the government schools are also continually monitored and supported by community teachers.

(4.7.8.11) Education for Adolescent Girls:

The MVF has taken special initiative in the education of adolescent girls in the Rangareddy district. The social norms and role expectations, discrimination against the girl child and force her to play a subordinate role. It is against this background that the MVF intervened in withdrawing girl-children from work and provide them with access to full time formal education. To break the traditional and deep rooted norms and attitudes, which discriminate against the girl’s advancement, MVF conducts short and long term camps for adolescent girls. The camps for girls are similar in nature but are more intensive compared to those of
boys. The camps ensure a sustainable access for adolescent girls into the formal education system. The girls after the completion of bridge course are admitted to government schools and Social Welfare hostels. The camp at Alur village runs throughout the year for the girls.

(4.7.8.12) Teacher/Education Activist and Teacher Training:

The key to the success of the MVF activities is the role played by the teacher. The teacher's role here is different from the role played by a teacher in a regular school. In MVF programmes he or she is the education activist. The teachers are drawn from the village community and are often first generation literates themselves. Some of them are even former child labourers who have received education. Being the first generation learners themselves they recognise the hazardous of being working children and also the dignity formal schooling can give them.

These youth volunteers do most of the field work for MVF. They organise village level publicity activities, street theatre, public meetings, mass meetings and cultural activities on the issue of child labour in order to sensitise the community and build an atmosphere for the elimination of child labour. These activists also take up the responsibility of targeting the enrolment and retention of children in schools and hostels. Because these youth come from a similar background, they are able to anticipate the resistance that will be experienced and the methods that should be used to counter it successfully.
The MVF provides training to the education activists based on the background of the trainees and the role they have to play in the MVF activities in the training institute located at following basic principles.

1. There should be space for the trainee to freely express his sentiments with regard to child labour and universalisation of elementary education.

2. There must be recognition for the youth’s own abilities and strengths, as ‘education activists’ rather than as full-fledged professionals substituting for well qualified formal teachers.

3. The training must use the language of the people in support of their struggle for right to education and schooling.

4. The trainees’ knowledge of and experience in the community, must be respected as they work towards the cause of child labour and education.

5. The training must give the education activists the skills to deal with community and work with the children. Further, the training should prepare them to teach at the camp and

6. The teacher training programme must workout strategies, depending upon the context, to meet the real interest of the children.

(4.7.8.13) Community Participation:

MVF strongly believes that without community participation and support no programme is successful. MVF has strengthened the community to face the programmes that affect the education of their children. The MVF involves the
community through Parents Teacher Association (PTA), the Village Education Committee (VEC) and the Mandal Education Committee (MEC).

MVF makes special efforts to include sarpanches, head master of local school, parents and youth in these committees. These committees have been instrumental in acting as pressure groups to sensitise the administration to the education needs of the community. These are very helpful in bringing the child workers in rural areas into school. The committees are also involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the existing schools. They have been reasonably successful both in terms of utilising existing infrastructure as well as developing additional resources.

(4.7.8.14) Parent Teacher Association (PTA):

The PTA is established in every school. The PTA helps in raising funds for the appointment of teachers on behalf of the community when there is high enrolment of students, and not enough teachers to teach.

(4.7.8.15) Village Education Committee (VEC):

The VEC has taken up the responsibility of running the government schools. Increasing demands have been placed by the VEC on the schools to strengthen and improve their services. Teachers of government schools have become more regular and there is improvement in the quality of their teaching in some areas due to pressure from the VECs. The VEC helps to neutralise the landlords and talk to parents when bonded children ran away to camp to study.
(4.7.8.16) Mandal Education Committee (MEC):

This committee acts as lobby to resolve the problems, which have not been sorted out at village level.

(4.7.8.17) Non-Formal Education (NFE):

The MVF is critical of the NFE programmes. In its view NFE programmes can never cater to the child’s need of having access to a full time regular school. The NFE centres with all its paraphernalia only justify the child’s exploitation more than anything else. The part time schools like NFE centres fail to provide an access to a new pattern of life. Only full time schools gives this break to the child from its past, its tradition and allows it to grow and look forward to a new future.

(4.7.9) Impact of the MVF programmes:

(4.7.9.1) Quantitative Achievement:

The MVF’s activities have expanded rapidly during the last decade. Its area of operation has expanded from 3 villages in 1991 to about 500 villages in 1999. Currently the MVF is active in ten mandals of Rangareddy district and in another six mandals its activities have been expanding. More than 80,000 children in 500 villages have benefited from the MVF programmes of withdrawing children from work and enrolling them into school. About 85 villages have been made child labour free and in more than 400 villages all children below the age of 11 years are in formal regular schools. Nearly 5000 adolescent girls have gained access to schools through MVF. More than 4000 bonded labourers have been released. Over
1600 education activist and 8000 youth volunteers contribute to the programme today. A forum of government teachers known as Bala Karmika Vimochana Vedieka (BKVV) was formed to carry on the campaign against child labour. There are about 1000 government teachers in the forum.

(4.7.9.2) Change in Community Attitude:

The MVF through its activities has made significant impact on the overall development in the Rangareddy district. In the first place there is now a clear understanding of the implication of a child working and not going to school for the first time. The process of withdrawing a child from work is viewed as an integral part of sending a child to school. At the same time, there is a greater appreciation of the fact that a child need not be deprived of education and that the community can play a major role in ensuring that all children are in school. The areas covered by the MVF have seen significant and unprecedented participation of the community, which has not only played a key role in sustaining the motivation of individuals and parents, but also contributed significantly in financial terms. In most schools, rather than waiting for the government to supplement the infrastructure, the community has come forward to school buildings. Much of the success of the MVF programme has been a consequence of active participation of the community in the management of the programme.

(4.7.9.3) Change in Parents Attitude:

A second major development in the areas covered by the MVF is the attitudinal change in the parents towards their children now in school. Most of the
parents have made enormous sacrifices in terms of time and money to ensure that their children remain in school. The work done by the child has been redistributed among other adults in the family. In some instances cattle and other livestock have been sold once the children were enrolled in schools as there was no one to look after them now. Above all the parent’s confidence in the capabilities of their children has increased enormously. Parents have begun to spend more money than before on their children.

(4.7.9.4) Change in Employers Attitude:

There is also a perceptible change in the attitude of employers towards children. The employers are no longer in a position to employ children quite as easily as before. Infact, community pressure has resulted in employers voluntarily sponsoring children working with them for joining Bridge Courses and later for enrolment.

(4.7.9.5) Change in Cropping Pattern and Rise in Adult Wages:

Due to decline in the availability of children to work, the wages of adults have increased in the areas covered by the MVF programme. Further, landlords have been forced to change cropping patterns. Crops such as floriculture, which depended to a large extent on children during the flower picking operations, are now no longer popular.
(4.7.9.6) Rise in Girls Age of Marriage:

Due to the MVF efforts many of the adolescent girls have joined the Bridge Course and later formal schools. Coupled with this and the changes in attitudes of parents and the community the average age at which girl is married has increased. Earlier all the girls were married before they attained the age of 15 years. Now they get married after they completed 18 years.

(4.7.9.7) Change in Regular Teachers Attitude:

The government teachers gradually began to evince interest in the process of teaching and learning in the camps, with thousands of children from the camps joining the government schools. They shed their initial hostility and resistance to the idea of children learning better in programme outside their schools. They understand the significance of the MVF approach for the older children and decided to implement similar Bridge courses in the formal school itself. The concept of bridge courses has activated the teachers and consequently strengthened the formal schools. The teacher’s attempt to seek the attention of the children, has helped in the former being creative and innovative. With this new found freedom to teach the teachers have gone beyond the boundaries of the class room.

(4.7.9.8) Adoption of MVF Model:

The MVF activities have also resulted in some significant changes in the pattern of thinking both at government and the NGO level. The MVF model with its emphasis on Bridge Courses has been instrumental in inspiring large-scale programmes such as ‘Back to schools’ and ‘Summer Camp’ programmes run by
the government of Andhra Pradesh. The MVF model also inspired some State
governments to start similar ventures in their states. The states like Karnataka,
Madhya Pradesh, Orisa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh have made
some attempts to adopt MVF model in one form or the other as part of Alternative
schooling. Thus, there is a scope of adopting the MVF model in other areas so as to
make the abolition of child labour thorough ‘Universalisation of Elementary
Education’.

(4.8) A Case Study of Balajyothi:

(4.8.1) Introduction:

Balajyothi is a NGO working with a desire to create an access to all non-
school going children of the city to schools and create a city without child labour.
It was established on 14th November 1995 as ‘Hyderabad District Child Labour
Project Society’ and popularly known as ‘Balajyothi’. It is at Hyderabad District
Collectorate, Nampalli Station Road, Hyderabad. Its working languages are
Telugu, Urdu and English.

(4.8.2) Objectives of Balajyothi:

The Balajyothi has few important objectives. They are (i) the sensitisation
of child labour issue; (ii) to assess the reasons for the child labour problem in two
cites; and (iii) the prevention and rehabilitation of child labour by providing them
schooling with hostel facility.
(4.8.3) Perspectives on child labour:

The Balajyothi argues that ‘the child labour is a crime’ should be a social norm. It also argues that ‘the Child’s place is in school’ should also be a social norm. These social norms cannot be built with hazardous and non-hazardous divisions, according to the Balajyothi. ‘Any labour and work is hazardous for child’ whether it is hazardous or non-hazardous, paid or unpaid and domestic or industrial labour. The Balajyothi says it is very difficult and not in the interest of child labour to divide them into hazardous and non-hazardous.

Access of school plays an important role in preventing the swelling of child labour and it is obvious that every 5-8 years age group child who is out of school now will become child labour with in no time. There are nearly 30,000 children who are in the age group of 5-8 years and out of school. They will invariably join the labour force in the next one to two years. Every child who is out of school is a child labour or potential child labour.

The child labour issue cannot be dealt with in isolation of education. The experience shows that where there is a good government school, the number of non-school going children is less. In other words the number of child labour in that area is less. It is very difficult to divide the children especially in urban areas as hazardous and non-hazardous where children shift from job to job in no time. Hazardous child labour or child labour is same in minds of parents and children. We cannot confuse them and make them compromise in these differentiating lines. Balajyothi argues that we have to attack the issues of the child labour and develop
social pressure against child labour. Social pressure cannot be divided into hazardous and non-hazardous.

(4.8.4) Principles Specific to Balajyothi:

The Balajyothi argues that poverty is not the only reason for the child labour. There are different reasons for the presence of child labour in the society. The main reasons, according to Balajyothi, are as the denied access to school or distance of school from the place of their residence. The Balajyothi also argues that the high drop-outs are due to insufficient school facilities. They also feel that the traditional backwardness of community, where there is no established culture in the family to send a child to education, is partly responsible for the cause of the child labour. It also opines that a break in education has been witnessed due to migration, health of the child or problems in the family.

