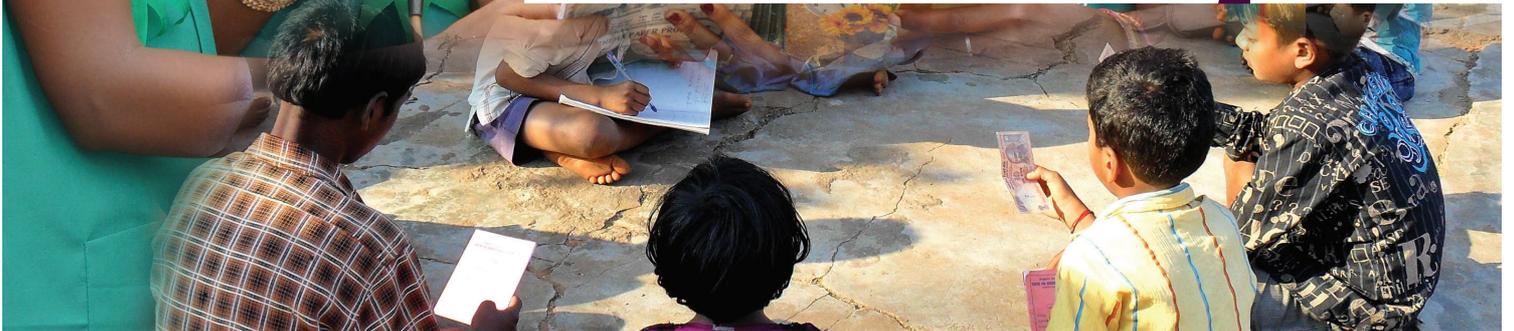
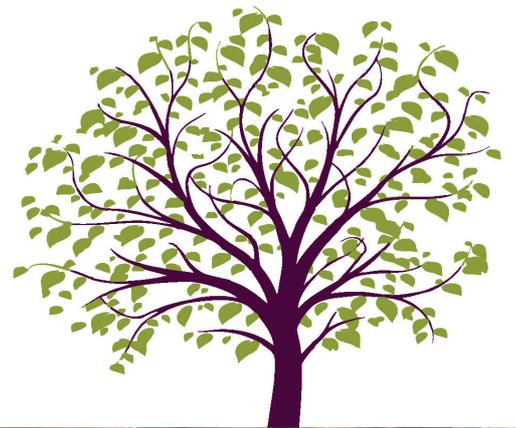




NAHRUNG

A decadal effort - "Translating vision to reality"



Nahrung

Sustenance

A decadal effort - "Translating vision to reality"

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TOC

Foreword

“The Journey of Sustenance” – as told on the cover page, is an effort towards building communities towards a secured and sustainable livelihood giving children a perfect platform to enjoy, relish and reinvent their childhood. This publication brings about the highlights of the decadal efforts by revisiting the achievements through a timeline based theme. CeFHA has been instrumental in creating a space for children to discuss on children issues initially but then that has paraphrased into a more meaningful cognition to take up child right issues and stand “For the Children by the Children”.

CeFHA in its approach believed it was necessary of intervening in the livelihood program of the marginalised and create an atmosphere of secured lifestyle that could help children nourish their childhood in a better way. The understanding of holistic development through integrated interventions in making life better through improved understanding on child rights approach, children issues, sustainable land use, alternative skill development, advocate on issues, understanding climate change and taking up different issues through campaigns and rallies have all translated into the formation of Green Ambassadors and further strengthened into the formation of GRACCC (Green Ambassadors Collective on Climate Change).

A Success story that needs to be told to different stake holders and thus, I believe that this publication would do justice to speak on behalf of the efforts of Children SHGs and Communities for the past decade.

We have believed in transforming the then existing situation in 2005 to a vision that the communities aspired to in 2015 and this partnership with the children

and communities of Kotauratla Mandal is reflected in the next forty pages of this publication. I personally feel this is the beginning of a revolution of a new kind, the revolution that would inculcate the adults to be a path-paving duty bearers and children to exercise their stance being right holders.

I would like to thank KNH, line departments of Government of A.P. who have also walked with us without withering out in turbulent times. A special mention needs to be given to Ms. Beate Lemmen- FeldKamp, Dr. Guido Falkenberg, Mr. Joerg Denker from KNH Germany to be supportive in our initiative towards the work with the Children. Mr. Sathish Samuel and Mr. Stanley D Silva of KNH India to be inspirational in their ideas and being a very serious motivating factor for helping the process of building the children into an organised structure. I personally would like to thank all the children, parents, Shgs, communities and staff who have been associated with the vision and mission of the Organisation and without which achieving anything would have been an issue.

I would want to make a special mention of Mrs. Radha Kunke , Mr. Bhaskar Nagendra and Mr. Sushant for Visiting field, organising Interviews with Children ,Parents, teachers and trainers, compiling and designing the publication and thank them with all kindness for taking up the assignment though they were busy in their individual assignments.



With Best Wishes
Dr. Sasiprabha



First of all, I would congratulate the efforts of the Children the way they organised themselves is amazing. I have visited CeFHA field area in the year 2005 and I remember questioning the team in one of the villages – “Yasidipalem” what work is going to be done when there are only 2 – 3 old people left in the Village? But, then in 2010 when I visited them again it was astonishing to see almost 90% of the people back in to their village and working on their fields. The answer was livelihood sustenance through a strategic approach to evade migration and help people stay in the village and continue to live their life with a lot of respect, self-morale and confidence. It is exactly what child rights is to live with the families and live within the village amongst your community and understand life which teaches them to be united.

This rattling question of how could migration be countered was an answer not by words but by deeds, I am very happy for what CeFHA has produced in the field and how it has transformed the arena of development for the Children. Green Ambassadors have truly, have won many hearts and it is very heartening to see children speak out their voices and opinions it is for the adults now who are the Duty Bearers to take up the issues and protect the rights of the children who should be considered to be the Right Holders.

The experience with the children and communities of Kotauratla would be very rich in my heart and mind. I am sure the efforts like said in this book called Sustenance would transform many generations in the future to come by, the foundation for a major revolution has been laid and it is now to the communities of Kotauratla to take it forward with new exuberance in the area.

Dr. Guido Falkenberg

Introduction

Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (CeFHA) is a registered Trust working with the marginalised communities in Visakhapatnam District, Andhra Pradesh. The main objective of working for development of people (moral, educational, and medical) with indigenous communities like Adivasis, fisher folk and Dalits, with a special focus children, women and people with disabilities (PwDs). It works on children's and women's issues, micro credit, children's education and health, community health, sustainable agriculture, environment, and skill building for livelihoods.

CeFHA has, as part of its work, promoted and helped set up children groups and networks, eco clubs and children and youth societies, SHGs and thrift and credit societies, farmers groups and networks of people with disabilities and Dalits.

CeFHA works in 36 villages in Kotauratla Mandal, Visakhapatnam District

with 2,085 families of which 495 families are from Adivasi communities, 1,185 belong to Scheduled Castes and 490 are from Backward Castes. It reaches out to a total population of 8,967 people, 4,510 of which are men/boys and 4,457 are women/girls. CeFHA initially began its work in the urban slums of Visakhapatnam city and after the tsunami in 2004 worked on reconstruction in the coastal villages. It was during its work on reconstruction that people from Kotauratla Mandal invited CeFHA to work with them and help them on the path to development.

Kotauratla Mandal lies in the foothills of the Eastern Ghats in Visakhapatnam District flanked on one side by the ghats and the coast of Bay of Bengal on the other. The River Varaha flows through the unusual hills and dense forests. The communities are primarily agricultural growing sugarcane, paddy and maize as their main crops. Several small-scale

industries of wax, sugar, power, cement, biotechnology are housed in the Mandal.

Historically dominated by the landowning Rajus (Kshatriya caste), the Dalits and Adivasis mainly work as agricultural labourers on their farms. They themselves own very little land and those who do are dependent on the monsoons for their agriculture. A combination of frequent drought like conditions created by erratic rainfall, dwindling natural resources and very few employment opportunities with the area has made these communities highly vulnerable. Migration is very high with the people migrating for as much as 6 months in year to nearby towns and cities in search for work.

Baseline surveys and Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) conducted in the beginning (2005) indicated that a large percentage of the marginalized families here are food secure for only 4 months in a year.

The baseline surveys also brought out issues related lack of education and educational facilities, high levels of malnourishment among the children, lack of access to water, landlessness, lack of work opportunities and skills for income generation, unsustainable agricultural practices amongst those who own land, domestic violence and backwardness among women.

The survey also revealed that the children in the area were deeply impacted by the conditions of their families. They, more often than not, did not go to school and were engaged in some form of work or another

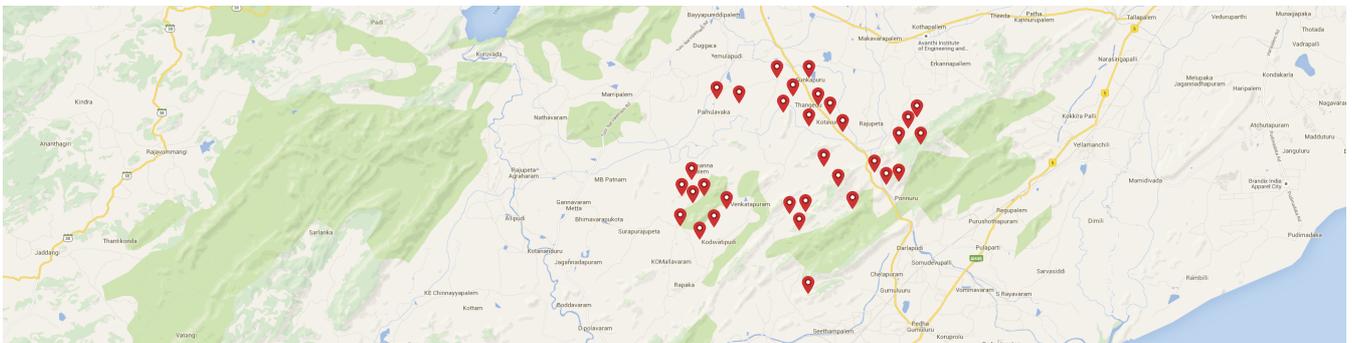
including cattle, goat and sheep herding, domestic work, collection of minor forest produce from the forests and agriculture labour. The lack of healthy and nutritional food resulted in malnourishment and impacted their overall development.

