



Kerala's Real Story in Ensuring Child Rights

The Kerala Network of CRC Change Agents

INDIA POLITICAL



Kerala's Real Story in Ensuring Child Rights

**Documentation of the work done by the
Kerala Network of CRC Change Agents**

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Foreword

The book you are holding in your hands right now is unique in many ways. What is done by the participants, the Change Agents, almost all over Kerala has no real equivalence. There are other participating countries in Africa, Latin-America and Asia doing an excellent change work in CRC but all these countries are different in background and contexts. Kerala is Kerala and that is unique. This Kerala CRC Network is filled with a lot of dedicated Change Agents, and they have been so for many years. Now these Change Agents are telling their own story of their meeting with CRC and what they have achieved in a few years. That is indeed a good and important story to be told to others.

India had its first team in batch 3 (2005) in the international training programme “Child Rights, Classroom and School Management” on CRC (Convention of the Rights of the Child) funded by the Swedish Government through Sida and run by Lund University. 2005 was a starting point for many new things to start happening in Child Rights in Kerala. There has been a good educational foundation in Kerala since a long time.

Mathew Zacharias was the first Change Agent from Kerala and Wayanad. The next team was in batch 4 involving Mohandas as a Change Agent, also from Wayanad district in Kerala.

Then the “snowball” has been rolling very fast in many parts of Kerala. The first district was as mentioned Wayanad, then we had Malappuram and Kozhikode (Calicut) districts. As times went by we met Change Agents from Kasaragod, Kannur, Malappuram again, Thrissur and so on. Today Kerala has participants – or Change Agents for CRC, UN Child Rights Convention – from most of the districts in Kerala. DIET people, principals/headmasters, teachers and now educational officials at the state level in Trivandrum, the capital of Kerala.

So far India – including Kerala – has had 11 teams and 33 Change Agents in batches 1 to 18. The Change Agents from India had the following positions and bases for their Change Projects:

Level	Position of Change Agents in Batch 1-18	Change Projects in Batch 1-18	Position of Change Agents in Batch 8-14	Change Projects in Batch 8-14	Comments
National	2	0	0	0	
Region/Province/District	20	5	6	0	Teacher Training
Local	11	5	9	5	

Table 1. Change Agents' professional position and the team's Change Projects on three socio-administrative levels in India: National level, Region/Province/District level, and Local level.

The Child Rights Programme is focusing Kerala, one of the 28 states in India, in the southwest part of the country. Kerala has so far got 9 separate teams and 29 Change Agents in this training programme. The implementation of CRC in education, learning and teaching has been dominated by participants – or Change Agents – from local schools (principals/headmasters) and teacher trainers at the district level (at DIET).

The change projects are often directed towards participation in decision making processes by students in primary schools but also lately in secondary and higher secondary schools in Kerala.

The CRC network in Kerala has been very active and in work for many years. The Change Agents are always ready to help, strengthen and support each other in their work especially when there are new teams in the training programme in Sweden.

The state coordinator is Mohandas who now is the Principal of DIET Wayanad which is the first and oldest DIET in India started in 1989. There is a tradition of teacher training in Wayanad and in Kerala. Other co-ordinators in the different districts have been Indira followed by Ibrahimkutty (Malappuram), George Joseph (first in Kasaragod and later in Calicut), and as mentioned Mathew Zacharias was the very first initiator in this network in Wayanad and Kerala. They have all been Change Agents in a real sense from the beginning and have been continuing their dedicated and professional work on CRC many years after the training programme ended. There are today 29 Change Agents in Kerala if you just count the names in the training programme. But in fact they are many more who are really active in CRC Change Work in Kerala.

Kerala's Real Story in Ensuring Child Rights

Read the book carefully and enjoy the work on CRC that has been done so far by the Change Agents. That is in fact a real role model to India. Excellently done, CRC Change Agents in Kerala.

The book is as the title promises: "Kerala's Real Story in Ensuring Child Rights". Children In Kerala are the Future!

Per Wickenberg,

*Mentor for Kerala and professor in Sociology of Law,
Lund University, Sweden*

Preface

Children all over the world should be thankful to Sweden for improving their lot because it was there that the modern concept of Child Rights found its first forceful expression. The book 'The Century of the Child' published in 1903 by Ellen Key, a Swedish feminist, was widely read and discussed. The book led to a change in the image of the child. It definitely influenced the convention adopted by the international Labour Organization in 1919 which set a minimum age for employing children in industry and the subsequent Geneva Declaration (1924) by the League of Nations, the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959) and finally the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is a legally binding international instrument for all the member countries that have ratified it. It is to the credit of Sweden that in addition to being a forerunner in ensuring Child Rights, it has come forward to support other nations also in implementing the CRC. The country does this by promoting international co-operation aimed at the fulfillment of children's rights.

The Swedish Bill, 'A shared Responsibility: Sweden's Policy for Global Development' passed in 2003 states that the guiding principle of the policy for global development is a Rights perspective based on international human rights conventions. Referring to children, the Bill states that the policy should be based on CRC and that children should be regarded as capable and active persons holding civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. On the basis of Sweden's commitment to international development co-operation, the country makes use of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). SIDA offers about 80 Advanced International Training Programmes of strategic importance to the social and economic development of the

participants' countries.

The international Training Programme on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management is one of the courses sponsored by SIDA for participants from the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin-America. It is conducted by Lund University Commissioned Education at Lund, Sweden. The programme began in 2003. The ultimate aim is to empower children so that they can identify and claim their rights. This is sought to be achieved through training teachers, educational administrators and policy makers. The participants are expected to initiate processes of change in their home countries and to participate in reform processes of strategic importance at different levels. The programme also aims at capacity building with a view to strengthening their institutions. The participants can compare and share experiences with persons from other countries in the area of Child Rights. The training is participatory, rights based, learner friendly and gender – sensitive. It also tries to familiarize participants with Swedish and other international practices at school and classroom levels in relation with democratic principles and human rights. The focus is on *change*. The training encourages participants to initiate and take forward change processes in their organizations and countries.

The school visits that are a part of the training programme offers and opportunity for theory to meet practice. The participants get a chance to watch the hosting principals, teachers and students engaged in different activities. They watch regular lessons and school councils. they also have informal meetings with students, teachers and parents.

The participants develop proposals for a 'project for change' under the guidance of their mentors and implement them in their countries after they go back.

A follow-up seminar in another country is an essential part of the training. In this part of the training, the change agents get a chance to share their experiences in implementing the projects in different circumstances. They also get a chance to visit the institutions of former participants who have gone forward in the implementation of the project for change. Mentors visit the institutions of the participants, encouraging them and assessing their work. When all the requirements are fulfilled, Lund University awards an International Diploma in Child Rights, Classroom and School Management to the participants.

Twenty nine *Change Agents* from Kerala, a state at the south-western tip of India were lucky enough to participate in the International Training Programme on Child Rights

at Lund. These people have been showing remarkable cohesion and team – spirit and are still working in unison for the successful implementation of CRC in the state of Kerala. This book tries to document their work and to analyze the secret behind the success of Kerala in the field of Child Rights.

This preface will not be complete without a mention of our mentor, Prof. Per Wickenberg. The Change Agents of Kerala learned the true meaning of the word ‘mentor’ by watching him in action. His role has been crucial in creating such a strong CRC network in Kerala. He has been guiding and mentoring us in an inimitable way all along. He helped up shape our projects and ensured their effective implementation through timely interventions and periodic visits. He is available to us online 365 days in a year. Due to his personal charm, warmth in interpersonal relationships, dedication to the cause of Child Rights, the quality of the classes he gives, and the coverage he receives in the media, he is well known throughout Kerala. He is a family friend to all the Change Agents in the state. Whenever he visits schools, children interact with him freely as if a dear uncle has come to visit them. The idea of the present book also came from him and he has been giving the editorial team useful inputs regularly. Per, we do not know what we would have done without you.

- George Joseph

Chapter-1

The Status of Child Rights in India

-George Joseph

History of Child Rights in India

India is one of the cradles of human civilization. The oldest known culture that existed here was the Indus Valley Civilization (3300-1300 B.C.) which co-existed with the ancient Chinese, Mesopotamian, Egyptian and Greek civilizations. But we have only archeological evidence of this culture as their script has not been deciphered yet. Clay toys of animals with movable heads have been excavated from here. One toy cart with movable wheels is of special interest because it is the earliest wheeled vehicle discovered anywhere in the world. The variety of toys tell us the story of the concern they had for their children.

But plenty of written texts are available from the Vedic period (1500-500 B.C.) onwards after the advent of the Aryans. A number of rituals were conducted in Hindu families in relation with children. There was a ceremony to ensure the safety of the child in the womb. The birth ceremony took place before the cutting of the umbilical cord and involved the whispering of sacred spells



Clay toy cart- Indus Valley Civilization

(Mantra) in the baby's ear, placing a mixture of honey and ghee in his mouth, and giving him a name, to be kept secret by his parents until his initiation. The ceremony

when the child was taken out of the house and shown the sun for the first time, the first feeding of solid food in the child's sixth month and the ear-piercing ceremony were all occasions for celebration.

The number of these ceremonies shows the importance given to children. Sons were looked upon as great blessings. Daughters were not given this much importance, probably because they became members of their husbands' families on marriage. The necessity of providing them with dowries also lessened their desirability. But in the best Indian families daughters, though their birth may have been regretted, were cared for and petted just as sons were.

The general impression we get from literature is that in ancient India the child's life was a happy one. The small child was usually pampered, humoured and allowed a degree of freedom which few children in Europe obtained until modern times. The loving descriptions of children in poetry show them as spoilt darlings of their parents. Look at these lines from 'Shakuntalam' by Kalidasa.

With their teeth half-shown in causeless laughter,
And their efforts at talking so sweetly uncertain,
When children ask to sit on his lap
A man is blessed, even by the dirt on their bodies.

The speaker of this verse is a great king, and it shows that even the little children of princes played naked in dust and were loved with tenderness by their elders.

But the undisciplined life of the small child soon came to an end. Children were initiated into the traditional trades of their castes at an early age. Only children from the upper castes were permitted to learn the alphabet. Normally a boy began to learn the alphabet in his fourth or fifth year. Women's education was not looked on as essential. Girls were by no means neglected and well-bred women were usually literate. There are records of some scholarly women like Gargi and Mythreyi in ancient Indian literature.

The caste into which the child was born decided the agenda of his life. Tresspass of caste boundaries was very difficult, though not impossible. During the Islamic period of India (11th to 18th century AD) we see a sizable number of people embracing the Islamic way of life. The British period (18th to 20th century AD) sowed seeds of social change in India. Emboldened by English education and western liberal ideas, the people of India organized themselves and eventually won freedom from the British in 1947.

Free India gave itself a constitution in 1950. Most of the rights of the child detailed in the UN Convention on Child Rights are guaranteed in the Constitution of India. Since 1950, these rights have been expanded through the process of judicial interpretation and review. In 1974, the Government of India adopted a National Policy for Children, declaring the nation's children as 'supremely important assets'. The 'Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act' was enacted in 1986. The Act defines a child as any person who has not completed his fourteenth year of age. It prohibits children from working in hazardous occupations. The Act was amended in 2006. Employment of children as domestic workers or servants and in restaurants, hotels, resorts, spas and other recreational centers was prohibited.

The Government of India ratified the convention on the Rights of the Child on 12th November 1992. By ratifying the convention, the Government is obliged to review National and State legislation and bring it in line with provisions of the convention. At the provincial level, the state Governments were directed to assimilate the articles of the CRC into their state Plans of Actions for Children. A number of schemes for the welfare and development of children have been strengthened and refined with a view to ensuring children their economic, political and social rights. The convention has been translated into most of the regional languages for dissemination to the masses. A Juvenile Justice Act was enacted in 1986 to deal with offences committed by children. It was re-enacted in 2000 'bearing in mind the standards prescribed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice, 1985 (the Beijing rules), UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (1990) and all other relevant international instruments.' It was amended in 2006 to add more provisions.

'The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act-2012' was passed by the Indian Parliament on 22nd May 2012. It has been drafted 'to strengthen the legal provisions for the protection of children from sexual abuse and exploitation.' It is for the first time that a special law has been passed to address the issue of sexual offences against children. The Act provides for the establishment of special courts for trial of offences under the Act. It incorporates child friendly procedures for reporting and recording of evidence, investigation and trial of offences. Attempt to commit an offence also has been made liable for punishment. The burden of proof is shifted on to the accused. There are also provisions for relief and rehabilitation for the child as soon as the complaint is made.

Thus it is evident that India is vigorously enacting laws for protection of Child Rights. But ensuring Child Rights in a country like India with all its diversities is no easy task.

The present Status

There has been progress in overall indicators in the field of Child Rights in India. Infant mortality rates have come down, child survival has gone up, literacy rates have improved and school dropout rates have fallen.

The total population of India as per the census conducted in 2011 is 1.21 billion. 40% of India's population is below the age of 18 years. That means we have more than 484 million children in India. This is the world's largest child population.

Education

Due to the sustained effort of the central and state governments supported by different agencies in the field, the educational status of the children in India has improved considerably. Thanks to the opening of over three hundred and fifty thousand schools in the last decade, 99 percent of India's rural population has a primary school within a one kilometre radius. The Net Enrolment Ratio in primary schools during 2007-2010 was 97% for boys and 94% for girls. The Net attendance Ratio for the same period is 85% for boys and 81% for girls. The Net Attendance Ratio for secondary schools during 2005-2010 was 59% for boys and 49% for girls. From the figures, it is clear that the enrolment levels have improved in primary schools but the dropout rate increases cumulatively towards higher levels. Although there is improvement, the enrolment of girls is still below that of boys. The dropout rate of girls is also higher. Children belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes have lower enrolment and higher dropout rates. Eight million children remain out of school and the integration of these children into an age-appropriate class remains a significant challenge.

Health and Nutrition

Though the Government is trying hard to improve the availability of nutrients through schemes like the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), nutrition continues to be a problem for children in India. According to the WHO, the percentage of underweight children in India in the period 2006-2010 was 43. More than 50% of India's children are malnourished.

Vigorous immunization programmes have been able to eradicate childhood diseases like polio from India. In 2010, 87% of 1 year old children were given BCG vaccine. 83% were given DPT vaccine and 74% measles vaccine. This shows a rise in awareness of health in our population. But poverty and ignorance continue to be stumbling blocks in child health programmes.

Child Labour

In spite of the different Acts promulgated to prevent child labour, millions of children work to help their families because the parents do not have enough income. 17 million children in India work as per official estimates. 90% of the working children are in rural India. 85% of working children are in unorganized sector. About 80% of child labour is engaged in agricultural work.

Gender Discrimination

Preference for male children to continue the family line is deep rooted in Indian culture and as a result, female children are discriminated against from the stage of pregnancy.

The sex ratio of newborn children reveals an unhealthy trend. In 1960, there were 976 girls born for every 1000 boys. In 2001, there were only 927 girls of every 1000 boys. Government slogans like 'Girl or boy, both are equal' and financial sops for parents of only daughters have not had much impact.

Conclusion

Thus it is clear that independent India has made remarkable efforts to improve the situation of its children and in most fields, progress has been achieved. But due to the complexity of the situation, the size of the child population and the limitations of the resources at the disposal of the administration, much remains to be done to ensure the right of all children in the largest parliamentary democracy of the world.

Chapter-2

Our Swedish Experience

The system of education and the total situation in Sweden are so different from what they are familiar with that the participants from Kerala had a pleasant surprise when they visited Sweden. Some of them share their reminiscences of Sweden briefly in this chapter.

1. Mathew Zacharias (Batch-3)

I participated in batch III of the International Training Programme on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management at Lund. It was the first batch in which participants from India took part. I went to attend the course with 25 years of experience in the field of education. But to my surprise I found that the status of children in Sweden was very different from that of children in India. The measures taken to ensure the rights of children in Sweden highly impressed me.

The interaction between the teachers and the children in the class on equal terms and the absence of mental and physical punishment were new to me. The splendid noon meal in the Swedish schools and the sight of children having it without wasting food seemed remarkable to me.

The free mixing of girls and boys made me aware that the concept of gender equality is deep rooted in Sweden. The way classrooms and laboratories are maintained attracted me. Students in Grade IX were doing experiments in the science lab and they were explaining things to children from a lower class. A teacher was moving around the lab assessing their work.

The freedom children have to wear the clothes of their choice and the provision for giving educational allowance to all children on the basis of attendance are very progressive. The confidence and smile on the children's faces showed how things will change if children are given their rights.

2. Mohandas (Batch-4)

My Experience in Lund and Stockholm was enchanting. Chilled weather and rain welcomed me to Sweden. The scenic beauty of the landscape was beyond my imagination. When I reached Lund on 27th May 2006 Ms Jassica Abrahamsson, the Programme co-ordinator welcomed me to Hotel Sparta and inducted me into the Hotel. In the evening Mr. Richard Stenelo the Programme Director came to our room and gave us some instructions. The hospitality shown by Richard and Jassica increased my expectations. Even at 10 pm there was sufficient sunlight to go for a walk in Lund. Next day after the inaugural session we met our Mentors.

Cleanliness and punctuality were the two factors that attracted me much. There was no special training for time management required after this training. We cannot forget the dinners at Sparta. Each participant showed their talents in cooking. Our school visits were a real eye opener. The infrastructure facilities, well arranged classrooms for activity based learning, the friendly attitude of teachers and the happiness of the children were signs of the successful implementation of the Rights of the Child. When we joined for a lunch with the children I wondered weather I was in a star restaurant.

The Library in Malmo was another attraction. I had never seen a library like that in my life. When we came to Stockholm I had a feeling of reaching a rush city from a calm village, that is from beautiful Lund. The last part of the training in Sweden was in Lilla VIK, a golf course. People were very friendly there. Nobody moved without wishing others. This is part of the culture of Swedish people and added more positive impression about Swedish people.

3. Gopakumar (Batch-8)

I was selected for the international training programme at Lund in the 8th batch. I reached there in June 2008. It was the Spring time there. The sun did not set till midnight. The night lasted only for two hours. Being from the tropics I felt it to be wonderful experience.

We were surprised to see the municipal employees cleaning the public walls with water and paint to remove graffiti.

We visited the historically important places at Stockholm like the City Hall where the Nobel prize awarding ceremony is conducted. The visit to the Vasa Museum was also memorable.

I felt that implementation of Child Rights is not just a theory. It is highly practicable.

The schools are the gardens for the development of culture and humanism.

4. George Joseph(Batch-9)

I had a 'paradise experience' in Sweden. I went to that country with a positive picture developed through my reading. But what I found there surpassed my expectations.

The first thing that struck me was the beauty of the country. The month was September. The large farms, the flowers everywhere – even on the grass meadows – the trees laden with pink apples, the healthy cows and horses – all these attracted me. I fell in love with the country.

The next thing that impressed me was the refined behavior and the hospitality of the people. I was surprised by the 'Scandinavian simplicity'. Surprisingly there was no language barrier as everyone except some very old people spoke good English. And there was no racial discrimination. Swedes were fantastic hosts. A total stranger walked up to me in the street in Lund, shook my hand and said, "Indian, welcome to Sweden"! Needless to say I felt quite elated.

The traffic in Sweden was another surprise to me. Everyone obeying traffic rules perfectly and drivers stopping their vehicles when they saw me standing on the side of the road and letting me cross while they waited with a smile – all these made me think – this must be Eden, not Sweden.

Food there was a little difficult to adjust with as I am used to hot Indian food. But the different types of bread, fruit and milk more than compensated for the spicy dishes I missed.

The first thought that struck me when I went around a Swedish school was this: 'When, O God, when are the schools in my country going to reach this level!'

I was fascinated by what I saw in the school- physical facilities, teacher –pupil ratio, flexibility of curriculum, the large library, facilities for playing, the importance given to student councils, the standard of the food provided to children and the confidence level shown by the students.

Our mentors at Lund university treated us like friends. Their punctuality, dedication and team work were good examples to be emulated. They are 'cultural ambassadors' of Sweden because their behavior made us love their country. My Swedish sojourn turned me into a strong fan of Sweden.

5. Pushpa Mathew (Batch-9)

My husband George Joseph and me are the only couple who attended the SIDA

course on Child Rights at Lund together. It was an unforgettable experience in our career and life.

It was the school I visited in Lund that attracted me much. The school was totally different from anything I was familiar with. The teacher-pupil ratio seemed very attractive to me. The freedom children have to select the subjects to study is remarkable. The large dining hall in the school reminded me of a big restaurant. The quality of the food and the freedom children have to select anything seemed very good.

The hospitality of the Swedes was remarkable. On the first day in Lund, Emma was waiting for us at Hotel Sparta. All the mentors were very free with us. Whenever we gathered for tea or dinner, they sat near us and began conversations. The entertainment programmes and the visits helped us to know about Swedish Culture.

6. Abdul Gafoor (Batch-10)

A Real Experience

No words to express

Have a mind to disclose

What I received is the spirit

The power of togetherness .

It was for the child and ,

To have a mind to care her nature.

Lund by nature proved its culture,

A culture that depicted the simplicity,

And the elegance of the faculties.

A real team I found there,

Worked together for that course.

The school that we visited ,

A real garden of knowledge and resource

Still I cherish the memories of it ,

A real example of a complete school.

Sweden and Swedish people that I met there

Were cool, a **Real experience for me.**

7. Valsala K.K. (Batch-10)

The 23 days in Sweden were undoubtedly some of the best days in my teaching career. Even in the limited duration, the course gave me a lot of insight as well as a global perspective of the problems faced in ensuring Child Rights.

