



Girls are at a disadvantage in Raichur and Yadgir districts because cultural norms and family honour keep them from school much beyond primary level (Hallvenkatapura village, Yadgir district)

Feasibility Study for the Project Proposal

Transforming Lives: Access to Education for Children of Migrant Workers of North Karnataka

On behalf of Terre des Hommes-Germany, Regional Office South Asia

*"Inequalities persist partly because of social structures—many with historical roots—that remain entrenched in formal and informal institutions... This requires changes in attitudes, behavioural patterns, social value systems, and the formal and informal institutions shaping them. The driver of this change is education and education only. **The educational inequalities begin with lower levels of learning starting at an early age that drag on throughout school careers... Children with less capacity and lower test scores are less likely to continue education, even though it may be available and accessible.** The low education levels impact income earnings and access to health, resulting in poor quality of life. - Extract from UNDP's Human Development Report 2019*

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1 Executive Summary

The project proposal aims to increase the access to education for children of migrant workers coming from Raichur and Yadgir, two of the most backward districts of north Karnataka in India. These two districts which lay within the erstwhile Hyderabad (Nizam) state later came within the Karnataka state based on linguistic majorities when Indian states were reorganized in 1956. Both districts register low on the HDI, GEI and the MPI whose indicators show the levels of development, gender empowerment and multi-dimensional poverty prevailing.

The proposal aims to ensure access to quality education for children and technical and vocational skills to gain decent employment for youth of migrant workers of North Karnataka Districts. The target groups are children of migrant worker communities at both source and destination areas, including those who are early school leavers and in particular girls. The areas selected for implementation are 4 Gram Panchayats each in 4 blocks of Raichur and Yadgir districts (source areas); and 2 Urban Wards in Bengaluru South and Bengaluru North blocks of Bengaluru Urban District (destination areas).

The methodology of the study included study of secondary data such as the draft matrix (proposal) to BMZ, strategic goals of TDH-G and those of the Regional Office South Asia (ROSA), annual reports of the NGO SATHI. The study collected primary data through field visit observations, interviews and FGDs from travel to 14 project area villages in Raichur and Yadgir and 3 slum settlements in Bengaluru. The consultant interacted with a total of 251 persons (80M 110W 26B 35G) during the field visits. The consultant also did an Internet search to collect government and other data on the larger global, national and local laws and conventions related to child protection and education and the proposed project areas.

The main findings of the feasibility study are as follows:

- 1) The need for the interventions in the two rural and 1 urban district are established beyond doubt. Migrant communities do find it enormously challenging to access education for their children on account of little or no study support at home, disruption of children's schooling on account of migration, cultural norms that prohibit sending girls to school after puberty, poverty and illiteracy and a mindset that education is not priority.
- 2) The project is technically feasible. SATHI has worked with migrant and runaway children from the project areas in its other projects with children in contact with the railways and streets and remedial education centres elsewhere in Maharashtra and Delhi. One other project facilitates access to social security, welfare schemes and information to migrant workers through facilitation centres. SATHI also managed the Railway Childline and an open shelter at one of the major railway stations in Bengaluru until this function was taken over by the government. The station is children from north Karnataka are rescued and also near many settlements where migrant workers from north Karnataka are to be found.
- 3) SATHI has the organizational capacity and skills to implement the project. They may have to put in more effort at source areas where attitudinal changes towards education in general, girls education and the value vocational skills as a gateway to rise above poverty need to be addressed. Migrant youth in particular are focused on earning, city attractions, mobile phones and social media, with some evidence of alcohol and drug addiction. They too merit behaviour and attitudinal change if they are

not to remain in unskilled, low paid casual and construction labour and at a disadvantage in today's technologically fast-paced world.

- 4) Anecdotal evidence from individuals and officials interviewed indicated that children prefer to remain with family, except for a few very poor families without means to educate their girls. Their children may well be linked to existing government hostels for Backward Classes and SC/ST communities, using SATHI's contacts with other CSOs and government departments.

Broad recommendations derived from the study findings are as follows:

- 1) The study endorses the need for Community Learning Centres in both source and destination areas to support children's school studies in subjects they are weak in. Also, to provide remedial learning to slow learners and dropouts so that they achieve foundational literacy and numeracy at the very least.
- 2) The Community Learning Centres can also act as information centres for migrant families on a range of topics from welfare schemes, scholarships, gender justice, career guidance and skill training for youth. They can also support girls to complete 10th Std. through NIOS.
- 3) Linking youth to vocational skill training programs by existing providers (government and private) who have the expertise is better than SATHI undertaking this training themselves. Youth may be supported by SATHI with life skills (WHO model), travel support to training centres and counselling to build up their self-worth and stay the course till training is completed. Thereafter, information on potential job openings and placement support would be helpful to establish them in employment or self-employment with dignity.
- 4) A valuable service would be provided by linking poor families with government hostels or residential schools that could serve to educate their children without additional financial burden. Tuition in relevant subjects would help children of classes 6th – 10th avail means-cum-merit study scholarships from the government. SATHI already has experience of undertaking such interventions.
- 5) The proposition to network with other CSOs in the districts is a positive one. This could work towards creating critical mass of CSOs that can advocate with the KKRDB for increased fund allocations to the district for education and school improvement.
- 6) SATHI could assist government schools in the area to get in touch with alumni who could support school improvement, now that social media and electronic communication has been made accessible. Pride in the village *alma mater* may motivate them to help less fortunate members of the community to complete at least 10th Std. (high school) if not higher studies.
- 7) An action-research study on the entire experience at the end of the project could provide learning for SATHI's future programs. It could also inform the donor with regard to future funding of programs in other locations and geographies.
- 8) Sensitivity training for government officials at various levels could be on child safeguarding, going beyond the limited targeted child protection that is usually the subject of such training.