The Balajyothi strongly feel that even if the poverty is the reason there should be no compensation to the parents as it indirectly legitimises the child labour and makes a parent to look at their children as commodity. The more important factor is it will disturb present poor parents, who are sending their children to school without any compensation. And it vitiates the minds of the same populace. So it is decided that there should be no stipend component in the project.

Hyderabad being a city is attracting migrant work force from different parts of the State and the nation. Hence the child labour problem here is more severe and the effect of interior districts is also witnessed there. In this regard the Balajyothi
feels that there is a need for more elaborate plan for the city and it should become an example for other areas in this aspect.

(4.8.5) **Structure of Balajyothis**:

The organisation is headed by Chairman and followed by the executive committee of project society. The office of the society is established with the secretary and full time project officer, the programme coordinator and field officers or programme officers, supervisors and community coordinators.

(4.8.6) **Organisation Chart**:

(4.8.7) **Sources and Pattern of Funding**:

The Balajyothis gets up to 80 per cent of its funding from central government and the remaining from the State government. At times Balajyothis also receive UNICEF funds when there are particular training programmes.

(4.8.8) **Role of Balajyothis**:

(4.8.8.1) **Balajyothis Community Schools**:

The Balajyothis’s main effort is to provide access to schools for any child in every slum, create awareness and motivation in the community, and involve the community in every step. In a record holding way, the child labour schools known as ‘Balajyothis Primary Schools are started, covering 461 slums which do not have access to school in the city of Hyderabad. Every school is started with active involvement of local community, youth groups, basthi leadership, mothers and other social groups. The present strength of these schools is impressive 22,871.
Every school has a Mothers Committee and a School Education Committee (SEC). Taking advantage of the State Government's Janmabhoomi programme, Balajyothi schools are started wherever there is a demand for primary school. The success of Balajyothi proved that poverty is not the main hindrance for children to go to schools.

Teachers in these schools are local youth, mainly women, who are identified by the community. The teachers are trained in community mobilisation mechanisms attitude towards developing supporting systems in basthi and teaching methodologies. Every school helpers (ayas) to look after the siblings who accompany with their sisters and brothers. This has helped the schools in mobilising the children who are taking the household responsibility.

Table 4.6. Balajyothi Community School’s Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BJ Schools</th>
<th>Children in Balajyothi Schools</th>
<th>Slums Covered by BJ</th>
<th>Teachers Working</th>
<th>Ayas working</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>22,871</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.8.8.2) Strengthening the Government schools:

The Balajyothi observed that lack of infrastructure and motivation as the glaring hindrances that are obstructing the best output of well-drawn government educational system and schools. Attending to these needs, from its philosophy of
making children access to education, the Balajyothi has provided infrastructural material like black boards, chalks, slates and other scribbling material essential for the well functioning of government schools. The Balajyothi convinced the parents of dropout children in the basthies and motivated them to readmit their children into schools and this motivating activity helped to raise the strength of children in government schools. In some areas the Balajyothi provided para-teacher motivation teachers to government schools to contain adverse teacher-children ratio thus enabling the smooth functioning of teaching process.

Table 4.7. Balajyothi’s Role in Government Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of</th>
<th>Govt. Schools covered by BJ</th>
<th>BJ teachers working in Govt. schools</th>
<th>Ayas working in Govt. schools where BJ works</th>
<th>Children in Govt. schools opened by BJ</th>
<th>Defunct schools covered by BJ through Govt. schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6450</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.8.8.3) Bridge Course Camps:

By identifying the non-school going age group (5-8 years) as the potential child labour, the Balajyothi provided school access for this group. For the second group, i.e. 9-14 age group, who are working or drop-outs, the residential camps are conducted. Through these bridge courses, the children are prepared for educational standard suited for their age. For example, a 10 year old child labour might have lost his or her education at 1st or 2nd standard. In order to make this child join the 4th or 5th standard, which according to his or her age group is appropriate, the
bridge course camps gives the necessary education, training and support. The Balajyothi conducted these camps both independently and in collaboration with organisations like Child and Police Programme (CAP), women and child welfare organisations. After the completion of bridge course, these children, according to their will were either admitted in hostels or sent to schools near to their home. Nearly 1,700 children are mainstreamed through this process.

(4.8.8.4) Work with Social Welfare Hostels (Back to school program):

The Balajyothi has made use of the hostels under the Social Welfare Department to accommodate the children adopted through its programmes. Apart from the children coming from bridge course camps, nearly 4,000 child labour were mainstreamed this way. Through back to school programme into government schools, one hundred girl child labour a year were admitted by the Balajyothi into the girl child rehabilitation camp organised by Andhra Pradesh Women's Finance Corporation. After the completion of this camp, the children were mainstreamed into government schools and Social Welfare Hostels. The children thus joined by the Balajyothi in the Social Welfare Hostels are mainly drop-out children and child labourers. Keeping in view of the causes for drop-outs, the Balajyothi appointed follow-up teachers in the government hostels to take care of these children. At present the Balajyothi is having its presence in all the social welfare hostels in the city.
(4.8.8.5) Agenda with Domestic Child labour and Street Children:

The Balajyothi conducted a sample survey on domestic child labour and street children thereby began its work with the agenda of giving educational access to these two groups. The domestic child labour in our society has been in existence all through the ages, while in the past the children worked in the family occupations were determined by the caste system. In contemporary society, people from rural areas are migrating to the cities looking for employment opportunities. With this increased urbanisation, the children are becoming the victims thereby forcing them to become domestic child labour. These children are forming the major stock of domestic child labour and are being employed for meagre wages. These bonded children are doing various hectic jobs like cleaning utensils, washing clothes, cooking and guarding the children of the employer. There are various legislations and acts to stop children from working in hazardous conditions. However there is no law to guard the rights of these children working as maid servants.

Towards rehabilitating domestic child labour, the Balajyothi, in December 1998, conducted a sample survey in Borabanda area of Hyderabad city to identify the reasons that are preventing these children from going to schools and to become a part of mainstream through education. The survey covered 24 apartments identifying 72 domestic child workers, of which 35 were mainstreamed into schools through counselling and bridge courses. With the success and experiment of this small initiative, a larger initiative has been started identifying 2000 domestic child workers. About 20 bridge course schools are in the process of being
constructed for these children and those with some education capacities, who can be directly admitted into schools, are being sent to hostels.

**Table 4.8. Number of Children Mainstreamed into Social Welfare Hostels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Through Girl Child Camp by Women and Child Welfare</th>
<th>Through Camp at Naredmet</th>
<th>Through ‘Back to School Scheme’</th>
<th>Bridge Course Centres at 20 BJ Schools</th>
<th>Through collaboration with other NGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>2250</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4.8.8.6) Motivating Through Pressure Groups like Media:

The Balajyothi took utmost interest in motivating the groups and persons involved in its activities to make Hyderabad child labour free. For this purpose, the Balajyothi used media and other pressure groups to influence its target groups. Through media coverage of the Balajyothi activities, many people from different social sections of the city took a serious note of issues regarding children and child labour.

As part of this programme, a media workshop was conducted to sensitise the issues of children and child labour. With *juvenile rights forum*, which consists of advocates, journalists and other social activists, the Balajyothi took initiative to provide education access to children in the Juvenile Homes. In this process, schools were started in the observation homes of both boys and girls. After the
Balajyothi's initiative the government identified the scope and necessity to appoint teaching staff in the observation homes. A very positive result towards education access to children was recorded in this aspect.

(4.8.8.7) Construction of School Buildings:

The major problem the project has faced in the slums is space and proper buildings for the schools. To mitigate this problem an active search programme is taken up to identify places for construction of school buildings. A major programme is taken up under Janmabhoomi to construct the Balajyothi school buildings. As a result about 200 school buildings were sanctioned. They are in different stages of progress. Already 50 school buildings have been completed and more than 8,000 children are studying in these schools. With the efforts of the district administration, the Balajyothi is mobilising donors to contribute for the construction of these schools. It is sure that all the Balajyothi school buildings will be completed by next academic year.

(4.8.8.8) Intervention in Enforcement:

The Balajyothi has taken and co-ordinated enforcement drives. In this regard it actively co-ordinates with the department of labour in implementing child labour acts. During the enforcement drives and survey in shops, establishments and industries, the Balajyothi teachers and supervisors are taking up the role of labour inspectors. The network of Balajyothi has helped in bringing working children into education process.
(4.9) A Case Study Of Divya Disha:

(4.9.1) Introduction:

Divya Disha is a NGO, which believes that it is a community seeking to be an agent of change, empowering individuals and organisations in their journey towards holistic development. It was established in 1988. Its working languages are Telugu, English and Hindi. Divya Disha is currently active in Secundrabad and Hyderabad. Its head office is at H.No. 10-2-273/D, Plot No. 252/1, Street No 5, West Marredpally, Secundrabad-26 Andhra Pradesh.

Some of the projects undertaken by the organisation are street children project, child line- 1098 and domestic child workers project. Divya Disha is also involved in co-management of the State run juvenile home. The organisation is also actively involved in the process of co-managing the State juvenile home for neglected and delinquent children.

Divya Disha has been working for the rights of the children in Hyderabad municipal locality for last decade. Divya Disha has identified children, who work as bonded labourers with the employers in the urban area. Through this project, Divya Disha would like to make meaningful and long lasting intersectoral interventions to alleviate the problems of these children. Since the organisation is already working with street children and campaigning for the implementation of CRC (Child Rights Campaign) in school, there is a good understanding of the problems faced by these children and the conviction that this target should also access their right to education.
(4.9.2) Objectives:

The objectives of Divya Disha are (i) to help children come out of child labour problems; (ii) rehabilitation of youths and children living in the streets; (iii) providing primary education for children in the slums; (iv) ensuring the right to education for child domestic workers; (v) campaigning for the rights of children in government schools, (vi) private schools and community schools in slums; and (vii) to make children and public aware of child rights.

(4.9.3) Perspectives on Child Labour:

It is estimated that there are 40,000 street children, who are working as child labourers, in Hyderabad. While most of them struggle for survival, they are exposed to the dangers of being abused, exploited and contracting life-threatening diseases. Apart from this, the society treats them as a menace. They constantly struggle for survival, leave alone enjoying their childhood. Divya Disha through various programs and strategies seeks to alleviate the problems of these less fortunate children.