The trip to Sweden, being the first trip abroad in my life, gave me a lot of experience and great exposure. I am glad to share some unforgettable moments from the trip. Meeting other change agents from different parts of the world, talking and sharing thoughts with them was a great experience. The well organised and preplanned course and the strictness in the course timings were very impressive. I loved the opportunity to visit a school. That the school had no bells and uniform surprised me. Two or more teachers were present in the same class. The facilities in the school and the rich food given to children were remarkably good. The waste management system was also exemplary.

The Government takes care of the cost of students' education. All schools follow the same syllabus. Migrants can learn their mother tongue. Teachers get performance based pay-scales and promotions.

The streets are not clogged with traffic. People use bicycles. Women can walk on the streets fearlessly even at midnight. People of all ages find time to enjoy their spare time by going to parks and singing and dancing in groups.

I am extremely grateful to SIDA and Lund University for providing me with such a wonderful opportunity to attend the course in Lund and to get a first hand experience of the wonderful country of Sweden.

8. Bhaskaran (Batch-13)

What impressed me about Sweden is worthy to be shared. The civic sense of the people, their attitude to maintain cleanliness everywhere, punctuality, very good law and order situation, mutual respect, secular life, effective city traffic (No Traffic Police?), highly developed health and hygiene system, the common use of bicycle, the high status given to women are some of the highlights I can still remember.

The educational system of Sweden is also unique in many ways. The school curriculum highlights fundamental values such as democratic values, individual freedom and integrity, equal value of all people, gender equality, tolerance, responsibility, compassion for others, openness, international perspectives, self development of individuals etc.

The autonomy given to school heads and teachers in planning and practicing school activities has a positive impact on school quality. The status given to children as individuals and as active members of school, home and the society is a good model. Parents have the right to know what goes on in the school and the school must provide them all information about school activities. Sweden is beautiful and the people are good.

9. Carmaly P.A. (Batch-13)

The most important features of Swedesh schools are the provision for equity based quality education by empowering children through participation and decision making in classroom, school and home environment. Their implementation of time management, love of nature, creation of child friendly atmosphere through class council and school council, formulation of code of conduct by children in the class and school for ensuring a conducive learning environment, Individual Port-folio and Individual Development Plan for giving continuous assessment and feedback for total development of the children, sufficient number of books and reference materials in the class, free access in ICT based classrooms, many opportunities to students for active involvement in different activities to work and perform in groups and to share their ideas creatively seemed very impressive to me.

10. Anilkumar V.P. (Batch-13)

Sweden was very different from anything I had experienced - the geography, the climate, the people, the life style, the clothing, the villages and cities...

The strictly scheduled programme at Lund was very impressive. It was the joint effort of the professors and others that made the course such a grand success.

Our team got a chance to visit a school in Lund called Vikingaskolan. The beautiful classrooms, the energetic children, the availability of learning materials in plenty, the big library, the interesting teaching strategies, the importance given for work experience - it was a totally different world there. I was fascinated by the fact that children from all corners of the world were there in that school.

I consider it a great luck that I got a chance to visit two of the most beautiful cities of the world, Stockholm and Compenhagen. The buildings there showed a blend of the traditional and the modern. The crowded streets were extremely neat. Life was going on like a stream of crystal clear water.

11 Francis (Batch-14)

Scene -1

Venue - In front of the main block of Lund University

Time: 1st may 2010,11.am

A celebration welcoming Spring is on. Hundreds of young people are enjoying themselves, shouting, applying colours on their bodies and jumping up and down. The celebration ends at a pre-determined time. Now the young people begin cleaning up the place. The benches on which colours have rubbed off are carried near water taps, washed and brought back to their original places. Waste materials are collected in gunny bags and disposed of. The crowd disperses only after completing the cleaning work.

Scene -2

Venue – Lund Town centre, same day, 3 pm

More than ten thousand young people from Lund, the 'City of Youth' are celebrating. Thousands are dancing to the tune of fast music. Small groups are sitting on the grass and near the river, talking. They are having beer and chewing titbits.

On one side men and women are standing in the same queue near a temporary toilet waiting their turn. Young people in uniform are moving around with a special type of gunnybag collecting waste. The collected waste is being carried away in vehicles.

Scene -3

Venue –The parking area near Hotel Sparta, Lund. Some travelers are about to board a hightech bus. The driver welcomes them with a smiling face. After everyone has entered, the driver instructs them to wear seatbelts. Then he blows into an instrument fitted in the bus. When a passenger asks him what the instrument is, the driver replies "It is to make sure that the driver is not drunk".

Scene -4

Venue –City Centre Bus stop, Lund.

A family is crossing the road through the zebra line. Of the four members in the family, three reach the other side uneventfully but the fourth one, a boy of 4-5 years seems to be doing some investigation on the zebra lines. He jumps from one line to the next. When he does not reach the point he wants to, he jumps back. As if satisfied with his research, he too reaches the other side and joins his family. (The parents do not rush back, beat or scold the boy. The vehicle waiting do not frighten him blaring horns. No passengers shout at him. The society is tolerant to the action of the boy

which is appropriate for his age.)

Scene -5

Venue- A Traffic Junction near Lund ,Time -3.30 am

A cab stops at the traffic junction on its way to the airport. When the passengers ask the driver why the cab has stopped , he replies “Red light.” When the passengers comment that there were no other vehicles at all on the road ,the reply is “We must obey traffic rules”.

Scene -6

Venue –A public Road

Some pedestrians are trying to cross the road at a point without zebra lines. Seeing a car rushing near,they turn back.The car stops suddenly and the driver waves at the passengers with a smile, inviting them to cross the road.They cross the road ,thanking the driver.

Scene -7

Venue –Stockholm –the reception area near a famous tourist centre

A traveller approaches a waste bin to deposit waste.Three bins are placed side by side.The traveller reads the writing on each one, sorts the waste he has brought and puts each item into the appropriate bin.

Now some School Scenes

Scene -8

Venue –School, Time -8.30 am . School courtyard – Children are playing and chatting on the grass and in the courtyard. Seeing their teacher coming ,they run to the class.

Class –The lesson has begun. Children are working in groups.The time for the whole class discussion comes. The children who wish to speak raise their hands, expressing their desire to do so. They wait for their turn to speak. Others listen attentively.

Another class (3rd grade) – The learning activities are going on. Those who have doubts form a queue before the teacher. They take turns ,clearing their doubts or raising their needs.

Dining Hall –Children stand in queue ,take the food they need, go to vacant seats and eat. After finishing ,they put the waste in large barrels, place the plates and the glasses on the racks and go back.

The society reflects the culture of a country. The culture ,in turn ,develops through education.Sweden has a refined culture nurtured through an exceptional system of

education. This is the impression I developed when I visited the country to take part in the International Training Programme on Child Rights. The scenes given above are some of the things I saw there.

Usually when plans and projects for children are developed, no one cares for the children's interest. Much of the friction between children and adults is caused by this. Gradually dissatisfaction spreads in the society. The specialty in Sweden is that no one imposes rules on children in schools and public places. Instead, children behave according to the age appropriate norms they themselves develop. These norms are acceptable to children and adults alike. All visitors to Sweden will agree that the country has a remarkably advanced culture.

12. Baby George (Batch-14)

I was impressed by everything I saw in Sweden. Lund is a University town where thousands of students study. The buildings are beautiful and the roads are wide and neat. The next day after our arrival we went to see the town. It was a Sunday. A celebration of young people was in progress there. Young men and women were singing and dancing everywhere. The celebration was over by the evening. What followed surprised us. The young people themselves were collecting waste from the streets into gunny bags and in a short time, the street became clean.

What I saw in the school that I visited fascinated me. The physical facilities there are very impressive. All classrooms are large with enough furniture and computers. The teacher pupil ratio is 1:20. There is a fulltime teacher to take care of each disabled child.

Schools in Sweden have student councils and they play an important role in the running of the school. Applicants for the post of teacher have to face an interview by students. Some teachers told us that this was the most difficult part in the selection process.

The noon meal programme in schools is also exemplary. The dining hall looks like a star hotel. The quality of the food is very good. Students can select what they like from the different items available.

I found that the education in Sweden is very flexible. It takes into consideration the nature of children. It respects the opinions of children. It is positive discipline that is promoted. I found children in Sweden growing up fearless, happy and free. The general public, parents and the administration do much homework to ensure this.

Chapter - 3

The Kerala CRC Network

- *George Joseph*

The auspicious beginning of the Kerala CRC Network was with Mathew Zacharias being selected to the 3rd batch of the international Training Programme on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management conducted at Lund, Sweden in 2005. He was working as District Project Officer, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA – a national programme for universalization of school



education) in Wayanad district at that time. After the training programme, he began to work in the field of Child Rights with a missionary zeal, using the machinery of SSA at his disposal and involving the District Administration, the Department of Education, the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) and the Judiciary in the process. His efforts succeeded in popularizing the concept of Child Rights in the district and brought about some real change in the 21 schools selected for implementing the project for change.

The next person to attend the course at Lund was E.P.Mohandas. He attended the training in the 4th batch. When he was selected, he was a State Programme Officer in SSA Kerala. After the course, he took the 'Wayanad Initiative' started by Mathew Zacharias to new heights. He spread the message of Child Rights to all schools in the district. After him, Dr. I.M. Indira, Principal, DIET Calicut, O. Sivaraman, Programme Officer, SSA Wayanad and E.P. Sivadasan, Headmaster, Gokhale Nagar School, Wayanad were selected to attend the sixth batch at Lund together. They were the first

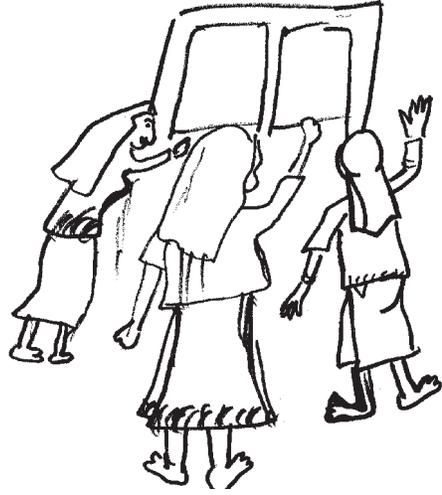
Indian team with all the three members being from Kerala. From that batch onwards all the Indian teams comprised participants from Kerala only. This in turn led to the formation of a strong CRC network in Kerala which continues to do a lot of good work in the field of Child Rights. Dr. Indira, in addition to her work in the school selected for implementing the project for change, took the initiative to conduct a study on the problems faced by girls in our society. This study was an eye-opener and was widely noticed and discussed by the electronic and print media in Kerala. O. Sivaraman took pains to ensure Child Rights in the single teacher 'Alternate Schools' in Wayanad situated in or near forests where the poorest of the poor study. E.P. Sivadasan tried out innovative practices like the starting of 'Pupil Parent Teacher Association' (PPTA) aimed at giving students a chance to participate in decision making related to school administration.

The next team that attended the training programme at Lund comprised Dr. Naseema, Professor, University of Calicut, T. V. Gopakumar, Lecturer, DIET Wayanad and Thankachan, Headmaster, Government School Sasimala, Wayanad in the eighth batch. Dr. Naseema focused on community participation in ensuring Child Rights in her project school. T. V. Gopakumar carried forward the Wayanad initiative in Child Rights using his links with the non-governmental organizations in the district. Thankachan very successfully implemented the principles of Child Rights in his school and the change in the children and the atmosphere of the school is remarkable.

The next team of change agents included in batch nine were George Joseph, Principal, DIET Kasaragod, Gracy T.J, Headmistress, Govt. School Kaippenchery, Wayanad and Pushpa Mathew, Teacher NGO Quarters Govt. High School, Calicut. George Joseph had been part of the Wayanad Initiative on Child Rights before being transferred to Kasargod. He selected 15 schools in the culturally and linguistically pluralistic district of Kasaragod and tried to make them child friendly through teacher training and frequent visits to the schools. He also popularized the concept of Child Rights through Seminars and discussions. Gracy T.J. focused on community participation, giving nutritious food to the children, class level PPTAs and a mobile PTA which visited the houses of children and thereby built up a good rapport between the parents and the school. Pushpa Mathew's school had a good number of girls from the Government Juvenile Home, Calicut. Most of these children had difficult backgrounds. Some of them had a history of conflict with law. As a result, they had problems with socialization. Pushpa tried to bring these children into the mainstream by establishing personal contact with them and by giving them leadership roles and

thereby fostering confidence in them.

Dr. Abdul Gafoor, Senior Lectuer, DIET Malappuram, Valsala K.K, Teacher, NGO Quarters Govt. High School, Calicut and Muhammed Haris, Headmaster, Munduparamba AUP School, Malappuram took part in the training at Lund in the tenth batch. Dr. Gafoor focused on the use of information and Communication Technology in ensuring Child Rights in Malappuram district. Valsala K.K. gave new dimensions to the work started by Pushpa Mathew in their school. She initiated class councils and a school council in the school. She also focused



on developing life skills and artistic talents in her children. She visited the houses of her students regularly, establishing an excellent rapport with the parents. She also conducted work experience courses for mothers aimed at giving them new skills leading to new sources of income. Haris has been trying to foster all the three 'P's in his school by giving children freedom and opportunities to get involved in the running of the school.

The next team to go to Lund was from Kasargod. Bhaskaran, Lecturer, DIET Kasargod, Anil Kumar, Teacher, DIET Lab School, Kasargod and Carmaly P.A, Teacher, Holy Family School, Kumbala were the members of that team. They attended the 13th batch of the training. Together, they took the work started by George Joseph in the district to new heights. Bhaskaran focused on school parliaments in selected schools. Student leaders from these schools also conducted district level student parliaments too. Bhaskaran was able to rope in the support of the administrators and the teacher community of the district in his project for change. Anilkumar succeeded in involving the children in his school in the process of decision making by conducting class and school councils at regular intervals and following up the ideas and suggestions put forward by children. Carmaly did wonders in making her bilingual school child friendly. Children there have become competent enough to take any responsibility pertaining to the school. The school is always first in the inter-school competitions held annually.

India was represented in the 14th batch by three participants from Kannur District – Baby George, Block Programme Officer, SSA Iritty, P.D. Francis, Headmaster,

Ambayathode School and Marykitty M.K, Headmistress, Kacherikkadavu St. George's School. The team implemented a project named POSCID India (Participation of School Children in Decisions). The project aimed at ensuring the presence of children in fora where decisions are made and thereby ensuring their interests and rights.

Five schools were selected and children, teachers and parents were trained. Students Parents Teacher Associations (SPTTA) were started in all these schools. This forum is used to let children express their views before elders. This helps children realize that the decisions are made for their good. This will also ensure more co-operation from children. Class councils are convened regularly to know children's opinions. Representatives from class councils take part in the school councils. Two representatives from the school council take part in SPTA meetings. they too take part in discussions and express their views.

Three Change Agents from Malappuram attended the 15th batch of the training at Lund. They were P.K. Ibrahimkutty, Senior Lecturer, DIET Malappuram, Babu Varghese, Lecturer, DIET Malappuram and Sherly P; Headmistress, Govt. LP School, Edivanna Estate, Malappuram. They selected Sherly's school and focused on empowering the tribal children there. Babu Varghese is still working as the co-ordinator of the Child Friendly City initiative in Nilambur, Malappuram district. This is a major project undertaken by Nilambur Municipal Council with the support of UNICEF Chennai Regional Office. It tries to make the city child-friendly through empowerment programmes for children, awareness programmes for the general public parents and teachers, production and distribution of reading materials on Child Rights and through co-ordinating the activities of the governmental and non-governmental agencies.

Chandini K.K; Professor, SCERT Kerala, Trivandrum, Ravishankar T; Working with IT@ School State Office, Trivandrum and Krishnadas K.M; Programme Officer, SSA Kannur attended the course at Lund in the 16th batch. Chandini has succeeded in including Child Rights as a component in the training of higher secondary teachers all over the state. The batch has taken Govt. High School, Thottada in Kannur district as the project school and in trying out empowering children at the higher secondary level through student's councils at class and school levels.

At the time this book goes to press, three persons from Kerala are attending the training at Lund in batch 18. They are Jayalakshmi (*SCERT, Trivandrum*), Mathew (*District Education Officer*) and M.V. Mukundan (*Principal, DIET, Pathanamthitta*). Let us hope that their inclusion will broaden the reach of the CRC Network in Kerala.

In addition to the individual projects undertaken, the CRC Network in Kerala has undertaken several remarkable tasks at state level as a team. It began when they conducted district level training programmes of headmasters in all the 14 districts of Kerala under the aegis of SSA State Office, Trivandrum. SSA Kerala also organized a one day international seminar on Child Rights at Calicut in which educational functionaries from all the districts participated.

Another state level activity was a cascade model training on Child Rights conducted for primary school teachers. The programme began with several module preparation and planning workshops followed by a very successful two day State Resource Group (SRG) training conducted for resource persons (RPs) from all the districts. These people were teachers of DIET, and programme officers of the district offices of SSA. These RPs in turn trained trainers from sub districts. The sub district level trainers conducted one day courses for teachers from all the schools in their jurisdiction.

At the time when the state of Kerala was formulating rules related to the Right to Education Act, the CRC network prepared a representation and submitted it to the Commission which was preparing the rules. The commission paid due attention to the 'Charter of Demands' submitted on behalf of the children of Kerala and promised that they would be incorporated into the rules.

Recently, the Kerala CRC network met under the auspices of the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and prepared a long term plan for ensuring Child Rights in Kerala. The plan is to try for convergence of different Governmental and Non-governmental agencies and other stake holders to achieve this long term goal.



Chapter-4

CRC Activities in Wayanad District

- *Gopakumar T.V. and Mathew Zacharias*

Name of Change Agents

Mathew Zacharia (*Dist.Project Officer, SSA Wayanad*), E.P.Mohandas (*District Project Officer, SSA, Wayanad*), E.P.Sivadasan (*Head Master ANM UPSchool, Gokhale nagar*), O. Sivaraman (*Programme Officer, SSA Wayanad*), T.V. Gopakumar (*Lecturer, DIET Wayanad*), V.V.Thankachan (*Head Master, GUPS Sasimala*), Gracy T.J (*Headmistress, GLPS Kaippanchery*)

1. Introduction

Sri .Mathew Zacharias, Dist.Project Officer, SSA Wayanad was the first person from Kerala to attend the International Training on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management. It was the 3rd batch of training organised by SIDA at Lund University. As a part of the ITP Sri .Mathew Zacharias undertook a project “Child friendly schools” and implemented it in 21 schools in Wayanad District. In 2006 Sri. EP Mohandas, State Programme officer, SSA Kerala attended the 4th batch of ITP. He tried to spread the idea of child friendly school to all schools in Wayanad Dist. In Batch 6 two persons from Wayanad got the opportunity to attend the ITP. Sri.O Sivaraman, programme officer, SSA Wayanad and Sri.E.P Sivadas, Head Master ANM UPSchool, Gokhale nagar jointly selected ANMUPS as their project school and implemented CRC activities there. In 2008 (Batch 8)Sri.T.V Gopakumar, Lecturer,DIET Wayanad and Sri. V.V.Thankachan, Head Master, GUPS Sasimala attended the ITP. GUPS Sasimala and GUPS Kolagappara were identified as the project schools for CRC Interventions.Smt. T.J Gracy, headmistress GLPS Kaippanchery was a participant in the 9th batch of the programme. She selected GLPS Kaippanchery for the CRC interventions.



2. About the District

Nestled among the mountains of the Western Ghats lies Wayanad, one of the loveliest hill stations of Kerala. This green paradise, located at a distance of 76 kms. from the seashores of Kozhikode, lies at a height of 700-2100 m. above sea level, on the northeastern part of the State. The name, Wayanad, is believed to have been derived from the word, 'Vayal nadu, meaning the land of paddy fields. The present district of Wayanad was carved out from the parts of Kozhikode and Kannur districts and came into being on the first of November 1980 as the 12th district of Kerala. This back-

ward district is perhaps one of the biggest foreign exchange earners of the state, thanks to its cash crops of pepper, cardamom, coffee, tea, spices and other condiments. Most of the reserve forests in the State are in this district. The loamy soil generally shows wide variation in depth and texture with a very high content of organic matter. A large percentage of the population in this region are tribals. The native Adivasis mainly consist of various sects like Paniyas, Kurumas, Adiyars, Kurichyars, Ooralis, Kattunaickens, etc.

Topography

The district has a geographical area of 2126 square kilometers in which 78787 hectares are forest. It lies between north latitude of 100.27" and 15058" and east longitude of 750.47" and 700.27". It is bound on the east by Nilgiris and Mysore districts, on the north by Coorg district, on the south by Malappuram and on the West by Kozhikode and Kannur.



Placed on the southern tip of the Deccan Plateau, its prime glory is the majestic Western Ghats with lofty ridges interspersed with magnificent forests, tangled jungles and deep valleys. In the centre of the district, hills are lower in height, while the northern area has high hills and they give a wild and mountainous appearance.

The western area is flat and open. Due to the peculiar terrain, there are east flowing and west flowing rivers. The altitude of Wayanad varies from 700 to 2100 meters from sea level.

The average yearly rainfall in Wayanad is 3000 m.m. The relative humidity of the atmosphere in the season of monsoon is 90%. In summer it comes down to 70%. The maximum temperature during daytime is 90.4°F and the minimum 59°F.

Population

In 2011, Wayanad had a population of 816,558 of which men and women were 401,314 and 415,244 respectively. In the 2001 census, Wayanad had a population of 780,619 of which males were 391,273 and 389,346 were females. There was a change of 4.60

percent in the population compared to population as per 2001. In the census of 2001, Wayanad District had recorded an increase of 16.14 percent to its population compared to 1991.

