

## VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

### PROJECT PROPOSAL

**1. Project Title:**

Back to school program for 150 children

**2. Executive Summary:**

This project will promote academic education among 150 children from Madhari (Cobbler), the underprivileged community. It will provide them with teaching and learning materials, school bags and uniforms ensuring continued education without dropout. It will facilitate formation of Children's Clubs at village levels for healthy social and emotional development. It will mainstream girls into academic education that would ultimately make positive impact on the entire family and future generations.

**3. Profile of Implementing Agency:**

1	Name of the implementing NGO	:	<b>VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE</b>
2	Address of the NGO	:	VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE No, 6, 6 <sup>th</sup> Street, Gandhinagar, Mannachanallur – 621005, TiruchirappalliDt, Tamilnadu, India Email: <a href="mailto:vdc_raju@yahoo.com">vdc_raju@yahoo.com</a> Website: vdcindia.org Mobile: 9842535088 / Phone: 0431 2561061
3	Legal Status of the organisation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ VDC is registered as a Society under Tamilnadu Societies Registration Act 1975 vide registration number 94/1984 dated 29<sup>th</sup> December 1984.</li><li>➤ Registered with Income Tax Department under Section 12A No: C. No. 2039 (167) TNV / 94-95 dated 30.11.95,</li><li>➤ Tax exemption under Section 80(G) of Income Tax Act 1961. No: C. No. 6162E (107)/2007-08/CIT –I / TRY dated 19.08.2008 (Permanent registration)</li><li>➤ Income-Tax PAN No: AAA TV0152C,</li><li>➤ FCRA - Registered with Home Ministry, Government of India, with No: 076040142 dated October14<sup>th</sup>1992 extended registration up to 2021.</li></ul>
5	Project Duration	:	One Year (12 months)
6	No of beneficiaries	:	150 children from Cobbler community
7	Grant assistance requested	:	INR 360,000
8	Contact person of the NGO		Mr. K.R. Raju, MSW, Secretary, VDC, Phone : (0) 0431-2561061(R) 0431-2562234 Mobile : 09842535088 E-mail : <a href="mailto:vdc_raju@yahoo.com">vdc_raju@yahoo.com</a>

#### **4. Statement of Need:**

In the social stratification of Indian society, Madhari, Arunthathiyar, Chakkiliar, Adiandthrar, Thotti, Madiga and Pagadai at the bottom of the social ladder. They are categorized as Scheduled Castes as per the Indian Constitution. Madhari community is one among the Scheduled Castes. They have been the weaker section in society. Madhari Dalit are the most oppressed among the Dalit. They live in miserable conditions working as manual scavengers, cobblers (shoe repair), agricultural laborers, construction workers. Madharis are treated as untouchables not only by the upper caste but also by the other Dalit subgroups. Hence they are called Dalit among Dalit.

Most Madharis are the third generation in their families working as cobblers. They make shoes, repaired shoes, repair buckles, stitches broken straps, and polishes leather. They work from 10 in the morning till 6 in the evening. They do not have permanent place to work. Normally they sit places close to bus stations, railway stations and markets. The earning is not sufficient to meet both ends in life. There is no respect for people in this profession. Their wives work as domestic servants.

They constitute around 57% among the population of Scheduled Castes. They are involved as cobblers (shoe repaired), cultivators, agricultural laborers, artisans, craftsmen, slum dwellers, coolies, bonded laborers, scavengers, sweepers and other low paid and mean occupants in the villages, towns, and cities. Normally they settle in the outskirts of the villages called "Chakkili valavu." They have been highly neglected and left far behind and remained backward in socio- economic-cultural, and educational fields for centuries.

The self-satisfactory way of life met with sudden change on account of the introduction of modern technology in leather industry and agriculture. The labor was no more required in the cultivation and also rain fed cultivation. Though their labor is not required, they did not want to change their profession forthwith. They have not been able to utilize the government assistance due to absence of education and lack of awareness.

