

**SOCIAL MOBILIZATION FOR GETTING
CHILDREN OUT OF WORK AND INTO SCHOOL:
IMPACT OF MV FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES***

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***Evaluation Report of UNDP/NORAD supported MV Foundation Project,
Nawabpet Mandal, Ranga Reddy District, Andhra Pradesh, India**

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Introduction

The MV Foundation's activities are based in Ranga Reddy (RR) district of Andhra Pradesh. The RR district has a population of 2.55 million with a sex ratio of 941¹. After Hyderabad, It is the most urbanized district in the state with 47 per cent of its population in urban areas in 1991². If we look at the human development indicators like infant mortality and female literacy, the levels are higher in RR district (rural+urban) as compared to the state level³. But in rural areas, RR district has poor indicators as compared to those of the state. For example, Rural female literacy in RR district was 18.1 per cent as compared to 23.9 per cent at the state level. The rural area in the RR district has all the characteristics of a typical semi-arid dry land farming area. Among the rural population of the district majority are engaged in primary activities and a small section of the population is engaged in occupations related to industry. Agriculture in the district is marked by backwardness due to poor irrigation facilities. Important crops grown in the district are vegetables, pulses, cotton, oilseeds etc. Cultivation of labour intensive crops like vegetables, cotton etc. is one of the important reasons for the high incidence of child labour in this area.

The MV Foundation has been supported since 1996 by UNDP/NORAD to bring children in the age-group 5-14 out of work and into school in 36 villages in Nawabpet mandal of RR district. The objective is to make this mandal child labour free. As a result of mid-term review it was also decided to provide additional funding for a girl child programme to cover all the mandals that MVF was working in as well as to support research and advocacy work.

The evaluation of the UNDP/NORAD supported MV Foundation project on social mobilization for bringing children out of work and into school in Nawabpet mandal in RR district was carried out between 20th and 28th of February, 2001. The evaluator looked at the interventions and impact of the programme in the last four years in the mandal. Apart from this, the impact of girl child programme and the research programme of MVF have been looked at.

¹ These numbers relate to 1991

² At the state level the percentage of urban population was only 26 per cent in 1991.

³ The infant mortality in RR district (rural+urban) was 56 per thousand as compared to 73 per thousand at the state level. Similarly, female literacy in RR district was 36.9 per cent as compared 32.7 per cent at the state level in 1991.

The terms of reference of the evaluation:

The objective of the evaluation of MV Foundation work is to undertake an impact assessment as well as review of project activities. Some of the Questions that need to be asked are as follows:

(a) Impact

- What kind of impact has the project had in the district and in the state?
- What are the major innovations made by the NGO which makes it a unique model?
- Has the project had any impact on DPEP?
- What kinds of advisory services is the NGO able to provide to the Government and other NGO partners?
- What are the lessons to be learnt from the experiences of the project?
- Is the project having a multiplier effect in the area? If not, what can be done to widen the impact?
- What are the policy implications of MVF's work?
- Are children being mainstreamed into the formal school system? How and what is the experience of these children in the formal schools?
- Is MVF able to influence the formal school system? If so, why? And if not why?
- What strategies are required to make impact on the formal school system?
- How are the MVF and the community able to ensure that children are not employed in the area?
- Are the para teachers satisfied with the training they get? If not, what kinds of training do they require to become more professional teachers?
- Have children been mainstreamed into the formal schools in the area?
- What is their experience and what, if any is the kind of assistance they require in order to cope with the formal school syllabus?
- Has the incidence of child labour decreased in the area?
- Is the education a solution to the problem of child labour? (please ask parents, teachers, children, school authorities, panchayat leaders and their views on this)
- Is there community contribution in the project? What is the extent of community contribution?
- What are the kinds of adjustments that parents make to allow the children to go to school?

(b) Girl Children

- ◆ To what extent has MVF been able to get girls out of work and into school?
- ◆ What are the kinds of constraints that are being faced and how are these being dealt with?
- ◆ Are the strategies being used for the girl child different for boys?

- ◆ Has there been radical increase in girls' enrolment and retention as a result of the MVF initiatives?
- ◆ What are the innovations being made in the girl child programme by MVF?