Literacy

The average literacy rate of Wayanad in 2011 was 89.32 compared to 85.25 of 2001. Male and female literacy were 92.84 and 85.94 respectively. For 2001 census, The figures stood at 89.77 and 80.72 in Wayanad District.

3. Project Proposals

There are seven Change Agents in Wayanad. The first participant was Mr. Mathew Zacharias (Batch 3 of ITP) and then Mohandas (Batch 4), O.Sivaraman and Sivadasan(Batch 6),Gopakumar and Thankachan (Batch 8) and Gracy (Batch 9). Titles of their project proposals given below.

1. Making the schools Child Friendly
Mathew Zacharias –Batch -3
2. Ensuring Child Rights to participate in classroom activities through improving classroom management
E.P Mohandas – Batch -4
3. How to involve the school children in decision making through participation.
O. Sivaraman and EP. Sivadasan Batch -6
4. Ensuring Community Participation in School Activities
TV Gopakumar ,VV Thankachan Batch -8
5. Ensuring Children's and Parents' participation in class and school activities
Gracy T.J.

4. Activities Undertaken

a. Activities done by Mathew Zacharias

The pioneer of the CRC network in Kerala is Mr. Mathew Zacharias.

The following activities were undertaken by him:

1. Conducted a survey on child rights and classroom activities among school children.
2. Selected 21 schools of different categories for implementing his ideas.
3. A 2 day (residential) training on CRC for the Headmasters and one teacher of each selected school.

4. Prepared an action plan to protect Child Rights in schools.
5. Conducted a district level convention of all the teachers of the 21 schools for declaring of the schools as Child Friendly.
6. Continuous monitoring and on- site support to the programme, by nine district level monitoring team members.
7. Preparation of a handbook for teachers, which helped the teachers to make the classroom and school child friendly.
8. Dissemination of the programme throughout the state through the Department of Education.

A two day Residential training for 21 Headmasters and 21 teachers was conducted on August 11 and 12, 2006. Dr. Per Wickenberg from Lund University was present. There were 51 participants. (21 Headmasters, 21 teachers and 9 monitoring team members).

An action plan was prepared for promoting child rights in schools. A district level convention for the declaration of "Child Friendly School" was conducted on 23 September 2006. 262 people participated in it. District judge Mr.C.C. Sacaria, District Panchayath President Smt Sarasamma and the district collector participated.

- Complaint and Suggestion boxes were installed in all the 21 schools.
- Formation of student councils in order to discuss the problems and school activities The Council met once a month.
- School level, block level and district level Child Right Committees were formed with all people's representatives and council members.
- Display Boards showing Child Rights were erected in all the schools.
- Children's day celebration.
- Declaration and oath taking on child rights in every school. An oath on child rights was taken by teachers, parents and community members.
- To understand the child and his background home visits of the teachers were conducted.
- Celebration of birthdays of all children in the school.
- A diary kept by children to let the mother and teacher know about the child's special needs and problems.
- Installation of slogans in classrooms about the child rights.

- Facilities for playing were arranged in schools.
- Modifying the mid-day meal programme with the help of PTA & local self governments(LSG)
- Student Council members participating in LSG meetings to make the LSGs aware of the problems schools face.
- Participation in NCC, Scouts, Guide and other club activities.
- Participation in co-curricular activities for self development.
- With the help of children the school atmosphere kept attractive and clean.

The UN convention on child rights, 1989 says that children have a right to a happy childhood and that teachers, parents and the whole society should strive for this. A law to this effect has been enacted in India. In the light of these things we understand that schools are places where child rights are to be protected. Therefore, all schools must become child friendly. As the first step the 21 selected schools in Wayanad district were declared child friendly on behalf of all the teachers of these schools and all the District level authorities who can contribute for maintaining a child friendly atmosphere in these schools. We took a solemn oath to this effect and declared that we are ready to take up the responsibilities connected with it.

The Oath

Children are the treasure of the country and the promise of the future. I understand that they have their own rights and duties. I recognize that freedom of opinion, safety, nutritious food, protection from mental and physical torture and quality education are children's birth right. I solemnly swear that there won't be any action from my part or from my house and institution which hurts children physically or mentally or which breaches the rights of children. I also swear that I will engage myself in activities for protecting child rights and that I will react against any violation of child rights.

The Display Board

- This is a Child Friendly School.
- This school respects child rights completely.
- Here the child has the freedom of expression.
- Here the teachers and children are in good friendship.
- Here each child gets care and protection.

- Here nobody shows any type of discrimination to children.
- Here the children are not tortured mentally or physically.
- Here we are all friends.

b. Activities done by Mohandas

Mohandas got the opportunity to participate in the ITP programme at Lund in the 4th batch. He joined with Mathew and the activities implemented in the District became more fruitful.

Mohandas concentrated on two tribal Alternate Schools. He implemented activities there. To attract the children to school he introduced some activities through alternate school teachers.

(Alternate school is a single teacher school situated in a non accessible area. This may be inside a forest or on the top of a hill where more than 10 children are available). The identified schools were Kurichiat and Cheeyambam Alternate Schools.

The classrooms were not sufficiently spacious for conducting activity based teaching. The teachers were not getting sufficient training in activity based teaching; Most of the children were first generation learners so they were not getting any support from their home. Sufficient Teaching and Learning Materials were not available in the Alternative school. Many children were coming to school without proper dress due to poverty; teachers and parents were unaware of the rights of the child.

An orientation programme on child rights for school teachers was conducted at Sulthan Bathery. About 100 teachers participated the programme.

- Mathew Zacharias and E.P. Mohandas engaged the sessions. District Panchayath president Smt. Sarasamma inaugurated the awareness programme for school children. The District Panchayath President declared a school Child Friendly by presenting a flower to a child.

Awareness Rally

Before the Activity Camp a rally was conducted. Students from different schools participated in the rally. All the children enjoyed the rally and fulfilled their responsibility of bringing their friends to school. Teachers and students of different Alternate Schools participated.

Activity Camps

Different Activity Camps were conducted with the help of some experts in the field. During the activity camps children got enough opportunities to experience different

activities. Through these activities children would slowly learn many things which are related with the pedagogy.

Alternate School Festival with the support of SSA Wayanad

Two A S Fests were conducted. The students, parents and the public really made this a festival. All children participated in one or the other activity. All the children were rewarded. Parents and the public also joined with the children. The public prepared a very good feast in these festivals.

Formation of Child Right Protection Council - A council for the protection of Child Rights was formed in the name of 'Child Rights Protection Council Wayanad'. The District Panchayath President was the chairman of the Council. The District officials like Deputy Director of Education, District Education Officer, District Welfare Officer, etc. were the members of this council. Mathew Zacharias was the President and E.P. Mohandas was the Secretary. The main objective of the council was to protect Child Rights and give awareness to the public and teachers. The area of the council was the entire district of Wayanad. It was decided to extent the concept of Child Right Protection Council throughout the state.

c. Activities done by E.P. Sivadasan, O. Sivaraman and Dr. I.M. Indira

Sivaraman, Sivadasan and IM Indira got the opportunity to participate in the sixth batch of ITP on Child Rights . Indira was from Kozhikode District. They joined together with Mathew and Mohandas to strengthen the CRC activities. They selected Goghale Nagar UPSchool for their project.

Mr. Sivadasan is the Headmaster of that school. Their project was 'How to involve school children in decision making through participation'. They constituted a PPTA (Pupil Parent Teacher Association) in the school. It was very successful in involving the children in decision making.

Formation of PPTA

Gokhale Nagar School has 175 pupils. Earlier the school had a Parent Teacher Association. The students had no role in decision making. Parents and teachers made decisions for the pupils. The objective of this programme was to make them decision makers.

A meeting of pupils and parents was convened. They decided to form a Pupil Parent Teacher Association. The member of legislative assembly inaugurated the programme. Members of local panchayaths, parents, teachers, educational functionaries and pu-

pils addressed the audience.

Area Groups were formed in ten different localities. The teacher in charge of the area group oriented the parents about the project being implemented in the school. In each group there were 20 pupils. The area groups planned and implemented the programme in that locality. Area committees met monthly once in that area. In each meeting they reviewed the progress of the activities implemented and planned for the future.

Activities implemented

The following activities were implemented in the school taking into consideration the opinions of the pupils.

- Declaration of PPTA and procession
- Celebration of Independence Day
- Hiroshima Day
- Declaration of plastic free environment
- Teacher's day celebration
- Distribution of mid-day meals
- Planning meeting of teachers, parents and school support group members. The team conducted a meeting of the teachers, parents and school support group members on 30.06.07. In this meeting it was decided to conduct an orientation programme for parents and pupils.

School Parliament

School Parliaments help children to know about the parliamentary system of the nation. This helps them to know the rights and duties of the citizens. It also enables them to shoulder responsibilities effectively. Democratic value can be imbibed through this. Election procedure can be familiarized to children too.

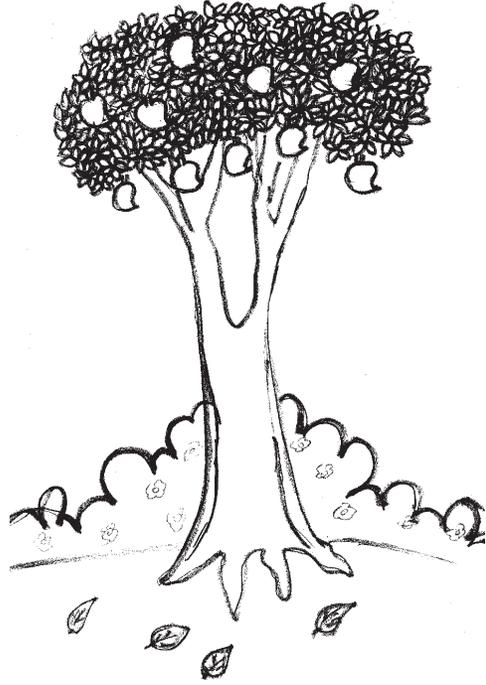
The following activities were undertaken in the school:

- Selection of class representatives
- Formation of school parliament
- Monthly meeting of the parliament
- Planning of activities for the next month

My Tree

The government has introduced 'My Tree' programme in the state. Though this

programme, the Department of Forests supplied seedlings to schools. Each child planted a tree in their plot. To make the 'My Tree' programme a success, the school convened a meeting of PPTA. The PPTA collected seedlings of fruit trees and distributed them to all pupils of the school. The pupils planted them in their own plots and protected them. Some of the children started their own nurseries in their houses. The activities of the 'My tree' Programme are shown below .



- Meeting of PPTA
- Collection of seedlings
- Distribution of seedlings to all pupils
- Planting of seedlings
- Monitoring through house visit
- Maintaining diary
- Reading diary every day (in the class)
- Drawing pictures
- Writing poems
- Writing stories
- Measuring the growth of the plants
- Making of organic manures and pesticides in the school
- Exhibiting the charts of the best pictures, stories, poems, riddles, photos and paper cuttings in the class
- Sending greeting cards to others

Organic cultivation

The farmers in the locality use chemical fertilizers and pesticides that are harmful to the community. To prevent this, the pupils prepared an organic pesticide called 'Panchagavyam'. 'Panchagavyam' is used to control pests. Most of the ingredients

are available in the locality itself. It is a 'learn and earn' programme for the children. The initial expenditure here was met by the Education Department. Pupils collected the materials needed for the organic pesticide, produced it and sold it to farmers. It helped to reduce the use of harmful pesticides. Pupils used this pesticide in their vegetable cultivation in the houses. They also propagated the use of organic pesticides in the society.

The following activities were also done

- Orientation by experts
- Preparation of organic pesticide
- Orientation of community
- Cultivation of vegetables
- Bio – fencing of compounds

Learning material preparation

Learning material preparation by children makes learning more effective. It is a kind of learning. Children observe the surroundings and collect materials which they can later use in the class. Observation and collection of materials which are the basic skills in learning of science can also be increased .

The steps followed were:

- a. Demonstration by experts
- b. Collection of low cost and no cost materials
- c. Workshop for children
- d. Exhibition of materials

Plastic free campaign

The government has banned the use of plastic carry bags in the state. Pollution from plastic is a serious problem in the community. It has caused many epidemics in the state. Chikungunya killed many people and many are sick now. Many of them were troubled with skin diseases.

PPTA decided to orient the people and prepared an action plan for a plastic free environment.

The following steps were taken:

- Meeting of PPTA
- Oath taking for plastic free environment

- Orientation through area committee
- Removal of plastic from the environment
- Preparation of paper bags and cloth bags instead of plastic bags

Sahavasa Camp

We conducted a Sahavasa Camp on 21st September 2007. 30 selected pupils and 10 teachers, 10 SSG members and 10 PTA members participated in the camp. The camp was conducted in a beautiful Island called 'Kuruva Island'. We reached there at 7AM on 21st September by bus. Pupils were divided into groups. They prepared the food with much enthusiasm. Parents, teachers and others supported them. Forest Department Range Officer Pushparaj gave a class on the ecosystem of the Island. Teachers and pupils prepared a special magazine from that place. They spent one whole day with dance, music and various entertainments. At night we arranged a camp fire and the group danced around the fire. The Sahavasa camp was a memorable event to PPTA.

Swimming training

To improve the physical fitness of the children, the PPTA conducted a one week training on swimming. Experts from among the teachers and parents gave training in swimming. Boys and girls participated in the programme. Most of them learned swimming and started to train their younger ones. It improved their confidence also.



The steps in this programme were:

- Meeting of PPTA and planning
- Selection of pupils
- Selection of trainers
- Arrangement of venue and materials
- Swimming practice

Puppetry

Learning becomes meaningful and enjoyable when children have participation in the process. Puppetry would be used as an interesting medium of transacting curricular objectives to the children. Especially learning a second language could be made more easy by using this method. Constructing dialogues and demonstration of events be-

come interesting and develop children's creativity.

The activities done in the school in relation with the training in puppetry were:

- Workshop for puppetry making
- Groupwise script writing
- Stage play

Exposure trip

PPTA conducted an exposure trip to Silent Valley in the second week of December. It is a very nice evergreen forest. On the way we saw a Water Theme Park. Pupils, parents, SSG members and teachers participated in the trip.

Ayurvedic Medical Camp

PPTA conducted an Ayurvedic medical camp in the school. Six famous doctors participated in the camp. The doctors examined not only pupils but their parents also. We arranged some medical aid to those who needed medicine and arranged a class to public about health hygiene.

d. Activities done by Gopakumar and Thankachan

In the 8 batch of ITP on Child Right at Lund, Gopakumar and Thankachan from Wayanad participated. Gopakumar and Thankachan joined with the former change agents and introduced new interventions. Thankachan is the Headmaster of GUPS Sasimala and his school was one of the target schools of Mathew Zacharias. This school was the first child friendly school in Wayanad as well as in Kerala. Their project was 'Empowering Community Participation in School activities'. They selected three schools for the implementation of their project- GUPS Sasimala, GUPS Kolagappara and GUPS Kuppadi. Activities undertaken:

- General body meeting including school support group, educational authorities and local body members and discussed the creative participation of community in school activities.
- Constituted 'Cluster PTA'. The catchment area of a school was divided into 8 divisions called clusters. Most of the parents are barely literate. So they rarely come to school for interaction. In this situation the headmaster and teachers visited the clusters in the evenings and conducted meetings there with parents and local body members. The main agenda is the academic development and retention of the children in school. Cluster PTA was conducted every two weeks in each cluster.
- Home visit and survey. The class teacher and students visited the home of each

and every child in their class and surveyed the various perspectives. They found out the various challenges each student was going through such as financial problems, lack of security in home, unhygienic conditions, suffering due to parents' drug-alcohol addiction, etc. The report of this survey was discussed in cluster PTA and staff meeting and the following steps were taken.

1. Conducted awareness program for parents to discuss what they are expected to do for their children.
2. Ensured counseling for needy children with the help of counselors and teachers.
3. Provision of nutritious lunch for children and breakfast for those from needy poor families.
4. Provided clothes and study material for the needy with the help of Govt and the contribution of various institutions and community welfare organizations.
5. Conducted medical camps for children with special needs, provided them with various appliances like spectacles, hearing aids etc.
6. Conducted various programs including counseling and classes to help children escape from various bad habits.
7. To improve the hygienic conditions in school and home, we conducted awareness programs and formed groups in class, and assigned a particular area for each group for cleaning, maintaining, growing vegetables etc and provided them with prizes as encouragement. This gave students a good competitive, co-operating spirit, which in turn helped us in the growth of a hygienic and attractive school.
8. Field trips: - conducted trips to various agricultural farms, where students interacted with the farmers and studied about various techniques of farming, crops, type of irrigation and other methods involved in farming. They involved themselves in spreading awareness about organic farming and avoiding pesticides and fertilizers among the farmers.

Other innovative activities in school:

- Organised school councils and pupils and discussed issues in a democratic way. School level and class level councils were started.
- Developed an Integrated School Development Programme with the help of parents and school support group members. Monthly activities included:
 1. Parents meetings
 2. Convergence meeting with Local Self Government

3. Breakfast for economically backward children
4. Vegetable cultivation for mid day meal
5. Monthly house visit by teachers
6. Swimming practice for students
7. Distribution of sports material by Panchayath

Vegetable Cultivation:

With the help of parents and local body, a land space near each school was identified and vegetables were cultivated. This was a high success and the participation of the community was remarkable.

e. Activities done by Gracy T.J.

The change agents in Wayanad got one more member in the year 2008. It was TJ Gracy. She attended the 9th batch of the ITP at Lund. Gracy is the Headmistress of a Lower Primary school, that is GLPS Kaippenchery. She implemented many activities in her school with the help of teachers, parents and the community.

GLP School, Kaippanchery was declared child friendly school in the academic year of 2006- 2007. The school concentrates on the education of rural folk, especially the tribal children from poor, backward families. There are 250 children and 10 teachers in the school.

Activities

- Formed class PPTA executive groups consisting of the class teacher, one mother, one father, one boy, one girl and 2 School Support Group(SSG) members. There are 8 class PPTA executive groups; they together form school executive committee.
 - The respective class executive group visited the home of each and every child in their class and surveyed the various perspectives. They found out the challenges each student was facing such as financial problems, lack of security in home, unhygienic conditions, suffering due to parents drug-alcohol addiction, etc.
 - Conducted a residential camp involving children, teachers and parents in the month of November. We conducted programs like camp fire, work experience class, dance, yoga and games involving interactions between children, parents and teachers, thereby creating a homely and friendly atmosphere in school.
1. This camp brought to light the hidden talents in children coming from various backgrounds.

2. Helped in observing different talents in children, thereby helping shy children to come forward.
3. Helped in improving team spirit and co-operative nature of students.
4. Helped in invoking the confidence, sense of commitment and responsibility and concentration in children with the help of personality development programs like yoga.
5. On the walls of the classes, attractive pictures and paintings were drawn which in turn helped us to make the atmosphere more friendly, and this attracted students to the classroom.
6. We conducted mobile PTA meetings in different areas in the community and spread awareness about child rights, discussed their problems and necessary steps were taken to meet their requirements.

Other innovative activities in school

1. We published class newspapers, prepared by pupils with the guidance of class teacher by forming an editorial board.
2. We set up reading corners in classes for developing the reading habit in children.

House visits: Teachers and executive members of PTA visited various houses in the locality, especially in tribal pockets where most of the parents are illiterate and poor and prompted the parents to admit all children above 5yrs in the school.

3. A warm welcome ceremony was conducted for the children admitted into Std.I for the new academic year 2009-10. The celebration included an inaugural ceremony followed by a welcome dance and songs by senior children. Sweets, balloons and garlands were distributed to the newcomers as a token of love and welcome. There were interactive sessions among teachers and children, which in turn gave a sense of belongingness to teachers and other students.
4. **Observation of World Environment Day:** Children brought various seeds and they planted them in their respective sections in the school garden. Under the guidance of class teachers, each class took the responsibility of a particular part of the school campus and started a nursery of vegetables and flowers. They vowed to take care of the plants throughout the academic year and a prize was announced for the class which develops the best vegetable and flower garden by the end of the academic year. A seminar was conducted in which the Block Panchayath Member gave an awareness class to the children regarding the importance of planting trees and developing an eco-friendly lifestyle, the hazards of deforestation and use of

pesticides and fertilizers.

- 5 Started the provision of breakfast and lunch with the help of government and local self-government, giving emphasis to providing nutritious food to all children especially to those from poverty stricken families.
- 6 Transportation was arranged for tribal children coming from far off places with the funds collected from school PTA as an encouragement for them to come to school.
- 7 Honesty shops are the shops which contain all the necessary items required by the children such as eraser, pen, pencil, book etc in the corner of the class, where there is no particular seller and the child himself buys the required objects depositing the money in the respective box. It in turn gives them the responsibility and the value of being honest in a society. It also helps them in studying arithmetic.
- 8 Organized class PTA executive committee for the academic year 2009-10, to ensure that all the activities aimed at child welfare were going on smoothly.
- 9 Conducted a survey in tribal colonies and identified the pathetic situations of some families, where children lack even the basic requirements of food, clothing and medicines. These children were given their necessary requirements with the help of PTA. After Onam holidays, provision was made to ensure tea and snacks in the evening for children from underprivileged families.

5. Impact of the Projects

The Impact of the Interventions have been remarkable. Mathew Zacharias selected 21 schools as his project schools. All of them became child friendly schools. The other 251 schools are becoming child friendly after the interventions from all the 7 change agents. All the teachers have got training on Child Rights. All the Local body members were trained. All the Headmasters and all the parents were also trained . Now all schools in Wayanad are child friendly. Community participation in school activities has increased. After the training, one panchayath (Sulthan Bathery) organized a function and declared the panchayath child friendly. They also published a palmphet on Child Rights and distributed it to all the schools in the Panchayath.

