

Project Nanhi Kali

(A project jointly managed by the K.C. Mahindra Education Trust and Naandi Foundation)

About K.C. Mahindra Education Trust

The K.C. Mahindra Education Trust (KCMET) was formed by the late Mr. K.C. Mahindra in 1953 with the vision to “transform the lives of people in India through education, by providing financial assistance and recognition to them, across age groups and income strata”. Since then, KCMET has undertaken a number of education initiatives through which it has provided Rs.644.5 million approximately in the form of grants, scholarships and loans to more than 82500 deserving and needy students. The Trust also runs the Mahindra Pride Schools which provides livelihood training to youth from socially disadvantaged sections of society specifically Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes.

About Naandi Foundation

Naandi Foundation, with their primary goal of “Eradicating poverty, Changing lives” focuses on three broad sectors – Child Rights, Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation and Sustainable Livelihoods. Naandi is one of the largest and fastest growing social sector organisations in India working to make poverty history

Project Nanhi Kali was inception in 1996 with the objective of providing primary education to underprivileged girl children in India. Today, it is a national sponsorship program which provides academic and material support to more than 70,000 underprivileged girl children and helps them complete 10 years of quality education with dignity. Our goal is to reach out to 500,000 underprivileged girl children by 2014.

Statement of the Problem

India has 1/6th of the world's population and 1/3rd of the world's poor. The socio-economic composition of children who drop out of school in India suggests that education deprivation occurs most among urban poor, rural and tribal children and within each category the situation of girls is worse than boys because of the perceived and actual costs to households of girls' schooling. Under-educated parents, particularly mothers, do not realize the importance of educating their children. This contributes to factors that perpetuate the cycle of poverty, such as child labour, low wages, and job insecurity.

Through the Nanhi Kali project, we are addressing three of the eight Millennium Development Goals – universal education, gender equality and empowering women and eradication of poverty. The World Bank has recognized that investment in girl's education is essential to meet the Millennium Development Goals. According to UNICEF (2007) India accounts for 1/5th of the



worlds out of school girls and if this is not addressed the World will not be able to reach the Millennium Development Goals to have every child complete primary school by 2015.

In India, Government schools provide “free” education but surveys have shown that ‘quality’ of education is a big question mark.

ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) 2009 further reiterates that year after year, children remain at least two grade levels behind through the primary stage. The proportion of children in standard 3 who can read at standard 1 level is still less than 50%. Even with the high enrollment rates as per this report, 52.8% of children studying in grade V lack the reasoning skills expected in grade 2. An average of 25% teachers are absent from school at any given point of time and half of those present are not teaching.

Literacy in India

	Males	Females
No Education (aged 6 and above)	18%	41%
Median years of schooling (aged 6 and above)	5 years	2 years

Source: 2005-2006 National Family Health Survey – 3

	Males	Females
Literacy	82%	65%

Source: Results from the Preliminary Data of Census, 2011

The recent 2011 census data has revealed that while the effective female literacy rate has improved from 54% to 65%, it still lags behind the male literacy rate by 17%. What is extremely disturbing is the abysmal child sex ratio which has fallen from 927:1000 (females: males) to 914:1000. The strong preference for a son amongst Indians has resulted in a grave imbalance in the gender ratio, which is a matter of utmost concern. Nanhi Kali can help correct this ratio, as education of girls is the first step towards empowering them to become economically independent.

Beneficiaries of Nanhi Kali Project

Needy, underprivileged girls of urban poor, rural and tribal families enrolled in government schools belonging to below poverty line schedule caste/schedule tribe (socially weaker sections) or migrant communities who are generally first generation learners with younger siblings and of single parent are selected as Nanhi Kalis.



Implementation of Project Nanhi Kali:

The Nanhi Kali programme is implemented in some of the most deprived, remote, and difficult regions of the country where the literacy levels, especially female literacy levels are low. Nanhi Kali works with 21 NGO Partners who at grassroots level provide the support to the girls, who are studying at the Government Schools in India.