(4.9.4) Principles Specific to Divya Disha:

Some of the principles specific to Divya Disha are (i) the identification of child labourers; (ii) establishing contact with parents and children working so as to motivate the children to attend the motivation centres; (iii) to sustain rapport building through regular discussions with the parents and employers of the children so as to stop any form of violence or abuse against the children and to relive the children from the burden of work; (iv) to invite parents and employers to motivation centres and meetings of children; (v) to involve the parents and
employers in the process of educating children; (vi) to conduct direct enrolment campaigns by the involvement of the community and department of labour for enrolment of children in schools/motivation centres; (vii) to involve the parents and employers in the rallies and campaigns; (viii) to establish contacts and rapport with apartment/colony associations, so as to sensitise and involve them in the campaign; and (ix) to sensitise their programmes in schools and organising child to child interaction between schools and motivation centres.

(4.9.5) Structure of Divya Disha

![Organisational Structure of Divya Disha](image)

(4.9.6) Structure of the Organisation:

![Organisational Structure of Divya Disha](image)
(4.9.7) **Sources and Pattern of Funding:**

No funds for street children and child labour projects - only donations - so freedom to experiment. The CRC and the schools that are being run for the child labour are supported by UNICEF. In January 1999 Divya Disha received Rs.6 lakhs for 25 schools 13 lakhs for 50 schools. Their estimated target is 80 thousand children. Divya Disha’s child line project receives its funding from the ministry of social justice and empowerment, Government of India. In 1999, they have received Rs.60,000 against their total budget of Rs.75,000.

(4.9.8) **Divya Disha’s Contribution:**

(4.9.8.1) **Street Presence:**

One of the most significant contributions of Divya Disha is to meet the children daily at the contact points, in places where children often gather.

(4.9.8.2) **Disha Rail Watch:**

It is very significant that most children who run away from home arrive in the two city by trains. Therefore the volunteers and staffs watch the railway platforms to make first contact with these children, so as to counsel and help the child to go back home or be admitted into home for street children. This would prevent children from adapting themselves to the street life and becoming child labourers.
(4.9.8.3) Street Children Project:

It is estimated that there are 40,000 street children (who are working as child labourers) in Hyderabad. While most of them struggle for survival, they are also exposed to the dangers of being abused, exploited and contracting life threatening diseases. Furthermore the society treats them as a menace. They constantly struggle for their survival, leave alone enjoying their childhood. Divya Disha, through various programs and strategies, seeks to alleviate the problems of these less fortunate children.

(4.9.8.4) Rehabilitation Home Balaniketan:

The children, who have not yet made a decision to go back home or have no home, but would like to be off street, are invited to stay at Balaniketan. They are provided free food, clothes, safe environment and an opportunity to get back to the mainstream society. All the children below the age of 14 years are oriented into formal education and admitted into the nearby schools or residential hostels. The older boys are sent to various vocational training centres. Regular health check up at primary health centre, routine physical exercise and educational support form a part of the curriculum at Balaniketan. The children are actively involved in cooking their own food and maintaining the cleanliness of the premises.

(4.9.8.5) Disha Recreation Centre (DRC):

One of the expressed needs of these children is that they have no recreational opportunities. Divya Disha has established a recreation centre in a school near Secunderabad railway station. The centre provides opportunities to
play with other children. They also provide first aid and medical care, awareness programs on health, bathing and washing facilities.

(4.9.8.6) CRC in Schools:

The child rights charter, formulated by Divya Disha has been signed by schools aiming to promote the rights of children in schools. The CRC focuses on awareness of children's rights among school children, their parents, teachers and management of schools. Regular discussions with the principals have led to child rights clubs being established in 50 schools. In these clubs various methods are being used to broaden students' understanding on child rights. The students participate in workshops, seminars, drama, social service and group work to activate themselves on child right issues. The campaign is supported by UNICEF. This campaign reaches out to 1,00,000 children across the two cities of Hyderabad and Secundrabad.

(4.9.8.7) Domestic Child Worker Motivation Centres:

Divya Disha has established three motivation centres for children who are working as domestic workers. These children are often abused and exploited by the employers and there are no initiatives to help them. The teachers of Divya Disha motivate the children into formal education. In the motivation centres the children's interest and level of education are assessed. The bridge courses are also conducted at the motivation centres using the primers or modules prepared by team.
(4.9.8.8) Childline 1098:

Divya Disha is the collaborative organisation for CHILDLINE - Hyderabad. This is a toll free telephone service to help children in distress. This service is a project of the Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment, Government of India. The cases of children in need of shelter and home, medical assistance, and legal assistance are being responded by the CHILDLINE staff.

(4.9.8.9) Primary Education in Slums:

Divya Disha is in charge of monitoring 16 community schools in the slums. The project, which is part of the National Child Labour Project Initiative (NCLPI), aims at making primary education accessible to children in the slums. The project has been successful in ensuring enrolment and retention in schools because of the improving standard of education. The slum children are offered the bridge courses.

(4.9.8.10) Locality Level Organisation of Children:

Divya Disha helps the children in organising themselves. The organisation helps the children to be heard. The organisation of the domestic child workers, i.e., Balikela Sangham, girl children’s organisation, forms a part of larger network of children.

(4.9.8.11) Together Towards Common Goals:

Divya Disha says it believes in cooperation. It constantly looks for new institutions and individuals interested in helping the children of Hyderabad and Secundrabad. Some of its current collaborators are the various departments of
labour, women and child welfare, education and law enforcement agencies like Police, Railway Police and also UNICEF. Divya Disha also involves the support of hospitals in the various projects undertaken. Another hallmark of all ventures is the involvement of the community and volunteers from different strata of the society.

(4.9.8.12) Collaborator’s Program:

Trust between collaborators and social service workers, according to Divya Disha, is the driving force behind long-term development. Divya Disha believes that donors ought to be given up-to-date and accurate information about how effectively their funds are being used. The collaborator’s program is a policy that follows to keep its collaborators informed and satisfied. A quarterly newsletter sent to collaborators includes the current State of projects and a summary of financial transactions. Divya Disha says its values are accountability and transparency. It says they have opened a house policy according to which any donor is welcome at any time is to visit the office and field-work locations. Divya Disha argues that there are numerous ways for the contributors to help the children.

(4.9.8.13) High Quality Interventions:

Divya Disha is working in the two cites of Hyderabad and Secundrabad as voluntary organisation since 1988. It believes the problem of child labour need to be dealt with as illness rather than the symptoms. The holistic development is made possible by taking into consideration the interdependency of the child’s personality, family history, social and physical environment, and institutional setting. In spite of good intentions, most relief programs end up with poor results
because they are based on an inadequate understanding of the problem and how different parts of the problem combine together. Divya Disha is recognised for its ability to intervene in a context sensitive manner and they say that is why they have succeeded in causing real and lasting changes in the lives of children.

(4.10) Analysis of MVF, Balajyothi and Divya Disha:

(4.10.1) Analysis of MV Foundation:

The organisational principle of MVF revolves around the emancipation of the child labour. The MVF argues that all children must attend full-time formal day schools. The night schools or non-formal education centres are unacceptable to MVF. The organisational definition of the MVF on child labour is the child out of school. The broad definition of child labour, therefore, encompasses every non-school going child, irrespective of whether the child is engaged in wage or non-wage work, or whether he or she is working for the family or for others, employed in hazardous or non-hazardous occupations, employed on daily wage or on a contract basis as bonded labourers. The MVF argues that all work and labour is necessarily hazardous and harms the overall growth and development of the child. Any law regulating child work is unacceptable as it fights for the total abolition of child labour.

The MVF strongly condemns any justification defending the existence of child labour. The arguments that are put forward for the justification of the existence of the child labour are not convincing enough for this organisation. The arguments about the harsh reality of the family, poverty, necessity of children's
earnings for the family, lack of interest among parents, poor quality of teachers and schools, irrelevance of education in providing employment, loss of relevant skills among educated children, etc., are all anti-children and go against their real development. These are basic non-negotiable principles the MVF has been striving for against many odds. The organisation, volunteers and associates are working throughout the year to achieve these objectives.

(4.10.1) Principles and Decision Making Processes in MVF:

All members of MVF firmly believe in the charter whose basic principle is the emancipation of child rights. Given this framework, the staffs have autonomy in decision making and working out the details of the programme. The staffs at the local level share full responsibility for planning, implementation and monitoring of the programme. The decisions, thus, taken are respected and even encouraged. The innovative ideas that emerge from such a process are shared with all the other members of the MVF. It is in learning from these experiences, understanding the significance of such an exercise and conceptualising the key elements in the strategy adopted, that the policies are evolved on a large scale. The development of the programme of MVF and the lessons learnt become a part of the collective experience of the MVF as a whole. In this sense the MVF’s programme develops in a spiral fashion from one stage to next. The entire process does not repeat from the start when it begins in a new area but takes off from where the MVF is at the moment. The MVF has always worked with the village community. Every occasion is utilised to see that the community leadership is in forefront giving strength to the programme. This also results in the community owning up the
programme. In other words the MVF avoids substituting the community. Thus the
MVF is not a direct implementing agency but acts as a facilitator of the
programme. The emphasis of the programme must be on building processes for
total involvement of the community, for example by setting up of forums to bring
pressure, establishing committees and ensuring their systematic functioning on
principles of transparency and democracy. Working towards achievement of
targets and results *per se* is unacceptable.

All efforts of mobilisation result in establishing forums, committees and
pressure groups leading to institution building with a process for a systematic
review of the programme. Through this process of MVF’s constant interaction with
the institutions, thus, new agendas for action emerge. It gains confidence to take up
challenging tasks. Simultaneously the staffs of the MVF also graduates to take on
new assignments and roles in the organisation. Their capacities are thus enhanced.
Involvement of the staff in conducting surveys analysis of data, self evaluation
studies and reports become essential components in drawing up a plan of action
and also in responding to the demands.

(4.10.2) Programme Implementation in MVF:

The MVF firmly believes in the principle of non-violence and argues that it
must be adhered to on all occasions. There can be no justification for the use of
violence at any time. The principle of social inclusion of all groups, classes,
communities and individuals in the programme must be adhered to in building a
social norm that ‘no child must work and that every child must attend full-time
formal school. The exclusion would only result in shifting the issue from the agenda of child rights to issues of identities or class interests.

According to MVF all efforts to resolve conflicts and tensions have to be made at the local level. This process must result in building support groups for the protection of child rights. In other words, every occasion of conflict must be used to build a consensus leading to a norm that children must not be exploited and that the place they belong to is the school.

The MVF does not believe in replacing the State as an agent of social mobility. Hence it argues that the MVF programme must not set up institutions that are parallel to those provided by the State. In this regard it calls for works towards strengthening of existing institutions and structures such as schools, social welfare hostels and gram panchayats. It also argues that the individuals realise their strengths and be empowered. The community, then, begins to correct the system, demand its share in the State establishment and bring about change in the existing framework. In effect, in doing so, the voice of the people can become the voice of the establishment. It strongly argues about individual rights as enshrined in the Constitution of India.