Initial dialogue with the communities helped them identify and prioritize their issues and arrive at the kind of interventions they wanted to initiate with CeFHA's support and facilitation.

The major interventions thus identified were: work with children on education, nutrition and health, assisting youth in

higher education and skills development, introducing sustainable agricultural practices, irrigation, orchard development on community lands, animal husbandry, thrift and credit, facilitating community level organisations and their networking and advocacy for the rights of women and children.

This publication is about the work with children, more specifically the decadal journey of the process of development of Green Ambassadors' Network that emerged from it and the attention that they have been able to bring to Child Rights and Ecological Child Rights.





Child Focussed Community Development

The Concept and the Project

CeFHA initiated the project Child Focussed Community Development (CFCD) with the deep understanding that a child's well-being depends on the family's well-being and a family's well-being depends on the community's well-being. The project is supported by Kinder Not Hilfe (KNH), a funding agency that primarily focussed on children's development. This project was one of the first moves away from institution based child development to a community based child development approach and CeFHA one of the first organisations to design and implement such an approach. The

attempt was to address the challenges in the former approach where children became alienated from their families, community and culture. A community based approach, more holistic, ensures that the child not only remained within the family and community but in the process, the families and communities would also develop along with the child; and children could participate and engage with the communities on issues that concerned them.

Towards this, while child development was the primary objective, the project took up several activities for community development addressing children's education, nutrition and health, introducing sustainable agricultural practices within the families, orchard development on community lands, animal husbandry, promoting SHGs and thrift and credit with women, facilitating community

level organisations and their networking and advocacy for the rights of women and children.

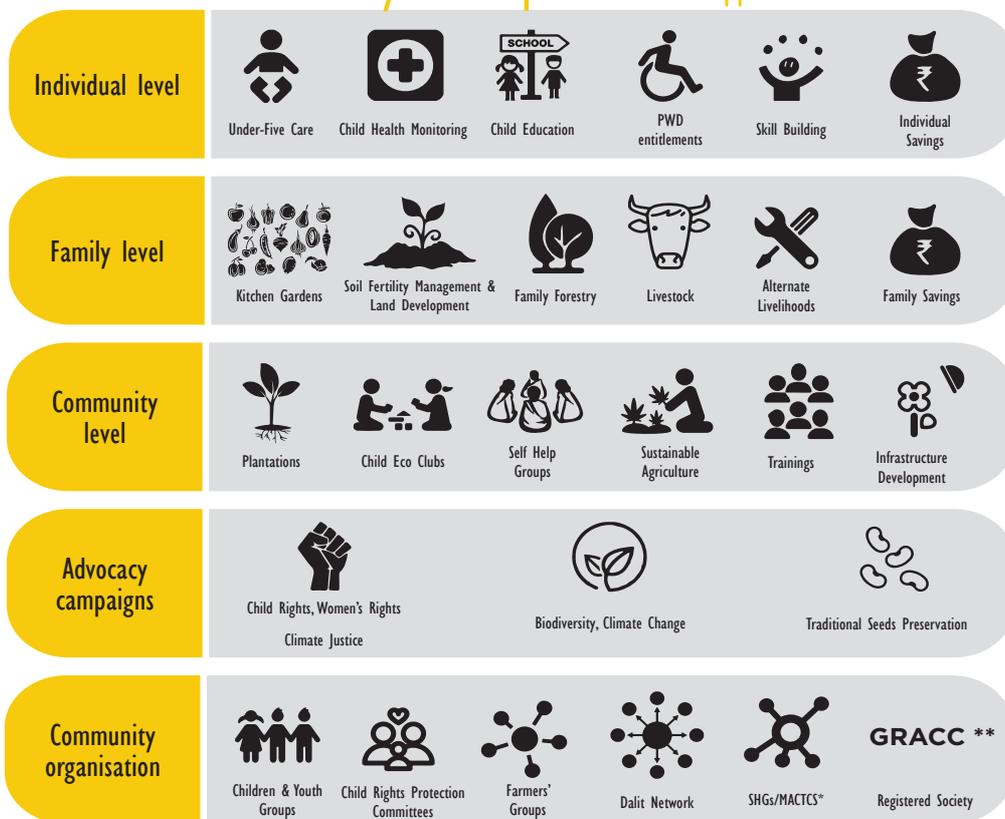


Achievements and results of CeFHA's work with children

- Improved health & nutrition among children
- Reduction in child labor
- All the children in the project area enrolled and retained in schools and older children go for higher studies
- Child Clubs and Eco Clubs set up
- Children's Groups and Networks formed
- Children develop their own savings and Education Fund
- Children trained on Child Rights and aspects of health, environment and biodiversity
- Children capacitated with various skills, knowledge and information
- Children in local schools are aware about importance of agrobiodiversity and learn the importance of preservation of Traditional Seeds by maintaining Seed Banks
- Nurseries and plantations raised in schools and communities by children
- Children take up study projects on Biodiversity, Ecotourism and Aves
- Children participate, engage and make decisions in their communities and Panchayats
- Children address and advocate on issues related to Child Rights and Ecological Child Rights
- Children carry out campaigns and rallies to build public awareness on Climate change and environment issues through Cycle Yatra and National Yatra
- Formation of Green Ambassadors children's network in Kotauratla and expansion to District and State
- Registered Trust - Green Ambassadors Collective on Climate Change registered as a Trust.



Child Focused Community Development - An approach A Model



* MACTCS - Mutually Aided Cooperative Thrift & Credit Society

** Green Ambassadors Collective on Climate change



Children are no longer passive spectators to issues in their community; nor are they helpless victims of misguided, powerful adults or an indifferent system.

The approach has been successful model for child focussed community development. Children not only are healthy and educated but also have become active advocates for their rights, for environment and for Climate Change. The families and communities of the children have simultaneously developed with their capacity to earn a livelihood, create collective spaces to share their travails and triumphs and collective decision making, garner their entitlements and assert their rights.



The Beginning

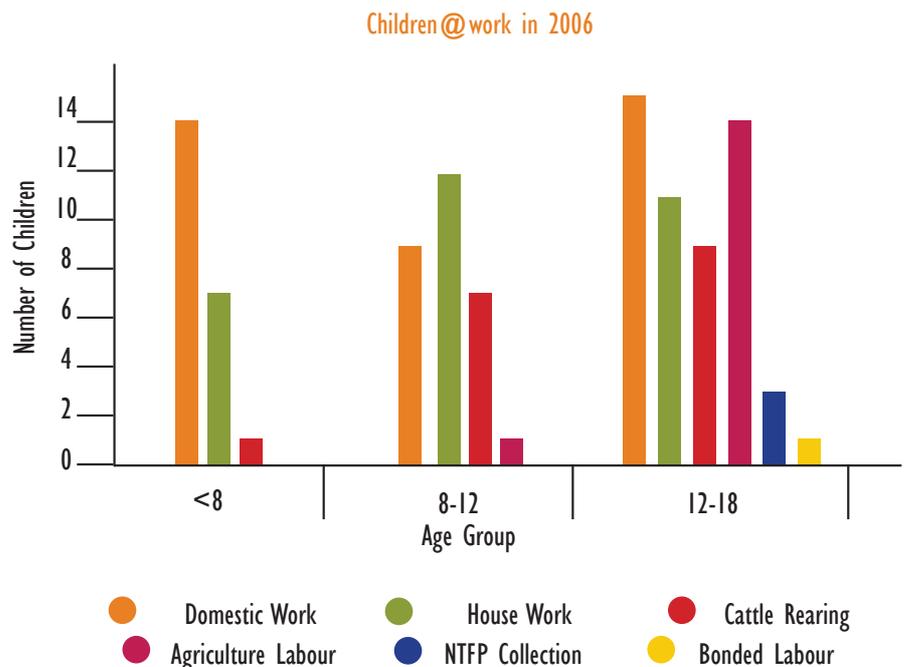
CeFHA began its work with children by identifying children who did not go to school – those who weren't ever enrolled in a school and those who dropped out of school. A baseline survey was carried out in the 16 villages which brought out the issues faced by the communities and specifically those experienced by children.

Out of 254 children who were involved in child labour 51% were children in the age group of 12-18 years. 49% of these (12-18 years) children were involved in domestic work out of which 28% were employed while 21% helped out at home. 26% worked as agricultural labour and 17% were involved in cattle rearing.

Amongst the younger lot, the 8-12 years age group 72% were involved in Domestic work and 31% were in paid employment.

The very young (< 8 years old) were mostly involved in working at home doing domestic duties.

It was under these conditions that CeFHA began its work with children.



