

**M.VENKATARANGAIYA FOUNDATION
AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Conducted By

Dr.Abdul Aziz • Prof. Babu Mathew • Ms.Alpa Vora

For
HIVOS
(Regional Office South Asia, Bangalore)

October 2001



FOREWORD

A study of the M. Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF) was undertaken for HIVOS in the early part of the year 2000 to assess the impact of the foundation's work on spreading primary education in Ranga Reddy district of Andhra Pradesh. The study sought to examine the impact of the work of the MVF Foundation on the problem of child labour in the region and the gains that have accrued in the process to the community including children, parents, schools and civil society.

The MV Foundation has indeed done excellent work that has impacted larger social and political process. It has emerged as a dynamic movement involving children, parents, teacher's employers, the entire school system, local self government and departments of district and state administration, transforming a district teeming with child labour, by giving children their basic right – Education.

We are extremely thankful to Dr. Shantha Sinha, Shri. Venkat Reddy and all the members of the MV Foundation for facilitating our visits, sharing information and organizational learning's during the study period and providing us with the primary data collected by the Research and Development Services, Hyderabad. Our Sincere thanks to HIVOS for giving us an opportunity to engage and learn from this study process.

We have gained immensely by way of insights and learning's that we have tried to highlight through this report. We do believe that the work of MVF holds tremendous demonstrative values for government and non-government initiatives towards universalizing education for all children and elimination of child labour.

Dr. Abdul Aziz

Prof. Babu Mathew

Ms. Alpa Vora

SECTION 1.0 : INTRODUCTION

The M. Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF) was established as a trust in 1981 in the memory of Prof. M. Venkatarangaiya, an eminent teacher committed to rural development and transformation.

The Trust's objective including promoting, opening and operating research and educational institutions, publishing work of academic and literary value and undertaking rural and community development. The initial focus was on graduate and post-graduate studies and research on analyzing and undertaking the process of social change. By 1987, MVF began to concentrate on the abolition of child labour by simply withdrawing children from work. Realising the close link between child labour and the absence of schooling, MVF thereafter became involved in mobilizing communities to remove their children from the labour force and put them back in schools. MVF's activities to eradicate child labour cover children working as agricultural, household and factory labour with special attention being paid to bonded labour and girl child labour. The children belong to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and other Backward Castes, but not exclusively so.

MVF perceives itself as an organization for social mobilization to abolish child labour and to achieve a cent per cent enrollment of children to school in the area of its operation. MVF's model of universalizing of elementary education utilizing government institutions is seen as an alternative to the strategy of non-formal education and improvement of working conditions towards the eradication of child labour. Its framework is the rights of the child, which demands the abolition of child labour in the immediate present rather than its progressive elimination in the distant future.

This is very difficult task indeed – it is difficult for the following reasons: In the first place, there is total ignorance among the poor about the role education can play to promote social and economic mobility. Secondly, even amongst those who realize the importance of education, they tend to place a premium on the present and discount the future markedly such that they would rather have their children earn even small amounts today than wait for a future date when they start earning substantial amounts on a regular basis. Thirdly, a large segment to the poorer sections have lost faith in the present system of education where the government schools have given a bad account of themselves. So much so, the parents consider schooling as a waste of time since the children would rather learn in these schools nor would they earn by working. Assuming that somehow one takes out children from work, the question arises as to how these children, who may be advanced in age, would integrate themselves into the school system. Obviously, it needs extra effort to change their mind set and to prepare them in a short period of time to be able to catch up with what the regular students would have learnt by that age. And finally, what next after the schooling is completed?

The tasks involved in child labour abolition process are, therefore, (a) to create knowledge among parents and others about the crucial role of education in molding children's economic and psycho-social life, (b) to not evolve an alternative but a better system of education to convince the parents that the child will learn in the new environment and (c) to provide education to the child in such an environment with no cost to the parents. Anyone desirous of taking up a program of abolition of child labour needs to keep these requirements in view.

Possibly, keeping such a requirement in view in its operations, the MV Foundation has put down the following as its objectives:

1. To create awareness among the poor regarding their social, economic and political predicament.
2. To generate processes towards building a civil society through collective action, participation and community based initiatives.
3. And to work towards abolition of child labour through education.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

There are State-managed programs for rescuing such children and putting them into the stream of education. But the magnitude of the problem involved and the bureaucratic approach to the resolution of the problem have created some space for intervention by the non-government organizations. The MV Foundation has obviously chosen to operate in this space.

There have been studies conducted earlier to assess the working of this Foundation. However, these studies were grounded when the organisation had either just entered the arena or has been operating in a limited sphere. It is now found that the organisation has completed a substantial period of its existence, accumulated a good deal of experience and also diversified its activities having gone into new areas of operations – activity and geographical areawise. It will be of interest here, while evaluating its operations, to assess the impact of its campaign for elimination of child labour on the child in particular and the community in general.

More specifically, the objective of the present study are:

1. to make an assessment of the impact of MV Foundation's work on spreading primary education in Ranga Reddy district;
2. to assess the impact of this campaign on the problem of child labour; and
3. to understand what other positive gains have accrued to the community in the different villages of Rangareddy district by way of spin off of the main program; this spin off will cover impact on the child, the employer, the family, schools, hostel, policy making, civil society, and the Foundation itself.

METHODOLOGY

These objectives are achieved by collecting field data and data from the annual reports and other documents of M.V.Foundation, from the relevant State government departments, households of the child laboureres, their employers, schools, hostels and yuvak kendras. In addition, information on the demographic and

economic profile like population, land holdings etc., of the district was collected from the district statistical handbook. While it may be difficult to build a temporal and regional profile of all the parameters of the bonded and child labour problem, care was taken wherever possible to present time-series data relating at least to some of these parameters.

Since the children assisted are vast in number and since the time available to us was short we first purposively selected some villages for fieldwork and then randomly picked up some children, families employers, schools/hostels and yuvak kendras for interview. While this effort yielded some authenticated information, we did not hesitate to depend also on our own observation of the goings on in the field and to generate relevant qualitative information on the basis of focus groups discussion. Both type of information provided the database for our analysis and insights into the issue selected for examination. The quantitative data collected has been analysed using simple averages and ratios, and the results of this analysis is presented in the form of two-way tables.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report of this Impact Assessment Study is presented in the following distinct sections. Section 2.0 deals with the Strategy of MVF. In Section 3.0 is detailed the Programme Evolution. Section 4.0 examines the Organisational Evolution. Section 5.0 the Performace of MVF and Section 6.0 the Impact of MVF with the recommendations in Section 7.0

AREA PROFILE

The headquarters of the Foundation is Secunderabad but all its activities are grounded in the rural areas of the Rangareddy district, which is extremely arid and socially backward. Several quick surveys carried out by the volunteers of MVF confirmed the fact that there was a high incidence of bonded labour even among children and that the prevalence of child labour on a large scale has kept the school-going age children out of school. Obviously, there was a need for some kind of positive intervention to bring the child back to school. This need seemed to have been felt more in the Ranga Reddy District, which is backward in all respects. The intervention of MVF in this district is, therefore, understandable and also justifiable.

The Ranga Reddy district, which borders with Karnataka was formed in 1978 by caving out rural and urban areas from the erstwhile Hyderabad district. It has an area of 7493 saq.kms. and a population of 25.5 lakh (1991 census) accounting respectively for 2.7 per cent and 3.8 per cent of the State area and population. The district is comprised of three revenue divisions – Ranga Reddy East, Chevella and Vikarabad – 37 revenue mandals, 706 gram panchayats covering 11 municipal units and two towns.

The district is considered as one of the backward regions in the State by some development indicators. Of the total geographical area of 18.7 lakh acres, the cultivable net area is only 34.8 per cent. Area not available for cultivation is 36.4 per

cent, current fallow is 19.6 per cent. Area under forest is only 9.2 per cent – that too the forest is considered to be inferior type yielding only thorns and fuel wood. With a rainfall of 812.5 mm against the State average of 912 mm, 23.9 per cent of gross area irrigated (State 42.5%), the district can afford to raise only low value crops like jowar and bajra from about 75000 hectares out of 130000 hectares if area under cultivation. The district (21.5%) like the State (20%) has a high proportion of SC and ST population. The literacy rate of the district (40.2%) is lower than the State average of 44.1 per cent.

The total area of land holdings in the district in 1995-96 was a little more than 5 lakh hectares. The number of operational holdings being 2.81 lakh gives an average area of less than 2 hectares. However, a look at the land holding pattern suggests that the land distribution is highly skewed.

Thus, while the proportion of land holders below one hectare accounts for 47.3 per cent. The proportion of land held by them is just 13.4 per cent of the total area. If we consider 2 hectares and below, these figures respectively go up to 73.7 per cent and 33.9 per cent. That means three fourths of households own only a third of the land area, a third of the farmers of higher size class control three fourths of the land. The land holders owning above 4 hectares, whose proportion is 8.9 per cent, control 39 per cent of the land area. Besides, the total working population of the district formed 40.8 per cent of the total population. And, of the total main workers, cultivators accounted for only 25.3 per cent; of the balance, 28.5 per cent were agricultural labourers and 46.2 per cent were other workers. If the land distribution pattern is seen in juxtaposition with the distribution of the main workers certain inferences are possible. One, unequal land distribution leaves many with less of land asset which is the main source of livelihood in the rural economy. In the absence of land asset, especially in the case of the illiterate people whose proportion is as high as 60 per cent, leaves them no option but to work as labourers. In fact, the high proportion of agricultural labourers and other workers in the main working population suggests that labour alone as a source of livelihood is predominant in the district.

The low rainfall, arid conditions, low proportion of area of land under irrigation followed by poor yields and cultivation of low value crops, presence of large proportion of SC and ST population, prevalence of high illiteracy rates, unequal land distribution forcing many to eke out a living out of their own labour are undoubtedly indicators of backwardness.

What is worse, backwardness of this kind in all probability can be a home for the worse type of social and economic evils including the high incidence of child labour and bonded labour system.

CHILD LABOUR

The rural society has inherited the age-old feudalistic system, which in turn has produced an exploitative land – man relationship. The extremely low land

productivity, seasonal character of agriculture and its low employment potential, lack of alternative job opportunities have forced the landless and the marginal landholders to work as agricultural labourers. What is worse, the poverty condition in the rural areas has maintained a high level of work participation rates due to even women and children working to supplement the family income. Besides, the uncertainty relating to work opportunities on the one hand and the desire on the part of the landlords to ensure for themselves availability of labour at low wages has given rise, as themselves in the State and the country, a system of bonded labour.

The bonded labour system, no doubt, has been largely abolished under the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act of 1976 but in reality the system is found to be prevailing with the connivance of the landlords and the workers. For the latter there are compelling reasons such as lack of work throughout the year, poverty condition and necessity to borrow loans from the local money lenders (who incidentally are the landlords) to be an unwitting partner of the system.

The worst part of the bonded labour system is the involvement of children. Children's involvement is rampant as it meets on the one hand, the needs of the landlords like running errands, taking care of the children and cattle, cleaning the house, cattleshed and assisting with chores in the kitchen. On the other hand, managing child labour is easier and involves no hassles. The parents of such children also feel relieved to see that the burden of maintaining them is no more and they find that the children can be a good collateral for borrowing money from the local money-lenders. Obviously, the system has sustained itself due both to supply and demand forces operating in the rural labour market.