(4.10.3) Strategy - From Work to School:

More than 100,000 children in 500 villages of the Ranga Reddy district of Andhra Pradesh have benefited from the MVF programme where children are withdrawn from work and enrolled into schools. Relying mainly on community initiatives, the MVF programme aims at motivating parents and children to utilise
the formal school as a medium for the advancement of the child. The programme does not make any distinction between one form of child labour to another as it believes that every child out of school is a child labourer. Propelled by a set of non-negotiable principles that guide the programme, its one-point agenda is to ensure that no child works and all children go to school. The strategy adopted is essentially based on age and gender. Older children (9-14 years) are put through a bridge course, which equips them to catch up with regular school-going children. Younger children are directly admitted to schools. There is a detailed follow-up programme to ensure minimum dropout rate and this system makes the education system more accessible to working children. Very often it involves addressing issues such as getting birth certificates, negotiating with teachers for admission and ensuring hostel admissions. Education activists under the programme are trained to identify and resolve every possible impediment in the way of converting a child labourer into a full-time student. This includes handling such sensitive issues as age at marriage for girls.

(4.10.4) Impact:

The MVF programme has demonstrated that parents, irrespective of their economic status, have a great desire to educate their children and give them a better future. Once they are assured that their child will be looked after at school, they are willing to make enormous sacrifices in terms of time and money to ensure that the child stays in school.

There have been other spin-offs. The village community feels greater pride in their children and a greater sense of responsibility towards their rights. Issues
such as the age at marriage for girls have come under scrutiny with several girls insisting on remaining in school. In agriculture, it has meant a change in cropping pattern for the employers and to the adult labourer a greater bargaining power. Above all, with the community owning up the programme, the schools have become vibrant institutions where children’s rights are protected.

The MVF’s perspective and strategy on child labour and education are so successful that they have also been adopted by several voluntary organisations in India. Their initiatives to withdraw children from work have been relevant and effective in situations varying from urban areas to remote tribal pockets, cutting across regions and cultures. The MVF’s decade-long experience has shown that even in the Indian context child labour is not inevitable. All children deserve to be in school and MVF has shown that this is eminently possible.

(4.10.5) Networking with NGOs:

The MVF was the State coordinator for the Global March Against Child Labour in Andhra Pradesh that held during 16-21 March 1998. The objective of the global march was to create awareness on the issue of child labour and education at the international level. After the march a core group of ‘National Alliance for the Fundamental Right to Education’ was formed with the objective of expressing solidarity to each other on the issue and share experiences of the different programmes for the elimination of child labour. The alliance has developed a common action plan, which includes the flowing activities: (a) to conduct a awareness campaign on child rights; (b) community mobilisation for eradication of child labour; (c) child preparedness to get into mainstream of the
education system; (d) capacity building of the government school functionaries; and (d) advocacy and lobby interventions on the non-negotiables and right to education.

(4.10.6) Working with Government:

Having realised that the only way any significant impact could be made on the child labour situation is by influencing government programmes and policies, the MVF has deliberately avoided setting up parallel structures. Instead, it has utilised existing government institutions and followed a conscious policy to include, to the extent possible, the official machinery into its programmes. This approach of the MVF has also largely contributed to the replicability of the programme in other areas. The MVF is also closely involved in several training programmes for government officials, teachers and staff of the education department.

(4.10.7) Analysis of Balajyothi:

From its inception, Balajyothi recognised the need for regular interaction and advocacy with the government backed by field-level feedback. An important feature of an NGO is its working style, which has a touch of informality and non-hierarchical ethos in its working style. This has enabled Balajyothi to demand flexibility in functioning as well as to work towards its long-term strategy of abolishing the child labour.

Balajyothi experience offers an excellent example of how clearly stated commitments and objectives enable a project to negotiate from a position of
strength while participating in other programmes or linking up with various
government departments. The project did not deviate from its clear position on
defining child labour or its commitment to mainstream formal education. The
functioning of Balajyothi has demonstrated that it is possible to establish a vibrant
partnership between an NGO and the government, when both are committed to
common objective. The Balajyothi’s operations were facilitated by a policy
framework that was committed to children’s education as well as to addressing the
issue of child labour. At the same time, the experience highlights the crucial role of
individual agency, whether it is the NGO or the government.

Balajyothi has clearly challenged the traditional approach of providing
incentives as a strategy to establish the right of a child to education. Special care
has been taken to ensure adequate educational facilities are provided to the child
labour. Balajyothi’s experience shows that intensive community mobilisation
positively impacts children’s education. Parents, when convinced, do not expect
incentive to send their children to full-time school. The community mobilisation
has enabled the communities to play a catalytic role in ensuring schooling in their
areas.

It has also been clearly shown that the effective mobilisation of minority
communities has been generally perceived as difficult to reach. Balajyothi’s project
validates the strategy of recruiting local teachers as a mechanism to make the
school effective, especially in the minority areas. By opening schools in un-served
areas, the project has effectively set in place mechanisms to prevent the creation of
new child labour. It may be noted that while children continue to work after school
in some areas, the right of the child to a full day at school has clearly been established. The utilisation of a multiplicity of strategies has enabled the project to reach a diverse age group of children.

The NGOs experience also highlights an oft-repeated problem of successful mobilisation strategies not being equally matched by concerted and sustained initiatives to improve quality of education. This underlines the need for more careful planning and sourcing of expertise to meet the requirements of providing quality education.

(4.10.8) Objectives of Balajyothi:

At present juncture the project run by Bala Jyothi is grappling with issues of sustainability beyond the project period. In this regard the strategies include: (i) the sustainability of the schools already opened; (ii) to ensure quality education through sustained teacher training; (iii) to strengthening community groups to continue to play a proactive role vis-à-vis the school; (iv) to put the mechanisms in place to ensure that child labour education is addressed on scale across the city; and (v) to create a forum of concerned organisations and individuals that would lobby for policy changes and evolve effective strategies for both the government and NGOs.

(4.10.9) Networking with Government and NGOs:

The key operational feature of Balajyothi is to link up with various departments and programmes to raise resources for the project, utilise other programmes to further its objectives as well as strengthening government schools.
In an effort to plug the drop-out rates in localities served by government schools, the project has undertaken community awareness campaigns. And where this has led to an increase in enrolment, Balajyothi has provided the concerned schools with para-teachers as well as learning materials like blackboards and slates.

One of the strategies being considered by Balajyothi is to lobby with the government to have all Balajyothi schools recognised as government schools. As the project director unequivocally states all Balajyothi schools are transitional preparing the ground for the government to step in and fulfil its constitutional responsibility and commitment. Though some schools are already taken over by the government, several reservations have been expressed in this regard. All Balajyothi schools could not be automatically converted into government schools, as in some cases the population being served is small and transient. Some rationale in locating such schools for conversion would, therefore, need to be developed.

Balajyothi visualises network as a logical conclusion to its efforts to build partnerships between government and civil society to tackle the issue of child labour education on a citywide scale. Balajyothi's long-term strategy of creating a citywide forum to address the issue of child labour education and possibly to act as a think-tank for the government seems more hopeful. The Balajyothi has taken the lead to make various networks operational. The network has the two objectives of bringing all children into full-time schools and improving the quality of education, and making education accessible to all children. Forty-seven NGOs working with disadvantaged children have come together in a forum called Child Education Network (CEDNET). A city level coordination committee has been formed with
representatives from various government departments and ten NGOs under the chairmanship of district collector. In recent development, the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India has advised the State Education Department to use the citywide action plan developed by the network as the basis for planning educational strategies in Hyderabad district. A broad action plan has been worked out to address the needs of street children, domestic child labour, child labour in shops and establishments, children with special needs, children in sex trade and children of sex workers.

The educational system the NGOs have identified, in specific areas of focus, is based on their experience and expertise. Some preliminary meetings have taken place and strategies for different groups have been worked out based on the experiences and expertise of the member NGOs.

(4.10.10) Balajyothi and Children’s Education:

When the district administration started the NFE programme in the city, two projects were sanctioned to Balajyothi in 1996. Since Balajyothi is opposed to non-formal schooling, these were also run as full-time schools. As part of back to school programme, Balajyothi made use of hostels under the social welfare department to accommodate the mobilised children. In addition, it appointed teachers especially to ensure follow-up with the children at the site of the hostel. Nearly 400 children were mainstreamed through the back to school programme. It also admitted 300 girl child workers into girl rehabilitation camps organised by the Women’s Finance Corporation of The Department of Andhra Pradesh Women and Child Development over a three-year period. The project also actively coordinates
with the department of labour in implementing the Child Labour Act (CLA). Balajyothi has coordinated enforcement drivers and surveys, during which the project supervisors and teachers play the role of labour inspectors and are recognised as such by the community. In recent development, Balajyothi has been given the responsibility to conduct an educational survey of Hyderabad district under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme of the Government of India.

The project actively seeks to establish partnership with NGOs in the city to develop a forum to address the daunting task of bringing over one lakh child labour into schools as well as to actually take over the running of schools in some areas. When, in the early stages the project was strapped for funds, the NGOs were requested to take over the running of schools and, in some cases, to share in the costs of the school. In some areas, the project has successfully handed over the schools to NGOs. People’s Initiative Network (PIN), which works in Chaderghat, has taken over 17 schools started by Balajyothi. These schools are funded, managed and monitored by PIN. Another NGO, Krushi, which works with street children, runs five schools covering over 1,000 children with partial funding from Balajyothi. Over eight NGOs are in partnership with the project and run about 30 schools. As of now, all these are informal partnerships. There is a proposal, however, to formalise such involvement through MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Balajyothi and the participating NGO. The participating NGOs welcome this move as it legitimises their role within the project.
Balajyothi was attempting to both understand and explore strategies to eliminate child labour in Hyderabad. The effort was to evolve innovative strategies to combine community initiatives for primary education with the protection of the children’s rights, to create formal educational opportunities and, in the process, facilitate the revitalisation of the mainstream education system. This exploration began in a door-to-door survey in 800 bastis of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. 800 hundred preraks and 350 NFE instructors were involved. The survey was intended both to estimate the number of child labourers in the city as well to gain an insight into the factors that constrain their access to education. The objective of the survey was to assess the child labour problem in the two cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad as well as to determine the status of primary education and identify the factors underlying child labour. The finding revealed that around 35,000 children in the age group of 9 to 14 years and 30,000 in the age group of 5 to 8 years were out of school. Among the reasons cited for children not going to school, four were related to the schools themselves and one to the general economic situation of the family. Distance travelled to access the school, insufficient infrastructure in schools, absence of mechanisms to enable school drop-outs or those who had never gone to school to bridge the academic gap, migration difficulties of readmission, and poverty were factors highlighted by the survey. And in initial stages, they began a dialogue with local youth, basti leaders and women. These discussions gradually led to the mobilisation of the larger
community around. The women expressed concern about the future of their children and gradually, issues relating to education came stronger.