(c) Research : To look at the draft studies prepared by MVF particularly on methodology and results

The programme strategy and activities

The Nawabpet mandal activities has to be seen as part of the overall MVF framework and objectives of withdrawing children from work and mainstreaming them into the formal education system. Several of the strategies adopted in Nawabpet Mandal have already been tried and tested in other areas particularly in the neighboring Shankarapalli mandal. Thus Nawabpet has had the advantage of learning from the experience of other areas in bringing children out of work and into the formal school.

Objectives of the programme

1. To remove all children in 5-14 years age group from work and send them to formal schools.
2. To design bridge courses in Govt. schools for newly enrolled
3. To retain children in the school system
4. To strengthen Govt. schools through community support and participation.

These objectives are to be fulfilled through social mobilization. The philosophy of MVF involves: consensus building, negotiating resistance, creating demand, community ownership, strengthening existing structures and institutions, taking an inclusive approach, decentralized management, facilitating change (Wazir, 2000a). The activities for getting children to school include mobilization, residential camps, motivation centres, formation of local pressure groups, involvement of BKVV (the Teachers Forum against child labour). Once the children are in school, the more difficult job is to retain them in the school. The strategies include strengthening schools, summer courses, re-enrolment drives, follow up programmes in hostels, satellite and nodal schools programme, involving the BKVV.

MVF strategies are flexible and can change depending on the situation. The most effective strategy to create an atmosphere for enabling children to withdraw from work has been the Street Theatre. The focus of the theatre was on the issue of girl children and bonded labour. Later the focus was more on retaining the children in the school. Youth activists in the villages are crucial for enrolment and retaining children in the school. In recent years, they are also concentrating on child marriages. The MVF has many dedicated people in their organisation. For example, Ananthalakshmi at Nawabpet field office is one of them. There are also many dedicated youth activists in the villages.

Relying mainly on community initiatives, the MVF programme aims at motivating parents and children to utilize the formal school as a medium for child's advancement. The strategies are discussed with great enthusiasm among activists and generally there is no one technique, which is sacrosanct or superior to others. Not only have strategies evolved from experience, issues too have emerged from the demand of the people.

Recently, MV Foundation has started delegating responsibility in these villages to local groups ranging from youth volunteers, SECs, BKVV teachers, education volunteers, panchayats and women's group. In Nawabpet 10 villages were identified where non-MVF groups would become the main institutions to take up the responsibility of eliminating child labour and development of the school. These 10 villages are given to different groups: 3 for gram panchayats, one for youth activists, 2 for BKVV teachers, one for DWCRA women, 3 for SECs.

The local committees linked to MVF are SECs, DWCRA group, Gram Panchayat. Committees formed in the project to support the programme are youth committees, Mother's committees in 10 villages, School Development Committees⁴ in 9 to 10 villages, School girl committees around 15 in 9 villages. At the mandal level they have BKVV and Task Force for protection of girl child rights.

Impact of the Project

Let us first look at the quantitative impact of the project. The main objective of the project is to bring the non-school going children (child labourers) to formal schools. The numbers in Table 1 shows that the number of non-school going children declined from 1741 in 1996 to 340 in 2000. In one year between 1996 and 1997, 1237 non-school going children became school going children.. However, the numbers in 1996 are not strictly comparable to the numbers in subsequent years as the 1996 survey was done by the Government. Therefore, based on strictly comparable figures one can say that the number of non-school going children has declined from 504 in 1997 to 340 in 2000. In other words, 164 children were withdrawn from child labour and brought to school during 1997 to 2000. Majorities of these children were girls. This itself is an achievement. The remaining problem relates to the older children in the age group 9-14 particularly among girls. As a result, still we have 340 non-school going children in Nawabpet Mandal in 2000.

Another achievement of MVF is the retention of school children. As shown in Table 1, the retention rates have been increasing since 1996 and it reached 96.4 per cent in 2000. In 30 villages, 95-99% of all children in the age group are

⁴ The members of the school development committee are: (a) All members of SECs; (b) Former members of SECs who have contributed to the school and capacities to act as experts and (c) members who are educated from the villages.

in schools and in 6 villages, 90-94% of all children are in schools. The number of children upgraded to higher classes are also impressive (Table 1). In recent years, the number of child marriages that were stopped in Nawabpet Mandal has been increasing (from 6 in 1999 to 27 in 2000).