But bonded labour system and the system of child labour impose an individual as well as a social cost. Children who ought to have gone to school to be able to understand the world and to pick up skills are now completely deprived of the opportunity of enjoying their very basic rights as laid out in various national and international instruments. This is a big personal loss to the child. To the society also this is a loss because under these systems we will end up adding low quality population to the workforce year after year.

The individual and social costs actually call for taking the child out of the system and rehabilitating her/him to be able to access the rights due to a child. Rehabilitation of the bonded children – and the working children even outside the system – would mean putting them in the school and into the education stream such that they get an opportunity to acquire skills and capabilities to take advantage of productive work opportunities in future.

SECTION 2.0 : STRATEGY OF M.V. FOUNDATION

As part of evolving the strategy of universalisation of education, the Foundation has first tried to understand the ground reality. In doing so the M.V.F found that the following notions on the issue of child labour is not always correct:

1. Children are sent to work because the family needs additional income to sustain itself.
2. Parents being illiterate themselves, are not motivated enough to send their children to school.
3. Children themselves are not motivated to go to school.
4. Teachers are neither trained nor motivated and hence, cannot be expected to generate sufficient interest among the children.
5. The school calendar is such that it is difficult for children from rural areas to attend.
6. And, the school curriculum is irrelevant and is not responsive to the needs of the rural areas.

In fact, this is the understanding of the ground situation by most of the NGOs and the experts who have looked into the question of child labour and the education system in the rural areas. There have been attempts to improve the situation by adopting alternative approaches. On such approach which seeks to abolish child labour is to differentiate between 'hazardous' and 'non-hazardous' work where the child is put to work, and then, to argue for the abolition of the former and regulation of the latter. But the interesting point about the MV Foundation is that it completely rejects this approach and states its stand in unequivocal terms as follows:

1. All work / labour is hazardous and harms the overall growth of the child.
2. Any justification perpetuating the existence of child labour must, therefore, be condemned.
3. There should be total abolition of child labour and no regulation of work.
4. All children must attend full-time formal day schools.
5. Any child out of school is a child labourer.

It is this perspective about the system of child labour that has dictated the strategy, which the Foundation has developed and terms them as non-negotiables. The purpose of this section is to sketch that strategy and evaluate to what extent it is consistent with the perspective/vision developed by the Foundation. The strategy followed is totally participatory. In all its activities, which cover preparatory, enrollment, mainstreaming, and consolidation and expansion stages of the activities, the strategy followed is participatory. The strategy also operated at the local, decentralized level in response to the conditions there and involves the community as well as local institutions to rally around the child's right to education. This can be seen from the following account.

The preparatory stage of work constitutes the first contact with the community and is carried out through the Padayatra or the cycle rally or a public meeting in which

songs, street plays, speeches etc., are used to get the message across. Sometimes door to door campaigns and child to child campaigns have also been successfully used. A necessary part of this stage is the door to door survey carried out by volunteers of MVF in order to ascertain what the children are doing.

Once the survey is over, the main task is to ensure that children are enrolled into the educational process. Through experience MVF has developed different strategies for different groups of children. The most important criteria are first the age factor and second the employment status of the child. In so far as age is concerned children are classified into three broad age groups:

- a) 5 to 8 years old;
- b) 9 to 11 years old; and
- c) 12 to 14 years old.

As for children who are already engaged in wage labour; MVF considers them as hard core child labour for whom special efforts are considered necessary.

The youngest age group (5 to 8 years) are encouraged to get into the local schools immediately, in the class that corresponds to their age. A community teacher is provided to the local school to cope with the increased number of enrollment.

The second age category as have already seen belongs to the age group of 9 to 11 years. These are children who have been withdrawn from work. At present this category of children are put through short term orientation camps. The minimum duration of these camps is four months. At the end of the short term camp the children are put into social welfare hostels and formal schools. In the hostels MVF provides a Hostel Supervisor who looks after the needs and problems of the children especially their health needs.

The bridge course in the government school does not have a uniform policy for preparing children for the class according to their age. This is not even possible because the school has to work out a specific plan depending upon the availability of the teachers, volume of children and so on. Thus, if the number of children in a particular age group seeking bridge course is large then a special section is provided for them. On the other hand if there are only one or two children they are made to sit along with those in the similar age group and special coaching is given to them simultaneously. The logic being, that older children (specially 9 years and above) may not find it comfortable to sit with the five year old in the same class.

The third age category is the age group of 12 to 14. Most often these are the hard core child labourers. They are also children withdrawn from labour and may even include bonded labour. The initial contact with these children is itself difficult and is often made through motivation centers or night schools. Other variants like 3 day camps or transition camps or mobilization camps also seem to be used for gaining the first contact, before enrolling these children into the one year long camps. After one year of intensive learning in the long term camp, these children are encouraged to take the private exam for class VII and then sent into the mainstream schools.

Those who may not pass are sometimes allowed to be repeaters. The general rule is to put them into the social welfare hostels and encourage them through follow up to study further and complete schools.

The State government has established a network of free hostels under the jurisdiction of the State Social Welfare Department for the benefit of the school going children of the weaker sections. Apart from free board and lodging facilities each child gets a monthly allowance. Children used to drop out in large numbers either due to bad living conditions or due to supply of bad/inadequate food or a high level of absenteeism due to weekend visits by the children to their homes.

MVF interventions took the form of (a) appointment of hostel councellors or followers to guide the children in their studies and (b) financial assistance to the hostel to subscribe to news-papers and to children to purchase stationery of daily use. The hostel councellors, apart from helping the children to do the homework and revise lessons, would organize cultural programs, especially during weekends, and also take care of children's health problems. The weekend programs and health assistance are reported to have considerably reduced the incidence of weekend visits of the children to their homes and thereby brought down school absenteeism rate.

Children are thereafter encouraged to get into mainstream schools. A major task in this part of the exercise is as in the case of the hostels to restructure mainstream schools, firstly by providing adequate teachers. This is done by providing MVF and community teachers to work with government teachers. This is done by providing MVF and community teachers to work with government teachers. Only when the student-teacher ratio is favourably altered can this effort deliver useful results. So far this effort has yielded excellent results. Most often the additional teachers are not fully qualified or adequately trained, yet their presence and motivation level makes all the difference. The MVF group of trainees drawn from the District Resource Center help in this task. In order to maximize the effort, the hostel supervisor as well as the drop out motivators are assigned specific responsibilities.

A great source of strength and reason for success is the tremendous role played by this support group. Those who lend such support range from the Youth club, to the parent teacher association, to the panchayat, the teachers and government officials. These supporters have raised money for teachers, for constructing schools, and for mobilizing community support and for all forms of solidarity. Another significant organized group of supporters and for all forms of solidarity. Another significant organized group of supporters is the Bala Karmika Vimochana Vedika consisting of teachers in support of the MVF abolish child labour.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

Parent Teacher Association were given a direction in villages where they existed cause. Very many innovations have arisen during the course of mobilizing community support. These include levies of ration cards, cotton carrying lorries and fees from the parents.

Youth volunteers, Parent Teacher Associations, local government bodies like the gram panchayat, are integral to MVF's strategy of universalisation of elementary education through community participation for the sustainability of the strategy to and where they did not, were set up by villagers active in taking a stand on the issue of child labour or facilities provision in school. Local active youth, ward members, parents, the Sarpanch form the PTA. The PTA undertakes the survey of school going and non-school going children, provide a community teacher, monitor her attendance and distribution of work between the government teachers and her, review the children's performance in examinations, raise funds through donations drives or local cess for infrastructure. In June 1998, when the government replaced the PTAs with School Education Committees (SEC), the new SECs were made aware of MVF's programme. Further the experienced members of erstwhile PTAs were asked to be consulted whenever necessary.

GRAM PANCHAYAT

The Gram Panchayats (local self-government) through their elected representatives are being actively involved in the issue of elimination of child labour and strengthening of government schools. Their role vis-à-vis the PTAs were clarified through discussions over a period of time. With a view to strengthening the PTAs, MVF took up ten villages PTAs on a pilot basis and delegated the entire responsibility of implementing the programme to them. Each of these PTAs opened an account in the bank with the PTA president and headmaster as joint signatories. The salaries for the community teachers were disbursed through them. The gram panchayats reviewed the functioning of the PTAs and the schools twice a year. Based on their recommendations, MVF released the second installment to the PTA. The schools thus became accountable to the Gram Panchayat. The community in turn pressed the Gram Panchayat to raise the issue of inadequate facilities in schools at the general body meetings at the Mandal level has resulted in the Zilla Parishad (district level local body) demanding more teachers from the State Government.

In 1998, with the PTAs becoming SECs. A grant of HIVOS seed money was provided to the SECs, to strengthen the decision making process of SEC and accountability to the community and Gram Panchayat (the SEC chairperson and school headmaster opened a joint bank account) by collectively defining the needs of the schools and spending the money on items not provided by the government. In a majority of schools, the seed money was spent on furniture, teaching aids, building repairs and on occasions to mobilize matching resources in cash or kind (labour, land and furniture) and stimulated the teachers to participate more actively in withdrawing children from work.

BAALA KAARMIKA VIMOCHANA VEDIKA (BKVV)

The Baala Kaarmika Vimochana Vedika was founded in April 1996 by the teachers to abolish child labour in the State. It is a State-level organisation which has taken the form of a movement in recent times. All the teacher's union members are also said to be members of this organisation. The organisation aims to create awareness among teachers about the child labour problem and to protect the rights of the

children. The teachers also give their time during holidays and summer vacations for the cause of the child workers. The emphasis is on motivating children to mainstream into education, preventing atrocities on children including child marriage.

In 1997, government school teachers who have organized into the Forum for Liberation of Children from work – Baala Kaarmika Vimochana Vedika (BKVV) took on the responsibility for improving the quality of education in schools. Towards the goal, BKVV members introduced bridge courses in their schools to help children join classes suitable to their age, BKVV became the resource group for training of Non Formal Education (NFE) instructors, helping them to redefine their role to focus on withdrawal of children from work, admission and conduct bridge courses.

By 1998, BKVV has expanded to 19 Mandals with a total of 1300 members. It also began to act as a lobby advocating the protection of the child's rights, mobilizing teachers against child labour. This role also received recognition in State Government Education Programs like DPEP, BKVV also prepared a training module for training by SCERT to district resource persons from all over the state; visited all districts to impart training to the district and Mandal Child Development Officers and subsequently held a workshop on child labour for BKVV teachers which led to the formation of BKVV groups in 8 other districts.

The BKVV gets technical support from the MVF such as brochures, documents and even finances to organize workshops and public functions. In collaboration with MVF, BKVV conducted a workshop to share experiences of Bridge Courses and decided to start 4 model schools on a pilot basis to demonstrate quality education centers.

BKVV's impact led to parents shifting their children from private to government schools, enhancing the confidence of government teachers. MVF and BKVV's concerted drive to enroll children into schools led to an increased demand for middle schools which created a groundswell of local pressure for upgradation of infrastructure.

CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION COMMITTEES

In 1998-99, Child Rights Protection Committees were formed in many villages and also at the Mandal level. The committees act as local counseling centers for children wanting to attend school and for parents who had taken a decision to withdraw their children from work and enroll them in schools. Parents and children are assisted in dealing with problems from former employers and in easing adjustment in schools.

SECTION 3.0 : PROGRAMME EVOLUTION

GENESIS

The initial focus of the M.V.Foundation was on graduate and post-graduate studies and research on analyzing and understanding processes of social change. MVF worked with the scheduled caste communities who were engaged as labourers by landlords. MVF provided legal aid and mobilized the landless on cases of caste atrocities and bondage. MVF's social transformation agenda perceived the power relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor along class and caste lines. MVF's activities on the issue of social inequality consequently worked through a model of confrontation that pitted each against the other. This approach did not fully address the rights and needs of the children nor made a dent on the deep-rooted phenomenon of children getting sucked into bonded labour.

THE CHILD IN THE LABOURING CLASS

By 1987, MVF began to concentrate on the abolition of child labour by simply withdrawing children from work. A camp was organized to provide shelter for bonded labourers and offer a place to keep them away from their employers. MVF conducted its first three month camp of fifty bonded children in Shankerpally Mandal. The purpose was to withdraw the children from work and let them learn from shared experiences. Three months later all children were enrolled in Government Social Welfare Department Hostels and Schools. Following its success with 90% retention, the motivation and mobilization camps became a key feature of the MVF plan of action. Since then the organisation has not looked back and has been working with added vigour and speed.

Realizing the close link between child labour and the absence of schooling, MVF thereafter became involved in mobilizing communities to remove their children from the labour force and put them back in schools.

THE CHILD AS THE UNIVERSE

In 1991, MVF began to focus solely on the Universalisation of education and work only on issue of children without intervening on adult issues such as land, thrift groups, minimum wages and the like. (Box 1)

With support from CRY, MVF continued work in the 5 villages of Shankerpally holding 3 day camps to raise awareness on Non-Formal Education with the focus groups of parents from the Scheduled Caste Communities.

Youth were also involved as they are seen as potential motivators for transformation. (The organisation has taken a conscious policy not to use the term non formal education any more. The camps are now called motivation camps, essentially providing a space for children to be in a joyful learning environment which serves as a preparatory ground for enrollment into school.)

BOX 1

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE

In 1992, working with 25 children in Kochiragudda led to the question of whether it was necessary to take up community issues at all in order to work with children. The community made no demands on MVF to work on larger issues. MVF realized that it was not necessary and consciously decided to devote itself to children's issues alone.

UNIVERSALISING EDUCATION

1992

In 1992, a survey was conducted in Shankerpally mandal to gauge the situation on the education front. The data was fed into a mobilization drive and awareness generation that took place through padyatras and cycle rallies. The people who were resisting and supporting the education initiatives were identified and eventually drawn into the programme. The focus was on the youth and getting prominent personalities like the Sarpanch and Headmaster to publicly commit themselves to putting children back into schools. 40 youth and 1 sarpanch were identified as partners. A 3 day camp involving all children irrespective of their caste, class and gender was organized (Box 2). For the first time children were divided into 2 groups according to their age : 5-8, 9-14 years. There was a two pronged strategy, enrollment and prevention of dropouts. The plan was to cover the entire Mandal a task that seemed daunting at that time.

BOX 2

EDUCATION AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

The programme covered only bonded child labourers. It led to MVF being approached by other children as to why its programme did not cover child labour from other castes. Moreover, concentrating on bonded child labour meant the exclusion of girls from the program's purview. Hence, responding to these demands MVF arrived at its credo that child labour refers to all children out of school.

MAKING EDUCATION PARTICIPATIVE

In 1993, UNICEF funded the upscaling of MVF's programme to cover all 36 villages of Shankarpally Mandal. The focus on parents and youth continued but children also acted as motivators for their peers. Following the mobilization and to institutionalize their participation, youth clubs and Parent Teachers Association were formed.

A youth forum provided a platform for networking among the youth clubs and brought out a newsletter to gain visibility. When the youth demanded funds as there was no school in an area, an MLA gifted his own house in lieu of money. Even as the cycle rallies continued, street theatre was used as a medium to raise issues of child labour, bondage and the status of the girl child. The programme covered 220

children and made forays into Nawabpet and Chevella mandals. There was the first time, separate camps for girls and Gram Panchayats (Box 3) began to play an active role in furthering the education of their village children.

EDUCATION LEAP

By 1994, MVF's work covered the entire Shankarpally Mandal as well as 3 villages of Chevella Mandal, that in turn led to a demand from Nawabpet Mandal to initiate intervention there as well. MVF asked the community itself to conduct a survey, the process of which took two years giving MVF time to plan interventions.

In the meantime, there was a demand to set up 3 more camps enabling 600 children in all to be brought into the educational fold. With older children wanting to continue learning, to integrate them into higher classes, 18 children in standard five were taught in a long-term camp, the first of its kind under the programme (Box 3).

BOX 3

FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY

There was a shift from mere enrollment to continuing education. MVF streamlined the programme to address the needs of older children and in particular, girl students. With parents reluctant to send their daughters with male youth volunteers, female youth volunteers were introduced to accompany girls to long-term camps and hostels. Parents also demanded female trainers that led to the setting up of adolescent centers and separate camps for boys and girls. The MVF model of long-term camps for adolescent girls proved so successful that it was later adopted by the State Government.

Conflicts have been responded to in a creative manner and have been used as opportunities to build a consensus on the agenda of education. For example, when a youth volunteer was attacked by some employers opposed to the release of bonded children, a fact finding committee was set up by MVF to investigate the attack. The committee included some employers who supported the education initiative, thereby neutralizing opposition. The forum became an avenue to relate with employers in a participatory manner on the issue of eradicating child labour. Employers were thereafter feted in public for releasing their children and their "Vidhyadan" became a big event, an occasion and avenue to contribute to change and be recognized as protagonists rather than violators of child rights in a way that underlined their magnanimity.

Children also increased their participation in the programme's campaign drive. Continuing the involvement of local bodies, local officials like the Mandal Education Officer lent their support to the programme. The departments at the Mandal level involved those in the upper echelons of the establishment. At this stage, MVF came

out with its own public position of universalisation of elementary education as a non-negotiable.

IN SEARCH OF SUSTENANCE

In 1995, work proceeded in all 3 Mandals, namely Shankarpally, Chevella and Nawabpet. However, MVF consciously shifted its strategy of undertaking intervention itself (Box 4). Whereas in Shankarpally Mandal, where MVF has provided para-trainers in 1993, in Chevella, it was the community that has to provide a trainer, only then would MVF match it with another. The entire programme of survey, only then would MVF match it with another. The entire programme of survey, enrollment was given over to the youth. The non-negotiables were placed up front in open meetings and anyone employing children had to leave. Through the youth's efforts, the community itself took on the onus of raising at least 50% of the contributions to run the programme and a healthy competitive spirit was fostered among the youth clubs.

BOX 4

LOCALISING SUSTAINABILITY

Due to expansion fostered by the demand from other districts in a situation to tight finances, MVF stepped back from direct interventions and sought to decentralize the programme. This led to the strengthening of community participation and creative methods of sustaining the programme, for instance, through voluntary contributions and cess. MVF provided moral support and played an advisory role with minimal financial inputs.

This facilitated the expansion of its activities to the neighbouring Mandals that were already placing a strong demand on the MVF to initiate its activities in their mandals. The strategy ensured that the community took responsibility for implementing the programme. The learning and achievements of MVF are thus implemented in other area in a encapsulated form and make for scalling up and expansion of the efforts for child labour elimination. Most importantly it ensures expansion of the programme of universalisation of education and elimination of child labour and not of the MVF itself.

In shankarpally, a survey of children in primary schools revealed that nearly 3200 children languished in class I year after year, not due to conscious detention policy but other extraneous factors. For example, having a large number of class I students entitled the school to benefits like food aid programs. A major campaign, class I khali karo (Empty Class I) was taken up on a war footing to enable children to move to a higher classes. The slogans simplified the agenda for the campaign to focus its detention. 1400 activists were roped in for Shankarpally district alone.

Community involvement in the programme received a boost with the government's interest in including children in its Total Literacy Campaign. MVF trained 1200 volunteers on the issue of child labour. The demand for more training led to youth volunteers being employed at Rs 250/- a month under the TRYSEM Employment Programme of the government. The District Collector's support led to the programme moving out to cover the entire Ranga Reddy district. In partnership with District Collectors, the policy of incentives and special schools in 11 districts was halted as parents were mobilized by MVF to finance camps for all children instead of the funds being embarked for only their own children. In Shankarpally, DRDA volunteers were included for a girls camp. The Parents-Teachers Association, Youth and Gram Panchayats came together to form a Programme Advisory Committee to oversee the programme.

The phase of expansion in 1995 led to introspection about whether MVF should be upscaling or emphasizing quality. MVF covered the Mandals of Shankarpally, Nawabpet, Marpally, Vikarabad, Parigi, Basheerabad and Tandur. In 1996, the decision was taken to concentrate on expansion. This necessitated a change in the organized structure.

SPREADING THE MESSAGE

In 1996, for the sustainability thrust a campaign for strengthening schools was undertaken with the slogan "or school + our teacher". In place of the centralized Mandal level intervention, there is decentralization at the village level. The villages began to charge a cess of Rs 5/- on the ration card or for instance trucks coming in or leaving were taxed Rs 5/- to Rs 10/- which went towards education of the village children. The Non-Formal Education Centres became Motivation Centres. With the support of the District Collector, the Forum for Liberation of Children from Work – Baala Karmika Vimochana Vedika (BKVV) was inaugurated.

OPERATION SCALE UP

In 1997, MVF extended to the Mandals of Shabad, Peddemul, Mominpet, Doma, Pudur and Dharur. MVF's training took place on a larger scale. It trained 17,000 officers and wardens in Nalgonda and the Government requested MVF to expand BKVV to other areas of Ranga Reddy District. The long association with the local government had thus borne fruit with state level departments now seeking MVF's expertise.

This milestone coincided with another, as the first batch of MVF's students completed standard 10. They were supported to appear for the entrance test for admissions to polytechnics and were provided coaching. Eventually, 30 passed the polytechnics test but only a few cleared the 10th std. one student opted for

computer. This called for increasing focus on the quality of education in higher classes.

The first foray to other states was made with MVF's model being adapted in Orissa and Rajasthan. However, the philosophy of keeping children out of work was not accepted in its totality and they continued to adopt strategies of keeping children in work, providing education to them at the same time.

The sustainability thrust was strengthened with Child Rights Protection Committees being formed at the Mandal and village levels.

In 1997, MVF also branched out into socio-cultural community issues like child marriage. It roped in the DWCRA Women's group to take up the issue of girl children, conducting workshops for leaders of the women's sanghams in the district and Mandal level. The issue of child marriage hitherto in the private domain was raised to the level of public debate and taken up in right earnest in the following years.