The interactions with the community revealed that the problem of schooling was compounded by issues of migration, lack of government schools in the vicinity and a gradual drift of boys and girls away from education and into work. Another crucial issue was the total absence of community leadership. This impacted negatively on any attempt to address the basti’s problems whether relating to education or livelihood concerns. Given this situation Balajyothi’s effort was to stop the drift away from schooling and initiate a process of developing and strengthening community leadership and initiative. From the beginning, Balajyothi’s effort was to insist on the creation of formal schools in basti from the government. Initially the District Education Officer (DEO) argued that there was no need to open more schools in the basti as children were not even attending the ones that already existed. To strengthen their case Balajyothi initiated a study to assess the school requirements in the area and also to identify places where schools could be located. Continuing dialogue with the district administration led to the development of mutual trust between the NGO and the district administration.

(4.10.12) Balajyothi and Issues of Child Labour:

Balajyothi’s work on child labour is commendable. It works hard to succeed in abolishing the child labour. According to Balajyothi every child who is out of school is a child labour or potential child labour. It argues that most of the child labour are forced to work because there is no school available and it is not poverty but the perceptual problem of parents, which causes child labour.
Balajyothi is against the incentives to child labour's family as it vehemently argues that the children have a right to education. It also feel that the parents and the community in general should not be bribed to ensure education of children. It argues that both subsidy and mid-day meal programme would encourage drop-outs among regular school going children to be readmitted as working children. Balajyothi strongly feels that savings accrued as a result of dropping the subsidy and mid-day meal are to be used to expand the number of schools. The child labour issue, Balajyothi opines, is interconnected to the education issue and every child should be in a full-time facility. It also argues that the scope of the schools, in areas where the child labour is widespread, cannot be restricted to students attending the classes. The school is responsible for all children in the basti (slum) and not just those attending classes. The commitment to eliminate child labour and to uphold the right of every child to education is succinctly captured in the stated basic premises of Balajyothi itself.

Balajyothi stresses on the need for two definite components in any child labour project, prevention and rehabilitation. Consequently Balajyothi not only evolved strategies for the education of the working child but also the preventive programme, focused on different age groups, including the children in the 5 to 8 years age group, who are out of school and are potential child labour or already working. They run community-based schools to reach the 5 to 10 years age group as part of the strategy to prevent future child labour. They also run bridge courses for the 10+ working child (either residential or at the school site).
(4.10.13) Overcoming Obstacles:

In any project, delays in fund inflow could prove to be disastrous. Once the project was launched, the demand for schools was overwhelming. Procedural delays in releasing the money, due to questions regarding deviations from original NCLP guidelines, stretched Balajyothi project to a breaking point. This led to the immediate problem of the society losing credibility with the communities that had not responded positively. There are also apprehensions about the adverse impact this would have on the attitude of parents towards education or efforts to provide education to children. Here the versatility of the project director in exploring various strategies and mobilising resources from a variety of sources proved effective. The support from UNICEF, the Department of Women and Child Development, Adult Education and the Non-formal Education schemes of the State government and like-minded NGOs was sought to tide over the crisis. Some NGOs took over the running of the schools. In some cases started sharing the costs of the school and, in a few cases, they were bearing the entire costs of the school. At the same time, social pressure was brought to bear on the government. About 35,000 postcards were written by children with the help of their teachers to a leading local daily and to the Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh. The Chief Justice accepted these as a writ petition. Concerned officials of the Education and Labour Departments were asked by the court to explain the paucity of funds for such an effective project. A ruling was given for the money to be released within 15 days. This was duly done and the project overcame its most difficult hurdle. The society’s stand on child labour and the changes made in the project design were all validated.
Making Education Accessible - Strategies and Outcomes:

The principle focus of the project is to make the school accessible. Schools have thus been started in bastis that have no school within a kilometre radius. It would be pertinent to point out here that a major focus of the programme has to been to create access in areas with a high minority population, such as the old city of Hyderabad. While there have been several initiatives to reach education in minority areas of the city, these have been on a very small scale as part of NGO efforts. Through Balajyothi, the district administration for the first time has tried to provide educational opportunities to children of minority communities in a planned and structured manner.

The process of setting a school begins with project staff going into the slums, talking to basti leaders, women and youth. Several simultaneous steps are initiated in consultation with the community. A process is initiated for the formation of mother’s committee and school education committee. This is followed by identifying place where the school could be located and the woman teacher from within the community. The selected teacher then begins to establish rapport with the community and make a list of out-of-school children and those who are employed. This process of familiarisation is crucial, particularly in the urban context, where communities are isolated and alienated from each other. The personal contact of the teacher with parents and basti leaders is seen as a vital element in enabling a decision to send children to school. The process of finding a space for a school has, in some bastis, resulted in a very interesting dialogue with and mobilisation of the community. Efforts are made to identify community halls.
or government buildings, where the schools could be started. Where this not possible, houses are rented on reasonable rates. In the newer bastis like Filmnagar and Jubilee Hills, one of the most expensive localities of Hyderabad, the issue is finding space for a school has taken on new dimensions. Most of the bastis here have cropped up on government land and consist mainly of workers engaged in the burgeoning constructions business of Jubilee Hills. In many places, in consultation with and the active support of the community, open government lands were identified and school buildings with three to four rooms are built. In a few cases, where local land-grabbers controlled the open spaces, land was forcibly occupied with the help of the police and the right of the community established through official sanction by the district collector. There are several cases where the land-sharks, after a change of heart, have themselves contributed substantially to the school building fund. It must also be noted that funds for the construction of school buildings have also been accessed from various government programmes such as Prajala Vaddaku Palana and the Janmabhoomi programme. This highlights the fact that the project is, at all times, open to accessing resources from a variety of sources.

However this did not go without its adverse consequences. An interesting fall-out has been the parallel effort of basti dwellers to gain rights of occupancy to the basti they live in. In one of the newer bastis that was visited, the families were very keen on supporting the starting of a school as this was seen as giving legitimacy to their occupancy rights for schools from different areas.
Multiple strategies have been used to bring children especially girls into schools. Since lack of toilet facilities in schools makes girl child away from the school, efforts are being made to redress this issue. For the past two years Balajyothi has been running the camp with 100 girls, in each batch, in collaboration with the Department of Women and Child using government working women's hostel. Maintenance, teacher's salary and learning materials are borne by Balajyothi. The children are either sent into government hostels or prepared to take class VII board exams. There are camps providing bridge courses for older 10+ age group children, preparing them to enter formal schools and government hostels. The bridge courses enable older children to overcome the academic gap. For potential child labour in the age group of 5 to 8 years, the schools are opened in the neighbourhood itself. For domestic workers and street children, contact centres provide the initial step towards formal schooling. This is being explored through networking with other NGOs working in the area.

A more recent development has been to activate existing government schools by recruiting additional para-teachers through the project with Balajyothi supervisors providing the interface between the school and the community. Balajyothi also runs residential education camps as a bridge course for children above the age of 10 to enable those children who cannot be admitted directly into school. These are children working in mechanic shops, construction sites, as helpers in small teashops and as domestic labour. The camp duration is from 6 months to one year. The residential camps continue to be an effective means of maintaining older children. After the camp the children were admitted in
Balajyothi/government schools and social welfare hostels. Balajyothi also assisted in a camp for 300 children run under the child and police programme.

While MVF shares Balajyothi perspective and stand on child labour and child labour education, there are some differences in the strategies adopted. In MVF, mainstreaming is through bridge courses and camps into government schools. In Balajyothi an added dimension is the opening of schools in unserved neighbourhoods, with the long-term objective of having these become government schools, to ensure access to primary education in the bastis. As is evident from the figure 1, at all stages the focus is on formal schooling and on accessing infrastructure facilities like hostels provided by the social welfare department.

(4.10.15) From Balajyothi to the Formal School System:
Balajyothi community schools are set up in areas where children do not have government school within one kilometre radius. The majority of children who come here enrol for the first time. Each school has a locally selected teacher and an ayah. The schools have a curriculum, academic schedule and testing system similar to that of government schools. The use of the mainstream educational curriculum with all its drawbacks has not been a deterrent in enrolling and retaining children in school. This points to high levels of community mobilisation and teacher commitment and accountability.

A beginning has been made to address the problems of domestic child labour and street children. In order to aid the rehabilitation of domestic child labour, a sample survey was conducted. The survey covered 24 apartments in borabanda basti and identified 72 domestic child labourers 35 whom were mainstreamed through parental counselling and bridge courses. This small initiative led to identification of around 2,000 domestic child labour. Starting schools and bridge courses at community level and seeking admission into social welfare hostels are some of the strategies being used for rehabilitation. The project formally adopted a government orphanage. It also set up contact centres for street children. These centres are located in the three of the city’s railway stations, two parks, two bus stations and three major temples. They serve as contact and motivation points, each of which is run by a team comprising a supervisor, two community organisers and two teachers, all of whom work on a flexible time schedule.
(4.10.16) Outcome:

The outcome seems impressive in the sense that every year the project has expanded not only its schooling network but also the coverage of children and mobilisation of child labour and street children through other initiatives like the government’s back to school programme and through networking with other NGOs. It is also worth noting that the project has used the approved budget with fixed targets to almost double the number of schools as well as significantly increase the number of children enrolled. This was possible because of its decision to drop both the incentives and the mid-day meal scheme. Another important feature of the project has been its attempt to mainstream children not only through its own interventions but also through all other ongoing programmes.

Table 4.9 Balajyothi's Targets and Achievements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Balajyothi's Target</th>
<th>Achieved Under Balajyothi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Baljyothi Project, January 2001.

**Notes:** 1. Includes 40 schools for domestic child labour; 2. Includes 110 Janshalas under Joint UN, Project; 3. Includes 18,473 girls and 12,696 boys.
Table 4.10 Children Mainstreamed into Formal System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Graduated From Balajyothi</th>
<th>Back to School Programme</th>
<th>Girl Child Camp</th>
<th>CAP/Domestic Child Labour</th>
<th>Through Government School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1999-20</td>
<td>1,110</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>6,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>N.A</td>
<td>1,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


(4.10.17) Analysis of Divya Disha:

Divya Disha has been working for the rights of the children in Hyderabad municipal locality for the last decade. Divya Disha has identified children who work as bonded labourers with the employers in the urban area. Through this project, Divya Disha would like to make meaningful and long lasting intersectoral interventions to alleviate the problems of these children. Since the organisation is already working with street children and campaigning for the implementation of Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in school, there is a good understanding of the problems faced by these children and the conviction that this target should also access their right to education.