Table 1. Details of Children in Nawabpet Mandal: 1996 to 2000

Details	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
<u>Total Children</u>					
Boys	4103	4299	4780	4754	4901
Girls	2959	3912	4247	4562	4459
Total	7062	8216	9027	9326	9360
<u>No. of School going</u>					
Boys	3368	4123	4613	4559	4759
Girls	1953	3589	3990	4299	4261
Total	5321	7712	8603	8858	9020
<u>No. of Non-school going</u>					
Boys	735	176	167	195	142
Girls	1006	328	257	273	198
Total	1741	504	424	468	340
Percentage Retention	75.3	93.8	95.3	94.9	96.4
No. of children upgraded to higher classes	---	---	1825	1395	1644
<u>Motivation Centres for Girls</u>					
Enrolled	294	180	213	92	72
Mainstreamed	198	110	146	57	NA
No. of child marriages stopped	--	--	--	6	27

Note: the 1996 data was based on government survey. Subsequent surveys were conducted by MV Foundation. The increase in the number of children in 5-14 years age group indicates the greater access the youth have to the households and the children in the collection of data.

Source: MV Foundation

The biggest success has been on the issue of bonded labour. The Nawabpet mandal is almost bonded labour free now. The number of bonded labourers in the Mandal declined from 70 in 1995-96 to one in 2000-01 (Table 2). The present evaluator was witness to release of one bonded child labourer in Feb 2001. It was a case of landlord himself bringing the bonded child labourer to the MV Foundation office in Nawabpet Mandal. The landlord is also concerned about the welfare of the child and wanted him to join the formal school.

It is interesting to note that the community contribution is quite substantial in the mandal although it started declining since 1998-99. One of the important source of the contribution is Rs.5 for every ration card holder. These funds are used for different purposes. It is also worth noting that the number of MVF teachers in the mandal are equal to those of the Government teachers (Table 2).

Although there has not been much increase in the number of schools, the number of class rooms has increased from 82 in 1995-96 to 158 in 2000-01. The additional class rooms during this period were created under DPEP (40), JRY-JB (22), and by the community (14).

Table 2. Details on Bonded Labour, Schools and Teachers Nawabpet Mandal

Details	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001
No.of Bonded Labour	70	52	22	18	15	1
Community contri. to schools (Rs.)	---	170,010	185,400	91,200	68,700	15,610
No.of Govt. teachers	95	95	98	111	110	135
No.of MVF teachers	99	99	99	99	99	99
No.of community teachers	0	0	0	7	3	13
Class rooms	82	--	--	--	--	158
No.of Bridge Courses	2	2	2	2	2	
No.of Schools PS	27	26	26	25	25	
No.of Schools CPS	5	5	6	7	7	
No.of Schools ZPHS	4	4	5	5	6	

Source: MV Foundation

Changing the mindset and Unique Model

Perhaps more impressive than the quantitative achievement is the role of MVF in changing the mindset on child labour at village, state and even at national level. The following 'non-negotiables' of MVF are important and had some impact on the community and policy makers.

1. All children must attend full-time formal day schools
2. Any child out of school is a child labour
3. All work/labour is hazardous and harms the overall growth of the child.
4. There must be total abolition of child labour. Laws regulating child labour are unacceptable.
5. Any justification perpetuating the existence of child labour must be condemned.

It is a unique model in several respects. The MV Foundation believes creation of awareness and demand for education among the poor instead of waiting for the eradication of poverty. **MVF has countered the 'poverty argument' for existence of child labour and has demonstrated that poor parents send their children to school where it is possible for them to do so.** Such is the success of the MVF programme that whereas earlier parents had to

be motivated and persuaded to send children to school today parents come to the camps and entrust their children to the volunteers.

Bridge courses, residential camps are also unique model of MVF. Another uniqueness is the development of various institutions at the village level to take care of the child labour and education problems.

Impact at district and state level

The project of MVF has significant impact in Rangareddy district. The programme has expanded to over 500 villages covering more than half of RR district. In 400 of these villages every child in the 5-11 age group is in school. The MV Foundation can count on the support of 8,000 youth volunteer, 1600 education activities, 1500 govt. school teachers, 500 women's groups, and costless elected representatives and members of school education committees who actively involved in its activities. Nearly 1,50,000 children have been enrolled and retained in schools, more than 4000 bonded labourers have been released, and 168 villages are now child labour free.