Child Health & Nutrition

An important and often neglected aspect is early childhood development. The first few years of a child's life are, from a psychological perspective, a decisive phase because they lay the cornerstone for further development. Children under the age of five are the most vulnerable individuals in a society. Numerous studies prove that children who receive support and stimulation during their early years are more successful at school and at work later in life.

Towards this, CeFHA began its work with screening the nutritional status infants and young children. An Under-Five Care program was put in place through which their health and nutrition was regularly monitored. Information about the children's health was shared with the mothers and solutions discussed. Supplementary Feeding centres were set up which ensured that young children received adequate and nutritious food. Kitchen gardens set up in every household ensured that children as well as adults grew and ate a variety of greens and vegetables.

Within the year children's health began improving and malnourishment began decreasing.



787 Children

Children screened and provided care and support

1020 Children

456 boys and 564 girls avail the facility of Under-Five Clinics



1590 Kitchen Gardens

1590 Families

On an average 1590 families planted and maintained Kitchen Gardens every year.



21 Supplementary Feeding Centres

573 Children

Starting with 10 but coming down to 2 by the end of the decade Supplementary Centres played a major role in Children's nutrition.



Child Education

Education creates opportunities. Children who attend school have better prospects of finding a job, are aware of health risks and can make wise decisions concerning their lives. Extreme poverty can force poor families to send children to earn money.

When we think of education, we tend to focus on career opportunities. But education is so much more than that. Learning life skills enhances and promotes abilities that allow individuals to positively and successfully shape their own lives and constructively deal with difficult phases in life. It helps strengthen self-awareness, empathy, creative and critical thinking, the ability to make decisions, solve problems, effective communication, interpersonal skills, deal with one's emotions and the ability to cope with stress.

Children and young people require knowledge of their rights and the necessary skills and abilities to advocate for them and demand respect for them.

In the CFCD project we not only motivated the communities to educate their children but also worked towards improving children's knowledge relevant to their context and situation. For example, children in our region need to know local biodiversity, cultivation practices, traditional seeds and the impact of their gradual loss on their future. They also need to have additional Life Skills and livelihood skills. This goes far beyond mere academics and has been an integral part of CeFHA's work with children.

But first, the children had to be brought out the vicious cycle of poverty and its resultant burden on children to earn for their families. Towards this, CeFHA started by motivating the communities to enroll their children in schools. This had a dual impact – one of educating the child and secondly getting the child out of child labour. Once children were in schools, CeFHA



9 Motivational Centres
220 children

Children and communities motivated to enroll in Schools.



3 Bridge Camps
143 Children

Helping children bridge the academic gap.



29 Tuition Centres
605 Children

Helping the academically weak to strengthen themselves.



7 Tutorial Centres
229 Children

Special coaching for children appearing for public exams.

undertook activities which helped children academically and economically to do well in their academics. Series of trainings programs were conducted on a variety of subjects to take the children beyond academics and help them stay integrated in their culture and to advocate and engage with their communities on children-centric issues and rights.



One of the best things of being part of Green Ambassadors has been what I have learnt over the years. I have learnt about children's rights, biodiversity, Climate Change, sustainable agriculture, how to organise a campaign, how to approach government authorities and petition our demands. I have learnt to speak in public and have gained tremendous self-confidence. All

of this learning is something I would never have learnt only in school. It is by participating in the many activities, trainings, rallies and studies that my knowledge of the real world has expanded so much."

*– Ananthalakshmi, Secretary,
Green Ambassadors*



3 Studies

Children undertake 3 studies – Biodiversity, Eco Tourism and its impact and Aves of coastal lagoons



8 Eco Clubs

Children learn about Nature and to protect and conserve it through plantations.



70 Trainings & Workshops 2400 Children

Children learn about life skills, Climate Change, Child Rights, Biodiversity etc.

Motivational Centres

Migrating parents often cannot take young children with them due to uncertain conditions and lack of support systems in the new place. Quite often these children, left behind with their grandparents, other family members or sometimes bonded with a landlord, end up working at very young ages. They not only support their families in the daily domestic routines but are also earning members of the family. The parents, who are very poor, are reluctant to send their children to school and lose the crucial support – labour and money – which these children provide.

Motivational Centres played multiple roles: the centres became spaces to introduce children to the idea of school and helped them get used to the structured rigor of academic education; the centre also doubled up as a space where neglected health and nutritional needs of children were monitored and taken care of. Summer camps were held every year where all children were brought together to play, learn, take up collective activities and get to know one another. Motivational Centres typically ran for 3-4 months in a village until all the children were enrolled in schools.

Seventeen years old Ramalaxmi is now completing her Higher Secondary and plans to study further and train to become a Teacher. "I loved the games and activities. I remember planting so many fruit trees in and around our village", she says.



Fifteen year old Durgaprasad, one of the first PF2 children and an enthusiastic participant of the Motivational Centre, is on the verge of finishing his schooling. He plans to study further. He has participated in several Campaigns and rallies and is an active Green Ambassador.



9 Motivational Centres

201 Children

96 boys and 105 girls who were school dropouts or were never enrolled in schools were mainstreamed into formal, government run schools



Alumiyapalem is a sleepy little village, tucked away in the remote folds of the hills of Kotauratla. The Manne Doras, an Adivasi community, primarily live off their small farms and the produce they collect from the nearby forests.

In 2006, none of the children went to school. The one school that served the area

was too far away. The children were involved in a variety of work: cattle rearing, shepherding goats and sheep, helping out in household chores, looking after younger children, working on the podu patches and at times going for agriculture labour work in the nearby villages.

With regular visits and counseling from CeFHA staff, parents began sending their

children to the Motivational Centre. They came forward and contributed their labour to build a small wood-and-thatch shed for the children to meet and study. They also, along with CeFHA, petitioned the authorities to build a primary school close to the village. Today, all the children in the village go to school.

The communities came forward to help and support these initiatives. Bonukothur village community, for e.g., constructed a one-room building to conduct the Center in their village. They also provided a room to conduct classes.

Bridge Camps



When CeFHA started motivating the communities to enroll the children in school one of the obstacles we and they encountered was the fact that many of the children were much academically behind children of similar age. If they were to be enrolled in age-appropriate classes, they would have to make up for lost time. Bridge Camps was our solution.

There were initial issues CeFHA had to face for alternatives for income these children earned as house maids, Hotel Help, contract workers, cattle rearers and agricultural

labourers. But with consistent and persistent dialogue with the parents and members of the communities CeFHA motivated them to take a step forward in children's education.

Bridge Camps, which typically ran for a full academic year, were residential intensive sessions to help the children to catch up with their peers in academics in classes 3 to 5 and in class 7 according to both their age and knowledge. The Camp teachers accompanied the children helping them adjust to the new routine and environment before teaching began. The children were provided with all required educational materials (books, pens, pencils, uniforms) and day to day needs (blankets, bedding, personal care materials etc.) The Camps were also equipped with cooking utensils, gaslights, teaching materials, sports equipment, musical instruments and stationery etc.

Various children's committees were

formed to manage and monitor the Camps. Food Committee, Health Committee, Report Committee, Cleaning Committee, Exercise Committee, Review Committee, Materials Committee, Water Committee and Cultural Committee all reviewed, identified issues and gaps and worked out solutions. Regular meetings were also held amongst the teachers and staff to discuss their difficulties and find solutions.

Periodic tests were held which evaluated the children's progress. Special classes were taken for children who were academically weak and lagged behind.

Children who have gone through Bridge Camps are enrolled in Schools. Many of them have gone for higher studies like DIET (a teachers' training course), Diploma in Engineering, Computer Science, ITI, Lab technician, civil contracts works, nursing, business etc.

3 2 Bridge Camps 143 Children

Bridge Camps help school drop-outs to bridge their academics and rejoin schools



Goona Chiranjeevi, a 11-year old Adivasi boy from the Konda Dora, dropped out in the 3rd standard from Kodavatipudi School. His parents are daily wage laborers. They also collect soap nuts, honey and firewood from the forest and sell them in the market.

Chiranjeevi used to walk 4 km to school. Though he himself was very interested in studying his family was too poor to send him to school. He dropped out of school and began to work for a farmer to pay off the loan which his father took from him. He took care of the farmer's buffaloes. The farmer fed him two times a day and paid Rs. 2,500 per year.

CeFHA began motivating his parents to send the boy to school. After much dialogue with the parents and his employer, he was set free. Seeing his friends join good hostels after completing Bridge Camps he and his parents decided to continue his studies. But he needed to catch up academically as he had dropped out of school.

Chiranjeevi was very active in the Camp and developed many skills besides gradually becoming stronger in his academics too. Now, he is close to finishing his schooling. He plans to go for higher studies and dreams of becoming a Teacher.



Education Assistance & Higher Education Support

Education Assistance has been a continuing and integral part of the CFCD project. Children from very poor families that cannot support their education benefit from this assistance. Similarly children who wish to pursue higher education and do not have resources to do so, are supported. This includes material support through purchase of books and uniforms, transport expenses, etc. Children are also supported to get admissions in colleges and hostels by identifying colleges relevant to their interests, approaching the school authorities and ensuring that the children complete the necessary formalities.



3289 Children Education Assistance

1,654 Boys and 1,635 girls received educational assistance.

155 Children Higher Education support

85 Boys and 70 girls received support for professional and higher education.educational assistance.

Matla Anil Kumar, a Dalit from Kodavatipudi village, was a bright student. He topped his class with first division in Xth class. Unfortunately, Anil came from a poor family. His parents were agricultural labourers and his father pulled a rickshaw for additional income. As the eldest boy he felt duty bound to support his family and gave up his education inspite of a keen interest in it.