GIRL CHILD IN FOCUS

In 1998, a survey established that there were 25,000 girls on the cotton farms. Though seven sarpanches, the Gram Panchayat sent 720 petitions to the Labour Department demanding back wages for them. At that time, cotton farmers in Warangal had committed suicide and although the girls were working elsewhere, the media ridiculed the raising of the issue in this context. However, when a girl working on a cotton farm died in Pudur Mandalm the youth took it up in a massive public meeting of 7000 youth. Long term camps helped girl children escape the drudgery and violence at home. The general outrage on girl child labour facilitated MVF and parents as well as the girls themselves to oppose the child marriage that prevented them from shaping their own future. Motivation centres and special support structures were set up for girls. MVF was approached by parents and children to cancel child marriages. For the first time, surveys covered adolescent married girls.

In 1998, with the PTAs becoming SECs, a grant of HIVOS seed money was provided to the SECs, to strengthen the decision making processes of SEC and accountability to the community and Gram Panchayat (the SEC chairperson and Sarpanch opened a joint bank account) by collectively defining the needs of the school and spreading the money on items not provided by the government. In a majority of schools, the seed money was spent on furniture, teaching aids, building repairs and on occasions on new construction of a room or compound wall. It encouraged the community to mobilize matching resources in cash or kind (labour, land, and furniture) and stimulated the teachers to participate more actively in withdrawing children from work.

MVF assisted UNICEF in its programme of "joyful Learning" for upper primary students upto the age of ten. However, MVF's model was not adopted in its totality.

It also deputed 2 staff to an organisation, but was ineffective because the child labour issue was not as yet a priority for the organisation. At the same time the organisation has no plan for inducting these two new staff members into its fold.

MVF with 25 NGOs in Coastal Andhra Pradesh, participated in the Global March Against Child Labour organized by the South Asian Coalition Against Child Servitude (SAACS). MVF utilized the opportunity to train people on its message of non-negotiables as well as the experiential fact that it was not an issue of funding that prevented the universalisation of education. The Global March also helped it to strengthen links with the government. MVF also joined the National Alliance on Education to include this proviso. The lessons from field practice have been used to critique and propose amendments to the Bill for Education as a Fundamental Right.

HANDING OVER

1999 - 2000

In 1999, MVF participated in government Kala Jathas, cultural festivals that highlight socio-economic problems. Its Class I khali karo (Empty Class I) programme was taken on by the State Government which renamed it "Summer School" with the objective of emptying the primary school and ensuring retention in Standard 5 and Standard 7. MVF provided HRD for the programme only in the Ranga Reddy District. The concept of 4-5 Satellite schools for every nodal school was initiated as the demand for middle and higher schools accelerated. The BKVV spread to 9 other Mandals.

To further access to education, MVF ensured that the responsibility of transfer forms for admission in various institutions like hostels and middle schools, was passed on from parent to the school. This plugged that possibility of drop-outs and papers being misplaced in transit.

To strengthen the access of girls to education (Case Study 1), they were encouraged to attend school together in groups rather than singly and to ensure retention, buses transported them if the schools were at a distance. In the schools, Girls Committees were set up with headmasters acting as convenors. A lawyer attends a Legal Aid Cell once every month to facilitate intervention with younger girls. The government officials also became involved in the campaign against child marriages.

CASE STUDY 1
EDUCATING THE GIRL CHILD

“Giving birth to children is not enough”, says Sayamma firmly. When the youth volunteers appealed to the family to send the eldest daughter to school, the second daughter took on the duty of grazing the buffaloes. Widowed at a young age, Sayamma could not give her children the education she felt they deserved. So she decided not to let history repeat itself. She enquired about the address of the MVF hostel and travelled 50 kms to admit her second grand child, Kristamma into it. Now in Std VIII, Amruta, the eldest, studies in Vikarabad while her sister Kristamma motivated to follow in her foot-steps is in Std VII in a hostel in Moinabad. Sayamma takes care of the buffaloes that first Amruta and then her sister tended. Their young brother is in Standard IV at a local school. Sayamma is pleased for it’s obvious to her that the children are happy so she’s happy. “It’s good to see them study as it is adults and not children who should work”, she concludes. Her grand-daughters came home occasionally and when she misses them, Sayamma visits them at their hostel. She still recalls with delight her first glimpse of her eldest grand-daughter on one such visit, “She came riding down on a bicycle and her hair was cut short, imagine!” Sayamma does not view her changed role as an obligation or sacrifice but rather feels, “It is their destiny. And when my grand-daughters have climbed up in life, I feel higher too.”

There was a drive by the government for appointing Vidya volunteers. An interval day-long debate took place in MVF about whether it should plea for its volunteers to be selected automatically. Finally, it was decided that the youth should apply on their own. This would also enable MVF to retain its autonomy. When only 200 were selected and many of the dedicated MVF volunteers were left out, it was an indication to MVF that it had to work harder among the community. Unless this was done they would not gain confidence to exercise pressure to press for what they consider best. Moreover, the number of volunteers assigned to schools were not in proportion to the school strength defeating the purpose. Dharnas were staged to draw attention to this anomaly.

Having established various fora that can take over MVF programs and in keeping with its objective of long-term sustainability, in January 199, MVF began to withdraw from activists/interventions in 73 villages spread over 12 Mandals facilitating the State to assume its responsibility towards children (Case Study 2).

CASE STUDY 2
BONDED CHILD LABOUR

25 bonded child labourers were at a camp, some having run away from their employer's homes. Still in their work clothes, some torn, they were getting to know each other and falling into a routine of breakfast, interaction and games. The first tentative step towards learning was initiated for all the children seated in a single room with bare walls. As they clapped and sang joyously, a woman could be heard shouting outside, "who are you to abduct my son? He earns money and is pledged to his employer who's asking for him now. Will you answer him or give him his money. How will we survive if we do not have our son to repay the loan? Will take care of him forever?" her son sitting in the classroom sobbed loudly torn between wanting to return to his mother and remain in the camp. The clapping and singing ceased as the other children sensed the tension and began to wonder about their own parents' reactions back home.

2 months later, at the same camp, the boy, Venkatesh proudly shows off his notebook, its pages filled with numerals and letters in English and Telugu and his name and address neatly entered as also that of his family and employer. When he goes home two or three times a month, his employer rewards him with Rs 5/- while his mother admonishes him to return only after completing his studies.

There are now 65 children at the camp. The bare walls are covered with charts created by teachers and pupils. In these two months, they have learned numbers till 50 and picked up vocabulary. The daily routine begins with a wake-up call at 5.00 a.m for a quick run or walk followed by bath and breakfast. At 10.00 a.m., classes start with a prayer. The children are now divided into 7 groups according to their level of learning. There is a break for lunch at 1.00 noon and classes recommence at 2.00 till 3.30 followed by a short break until 6.00 p.m., games are played for an hour. Following dinner the 5 teachers supervise studies of the children. The teachers are supported by 4 workers in running the camp that will continue till June so that more children can get integrated into learning. Already, employers on their own have started releasing children from work and 60% of bonded child labourers in Kulkacherla Mandal have been covered. The children at the camp will shift into hostels at the standard suited to their level.

The camp on the MVF model is completely handled by the Government. The role of MVF is to collect children, provide a jeep for a month for door-to-door campaigning and to motivate parents and the community and handle issues that may come up. The MVF lend moral support and appreciation to the teacher for their commendable effort and volunteer advice if required. To ensure 100% coverage, there will be a kala Jatha that will move through the entire district for 11 days and dwell on the issues of bondage, untouchability and caste.

In 33 villages youth volunteers will oversee the programs, the SECs in 25 villages, the BKVV teachers in 9 villages, education volunteers in 6 villages, the Gram Panchayat in 4 villages and DWCRA women in 1 village. The meetings on child labour are convened by the Government Development Officer. In 2000, there was intervention by the National Human Rights (NHRC) when Justice Ramaswami oversaw the release of 1200 bonded children following petitions from 250 Gram Panchayats.

The programme's devolution to youth and womens groups and upgradation of infrastructure continues. (Case Study 3). MVF in continuing with its perceived role of training leaving the operation of schools to the Government intends to set up a training institute and stabilize MVF through institutional financial support rather than programs.

CASE STUDY 3 SCIENCE CENTRE

Children arrived in busloads and truckloads to view the Science Centre. Drawn from the schools in the district, studying in Classes VII – X , they were excited at the charts on display, though in English, covering subjects like the Human Anatomy, Physics and Biology. There was even a rudimentary microscope. Projects from some of the schools were also on display. The inauguration of the Science Centre was followed by a workshop for teachers to discuss pedagogy issues of how to demystify for institutionalizing quality education as it is often in subjects like science that children falter as MVF has found. The subject itself proves daunting because teaching aids and practicals on it accessible to a privileged few. The Science Centre is run by MVF with the assistance of a retired person. It was set up through a contribution of Rs 10,000 from the community with tables and fans given by the Sarpanch, MVF contributed material while the Central Government through a scheme for promotion of science has earmarked Rs 50,000 of which Rs 28,000 has been disbursed for equipment, books and furniture. As the children mill around touching the displays and felling the specimen, it is obvious that the purpose of providing access to prime studies as it is called is well on its way.

CONCLUSION

MVF's growth was marked by geographical shifts from **one Mandal** in Shankarpally to the entire Ranga Reddy District. In the process, MVF moved from **diverse** issues of social inequity to home in on the universalisation of education as its **singular** agenda but in the process of which it expanded the scope of the intervention to touch upon **multiple** issues such as child marriage that has a bearing on the access of children to education.

Initially the programme perceived societal issues in the frame of structural exploitation based on caste and class oppression. This influenced the manner of operation which was largely confrontational and hence **secretive** about the agenda

and strategies to be employed. With the shift to issues of children alone, the programme was **openly** shared and the non-negotiables made public while inhering in a consensual mode. With the emphasis on education as a fundamental right, it came as a natural corollary that MVF focused on **all children**.

Following large-scale **enrollment**, the underlying reasons for drop-outs came to be addressed. The community was mobilized to demand **upgradation** of infrastructure and MVF recognized that for children to be able to continue education required an emphasis on **quality** and **not numbers alone**, on education in its entirety rather than Non-Formal Education that was a guise to keep children in the labour force. The earlier **confrontational** approach gave way to a **consensual** approach so that releasing children from labour for education and allowing girls to step outside their homes became a **voluntary** outcome rather than an **enforced** one on the part of employers and parents.

The expansion of the agenda from the **micro-to the State** level was a logical progression due to the success of MVF's model of universalizing education for all children regardless of caste, class or gender. To ensure the sustainability of the programme, MVF consciously stepped back **from direct action to advocacy** on the children's right to education. The problem such as financial constraints or oppositions from vested interests were seen as **opportunities** to push the education agenda rather than as **obstacles** to growth.

MVF's success lies in the fact that though the **focus on children**, it automatically seized the higher moral ground. While remaining sensitive to the political ramifications of what it was trying to achieve it **did not politicize issues**, even where it involved for instance, the death of children. The **school** was established as a place owned by the community as a whole and hence a **neutral meeting place** for all involved to arrive at a consensus. Most importantly, MVF did not buy the conventional argument about child labour as a "harsh reality" that required "progressive elimination" but concentrated on the **rights of the child** that had to be attained by them as **children here and now** rather than in future.