Back to school programme and DPEP: MVF project has resulted in some significant changes in the pattern of thinking both at the government and the NGO level. In the first place it has brought about a realization at the state level that there is a wide gap between the expectation of the parents and the availability of educational infrastructure in particular teachers. It has also drawn attention to the fact that there is nothing inevitable about the existence of child labour in rural areas and that it is largely a problem of poor management and motivation. To this extent the MV Foundation model has been successful in influencing bureaucracy and politicians and resulted in changes in Andhra Pradesh Government's programmes and policies which are given below.

- (a) MVF model of bridge courses was adopted by the Dept. of social welfare in the 'Back to School' programme in the entire state of Andhra Pradesh. 3,00,000 children have been reached through this scheme. The Social Welfare department officials were trained by MVF to implement the programme.
- (b) DPEP has taken a cue from MVF model and has been reorienting all the Non-formal education instructors in the state of A.P. to focus their work towards motivating children to join formal schools. The DPEP has taken up the programme of elimination of child labour through education on a pilot basis in 15 districts.
- (c) The MVF has been identified as a training and resource centre to take up all the above activities.
- (d) The Andhra Pradesh government has accepted the residential bridge course as an effective strategy for preparing drop outs, and out of school and working children for the class appropriate to their age.
- (e) The Department of Women and Child Welfare has adopted the residential camp as a strategy for preparing illiterate adolescent girls for school.

- (f) The *Bala Jyoti* programme - a state level initiative of the National Child Labour programme - has replicated the MVF programme. Initiated in 1995, this programme aims to eliminate child labour in Hyderabad city and enroll children in schools.
- (g) DPIP: The A.P. Government has started District Poverty Initiatives Project (DPIP) or *Velugu* in six most backward districts (Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram, Chittoor, Ananthapur, Adilabad and Mahboobnagar) in the state. Under this project, the focus of the educational support through the 'bridge' school course would be on girls from the pool of child labourers/school drop-outs in the project districts who at present are neglected. Residential schools for girls will also be established. In the second phase of DPIP, the programme girls is proposed to be implemented in 14 more districts in the state.
- (h) The state Government has relaxed its admissions deadlines and children can be enrolled in schools the whole year round. Children can now enter the system as and when they are ready rather than on a prescribed date, thus gaining valuable time.

In addition to giving training to the programmes run by the government and NGOs in A.P., the MVF has been extending training support to major projects such as the Lok Jumbish in Rajasthan, People's Rural Education Movement (PREM) at Berhampur, Orissa, Jeevika in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board in Madras, the DPEP programmes in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, Cini Asha from West Bengal and so on. Recently, there was also a request for MVF volunteers from Gujarat after the earthquake.

One problem with widening of the MVF model to state level by the Government of A.P. is that it tends to bureaucratize the programme without flexibility. It is also possible that bureaucracy may be interested in reaching the targets without spending time in social mobilization. These problems have to be avoided while replicating the model at state level.

Impact on Formal Schools

The MVF has worked to strengthen the existing formal school system, which, it believes, can work as an instrument of social change. A variety of strategies are adopted to bring the children to schools and strengthen the school system. Volunteers mobilize the community to ensure regularity of the teacher, sometimes appointing para teachers paid by the village and MVF to make teaching more effective. One of the MVF's commissioned study shows that the teacher pupil ratio with Government teachers in Mahboobnagar district (49.5) is far better than that of Ranga Reddy district (76.5). But, if we compare all teachers, the teacher pupil ratio is more or less same in both the districts. MVF and community contribution in providing para teachers in schools of Ranga Reddy district brought teacher pupil ratio to the 38.7 which is near to the Mahboobnagar's over all teacher pupil ratio of 37. In Nawabpet Mandal alone there are 99 MVF teachers in the formal school.