CeFHA decided to support his cause. Anil applied for a Diploma in Polytechnics at Avanigadda and successfully completed with high score. He decided to continue his education and pursued for Bachelors of Technology at Srikakulam. He passed with a First division in the year 2011.

Anil Kumar's story is a classic example of how children from poor and socially backward communities, who otherwise do not have many opportunities, can come up fast and strong with a little bit of support.

Tuition Centres & Tutorials

There is no doubt that government schools provide basic education opportunities and facilities for the village children. But they leave a lot to be desired for. The quality of teaching and the attention children need is still very much below par.

Tuition Centres were started by CeFHA to support children in their academics. Teachers were appointed who helped children in the evenings and during holidays with their academic work, holding special classes for children who needed them. This additional attention helped the children do well in their academics. Similarly, Tutorials were started especially for children of Xth class who had failed their exams. These Tutorials helped them focus and gave them the much needed academic support.



29 Tuition Centres
605 Children

280 boys and 285 girls were supported in their academics by Tuition Centres



7 Tutorials
229 Children

99 boys and 130 girls helped to get through their public exams.



“I have been teaching in the Tuition Centres for many years now. The children of the village gather in the evenings and I help them in the subjects they find difficult like English, Maths, Science, Hindi etc. I also help the little ones learn their lessons better. I also help them keep neat and clean. The parents also feel very happy. They come and request me to teach their children and help them do well in life.”

**– Anand Kumar, Tuition Teacher,
Ramchandrapalem village.**

Eco clubs and child centres

Children's Eco Clubs facilitated children's social, educational, health and eco development activities. They initiated the children into gardening and farming with sustainable practices. Children were encouraged to plant trees around their homes and within the village, learnt to compost and use the composted waste in their gardens. The children took up clean and green activities that helped keep the surroundings in their villages clean. They were sensitized to minimize use of plastics and in turn they sensitized their parents and communities. The children also developed their own gardens and planted vegetables and fruit trees and maintained them collectively. This kind of collective eco-development activity brought children together to work towards a common goal and they learnt to work as a team.

Children were introduced to a variety of playful skillful activities. They learnt Yoga, flower

making, hand embroidery, making greeting cards, jewelry, soft toys and fabric painting. These activities expanded their creativity and imagination.

Besides working together the Eco Clubs also provided the children spaces to play, meet other children and come together. The sports materials housed in the Centres were a big attraction and children gathered in the evenings to have a good game of Cricket or Volley Ball. So were the books and toys for the younger children.



33 Children Centres
8 Eco Clubs

290 boys and 296 girls, in all 586 children, was supported by the Child Centres.



We planted a variety of vegetables and fruit trees around our homes. I myself planted guava, sapota, lemons and mangoes and took care of them. I grew vegetables and my family and I ate them. It was fun!"

– Durgaprasad, Alumiyapalem.



“You remember the Volley Ball equipment you (CeFHA) gave us when we were small? Well, we still play a good game of Volley Ball every evening!”, Chowduvada village youth tell Dr. Sasi Prabha during a village visit and meeting.



Children's Groups

Children's Groups were started in every village where children from the age groups of 8-18 years could gather, learn and have fun. The children's groups became an important instrument for organizing young people and enabling them to get actively involved in the development of their surroundings. As intended by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the children got to know their rights and have a platform from which they could claim them. Here they also learnt to carry out projects like taking up plantations and nursery development which served the local community. During the evenings and weekly meetings the children also met up for informal discussions, for playing, and for just having fun. A total of 64 Children's Groups were formed in the 36 villages. Children went through much training on a variety of subjects – arts and crafts, sustainable agriculture, Leadership development, Climate Change etc.

The Green Ambassadors Network was born out of Children's Groups. The regular meetings and collaborative activities resulted in the emergence of a children's network which began to take up issues and campaign for child rights. The combined strength of all the children's groups brought confidence, articulation, and created a collective force that takes up children's and child related issues.

Furthermore, all the children's groups followed the example of their mothers in the SHGs and saved a small amount every month towards an Education Fund. The fund is used for poor children to buy books and other school materials

Children's Education Fund

Besides the project's part in education assistance, children, through their Child Groups, also contribute a small amount every month to the Education Fund. This fund is used

to support needy children in education related matters. The Children's Education Fund stands at Rs. 341,760 as of March 2016.



Children's Education Fund
Rs. 341,760

64 groups collect a monthly contribution towards an education fund



Child Rights

Childhood is a time of evolving capabilities, vulnerability to abuse and exploitation, and a critical time for survival and development within the lifetime of human being. Children have unique developmental needs, as such their rights require special attention and cannot be clubbed with other human rights.

- They need their own set of rights because:
- they have limited political or social power
- are economically dependent on adults
- they are subject to rules that do not apply to other social groups
- they are vulnerable to ill treatment by adults and those more powerful than themselves
- children and young people are key recipients of services
- they often lack a voice in service access and delivery

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history, has several “foundation principles” that underpin all other children’s rights. These include: non-discrimination; best interests of the child; right to survival and development; and views of the child.

Non-discrimination means that all children have the same right to develop their potential -- all children, in all situations, all of the time, everywhere.

The best interests of the child must be “a primary consideration” in all actions and decisions concerning her or him, and must be used to resolve confusion between different rights.

The right to survival and development underscores the vital importance of ensuring access to basic services and to equity of opportunity for children to achieve their full development.

The views of the child means that the

voice of children must be heard and respected in all matters concerning their rights. Countries must promote children’s active, free and meaningful participation in decision-making that affects them.

The project has, over the decade, worked upon improving children’s access, especially those from the marginalised communities who are neglected, to basic amenities like nutrition, health and education; ensuring that the institutions they are embedded in – family, community, schools – are made aware of and motivated to adhere to Child Rights; creating spaces and opportunities for children to come together, discuss their issues and present their viewpoints in different fora; help them advocate for their needs; and in dire situations where their rights have been contravened taken up their issues legally.

Towards this, CeFHA promoted and helped set up:

Children Rights Protection Committee

Child Rights Protection Committees (CRPC) were formed in every village to protect the interests of children and tackle their issues in the area. The committee consists of 8 members including the local Panchayat members and CeFHA. The CRPC organizes

Child Protection Committee are set up even with CeFHA as an organisation. The members are – Director of CeFHA, Child Protection Officer, Child Coordinator, one girl and one boy from Children's Groups, one SHG member, one Teacher (government), one member from the community level Child Rights Protection Committee, one Panchayat member and one Child Protection Officer from the government (from Police department). CeFHA also has drawn up a Child Protection Policy for itself which has been diligently followed.

meetings every month to discuss issues related to child protection and education in the village.

The committee attempts to understand any violation of Child Rights, identify cases of child abuse, child labor, child marriages and children who have dropped out of school. The committee then takes these up and immediately discusses the matter with the parents, relevant school and government authorities and local panchayats to solve the problem.

Children's participation in Panchayats

CeFHA has ensured that children from Children's Groups participate in the Village



level Panchayats and able to bring up issues that affect them within the community as well

as at school. Over the years children have put forth their demands like toilets for girls, safe drinking water, school playground and Library, etc. and have succeeded in getting these facilities in their schools. In Kotauratla.

Ecological Child Rights

The ecological rights of children are embedded within the four basic rights. The rights of children to clean air, clean drinking water and food cannot be denied to them or violated. With the looming Climate crisis, their future is under dire threat.

CeFHA work towards this has been to



help children understand the importance of environment and deep connection of people and nature by helping them grow their own vegetable gardens, plant hill-slope plantations, study biodiversity etc. CeFHA also sensitized children to the issue of Climate Change and the impact it is likely to have on their lives, come together and build awareness on these issues within their own communities and advocate for them with relevant authorities.

CeFHA has promoted and helped establish the Green Ambassadors, a children's network, that is committed to promoting Child Rights, especially Ecological Child Rights.

Trainings & Campaigns on Child Rights

A series of trainings is conducted, every year, on Child Rights with children and with adults to educate them about the Rights enshrined in the CRC. Campaigns are conducted every year to sensitize people on Child Rights. These campaigns are organised through volunteers, Child Rights Protection Committees, and Women Groups in all the villages. Role plays, street theatre, songs, dialogues becomes ways to interact with the community, parents, women groups, youth, teacher and panchayat leaders.

Children's Issues

Over the decade CeFHA, along with Women's Groups, Children's Network and Dalit Network has taken up children's issues in the villages. When issues come to light, the various groups and Child Rights Protection Committees sit together with exploiting individuals and dialogue with them. In severe cases, the groups file complaints in the police station and/or legal cases are filed against them.

Cases taken up and resolved



Over the decade CeFHA and Green Ambassadors have taken up to resolution 57 such cases against boys and girls. These 57 cases include cases of abuse (2), bonded labour (18), trafficking (1), sexual abuse (4), child marriage (2) and child labour (30) have successfully been dealt with.

Child Rights is central to CeFHA's work with children and core to the CFCD project.

"The best legacy parents can leave for their child is not material wealth but a clean world to live in with clean air, clean water and healthy lands and forests."

– Ananthalakshmi, Secretary, Green Ambassadors



Green Ambassadors

If child rights are to be realised and protected in the long run, we have to impact economic, social, and political conditions. For this we need to lobby with government agencies, politicians and even the private sector. If we are to promote change from the ground up we need to engage children, their families and civil society in strengthening child rights and ensure that governments and international bodies meet their commitments to children's rights. We need children's and youth alliances to be able to give children a voice – to bring their concerns, priorities and issues to the fore so it becomes a part of policy making and implementation.