- The pupils' sense of responsibility has increased.
- Parents are getting involved more seriously in learning activities.
- Children's co-operation and their sense of value have improved.
- The attendance of the children has improved.

- The relation between the parents and the school has improved.
- We have been able to establish a good rapport with the three tier local self government.
- Parents have become confident that their children are safe in the school.
- Parents now get involved in the learning activities of their children with enthusiasm.
- Economically backward parents are happy that children get teaching and learning materials and cloths from the school.
- Parents are glad that children get good food in the school.
- Parents show more responsibility in all matters related to the children.

Way forward

Due to the sustained effort of the seven change agents and the support of their institutions, the district administration and the general public, remarkable success has been achieved in the area of Child Rights in Wayanad district. But the tempo of the initiative has to be sustained through periodic trainings for teachers and awareness programmes for parents and the public. Violations of Child Rights must be sternly dealt with, with the help of the administration and organizations like the Child Line.

There is the presence of a sizeable number of tribal people in the district. A good number of them are educationally and economically very backward. The rights of the tribal children are often neglected. The medium of instruction and the mothertongue of these children are not the same. Therefore they feel alienated in the school. So, steps to attract tribal children to school and to make them feel at home there are the need of the hour in Wayanad. Any future Child Rights initiative in Wayanad must focus on tribal children.



Chapter-5

CRC Activities in Kozhikode District

- *George Joseph*

Name of Change Agents

Dr. I.M. Indira, Principal (*DIET Kozhikode*), Pushpa Mathew (*Teacher, NGO Quarters Govt. HSS, Kozhikode*), George Joseph (*Principal, DIET Kozhikode- on transfer from DIET Kasargod*), Valsala K.K. (*Teacher, NGO Quarters Govt. HSS, Kozhikode*)

1. Introduction

The CRC network in Kozhikode district began when Dr. IM Indira took part in the international training programme on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management. She was the principal of DIET Kozhikode at that time. After her, it was Pushpa Mathew, teacher NGO Quarters Govt.High School, Kozhikode who became a member of the network after she attended the course in Lund in 2008 September – October .Following her ,Valsala KK of the same school also attended the course. George Joseph ,who had attended the training programme in Lund in 2008 while he was working in Kasaragod got transfered as principal, DIET Kozhikode in 2010. All these persons tried to make Child Rights a reality in the district by working together and roping in the support of the government machinery and the public.

2. About the District

Kozhikode District is situated towards the north of Kerala. It has the Arabian Sea on its west and the western Ghats on its east. Wayanad district lies on the other side of the Western Ghats. Kannur district is situated to the north and Malappuram district to the south. The topography of the district comprises a costal area ,midland plains and a hilly region adjacent to the Western Ghats. The total land area of the district is 23444sq.km.



The district has had human habitation from the megalithic period onwards. Several megalithic burial sites have been found in the district, near to the city of Kozhikode which is the district head quarters now. The city of Kozhikode (Calicut as it was pronounced by the British) is a thousand years old. Zamorins, the most powerful kings in Kerala at



Vasco da Gama Visiting the Zamorin, ruler of Kozhikode in 1498

that time shifted their capital to Kozhikode about a thousand years ago. The city is well known in world history as the place where Vasco de Gama landed in his epic journey to find India. Kozhikode city was the headquarters of Malabar district during the British rule. At present, the city has a population of half a million.

The total population of the district is more than three million. Some of the tribes of Wayanad live in the hills bordering that district. The hills and the plains have settlers who migrated from the southern part of the state in the second half of the 20th century. The plains have a mixed population comprising mainly of small time farmers, merchants and artisans. The costal belt has fisher folk, farmers and people working the service sector. A hundred thousand people from the district work outside India, mainly in the Arabian peninsula and the foreign exchange they remit is a major reason behind the well being of a good number of families in the district as is the case of several other districts of Kerala.

3. Project Proposals

a. Activities proposed in Pushpa Mathew's Project

- Study of the conditions of the Government Juvenile Home and the related laws
- Study of the family background and the personal history of the children from the Juvenile Home studying in standard VIIIA;
- Giving leadership role to the children from the Juvenile Home;
- Using the possibility of multiple intelligence (music, dance etc);
- Celebrating birthdays to help each child to develop self esteem
- Focusing on bridging the gap between children from the Juvenile Home and other children;
- Monitoring the progress and giving continuous inputs for three years;
- Focusing on the academic improvement of the children;

b. Activities proposed in Valsala's Project

Workshop on Drama

A Drama camp will be undertaken in the school with participation of all students in the classroom.

Home Visit

To make an effective learning process, we need to know the family background of each and every child. I propose to visit the homes of all children in my class.

Workshop on soap making

Activity based classrooms will automatically generate interest and enthusiasm in their

studies. So, we decided to conduct a half-day workshop on soap making. The main ingredient of this hand-made soap is coconut oil which is cheaply available in Kerala as it is the main crop here. Soap being an essential commodity in day-to-day life, this will help them to make soap for their own use. It will also give self confidence and happiness with this work.

Workshop on Book Binding

Most of the children in my class are using old notebooks of their senior students. I could see that most of them are damaged and the pages are toned-out. That is the reason why I plan to conduct a workshop on book binding. This will help the children to make new notebooks with the unused pages of their old books.

Workshop on story writing

Most of the children have hidden talents in them. This programme will help to promote children's imagination and let them write their expressions and feelings.

Field Trip

Field trip is a part of the learning process. In our curriculum most of the subjects need outdoor experiences. So, we plan to conduct field trips. It will also help to improve teacher-pupil relationship.

Excursion

Children sit in the class from morning to evening which will cause boredom and mental fatigue. In order to relax the pupil, we plan to conduct excursions. Such programmes reduce their mental stress and create a good atmosphere in the school.

Counselling Class

In order to increase children's mental ability, we often conduct counselling classes for the senior batches with the help of clinical psychologists to handle such sessions.

X'mas in Class

As ours is a pluralistic society, we celebrate all religious festivals in our school to develop an understanding of the inter-dependence between society and religion. I plan to make these celebrations more meaningful and lively.

Vegetable Plantation

Our society is deeply rooted in agriculture and it is the main source of income. In order to have a good attitude towards agriculture, we propose to cultivate different plants in our school compound. The crops are also used to make the noon-meal more nutritious.

4. Activities undertaken

- a. Dr. IM INDIRA had selected ANMUP School, Gokhale nagar, Wayanad for implementing her project along with E.P. Sivadasan and O. Sivaraman.

In addition to this Dr. Indira led DIET Kozhikode in a study with the title 'What girls say'. The study was aimed at identifying the problems faced by adolescent girls in the district of Kozhikode. The results of the study were extensively reported by electronic and print media and widely discussed in Kerala.

The main findings of the study are given below

- Girls feel much more comfortable with their women teachers than with men teachers.
- 15% of girl children feel insecure even at home.
- The only solution available to 31.5% of the girls for their mental frustration is to sit alone and cry.
- A good number of girls feel that they are discriminated against on the basis of gender.
- Girls are expected to do much of the chores at home.
- Only a small percentage of the girls are permitted to travel alone or in the company of other girls.
- A positive change has come about in classroom atmosphere. Girls and boys are treated equally in classroom activities.
- Counselling facilities available in schools are not satisfactory.
- As school toilets are not neat and as the number of toilets is not proportionate to the number of girls, only 56.5 % girls use them. As a result many girls suffer from problems related to urinary bladder.
- 18% girls have experienced mental or physical harassment at school. A few cases of sexual harassment also were reported.
- 34% girls have had 'unpleasant experiences' while travelling on buses. Even elderly men have tried to make advances towards them.
- A good percentage of the girls now have mobile phones. 6% of them have experienced sexual advances made through phones.
- Some girls have had bad experiences from persons from whom they least expected them.

- In response to a question ,one girl wrote 'I am disguised with life'.

This study opened the eyes of the authorities and was instrumental in the initiation of several reforms in schools across the state.

The department of education started 'Vigil Committees' in schools all over the state on the basis of the study with a woman teacher in charge of it in each school. In Kozhikode district a full time district level co-ordinator was posted to lead the activities of these committees. The women teachers who are in charge of these committees are called at regular intervals and given short –term trainings in doing their work professionally. Serious cases which they cannot handle at their level are referred to the district co-ordinator who intervenes and gets the help of appropriate agencies including the police when necessary.

b. PUSHPA MATHEW's school is special in that a good number of the children there are inmates of Govt. Juvenile Home , Kozhikode. These children are from difficult backgrounds and some of them have a history of conflict with law. The children experienced lack of acceptance among their classmates. Pushpa's project was aimed at socializing these children through activities in which they had to work hand in hand with the other children in the school. The important activities undertaken by Pushpa were the following:

1. Classroom activities were modified ensuring participation of the children from the juvenile home.
2. Two girls from the juvenile Home were made student librarians so that they would get leadership roles.
3. A medical camp was conducted for detecting the health problems of all the children in the school.
4. Experts were invited and classes were conducted on drug abuse and its consequences.
5. A motivational class by an educational psychologist was arranged.
6. In order to develop the creative talents of the children, a folksong workshop, a theatre camp and a literary camp were organised in the school. Children from the Juvenile Home proved their ability in these camps.
7. Sports competitions were conducted and juvenile home children proved their mettle in sports too.
8. Backward students in the Std. 10 were given an opportunity to remain in the school

after school hours up to 8 pm. to study on their own under the supervision of teachers.

9. Regular visits to the Juvenile Home were conducted to develop a rapport with the children so that they would become confident enough to share their problems.
10. The children were given roles like reading that day's news and presenting 'thought for the day' in the school assembly.
- c. VALSALA KK from the same school attended the training at Lund in the 10th batch. Her project was the continuation of Pushpa's work. After Valsala's return from Sweden, she and Pushpa worked together in their school, focussing on the children from the Juvenile Home.

The additional activities undertaken in NGO Quarters Govt. High School, Kozhikode after Valsala came back from Sweden are the following ;

1. Class and school student councils were organised to give children a chance to air their views and involve them in the process of decision making.
2. A School Protection Group (SPG) was formed with the local inspector of police, political and social leaders, representatives of parents and some prominent citizens in the locality.
3. Visits to the homes of all children were conducted aimed at improving the rapport between teachers, pupils and parents. These visits also led to improved participation of parents in school activities.
4. Soap making : The process of making soap was introduced to pupils and parents. The objective was to teach them a new method to generate some income and to have closer contact with children and parents. The workshop was a pleasant experience to all who were involved.
5. Book binding : A workshop for children and parents in book binding was conducted with the same objective and it went very well.
6. 'My curry' programme : The noon meal given to children was improved with the co-operation of parents. Care was taken to include new dishes and enhance the nutritional content of the food given. Children were encouraged to bring vegetables from home once a week and better curries were made with the help of mothers who came by turn. A vegetable garden was developed in the school and the vegetables produced there were used for improving the noon –meal programme.
7. Camps for writing stories ,poetry and for painting were conducted.

8. Girls were taught fabric painting so as to give them a source of income.
9. Celebrating festivals : Festivals of all religions like Onam, Christmas and Id-ul-fiter were celebrated aiming at developing the spirit of communal harmony and an awareness of other religions.
10. Competitions in floral arrangement , greeting card preparation and Henna Craft were conducted for children.

CRC activities in Kozhikode district received a boost when GEORGE JOSEPH took charge as Principal, DIET kozhikode. Some of the activities done under his leadership are given below.

1. A seminar with the title 'Child Rights–International experiences' was conducted in which Prof. Per Wickenberg and Dr. Mans Swensson of Lund University presented papers. The participants were teachers from all high schools in Kozhikode education district. The seminar was conducted in a dignified and scholarly manner and helped in spreading the message of Child Rights in the district.
2. A district level resource person training was conducted on Child Rights using the module prepared by the State Institute of Educational Management and Training(SIEMAT).These resource persons were used to train sub district level trainers and they in turn gave a one day training in Child Rights to a teacher and a representative of parents from each school. The total number of persons trained was around 2000.
3. A reading material on Child Rights meant for parents was prepared using the funds of DIET Kozhikode. Orientation courses for parents were conducted and the material was distributed.

4. Impact of the projects:

The impact of the study 'What our girls say' was profound. It influenced and became the cause of several activities undertaken at the district and state levels in the area of Child Rights.

The project for change jointly implemented by Pushpa and Valsala brought about several positive changes in NGO Quarters Govt. High school ,Kozhikode. The children from the Juvenile Home, who used to sit as a seperate group in the class earlier, began to mix with the other children. They gradually became confident enough to take-up leadership roles in the class and school. Their confidence level increased remarkably. They won prizes in the school and sub district level literary competitions. Two of the girls from the Juvenile Home who benefitted from the project became

members of a team which produced a children's film. The team won a special reference in the International children's film festival conducted in Hyderabad in 2011.

The interventions initiated by George Joseph helped in spreading an awareness of Child Rights among parents and the teacher community in the district.

5. Way Forward :

Several cases of violation of Child Rights are being reported from the district. More concrete efforts are necessary to sustain the impact created and to improve on it. We need more Change Agents to carry on the work.



Chapter-6

CRC Activities in Kasaragod District

- P. Bhaskaran

Name of Change Agents

George Joseph (*Principal, DIET Kasaragod*), P. Bhaskaran (*Lecturer, DIET Kasaragod*), Carmaly P.A. (*Teacher, Holy Family School, Kumbala*), Anil Kumar V.P. (*Teacher, DIET Lab School, Kasaragod*).

1. Introduction

The task of popularizing the concept of child rights in the schools of Kasaragod district was started in 2009 by George Joseph, then Principal DIET Kasaragod. Subsequently a team of 3 members under the leadership of P. Bhaskaran, Lecturer DIET Kasaragod also got training from Sweden and has been working with a change project in the district. Now Child Rights is not a new concept among teachers and even parents. Schools are fast transforming to provide a supportive and positive environment for children to grow and develop.

2. About Kasaragod District – Its history, topography and demographic features

Kasaragod has been famous since time immemorial due to its location at the north western tip of the state. Many Arab travelers visited Kasaragod between 9th and 14th centuries, as it was then an important trade centre. Mr. Barbose, the Portuguese traveler, who visited Kumbala near Kasaragod in 1514, has given a detailed account of the people of this land. Dr. Francis Buccanan visited Kasaragod in 1800. In his travelogue, he has included information on the political and communal set up in this area. Kasaragod was once part of Kumbala kingdom. The king of Kolathiri was the ruler of the region with Nileswar as his headquarters when Vijayanagar Empire attacked



Kasaragod. The ritualistic folk dance Theyyam depicts this story through its characters representing the king of Kolathiri and those who had helped him against the attack of Vijayanagar Empire.

When this empire declined in 14th century, the administration of this region went into the hands of Ikkeri Naiks. They ruled the region till 16th century. Tippu Sulthan conquered Malabar towards the end of 18th century. After the death of Tippu Sulthan in 1799, the region came under the control of the British. Kasaragod remained under the British rule till India became independent in 1947.

During the freedom struggle, Kasaragod played a prominent role. Later, Kasaragod became a part of Kerala following the formation of the state in November 1, 1956.

The district was formed on May 24, 1984. Kasaragod is known as the land of Gods, beaches, rivers, hills and forts. It is also a land of temples, mosques and churches.

Kasaragod district is rich in folk-culture, visual arts and festivals. The Theyyam, Kolkali, Daff- mutt, Poorakkali, Yakshaganam, Kalampattu, Porattu, Oppana and the Mappillapattu are the art forms popular in the district.

The important crops of the district are Arecanut, Coconut, Rubber, Paddy, Cashew, Pepper, Vegetables, Tapioca, Banana etc. The major languages spoken in the district are Malayalam, Kannada, Tulu, Marathi and Konkani. There are 12 rivers in the district.

3. The project proposals

Activities proposed in George Joseph's Project

- Selecting 15 schools in the district;
- Conducting an in-service course for teachers (about 30) on CRC;
- Implementing CRC in schools with the involvement of PTA and local community;
- Monitoring;
- Collecting success stories;
- Including the concept of CRC in our pre-service teacher education classes.

Project proposal of Bhaskaran, Anilkumar and Carmaly

The title of the project proposal submitted by team India in the 13th batch was: "EMPOWERING STUDENTS FOR PARTICIPATION AND DECISION MAKING IN THE CONTEXT OF KASARAGOD DISTRICT OF KERALA, INDIA."

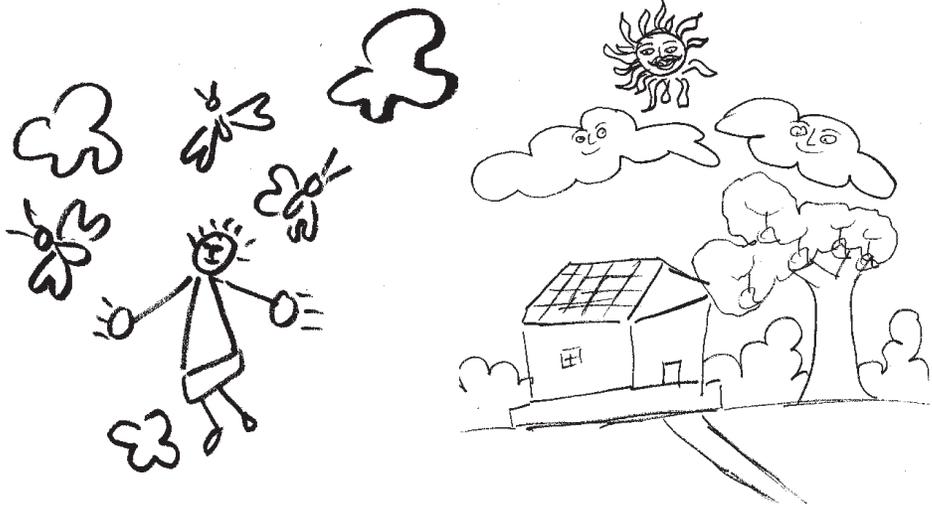
Activities Suggested In the Change Project

1. Workshop for Teacher trainees of DIET Kasaragod on the relevance and practice of CRC.

A one day workshop will be organized for the teacher trainees on the relevance and practice of CRC. A plan of action for practising CRC in the Institute and in the schools (where they are going to go for internship) will be formulated in the workshop.

2. Study on the practice of Child Rights in schools by Teacher Trainees.

A study will be conducted by the teacher trainees to know how far child rights are



being respected in schools. For this purpose tools will be administered in sample schools. The findings of the study will be disseminated.

3. Seminar on 'the Right to Education' in the context of Child Right Convention.

A district level seminar on the 'Right to Education' in the context of CRC will be organized. Educational officers, representatives of teachers, Local Self Governments, NGOs and Teacher trainees will be invited. A plan of action for implementing CRC in the district will be evolved in the seminar.

4. Tie-up programme by Teacher Trainees with 'Child Line' workers of Kasaragod district.

An orientation programme will be organized with the support of Child Line workers to sensitise teacher trainees about the areas of interventions and activities of Child Line workers. Trainees will be formed in to volunteer groups to support Child Line workers in their attempt to save street children, orphans, and children from disadvantaged groups.

5. Strengthening of School Parliament activities.

School Parliament activities will be strengthened by involving students in various school activities right from the planning process to its evaluation. Cleanliness, Safe drinking water, discipline, cultural activities, sports and games, health care are the major areas of student participation. There will be monthly meeting of the Council of Ministers in the schools.

6. Strengthening of Class Council activities.

Class Councils will be strengthened by giving children more opportunity and power to plan and implement activities. There will be 6 groups in each class looking after different areas of classroom activities. They are Cleanliness, Safe drinking water, Discipline, Cultural activities, Sports and games, Health care and Reading Circle.

Each of these groups will have a leader and the area of work or duty rotates among groups at regular intervals. The two Class Council members (a boy and a girl) will co-ordinate all the activities. And there will be monthly meeting to review and plan class council activities.

7. Formation of Code of Conduct in the class and school by the students themselves.

The Class Councils in classes and School Parliament in schools prepare a code of conduct by themselves in consultation with teachers. It will be displayed in classes and in school. Student Box and timely follow-up activities also will be there.

To help students to come up with their issues and grievances a 'Student Box' will be kept; where students can put their problems, grievances and suggestions about school activities on a sheet of paper. A Team will be formed for the timely follow up of the suggestions and grievances.

8. Setting up of a Board in schools to display norms of Child Friendly Schools.

Norms of a Child Friendly school will be formed with the active involvement of Class Councils, School Parliament, the Staff and the parents. The norms so framed will be displayed on a Board.

9. Training in Life skills (Stitching, Book binding, Planting of trees and Chess).

Students will be given training and exposure in different life skill areas (Stitching, Book binding, Planting of trees and Chess) on the basis of their interest and aptitude.

10. Awareness creation among parents on CRC in schools and at home.

Awareness will be created among parents about child rights and its practice in school and at home. For this awareness classes, home visits will be organized.

11. Health Card to all students with the support of Health Dept.

Medical care will be assured to all children with the support of Health Department. A Health Card will be issued. Periodic check up and health education classes will be organized.

12. Preparation of Individual Development Plan of children by involving children and parents.

Individual Development Plan will be prepared for the total development of the children. This has to be done for each child with the involvement of parents and the students. Each child will be treated on the basis of Individual Development Plan. Individual Portfolio will be developed on the basis of Individual Development Plan and Continuous Assessment and feedback.

13. Reading Circle for enhancing the habit of referencing and reading.

To promote the habit of reading and referencing, Reading Circles will be formed. Sufficient number of books for reading and referencing will be collected and kept in the classroom. Children in groups and as individuals will be assigned reading tasks. The whole process will be monitored by groups in turn.