MVF succeeded in mobilizing the community regarding the importance of formal school system. Now the village community wants accountability from the teachers in the formal schools. The SEC is strengthened and made more accountable to the community and village panchayat. SECs are encouraged to collectively define the needs of the school and raise the funds. More recently, the MVF has started providing seed monies to the better established SECs to leverage funds from other sources for improving the quality of their schools. These amounts range between Rs.5,000 to Rs.50,000 and have enabled the SECs to generate matching resources in cash and kind far exceeding the initial amount. The MVF also organised more structural course to be held during the summer holidays. Satellite and nodal schools is also being developed for easing the transition from primary to high schools. The MVF also works closely with BKVV by providing it with technical support and nominal financial assistance to facilitate meetings, training workshops and field activities. The presence of BKVV teacher in a school makes the interface with the educational bureaucracy a smooth and productive.

The MVF has been able to withdraw majority of the children in the 5-14 age group from work. The backlog of the hardcore child labourers in the 9-14 age group is also about to be cleared.

In order to improve the enrolment and retention of children, there is a need to strengthen the following three aspects: (a) quality of the formal schools is a problem ; (b) there is a growing demand for bridge course camps particularly from older girls and (c) required support to girls in social welfare hostels.

The evaluator came to know that in Ekamamidi village school, around 20 per cent of the children dropout in the afternoon to watch TV. Of course one can ask a counter question why 80 per cent are retained. The quality and training of para teachers have to be improved. It is easy for the government to delegate responsibility to para teachers as they are cost effective. Sometimes MVF's presence is also making Govt. complacent about its responsibilities. If there are problems, village community is looking towards MVF rather than to the Govt. Recent decision of MVF delegating responsibility to non-MVF groups is in the right direction.

Is Education solution to the problem of child labour?

The evaluator's discussions with parents, teachers, children, panchayat leaders and other groups in the villages feel that education is the solution for eradicating child labour. In fact, none of the groups gave the 'poverty argument' for the prevalence of child labour. Non-economic factors seemed to be more important than economic factors. Some officials, however, mentioned that income generation programmes have to be encouraged simultaneously to eradicate child labour for sustainable enrolment and retention. However, MVF can not be faulted for not promoting income generation activities. The MVF should concentrate on two objectives: (a) withdrawing children from work and

putting them into school and (b) strengthening and improving the quality of formal schooling system.

Community Contribution

A sense of community participation and even ownership of schools has emerged from the practice of every villager contributing towards the payment for para teachers or construction of school building or purchase of equipment. The amount may be small, even Rs.5 per family but, a poor woman explained this gave her the right to ask why the teacher had not come to the school. Any group could finance the teacher, be it the youth club, the gram panchayat or even through a cess on toddy dealer. If the village community supported two teachers, MVF would pay for another two. In many instances, the village community raised money to refurbish or even construct a school building where there was none and the formation of school education committees. In Nawabpet Mandal alone, the community contribution was more than Rs. 1 lakh in some years. Of course, the contributions in terms of social mobilization of youth activists and other groups are invaluable.

Adjustment of Parents

The evaluator spoke to the mothers of children who were withdrawn from child labour at Getuvanampally village. All mothers indicated that they had adjusted easily after their children joined the schools. Some parents are working more and some have sold their assets like goats. None of them complained and they are proud about the children joining the schools. MVF research studies also reveal the adjustments of parents after the removal of rural children from work. As shown in the survey done by Shanta Sinha, both the parents have taken more work. While the burden of domestic work on the mother has increased, the father too has shared this work in several instances. In many families the father started telling that they were busy now, has no leisure for gossip, meet friends and squander money. The parents do feel the weight of work that has fallen on them without their children around, but are prepared to carry it ungrudgingly.

Impact of Girl Child Programme

The girl child programme was introduced in 1998 in order to make an additional effort for recruiting and retaining girl children in the formal school system. The main objective of the Girl Child Programme is to build a social and cultural environment in support of girl children's road to education. The Foundation has multiple strategies for this purpose.

There is no parallel independent structure for girl child. MVF does not believe that one needs separate structures to deal with the issues relating to girl child. The strategies involve focusing in depth with the existing programme of the MVF. The Girl Child Programme is under a constant process of review and evaluation and is still unfolding and evolving.

The MVF has recruited and trained 150 girl child activists consisting of 25 mahila organisers and 27 motivators working full time exclusively on the girl child issue. Apart from this, the programme also involves 55 female education volunteers working in schools and 43 female education volunteers working in motivation centres. Special care is taken to involve youth groups, women's groups, SECs, the village panchayat, and Govt. officials as part of the advocacy drive for the rights of the girl child.