SECTION 4.0 : ORGANISATIONAL EVOLUTION

The picture of an Organization, its health and effectiveness, emerges from the interplay between the three dimensions of Organization Development, Programme Development and Human Resource Development.

An organizational review encompasses these three dimensions. However the review has emphasized Programme Development and in a small way Human Resource Development. It must be noted that the Organization Structure discussed with the Evaluation team has reference only to the Child Labour Programme. The larger organization picture and interrelationship between these and the Child Labour Programme is not clear.

MVF's organizational structure evolved in relation to the programme. In the pre-1994 phase, there were different departments to deal with youth, parents and schools. In the restructuring thereafter, organizers were divided according to the issues and geographical areas and reported to a supervisor for a particular area enabling sharing across clusters. Responsibilities were delegated and multi tasking was expected of all.

There are for a that serve as self-correcting mechanisms and ensure accountability while promoting lateral learning. (Table 1) The General Core Group has 40 members drawn from MVF and non-MVF staff, that determines programmatic policy, strategy, and innovation through brain-storming.

MV F FORA	
1 x 1 week	: Mandal level
1 x 15 days	: Cluster level
1 x 7 days	: Village level
1 x 3 months	: General Core Group level
1 x 3 months	: Project Coordinators level

Human Resource Development has moved apace. MVF which began with a staff of 5 and 5 activist teachers, currently has over 60 core staff and 500 part time volunteers spread over 300 villages. Planning and designing as well as implementation of programs are decentralized. The MVF leadership along with Mandal, district level in-charge persons, training coordinators, as well as those in charge of field work, coordination, documentation, training and accounts have free and frank discussions to review programs. There are also separate peer reviews by SEC and Gram Panchayats of work in the Mandals other than their own.

Most staff begin as volunteers who are rooted in the philosophy, culture and ideological basis of the organization. Youth volunteers remain the core. Training is provided to them and the organization supports them to upgrade their knowledge, skills.

The staff are appointed not just execute a given task but are expected to define new tasks for themselves and therefore the organization as well. They are constantly learning to take on new roles and delegate responsibility, In doing so they have evolved clarity in terms of the overall goals to be achieved, the principles of organizing and implementing the programmes. This results in a strong sense of identification and ownership of the process and tremendous professional growth as well.

MVF maintains distance from professionals as experience found them devoid of commitment and unwilling to maintain horizontal accountability. Tasks like research and documentation that require professional inputs are outsourced.

There is high motivation and opportunities for upward mobility, for instance volunteers can rise to coordinators. There is pride in being part of MVF and each is aware of the importance of their role and the climate is suffused with a spirit of creative exploration. MVF's volunteers moving on to other career paths was one of the factors that engendered the idea of MVF restructuring itself as a training institution.

Organisation Development in terms of the Management and Governance structure has remained fairly constant over the years. The Board meets once a year and is convened by the Secretary. It oversees compliance to the financial and the founding members' family, implicitly trust the staff who look to them for moral support. The vision and governance role is concentrated within a sub group of the Board that provides the direction as well as play the roles of Financial and administrative management. There is a Programme Advisory Committee that meets twice a year but its membership was not clarified. There is no move or proposal to induct younger, non-family members on the Board in the immediate future.

VISION OF MVF

Our interviews with Ms. Shantha Sinha, the moving spirit behind the Foundation clarified that the organization has a purpose and that being to identify the working children and to put them into schools. Since the government schools were found to be wanting in many respects, she said, the foundation is working towards strengthening these schools. All this called for a holistic approach. Hence the Foundation involved parents, teachers, NGOs, Panchayats, youth, clubs, women's organization and so on. From this account we may infer that the long-term vision of the Foundation is to eliminate child labour and to mainstream them into education. Keeping this as the main vision, the Foundation has some sub-set visions for the

immediate future. These are: to work in a more focused manner with the girl child, to create a resource base to be able to expand to other districts, to motivate the teachers' unions to take up issues of child rights holistically, to get the bureaucracy and the politicians oriented to the MVF philosophy and to ensure that the mainstreamed children finish at least the X class.

SECTION 5.0 : PERFORMANCE OF M.V.FOUNDATION

The Foundation, which started off on a modest scale, has today reached a massive scale of operations in terms of the villages covered. It may be of interest here to present some indicators of its reach in terms of villages covered, motivation camps organized, children upgraded to higher classes and so on. Data is not available for all the years the Foundation has been functioning. The Foundation could generate the required data for few recent years starting from 1996 and that too for some selected years. Since our interest is not necessarily on the time series analysis of the performance of the Foundation but on the assessment of the magnitude of the work done. By it as of now, the data made available for some selected years should serve our purpose of understanding the impact and outreach of the organization in quantitative terms.

VILLAGES COVERED

The Foundation began its work first in the Shankarpally Mandal and gradually moved out of it and went into other Mandals. By 1996 it had covered 16 Mandals of the Ranga Reddy District.

Table - 1: Number of Revenue Villages* covered under M.V.Foundation Child Labour Project (1996-2000)				
Sr.No.	Name of the Mandal	Number of Covered		% Change
		1996	2000	
1	Shankarpally	20	24	20.0
2	Chevella	23	31	34.8
3	Nawabpet	17	22	29.4
4	Vikarabad	16	26	62.5
5	Tandur	14	18	28.6
6	Basheerabad	16	17	6.3
7	Marpally	10	17	70.0
8	Parigi	14	29	107.1
9	Mominpet	6	14	133.3
10	Kulkacherla	3	7	133.3
11	Doma	3	11	266.6
12	Dharur	3	10	233.3
13	Pudur	4	8	100.0
14	Shabad	3	15	400.0
15	Peddemul	9	16	77.8
16	Rajendra Nagar	3	7	133.3
TOTAL :		164	272	65.9
Note *Each revenue village comprises 2 or 3 other villages / hamlets.				

The revenue villages covered were 164 and this number rose to 272 with the turn of the century an increase of about 66 percent. As Table-1 shows, the percentage increase in the number of villages covered varies rather widely from a mere 6 per cent in Basheerabad to 400 per cent in Shahbad. But since the base of villages covered also varies widely such comparisons may not make any sense. The fact to be noted is that during the short period of four years the Foundation expanded its reach from 164 revenue villages to 272 revenue villages.

CHILDREN MOTIVATED

The Foundation has been organizing motivation camps to motivate children to join the main stream of education. Table – 2 which presents data on this aspect makes an interesting reading. It can be seen that the caps were held initially (1996 and 97) only a in a few Mandals such as Shankarpally Nawabpet and Vikarabad. Hence the number of children attending the camps and those getting motivated are small. But with the Foundation moving into other Mandals from 1997, their number has increased.

Sr.No.	Name of the Mandal	1996		1997		1998		1999	
		Attended	Motivated	Attended	Motivated	Attended	Motivated	Attended	Motivated
1	Shankarpally	334	170	275	114	121	84	0	0
2	Chevella	0	0	314	212	460	177	195	143
3	Nawabpet	294	198	180	110	213	146	92	57
4	Vikarabad	240	89	86	34	0	0	0	0
5	Tandur	0	0	35	16	0	0	21	21
6	Basheerabad	0	0	202	148	69	31	38	38
7	Marpally	0	0	172	60	329	160	63	28
8	Parigi	0	0	132	56	196	89	297	66
9	Mominpet	0	0	0	0	40	10	20	8
10	Kulkacherla	0	0	45	29	85	31	75	25
11	Doma	0	0	65	39	50	20	70	32
12	Dharur								
13	Pudur	0	0	110	49	72	28	0	0
14	Shabad	0	0	0	0	0	0	152	31
15	Peddemul		0	0	0	0	0	30	18
16	Rajendra Nagar								
TOTAL :		868	457	1616	867	1635	776	1053	467
Proportion Motivated in %		52.6		65.4		47.5		44.4	

A second point to note is that not all the children who attended the motivation camps have been motivated to join the school. The proportion of those motivated to those attended is around one half. And what is significant is that this proportion which was above 50 per cent during 1996 and 1997 has declined during 1998 and

1999 respectively to 47.5 per cent and 44.4 per cent. No particular explanation is possible here. May be with the passage of time the Foundation is dealing with the hard core working children. Hence, it may be finding it difficult to motivate a large number of children.

EDUCATION CAMPS ORGANISED

Having motivated the children for schooling, the MVF organized a series of camps right from 1991 when it targeted the working children. Table – 3 shows that during 1991-2000 some 50 camps were organized whose duration varied from four months to one year. The number of children trained in these camps is 8818 of which one half were girl children.

Table - 3: CAMPS ORGANIZED BY MVF IN RANGA REDDY DISTRICT 1991-2000							
Sr. No.	Mandal	Camp Place	Year	Duration	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Shankarpally	Janwada	1991	4 months	45	25	70
2	Shankarpally	Maharajpet	1992	6 months	76	44	120
3	Shankarpally	Maharajpet	1993	6 months	135	65	200
4	Shankarpally	Maharajpet	1993	4 months	78	82	160
5	Shankarpally	Maharajpet	1994	6 months	124	76	200
6	Shankarpally	Mokila	1994	6 months	95	80	175
7	Uppal	Medipally	1994	4 months	58	152	210
8	Shankarpally	Fathepur	1994	4 months	64	86	150
9	Rajendra Nagar	Gandipet	1995	8 months	300	50	350
10	Rajendra Nagar	Gandipet(Long)	1995	1 Year	180	0	180
11	Chevella	Chevella	1995	6 months	87	83	170
12	Shankarpally	Mokila	1995	6 months	0	120	120
13	Shankarpally	Singapur	1995	6 months	0	120	120
14	Uppal	Medipally	1995	6 months	55	130	185
15	Chevella	Chevella(Kapart)	1996	8 months	150	80	230
16	Parigi	Pargi(NCLP)	1996	6 months	84	76	160
17	Chevella	Aloor(NCLP)	1996	6 months	147	25	172
18	Tandur	Tandur(NCLP)	1996	6 months	75	45	120
19	Basheerabad	Baasheerabad(NCLP)	1996	6 months	80	70	150
20	Marpally	Marpally(NCLP)	1996	6 months	65	85	150
21	Nawabpet	Nawabpet(NCLP)	1996	6 months	120	60	180
22	Chevella	Chevella(Long)	1996	1 Year	0	130	130
23	Rajendra Nagar	Kismathpur(NCLP)	1996	6 months	70	90	160
24	Parigi	Pargi(Long)	1996	1 Year	190	0	190
25	Nawabpet	Nawabpet	1997	8 months	0	120	120
26	Chevella	Aloor	1997	6 months	80	50	130
27	Chevella	Aloor(Long)	1997	1 Year	0	210	210
28	Parigi	Pargi(Long)	1997	1 Year	180	0	180

29	Shankarpally	Mokila	1997	8 months	120	0	120
30	Nawabpet	Nawabpet	1998	6 months	0	120	120
31	Shabad	Shabad	1998	4 months	50	115	165
32	Chevella	Aloor(Long)	1998	1 Year	0	280	280
33	Parigi	Parigi(Long)	1998	1 Year	190	0	190
34	Parigi	Pargi	1998	6 months	0	85	85
35	Vikarabad	Shivareddypet	1998	1 Year	195	0	195
36	Shabad	Shabad	1998	6 months	0	175	175
37	Shankarpally	Mokila	1998	6 months	140	0	140
38	Basheerabad	Basheerabad	1998	6 months	0	140	140
39	Marpally	Marpally	1998	6 months	0	130	130
40	Tandur	Tandur	1998	6 months	0	120	120
41	Nawabpet	Nawabpet	1998	6 months	50	80	130
42	Parigi	Pargi	1999	6 months	192	0	192
43	Chevella	Aloor(Long)	1999	1 Year	0	415	415
44	Vikarabad	Shivareddypet	1999	1 Year	240	0	240
45	Parigi	Sd. Malkapur	1999	1 Year	0	130	130
46	Shankarpally	Mokila	1999	4 months	135	0	135
47	Parigi	Pargi (Long)	2000	1 Year	294	0	294
48	Chevella	Aloor (Long)	2000	1 Year	0	345	345
49	Vikarabad	Shivareddypet	2000	1 Year	260	0	260
50	Parigi	Sd. Malkapur	2000	1 Year	0	125	125
TOTAL :					4404	4414	8818

CHILDREN UPGRADED

Consequent to the work of M.V.Foundation at the grassroots level, the number of children upgraded to higher classes has been going up as evident from Table – 4.