(4.10.18) Strategies and Processes:

The operational nature of Divya Disha consists of the following. It starts with the survey and identification of children working as child labour. It is followed by a survey in the project areas so as to identify and list the children working as domestic workers and to gather their address and details of family. The
information concerning their employers are also collected in this process. They also create awareness in the community thereby sensitising the issue of child labour. An important part of Divya Disha’s strategy is to provide bridge courses to the children relieved from the child labour and to establish the motivation centres. They are also display strong willingness to organise the children locally to form a larger network of children.

(4.10.19) Training and Capacity Building:

Divya Disha is also actively involved in school enrolment programme. They are involved in enrolling the children from the motivation centres into the nearby government schools. Divya Disha offers training for teachers of selected government schools of the area so as to improve attitudes towards children and quality of education. They also offer the capacity building training for domestic child workers, particularly the girls. While they are offered training the children’s perceptions of their problems and needs are taken into consideration.

As a part of their monitoring operations the school education committee is set up to meet at regular intervals so as to monitor the quality of education in schools. The monitoring of children enrolled in government school consist of a monthly visit by co-ordinator, weekly visit by supervisor to check attendance of the children and discuss academic progress with the principal/teacher. The monitoring is followed by the meeting of parents of the domestic child workers. The children enrolled in government school and motivation centres are extended educational support in the form of academic support (tuition), counselling, forming
neighbourhood study groups, forming a teacher resource group to assist in the motivation centres.

The success of the project is frequently assessed. The monthly review of project is assessed by co-ordinator. And the annual review of the project is undertaken by the partner agency and children. There is also an end of the project review by children, partner agency and external agency.

Divya Disha is seriously engaged in advocacy and intensive lobbying with the government. It also tried to focus the media attention on the plight of children working as domestic workers as to create public awareness.

(4.10.20) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in Schools:

Divya Disha’s campaign focuses on creating awareness among the children their rights as enshrined in United Nations Convention on the rights of the child. To create awareness among the children it has created the child rights club in many schools. Divya Disha has also drawn guidelines for the effective functioning of the child rights clubs. At present an estimated 100 schools are involved in the awareness creation campaign and 45 schools have child rights clubs.

Divya Disha also turns its attention on the issue of child rights. They help the children in schools understand and discuss the basic principles of CRC. They also pay their attention in identifying and extending the skills to children that are needed to implement the Articles of CRC. It also facilitates the implementation of CRC and encourage children’s participation in power structures with in the schools. It also creates awareness among parents, teachers and authorities about
CRC. It is also involved in consensus building in 100 schools on various issues that affect the children. As a result it has evoked a commitment from 50 schools to promote the rights of children. It also strives to integrate CRC perspective on the monitoring and inspection system into the Department of Education in an effort to build capacity among the children.

(4.10.21) Suggestion Box:

Divya Disha takes into account the children’s views seriously. In order to facilitate children’s views and opinions being taken into consideration for the management of the school, a suggestion box is installed. Proper guidance about the suggestion box and its use are given to all students. This gives the opportunity for children to express their views and opinions.

(4.10.22) Analysis:

The study on the issues of child labour gains enormous significance in India. India has the dubious distinction of having the largest child labour force in the world accounting for a third of the world’s working children. This situation calls for serious attention as it has grave implications for the country. Nearly 50 per cent of children in India are deprived of their right to childhood and destined to end up as illiterate workers with no opportunity to fulfil their true potential

It is estimated that there are 2 million children working in hazardous industries. If one were to define child labour as wage earning work alone the official estimates are around 17 million. The independent estimates, working on roughly the same definition, put the figures at around 40 million. However if one
were to define all children out of school as child labour the figure would be closer
to 100 million. The huge difference between various child labour estimates only
confirm the casual attitude of the policy makers. One reason why policy makers
are so casual about these figures is that they hold relevance only to the extent that
they think they need to do something about it. If policy makers decide that only
children in hazardous industries should be dealt with it means they are not
interested in any child labour outside the group of 2 million working in hazardous
industries. The reality, however, is that 85 per cent of child labour is in agriculture
and agro-based industries. The ‘visible’ child labour in factories, street children,
children working in hotels and petty establishments account for a very small
proportion of total child labour force in the country. The fact that the predominant
Indian child labour force in agriculture sector has been completely ignored is the
root cause of India’s failure to redress the child labour issue even after more than
five decades of independence.

There are several reasons for ignoring the predominant presence of the
child labour in agricultural and agro-based sector. The main reason is that when it
comes to children of poor parents, policy makers tend to think that there is
something inevitable about a child working. They often believe that the child is
working because the family is dependent on the income earned by the child for
survival and if the child is withdrawn from work the family will starve. Another
reason why this aspect has been ignored is that policy makers and programme
implementers tend to get bogged down by numbers. They are completely
intimidated by the large number of child labourers in agriculture and agro-based
sector. They often argue about the socio-economic consequences of what will
happen to the families and the society in large, if all children engaged in this sector stop working. As a result the tendency is to justify child labour in this sector either by ignoring its presence altogether or by not classifying it as child labour but as being child work, which is good for the child.

The child labour, in their opinion, is a ‘harsh reality’ and the belief that child labour is inevitable and nothing can be done about it overshadows all aspects of child labour policy in India. As a result it has been argued that the best approach is to attack the most exploitative forms of child labour first rather than pursuing the child labour working for the survival of the family in other sectors. The children in various hazardous industries present themselves as the most exploited as they are the most visible. As a result the emphasis has been on child labour in these industries with the exclusion of all other forms of child labour. Child labour in agriculture and agro-based sector has been excluded from this aspect. The critical factor in this regard is the reluctance of the government to invest adequately in education. Ignoring the presence of the child labour in agriculture and agro-based sector and treating them as inevitable and harsh reality is an extremely convenient way of justifying low investments in education.

The classic poverty argument has been presented by many to support their arguments in favour of the presence of the child labour. They argue that the poor families need their children’s substantial contribution to the family. The child labour situation in India is over simplified in identifying it as a cause of object poverty in the poor families. The tragedy of child labour situation in India is that it is simply assumed that every child labourer is working because it is an issue of
survival for the family. This is the most insidious aspect of the poverty argument. The poverty argument for all its appearance of being logical is completely flawed. A scenario is perceived by which the poorest in every village drop out from the school first and enter the labour market. However in rural areas there are positive examples of children belonging to very poor families studying in schools while their relatively better off counterparts are working. A number of factors that have nothing to do with the economics of the situation, such as tradition, ignorance of parents on account of illiteracy, lack of access to alternatives and insensitive administration govern the family's decision to send a child to work or to school. The poverty argument ignores all these aspects and presupposes everything as a purely economic decision. The experience of the NGOs discussed in this research has shown that when closely examined and challenged the poverty argument fails to impress. In fact more often than not, it turns out only to be a good excuse for the State not to do any work bypassing the responsibility. The State's key departments like the education and labour department fail to do anything at all on the ground that unless the 'real' problem of poverty is solved it would not be possible to deal with issues of child labour.

As already discussed in this research there are a number of ways of looking at child labour. Different people have different perceptions on the issue of child labour. Some believe that only wage-earning work done by children should be classified as child labour. There are others who focus only on child labour in hazardous occupations like carpet weaving, match factories and glass factories and do not look into the issues of working children in other non-hazardous sectors. There are some, who assert that some kinds of child work, when performed in a
family environment, positively contribute to the child development. For them there is a line of distinction between the positive child work and the negative child labour. The distinctions such as child work, child labour and hazardous work tend to underestimate the serious discussions on the child labour. Comparing the children working in the hazardous looms to the bonded labourer only undermine the serious discussions on the issues of the child labour. It would be misleading to categorise a child grazing cattle for his/her own family as child work, while calling it child labour when the same task is performed for a wage. Could the better wage and the changed work conditions presuppose that the child labour is acceptable. Given all the difficulties in categorising the working children, the NGOs tend to consider all working children as the child labour. The NGOs argue that categorisations of the work done by a child only leads to more complications and not solutions. They regard every form of work done by a children as child labour. It also asserts that in the rural Indian context there is no such thing as an idle non-school going child. Any child not in school will sooner than later be put to work. In the models conceived by the NGOs, there are thus only two categories of children, those who go to work and those who do not. While the former is regarded as child labour, the later is regarded as the school going children. The NGOs studied in this research categorise any non-school going child as child labour.

The NGOs believe that every child has a right to childhood and an opportunity to develop his or her full potential and that every form of work done by a child interferes with this right. Coupled with the understanding that only children who are full-time students can be kept away from work, it believes that the only way the children's right to childhood can be fulfilled is by making the
child a full-time student. In all three NGOs taken for this research, the operational models have been largely dictated by their willingness to deal with three most important issues. They are: (i) securing a child’s right to his or her childhood; (ii) the elimination of child labour; and (iii) the universalisation of education remain an integral part. They strongly believe that any deviation from these stated objectives, without taking cognisance of these objectives, is bound to fail.

The experience of all three NGOs taken for this research reveals that parents are willing to contribute great part of their earnings for their children’s education thereby disproving the popular poverty argument. They are also prepared to sacrifice anything for their children’s education. Almost all parents, even from the so called poorest segment of the rural society, are not only keen on withdrawing their children from work and sending them to schools, but are also willing to make whatever sacrifices in terms of money and time that this decision entails. Once a child is enrolled and shows some progress, parents have sold off their cattle, sheep and so on, which were being looked after by the child and retained the child in school. Parents themselves and other older family members have taken over any work earlier performed by the child that inevitably needs to be done. There is some evidence to show that the mother tends to be over burdened with the largest share. This is, however, very rarely resented. In the camps run by the NGOs, which are the transit camps to enable a smooth shift of a child from a work environment to that of school, one can actually see the manner in which parent’s attitudes change. Once parents realise that their child is capable of picking up studies and their confidence in his or her abilities grows, they no longer think in terms of sending the child to work. They also tend to pamper the child a lot more,
presenting them with small gifts when they visit them at the camp, get photographed with them and in general like to be associated with them in every way. Far from worrying about the loss of income from the child’s labour, they end up spending much more on the child.

However this issue cannot be over simplified by merely highlighting the parental contribution in sending their children to camps run by the NGOs. The parents are willing and capable of sending their children to school. However it does not end up with parents sending their children to camps as it involves a whole lot of complex issues. In the first place for the poor parents, especially those belonging to the communities traditionally engaged in agricultural labour, who by and large are themselves illiterate, the very task of sending their children to school instead of to work is in itself a major revolutionary step. For generations they have been led to believe that the best thing for them is to initiate their children into work at the earliest and education was never a part of their economic agenda. This is exactly opposite to urban middle class thinking. While it never occurs to the urban middle class parents that their children should be sent to work, for the rural parents, who is essentially an agricultural labourer and an illiterate, sending a child to work is the most natural thing for them.