Alcoholism is a major social problem among both men and women. About 90% of Madhari Dalit adults are addicted to alcohol. About 60% of their daily wages are spent on consumption of alcohol, which leads to deterioration of health, negligence of child care and continuation of poverty.

Only 1.75 % people of Madhari community are literates while 98.16% are illiterates. Only 0.16% of the people have at least completed their 10th STD in school. Because of the poor socio economic status of the community the children are very rarely sent to elementary school. Even when they go, they drop out of school. Most of the children in the rural areas work as bonded laborers in the agricultural farms of the upper caste. Children in the urban areas work as temporary workers in restaurants / hotels, automobile mechanic shed, and garages.

Children are teased and taunted in schools and streets by other upper caste children because their parents are performing low menial jobs such as shoe repair and scavenging. The abusive remarks are hurtful and little children refuse to go to school. Sometimes due to poverty and low socio economic status, the children are not sent to school or drop out from middle school level.

Some parents bring back their children from schools to assist their work. Girl children are restricted to go to school once they attain puberty. Most girl children dropout due to their responsibility as baby-sitters. The parents never motivate their children to go to schools and they are only interested in involving their children in their traditional work. If educated, these children would become the first generation of learners.

To escape from sexual abuse in workplaces, many Madhari Dalit teenage girls are forced to marry at very young age of 13-18 years. Due to lack of education and health awareness, they get pregnant soon after marriage in very young age.

In the midst of and as a consequence of lack of marketable skills, unemployment, under-employment, low income, indebtedness, poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, anemia, poor educational facilities, lack of appropriate teaching methodologies, and insensitive educational system, majority of Madhari children who are slow learners become dropouts, specifically girl children, and unfit for alternate employment elsewhere. However, slow learners are normal students but the problem is that they are simply not interested in studying under traditionally accepted system of education. The slow learners can learn all that is required in their course as long as some extra time and effort is put to help them.

These children face the problem of learning disabilities/difficulties with spoken language (listening and speaking), written language (reading, writing and spelling), arithmetic (calculation and concepts) and reasoning (organization and integration of ideas and thoughts). Due to this problem, children find it very difficult to learn as quickly as someone who is not affected by learning disabilities. They score fewer marks that in turn result in emotional problems among slow learners.

Hence, there is a desperate need for an external intervention to address the problem of dropout by initiating Children Learning Centers for the advancement of academic education among Madhari children in 10 villages.

## **5. Location of the Project:**

The proposed project will be located in 10 village of Mannachanallur block in Tiruchirappalli district, Tamil Nadu. The target villages with families (given in brackets) are:

- 1) Solanganallur (60)
- 2) Thirupanjeeli Ambethcar Nagar (60)
- 3) Sirugambur (30)
- 4) Thiruvellarai (40)
- 5) Theerampalayam (40)
- 6) Inamkalpalayam (60)

- 7) Konalai
- 8) Kalpalayam
- 9) Manachanallur(35)
- 10) Thillampatti (20)

**6. Target Groups:**

The target group is 150 children belonging to Madhari (cobbler) community in 10 villages just mentioned above.

**7. Objectives:**

- To prevent dropouts and increase the enrollment in school admission,
- To increase writing and reading skills in English, Mathematics and Science,
- To increase awareness of parents and community on importance of education, health and nutrition,
- To help the community to get community certificates and government benefits on education and livelihood.

**8. Project Activity:**

**Organizing Child Learning Centres (CLCs):**

There is a need to start CLCs in 10 villages benefiting children studying from 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The overall purpose of CLCs is twofold – (1) to improve academic excellence and (2) to recognise and enhance special talents of children.

Accordingly these 10CLCs will be equipped with teaching and play materials. Teaching and play materials will include writing boards, games boards, chart papers, crosswords, cross number buzzles, playing cards, markers, toys, snakes and ladders, etc. The learners, children, will be provided with learning materials. Learning materials will include books, note-books, pen, pencil, eraser, scale, geometry box, etc. Each CLC will function from 5 O' Clock to 7 O' Clock in the evening. It will also function as a place for children to acquire life skills and personal hygiene practices.