Table - 4: Number of Children Upgraded to Higher Classes (1996 and 1999)			
Sr.No.	Name of the Mandal	Number of Covered	
		1996	1999
1	Shankarpally	1295	1606
2	Chevella	686	1261
3	Nawabpet	1825	1395
4	Vikarabad	218	934
5	Tandur	140	459
6	Basheerabad	1125	1449
7	Marpally	1649	693
8	Parigi	0	896
9	Mominpet	983	790
10	Kulkacherla	0	75
11	Doma	0	100
12	Dharur	0	301
13	Pudur	0	58
14	Shabad	0	329
15	Peddemul	0	465
16	Rajendra Nagar	0	0
TOTAL :		7921	10811

Thus, this number which was 7921 in 1996 has gone upto 10,811 in 1999 – a rise of 36.3 per cent in three years. The total figure of nearly 11 thousand is big enough to prove that the Foundation has evolved a tenable approach that sustain the children in the formal school system.

BONDED LABOURERS

An outstanding achievement of the Foundation's work is the decline in the number of bonded labourers in the area of their operation. The number of bonded labourers which was as high as 1659 in 1996 has come down to 997 (Table – 5) – a decline of about 40% in four years. This decline may be due to two reasons: one, due to the release of bonded child labour consequent to the campaign organized by the Foundation against the bonded labour system: and two, due to reluctance on the part of employers to take new bonded workers due to the change of community's attitude towards the system of bonded labourer initiated by the Foundation. Thus, the bringing in of bonded child labourers into the fold of education has had far reaching impact and consequences resulting in the elimination of the practice of children being used as bonded labour both in the present and future.

Table - 5: Number of Bonded Labourers (199-2000)			
Sr.No.	Name of the Mandal	Number of Bonded Labour	
		1996	2000
1	Shankarpally	83	32
2	Chevella	177	48
3	Nawabpet	92	15
4	Vikarabad	146	42
5	Tandur	180	177
6	Basheerabad	280	200
7	Marpally	149	55
8	Parigi	170	131
9	Mominpet	55	38
10	Kulkacherla	NA	86
11	Doma	-	-
12	Dharur	16	11
13	Pudur	39	11
14	Shabad	92	52
15	Peddemul	180	99
16	Rajendra Nagar	-	-
TOTAL :		1659	997

SCHOOL GOING AND NON-SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN

The Third outcome about the Foundation could feel satisfied is the rise in the number of school going (SG) children and the opposite trend in the non-school going (NSG) children. The data presented in Table – 6 for the 16 Mandals where the Foundation has been actively working vouchsafes to this fact. The ratio of NSG to SG which was 0.32 in 1996 has improved to 0.15. That is, for every 1000 SG children there were 32 SNG children in 1996. In 2000, the number of NSG children has declined to 15.

Table - 6: Number of School Going and Non-School Going Children (1996-2000)							
Sr.No.	Name of the Mandal	1996			1999		
		SG	NSG	Total	SG	NSG	Total
1	Shankarpally	8633	2007	10640	11312	498	11810
2	Chevella	9895	2076	11971	12065	541	12606
3	Nawabpet	5401	1759	7160	8939	485	9424
4	Vikarabad	4900	1614	6514	11820	1024	12844
5	Tandur	3964	1768	5732	4751	1580	6331
6	Basheerabad	5428	3206	8634	7391	2074	9465
7	Marpally	5390	2084	7474	9006	1703	10709
8	Parigi	6564	2625	9189	8352	2273	10625
9	Mominpet	2189	727	2916	6112	599	6711
10	Kulkacherla	0	0	0	1283	848	2131
11	Doma	0	0	0	1345	677	2022
12	Dharur	610	270	880	2390	359	2749
13	Pudur	2549	190	2739	2358	182	2540
14	Shabad	1522	436	1958	6553	839	7392
15	Peddemul	2779	731	3510	5776	1510	7286
16	Rajendra Nagar	0	0	0	117	61	178
TOTAL :		59824	19493	79317	99570	15253	114823
Ratio of SG to NSG		0.32			0.15		

VOLUNTEER TEACHERS

MVF has played a significant role in augmenting the teaching staff and preventing school drop outs. Table – 7 presents data about number of volunteer teachers contributed by the MVF and other organizations. It may be seen that by 1996 the MVF had provided 427 volunteers. This number went up to 559 in 2000. On the other hand, the number of non-MVF volunteers increased from 267 to 911 during the same period. Since the number of non-MVF volunteers rose at a much faster rate, the ratio of MVF to non-MVF volunteers changed from 0.63 to 1.62 which means for every 100 MVF volunteers the non-MVF volunteers who were 63 in 1996 rose to 162.

Table - 7: Statement Showing MVF and Non - MVF Volunteers (1996-2000)					
Sr.No.	Name of the Mandal	No. of MVF Volunteers		No. of Non-MVF Volunteers	
		1996	2000	1996	2000
1	Shankarpally	83	79	8	71
2	Chevella	50	86	53	82
3	Nawabpet	35	42	24	36
4	Vikarabad	75	68	2	51
5	Tandur	26	22	19	27
6	Basheerabad	33	42	17	25
7	Marpally	23	28	33	82
8	Parigi	14	46	63	217
9	Mominpet	15	32	0	86
10	Kulkacherla	5	6	1	43
11	Doma	8	9	-	61
12	Dharur	10	24	2	3
13	Pudur	14	16	8	20
14	Shabad	9	35	8	51
15	Peddemul	25	16	29	46
16	Rajendra Nagar	2	8	0	10
TOTAL :		427	559	267	911

This is a notable development because, the action of the MVF has inspired other organizations and people's groups to contribute volunteers. The MVF should gradually withdraw leaving the space for others and move over to new areas. This indeed is the strategy worked out by the Foundation and this strategy will have a sustainable effect.

TEACHER – PUPIL RATIO

The intervention of MVF and others in the school education system through contribution of volunteer-teachers has had a positive impact on the teacher-pupil ratio (TPR). Data collected in this regard by the Research and Development Services, Hyderabad from selected village schools in the Ranga Reddy district (Table – 8) makes an interesting reading. The 16 upper primary schools covered by this organization have a student strength of 5605. The number of teachers provided by the government is 73 which will give a TPR of 76.8 as against the accepted norm of 40. In these schools. Volunteer teachers have been provided by the MVF (18) by SEC (10) and under the Vidya volunteer scheme (44). If the MVF volunteer teachers are added to the government teachers, the number of teachers goes upto 91 and that will give us the TPR of 61.5. If to this figure the SEC and Vidya volunteers are added the TPR will be at a comfortable level of 38.7 which is an improvement over the

norm of 40! The fact that the schemes of SEC and VV are schemes inspired by the MVF, the credit for maintaining a comfortable level of TPR should undoubtedly go to the Foundation.

Table - 8: Teacher Pupil in the Selected Village Schools Ratio in Ranga Reddy District, 1999-2000									
Village Name	School	Govt. Type	MVF	PTA	Other SEC	Total (VV)	Total Students	TPR Govt.	TPR All
Shankarpally	UPS	5	0	1	2	8	258	51.6	32.3
Chevella	UPS	7	5		1	13	467	66.7	35.9
Nawabpet	UPS	4	2	1	4	11	400	100.0	36.4
Vikarabad	UPS	3	1		5	9	330	110.0	36.7
Tandur	UPS	5	1	2		8	488	97.6	61.0
Basheerabad	UPS	5	1		1	7	251	50.2	35.9
Marpally	UPS	3	2		5	10	326	108.7	32.6
Parigi	UPS	3			2	5	203	67.7	40.6
Mominpet	UPS	6		2	1	9	416	69.3	46.2
Kulkacherla	UPS	2	1		3	6	227	113.5	37.8
Doma	UPS	7	1		1	9	374	53.4	41.6
Dharur	UPS	6	1			7	224	37.3	32.0
Pudur	UPS	4			4	8	365	91.3	45.6
Shabad	UPS	5	2	2	4	13	418	83.6	32.2
Peddemul	UPS	4			3	7	390	97.5	55.7
Rajendra Nagar	UPS	4	1	2	8	15	468	117.0	31.2
		73	18	10	44	145	5605	76.8	38.7

SECTION 6.0 : IMPACT OF M.V.FOUNDATION

While the previous section discussed the impact, reach and spread of MVFs work in quantitative terms, this section discusses the impact of MVF on the child, family, employer, school system and student hostels, education policy, civil society, and the Foundation itself.

THE CHILD

It is an experience in itself to observe the effect of putting the child workers in a new but a free environment. Our visits to two motivation camps – one at Chityal organized by the MVF exclusively for the girls and the other organized at Kulkacherla by the Education Department exclusively for boys – strengthened our belief that given the opportunity, the children would like to get their childhood back. There was an atmosphere of enthusiasm with spontaneous outbursts of laughter leading to songs and demonstration of folk art.

It is with a sense of great satisfaction that we observed a number of boys and girls pursuing their studies in the day school along with other regular students. For instance, Master Pulya, a IV standard ST boy had joined III standard after going through the MVF program. He had worked as a bonded labourer for a local landlord. The MVF, among other child workers, brought him to attend the motivation camp, motivated him to go throughout the bridge course and put him in the regular school.. The boy is excited about the turn of events. Hew says he had no friends earlier; but now there are many in the school. He is treated better at home now than before because the family members think that he is after all studying. For the same reason, he is treated better by others in his village.

Through its work, MVF has enabled children to have access to one of their basic rights – education. In securing the right to education for the working child, MVF has also been able to bring about a positive impact on the child's physical health and put an end to exploitative practices of early marriages for girls and bonded child labour. Since MVF covers a large area of operation, the impact of the change assume greater significance in that it sets in a new value framework and age old social practices of discrimination are challenged.