14. 'Kaumarya Deepika'-a programme for girl children (Holy Family ASB School).

Girl empowerment programme 'Kaumarya Deepika' will be continued. A Counseling centre will be started in the school primarily for the girl children. Orientation for mothers and girl children, training in socially useful products and leadership training are the major activities.

15. ICT based classroom teaching-learning process.

Classroom teaching learning process will be made more lively and effective by the use of ICT. Students will be trained in the use of computers in their studies. An electronic library will be set up to help children to have free access in ICT based education.

16. Strengthening of Club activities (Eco, Social Science and Literary club)

Various club activities will be strengthened to create a learning atmosphere in the school. Students will be given opportunities to work in groups and to share their ideas. Day celebrations, fieldtrips, creative works etc will be organized.

4. Activities implemented

a. Activities done as part of the project of George Joseph

JUNE 2009

In Kasaragod District, George Joseph visited the schools selected in June. It was noticed that most of the schools are implementing the programme in right earnest.

The concept of Child Rights had been discussed in joint meetings of teachers and parents' representatives. Display boards have been erected in most of the schools. The writing on the display boards is as follows:

- This school recognizes the rights of the children here.
- Children here have freedom of opinion.
- The teachers and pupils here have a very friendly relation with one another.
- Each child here gets enough attention and care.
- No child is discriminated against here.
- Children here are free from physical and mental torture.
- We are all friends here.

A suggestion box has been placed in each school and a teacher has been given the charge to read the complaints and suggestions put by children in this box. Some schools have conducted awareness programmes for all the parents on Child Rights.

JULY-2009

In July, a team of mentors under the leadership of Prof. Per Wickenberg visited Kasaragod. Dr. Mans Svensson, Mr. Stefan Larson and Mr. Henrik Palsson were the members of the team. They visited two of the schools selected and interacted with the children. The schools visited were Holy Family S B School, Kumbala and DIET Lab School, Maipady.

On the 4th of July 2009, a seminar on Child Rights was conducted in the Collectorate Conference Hall, Kasaragod. The programme was inaugurated by Sri. Anand Singh I.A.S, District Collector. Sri. V. Narayanan, Chairman Standing Committee on Education, District Panchayat Kasaragod presided over the inaugural session.

A seminar paper on Child Rights was presented by Prof. Per Wickenberg. Dr. Mans Svensson, Mr. Henrik Palsson and Mr. Stefan Larson spoke on the different aspects of Child Rights. Sri. Mathew Zacharias, Senior Lecturer, DIET Wayanad, the first person from Kerala to attend the International Course on Child Rights at Lund spoke on the Wayanad initiative on Child Rights. Sri. Nitheesh M. George, Centre Co-ordinator, 'Child Line', Kasaragod shared the experiences of 'Child Line' in the area of safeguarding Child Rights. Sri. Rajan R, Deputy Director of Education in charge of the Integrated Education of Disabled Children in the state of Kerala spoke on the rights of disabled children.

AUGUST-2009

In August George Joseph visited more schools and assessed the progress of the implementation of the programme there. The headmasters and teachers were directed to form vigilance committees in schools to deal with cases of child harassment and to start student councils. Luckily, these instructions had been given to all headmasters in the vacation training given in May. Schools have been instructed to start a Class Student Council in each class division and to form a School Student Council (school parliament) with representatives from all classes.

SEPTEMBER-2009

In the interactions with teachers in September it was found that class level and school level student councils have been started in most of these schools. In the DIET Lab School, George Joseph and two teachers trained and put in charge of the student council have ensured that class and school level Student Councils have been formed and meetings of these councils are held at least once in a month. Children come up with strong views on different aspects related to the school and steps are always taken to meet their genuine demands.

Activities done by Bhaskaran, Anil Kumar and Carmaly

1: Empowering Teacher Trainees of DIET Kasaragod on the relevance and practice of child rights and school management.

The programme was to create awareness among teacher trainees about the relevance and practice of Child Rights in the school context. As part of this a one day training was given to the trainees. The experience of participants was shared. A film was screened for discussion. In addition to this, worksheets, group work, brain storming sessions, power point presentation on CRC etc were there.

2: A Study by Teacher Trainees on the practice of Child Rights in schools

A study was conducted by Teacher Trainees of DIET Kasaragod to understand whether the schools were child friendly. Trainees had gone for internship in these schools.

The following were the areas focused in the study

- a. Whether the schools provide a friendly, rewarding and supportive school environment for the children?
- b. Whether children's cooperation and active learning are promoted?



A classroom in Govt. LP School, Kaippancherry, Wayanad



Pupils in an Alternate School in Wayanad engaged in co-operative learning



'Tree House' for children in ANMuJP School, Gokhale Nagar, Wayanad

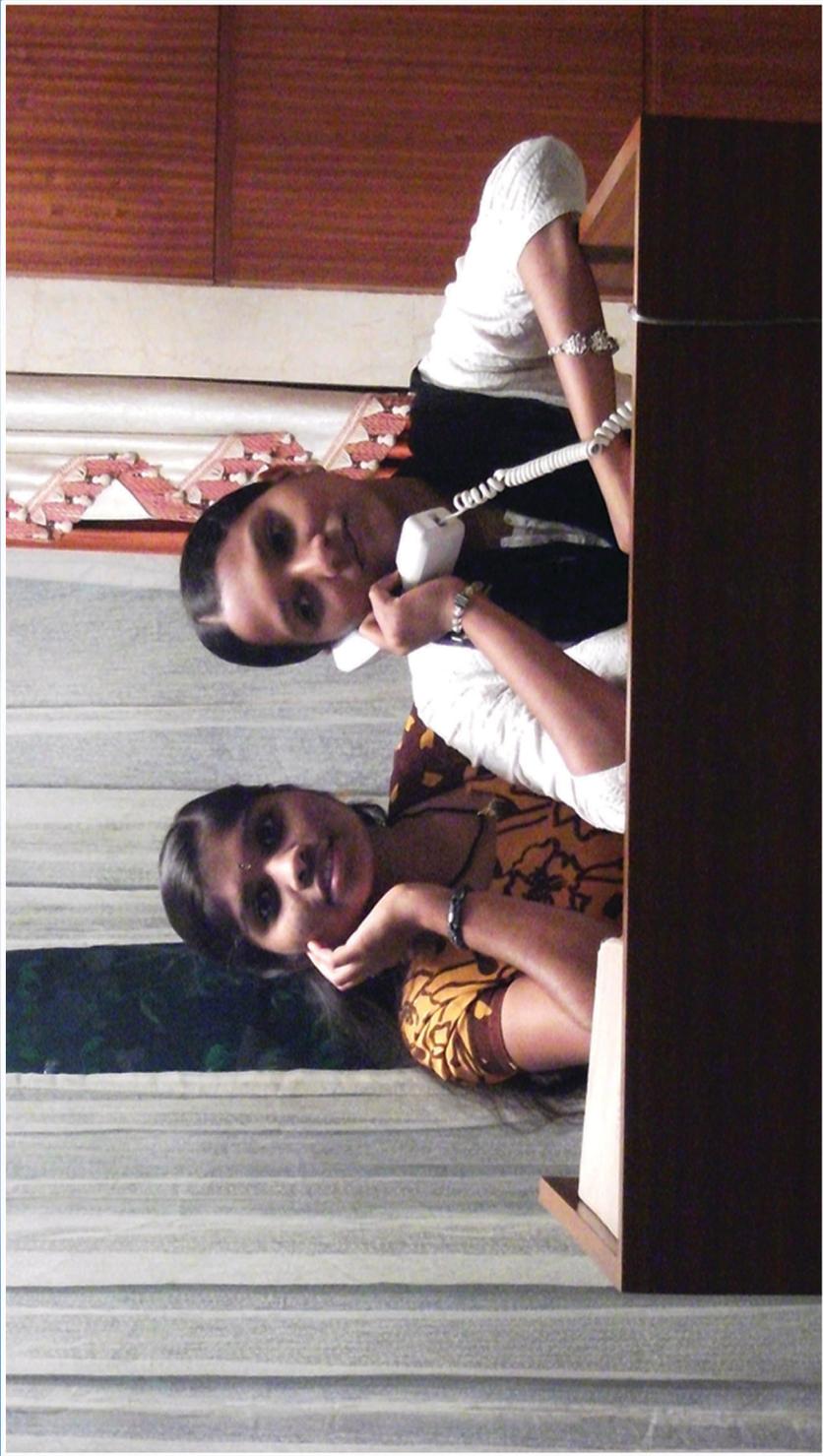




Prof. Per Wickenberg in conversation with students in NGO Quarters Govt. High School, Kozhikode



Drama staged by students of NGO Quarters Govt High School, Kozhikode



Girls from NGO Quarters Govt. High School, Kozhikode who participated in the International Children's Film Festival at Hyderabad in 2011



District Students' Parliament, Kasaragod



Training in Chess, DIET Kasaragod

- c. The involvement of students, parents and the community in school activities.
- d. Promoting equal opportunities and participation of children in decision making.

Eight schools were selected for the study. The tool was designed by the trainees. The data was collected during the time of their internship in the month of January, 2011. A team of 5 trainees were placed in each school for 8 days.

3: Training for Empowering Headmasters on Child Rights in schools

Training was given to 536 Headmasters (Primary and Secondary Schools) to sensitize them on Child Rights and related issues and to empower them to make their schools child friendly. The Training was mainly based on UNCRC. A presentation on the findings of a study by DIET Kasaragod on Child Rights in Schools was also discussed in the training.

4: District level Seminar on Child Rights

A district level Seminar on “Current and Emerging Issues on Child Rights and School Management Practices was organized in DIET on 29th March 2011. The Seminar was to popularize the concept of Child Rights and the need for creating child friendly atmosphere in schools.

The participants of the seminar were representatives of Local Self Governments, HMs, principals, teachers, student leaders, Parent Teacher Association leaders, teacher educators, teacher trainees, DIET staff, NGOs, Child Line workers and leaders of Teachers’ unions. The Seminar was inaugurated by Dr. MA Khader, Director, SCERT Kerala.

The major presentations in the Seminar were;

- a. Child Rights-Protection and Practice in the Kerala context by Advocate Mani.G. Nair, Chair Person, Child Welfare Commission, Kasaragod.
- b. UN Convention on the Rights of Child by Mr.Sreekumar, of Kozhikode DIET.
- c. Issues and challenges faced by our children in schools, at home and in the society by Dr. Krishna Kumar, Director IMHANS Kozhikode.
- d. A Study Report on Child Rights and School Management Practices in High Schools of Kasaragod District” by P. Bhaskaran, Lecturer, DIET Kasaragod.

5: Training to Headmasters/Teachers on School Parliament activities

School Parliament has been visualized as an effective strategy for promoting student’s

participation in school management. As part of strengthening and popularizing School Parliament in schools, a special programme was launched in the month of October 2011. For this purpose 20 schools were selected. Training was given to headmasters and one teacher from each school.

The focus in the training was on the following;

- a. Sensitizing the concept of Child Rights
- b. Ensuring Child Rights through student's participation
- c. School Parliament & Students' participation

Schools were visited and field support was given to all these schools for organising Student Parliament in these schools.

6: District Student Parliament-Leadership Training

A District level leadership training for Upper Primary students was conducted. Selected Student Parliament Members of the 23 schools were given leadership training for the formation of District parliament. The theme of the training was Child Rights and Schools. Sri. KV Kunhiraman, former Member of Kerala Legislative Assembly handled classes for the students.

7: District Student Parliament

A District level Student Parliament was held on 04/01/2012 at DIET Kasaragod. Upper Primary students from 23 schools participated in the programme. The programme was to help students to take an active role as decisionmakers in solving issues related to their own rights in schools.

The President, Prime Minister, Speaker and the Ministers were selected from among the students. They held a special session on that day; the theme was Child Rights and Schools. The various issues related to the rights of children in schools were raised in the Parliament. Students were engaged in serious discussions on the various aspects of these issues and came out with a new ideas to make schools child friendly.

8: Strengthening of School Parliaments in Project Schools

A programme for strengthening School Parliament in DIET Lab School and Holy Family School was started in the beginning of the academic year 2011-12.

A Core Team was formed in these schools for planning and monitoring School Parliament activities. The team sat regularly and planned the activities at each level. The

Portfolios of the ministers were decided-cleanliness, safe drinking water, discipline, cultural activities, sports and games, health care and Reading Circle.

The Parliament has undertaken many activities with the participation of all students. Some of the activities are:

- a. Effective use of library by promoting reading habit among students and encouraging students' visiting school library.
- b. Conducted sports meet and arts meet.
- c. Campus cleaning work
- d. Strengthening of Heritage Museum in DIET (by DIET Parliament).

9: Formation of Class Councils

Class Councils were formed in DIET Lab school and in Holy Family school. A Chairman and a Secretary were elected for each class. Students discussed matters pertaining to their class and school. The Class Teachers gave guidance to the students for convening the meeting. Class Councils were convened once in a fortnight.

10: Formation of a Code of Conduct in the class and school with involvement of students

The Class councils and the School Parliament of DIET Lab School and Holy Family School have prepared a Code of Conduct for the class and for the school in consultation with the teachers. It is displayed in the classes and in the school. It was actually an agreement among students, teachers and the parents for making school effective and child friendly.

11: Student Box and timely follow-up

To help students to come up with their issues and to voice their grievances Student Boxes were kept in both the schools. In the Holy Family School students were given special orientation to develop self esteem and confidence. A team was formed in the two schools for the timely follow up based on student's suggestions and grievances.

12: Erecting of Board in schools to display norms of Child Friendly Schools

Norms of a Child friendly school were framed with the active involvement of students. It was discussed in the School Parliament, in the Staff Council and in the PTA meeting. The norms of a 'Child friendly school' were displayed prominently in DIET lab school and in Holy Family School.

13: Parental Orientation

A parental orientation programme was organized in DIET for making parents aware of many of the aspects of Child Rights. More than 80% of the parents attended the meeting. Importance was given for empowering them to create a conducive learning atmosphere at home.

In Holy Family School awareness was created among parents about Child Rights and its practice in school and at home. For this awareness classes, home visits were organized.

14: Life skill Training for students

The Student Parliament has initiated major activities for developing life skills among students. They are,

- ***Training in Chess***

All the Upper Primary students of DIET Lab school and Holy Family School were given training in the game of Chess. It is a fact that Chess would help students in developing certain life skills such as concentration, self discipline and team spirit. Trained Resource Teachers were invited for training the students. Every day from 3.30 pm to 4.00 pm children in batches practised the game. Master Trainers were identified among the students to train other students.

- ***Training in Swimming***

In DIET Lab School, every week students were given special training in swimming. A nearby pond was used for this purpose. Usually Saturdays were used for this. Most of the students in the Upper Primary classes learned swimming through this programme.

- ***Stitching, book binding, planting of trees***

In the Holy Family School students were given training and exposure in different life skill areas -Stitching, Book binding, Planting of trees, Badminton, Net making etc. Usually children are given training every day at 3.30pm and on Saturdays.

15: Residential camp for students

A Residential Camp for students of Upper Primary classes was conducted in Holy Family School with the active support of parents. It was a leadership camp for both boys and girls.

16: Preparation of Individual Development Plan for children

Individual Development Plan was prepared for the total development of the chil-

dren. This activity was seriously undertaken in Holy Family School. As a beginning it was attempted in one class and an Individual Development Plan was prepared for each child in the class. In this activity the involvement of parents and the students was ensured. Children were individually treated on the basis of Individual Development Plan. Individual Portfolios were also developed on the basis of the Individual Development Plan.

17: Reading Circle for enhancing the habit of referencing and reading

To promote the habit of reading and referencing different strategies were adopted in the two schools. In Holy Family School, Reading Circles were formed. Children in groups and as individuals were assigned reading tasks. Group Leaders monitored the distribution and the reading of books. In DIET Lab School Reading Corners were set up in all the classes. Children's reading habit was promoted through reading competitions, quiz programmes etc. The Kannada language medium teachers collected a large number of Kannada books for the children.

18: "Kaumarya Deepika"-a programme for empowering girl children

Girl empowerment programme called 'Kaumarya Deepika' was implemented in Holy family School with the support of SSA (A Govt. of India Project for education) The programme aimed to develop confidence among girl children to lead a healthy and successful life. A Counseling Centre was started in the school especially for the girl children. Orientation for mothers and girl children and training in socially useful productive work and leadership training were also organized.

19: Strengthening of Club activities

To ensure student participation in various activities through team work various Club activities were organized in DIET Lab School and in Holy Family School. The important Clubs were Social Science Club, Maths Club, Science Club, Road Safety Club, Eco Club and Literary Club. It was ensured that all students were members in one or the other club. Students were actively involved in club activities and worked in teams and shared their ideas. Day celebrations, field trips, creative works etc were organized.

20: Road safety programme

Road safety programme was successfully implemented in Holy Family School. Every day, at 4 pm when the students leave school, the trained 'Students Police' would help other children to cross the road and get into their bus. An awareness class on road

safety was conducted for the students and parents.

The participation of students in Road Safety Programmes led to the Holy Family schools getting two awards-The best school and the best Road Safety Programme Guide teacher award for the year 2010.

5. Impact of the Project

The various activities implemented under the change project have resulted in short term, medium term and long term achievements in the target group. All the activities implemented in this change project have empowered students for participation and decision making in their schools.

The training and the continuous support given to Teacher Trainees of DIET Kasaragod resulted in creating awareness about Child Rights and their relevance in schools. Trainees were able to analyse the Kerala context based on the 3 Ps. And it was concluded that the Participation aspect need to be given more importance in our context. They developed a plan of action for implementing CRC activities in schools.

The study helped the trainees to sensitive and analyse the situation of child rights in schools. They came up with suitable activities for changing the school environment in favor of the child.

The Training given to Headmasters of 536 schools had positive results. Headmasters were sensitized on the present situation of Child Rights in their schools. They regularly assessed and reported the child right situation in their schools based on the tool designed for this purpose.

The training given to Headmasters of selected schools for strengthening School Parliament was another major attempt in this project. School Parliament was activated in 23 Upper Primary schools. In these schools children were given opportunities for participation in almost all the activities of the school. In improving Noon Meal, maintaining cleanliness, participation of all children in the classroom activities and special care to physically and mentally challenged children and girl children were the major areas focused.

The leadership training given to children from 23 schools helped them to organize various activities in their schools with the active involvement of other children.

In DIET Lab School, the Parliament provided a good opportunity for the children to perform as leaders. The girl children were more active than boys. The Parliament

organized cultural fests, camps etc, where everyone was given a chance to participate. Children were given easy access to the library and reading habit was promoted for self development. Children developed the habit of using their spare time for reading in the reading corner.

In Holy Family School Kumbala, the involvement of students in the classroom teaching-learning process was very high. Students and teachers followed a self imposed discipline in their work. The school recognised good practices of students in the morning assembly. Students framed a code of conduct in their classes and for the school. It was observed that students followed the rules they had collectively framed. The orientation given to parents on Child Rights resulted in their active participation in school level programmes. The suggestions and issues raised by parents were discussed in the staff meeting and follow up activities were undertaken. For example teachers gave extra classes for the backward children in hard subjects like Maths and English. A Radio Station called "Rainbow" was set up in DIET Lab School with the support of parents, which helped the students to expose their talents in different areas. Parents now support their children in their learning too.

The reading habit of students was also improved. Those who came first and second in reading competition took part in district level competitions. Two of the students got 8th and 10th positions in the district. Children use their spare time for reading in the reading corner. Some of the children took membership in other libraries in their locality.

The importance of unity in diversity is seen in the School Assembly. Without any compulsion students now maintain discipline and order in the school. They help each other and have started following values of democracy in life.

The Student Box helped to reduce the grievances of children. Every week the teacher in charge opened the box and attended to students' complaints and suggestions. Timely follow up action encouraged children to come up with their genuine problems. They are now more confident and dare to share their feelings and problems with the teachers.

The life skill training given to students – the training in Chess and Swimming improved the level of confidence mainly among girl children. Now they have started training the younger ones of the school. This leadership quality is reflected in their classroom study also. Now they are more active in classroom activities.

In Holy Family school also students became actively involved in life skill related activities. It resulted in products of different varieties. The training in life skills developed a sense of self esteem among students through self initiative in their learning and in other areas of life. The learning achievement of students also improved.

The Kaumara Deepika programme helped children to get awareness about health care. Girl children benefitted more from this. School environment was made hygienic and conducive for learning. Children are now getting healthy and active. Cases of student illness have minimized. The school environment is clean and hygienic.

The positive feedback and support given to students on the basis of Individual Development Plan and Individual Portfolio has helped students to actively participate in the classroom teaching, learning process.

6. Way Forward

We know that Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) is a means of transporting the concept of Child Rights into classroom practice and school management. As a result of the interventions in the last few years, the concept of Child Rights has been popularized among stake holders of school education in the district. The change projects implemented by the earlier team and the present team resulted in substantial changes in the attitude of a group of teachers in the district. More serious attempts should be made to upscale the present initiatives so as to reach the benefits to a larger number of children.

While framing future projects in the district in this area the following basic dimensions of Child Friendly School (as conceived by UNICEF) should be focused.

1. Our programmes and activities should enable the participation of all kinds of children.
2. The school activities should be academically effective and relevant to children's needs for livelihood knowledge and skills. Teachers should be given more freedom to design and implement innovative activities.
3. The School environment should be healthy and safe for, and protective of, children's emotional, psychological, and physical well-being. Clean and accessible drinking water, sanitation facilities, and hygiene education should be ensured.
4. The school should be made gender responsive in creating an environment and capacities fostering equality.