The Green Ambassadors Network was born out of the Children's Groups promoted in the area. The regular meetings and collaborative activities resulted in the emergence of a children's network which began to take up issues and campaign for child rights. The

combined strength of all the children's groups brought confidence, articulation, and created a collective force that takes up children's and child related issues.

The Green Ambassadors Children's Network is 6985 strong with members from 11 districts of Andhra Pradesh and 2600+ from Kotauratla mandal.

Promoted and formed by CeFHA in 2008, today the network is 6600+ strong with members from 8 districts of Andhra Pradesh and 2600+ from Kotauratla mandal. Their vision is to bring awareness in their communities on Child Rights and Ecological Child Rights. This vision has led them to take up a host of campaigns and advocate for Child Rights - on a variety of subjects like child labour, violence against girls and women, climate justice, impact of plastics, conservation of traditional seeds,.

The Green Ambassadors network is a registered Society under the Andhra Pradesh

Societies Registration Act, 2001 with the name "Green Ambassadors Collective on Climate Change". Their objectives are:

- To ensure the rights of the children and child protection.
- To create consciousness on environment, biodiversity and climate change
- To capacitate children on Global warming it's effects and enjoy the ecological rights of Children
- To address climate change and food security from Child Rights perspective

The children, through their network have taken up issues with relevant authorities and seen them through to resolution on sexual abuse of young girls, freeing bonded labourer children, quality of food in government hostels and schools, etc. They have taken up studies on bio-diversity to understand the

inter-relatedness of the ecosystem and their relationship to it. They carried out studies on eco-tourism and the impact this has had on the Adivasi communities. Currently they are carrying out an Avian study. They have shared their findings with their communities and relevant local authorities.

Green Ambassadors work on plantations
 Cycle Yatra on Environment
 Green Ambassadors speak to media on Ecotourism impacts

Filing a complaint at the Police Station
 National Awareness Yatra on Climate Change
 Study on Biodiversity published

Various activities taken up by Green Ambassadors:

- Capacity building of children on ecologically sustainable knowledge systems
- Awareness campaigns at villages, mandal, district, and national levels
- Advocacy for Reduction of usage of Plastics
- Green Walk and Green Talk in Schools in the area
- Protection of Forests
- Policing against unlawful activities that degrade environment
- Learning resource centres - herbarium, seed bank, collection and preservation of aquatic species in schools

- Nursery raising and plantations in schools, communities and hill slopes
- Design of a field- Agriculture plot demonstration by child group
- Agro-forestry Model at village level
- Geographical orientation (north to south plantation)
- Published study on Wild, Domesticated, Freshwater and Agricultural Diversity
- School Biodiversity
- Study on Impacts of Eco tourism on children
- Advocacy and lobbying for Environment protection

Through this formal registered body the Green Ambassadors plan to raise funds and take up projects on Climate Change. They plan to expand and bring more children from 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh into their network and take the message of Child Rights, Ecological Child Rights and Climate Change to every corner of the country.

| Expanse | Memberships |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Kotauratla memberships | 2,609 |
| North Andhra memberships | 3,671 |
| State Memberships | 6,985 |
| South Andhra membership | 3314 |





Campaigns and Celebrations

Campaigns have been an important tool to raise awareness on issues at CeFHA as well as for Green Ambassadors. It has played an important role in engaging with communities, authorities, government agencies and civil society. They have helped in bringing issues concerning children and issues children are concerned about into limelight.

Over the years campaigns have been taken up on Child Health & Nutrition, Child Education, Child Rights, OP3, Environment, Climate Change, Biodiversity etc. Campaigns have been taken up at different levels – at the village level, mandal level, regional level and at national level. Authorities at different level have been engaged – Village Panchayats, Mandal

Authorities, Police Department, District Collectors, academicians, School authorities, and Ministers.

Similarly, celebrations of important days like Universal Children’s Day, Wild Life Week presented opportunities for children to gather, celebrate and share their viewpoints.

Campaigns over the decade:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | <p>Child Rights Campaigns</p> <p>Campaigns have been held almost every year to sensitize and build awareness on children’s issues – child labour, violence against girls, OP3 and health & education</p> <p>18 campaigns engaging 3350+ people</p> |
| 2. | <p>Campaigns on Environment</p> <p>Campaigns on Environment addressed issues of biodiversity, deforestation, use of plastics and pollution of natural resources.</p> <p>14 campaigns engaging 3000+ people</p> |
| 3. | <p>Campaigns on Climate Change</p> <p>Campaigns brought out impacts of Climate Change, Climate Justice, sustainable development and government policies.</p> <p>8 District level campaigns engaging 3500+ people</p> <p>8 State level campaigns engaging 5200+ people</p> |

National Yatra for Awareness on Environment & Climate Change

One of issues that concern children most, as articulated by them during meetings and consultations, is the issue of Climate Change. The impact of Climate Change is going to be impacting the coming generations severely. While we still have a lot to learn about the consequences of climate change, it is clear that the current paradigm of development is unsustainable and has the potential to add tremendously to the insecurity faced by the most vulnerable people, especially women and children.

The National Yatra was in this direction, to build peer pressure, on the need of safe environment and reassure the general masses and government that children are ready to work closely and with personal commitment with the government to reduce pollution, preserve environmental diversity and protect water bodies since these are basics to protection of child rights.

The Yatra simultaneously started from Semiliguda in Koraput district passing through Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, Yanam, Palakollu, Gudivada, Vijayawada, Guntur, Ongole and Nellore in Andhra Pradesh. Similarly children from Tamil Nadu assembled at Kanyakumari and traveled through various districts making halts at Virudunagar, Ramnad, Nagapatinam, Cuddalore and Chennai. Both these teams arrived at Chennai on the 26th May 2012.

Children from the Green Ambassadors Network from Andhra Pradesh and Odisha joined this National Yatra organised by Children Movement for Climate Justice (AP), a children led network for ensuring ecological rights of children as part of overall child rights as specified in UNCRC. The CMCJ- AP initiative is an offshoot of KNH partners AP and other NGO's working group of AP in India.

The Yatra concluded with the children of AP and Odisha & Green Ambassadors submitting a Memorandum to Dist Collector, Visakhapatnam.



Green Ambassadors submit memorandum to District Collector



“Everyone spoke about climate change and the dreadful impacts it has on the humans. The message has to reach the local community based organisations, women group, self-help groups and federations.”

- Satish Samuel, India Co-ordinator, KNH

“From the perspective of KNH there is a lot of respect for the children as they have learnt the concept, dynamics, theory of climate change and internalised the concepts pertaining to child rights. The children are the real experts to protect the Mother Earth. It is very heartening to visually see the powerful ambassador for the environment within every child present here. It is now proved that the children though young in age they can influence the decision making process in villages and if need be at a higher level as well.”

- Guido Falkenberg, Team Leader, India, KNH , Department of Asia and Eastern Europe



Cycle Yatra for Biodiversity, Environment and Climate Change

Addressing the serious issue of pollution and environmental degradation, the Green Ambassadors undertook a Cycle Yatra (Campaign on Cycles) awareness generation through Cycle yatra on environment protection and climate change on 21st May 2013 covering Kotauratla, Makavarapalem and Narsipatnam Mandals of Visakhapatnam District.

In a press meet, Green Ambassadors spoke about the urgent need to change our mindset and lifestyles as these are aggravating the climate crisis. A human chain was formed in the centre of Kotauratla village to draw attention to the event.

In the villages, the children divided themselves into groups and spread out into the village to speak about impacts of pollution on health, excessive use of plastics, chemical-



KNH India Coordinator, Mr. Sathish Samuel and Dr. Sasi Prabha Stanley, CeFHA spoke to the gathering, encouraging and congratulating them for their initiative. Shri Rajendra Kumar, Circle Inspector of Narsipatnam flagged off the yatra.

based agriculture, depletion of ground level water, migration & displacement, impacts of plastic, the disappearance of wild species, deforestation and climate related issues.

Campaign for Ratification of Optional Protocol3 CRC

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (OP3 CRC) came into force on 14 April 2014, providing children with the opportunity to access justice at the international level. But children will only be able to use this complaints procedure if their States ratify OP3 CRC.

The Green Ambassadors organized meetings, workshops and awareness campaigns and signature campaigns in the Mandal and the schools and hostels for ratification of OP3.

Campaigns on Global warming & Climate change

A campaign was organized at Kotauratla and an exhibition at Visakhapatnam on the issues of global warming and climate change. 720 children and school children also joined in the camp to generate awareness on various environmental issues. The exhibition at Visakhapatnam was organised for the school children and college students where it met with a good response and an active interaction between rural and urban students. Government officials, elected representatives, officers from NGOs and friends from CBOs took part in the campaign to demand children's ecological rights. A memorandum was handed over to District Collector Mr. J. Shyamala Rao and the children shared their concerns about Environment with him and with the Media.

Green Walk on Green Talk

Green Walk on Green Talk was a unique programme designed to raise awareness

on Climate Change issues. A team of 12 children visited 8 schools once a month by walk carrying banners on the subject. In the school, they spoke about environment, climate



change, biodiversity, organic farming, need for protection of Indigenous seeds, forests and indigenous medicinal plants, regeneration of forests & Ecological Child Rights.