The rights of the child has now assumed centre stage importance in the agenda of local self governance as panchayats, the school system, parents and civil society work together to ensure enrollment and retention of children in schools, improving the school environment and striving to better the quality of education in schools keeping aside political, social and cultural differences.

The children are not passive recipients in this process. They play an active role of motivators for their peers who are still out of school, often convincing parents and adults of the benefits of education. They take responsibility within schools, hostels and camps to ensure smooth functioning of systems and improvement in the learning and living environment by giving feedback and participating on committees. In this way the MVF has been able to inculcate leadership within the young learners.

It can be seen that education boosts confidence and enhances the sense of the child's self worth. Many boys and girls to whom we spoke in the schools and hostels admitted that their life is better now. They live in a better environment and hope to do well in life in future. Many of the boys would like to join the polytechnic after completing X class that they believe will be passport to a job in a factory – they are dreaming of what was once unthinkable.

Most of all, they now have faith in the process of change taking place in their lives that takes them closer to their rights – to learn, to be free from labour and participate in decisions that affect their life.

FAMILY

The MVF intervention was initially looked upon by the parents as an unwarranted interference in their family affairs. However, with their children's empowerment has come about a change in their attitudes. Although the absence of their child working entails a decline in the family income and an increase in their workload, they feel a sense of accomplishment in the fact that their child is learning, a right they were themselves denied as children. History will not repeat itself. They too now dream through the eyes of their children of an unfettered existence for the benefits of education are long-term and far outweigh whatever income they would have otherwise earned in the immediate present. These facts are borne out from our interviews of parents carried out in Pulmaddi village.

Two of Nagamani's daughters were engaged in household work. But when these children joined school (one is now studying VIII class in Moinabad and one in V class in Dharur) the parents are sharing the household work. This has not reduced the family income but the workload on the parents has increased. However, the mother says that in spite of this problem it gives her a lot of satisfaction to know that her daughters are studying.

Eswaramma's 13 year old boy was assisting his blacksmith father and attending cattle. After he was put in school, the cattle were sold and the blacksmith now asks his clients to assist him in keeping the fire going by turning a wheel mechanism (the job which his son used to do) while he works. The parents admit that there is a slight drop in family income but they say that after all now they have to take care of the needs of only two of them.

MVF has reached out to the poorest and socially most marginalized families of the villages they work in and brought their children into the fold of education – a right that was denied to them for generations. The families have been drawn into community life as they participate in school education committees and raise the issue of universalisation of education for all children at various forums including local self government bodies and programmes of DWCRA, Janmabhoomi etc.,

Parents, youth and grandparents have become protagonists for the child's right to education, playing the role of volunteers in enrollment drives, contributing labour or money to improve school infrastructure and ensuring that children do attend school.

The organization has been able to channelise youth energy and idealism into constructive work. The youth mandals belonging to various political affiliations have been able to unite around the agenda of education. It gives the youth a tremendous sense of pride and self worth as they engage in the task of child labour elimination. Their energy and enthusiasm in fact forms the pulse of the movement. This is indeed an outstanding contribution in a time where youth energies are absorbed by lumpen forces or used for political agenda.

Parents have been supported by the MVF to let go of their resistances to change with regards to long standing practices such as child marriages, pledging children in bondage to secure loans and child labour. As parents experience the value and worth of education both in the present and future life of their children, they themselves find creative solutions to adapt to the changed situation; taking upon themselves for instance the work hitherto done by the child or selling the cattle and engaging in another form of livelihood. Thus parents and families perceive education as a tool for social transformation and empowerment providing them and their children opportunity for equal participation in community life, an enhanced status and freedom from bondage.

THE EMPLOYER

The awareness created by the MVF volunteers among the bonded labourers, employers and the general public has led to a change of attitude among all concerned. The bonded children desire to go to school. The general public is willing to support their cause. The employers are getting reconciled to releasing the bonded labourers especially the bonded child labourers. For them this would mean (a) loss of whole or part of the loan advanced to bonded workers and (b) doing the work themselves or hiring paid adult labour.

The point that the employers are now getting reconciled to the new situation and even taking up the cause of the bonded labourers emerges from our interview with an ex-bonded labour employer. Sri Narasimha Reddy of Kondakal Village had employed a child bonded labourer to look after buffaloes. After observing the campaign organized by the MVF for release of bonded child labour, he agreed to release the boy. The boy's father had borrowed Rs.3000 from him of which Rs.2300 was adjusted towards wages. The father of the child promised to repay the balance of Rs.700 which did not materialize. Like him, many employers too did not get back their loan money. He admitted that he and other employers initially abused the MVF for bringing such misery upon them but subsequently accepted the changed situation after seeing how the ex-bonded child labourers were getting educated in the village school.

The MVF offers space for the employer to attain a new position of legitimized respectability by supporting the campaign to eradicate bonded labour. Sri Reddy said that he is a member of the local School Education Committee and as such he is trying to improve school education in his village. He also stated that he too has campaigned against the bonded labour system and worked towards release of child bonded labourers, motivating other employers to free children and give them Vidyadan. The MVF campaign, according to him, has not only created awareness about the ill effects of bonded labour system but it has also created some degree of fear complex among the potential employers. For, now everybody has come to know that the law will take its own course if it is violated.

At the same time, the attitudes that underscore the social inequity that MVF sought to address earlier by directly facilitating the adult bonded labourers may remain entrenched but education will transform irrevocably the situation of bondage. Sri Reddy agrees that children should not be appointed as bonded labourers because they are expected to be in school. He says, adult workers, however, may be taken in as bonded labourers because there is so much work in the farms and there is need to ensure that labourers are available for this work. Bonded child labour was employed by him for household work and for tending cattle. After the release of the labourer, the family had to take over this work. Initially, it was considered a burden but subsequently they got used to the work. He also added that the bonded labour system will vanish in future. During his father's time, it was rampant. The household had many bonded workers. During his own time, he had employed just one boy. During his children's time there will be none to assist in the household work.

SCHOOL SYSTEM

It is a well known fact that the village schools are inefficient in the delivery of services to children. Inefficiency arises due to many factors but the most important one is the inadequacy of school infrastructure like teachers, classrooms, toilets, furniture, and play material, play grounds and teaching aids. The sheer numbers and the vast amount of money needed to provide these items of infrastructure become a reason for the government to cite, to cover its lack of political will.

MVF saw the government as being principally responsible and demonstrated models of voluntary teachers and community contributions for infrastructure to show how the existing government structures combined with community participation would augment the government programs and infrastructure in the schools.

Intervention by the MVF has led the local community to devise innovative methods of raising contribution for school development. By way of illustration, in Mokila Village, Shankarpally Mandal, the panchayat collects fines imposed as punishment in the form of furniture for use in the school! The impact of this intervention on the augmentation of school infrastructure may be gauged from the following data on the Mokila village school.

Intervention by the MVF has led the local community to devise innovative methods of raising contribution for school development. By way of illustration, in Mokila village, Shankarpally Mandal, the panchayat collects fines imposed as punishment in the form of furniture for use in the school! The impact of this intervention on the augmentation of school infrastructure may be gauged from the following data on the Mokila village school.

Year	1991-92	1999-2000							
1. Enrollment of children	163	326 of which							
		SC		ST		BC		OTHERS	
		B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
		45	35	26	4	82	92	13	29
2. Rooms	3	Earlier				Now			
		2 by village Community Corporate groups and MVF				One under Janmabhoomi with 30% Community Contribution			
3. Speed money from MVF		1997-98 Rs. 25,000				1999-2000 Rs. 25,000			
4. Vidya Volunteers from MVF		1991 One		1994 Four		1998 Two			

From the above, one can gauge the role played by the MVF in augmenting the school infrastructure in the Mokila village. Apart from the tangibles, the schools has derived some intangible benefits too. One is, the teacher volunteer exposure program. Some selected teachers like Ms.Asha Ram are taken to other projects, school for sharing experiences in other states. The second intangible is the exposure of the school head master, Mr.Suresh, to an entirely new school environment. Talking about the beneficial effects of the MVF intervention, he admitted that he came to know about the concepts of dropouts, retention, child labour etc., only after he was transferred to this school. He said that after his coming over to this school his role changed from merely teaching to involving himself in community problems. He felt that he was more useful to society now than before. In other words, a slow change is taking place in the attitudes and approaches of the teachers towards their professional life that is now something to be cherished. The sense of self worth led to a collective forum, the Bala Karmika Vimochana Vedika (BKVV), being established enabling the teachers themselves to have a direct say in the education system that was hitherto left to the bureaucrats to shape.

As a natural corollary to enrollment has come to challenge to retain children in school. The improvement in school infrastructure and presence of active school

education committees combined with the increased motivation and sense of pride experienced by teachers in relation to their work has led to them putting in greater effort in planning lessons developing creative teaching aids. The MVF has facilitated workshops, exposure programmes and visits for teachers and volunteers to address the concern of quality education. It has responded to the difficulties experienced by children in the secondary schools in relation to subjects such as mathematics, science and has already taken steps to initiate Science Centres which will demystify and make science easier to learn through experiments, charts and films. The organization methodology thus takes cognizance of the issues pertaining to the quality of education that logically emerges in sequel to accomplishment of the task of universal enrollment.

The most significant influence created by MVF is the realization that schools run by Government can deliver results of community mobilization is facilitated through the catalytic role of NGOs and social activists. It is thus clear that given the type of commitment and philosophy which MVF has, this experiment can be multiplied. The method of consensus building adopted by MVF among employer, parents, local community leaders and the school system is particularly useful and can be replicated.

STUDENT HOSTELS

Initially, the Foundation had to face problems with the Department and the hostel staff. MVF undertook anti-corruption campaign and actions with the help of Government machinery against wardens who were misappropriating government allocations. As a matter of fact, some wardens reportedly represented to the District Collector that the Foundation was interfering with day-to-day management of the hostels. In due course, however, things became easier for the Foundation due to its positive approach which is to strengthen rather than condemn the hostel administration by including the hostel staff in all its programs and thereby projecting their image and taking care of their feelings and sentiments.

The presence of the MVF volunteers in the hostel and the improved morale of the children who now demand the facilities they are entitled to have gone along way to improve the living conditions in the hostels. The BC Welfare Boy's Hostel, Mahendra Hills, Secunderabad and the BC Welfare Girls Hotel (near Vikarabad) are illustrative cases.

In the Boy's Hostel, which has 140 inmates nearly 50% are the ex-working children whom the MVF enrolled after duly motivating them by organizing camps. A majority of these boys were working in the local biscuit factories and they had either not been to school or had been school drop outs. They are being helped by the MVF counselors in their homework and revision of class lessons. Newspaper reading habit is inculcated among the children. Indeed, the children put up the main news highlights on the notice-board and even write down what they call the golden sentences taken from the newspapers and other reading material. What is more, the children have been motivated to keep the surroundings clean and to develop a beautiful garden. In the garden are grown flowers, vegetables and some valuable

plants. The children have developed a sense of ownership of the garden and they take care of it with loving attention. In a limited scale, we also observed such interest among the inmates of the Girls's Hostel. A compound coming up in the hostel recently has encouraged the girls to take to gardening.