Motivation centres are set up to cater to those adolescent girls with whom the initial campaign does not succeed. Apart from simple literacy, singing and play, the girls are also exposed to discussions on issues like child labour, the girl child right's to education and the consequences of early marriages. In the year 1999 a total of 90 motivation centres were conducted. A number of 1596 adolescent girls have been reached through these centres of whom 282 girls have joined the mainstream schools, 247 girls are in the camps and 276 girls have either dropped out or have got married and left the centre.

Short term camps lasting one to three days are organised to withdraw girls in the age group 9-14 from work and prepare them for eventual enrolment in the longer-term residential camps. Exposure visits to residential camps are arranged for the girls and their mothers so that they can see at first hand that it is possible to withdraw children from work and give them care, security and education in the camps.

It has been the understanding of the MVF that all efforts towards mobilization of the community and the involvement of stakeholders must result in building sustainable processes and also in setting up of local institutions and forums, which would meet regularly to review the programme.

(a) *Girl Child Rights Protection Committees* have been set up at the village and mandal level. Their aim is to provide institutional support to girls who have been withdrawn from work, those who are already in schools and also those early marriage has been avoided.

(b) *Mother's committees* were formed from a cross section of women whose daughters attend schools or residential camps and members of the DW CRA. These mothers meet regularly and follow up dropouts, monitor the motivation centres and bring information on child marriages.

(c) In order to provide support to the girls in the schools, *School Girl Committees* have been formed in every school under the aegis of the SEC to be convened by the school head master.

(d) *Girl Youth Committees* consisting of girls in class 10 and above have also been established in some villages.

When it comes to girl's education, parents and others find several excuses for not sending the girls to school. There has been some opposition to older girls joining high schools in the neighbouring villages. Distance from the village becomes a common excuse and parents fear sexual abuse if children have to leave their village to go to another village for schooling. On the other hand, the same parents send them out to work on cotton fields, to fetch fuel and water which often requires them to go beyond the village boundaries. However, MVF

has been able to persuade parents, the school education committee and gram panchayat to find solutions to the problem. The solutions include: securing bus passes for the girls, helping girls to walk in-groups to reach the school in the next village, admitting girls into hostels, upgrading primary schools to upper primary schools.

One of the beneficial effects of persuading the community to get the girls to schools is that child marriage problem is being tackled. Child marriage is a more complex issue than child labour as it is a question of cultural practices. All excuses are given for conducting child marriages. MVF organisers and volunteers keep close track of parental plans to marry off their under-age daughters. When persuasion fails, activists have to recourse to police and legal action against the parents. In the year 2000, the child rights protection youth committees (CRPYC) concentrated its activities in building an atmosphere against child marriages through rallies, public meetings, distribution of pamphlets, displaying posters and so on. They took up specific cases and about 27 marriages could be stopped in Nawabpet Mandal with the help of MRO and VAOs (village assistance officers). The girls were either sent to the local schools or the bridge course camps. For the first time, a public debate on the issue of girls being married was held.

The discussions with various groups in the villages, officials and MVF revealed that girls had remained a difficult-to-reach group for various reasons. Getting girls out-of-work and into school (particularly the older girls) is not an easy task and requires strategies at various levels. The MVF should continue their efforts on girl children in bringing them out of work and into school. Three areas needed improvement to achieve this purpose. **These three are: (a) probably more bridge course camps are needed to release older girl children from their work burden and join them in schools; (b) intense follow up of children especially girls studying in social welfare hostels and in schools involving the community and village level institutions and (c) improvement in the quality of schools.**

It is not clear whether girls work burden at home has declined after joining the school. Also, some girls (in the Aluru camp) even think that mothers should take care of their burden when they join schools. MVF may have to look at these gender aspects.

Research Studies

The evaluator has seen the drafts of the following six studies done/commissioned by the MV Foundation.

(1) The Impact of Removal of Rural Child Labour from Work through Formal Education by Shantha Sinha

For the purposes of the study, all the children who joined the camps organised by the MVF during 1991-93 were chosen as a sample. There were thus 491 children of whom 315 were boys and 176 were girls. The data was

collected by youth activists who had prior knowledge of the families, and their background. The study clearly brings out that both parents have taken more work due to removal of girls from work.