Indigenous Seeds Festival

In continuation of the earlier campaigns and exhibitions at Kotauratla, Green Ambassadors and CeFHA along with IRDWSI organised a National Workshop cum Exhibition

on Indigenous seeds and Biodiversity on 4th June, 2011 at Visakha Library as part of World Environment Week.

Children collected and documented 180 varieties of the locally available indigenous seeds, natural dyes, medicinal plants and herbal



cosmetics and exhibited them during the programme. The workshop and exhibition addressed the rapid loss of biodiversity and its impacts on local communities and the urgent need to conserve the many disappearing varieties of plants.

The objective of the event was to educate the public on the importance of Seed Sovereignty and urge them to conserve and multiply them. They also demonstrated organic farming methods using local inputs and traditional seeds.

350 participants attended the programme including media, students from schools and colleges, children from slums, NGOs, government and other line departments and private sector companies.

Seed Banks & Herbariums

As part of the school biodiversity programme, members of children groups along



with other school children visited nearby forests, collected samples of different plant species. A herbarium was prepared and placed in class rooms to sensitize and inform students about the varieties of plant species available and the benefits of these plants.

The children developed a seed bank of indigenous seeds documented by interviewing knowledgeable people of the community and collected from the farms and forests. This enhanced the understanding of children on agrobiodiversity of the local area.

Agrobiodiversity Demonstration

Integrated Agriculture Biodiversity program is based on conservation agriculture, which is a combination of our age-old traditional knowledge and modern scientific techniques. As part of the program, the Gandhiji Children's Group of Allumiyapalem village took up a model demo plot to demonstrate mixed, diversified cropping and re-introducing millets which has disappeared long back from

the village. 10 cents of land was contributed by one of the farmers. The children were helped by the SHG members to prepare the land, fence it, collect seeds and plant them. A mix of millets, maize, tubers and vegetables



were planted and maintained using compost and organic fertilizers and pesticides prepared by the children. The children worked on the land during the weekends by dividing the plot amongst themselves and taking responsibility for them. The harvested produce was shared and distributed within the community.

Celebration of Special Days

Special Days are occasions that bring children together, hold events and take up activities that generate awareness among the communities. The activities included visits to

schools, colleges, and hostels, holding debates, conducting quizzes and essay and painting competitions the topic. Relevant government officials participate in these events which help



in building linkages between children and the authorities.

The various events and celebrations were:

- World Wild Life Week

- World Environment Day
- World Day Against Child Labor
- Universal Children's Day - Stop Violence against Children

- Orange the World "SAY NO - UNITE to END Violence Against Women and Girls"



The "cycle" becomes a symbol of sustainability, a solution to current problems of pollution & climate change. Children brought their own cycles and worked out how share them with those do not have a cycle or with visitors.

| Event / program | Contributors | Contributions | | Purpose |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| | | In cash (Amt. in Rs.) | In kind(Value in Rs.) | |
| NGOs /Children networks Contribution on National Yatra | 15 NGOs | 55,000 | 2,28,000 | Mobilized for the program National Yatra |
| Children Green Ambassadors Cycle Yatra | 45 groups from 20 villages | 11,240 | 3,395 97 Kgs Rice | Mobilized for the program Cycle Yatra |
| German Volunteers contribution to Green Ambassadors | 30 groups from 20 villages | 45,000 | Language Course & Computer Training | Mobilized for the program |
| Community contribution on child programs | 36 villages | | 3,17,960 | Mobilized for various campaigns & meetings |
| Total | | 1,11,240 | 5,49,355 | |

- 100 children & 4 children with disabilities
- 10 villages in 3 Mandals
- 48 kms
- Community contributions: Rs. 11,240/- (in cash) and 135 kgs rice and 40 Cycles

Studies

Study on Biodiversity

Biodiversity has been an important topic through all the children's programme. The effort has been to dialogue and discuss the importance of biodiversity, impacts of its losses and ways to address the problem since we believe sustainable development is not possible without addressing biodiversity. Activities, trainings and campaigns have brought the issue of disappearing biodiversity to the fore and attempted to get communities to discuss, document and demonstrated strategies for managing it.

The Biodiversity Study "Children's study project on biodiversity and climate change action" was an important step in this direction. The Study, carried out by children, attempted to audit and build an inventory of existing resources in the area. The objectives and effort was to

- document local biodiversity and changes that have occurred in the selected villages
- capacitate children on researches of different ecosystems
- help develop an action plan to protect and strengthen the existing fauna, flora on land as well as in water.
- disseminate the knowledge about the benefits of protecting forests river water sources

Towards this a capacity building program was organised for 100 children from the Green Ambassadors Children's Network. Besides research methodologies, they were trained on the importance of biodiversity, what it included and why it needs to be protected.

The training programs were ably supported by stalwarts from the field - Prof. K.C. Malhotra, Chairman- Ecosystems and Research Division of Ministry of Environment

and Forests (technical aspects of the Study), Mr. Ratnam, Social activist and Environmentalist (conceptual basis of critiquing the efficacy of modern day development) and Dr. Rajasekhar and Dr. Venkaiah from Andhra University (floral resources of the area).

A comprehensive strategy was designed and developed in consultation with school children, communities, school teachers and government officials and it was decided to cover (i) Domesticated Biodiversity which covered the matrix of plants and animals and agriculture, horticulture and domesticated animals and (ii) Wild biodiversity - terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals.

Out of hundred trained Green Ambassadors, forty (21 boys and 19 girls) were selected, in the age range of 7-15 years. 5 villages were selected appropriate to the topics covered. A team of 8 children for each of the 5 selected villages were formed. 2 teams



of 20 each studied terrestrial plant & animal biodiversity and the other 20 studied aquatic biodiversity of riverbed.

The methods of study included a series of Focus Group Discussions (FGD's), Transact Walks through the villages and interviews with knowledgeable persons.

Trees, medicinal plants, oil yielding plants, wild plants used as food by humans and animals, commercially valuable trees, etc. for terrestrial biodiversity were documented. For aquatic biodiversity the team documented seasonal variations in the availability of water in the river, plants and birds found on the banks of the river, seasonal variation in availability of wild animal biodiversity on the banks of the river and aquatic animals found in the river bed.

The findings were widely shared with communities, government officials, academicians, general public in cities etc.

We thank the KNH Germany and India for the support to carry the study and the publication.

Study on impacts of Ecotourism on children

Children initiated a study to learn about the consequences of Ecotourism on environment and the life of the children. The premise being that increasingly, in tourism dominated areas, people are getting bonded to an exploitative economic model which in turn impacts the children and their rights negatively. Children from poor families in these areas are often forced into work very which deprives their basic rights and well-being. It's not only environment that is at stake but what it brings with it - a violation of dignity, and an erosion of morale and confidence of the local eco ethnic groups which in turn pose a threat to Child Rights and Ecological Child Rights. The basic objectives of the study were:

- To understand the impacts of Ecotourism from a Child Rights perspective
- To understand Child Rights violations and root causes of the violations.

- To learn the links and associations between economy, exploitation of ecology and ethnic groups.
- To critically analyse the factors of destruction and possible alternatives.
- To get well versed with Environment law, Tourism law and practically evaluate their efficacy

30 children were involved in the study on various tourist ports and 100 children have undergone training on various aspects and topics related to the Eco tourism.

We thank IRDWSI for their contribution and support for the Green Ambassadors to understand about the Eco tourism and its impact on children.

Study on Aves

Birds are critical links within the vast food chains and webs that exist in the ecosystem. Birds are one of pollinators and key predators of pests and play an important role in agriculture. Many bird populations are on



a decline, especially of migratory birds. These birds are telling us something else about the health of the environment, and the impacts we are having on it.

The Green Ambassadors and CeFHA took up a study focussed on the important functions that the birds carry out and reasons

for their disappearances. The objectives were to:

- capacitate the children on avian habitats and relations of birds on ecosystems.
- train children on scientific questionnaires related to bird density and also scientific methods of recording

bird habitat parameters.

- expose children to bird dense habitats and help them understand with a practical hands on experience on assessing bird habitat parameters.
- understand impacts of land use variation and vegetation change on birds.
- document the environmental factors that influence avian population.
- document important species of Aves and record the correlations with local habitations.

100 children were selected and trained on different some of the aspects of Avian life.

An orientation workshop in Bangalore and exposure trips to Pulicat Lake, Tamil Nadu and Gopalpur Bird Sanctuary were arranged.

We thank the contributions of Visthar, Bangalore, Crenio, Chennai and Eco tourism department of Gopalpur, Odisha.

Role of SHGs in Child Development

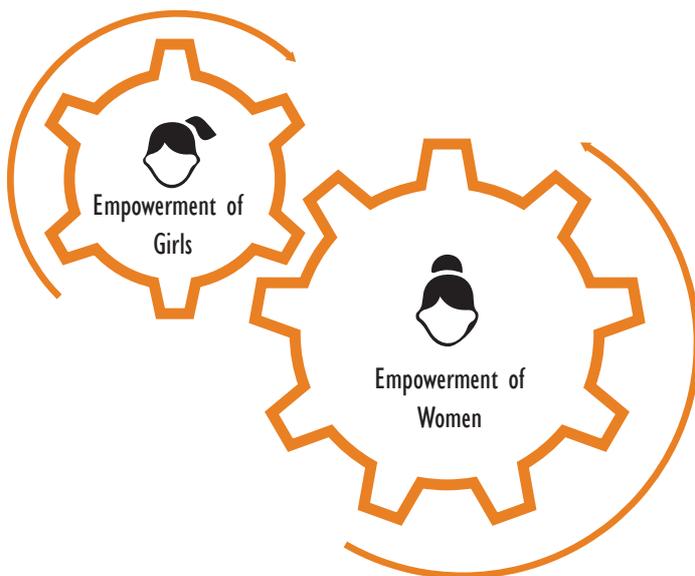
The lives of women and children are tightly knit, as are their rights. Women and children have both been subjected to discrimination, so they share that experience. But it is also true that women's health and social

and economic status – even before a child is born – is directly related to a child's prospects for survival and development. Historically, women have been the primary caregivers of children, and resources put in their hands are

more likely to be used to benefit children than those given to men. Discrimination against women is thus detrimental not only to women themselves, but also to the next generation.