A special point to be mentioned about the Boy's Hostel is the involvement of the local community. We were told that during the initial years the local residents had reservations about and even hostile attitude towards the hostel inmates as they feared that the boys coming as they do from poor background may indulge in thefts. But with the children blooming into a disciplined group and spending their spare time in gardening and cultural activities, the residents were slowly drawn closer. Today, it is learnt that they have accepted the boys and some of them even visit the garden in the evening. A local doctor has been providing free medical advice to the children. Some industrialists supplied play materials, and other regularly distribute sweets on festive occasions. The residents collect and supply used dresses, note books etc., to the hostel for the benefit of the inmates.

The warden of the hostel is of the opinion that the exposure to the new environment has created among them higher level feelings of community life and ambitions to become something in life. The fellow feelings that have sprouted among them goad them on to bring to hostel other boys who are similarly placed. The warden summed up the impact of MVF intervention when he stated that wardens of other hostel are threatened and worried about the good work in his hostel; they point an accusing finger at him saying that you are doing all this good work to derive satisfaction but think of the fate of a person who will succeed you!

The institution of the hostel has been put into good use for the rehabilitation of bonded child labourers as well as older working children. In future as children directly join schools, there may not be the need to enroll a large number of students into hostels, but as of now this institution fulfills a critical purpose and has been put to effective use, its overall standard experiencing improvement due to MVF's supportive interventions.

EDUCATION POLICY

There is a distinct impact of MVF on the State government policies especially on the issue of the child workers and their schooling. Though a one-to-one relationship is difficult to establish from the limited interaction with the policy makers and bureaucracy it is possible to gauge the impact on policy making. It is admitted that the concept of child labour as a target of the Department of Education is the product of the work done by the MVF. The dictum "Child out of school is child labour" has gained acceptance by the State Government. "Back to School" program of MVF is said to have been replicated by the government.

The suggestion made by the MVF that the Non-Formal Education night school if attached to day – schools would deliver goods better is said to have been accepted by the Education Department. The concept of bridge courses and child camps organized by the MVF have been accepted by the government.

Further, as more children get into the education stream, a demand for education is generated putting pressure on the provision of educational facilities. Parents, panchayat members, local informal leaders including youth ask the bureaucrats and political leaders to provide more of such facilities.

Apart from the Education Department, the Social Welfare Department to a greater extent and the Departments of Labour and of Women and Child Development to a lesser extent are influenced by the work and philosophy of the MVF. The reforms undertaken of the hostel administration by the Social Welfare Department and the more rigorous drive by the Labour Department and by the Women and Child Department to focus on the working children and children suffering from malnutrition and disease have been in response to many issues highlighted by the MVF and by people's organizations.

Similarly one is aware of the fact that the experiences of MVF have influenced the Department of Education in the Human Resource Development Ministry and the Ministry of Labour of the Central Government. Due to its effectiveness and scale of impact, the work of MVF acts as a model and informs the policy initiatives and programmes of the government.

THE CIVIL SOCIETY

The Foundation works in partnership with the panchayats, NGO's and people's organizations like Yuvak Kendras. The work of these organizations gives indirect evidence of how the MVF has impacted upon them.

The local NGO's in Nalgonda district with the help of the MVF have initiated action to motivate and enroll the working children into the school. They are following the same methodology as does the MVF in their work. An example is the Yuva Shakthi Telugu Yojana Sangam at Pulmaddi which has taken up school development work in the village. The organization cleaned the surroundings of the school (which was evident to us), mobilized and motivated children and took them to MVF camps. As local workers, the members of the Sangam played an important role in convincing parents about the need for schooling the child. The organization donated to the school a mike set worth Rs.4000, saving the school, the Rs.700 by way of rent for hiring a mike set during school functions. They have an action plan of upgrading the school into a high school and development playground.

Wherever possible MVF works closely and links with small CBOs and NGOs in neighbouring areas linking them to existing institutions and government programmes operating in their area. It has also worked with the UNDP programme on poverty alleviation in Mahbubnagar, Kurnool, Anantapur districts where bridge course camps have been set up. There have also been occasions where many NGOs have visited MVF in the last couple of years. Whenever they require further inputs from MVF, it was given. Thus for example the Lok Jhumbesh from Rajasthan, CARE-U.P, PREM-Orissa, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board – Chennai, PRATHAM – Mumbai, CINI Asha – Kolkotta sought support from MVF from grounding their bridge courses, programmes and camps.

MVF also sees its programme of training as networking. National workshop for NGOs receiving support from UNDP, CIDA, UNICEF and DPEP (GOI) have sought to provide orientation and training on issues relating to child labour and education. As an outcome followup support has been sought by several NGOs which MVF continues to provide. It has participated in the National Alliance for the Right to Education and the Global March against Child Labour. In this sense, the work of the Foundation has had a ripple effect that has spread to neighbouring districts and other states.

MVF admits that its non-negotiables are perceived as fanaticism by some NGOs and the large scale of operation as unwieldy for replication. This results in some NGOs maintaining a distance from it or remaining indifferent about sharing experiences of their strategy.

It was also stated by the MVF that even if some of the NGOs are convinced about the efficacy of MVF's programme, they are not able to take it up because funding for such a strategy is not forthcoming from donor agencies.

The role of the panchayats in the process of putting the working child into school influenced by the MVF is illustrated by the case of Pulmaddi panchayat. In our discussion with the panchayat president, it was recalled how the MVF arrived in the village in 1996 to motivate the children to go to school. Due to lack of school facilities a large number of children dropped out after the V Class. Inspired by MVF, the panchayat raised the required voluntary contribution from people and also gave an undertaking to the government that they would not ask for accommodation and teachers if higher classes are sanctioned. The panchayat bought furniture, sports material and an almirah from the seed money of rs.25000 given by the MVF. It organized construction of three rooms under DPEP and two rooms under EAS. The MVF gave five voluntary teachers in 1996. Subsequently two Vidya Volunteers were deputed to Urdu and Telugu medium schools. The panchayat members and members of the youth organization convinced the parents of child workers and dropped out children about the need for putting the children back into school. They even met the employers and sought the release of bonded laborers. In 1996 the estimated number of child labourers was about 200 including three bonded child labourers. Today, this number has come down to 45 with practically no bonded child labourers. The panchayat also stopped the marriage of a 7 year old girl who is now said to be studying in the Class III. But from the inspiration from this organization, the panchayat president said, they would not have understood the gravity of the child labour problem. That speaks volumes for the foundation laid by M.V.F. at the grassroots to make child labour be seen as an avoidable evil rather than a compromise that has to be made with the harsh reality of life in India.

SECTION 7.0 : RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many learnings which can benefit all those who are active in the Child Labour front from the experiences of the M.V.Foundation. One such important learning pertains to the strategy that is adopted for solving the problem of child labour through voluntary universal elementary education. In contrast to the popular approach of trying to make elementary education compulsory, M.V.Foundation achieves the same objective by mobilising the local community and ensuring that all children go to school on a voluntary basis.

We all aware that the Government of India is actively considering one more amendment to the Constitution. This was numbered as the 83rd Amendment and a Bill had also been introduced. Now the Amendment has been numbered as the 93rd Amendment. The proposal contained therein is to introduce Art.21-A in order to give constitutional recognition to the judgment of the Supreme Court delivered in the Unnikrishnan's Case. There are two possible ways in which such an amendment can be worded. One alternative may put the burden of enrollment upon parents and consequently this would mean that if a child cannot go to school the parents could be penalized. The other approach would mean that it is the responsibility of the State to ensure that good school in working condition is established within the reach of every child in India. Such a school must have enough teachers, enough classrooms, minimal infrastructure and an enabling atmosphere which allows the child to move from one class to another. M.V.Foundation through its practical work in Ranga Reddy District has demonstrated that parents are willing to send their children to such an institution if education is really imparted.

Thus a very significant contribution of the M.V.Foundation experiment is that its model can be kept in mind while attempting to draft a skeletal central legislation to give effect to the newly proposed 93rd Amendment. Of course the question whether law alone can bring about such transformation is debatable, but the fact that a good enabling legal framework can be of great use if there is a social movement to press for the cause through community mobilization, is quite indisputable.

The local self government like Panchayats and the teachers have acquired a varied and rich experience on the issue of universalisation of education in a district notable earlier only for its backwardness. It is necessary therefore for these for a to be aware of and participate in national level debates on making education compulsory. Such involvement at the macro level would also stimulate the local agenda of showing that the model is replicable.

The extraordinary success of this programme is due to the fact that M.V.Foundation has become a social movement. It has been able to mobilize parents, teachers, children, youth women, members of the local self government and well wishers in order to make its programme a great success.

It points out that the community can still be mobilized to sustain and accelerate a programme of elementary education for all children in a given neighbourhood. MVF's work serves as a demonstrative example of how this can be done for those who are searching for viable strategies to tackle the problem of child labour.

Having spread elementary education; MVF is now proceeding to activate and in some cases set up nodal schools which absorb these children into good quality secondary education. The area of quality education and strengthening secondary schools education thus features as a priority area of work in the immediate future.

The gender awareness created in the programme due to the focus on the girl child has as its natural corollary an increase in the strength of the female staff. The Review Team found that the female volunteers and motivators are young and lack support system of experienced women staff who would guide them in the programme and offer emotional support. Currently the process is largely facilitated by men. This is specially critical as the young female staff and volunteers confront resistances and opposition as they move out of their homes into public and community life. The MVF has already initiated inputs in terms of legal aid that addresses the emerging needs. There is also a search for an elderly person as a woman warden in the camps.

With the emphasis on programmatic activities, the administration and financial systems of MVF have been neglected and will have to match the scale of operations. External inputs on streamlining these may be required.

MVF's Planning Monitoring and Implementation could greatly benefit from the use of Information Systems. The data from all field centres can be fed into a Community Information System (GIS) that is in the pipeline. A Financial Information System would be able to streamline operations especially in light of the distance between the Headquarters and the field bases. The Board could shape and strengthen.

MVF by expanding roles from the current legal and moral compliance orientation to a more proactive one for the future.

MVF anticipates the broad area of operation and applies for funds on project basis that may create an artificial factionalism within the programme. That MVF has established its competence, institutional funding is in order. This will allow flexibility in aligning the programmes to be more responsive to the people and create space for experimentation such as with a Science Centre.

MVF's impact of transferring a district teeming with child labour parallels some micro level success in other parts of the country. MVF however is marked by the spirit of *joie-de-vivre*, commitment to the task at hand at all levels. In future, analyzing what are these specific elements that feed and sustain the model would be an eye opener for others in the field of education.

The Team found that the MVF philosophy had filtered to all levels from the local self-government and school teachers to state level policy makers. The continuing role of MVF in advocating the learnings from the field to feed into macro policy of Government, multilateral and bilateral agencies is indeed required. Its support by way of training to build capacities of NGOs, state and local governments to adapt and implement the Foundation's methodology for universalisation of education and child labour elimination is most crucial. We would therefore strongly recommend that these learning from the M.V.Foundation must be popularized all over the country.