Female Literacy Levels in the areas where the Nanhi Kali Projects exist:

State	District	Female Literacy
Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad	73.5
	Mahbubnagar	31.9
	Vishakapatnam	50.1
Madhya Pradesh	Sheopur Kala	29.1
	Ratlam	54.3
Chattisgarh	Kanker	63.3
Rajasthan	Tribal sub-plan of Udaipur	43.3
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	80.4
Delhi	Central	76.1
	South	73.9
	East	79.3
	West	78
Maharashtra	Mumbai	81.1
	Nasik	64.3

Source: Elementary Education in India: Where Do We Stand – District Report Cards 2008-09; National University of Educational Planning and Administration

Support provided by Nanhi Kali

The Nanhi Kali Project encourages girls to attend school by ensuring their holistic development through provision of material support in addition to academic support.

a) Academic Support

The Academic Support is provided in terms of an extra study class which is conducted either before or after school hours. These classes help to bridge the gaps in learning achievements and enable children to reach their grade specific competency level. The classes are conducted by “Community Activists” selected from within the community with the vision that they would be the local resource to act as friends and mentors to the children and at the same time stroking community interest and proactive action for quality education. The teaching strategy is based on



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cooperative and reflective learning where the focus is on enabling learning rather than on teaching.

The Academic Support Classes assume greater significance since living conditions and contexts of poor children do not give them the luxury of space and time at home to study, revise and practice. The Nanhi Kalis are usually first generation learners and have no one at home whom they can turn to in case they need clarification in any subject.

b) Material Support

Material support consists of an education kit comprising of two sets of uniforms, undergarments, shoes, socks, school bag, stationery and notebooks which is ceremonially handed over to every individual Nanhi Kali at a colorful function. The function is attended by the parents and the larger community and cuts across all barriers of caste, creed, age and gender. It also serves as a platform to sensitize the community on the importance of girl's education.

A report prepared for Plan International, New Delhi by Educational Resource Unit in 2006 indicates that there are hidden costs associated with education that rise as the child progresses up the educational ladder. Very often it is these hidden costs which result in a girl dropping out of school. The material support provided by the Nanhi Kali Project directly is designed to address the hidden costs of education that affects a girl's chances of education.

c) Social and Moral Support

Sensitizing the community on the importance of girls' education and encouraging it to take ownership of the functioning of the school is an essential part of the Nanhi Kali programme. Events are organised wherein the community members, especially women, participate actively. These serve as platforms to change mind-sets and attitudes.



Impact of the Programme

1. Reach

We are currently providing educational support, both academic and material, to approximately 70,000 in nine states in India, namely Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan.

2.. Reduction in Drop-out rates of girls

Drop out rates of girls, which, at the national level is almost 30 per cent for Primary and 70 per cent for Secondary School, has successfully been curtailed to less than 10 per cent within the Nanhi Kali programme.

3. Overcoming the practice of child marriage

Considering the prevailing trend of early marriage and limiting rest of their life to household chores, passing middle school seems to have removed this social binding and opened a larger hope for the community. While it was difficult to stop child marriage in early days now the children who passed middle & high school have become instrumental in convincing the parents that education should come first and then marriage.

In the recent tracking we found that 724 out of 913 10th pass Nanhi Kalis (from Sheopur, Hyderabad, Mahabubnagar & Arakku) are pursuing further education. Some are into Degree, Polytechnic, Vocational courses and Engineering. Among those who discontinued education, some are self employed (like tailoring, vegetable vending & small shop) and few have married and/or migrated.

4. Increase in attendance & performance of Nanhi Kalis

Through constant monitoring and follow-up the Nanhi Kali team is able to maintain 78% average attendance of Nanhi Kalis in school which has a direct impact in the academic performance of the child. There is a steady growth in the academic performance of the children across years. In the year 2008-2009 State Board examination for grade V in Chhattisgarh, three Nanhi Kalis secured a rank in the top 10 positions. **In the year 2009-2010, 27 Nanhi Kalis secured more than 91% in the same board examination.**



Cost of Sponsorship:

Through Global Giving we aim at sponsoring 100 Nanhi Kalis in the secondary sections (class VI – class X) in the Tribal area of Kanker in Chhattisgarh, India.

Total cost of sponsoring 100 Nanhi Kalis for a year is USD 7200/- @ USD 90/- per child per year.

The Trust is registered under Bombay Public Trusts Act, 1950.

Feedback to the Sponsor for a donation towards the complete sponsorship amount of USD 90/-:

- Profile of each Nanhi Kali along with a photograph;
- Progress report every six months to track the academic progress of the sponsored child.
- Donors can choose to get a mention on the “I Pledge” page on the Nanhi Kali website



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