Comments on the study are as follows: The policy implication is that parents have coping mechanisms when the children withdraw from work. The sample is basically on the girls from Social welfare hostels. The author should have taken some girls who are in the school but staying at home. In this case, it is possible that the girls may be still sharing the burden of work at home. Secondly, it is not clear whether youth activists are trained properly to collect the field data. Some skills are needed to collect the data.

2. Girl child bonded labour in cotton seed fields : A study of two villages in Rangareddy District of Andhra Pradesh by Davuluri Venkateswarlu

This study examined various aspects regarding cottonseed cultivation, working conditions of girl children in cottonseed fields, the reasons behind employing only girls in the cottonseed production, the impact of this work on the duration of the children, role of the children's earnings in family income etc.

The study is interesting. Although children's contribution in the family is quite substantial, the children work more than the parents with less wages. The methodology of collection of data is not clearly given. It is also not clear whether parents are doing multiple jobs i.e. in addition to working on cotton fields. The author also mentions that wages of adults would increase with the withdrawal of child work. Is there any evidence on this?

(3) Profile of School Going and Non-school going children and their families: A Study of Mominpet Mandal . Study done by Research and Development Society and commissioned by MV Foundation

This study was carried out with the objectives of knowing socio-economic and demographic differences between the households of school going and non-school going children. And, to identify the various factors and their role which are contributing to the child labour problem. The field work of the study was undertaken in the month of March, 1997. The sample consists of 219 households belonging to scheduled caste community in Mominpet mandal (which has no presence of MV Foundation) of which 79 households where children are in work and 138 households where children go to schools.

The method of collecting information is by means of interview using a structured questionnaire and observations. The earlier notion that poverty is main cause for deprivation or discontinuation of education is found to be incorrect. The study found that other factors like disinterest, distrust on education system, no parental morality, lack of necessary environment and motivation etc., are important reasons behind the deprivation or discontinuation of education and enormous number of child labour in this area. For economic factors, the study examines the economic background of the households for school going and

non-school going children. There is no significant difference between the two types of households. However, one has to examine the incomes from the occupations/assets for these two groups.

4. Impact of Girl's Enrollment on Work Sharing and Distribution Pattern in Families. Study done by Research and Development Society and commissioned by MV Foundation.

Out of nearly 1000 eligible hostel/camp/local school enrolled girls in the age group of 8-15 years , 225 were contacted during the study. The respondents for the purpose of interview were either of the parents or any other elder member of the family. In many cases, girl child was also informally interviewed to elicit the additional information. The study was conducted in 109 villages in 14 mandals of Ranga Reddy district during December 1999 and January 2000.

The study finds that parents are making several adjustments. Some of them are: parents are waking up early in the morning to complete household chores; women demanding their spouses for assistance in household chores; working more days in a month on daily wages; reduced expenditure on unnecessary rituals; some of the parents shifted to more income generating occupations; preferring agricultural work on contract basis to daily wage basis. As study admits, it is mainly exploratory in nature. The study would have greater validity if sample size is large.

5. A Study on enrolment and retention pattern: A Comparative Study of Rangareddy and Mahboobnagar Districts. Study done by Research and Development Society and commissioned by MV Foundation

The study was done in sixteen Mandals of Ranga Reddy and Mahboobnagar. A simple schedule was prepared to get the information regarding infrastructure and other facilities, community participation etc. and to record the data from attendance registers for past five years. General observations of the investigators were recorded to get the additional inputs for the study.

The study observed that the retention percentage in first series, which includes the first class is very poor. Inflation of enrolment figures in 1st class is an important reason behind such a poor retention ratio in the first series. The retention percentage in 6th and 7th classes is higher when compared with the 5th class because the strengths in 6th and 7th classes in upper primary schools include the children coming from primary schools in nearby villages. The study is basically descriptive with presentation of tables rather than analysis.

6. M. Venkatarangaiya Foundation - Education as Empowerment : A Field Report by Sucheta Mahajan

As the title suggests this study is a field report by the author. The author met various groups in villages and officials during 18th to 27th March, 2000. This is a useful study on the philosophy and achievements of MVF.