5. We know that community partnership is the key building block in realizing CFS goals. Ensure active participation of students, parents, and community in all aspects of school policy, management and support to children.

The future projects in the district should be made ambitious but realistic; where all the above five elements are to be addressed. There should be a strong team of educational officers at the district level to plan, monitor and support activities at different levels.



Chapter-7

CRC Activities in Malappuram District

- *George Joseph & Babu Varghese*

Name of Change Agents

Dr. C. Naseema (*Professor, Department of Education, University of Calicut*), Dr. I.M. Indira (*Principal, DIET, Malappuram, on transfer from DIET Kozhikode*), Dr. Abdul Gafoor (*Senior Lecturer, DIET, Malappuram*), Muhammed Haris (*Headmaster, AMUP School, Munduparamba, Malappuram*), Ibrahimkutty P.K. (*Senior Lecturer, DIET Malappuram*), Babu Varghese (*Lecturer, DIET Malappuram*), Sherly P (*Headmistress, Govt. LP School, Edivanna Estate, Malappuram*)

Introduction

The first person from Malappuram who attended the training at Lund was Dr.C. Naseema, Professor, University of Calicut. She was a participant in batch eight. She selected Govt. Lower Primary School, Vallikkunnu for her project. She tried to implement CRC in the school with the support of the community. Dr. I.M. Indira was transferred to Malappuram District in 2008 and her presence gave an impetus to CRC activities in the district. In 2009, Dr. Abdul Gafoor, Senior Lecturer, DIET Malappuram and Muhammed Haris, Headmaster, Munduparamba AMUP school attended the programme. Dr. Gafoor initiated several IT based activities aimed at spreading the message of Child Rights in the district. Haris implemented a number of innovative programmes in his school.

Ibrahimkutty P.K. and Babu Varghese working in DIET Malappuram and Sherly P, Headmistress, Govt. Lower Primary School, Edivanna Estate, Malappuram attended the training in 2011. They did a project aimed at ensuring the rights of the tribal children in Govt. Lower Primary School, Edivanna. In addition to this, Babu Varghese



is involved on a full time basis in converting Nilambur Municipality in Malappuram into the first Child Friendly City in India. This remarkable work has been undertaken in a project mode by the Nilambur Municipal Council with the collaboration of UNICEF.

About the district

Malappuram is a district in the state of Kerala, South India with its headquarters in the town of Malappuram. The district was formed on 16 June 1969.

The classic medieval center of Vedic learning and local politics, Thirunavaya, home of the traditional Ayurveda medicine, Kottakkal and one of the oldest centres of education of Islam in the region, Ponnani are situated in Malappuram district along with rapidly expanding towns like Tirur, Manjeri, Perinthalmanna, Chemmad and Edappal. In 1921 the area witnessed a series of devastating revolts and massacres followed by decades of frozen economical, social, and political development. In the early years after independence, Malappuram saw large land reforms under the Land Reform Ordinance. In the 1970s, huge oil reserves of Persian Gulf were opened to commercial extraction, and thousands of unskilled people from the district migrated to "the Gulf" seeking fortunes. They sent money home, propping up a sleepy rural economy, and by late 20th century, the region had achieved for the first time good health standards and near universal literacy. The present development, both economical and social, of the Malappuram District owes much to the Kerala Gulf diaspora.

Malappuram district comprises vast forests and a number of small hills, little rivers and streams flowing to the west, backwaters and paddy, arecanut, cashew nut, pepper, ginger, pulses, coconut, banana, tapioca, and rubber plantations. Malappuram is one of two Muslim majority districts or Union Territories in south India other being Lakshadweep. The Hindu temples and Moplah mosques of the region are known for their colorful festivals. It is the most populous district in Kerala. The population includes Muslims, Hindus, Christians and others.

I. Project of Dr. C. Naseema (Batch 8)

Implementation of CRC in Primary School with the Support of Community

Focus of the project:

Government schools in Kerala State are following an activity based curriculum after the implementation of the programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan(Movement of Education for All). But even now all schools are not child friendly and are not following CRC in a comprehensive sense. It can be identified that there is no complete participation or protection of Child Rights in the schools of Kerala. This project is an attempt to convert a government school to a child friendly school in with the support of the community.

After identifying a Local Self Government (panchayat) which will support the project, one school suitable for the implementation of the CRC was identified. Participation of the children in all activities of the school and protection of the Child Rights in the

school were the major objectives of the project.

Target groups of the project:

a) **Target areas:** Community- here it refers to the people in the Panjayath(local body).

b) **Target group:** Primary school pupils from I to IV Grade.

A government primary school having about 10 teachers and below 200 students was selected for the purpose.

c) **Stakeholders:** Parents, teachers and community as a whole.

Expected Project Outcome(s):

- A child friendly school atmosphere and awareness of the community about CRC.
- Participation of the children in all activities of the school.
- Protection of Child Rights in the school.
- Awareness of CRC among students, teachers and community

What has been done?

A discussion with the Panchayath president and, headmasters was organized. Then the Government Lower Primary School, Vallikkunnu in Vallikkunnu Panchayath was selected for the project work.

First Meeting: A meeting was convened by giving a letter regarding the project to the Headmistress of the school. Then with the support of the Panchayat President, a meeting of parents and teachers was organized. Parent Teacher Association President Mr. Dasan K presided over the meeting. The change agent addressed the parents and teachers and gave an idea about what CRC is. Then a discussion on CRC was held.

Pamphlets prepared quoting important articles of CRC were distributed to them. The parents and community members were motivated by highlighting the importance of CRC. Then a plan of action for the implementation of CRC was roughly prepared. It included the conduct of a workshop for the stakeholders with the classes and discussion of experts from the field of Child Rights and Education. After that practical suggestions for the implementation of CRC in classroom were drawn.

Necessary directions for the implementation were given to teachers. The headmistress agreed to assist them.

What results/observations have been obtained?

In India, Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) is a Constitutional man-

date and commitment. Universalization implies providing free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of fourteen years. The context of UEE has undergone many changes. The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002 provides the status of fundamental right to Education and the Right to education Act was implemented.

Observation of school activities revealed the following:

Government Lower Primary School, Vallikkunnu has a congenial atmosphere for the implementation of the project on CRC. The headmistress, teachers, parents and the community related to the school are highly supportive in the implementation of the idea of CRC.

Method of Teaching : Since the curriculum of Kerala follows an activity centered approach , some aspects of CRC have been already implemented in the curriculum itself. Also, the curriculum of the state does not promote any discrimination based on sex, culture or socio economic background of the students.

Classrooms: Though teachers follow activity oriented teaching methods, the seating arrangements in all the classrooms were not suitable for the activities.

How to continue?

Formation of students Council:

A students council was formed in the school with the following structure:

Patron	: Headmaster
Chairman	: Selected by the students
Secretary	: Selected by the students
Executive members	: Student representatives of all classes

The students' council met every month for discussion of progress of learning, problems associated with the students, demands from the students for the smooth functioning of school etc. A minutes book was kept for the students council meeting. The decisions of the council were conveyed to the headmaster by the chairman after every meeting.

It was observed that the decisions/ suggestions put forth by the students' council were discussed in the parent teacher association(PTA) and many of the suggestions were implemented by PTA in the school.

For example, demolition of the old, unused building of the school and construction of a good playground and a garden in front of the school were the recommendations of the students' council.

In 2011 December, PTA implemented the suggestions and now the school has a good playground and a garden in the front.

Workshop on CRC:

A one day workshop on CRC was conducted for the LSG members, by the school. For the workshop, Multimedia presentation and discussion methods were used.

Classrooms:

The seating arrangement in all the classrooms was not suitable for activity centered approach. Special care was taken for making the activities in the classroom more effective by providing suitable seating arrangements .

Modification of the classrooms:

Classroom of standard I was painted with pictures of insects, small creatures ,animals etc. in order to facilitate learning and to create a joyful atmosphere in the classroom in 2009. In 2010-11, the panchayat provided classrooms of standard II, III and IV with blackboards on the walls (by painting walls in black to use them as blackboard)so that the students can write or draw freely on them.

The project had a mentionable impact on the atmosphere of GLPS, Vallikkunnu. The Change Agent believes that the Project on CRC succeeded to a great extent in contributing a child friendly atmosphere and facilities in the school with the help of the participation of Parent Teacher Association and the support of the panchayat.

**II. Project Dr. Abdul Gafoor, Senior Lecturer, DIET
Malappuram (Batch-10)**

Project Proposal:

Objectives

1. To form and to make function the CRC (Child Right Cell) in the proposed school with the equal participation of children , teachers and parents.
2. To make parents and teachers aware of Child Rights through workshops.
3. To make the classrooms fully child centred through the suggestions and participation of the CRC members.
4. To conduct various inhouse and outside activities to boost children's creativity and

to find the means for communicating it through magazines, exhibitions, children's fairs and festivals

5. To utilize various means of communication such as brochures, pamphlets, posters and websites to make teachers and parents aware of Child Rights and related issues.

Target groups of the project:

a) Target areas: The programme has to be implemented in the two schools of MALAPPURAM and KOZHIKODE. They are

1. Aided Mappila Upper Primary School, Munduparamba, Malappuram(Dt), where Mohammed Haris is working
2. GHSS NGO Quarters, Calicut, where Valsala is working

b) Target groups: The following are identified as the target groups in this project work.

1. Parents
2. Teachers
3. Children
4. Headteachers

Expected Project Outcome(s):

1. The present project endeavours to develop a participatory environment in the suggested schools in the decision making process especially with regard to the issues related to children
2. A conducive climate can be developed in the schools making them Child Friendly through awareness workshops to be conducted for the parents and teachers.
3. Creative expressions of the children could be maximized through various means and it will empower all stake holders who participate in the schooling process
4. An effective communication network can be developed throughout the project areas through the Web Site of DIET, posters, pamphlets and others.

Indicators

1. The schools will have classes with comfortable seating and other arrangements for groups work and other activities.
2. Creative expressions can be expressed through the bulletin boards, magazines,

fairs and festivals

3. Pamphlets and posters could be used for conducting awareness programmes for teachers and community members.
4. Modules could be prepared for the workshops for the teachers and parents.
5. Web site links can be made available for communicating various information
6. Various situational tests could be used in the schools for knowing the child and boosting their morale.
7. Documentation of scheduled programmes through various means such as photos, compact discs, children's diaries, school calendar, etc will also be in the schools and it will guide them later for framing various other empowerment programmes.

1. Website Link on Child Rights

Started a Web link for Child Rights (www.dietmalappuram.org)

Features:

- Link with a head 'Children's corner'
- Children's corner with
- Introductory page
- "Read more" button
- When 'read more' is clicked it will lead to a page with various websites on Child Rights and learning.
- Besides it also includes two other buttons, Child Rights(PDF document prepared for familiarising teachers on CHILD RIGHTS) and Right to Education bill (India).

Website Home Page

Children's Corner

Children's corner Read more

Child Rights –PDF Document

A thirty three page PDF document was prepared in this regard and posted to the link in the website .

Right to Education Bill (India)

IT Training to Heads of the Schools and Teachers

Five day IT training programmes for Heads of the schools and school teachers in DIET Malappuram, Kerala were organized. In the training, one day is utilized to

familiarise each participant to the Web site and children's corner by browsing the web site.

Besides, teachers were familiarised with the blog on children CHILD IN NEED .Email messages were sent to all Educational Offices in Malappuram district to inform all school heads to visit the blog and to send the photos from their schools as their contribution to the blog. Besides, the innovative activities conducted in the schools of the other change agents are also added to the blog.

Blog on children

A photo blog has been developed to display the various works done in schools (both SIDA project participants and others) www.creativechild.wordpress.com

Accordingly various schools sent their photos to the blog for depicting the activities undertaken in the schools to boost the creativity of the children.

III. Project Activities in AMUPS Munduparamba by Mohammed Haris (Batch-10)

Mohammed Haris is heading this school and we conducted various activities in the school on the CRC elements, especially focussing on PARTICIPATION.

Activities Undertaken:

The activities conducted in the school are listed here , especially with regard to the classroom as an enjoyable unit in the school.

1. Science workshop (October -2009)

One of the activities undertaken in the school is a workshop on science experimentation, where the students participated in the various scientific activities. The workshop was led by an expert in experiments for one day. The main activities undertaken in the workshop were;

- a. Demonstration and discussion
- b. Group activity - students doing experiments in the workshop

2. Work experience for exploring the creativity of the children

Various activities were undertaken in this dimension .This was to explore all possibilities to utilise various capacities of the students at the best. Some of the activities are given below:

- a. Clay modelling
- b. Painting

- c. Model making
- d. Origami
- e. Flower making through origami

3. Healthy body for healthy and creative individual

Under this banner we conducted two main programmes in the school. They were;

a. Global Hand Wash Day – October 2009

This was a district level programme organised for increasing the awareness of the children on health. Various district level officials participated in the programme.

The programme was well organised. UNICEF also sent its special letter to the school to organise such district and local level programmes on hand wash day.

Medical Camp for the Students

A medical camp was organised with the support of the nearby Government Homoeo Hospital. The camp was followed by the distribution of the needed medicines to the students.

World Food Day (October -2009)

On this day all students brought many leafy vegetables prepared by their mothers and exhibited them in the classes. The exhibition was followed by a lunch by sharing all those food items. This helped to have a clear idea about various leafy vegetables in the surroundings and to create an attitude among the students to include vegetables in their daily food.

4. National Integration Activities

Many activities were conducted in the school in this regard such as ;

- i. Special publications for the day by the students
- ii. Club level activities, public marches and march past of various students' club workers were also conducted in the school
- iii. Guides -40 girls are members of it.
- iv. 30 boys form this union – The Cub
- v. 30 girls from Lower primary classes form Bul Bul
- vi. National Integration Day-2010 – Students Public March
- vii. Band troupe march- January 2010

Literary Activities

In AMUPS Munduparamba , we conducted many literary activities in connection with the classroom works. We have a literary club in the school, named 'Vidya Rangam' (Knowledge Arena) . It is very active and many programmes are conducted under its banner.

1. Publications – Classroom magazines

From each class division , we published individual manuscript magazines as a part of the daily class work and on special occasions.

Kerala textbooks are issue based and students have to confront with various social issues and accordingly a number of creative and constructive literary written works are usually generated out of each class.

2. Trees to tell stories

This is another activity carried out in the school , here students constructed many story telling trees and exhibited them publically in th school.

3. Book Exhibition

- Stories written by the children in the school were exhibited for other children to read.

District level Magazine Preparaion

Students participated in the district level competition on the onsite magazine preparation and won the first prize in it . They produced the magazine NIRANGAL (Colours).

- Manuscript magazine – first prize in the district.
- School Inland Magazine 2010-02-10

An inland type magazine was published in February 2010 and it was distributed to all students. It includes various creative literary expressions of the children

Inland magazine 2010

Galileo Little Scientist Programme 2009-2010

In AMUPS Munduparamba certain activities are carried out to ensure students' participation in the class room activities. As the *Galileo little Scientist* was a programme launched in the state of Kerala to boost scientific temper among the students, the same programme was undertaken in the school with a different vision. Some of the activities were the following:

1. Role Playing

A role play was organised in the school and all science club members participated in it. The theme of the role play was the Solar System. Students planned and took various roles in this and demonstrated it publically.

2. Public Rally

As a part of Galileo Little Scientist Programme we conducted a public procession with placards, bandset and models of various space rockets to create public awareness on scientific expeditions..

3. Sky watch – 14th January 2010.

A night camp was organised in the school to observe different galaxies. An expert from outside assisted for explaining the night sky. The day time was used the students to prepare the solar filters to watch the the Solar Eclipse that observed on 15th January, 2010.

On the day of the Solar Eclipse, we observed it as day to watch the eclipse with the the self made solar filters.

Activities conducted on 14th and 15 th January 2010

- On 13-01--2010 a public survey on the awareness of the people about solar eclipse was conducted by the students by visiting the surrounding places and collecting public opinion . The data were analysed and results generated.
- 14-01-2010 Solar Filters were prepared in all classes.They also made solar mirrors and other means to watch the eclipse.
- Night camp
Science club members participated in it.An expert led the session at night and students spent that night in the school itself.
- 15-01-2010 Solar Eclipse observation
- Seeing the sun through coloured water
- Watching with solar reflecting mirrors (Students made)

Study Visit

Specific study visits were also conducted in the school to various places as a part of the classroom work.

- Water treatment plant laboratory

- Visiting the paddy field
- School Fest 2010

A school anniversary fest was also organised in the school in which all students participated in various cultural activities like;

1. Reciting poems
2. Singing
3. Dancing
4. Theater games
5. Action songs
6. Invitation cards prepared by the students
7. Annual day

Social science activities

Certain activities were undertaken in this direction too. Some of them are;

1. The school students' council formation and meeting the students representatives
Students council meeting – Open discussion
2. Constructing Local history – We conducted this by discussion with the old people who live in the surrounding places. The discussions were videographed and the video was viewed by all upper primary school children of the school.

Parental Meeting

The parents assembled in the school on various occasions this year. The parent teacher combined meetings were held under various banners such as ;

1. General Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Meeting held once for discussing the general issues .
2. CPTA gathering – Conducted twice and it was organised for meeting parents class wise to discuss the assessment data regarding students.
3. Mother PTA – Met once and it was held to give guidance to mothers.

Survey on the students by the students -2010

The students council members decided to conduct a survey on all students to know them personally well. They prepared a tool to collect data from all students. The work will be completed in the coming months and we decided to make a class wise personal portfolio with it.

The students' council activities will be strengthened in the coming months and more other activities can be expected from here

Photo Calendar in each class

Students' council also decided to create a photo calendar for all classes including the photos of all students in a class. It was completed by July 2010.

Physical Features Updating- Computer Lab

The computer lab was updated in the year 2010 as new computers were donated by a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) Kerala (He provided two new computers) and a Member of the Indian Parliament (MP)- provided two computers. They were inaugurated on 19th February 2010.

IV. Project of Ibrahimkutty, Babu Varghese and Sherly (Batch-15)

Project Proposal:

Applying CRC for effective learning at school to overcome the negligence from home with special reference to tribal pupils in Government primary school, Edivanna Estate, Nilambur of Kerala State.

The school selected for the project is Government primary school, Edivanna Estate, which is situated in a tribal belt. There are 360 pupils studying in this school out of which 58 belong to scheduled tribe or scheduled caste communities.

There are certain issues pertaining to these pupils such as irregularity in attending school, low participation in school level learning process, weak support from parents, low availability of learning materials, poor nutrition, lack of health care, alcohol and drug abuse at home and poor mental health. We expect to transform the situation existing in this school into a child friendly one in order to include all children irrespective of their ethnic, cultural, social or economic diversity.

Purpose and stakeholders

1. The learning atmosphere at home will be different as there is no separate learning space and materials.
2. The attitude of parents towards the education of their children will also be different.
3. The concern of the LSG members and Department Officials towards the right education of these children is different.

4. The food and medical support provided to these children are different.
5. The attitude of parents towards ensuring the regular attendance of their children is different.
6. The concern of teachers for ensuring the participation of tribal children in the learning process is different.
7. The availability of learning materials including reference materials in the school and classroom for these students is different.
8. The opportunity for participating in the co-curricular activities for these children is different.
9. The opportunity for expressing the creative talents for these children is limited.
10. The opportunity for developing and physical and mental health of these children is different.

What is to be changed?

As change agents, our vision is to transform the selected school into a child friendly one (CFS) in order to ensure implementation of child rights. This includes seeking out and enabling participation of all children especially those who are different ethnically, culturally, linguistically, socio-economically and in terms of ability. Another one is academic effectiveness and relevance to children's needs for life and livelihood, knowledge and skills. Another concern is health of children and their emotional, psychological and physical well being and also fostering equality especially in terms of gender. We are focusing on family and community participation in all aspects of school policy, management and support to children.

The existing situation in the school requires a wide range of change for ensuring CRC in terms of Provision, Protection and Participation in the following areas:

1. Learning Atmosphere
2. Attitude of Parents
3. Awareness of LSG members and Department Officials
4. Food and Medical Support
5. Motivation of Parents
6. Teacher Concern over tribal children
7. Availability of Co-curricular activities

8. Opportunity for developing creative talents
9. Provision for developing Physical and Mental health.

Target groups and stakeholders

357 pupils studying from pre-primary to grade 4, 58 tribal children as special focus group, parents of tribal children, members of Local Self Government (LSG) and departmental officials were selected as the target groups.

School Selected for the Tryout

Govt. LP School Edivanna Estate, Kerala, India

For applying CRC among tribal students Team India selected Govt. Lower primary school Edivanna Estate in a tribal pocket and the school is situated in socially and economically backward area. Among the 361 students from class I to IV 60 belong to primitive tribes.

Issues identified during the study

Irregularity in attending school, Low participation in learning process, Weak support from parents, Low availability of learning materials, Poor nutrition, Lack of health care, Alcoholic and drug abuse at home were identified as the issues during our try out.

Activities done

For the fulfillment of the dream project we conducted different activities.

1. Equipped the departmental Officials

For ensuring the participation of the education department we conducted discussion with different officials in the department and introduced the project.

2. Initial meeting of Stakeholders

We conducted a meeting of stakeholders on 20th October 2011 at Govt. LP. School Edivanna in which LSG President and all members, DIET Principal, DIET faculties, Members of PTA (Parent Teacher Association), a Psychologist, Teachers and Students' council members participated. We presented the project proposal, familiarized the project plan and also formed a working group.

3. Orientation of Parents on CRC

On 11th November 2011 we conducted an orientation programme for parents on CRC. All parents participated. They were familiarized with CRC. The parents recognized that the existing facilities in the school were not sufficient. It was decided to provide more facilities in school and at home.