Women's autonomy, defined as the ability to control their own lives and to participate in making decisions that affect them and their families, directly impact Child Development. Conversely, protecting the rights of children – particularly girls – is the first step in promoting gender equality for women. If the rights of women and children are considered together, they can reinforce each other and make mutually supportive demands on society.

The CFCD project has taken a holistic approach to Child Development. An integral part of it has been the work towards empowerment of women. This process has facilitated Women's SHGs which played a big part in formulating, planning, implementing,



monitoring and evaluating the Child Development programme. All the members of the Women's Network and women's groups have been core partners of the project and are closely linked with the Child Groups and Children's at local, regional and State level.

SHG role in Child Development & sustainability

- Strengthening the Child groups and organize the meetings in the villages
- Enrolment of the child drop outs & retention through child groups in the school
- Monitoring Motivational Centres, Tuition Centers & Tutorials, Child Clubs and Child Groups
- Helping in raising Children Education Fund
- Organizing Child Health camps & referral activities
- Raising village Health Fund & Grain Fund

- Individual child savings in the family as well as family savings
- Raising children's issues and working on them for their resolution
- Supporting in organising children's campaigns along with child groups and other networks and helping raise contributions for the events.

The Self Help Groups', promoted by CeFHA, have been federated and registered as a Mutually Aided Cooperative Thrift & Credit Society - Jhansi Laxmi MACTCS Society. Made up of all the 100 women's groups from 36 villages with 180 women leaders, its 1373 members have invested into shares of the Society with a plan to initiate their own enterprises and businesses. The Women's MACTS funds stands at Rs. 10,08,671/- as of March 2016.

The Women's Network has been capacitated enough to take not only the work with women forward but also the work with children forward. Once CeFHA exits, the

Women's SHGs and Network will take the work forward, manage and sustain the process of child development.



Way forward

CeFHA has worked on the issues of Child Rights and Child Development for a whole decade. There have been many triumphs and struggles, successes and challenges during these years. A clear workable model has been developed that shows that Child Development

can best happen when embedded in Community Development. The various Funds established from community contributions effectively show that communities, when supported with crucial and effective inputs, can manage to come out of the challenges of poverty and socio-cultural

marginalization, can take effective collective leadership and can advocate for their rights and entitlements.

Integrated activities and approaches help children to stay within their families and can engage effectively with their communities

Community Funds established

| SN | Name of the Programme | Number of Villages | Fund raised by | Amount (in Rs.) |
|----|----------------------------------|--------------------|--|------------------|
| 1 | Child Education Fund | 31 | 56 Children groups | 3,41,760 |
| 2 | Women's Group Savings | 36 | 100 SHGs | 13,50,178 |
| 3 | SHG investment shares in MACTCS | 16 | 40 SHGs | 2,24,870 |
| 4 | Health Fund | 29 | 39 women groups | 2,03,863 |
| 5 | PWD Fund | 19 | 32 PWD groups | 4,69,079 |
| 6 | Green Ambassadors Fund | 36 | 2086 children out of 5817 child members contribute to GRACCC | 38,810 |
| 7 | Farmer Group Fund | 16 | 28 Farmers' Groups | 28,767 |
| 8 | Children Plantation Contribution | 20 | 60 Children's Groups | 29,310 |
| | | | Total fund raised from various groups | 26,86.637 |

on local as well as global issues. It is also clear that work on Child Development cannot stop at the age of 18. Children who have been intensely engaged need avenues to grow and develop further; find employment and become contributing citizens.

Towards this, CeFHA plans to set up a Community College for youth to help train them in livelihood skills. Similarly, the Women's MACTCS is registered and will require handholding for a few years monetarily as well as for capacity building. Since women

and children are closely linked it is important to take these two activities to a satisfactory conclusion which CeFHA will endeavor to take.

Community contributions to events and programmes

| SN | | Contributors | Contributions | | Purpose |
|----|--|-------------------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| | | | In Cash (in Rs.) | In kind (value in Rs.) | |
| 1 | NGOs /Children networks Contribution on National Yatra | 15 NGOs | 55,000 | 2,28,000 | Mobilized for the program National Yatra |
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| | Total | | 1,11,240 | 5,49,355 | |



Case Stories

Ananthalakshmi

Ananthalakshmi is a dynamic and articulate young girl from Ponduru village and ably handles her role and responsibilities as Secretary of Green Ambassadors Network.

Ananthalakshmi has been part of the Child Groups right from 2007 and has actively participated in all the activities – eco clubs, studies and campaigns. Among the many campaigns she has participated in, the most memorable one for her was the National

Yatra from Visakhapatnam to Chennai held in May 2012. Of the many points she brought up during her speeches during the Yatra, her key questions related to the current lifestyle and the price the next generation has to pay. Her own favourite activity has been the Biodiversity Study which the children took up in their area. *“I was amazed at the variety of flora and fauna that existed and played such a crucial role in our lives. I am also deeply saddened with the rapidity with which they were disappearing in our villages”,*

she says. She feels motivated and inspired to work on these issues and do her best to protect the environment.

Her ambition for the GRACC is to expand the network throughout the country and take its message to as many people. Her personal desire is to work in an NGO and serve people like “Madam” (Dr. Sasi Prabha, CeFHA).



A young Ananthalakshmi



Speaking to the media



Addressing a public meeting



Ready to lead...

Ananda Bharati

Ananda Bharati, Gottivada village, is one of the PF2 children who has grown into a lovely and articulate young girl. She belongs to the Dalit community and lives with her parents and a younger sister. Both her parents are illiterate and work as labourers to earn a livelihood. Her parents are very keen she gets a good education, since they are aware that education can be the key to a better life and income security.

When Ananda finished her 5th standard in the local Government School with good

marks, she was keen to continue her education. But the Intermediate school was too far from her village. She either would have had to walk 12 kms. up and down everyday or take the bus, her family couldn't afford. It was at this time that CeFHA helped her get into a government Intermediate school with hostel facilities. Though it was 35 kms. away, the family didn't mind as all expenses of boarding and lodging would be taken care of.

Ananada is also part of the Green Ambassador Network, and undergone several trainings and has evolved her own critique of

development and environmental issues. She is an active speaker and has addressed many of public meetings and events.

She is currently finishing the Xth exams and is much liked by her teachers who are very proud of the way she has developed and grown over the years.



A young PF2 child



All ready to plant a tree!



At the Cycle Yatra



Confident & articulate

Pavan Kumar

15 year old Pavan Kumar of Chowduvada village, a PF2 child, is not only studying for a Diploma in Civil Engineering but is also an enthusiastic sportsman. He plans to complete his diploma and begin to work, either taking up civil works contracts or getting a job with the government.

He has been an active Green Ambassador right since his childhood and has actively participated in all the events and programmes. As a sportsman too, he has participated in many of the mandal level tournaments. He does

love Volleyball, introduced to him during his childhood through the Child Clubs. He and his friends have a hard game of Volley Ball almost everyday. A game that was learnt as a child with equipment from the Child Clubs today has become a way for them to get together, compete and get their adrenalin flowing.

Pavan actively participated in the Cycle Yatra and spoke at the public gatherings, sharing his concerns.

One of his biggest concerns is the impact the large companies are having on the area. "The companies are buying up land and my

people have been displaced. We have lost our lands and have no options of employment. Business in the village doesn't pay enough to sustain a family. People are pushed into migration", he says. He is a firm advocate of tree plantations, saying "The amount of pollution that we are facing now through industries, transport, mining, etc. and the urgent need of reducing carbon levels, the only solution is plant more and more trees."



A young PF2 child



Green as they go!



Young and in training!



An avid sportsman today

Adult Speak

We spoke to the adults who have come in contact with the children or have influenced them in some way or the other. This is what they say...



"It is very heartening to see my daughter grow and develop. As a poor family, we would never have been able to send her to the cities she has travelled, the kinds of things she is learning. I am very proud to see her able to talk to big people, interact with officials. She is very committed. She has, along with other children, motivated the panchayat and now we have dustbins throughout the street. Yes, I am very happy to see my daughter blossom and am very grateful to CeFHA to have given her such opportunities". – Peddapudi Ammaji, Mother of Green Ambassador Mamata, B.K.Palli village.



"We spent a lot of time training the children in environmental issues. What is good to see is that they have developed the ability to see all issues from an environmental angle. As young minds they have absorbed their own experience, their community's experience of environment degradation and are directly able to connect their issues to the root cause. They are able to articulate their arguments and are willing to spread the message as a volunteer. They are also inculcating their learnings into their own lives." – J. Ratnam, Social Activist, Environmentalist, Trainer of Green Ambassadors.