The stringent and inflexible approach adopted by the State schools deter and discourage the rural parents to send their children to school instead of sending them for work. The rural parents are familiarised to a routine of what is to be done, whom to approach, how to negotiate and above all, what is expected from their child if sent to work. For them getting their children admitted into the school is a
complex process involving the production of birth and caste certificates and purchase of school books, school uniforms and other educational materials. Often the children are denied admission to formal schools simply because such admission is being sought in August while all admissions close in July itself. And, of course, if for some reason the children have crossed the normal school age of 5-7 years, there is absolutely no provision for allowing them to get admitted in a higher class under an accelerated program, and he has to sit in the first class along with much younger children and often become the victim of others fun. It is no exaggeration to say that, for these parents, it is much easier to engage their children as bonded labourer with some landlord than enrolling them in a school that involves many complex procedures. Once inside the school, the whole attitude of the teacher is completely mysterious as far as the parents are concerned. They are not sure how to handle the child’s homework and the other demands made of them by the teacher. The teachers themselves often behave irrationally. The NGOs experience suggests that a larger number of children have been pushed out than having been dropped out of school. The teachers in the State schools employ a number of methods to restrict the number of children in their class. Even a simple thing like not reading a child’s name during roll call is enough to perplex the child and the parents. Added to these issues are asking the child to get a new book, learn a poem at home and the end of the year result stating that the child is not up to the mark. The above-mentioned reasons are more than sufficient for pushing the children out of school. Even if the parents and the child managed to survive these onslaughs initially, there are always the nagging feeling reinforced by others in the village that they should simply continue what they have been doing for generations viz.
sending their children to work. Given the atmosphere that prevails at the village level, mere desire to provide education for the child is not enough to convert it into a reality. However, on the other hand, ignoring this desire would be catastrophic.

Though there is a relationship between poverty and child labour, this has very little to do with any economic compulsion that poverty normally implies. It is a much more generic issue. The relationship between the child labour and illiteracy is yet another example of the poor not being heard in a greater society because they are not important enough. It arises out of an inability on the part of the poor to access the right quarters and to articulate their demand effectively and has little to do with lack of income or affordability. It is an entitlement that poor have been denied.

An often talked about short-sighted argument in democratic India is that the compulsory education laws should be opposed in many quarters on the ground that this would lead to unnecessary harassment of poor parents by the bureaucracy in charge of implementing these laws. It is argued that in a situation where children inevitably have to work for the survival of the family this would cause untold hardship. This argument runs counter to the stated welfare objectives of the State. A State committed to its socio-economic development cannot ignore a large part of its own population on the grounds that implementing the State’s welfare objectives would cause the sufferings to the poor. The NGOs experience suggests that it is extremely unlikely that parents would be harassed since they are anyway keen on sending their children to schools. On the other hand such a law would be welcome as it would deal with the real problem of the State’s unwillingness and the inability
to provide adequate number of schools and teachers. It would also provide legitimacy to groups demanding provision of adequate educational facilities to all those in need.

The NGOs studied in this research strongly feel that eliminating the child labour must be a greater objective of the community. The NGOs believe that the only way to tackle the problem of the child labour is to harness the desire of the parents for a better future of their children through education. The NGOs believe that the starting point for any programme to withdraw a child from work and enrol him or her in school is to promote the norm within the community that no child should work. Tackling the community implies not dealing with parents alone but the whole set of people including employers, opinion makers, the elected local body representatives, the community elders, the local youth, and the teachers. It involves sensitising all these members of the community to the issue of child labour and the manner in which they contribute to its persistence. It also involves sensitising the community to the long-term benefits of eliminating child labour for the community as a whole and not just the parents or the children themselves. Once the parents are convinced that a child’s work is neither necessary nor good for the child, then enrolment into schools becomes automatic. This increases the community’s stakes in the school, which in turn leads to greater involvement of the community in the affairs of the school. Once this is witnessed the quality of instruction and the response from the school to the requirements of the child show a dramatic improvement, which promotes a greater response from the community until it becomes a self sustaining process. In the NGOs strategies, universalisation of education is not seen as a process initiated by first setting up a school and then
asking children to join. The strategy is to first create a demand and then access the school. In this strategy the source of the demand is the desire to abolish child labour. The community's rejection the of child labour and the consequent development of the school as an institution taking care of all aspects of a child's development is the ultimate objective of the NGOs models. All NGOs programmes aim at operationalising this strategy.

It is often argued that the education, that is served in formal schools, do not meet the requirements of rural children. The presence of so many educated unemployed is cited as an example to substantiate this argument. It is also argued that it would be more sensible to promote some kind of vocational training so that children and the society would not have to face the problem of unemployment. However it has to be noted that there are a number of aspects to the issue of school education. It is, however, unfortunate that the relevance of school education has often been applied to the working children and not to non-working children. The schools and the education system in India, in general, have for a very long time been 'serving' irrelevant education to people. Though the education system does not guarantee employment opportunity, it makes up, for it, in raising the self-esteem of the individual. The irrelevance of education has often been cited in debates involving the poor and deprived families. In other words, this has been extended to argue that the skills learned in the child work would be of better use to the children in the latter stage then the long-term gains the full-time school education would provide. What has been ignored is the fact that private and other public school's educational pattern is no better than the one offered at the State schools. However, for those parents habituated to sending their children to school,
irrelevance of education has never been a reason for not sending children to school. For them the choice has never been to send their children to a school which allegedly provides irrelevant education or send them to work. They simply send the child to the school irrespective of whether it provides them relevant or irrelevant education. That is why it is puzzling to hear the talks on the relevance of education to working children. The problem of relevance of education is something that afflicts the education system as a whole and cannot be an excuse for keeping working children away from schools. It has to be tackled at a completely different level. In the ultimate analysis when it comes to eliminating child labour, neither the issue of irrelevance of education nor the nature of schools, is of very great significance. The only aspect that is to be kept in mind is that the children should be kept away from their work.

The second aspect of the issue is that one should see school primarily as an institution that enforces a child’s right to childhood by keeping the child away from work. It is here that true nature of formal State day schools emerge. The formal State schools, especially in the rural context have always been accused of not providing relevant education that would enable the child to be a productive entity. They have been ridiculed for functioning in a manner that deprives the family of child’s inputs in the labour market when it is needed most. It is therefore suggested that State schools should provide ‘vocational’ education often on the lines of ‘earn while you learn’ scheme and that schools should be closed so that the child can contribute to the family income. A closer look at these so called ‘defects’ of the formal State school system shows that it is precisely on account of these so called defects that these State schools should be supported. The vocational
education very often is only an euphemism for perpetuating the presence of the child in the labour market from an early age. As for the timings of the school sessions, as an institution that keeps the child away from work, it is in fact imperative that schools function in full swing during peak agriculture season. Clearly, the one thing that the formal schools by any stretch of imagination cannot be accused of doing is supporting the child labour. It is this accusation that makes State institutions invaluable for any programme seeking to eliminate child labour. Above all, the formal school is important because it is the only State institution, which deals exclusively with children.

Another argument that is put forward is to take advantage of the family's strength in the traditional family occupation and transferring it to their children. There is a tendency to romanticise the whole issue of traditional crafts. It is often expressed that traditional crafts have, for centuries, sustained rural economy with an efficiency that the modern systems cannot achieve. As a result it is believed that initiating a child to the family profession as early as possible is beneficial to the child, who will end up ultimately doing what he is likely to be best at viz. caring for the family profession. Thus, it is argued, that the children not only need to waste time in obtaining irrelevant education inputs but they can also become productive citizens and earn a living. Taken to its logical conclusion this approach implies that it is best for children to continue in their family profession. This is not too different from the traditional social system where certain profession were earmarked for certain communities. Such
would become an agricultural labourer. In this approach, the choice of deciding their future is completely taken away from the children at a very early stage. The children have been denied their rights to choose what they want to do. The fallacy in this approach is that it ignores the fact that the rural society is replete with examples of individuals belonging to artisan families, who have risen to very high levels outside their family profession and who, in all probability, would have been misfits if they had not changed their profession. The true nature of education is that it equips a person to make a calculated choice at the right time. It is this capacity of the child to decide his or her own future that we take away when we deny education in the name of providing secure employment.

The argument that a child initiated to the family craft at an young age picks up skills faster is not particularly true. In fact there is evidence to show that they do so much better after they achieve a certain proficiency in studies and after they attain an age of around 12-14 years. The whole attitude towards children, in this approach of incorporating them into the family occupation at an early age, is to somehow convert them into some kind of efficient workers. It is an approach that views childhood as a process of converting a child into a worker and divides the society into two broad categories, one comprising those who can afford to wait for their children to equip themselves before they face the challenges of adulthood and the other comprising those who need to put their children to work as soon as possible so that they do not become a burden on the society. This is an approach often advocated by those who themselves would never think twice before sending their own children to school and who have no intention of reverting to their own family occupation.

284
The government programmes designed to eliminate child labour and introduce universal education has been based on various arguments. Both the poverty argument and the concept of irrelevance of education have played a major role in the formulation of the State programmes relating to child labour and education. As far as child labour is concerned the State’s philosophy revolves around the ‘harsh reality’ of child labour and hence even the legislation passed in this regard refers only to eliminating child labour from the so-called hazardous industries, while regulating it in the formal sector elsewhere. This legislation specifically excludes child labour in family environment from its purview. This is despite the fact that out of an official 17 million working children, the various programmes of the State target only 2 million children engaged in the ‘hazardous industry’. Even these programmes rely on such measures as compensating the parents for the loss in income from child labour, which completely betray a lack of understanding of the actual issues involved. The education policy of the government succumbs to the poverty argument and the harsh reality of child labour even more. The biggest initiative in recent times - the non-formal education programme - simply assumes that children have to work and hence advocate running of non-formal education centres that do not interfere with the work pattern of the children. Beyond this, apart from pronouncing false promises, little has been achieved. Therefore, the State accepts unquestioningly the efficacy of both the poverty argument and the notion of irrelevance of education for working children. Both these concepts as we have already seen are flawed and need to be seriously challenged.
The problem with the State’s policies and programmes in regard to child labour and education is that they operate completely on negative premises. The State assumes that ‘poor’ parents cannot and will not withdraw children from work and enrol them in schools. The State also assumes that the parents feel that the education system is irrelevant and this is another major reason why they will not send their children to school. And, finally the State firmly believe that the formal school system is not the appropriate system for the children of ‘poor’ parents. This approach, however, completely ignores the fact that a large number of poor parents are sending their children to school. It does not recognise the latent desire on the part of the ‘poor’ parents trying to seek a better future for their children through education. The commitment of the poor parents has rather been underestimated in Indian social system. It is often wondered how someone who does not get to eat even two square meals a day can possibly want the same things he wants. In this situation the child labour problem is relegated to piecemeal approach. This approach is doomed to failure from the very start because even if the programme is successful in withdrawing some children from the workforce there will always be others available to take their place.