4. Vision Workshop-2 days

Conducted a 2 day vision workshop on CRC Implementation on 21st and 25th November. Several officials from different departments participated:

5. School Beautification

As a part of implementing CRC we started school beautification and arranged a children's park in the school.

6. Building as a Learning Aid (BALA)

As a part of the project we made the school building a learning aid by painting numbers on steps and Angle concept through doors and windows.

7. Drinking Water

We provided drinking water(both boiled and cold) facilities in the classroom, steel kettle & glass to all classes.

8. Multi Dimensional Learning Corner (MDLC)

Learning corners were arranged in each classroom with various learning materials and articles.

9. Vegetable & Herbal Gardens

As a part of the project, students Teachers and Parents developed a vegetable & Herbal Garden in the school compound.

10. Play Ground and Training Equipments

Modified the school playground and provided sports equipments.

11. Outdoor Sitting Arrangement

Outdoor sitting arrangements were arranged for students under shade of trees.

12. Smart Classroom

With the help of the MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly Kerala) we set up a smart classroom in the school.

13. Learning Centre in Tribal Colony

In order to ensure CRC in the tribal hamlet, we planned to establish a learning centre there. For this we conducted a discussion with various officials including the minister for tribal development and leaders of the tribal hamlet. A site was identified at Peruvampadam Tribal Colony. We prepared a plan and estimate. It was approved by the Tribal Department and the final project has been submitted to NIRMATHI.

14. Teachers conducted house visit

To identify the problems faced by the students and parents the teachers conducted house visits.

15. Support to tribal students

Conducted Medical camp, supplied allopathic and ayurvedic medicines. Developed health card and also conducted orientation on health and drug abuse.

16. Provided Nutritious Food

- Mid Day Meal on all days
- Milk 2 days in a week
- Egg and fruits once in a week.

17. Orientation for Teachers

Conducted a one day orientation programme for teachers in the school and sensitized the issues pertaining to Tribal Children.

18. Provided equal opportunity to tribal children

For ensuring equal opportunity to Tribal students we conducted the following programmes:

- Inclusion of Tribal Students in Students' Council.
- Involvement in classroom activities.
- Participation in study trips.
- Ensuring the involvement in sports & Games
- Publishing magazines and news papers.
- Special coaching in performing arts.
- Ensuring physical and mental health.
- Talent scan and performance fest.

Impact of the project:

As decided, our objective was to implement the elements of Child Rights in the selected school in order to empower all the children to participate in all learning activities irrespective of their socio-economic and cultural variance. With this end in view, certain programs were implemented in this school during this short period. The results of the initiatives based on the indicators are given below.

1. The parents, teachers, local community leaders and the related department officials who attended the visioning workshop were motivated towards ensuring Child Rights in providing all the supportive elements in the selected school. The community leaders came forward to provide facilities such as painting of school walls with fantasy pictures, providing posts and stands for placing drinking water in front of all classrooms.
2. The community leaders and parents took initiative to collect children's literature and materials for little scientific experiments for keeping in the Multi-Dimensional Learning Corner set up in the classrooms.
3. Pupils collected local herbs from their home surroundings and came forward to plant them in the herbal garden set up in the school premises.
4. The existing playground was made accessible to all children. The teachers and parents collected some play equipments. The involvement of all students in one or other games on all working days in the evenings is ensured.
5. Outdoor classes under the shade of trees were set up which provide a conducive atmosphere for the informal learning of students, where children can now freely interact with teachers.
6. The Member of Legislative Assembly sponsored computers for setting up of smart classroom. Now the children belonging to the tribal community get an opportunity to use the computers in their learning process for the first time.
7. The meeting organized in the tribal hamlet for seeking the chance of opening a learning centre in the hamlet (at Peruvampadam Tribal Colony) was an eye opener to the Local Self Government members, Tribal Department Officials and tribal parents for providing an apt learning situation to the tribal children around their homes. That is why the department developed a project to set up a permanent learning centre in the hamlet.
8. Ensured nutritious food to all children by providing morning food and lunch everyday and eggs and bananas twice a week. The teachers commented that, though this attempt, the children especially those belonging to tribal communities can now actively participate in all activities, even in the evening games full of energy.
9. The medical camp organized in the school helped the teachers and parents to know about the health condition of the children especially the tribal children.

Health cards are being issued to all children.

10. A one day orientation was organized for all teachers in this school. The teachers now say that the child right based approach has the potential of contributing to the broader efforts of improving educational quality and efficiency. Schools and classrooms that are protective, inclusive, child centered, democratic and participatory have the potential to solve problems such as non-attendance and drop out.
11. After the visit to children's houses, the teachers commented that, this enabled them to alter negative attitudes through practice of tolerance, democracy and respect to all children in their classroom.
12. The tribal children are of the opinion that, the protection given by the peers and teachers really motivated them to actively participate in creative programs, field trips, performing arts, sports and games. They are now becoming even group leaders which is a new experience for them.
13. The local community was motivated to develop a comprehensive institutional plan for the school covering all aspects of the development of the school and submitted it to the State Government for approval.
14. The teachers themselves developed skills, understanding and attitudes in favour of right based educational work at class and school level, taking into consideration their experience during house visit and discussion with us.

Child Friendly City Project - NILAMBUR

Apart from the project at Govt. Lower Primary School Edivanna, we have initiated the Child Friendly City project under Nilambur Municipality. It is a comprehensive educational programme. The major objective of the programme is to make the entire Municipality a child friendly one. As a pilot project of the Govt. of Kerala, various agencies are actively participating in the project including UNICEF.

Activities conducted

In order to fulfill the Dream Project 'Child Friendly City,' various programmes were conducted with the initiative of Change Agents in Malappuram District. The experience we got from Sweden helped us a lot to implement the Child Friendly City project. At the beginning we conducted a vision workshop with the participation of various department heads in our state. The highlights of the programme are given below

- Child protection council under Nilambur Municipality.

- Child protection councils in all schools
- Toll free helpline number to all students and parents in our Municipality
- Suggestion boxes in all schools.
- Student Parliament in all schools.
- Municipal Student Parliament
- Service of Child Protection Officer and Councilor in all schools.
- Child friendly atmosphere in all schools
- Special practices (Yoga, Motivation classes) to enhance child mental health.
- Special practice in communicative English with the support of native speakers from Britain.
- Special training on Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Handbook on Child Rights for all children in all schools.
- Ensuring participation of all students in various activities .

Way forward

Malappuram was backward in Education till recently but the district has been making rapid strides of late. Prevalence of child marriage and the percentage of school drop-outs was comparatively high here but due to increased awareness and the intervention of progressive political leaders, notable change has occurred in these issues. The Child Rights initiatives in the district, especially the 'Child Friendly City' project in Nilambur have had a remarkable impact and the message is spreading in the district. The objective in this district in future must be to take forward the remarkable work started so that Malappuram can come out of the image of a backward district where social evils like child marriage prevail and education practices with the least regard to Child Rights are undertaken.



Chapter-8

CRC Activities in Kannur District

- *Baby George, Francis P.D.*

Name of Change Agents

Baby George (*Block Programme Officer, SSA Iritty*), Francis P.D. (*Headmaster, Ambayathode, UP School*), K.M. Marykutty (*St. George's UP School, Kacherykadavu*).

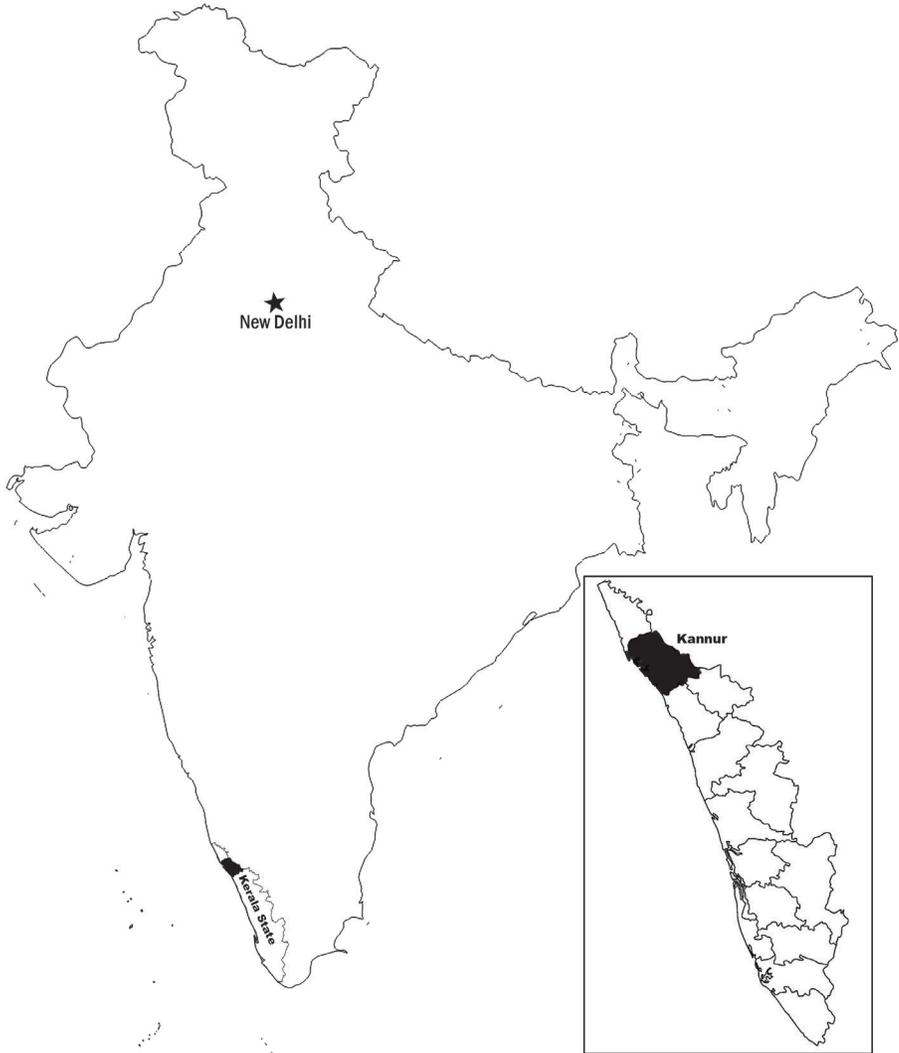
Introduction

Kannur is known as the land of looms and lores. It is situated in the northern part of Kerala. Activities based on Child Rights inspired by SIDA, were spreading fast in the neighboring districts. Kannur could not join the endeavor due to lack of CHANGE AGENTS. In May 2011, team India to the 14th Batch of the training in Child Rights Classroom and School Management, organized by SIDA, conducted by Lund University, was from Kannur. Baby George (Block Programme Officer Iritty, SSA Kerala), P D Francis (Headmaster Ambayathode U P School) and K M Marykutty Headmistress St.George's U P School Kacherykadavu, were the members.

Inspired by the training received from Lund University, we the Change Agents undertook a project named "POSCID INDIA"(Participation Of School Children In Decisions)and started implementing the project and other activities based on Child Rights after returning from Sweden.

II. About the District

Kannur is a northern district of Kerala, Kasaragod being the only district situated farther north. Kozhikode lies to the south and Wayanad is situated to the south-east. Coorg district of Karnataka State is located towards the east and the Arabian Sea is the western boundary. The town of Kannur is the district headquarters and gives the

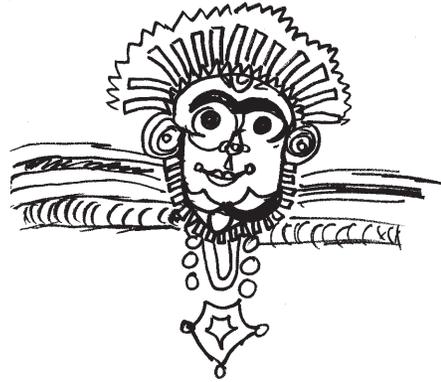


district its name.

Kannur is known as the land of looms and lores because of the handloom industry flourishing in the district. Folklore tradition is very strong here which find their expression in Theyyam, a ritual dance. The total land area of the district is 2966 sq.km. The earliest evidences of human habitation in the district are rock-cut caves and megalithic burial sites. The district was part of the Chera Kingdom during the first several centuries of Christian Era. Then the area was ruled by Kolathiri Rajas who

had trade links with Arabia and Persia in 12th and 13th centuries.

The total population of the district is nearly two and a half million. A majority of the population depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihood. The main crops grown in the district are paddy, coconut, pepper, cashew, tapioca, arecanut and plantation crops like rubber. The literacy rate is 92.8%.



Kannur district has a vibrant social life. The people of the district are known for their strong political views and progressiveness.

III. Project plan

Project Title: POSCID (India)

(Participation Of School Children In Decisions)

Frame of reference:

Kerala has great reputation in Education. We are far ahead of the other states in India in ensuring provision and Protection of children. Article 12 of CRC ensures Children's right to act and take decisions. The Right to Education Act (RTE INDIA-2009) and a revised curriculum have been implemented in Kerala. But our tradition and belief about the child is that 'a child is still a child' who is not capable of taking decisions. In this context, we, the participants of the 14th batch from India, decided to ensure PARTICIPATION of pupils.

We are part of a network of change agents in Kerala in this mission.

Project duration: 2 years

The focus area of the change agents from Kannur is Iritty; the largest Educational Sub district in Kerala.

It is a remote and hilly area in Western Ghats. 102 schools ,3600 students and 1500 teachers are there in the area. But the project POSCID India is mainly focused in 5 target schools in this Educational Sub District.

Purpose:

To ensure CRC by providing space for PARTICIPATION in decision making processes for school children in Primary schools.

1. OUTCOME (Medium term results)

- Preparing the ground for the Project.

OUTPUT (Short term Results)

- Positive approach from the community.

Indicators

- Positive talk among the stakeholders
- Positive media coverage.
- Rapport with the higher authorities, presence of higher authorities in project activities, minutes of discussions etc..

Activities

1. Experience sharing with pupils staff and parents
2. Meeting with managers, Educational officers.
3. Meeting with the Member of Legislative assembly, local self Government functionaries
4. Press conference

Monitoring Tools

Observation, News Coverage, Telephone calls

Duration: 2 Weeks Responsibility Change agents

2. OUTCOME (Medium term results)

Student councils established in 4 to 6 schools in IRITTY SUB DST, KANNUR, KERALA, INDIA

OUTPUT (Short term Results)

Formation of student councils

Indicators

Presence of student councils in schools

Democratic atmosphere in schools, i.e. election of representatives, discussion with pupils in learning activities, better achievement in learning even by slow learners.

Activities

1. Awareness programme for Headmasters and BRC trainers
2. Selection of target groups (4-6 schools) selection criterion –volunteering
3. Meeting of students from target schools
4. Formation of Class/School Councils
5. Periodic meeting of school councils.

Monitoring Tools

Written document (school council format)

Interview, evaluation sheets, observation.

Time: 2 months

Responsibility: Change agents (Baby George, P.D Francis, K. M. Marykutty) & trainers

3. OUTCOME (Medium term results)

Transformation of Parent Teacher Association to Student Parent Teacher Association (PTA to SPTA)

OUTPUT (Short term Results)

Formation of SPTA (Student Parent Teacher Association)

Indicators

1. Presence of SPTA in schools
2. Satisfaction of pupils in implementing their decisions, school level functions of the pupils by the pupils for the pupils, confident interactions etc.
3. Volunteering of pupils in school activities

Activities

1. Combined seminar of Headmasters, Staff secretary/Senior Assistant, PTA/MPTA presidents, Student council-representatives, Local self government of target Schools
2. Formation of school parliament and cabinet
3. Election of student representatives to SPTA
4. Declaration of SPTA in target schools
5. Time bound meeting of SPTA

Monitoring tools

Observation, Interview, Questionnaire

Duration : One Year

Responsibility: change agents and target schools

4. OUTCOME (Medium term results)

Target schools transformed to Child Friendly Schools

OUTPUT (Short term Results)

School involving in child friendly activities

INDICATORS

1. School Level functions of the Pupils by the pupils for the Pupils
2. Increased involvement in learning activities of pupils including slow learners
3. Behavioral change in teachers and parents (Listening to children)
4. Falling Rate of drop outs especially in tribal areas

ACTIVITIES

1. Awareness programme for parents in target schools
2. House visit (Know the child)
3. Celebrations: Birth day, children's day etc...
4. Supply of Nutritious food
5. Complaint Box
6. Honesty shops
7. Support from health department
8. CFS board installation and declaration

Monitoring tools

Observation, Interviews, Questionnaire,

Time: One Year

Responsibility: Change agents and extended hands

IV. Activities done so far

What we did

- (a) Meeting with the higher authorities for preparing the ground.
- (b) Experience sharing with the parents, teachers and students
- (c) Headmasters' training (At Assistant Educational Officer's conference hall Iritty on 15/06/2011)
- (d) Selection of target schools (On 30/06/2011 in a joint sitting with Assistant Educational Officer & Change Agents)
- (e) Workshop for the selected members from the target schools, for a couple of days (for PTA Presidents, MPTA Presidents, Headmasters, Teachers in charge, Student representatives, BRC Trainers and local self Govt. members, from 26/7/2011 to 27/07/2011 at Block Resource Centre Iritty)

A short film made by film club Ambayathode U P School –Won third prize in the children's film festival 2012.

- Training on Child Rights to teacher trainees of DIET Kannur
- A talk by Per in DIET Kannur
- Interaction with Educational Experts

Who was doing what?

We the change agents: Organizing all the above activities.

Target school Headmasters: Orientation to parents, Council formation etc.

Parents: Positive support and active participation in the programmes, financial support etc.

Students: Active participation in council meetings and SPTA meetings

V. Success stories

Indicators of the project schools tell us that we are on the right track. We are working as a team. Support from former change agents influenced the policy making of the government. It is a blessing. So the teacher training programme in Kerala includes a one day programme on Child Rights. An intensive parent awareness programme is also going on. It was a great help in our project work. Other indicators of the success are..

- Attitudinal change is taking place gradually.
- Parents dislike corporal punishment.
- Quick response to the request for Provision Protection and Participation.

(It is slow because, while implementing CRC, the society has to sacrifice some privileges.)

The society was used to negative discipline practices formerly. Now they are used to following positive discipline. At first they found it difficult. Slow and steady result oriented practices demand patience and self discipline.

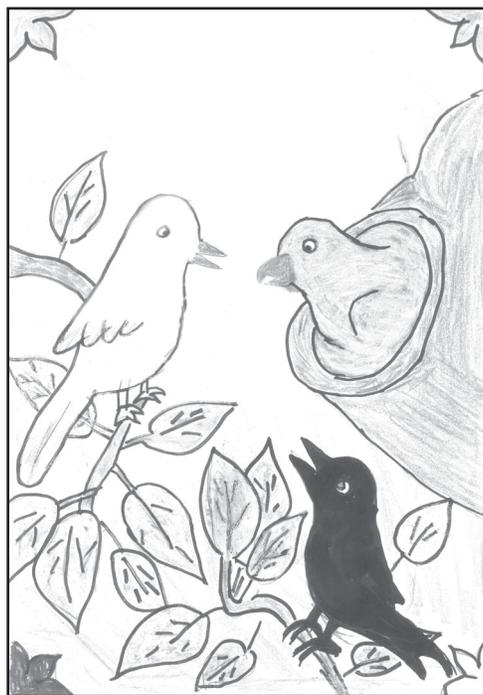
VI. Way forward

We have to achieve the ultimate goal of CFS, to ensure Child Rights in and outside the target schools. Continuous and comprehensive work by the Change Agents as well as the society related to the target schools is necessary for it. They are:

1. Continue the activities more vigorously in target schools. Follow up seminars and personal support will do it.
2. Expand the activities in other welcoming schools in the sub District. For that,

cluster training programmes will be organized and the nearby schools will be invited to the programme. At least one neighbouring school of each POSCID INDIA project school will be made child friendly.

3. Take up collaborative work with some NGO's like Wise Men International, OISCA international etc. Friends and relatives working in these organizations will help us in this matter.



Chapter-9

State level Interventions

-E.P. Mohandas

In addition to the activities in different districts, the Kerala CRC Network has been able to do some substantial work at the state level too. The first intervention we Change Agents from Kerala did at the State level was a series of awareness programmes for educational functionaries in all the 14 districts.

I. District wise awareness programme

We Change Agents prepared a module for training of the key persons in the education sector of the districts. Apart from the educational officers and headmasters, many LSG members also participated in that programme. The programme had a very good impact and was appreciated by district authorities.

II. International Seminar on Child Rights – Violations and Solutions

An international Seminar on Child Rights : Violations and Solutions’ was organized at the Indian Institute of Spices Research in Calicut on 8th March 2008 under the aegis of SSA Kerala. There were participants from Sweden, Afghanistan and officials from Central Government and State Government. Miss. Shalini Prasad IAS, Member Secretary, National Child Right Commission inaugurated the seminar. Dr. B. Vijayakumar, State Project Director, SSA Kerala presided over the function. Dr. Binay Patnayak, Chief Consultant, Pedagogy, TSG, EDCIL, New Delhi moderated the seminar. Dr. Per Wickenberg from Lund University, Sweden made the key note address.

The following papers were presented in the seminar.