"We are very proud that our students are travelling all around the country and spreading the message of protecting the environment. They have taken up many activities in our school too, about keeping it Clean and Green and fully support their activities." – Headmistress, ZP School, Kotauratla



"It is a proud moment for any Teacher to see her student get up on the stage and speak to a gathering. It feels good to see children whom we have taught from when they were children grow up, confident, knowing much more than just academics and taking action in what they believe in." – Teacher, Ananda Bharati's school



"When children feel convinced what I am doing is right, it gives them a moral authority, a conviction of action, a sense of integrity, a sense of contribution to society. What I see in the Green Ambassadors is that they are able to take a stand for environment, a stand for life itself. When we train them we transfer a scientific temper. When this adds to their own experience of life and conviction of working for a better society these become huge motivators and drivers that can attract other youngsters and children and can build awareness. I am quite impressed with their work". – Professor Satyapal, Anthropology, Andhra University



"The Green Ambassadors have very good activities under the guidance of Dr. Sasi Prabha. In my experience the children are very interested to know about the plants of Eastern Ghats, are very interested in conservation of those plants. They have collected a variety of plants and they used to be very curious to know where they can be found, how they are used, etc. I feel it is very important that children learn about the importance of Biodiversity and they will in future be able to protect the environment from damage." – Prof. M. Venkaiah, Botany, Andhra University.

Yasidipalem - A model village

“A child’s well-being depends on the family’s well-being and a family’s well-being depends on the community’s well-being.”

Yasidipalem is a small but a beautiful village in Kotauratla mandal, Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. Nestled amongst dense trees and surrounded by vegetable farms it is more than idyllic. 22 Dalit families live here farming the lands using organic methods and supporting themselves through a variety of livelihoods. All the children go to school and the older children are in high school and colleges.

But Yasidipalem was not always like this.

In 2005 Yasidipalem was a ghost-village 6 months in a year. Only the old and the very young were left behind. All the able-bodied, adult men and women and older children were

out of the village earning a livelihood. Many of the families went 800-1000 kms. away looking for work.

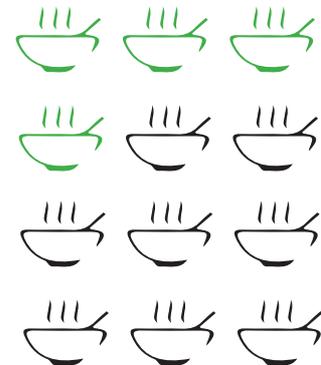
The children left behind were mostly in the care of grandparents. They didn’t go to school and many of them were busy doing the housework which their grandparents couldn’t do. Children of migrant parents are known to be distressed, missing their parents, feeling lonely and abandoned.

The 6 months that the adult men and women were present in the village were spent carrying out agricultural labour work in the fields of the richer, higher caste farming families. The lands owned by the villagers were entirely rainfed with no water source for irrigation. Those who did manage to grow something grew cash crops. Food security was only for 4 months a year.

Migration



80% of families migrated 6 months in a year



Food security was only for 4 months in a year

What could be done?

It is impossible to work for children's development without working on their larger context, their families and their communities. Even if child development activities are taken up their situation changes only temporarily eventually resulting in them going back into the same situation they were growing in. It is with this understanding that KNH took up a Child Focussed Community Development project and the story of Yasidipalem goes to show how such approach can have long term positive impacts on children's lives.

So, the first question we and the community, asked was "how could migration be stopped in the village?" Clearly, the answer to that was if people found and had livelihood opportunities within their village or close by they will not migrate, and that is how the story of Yasidipalem began.

We began with a 5-pronged approach – children's development, farm-based development activities, skill trainings for

alternate livelihood options, Self-Help Groups for women and co-ordinating with government agencies for helping people access their entitlements.

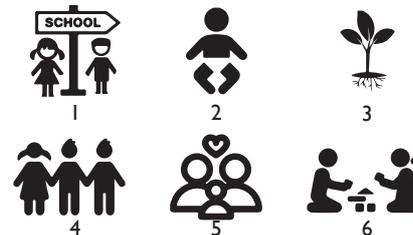
Child Development Activities

We began with what was required most urgently – health and nutrition. A supplementary feeding centre was set up which ensured that the 16 young children of the village were regularly fed. Nutritional gardens were promoted and taken up by 22 families. A village health clinic and an under-five clinic screened and provided care and support to the community and the children respectively. Pre-and-post natal care ensured that pregnant women were supported during their pregnancy.

Children's education was taken up in a big way. 13 children were enrolled in schools and education assistance was provided to them. A Children's Group was formed through which children took up a variety of

fun activities like school plantations through an eco-club. Workshops were conducted on fabric painting, jewellery making etc. and sports materials were purchased for regular games. Children also raised their own funds and set up their own education fund.

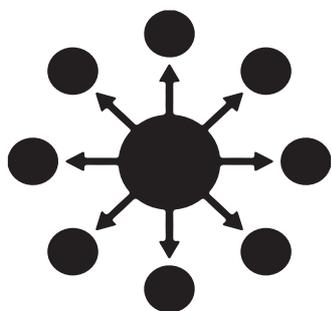
A Child Rights Protection Committee was set up which looked into issues which children faced and these were resolved together with the parents and the community.



- 1 - Enrollment – 13 children
- 2 - Under-five care – 8 children
- 3 - Plantations – 105 trees
- 4 - Child groups – 1 with 14 kids
- 5 - Child protection committee
- 6 - Eco-club - 1

Self-Help Groups

Self-Help Groups for women were promoted with the mothers of the children and others. Women began to save small amounts regularly which helped them with their micro home needs. Regular dialogues with them and their families about status of women and their rights helped empower them. Leadership training programs helped bring out their leadership qualities and built confidence and a sense of empowerment.



Self-Help Groups (22 Women)

Farm-based Activities

An ecologically sound agro-forestry system was introduced. Diversification of crops, inter-cropping of vegetables, tubers, fodder and fruit trees was demonstrated on a demo plot. Organic methods and practices were re-introduced. A bio-resource centre was set up which became a key meeting place for the farmers where they could learn new techniques and share their experiences. A series of training programs on preparation of organic fertilizers and pesticides, seed preservation and multiplication, soil fertility management ensured that people's knowledge on this was renewed and increased. Livestock, cattle, goats and sheep and poultry were provided which not only provided the manure for agriculture but also ensured supplementary income. The combination of these things ensured that the families had enough food to eat and had cash for their other needs. Surplus produce from the farms and their livestock was sold in the local markets.

Two borewells were dug which provided irrigation to the agricultural lands.



Alternate Livelihoods

A series of skill trainings were held which helped the families take up supplementary activities. They learnt to make soaps and detergents, food processing, mushroom cultivation, bird rearing etc. and this created multiple livelihood options.



Cattle
(22 buffaloes)



Goat & Sheep
(50)



Poultry
(150)

Village Governance

People's organisations were promoted that helped people actively participate in the governance of their village and engage collectively with the government agencies. Farmers' Committee, Youth Group, Forest Committee and a Dalit network ensured that issues relating to the respective subject were dealt with collectively. Their collective strength helped them negotiate with the panchayat and

other agencies to garner and access schemes, solve problems and demand for what were their rights. Working collectively has also ensured that the relationships within the community and with other villages around are healthy. Conflicts are resolved together and



Childrens
Groups



Farmer's
Committee



Self-Help
Groups



Child Protection
Committee



Youth Groups

where support is needed, it is given.

So, did all this work? Yes, it did.

The community of Yasidipalem that was entirely dependent on migration and agricultural labour work became entirely self-reliant and self-sufficient in a few years.

The people grow their own food. Traditional seeds are used. Kitchen gardens supplement and bolster family nutrition.

Children go to school. They were now involved in child relevant and child appropriate activities. They no longer do work which is better suited to adults.

Women are economically independent. They participate in community level decision making and their own leadership qualities have emerged.

Farming has become diversified, sustainable and a viable activity. Surplus is sold in the local markets. Bio-degradable wastes are recycled into farming manure. Soil has become healthy.

A variety of supplementary and alternate livelihoods activities now support the families. The diversification of livelihoods means that families were not starving during lean seasons.

Individual and collective savings create a safety net and have become a resource during emergencies. The dependence on moneylenders has decreased and debt traps are avoided.

A host of government schemes were accessed and village infrastructure, water and sanitation facilities, housing improved.

What people say:

“Earlier the people of Yasidipalem used to come and work for us. Now we go and work for them!”

– a farmer from the neighbouring village

“The people of Yasidipalem are not just Rajus but have become Maharajus!”

– people from neighbouring villages



Ravada Apparao, a Dalit from the village, and his family of five worked as daily wage labourers, weaving palm fiber baskets and earning Rs. 300-400 a week. This meager earning was just not enough for the family to survive. Apparao tried leasing land to cultivate as he and his wife did not own any land. Bad monsoons ensured that the crop failed and Apparao had to take a loan to offset his

losses. The loan became a trap and he and his wife began to go to far away cities to earn a living and to collect money to pay off his loans. Apparao's poverty meant that his three children could not be educated and the whole family was malnourished.

His was one of the families supported by the project and Apparao bought a buffalo, few goats and chicks. He and his wife began growing fodder in the wastelands around and went into milk business within the year. They could now earn Rs.1500-2000 per week. Apparao paid off his loans and put his children in school. His daughter is now in college and the other two children gearing up for higher studies.



Growing food & vegetables



Fodder for animals



Organic manure preparation



Purchasing buffaloes



Goats and sheep



... and poultry



Working on Child Rights



Children's plantations



Children's groups



Children's health screening



Women's SHGs



Skill trainings