General observation on the research studies: The sample size is generally small for the studies. Methodologies are not clearly written for some studies. The studies done by Research and Development Services are more like tables with notes rather than analytical analysis. As most of these are in the draft stage, hopefully they will improve in the revised drafts.

Lessons and Policy Implications

- The MV Foundation has succeeded in changing the mindset regarding child labour and education at village, state and even to some extent at the national level.
- It is a unique model in several respects. Bridge courses and camps and social mobilization of the community on child labour and education are some of the examples for this uniqueness.
- One policy implication is that we have to go beyond poverty argument in examining the factors responsible for the prevalence of child labour.
- The concept of considering non-school going children as child labour has significant policy implications.
- One significant lesson is that one has to work with existing institutions like formal schools rather creating parallel institutions.
- One of the important policy implication for widening MVF model is that social mobilization is important and mere creation of bridge and residential schools will not solve the problem of child labour.
- Another lesson is that one has to face several challenges in bringing the older children (9-14 age group) particularly girls to schools.
- Also it is important to withdraw from the villages when the village institutions are strengthened. The MV Foundation has started delegating responsibility in these villages to local groups ranging from youth volunteers, SECs, BKVV teachers, education volunteers, gram panchayats and women's groups.

Recommendations

- ◆ School Management and quality: The MVF has been able to withdraw majority of the children in the 5-14 age group from work. Now there is a need to strengthen **school management** and **quality** through community involvement. It is important for sustainability of the programme.
- ◆ Conditions in the hostels and schools have to be improved. There is a need for Upgradation of class rooms. Sports in the schools have to be introduced in order to reduce boredom.

- ◆ Some problems in the schools may have to be tackled. Problem of dropping out in the afternoons to watch TV in some schools is one of them. In one high school more than 250 children are enrolled but, just 50% of the children are attending regularly. The main reason behind such high enrolment is free ration rice scheme for school going children
- ◆ Conducting more bridge camps to release all children from burden and join them in schools, especially girls.
- ◆ Follow up of girls studying in social welfare hostels and in schools involving the community and village institutions.
- ◆ Girl children : work load of children at home has to be examined.
- ◆ Research : Methodology has to be written clearly. More analytical work should be there rather than giving tables with notes as provided in some studies. Also some research has to move from child labour to quality of education.
- ◆ Training of para teachers and local level institutions is important.
- ◆ MVF's presence making the official machinery complacent. The local community may have to be sensitized.
- ◆ Income generation activities is not the work of MVF. They should concentrate on child labour and education. However, if the opportunity is there community can be sensitized about the opportunities . Some issues like malnutrition are important.
- ◆ The MV Foundation has developed a powerful model with enormous possibilities for replication in the state, the rest of India and in the other developing countries. But before it can do this, it has to disseminate its philosophy and achievements more widely to change the intellectual biases and mindsets.

Evaluation Schedule

- 20.2.2001 Discussions with Dr. Santha Sinha and Mr. Venkat Reddy, MV Foundation
Field visit: Visited Bridge Schools. Spoke to Boys and girl and teachers in the schools. Discussions with BKVV teachers on child labour and education.
 Discussions with field officers of the Nawab Pet Mandal team in Nawabpet Mandal office
- 21.2.2001 Spoke to Ms.Lata Menon, UNICEF; Mr. B.N. Yugandhar, Vice Chairman, Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty, Mr. Vijay Kumar, DPIP
- 25.2.2001 Spoke to Mr. Nagarjuna, DPEP co-ordinator. Meeting at head office at MV Foundation with Dr. Shanta Sinha and Mr. Venkat Reddy and Dr. Davuri Venkateswarulu
- 26.2.2001 Field visit: Visited village Ekamamidi and Nawabpet town. Discussions with para teachers, youth activists, school education committees, formal school teachers, Panchayat leaders, Mandal Revenue Office, Mandal Development Officer, parents.
- 27.2.2001 Field visit: Visited training centre in Chevalla; Visited village Getuvanampalli. Went to the village houses and had long discussions with parents (particularly mothers). Also spoke to primary school teachers
- 28.2.2001 Spoke to Mr. Jawahar Reddy, Collector, Srikakulam; Mr. Vijay Mahajan, BASIX;

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