The proposed CLCs will be resourced by trained and well-equipped Animators with teaching skills, both academic and life skills, and involve children in extracurricular activities. Animators will introduce different plays and games to children in accordance with their age to learn and develop critical skills. They will also introduce traditional games for the physical, mental, social, emotional, and intellectual or cognitive development of children. They will try to develop six types of cognitive processes like attention, perception, memory, language, learning, and higher reasoning among children.

The CLCs will give special attention to children with learning difficulties by providing them with required and necessary learning materials to rectify the learning disabilities. Each CLC will be unique and will become a model for other CLCs.

**Organizing and Strengthening Children's Clubs:**

There will be a Children's Club in every target village. The purpose of forming and strengthening Children's Clubs in every village is to ensure their participation that would

bring out their hidden talents and abilities and in the process each child could enhance his/her learning skills too.

One of the objectives of Children's Club is to involve children in protecting their rights as a child and address those issues that affect them most at family, school, community and village levels. Hence, they will meet regularly and discuss issues and problems like child labour, child marriage, child trafficking, dropout, illiteracy, migration, child abuse, child rights violations, environmental degradation, ecological imbalance, global warming, inadequate health care systems, lack of accessibility to education, poverty, exclusion etc, and keep written minutes. The Children's Clubs will meet during weekends.

### **Training Children:**

Being an exclusive program for the education of children, it is necessary to organise training programs on the following areas:

1. Participatory Rural Appraisal;
2. Protection of environment (such as climate change, sustainable organic agriculture etc.), promotion of health, education, human rights, peace, justice action, culture and sports;
3. Presentation and communication skills, cartoon making, oratory skills, short film making, playing chess and participating in competitions at various levels, and gender sensitivity; and,
4. Cultural activities like street theatre, writing poems/songs, comics and folklore art forms, etc.

After the completion of the training, the trained children will be able to:

- Identify and articulate their needs;
- Identify vulnerable groups and their attitude and behaviour towards them;
- Understand their rights and entitlements;
- Understand their duty towards other children as a member of a group;
- Identify and manage stress in themselves and other children;
- Protect environment; and,
- Differentiate gender issues.

### **9. Expected Outcomes:**

- 1) 150 slow learners / dropouts and first generation learners get school education through this CLCs,
- 2) Prevention of school dropouts, enhancement of school enrollment and enhancing the life coping skills achieved.
- 3) 150 children will be able to cope-up with other children and be able to read and write English, mathematics and science and will get good marks enhancing their academic performance.
- 4) Children will get community certificates
- 5) Parents will get government schemes and benefits
- 6) Parents will get organized into self-help groups and will involve in savings and credit program.

**10. Monitoring and Evaluation:**

We will monitor the progress of the proposed project with the active participation of our staff.

We will report the developments on regular basis. Project Director will be responsible for reporting the new developments in the field.

**11. Sustainability:**

Our initiatives are meant to ensure the process of children's involvement through Children's Clubs

The Children's Clubs will be supported by local Youth Clubs. Children who already been there in the Children's Clubs will bring their experience, vision and maturity to the Youth Clubs and show allegiance and commitment to support Children's Clubs.

We will create linkages with the governing structures especially that of the Panchayats (local bodies) at the local governance level. This will initiate a process whereby children constantly refer to the Panchayat Raj structures and the Panchayat leaders to own up the Children's Clubs.

We will also get the various departments of the government at various levels to channel their programs and activities through the children/youth clubs and their federations.

**12. Project Budget:**

S. No.	Items of Expenditure	Amount	USD
1	Teaching materials @ INR 12,000 X 10	120,000	1,714.26
2	Learning Materials @ INR 12,000 X 10	120,000	1,714.26
3	Honorarium to Animators @ INR 1000 X 12 months X 10	120,000	1,714.26
	Total	<b>360,000</b>	<b>5,142.78</b>