In implementing the structured policies designed to relieve the children from their work, the reach of the State rarely extends beyond the last point where an institution exists. Thus the State’s programmes essentially stop at the school level and processes and issues that stretch beyond the school to the community and the household are essentially beyond its reach. As a result even the best programme of the State can impact only those in schools and those out of school and at work cannot even be accessed. Given the fact that the most of the problems
lies in this domain, the capacity of even the better implemented State programmes to alter the existing situation with regard to child labour and education is extremely limited.

Any programme aimed to redress the problems of the child labour and education has to be built around positive aspects. It has to be recognised that parents, however poor they may be, are motivated strongly towards providing a better alternative for their children through education. It needs to recognise that these parents are not only willing but also capable of making the necessary sacrifices to ensure that their child does not go to work. It should also forthrightly reject all arguments, however 'logical' they may be, in favour of a child working. It should strongly reject the poverty argument and its implications. It should recognise that since any form of work deprives the children of their right to childhood, any attempt to categorise the work undertaken by the children is a purely an academic exercise of no particular consequence to the children. It should recognise that any child out of school is a child labourer. Consequently it should take cognisance of the fact that withdrawal of a child from work and enrolment into formal day school as a full-time student are two aspects of the same problem and they cannot be dealt with separately. Once these aspects are internalised the basic components of the programme emerge. The essence of any programme to eliminate child labour is to create a norm within the community that no child should work and that all children should be in formal schools. The strength for creating this norm comes from the belief that this is what community itself wants. In this regard it would be wise not to harness the positive aspects of the child labour. Once the norm is accepted then the programme has to develop in a manner
that covers all children out of school in the area. In fact the acceptance of the norm itself ensures that the community plans for all the children. Specific strategies need to be adopted for children in different age groups and the programme needs to be planned for every single child in the area. It is quite possible that all do not respond immediately but the programme itself should not be found wanting to meet such a response as and when it occurs. The formation of the plan automatically results in the school becoming the focus of all further attention, which in turn strengthens the role of the school itself. Sensitising teachers, various community leaders, employers and other affected persons to all aspects concerning child labour needs to be fully incorporated into the programme as an independent component. Above all the programme should invariably involve the youth, in particular the non-student first generation educated youth, as the prime movers of the programme.

Despite their efficient functioning the NGOs do not go without constraints. They are constrained by paucity of funds for their operation. As a result there has been a primary problem of insufficient schools. The efficiency of a NGO is based on its effort to concentrate on infrastructure building. While in urban areas building and place or space problem poses serious problem for the construction of new buildings, it poses an equal amount of problem in rural areas. In many rural areas the transportation poses serious problem for the efficient functioning of many NGOs.

It is often argued by many socio-economists that the INGOs and NGOs could be an alternative to the government. Though the INGOs significantly contribute to many third world countries' development paradigms the same argued
for the NGOs. This is mainly because the NGOs operate within the domain of the State and hence there is little prospect of the NGOs offering an alternative to the State in its development programmes. This is particularly true in the case of Andhra Pradesh, where the NGOs co-exist with the State and often, in many cases, as junior partners in the development programmes.

There has been a concerted effort on the part of the State to co-operate with the NGOs. The NGOs feel that they are a part of the government and keep ultimate faith in the institutions of the government. The NGOs realise that they are a part of greater social system in which the government is a dominant institution to deal with. The nature of the State-NGOs relation is such that they depend on each other. While the State relies on the NGOs in influencing the micro-level community, the State’s physical capabilities and resources are of immense importance to the NGOs. The NGOs are more successful in reaching out to downtrodden and neglected than the State. While the State legislates the rehabilitation programmes they are efficiently implemented by the NGOs. The NGOs, because of their grass root operational characteristics, are more efficient in prioritising the need of the community. This is particularly true in issues such as imparting the importance of education to the children from the downtrodden and neglected community. The NGOs are successful in building congenial atmosphere, where parents feel they can send their children to school thereby making efforts to make education a normal part of their children’s life. The NGOs are more successful, than the State, in convincing that working is abnormal for children of school going age. The NGOs are more successful in reaching out to people through its micro-level planning as the government’s macro-level planning does not yield desired effect on
local communities. The NGOs examine the micro needs of the community and build the policies at macro-levels. The NGOs are also triumphant in involving the community in their operation. The NGOs are experimenting agencies, innovative and works as pressure group on brining in the needed changes in the policies and implementation of the policies. Due their continual experiment the NGOs gain authenticity. The NGOs, with their influence over the local community, are successful in influencing the State.

The interdependency between the State and the NGOs could be of mutual benefit to each other. While the State reaches out to the micro-community, the NGOs could gain from the State’s infrastructural facilities. Though the NGOs cannot be an alternative to the State in implementing the welfare measures, they exert significant influence on the State in framing and shaping its policies to the benefit of the people. The NGOs are successful on issues in which the State failed to make positive contribution. One such issue is that the NGOs are more successful than the State in making the people realise their rights in the society. The NGOs are also successful in bringing into the forum the neglected communities so that their voice could be heard by the State.

Another important thing to be highlighted is the operational flexibility of the NGOs. The State does not exercise flexibility in its operations. Unlike the State, the NGOs do not impose any age restrictions on the children being admitted into their schools. While the young children of 5 to 8 years are initiated into normal primary education, the other age group children are accommodated into normal schooling after providing them with bridge courses.
An important instrument of the NGOs functioning is to bring attitudinal changes to the society, and the children and their parents. The NGOs are more successful in bringing the children back to the school as they try to bring attitudinal change in children. The NGOs understand that the attitude building among the children greatly influences their parents. The NGOs also form the child rights clubs in the schools to advocate the child rights and abolition of child labour problem.

One of the most important contributions of the NGOs is creating awareness among the neglected communities. It is not only the infrastructural facilities, such as school buildings and roads to the villages that attract the children to the school. Reaching out to the children and their parents is the most important part of any developmental process. The State has not been able to reach out to the neglected communities while dealing with issues sensitive to the community. The community attitude towards the NGOs could be best understood by looking at the degree of co-operation between them. The NGOs gain great deal of co-operation from the local communities even in dealing with sensitive issues such as child labour and the children’s education. In this regard the NGOs are successful in imparting, among the downtrodden families, the importance of sending their children to school. This is particularly true in the case of the child labour education. The State has not only failed to make education compulsory to the children but it also failed to highlight the importance of education to the neglected communities. Also it has not been able to provide positive education to the children in that the children and their parents failed to realise that the long-terms gains of sending children to the schools would outweigh the short-term gains of the monetary incentives accrued from their children’s employment.
The NGOs contribution in redressing the issues of child labour and their education is of immense value to the society. The key strategy of the NGOs is based on creating awareness in children and their parents. The NGOs-run rehabilitation homes gives the feeling of a home rather than a hostel and with freedom to the children relieved from child labour. The NGOs are different from the State in so far as their human resources are concerned. The State, despite its noble vision, performs its responsibility to the society with disenchanted staffs. The NGOs are. indeed, committed to their cause. Many of their employees are educated and motivated youths with clear vision and dedication to the society. Many of their staffs are ideologically orientated towards many social issues such as the abolition of child labour and their education.

There are also impediments to the developmental efforts offered by many NGOs. This is mainly because of the NGOs limited role. The NGOs role is limited to being an advisory body to the government in framing the developmental policies and the implementation agency for the government programmes. The NGOs lack legitimacy in enforcing their authority.

The State-run schools are purely straight-forward in that they offer only the service of educating the children. There is no scope for non-teaching undertakings, such as supervisory and advocacy roles, in the State-run schools. Where as the NGOs role is not only limited to teaching, but also to monitor the quality of education they offer. This increases the scope for improving the quality of education. They also conduct motivation centres to motivate the children to attend the school and give up their employment. The schools run by the NGOs cater to
the needs of different categories of the children. While the children, in the age
group of 5+, are permitted to go to primary schools, the 10+ children are
encouraged to attend to bridge courses with vocational training to prepare them for
future employment. The State-run schools, in this regard, are different from the
NGOs-run schools as the former follows strict rules in their admission procedures.
In this regard, the children without certification find it difficult to get access to
these schools. The situation is further worse for the children of more than 10 years
old, such as those relived from the child labour, without any formal education to
get admitted into the State-run schools.

Another important aspect of the NGOs is that they have strong network
among themselves. The like-minded NGOs come together for the purpose of
achieving their social responsibility. The NGOs network exchange field data and
resources among themselves. The NGOs network also offer counselling to the
children and their parents to motivate them towards their children’s education and
vocational training. The NGOs are different from the State in their operational
characteristics in which minute details are looked at very carefully. Though they do
not believe in certain societal divisions, such as the one based on caste and gender,
they are willing to work and reach out to the community. For example the NGOs
realise the gender sensitivity of the community in which they are working. They
also realise and understand the micro-level community’s perception on gender
differences. The NGOs look into the details on the perceived needs of different
gender. This is particularly true in the case of constructing infrastructural facilities
such as separate classrooms and toilet facilities for girl child. By doing so they are
making the children and their parents understand that they are indeed committed to their cause by respecting their communities’ gender belief.

The NGOs that have been studied in this research are more successful in networking and lobbying with State. They are also successful in reaching out to the depressed and neglected communities. None of the NGOs studied believe in the poverty argument. The solution to the problem of the child labour, according to these NGOs, lies in imparting the importance of education to both the children and their parents. The NGOs are far successful, than the State, in appealing to the rationale of the society. The NGOs realise the community’s and the society’s cooperation is very important in redressing the child labour problems. While the NGOs have great success in reaching out to the communities, they witnessed a limited success in changing the societal attitude towards the child labour. As a result a clear trend has been emerging whereby it is recognised that child labour is unacceptable behaviour in the society.

The NGOs studied in this research do not feel they could be an alternative to the State. However, they consider themselves to be an actor of social mobility. The NGOs strongly believe in co-existing within the framework of the State. They lay greater emphasis in co-operating with the State, as they know that the confrontationist approach would not yield desired dividend. The State is of great support to the NGOs’ activities. Though the State is unable to make primary education compulsory, it cannot be construed as an indirect effect of the pressure exerted upon the State by vested interests.
The NGOs role is often sought by the State in framing the policies. Though the policy draft proposals are highly appreciated they are not able to deliver the desired effect of abolishing the existence of the child labour. The NGOs do not have any supervisory role in implementing the laws. This is left to the State. Hence it is possible to see the laws being enacted in half measures. The State’s law concerning the child labour is flawed with enough loopholes to let loose the offender. In this regard, the NGOs call for stringent measures for the violation of the laws enforcing the abolition of the child labour.

The NGOs that have been studied in this research are committed to the cause of abolishing the child labour. Barring few incidents such as those concerning the funding, they are successfully marching towards fulfilling their objectives of abolishing the child labour from the two cities of Andhra Pradesh.