1. Dr. Per Wickenberg, Lund University - “Children are the future”
2. Dr. Bodil Rasmusson – “Children are the future”
3. Dr. Vijayakumar, State Project Director, SSA Kerala – “Emerging issues in the

districts on Child Rights violations”

4. Binay Pattanayak, MHRD, India – “Skill based education-implications for Child Rights – A Case Study”
5. C. Ramakrishnan, Personal Secretary to Minister for Educaiton – “Quality Education is the Right of the Child”
6. Dr. C. Naseema, Director, Adult Education Department, University of Calicut – “Primary Schools – For the Best Interest of the Child”
7. Dr. N.P. Hafis Muhammed, Co-ordinator, Child Line, Ferook College - “Child Line Activities in Kerala”

After the presentations, the participants were divided into six groups and a group discussion was held. The following are the key points that emerged from the group discussion.

What can be done at the policy level

1. CRC should become a part of curriculum both in the formal and the non-formal stream of education. The component of Child Rights should be reflected in the textbooks. General Education Department should own up this programme.
2. Just as we have a commission for women at the state level we should have a committee for children at the State/District/Block/Panchayath level and the commission should have judicial power. Child protection committee should be there at school level and these committees should have student representatives in them.
3. The Commission should have sittings at District/Block/Panchayath level regularly.
4. Pupils’ participation in PTA is to be made mandatory.
5. Exposure trips to schools where CRC has already been implemented are to be conducted.
6. Sufficient number of clean toilets should be built in schools.
7. Drinking water is to be provided for all children.
8. At present no aided schools are given financial assistance for toilets and drinking water by the government. The national policy should change and all schools should get financial assistance for toilets and drinking water just like we provide textbooks for all children.
9. Teacher pupil ratio in primary classes should be 1:20 and in High Schools it can be 1:30 to ensure participation.

10. Classrooms should be spacious, seating arrangements should be made more child friendly and there must be enough space for children to move about.
11. Noon meal is to be made nutritious and attractive to children. It should be properly served. Breakfast is to be given to needy children.
12. Unsafe school buildings, like the ones with asbestos roof should be banned.
13. Sufficient play time should be given. It should be part of school curriculum.
14. Uniform not to be made compulsory on all days.
15. 200 working days in one academic year are to be ensured.
16. Teachers to be appointed for subjects like Physical Education, Music, Art, etc.
17. School going children face problems while travelling. They are not permitted to sit in buses. A clear direction in this regard has to be given to bus owners.
18. Mother tongue should be made compulsory in all schools in the state.

III. Submission of Memorandum to Child Rights Commission

In 2009, Government of India implemented the Right to Education Act and forced the states to ensure the Right to Education. Region wise awareness programmes were conducted by Government of Kerala for the implementation of RTE. The Change Agents of Kerala sat together and prepared a memorandum of suggestions and submitted it to the chairperson of RTE Commission Kerala. (The text of the memorandum is given in the annexure.)

IV. Cascade model Training with the help of SIEMAT Kerala

SIEMAT is the body for giving management training to the educational institutions in Kerala. We Change Agents submitted a project proposal to SIEMAT to give an intensive training to all teachers and head teachers in Kerala. SIEMAT accepted our project proposal and conducted a State Level Resource Group Training, where our Change Agents took the role of key resource persons. A state level resource group was constituted by including the participants from the state level training. The DIETs in all the 14 districts conducted district level resource group training and the persons trained at the district level were used to impart a one day training to teachers at Sub – District level.

V. Vacation Training of Teachers

Vacation trainings are being given to all teachers every year in Kerala as a part of capacity building. Due to the influence of the Change Agents a slot was included in

the teacher training package on Child Rights. About 1,00,000 teachers received this training and we hope it has led to an attitudinal change in them.

VI. Training of SSA Trainers with the Help of SCERT

SCERT took the initiative to prepare a module for a training on Child Rights. We Change Agents took a major role in it. Using this training module all the SSA trainers in the 14 districts were given training.

VII. Handbook and Brochure for Parental Awareness on Child Rights

SSA prepared a handbook and brochure for parental awareness on Child Rights. We Change Agents participated in the Handbook preparation workshop and training programmes. Panchayath level trainings were conducted throughout Kerala. All the child right activities we initiated have got very good media coverage including electronic and print media.

Thus the Change Agents from Kerala have been able to work as a cohesive team and to spread the message of Child Rights far and wide in our state. Our interventions have influenced the educational field of Kerala and have had an impact even in the laws made in relation with Child Rights.



Chapter-10

CRC in Practice in Sasimala School

- **Thankachan V.V.**

(Thankachan is the headmaster of Sasimala School, the first school declared as Child Friendly in Kerala. Here Thankachan shares his experience in trying to put CRC into practice in his school).

Sasimala is a village in Wayanad District of Kerala, bordering on the neighboring state of Karnataka. This fast developing village is inhabited mostly by small time farmers and labourers. There are three tribal colonies also here. Highly educated people and those belonging to the salaried class are very rare in this village.

A government school was established at Sasimala in 1973 as a result of the enthusiasm of the local people and the kindness of the government. About 200 children are studying here now.

The teachers of this school have always tried to identify the abilities of the children and to encourage them. In the background of world wide discussions on the need for making schools child friendly and considering children as individuals, a discussion emerged in the School Resource Group (SRG) about the need to make Sasimala school child-friendly. Some new ideas gained from a classes conducted at DIET Wayanad under the leadership of Mathew Zacharias served as a catalyst for this.

An SRG meeting was conducted in the presence of Mathew Zacharias. The meeting discussed the changes to be brought about in the school to make it child friendly. Teachers talked about the emotional atmosphere in their class and the behavior of their children. The meeting chalked out the following action plan.

1. To visit the homes of all children with a view to understanding their familial and economic background.
2. To ensure the availability of textbooks and other learning materials.

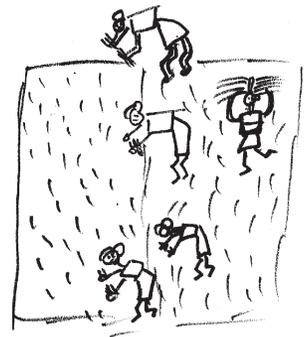
3. To bring in a homely atmosphere in the school.
4. To improve the noon meal provided to children with the help of different agencies.
5. To conduct awareness classes for parents.
6. To avoid mental and physical harassment of children in the school and society.

It was decided to do these activities in a time bound manner and to make the school child friendly by 15th August 2008. As a result of the implementation of the activities, the following changes occurred in the school:

1. Now we are able to give nutritious food to our students with the help of the public.
2. Teachers have stopped corporal punishment. They get in touch with parents, understand the real problems of children and approach children with better understanding. This helps solve the problem of indiscipline.
3. A good friendship has developed between teachers and children. This relationship helped children in their studies.
4. Children have begun to share their problems with teachers.
5. The behavior of some backward children has improved notably.

Gradually the children began to love the school. Parents also began to own up the school. The good rapport among children, teachers and parents changed the face of the school. Some of the very backward children came forward enthusiastically to take part in competitive examinations and sports. Some of them went upto district level in different competitions.

In the beginning teachers had to face many problems in creating a child friendly atmosphere in the schools. Now it has become a life style for them and they get much job satisfaction too.



Chapter-11

Way Forward

- *George Joseph*

With a strong team of Change Agents exposed to different international practices, Kerala is poised to scale new heights in the field of Child Rights. Educational functionaries working in five northern districts and some state level officers are members of this team. With some more likely to join this group, a plan for the future is necessary.

With this view in mind, a meeting was conducted at the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT). It was initiated by Chandini K.K. a Change Agent who works there. The meeting was attended by most of the Change Agents and some others active in the field of education. The view that emerged in the meeting was this: Convergence is the key to success. There are several governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Kerala which either already undertake or have the potential to undertake programmes that can ensure the rights of the children in the state. The agencies identified are the following.

1. Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA)

This programme sponsored by the Government of India working in the area of education of children upto the eighth standard has Child Rights in their agenda. This agency with district level and block level offices all over the state is already doing a good job in improving the physical facilities of schools, in the education of girls, children from weaker sections of the society and children with special needs.

2. Rashtriya Madhyamic Siksha Abhiyan (RMSA)

This is also a centrally sponsored programme but it focuses on the education of secondary school children.

3. National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)

This is another programme funded by the Central Government. It focuses on improving the health of people in rural areas and has the potential to take up programmes that can improve the lot of rural children.

4. Department of Education

The education department with its schools spread in every nook and corner is a major force that has helped Kerala reach the topmost place among the states of India in elementary and secondary education and in literacy.

5. State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT)

SCERT prepares the textbooks for school education in the state and is the policy making agency in educational practices.

6. State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT)

SIEMAT focuses on the management aspect in school education and trains principals of schools and educational officers.

7. District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs)

DIETs with their informed and innovative staff are leaders in the academic field in the districts. All new educational practices reach the districts through DIETs.

8. Department of Health

This government department is doing a remarkable job in immunization programmes and many other activities aimed at fighting diseases.

9. Department of Social Welfare

This department, in addition to their many programmes aimed at social welfare, runs the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS). Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) Centres come under this scheme. They run the juvenile homes too.

10. Kudumbasree

This quasi governmental programme pays attention to empowering women. It also has a component of Child Rights. Kudumbasree has already brought out some excellent reading material on Child Rights.

11. Mahila Samakhya

This is also a quasi governmental organization working for the welfare of women. It also takes up activities aimed at ensuring Child Rights.

12. Childline

This is a non-governmental organization and is doing an exceptionally good job in

locating specific instances of child abuse. The work of this organization has been very successful in curbing child labour and in bringing many child molesters before law. Childline also pays attention to the rehabilitation of children in distress. It is a fact that all these agencies are doing good work but they are isolated attempts. Also, there is duplication at times. If convergence of the work of these agencies can be achieved, the status of Child Rights in Kerala will become comparable to that in developed countries. The strong group of Change Agents in Kerala can take the lead in achieving this convergence. SCERT Kerala can be the co-ordinating agency.

The last meeting of Change Agents in the presence of our mentor Prof. Per Wickenberg decided to form a pressure group to strive for Child Rights. The objective is to intervene in issues where the rights of children are violated. It is planned to start offices in all districts where Change Agents are available and to co-ordinate the work at the state level. We also plan to ensure that Child Rights find a prominent place in the school curriculum in the state.

The upcoming international impact seminar at Bangkok in June 2013 will give us a great opportunity to share our experience and to learn from the experiences of other teams from 16 countries in Africa, Asia and South America. That exposure is sure to broaden our vision, give us more insights and prompt us to take up greater tasks.

There is also a proposal to conduct a joint meeting of the Change Agents of Srilanka and India in August 2013. This will lead to fruitful regional co-operation between the two neighbours who have much in common.



Annexure

1) Representation before the Hon`ble Commission for Right to Education Act, Housing Board Building, Trivandrum – 1.

Honourable Madam,

The Commission for Right to Education Act, Kerala is engaged in the historic duty of formulating the rules related to the right of children for free and compulsory education. Right to Education is one of the key aspects of Child Rights which we have to ensure. In this context, we, the undersigned persons who underwent an advanced training programme on Child Rights at Lund University, Sweden, wish to place before you some suggestions related to Child Rights for your kind consideration.

Some Acts and Rules, once formulated, become turning points in the history of the State. The present one being framed is such a one. As it is related to children, we request you to be kind enough to consider the following ideas for inclusion in the new Rules so as to ensure Child Rights.

- 1) It will be in the fitness of things if the Commission for Right to Education Act seeks children`s opinion related to the Rules by convening a meeting of some representatives of children in the age group 6 to 14.
- 2) Children`s representation has to be ensured in all forums where decisions affecting them are taken.
- 3) The proposed School Management Committee must include two student representatives- a boy and a girl.
- 4) In order to ensure Activity Based Classes, the duration of an instructional pe-

riod must be an hour. There can be five such periods a day.

- 5) A national level common curriculum must be introduced in all our schools.
- 6) The major part of the trainings of teachers must be completed during the mid-summer vacation. The maximum number of days on which a teacher can be absent from classes must be limited to 20 in a year including casual leave.
- 7) In the month of March, children in lower classes lose a lot of instructional days due to the SSLC Examination. This must be avoided.
- 8) All children (including those from linguistic minorities and tribes) should get a change to study their mother tongue, even if it is not the medium of instruction.
- 9) Due to other responsibilities, headmasters do not get enough time to teach. This is denial of children's right to quality education. Therefore, all headmasters must be exempted from class charge.
- 10) Public transport between home and the neighbourhood school must be free for children.
- 11) The quality of the noon-meal provided must be improved. More variety must be brought in. Centralised kitchens under the supervision of local authorities should be started for supplying food to schools.
- 12) Dining halls for children must be constructed in all schools.
- 13) Children's right to know what their rights are should be ensured through making Child Rights part of the curriculum.
- 14) Parental awareness of Child Rights also must be ensured.
- 15) Physical exercise for atleast half an hour must be made mandatory for children.
- 16) Many fatal accidents due to children's inability to swim are reported in our State each year. Swimming must be taught in schools and grace marks should be provided in the SSLC Examination to children who are good at swimming.
- 17) Professional counselors must be posted in schools.
- 18) Co-education should be promoted.
- 19) The draft Rules mention Child Rights. It must be specified that these rights are those given in the 54 articles of the UN convention on Child Rights promulgated in 1989 and ratified by India in 1992.

- 20) The major rights of the child must be exhibited in schools.
- 21) The School Development Plan must take into consideration the Rights of the Child.
- 22) Education of bedridden children must be ensured through a special package.

2) Module for a Two day Training on Child Rights For Members of the State Resource Group.

[This is the module of one of the trainings on Child Rights conducted in Kerala. This was done under the banner of the State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT) Kerala.]

Objectives:

- To help the participants recognize Child Rights.
- To make them aware of the violation of the rights at home, school and in the society.
- To develop an attitude in them to safeguard Child Rights and to enable them to plan necessary activities.
- To equip them to take the lead in awareness programmes in this field.

Day-1

- 9.30 a.m** - **Registration.**
- 10.00** - **Inauguration.**
- 10.30** - **Session one.**

Objective

To get an idea of the violation of child rights in different fields.

Ice breaking

Tip activity : Imagine that you are an eight year old child. What will be your wishes/needs?

Note down some of them in your notebook.

Random presentation of the notes.

- It is natural that an eight year old child will have wishes like this.
- But how far are these fulfilled?

(A short discussion is held on these points.)

Presentation of a case

R.P presents the case given at the end of the module.

The participants are asked to note down an unforgettable incident from their childhood.(The incident can be a happy or a sad one.) Now the participants sit in groups of five and narrate the incident to one another. Then, one of these is selected and presented before the whole class. The R.P charts the relevant points in the presentations under the following heads:

- Issues related to recognition.
- Issues related to protection.
- Issues related to participation.

The following questions are raised in the plenary session.

- Why do you remember these incidents even now?
- Do they make you happy /sad now?
- How did they influence you in your later life?
(Physically, emotionally)
- Do you keep in mind these experiences when you deal with children?

A worksheet is distributed to the groups.

The groups discuss the worksheet and respond to the problems given there.

- What is the real problem in the incidents given?
- Why does it happen?
- What is the remedy?
- What role do institutions like home, school and the society have in solving the problem?
- How do you react to these incidents?

The discussion should arrive at the following generalizations:

- Children face many problems.
- Knowingly or unknowingly we too contribute to children's violations of rights.
- Many of the things we regard as unimportant may seriously affect children emotionally and mentally.

- Children suffer because of the ignorance of adults.
- Over protection and over indulgence can also cause problem.
- The violations of child rights must be identified and prevented.
- Schools have an important role in this.

Session Two – 2.00.P.M

Objectives: To give the participants a historical perspective of Child Rights and familiarize them with the important articles in the UN Charter.

The worksheet 'Reflections on Child Rights' is distributed.

The participants go through the worksheet individually. Now they share their ideas in pairs.

This is followed by a group discussion. The RP consolidates the discussion.

Now a power point presentation on the history of CRC the UN Convention and the important articles in it is done.

A discussion follows in which the idea related to the development of the concept of Child Rights, the different articles of the UN Convention, the steps taken in india in accordance with it and the Right to Education Act 2009 are consolidated.

Session Three- 6.00 P.M

Objectives: Participants identify the violations of child rights at home, in the school and in the society. The remedial measures are also identified.

Process: The participants individually note down some practices that are against Child Rights. Now the points noted down are discussed in groups. The findings of the groups are presented in the plenary session. They are charted under the following heads-home, school and society.

Day-2

Session Four- 9.30 am

Objectives: To enable the participants to develop an activity package for use in school.

RP begins with a recapitulation of the earlier sessions. The participants are divided into five groups. The groups develop a package of activities that can be implemented in schools this year to overcome the problems related to Child Rights already identified. The main points are charted.

Eg: improving noon- meal

- School democratic forum.
- Parent pupil teacher Association (PPTA)
- Exhibiting a board showing Child Rights.
- Avoiding the cane- freedom from mental and physical torture.
- Equal opportunities for all children.
- Participation of all children.
- Participation of children in the process of decision making in the school.
- Class PPTA Executive.

Session Five -11.30 am

Objectives: The participants develop a module for the training of the district resource groups.

Groups prepare one day modules and present them in the plenary session. After a discussion a final form is decided upon.

Session Six – 2.pm

Consolidation of ideas and valediction.

A Case

A physics class in Std VIII. The teacher is explaining the different types of images formed by mirrors. Children are listening attentively. Two mirrors are placed face to face and a lighted candle is placed in between them. Children come in small groups and see the images formed. Both mirrors show an infinite number of images. Children try to count the images of the candle. The teacher is full of satisfaction that the children have enjoyed watching the experiment.

- After all the children have seen the images, the teacher asks a question:
- Has anyone seen images like this before?
- All children start thinking. Suddenly Gopal jumps up and says: ‘Sir, I have seen such images- in the barbershop.’

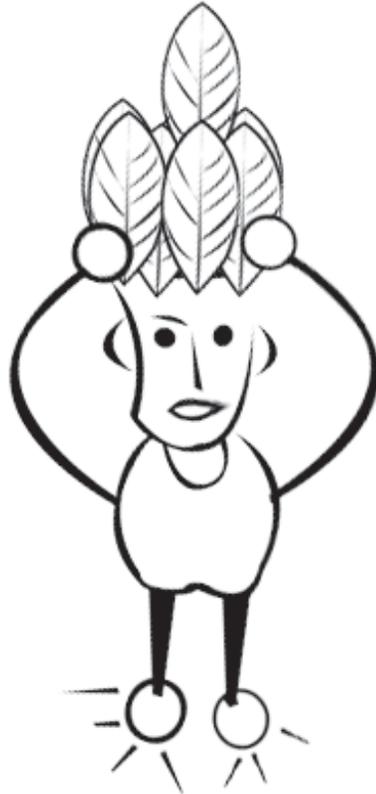
The teacher asks him to come near.

He has a smile on his face. Proud of having given the right answer, Gopal who is sitting on a back bench, reaches the front of the class. As soon as he reaches near, the teacher slaps Gopal hard and asks him to get out of the class. Gopal has the biggest

shock of his life.

All the children laugh aloud. Gopal does not understand why the teacher has slapped him and why his classmates are laughing.

Gopal is not permitted to sit in the physics class for a week. Finally, he is permitted to attend the class on the condition that he would not misbehave in future. The question in Gopal's mind then and now is – why was he slapped and sent out of the class?



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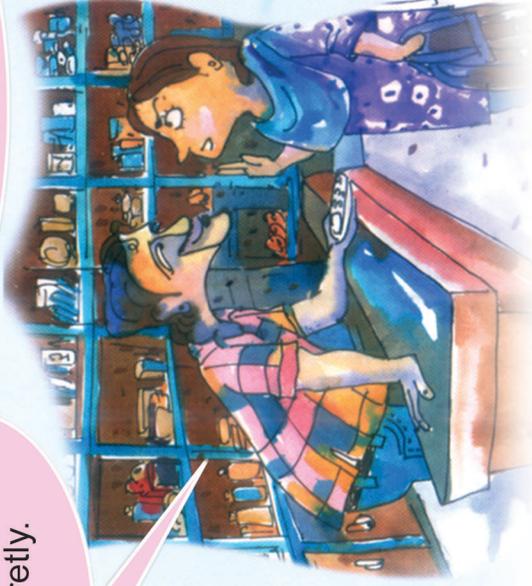
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Keep this mobile.
You can use
this secretly.

I don't want it.
My parents will buy one
for me when I am old
enough to possess one.



Children should not yield to any type of sexual harassment from anyone.

A page of 'Boundless Sky', a handbook for children on Child Rights published as part of the 'Child Friendly City' project of Nilambur Municipality, Malappuram. The book was written by CRC Change Agents.



It is a breach of right to engage children below the age of 18 in forced labour.

A page of 'Boundless Sky', a handbook for children on Child Rights published as part of the 'Child Friendly City' project of Nilambur Municipality, Malappuram. The book was written by CRC Change Agents.



Celebration of the 'Day of Reading' at AMUP School, Munduparamba, Malappuram



Hon. Chief Minister of Kerala, Mr. Oommen Chandy inaugurating the
'Child Friendly City' project at Nilambur, Malappuram



Drama emphasising religious harmony - AMUP School, Munduparamba, Malappuram



Children playing at Government Primary School, Edivanna Estate, Malappuram



Swimming practice at Ambayathode UP School, Kannur



Girls getting ready for a folk dance at St. George's UP School, Kacherykadavu, Kannur

KERALA





Twenty nine educators from Kerala, a state situated at the south-western tip of India attended the International Training Programme on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management conducted under the aegis of Sida at Lund University, Sweden between 2005 and 2013. This book is a documentation of the work done by these Change Agents after the training, under the guidance of their mentor, Prof. Per Wickenberg. This book has been written through the combined effort of the Kerala Network of Change Agents. The chief editor is George Joseph, former principal, DIET Kozhikode.

