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**“To Develop a Continuum of Early Childhood Care and Education through setting up a Gali Pre School System and Remedial classes for Rag Picking Community Children”**

**Concept Note**

**Project Summary**

**Worldwide 200 million children under 5 years of age are not achieving their development potential due to poverty, poor health and nutrition, and lack of stimulation and learning opportunities[[1]](#footnote-1). The vast majority of these children are from disadvantaged households and communities from low-income groups.**

**Early childhood lays critical foundations for the entire life-course. This has been demonstrated by the latest advances in neuroscience and genetics, as well as nutrition and child development research combined with rigorous programme evaluation data. Investments in Early Childhood Development offers outstanding returns – both in human and economic terms. Several studies have established the improvements in education, health, social development and economic growth indicators attributable to ECD. World Bank economists conclude[[2]](#footnote-2) that, “well targeted ECD programmes cost less and produce more dramatic and lasting results than education investments at any other level” ECD programmes help reduce the social and economic disparities and gender inequalities that divide societies and perpetuate poverty and are far preferable to costly remedial action.**

**The early years of a child are crucial for her/his life-long development and foundations of cumulative learning. In these early years the child starts developing cognitive, emotional, social, lingual and sensory-motor skills and that’s why it is so important to ensure not only their survival and growth but also providing constructive environment to flourish their full potentials. However, with the drastic changes in perspective we still have a major chunk of children who have not been covered under the ICDS programme or alternative Early Childhood Care and Education Development - ECCED interventions. The children under three years of age are more vulnerable in terms of their survival and risk of malnourishment and infections. In this context nutrition and provision of preschool education, both ingredients are crucial for the smooth development of mind and body of the child.**

**Rag Pickers/ Waste Pickers Community: The new philosophy of resource management is beginning to transform solid waste management worldwide. It is grounded in "re- source recognition" — the idea that most waste material can be regarded as unused resources. Environmentally sound waste management now entails the reduction of waste in production and distribution processes and the enhancement of reuse and recycling. In wealthy nations these principles are being translated into practice through government regulation, stakeholder co-operation and citizens' initiatives. In poorer countries, however, urban solid waste management is still wedded to the conventional engineering systems and city cleansing departments tend to look to higher technology and privatization for solutions to the environmental problems of uncollected and unsafely dumped wastes.**

**The rag picking community is one of the most marginalized in our society. Much of the city’s trash is brought to this neighbourhood, and many make their living sorting through the garbage (rag-picking), filtering out anything that is recyclable (paper, plastic, glass) or reusable (metal, electronics). Both elders and children are rag pickers living in utterly inhuman conditions. Children are deprived of education, recreation, health and nutrition. They get engaged in hazardous activities for income generation at an early age, which is the age for getting education and basic amenities to grow like a normal child. These children became involved in rag picking and other petty menial jobs like maid servants, cleaner at tea stalls or as auto workshop boys or other similar odd jobs in the unorganized sector with no security. The deprivation which they suffer has reduced their self-dignity and has given them a very pitiful picture of themselves; they are stigmatized and ostracized lot not only by others but by themselves too. They are identified with the dirty work (of rag picking) that they are involved in and forced to do all menial work by their families. Girl children are especially affected adversely by this development. They are deprived of minimum basic rights such as education and health. The major deprivations were in the areas of education, health, nutrition, sanitation & hygiene, child abuse, addiction and awareness of key issues involved in vulnerability of children. The community people are not aware about education because of their conservative mentality. They lack awareness on health and hygiene. They are not interested to immunize their children. There is inappropriate infrastructure, misguidance and use of drugs. Incidents of violence are also reported. So there is a need of Education , Health Care , abolishing malnutrition among the children whose parents are involved in rag picking.**

**The adolescent girls who are 10/12 th pass will be identified from the communities and will be given training on the Early Childhood Education Programme for two weeks. After training the adolescent girls in their own house, they will open a Center for 20 children between the age group of 2- 5 years. Two hours in a day they will open the centre in their own house and will do play way teaching, Health Care and Nutrition will be provided to the children. The parents also will try to understand the need of Education and Children will be prepared to attend the formal school. When the child will be 5 years old they will be admitted in the Government School and regular follow up will be done. Through this programme all the children will be able to go to School and we can eradicate rag picking among the children. The adolescent girl will be trained to become a community leader. The project will be supervised and monitored by the community leaders. The community will be trained to take the ownership of the project.**

**Early childhood Education Centre Gali Pre School will be opened in each lane/gali of the rag picking community for the children between 3 to 5 years.**

**Children who are out of School will be prepared to go to School and those have been admitted in Government School will be provided after School Support through remedial classes for the age group from 10 to 14 years.**

**In the North East Delhi and Delhi - NCR Border of Delhi/ Uttar Pradesh , lakhs of families livelihood is Rag Picking, Segregation and Selling. The Children at the age of 6 years starts doing rag picking. At the tender age they start earning for the families. Then it becomes the temptation of money and they do not like to go to School. As the parents are also illiterate and are not able to guide/support their children or ward in pursuing their education. In the border area a sizable portion of the migrants belongs to Bangladesh in which their mother tongue is not Hindi and this poses as a hindrance in educating their children. So, they need to learn Hindi language in order to be able to fully grasp what is being taught in schools. Out of the total population 70% are Muslims and most of them prefer sending their children in Madrassas. Children who have never been to school need to be prepared and enrolled in formal schools. Small children of the age group of 2-5 years of age need early childhood care and pre-school education so that they can be prepared for formal schooling and get enrolled at appropriate age. Children of the age group 2-5 years of age are the most vulnerable since at such a young age they are exposed to the highly unhygienic and uncongenial environment for proper growth and learning. Their parents take them to the dumping yards and they play around in the filth. If age appropriate care and education is provided to these children, they can be mainstreamed easily with age appropriate formal education. It is a fact that because of the social environment in the target area many children are involved in petty crimes, drug abuse, alcoholism and tobacco use. They need to be counselled so as to channelize their energy in the positive manner. The quality of education in government schools is questionable and if there is no external support such as the remedial education/after-school support, there is likely that the children who have been enrolled after so much of effort may drop out again from school.**

**A significant percent of the tender age children in the targeted community are not going to school. Some children have studied for a few years in village schools but have dropped out after they migrated to city along with their parents. Children especially those who were born in cities have never been to school. Due to high cost of living in big cities, parents prefer their children particularly those above the age of 10 to earn a livelihood rather than to go to a school. Girls in that age group are given additional burden of taking care of their younger siblings when their parents go out for work. Even if some parents want to enroll their children in school, it is not easy for them. They have no legally compliant identification documents, because of which schools refuse to admit their children. Moreover the children from slums were lagging behind from students in age appropriate classes due to gap in studies in the process of migrating and getting a suitable place for settlement in urban cities. Due to their inability to overcome the above mentioned challenges, the parents of such children residing in urban slums give up on the idea of educating their kids and ignorantly push their children into inexorable and vicious cycle of illiteracy and poverty. Children who are attending the School also need the extra support after School. Remedial Classes opening in the Community will help the children to complete their Schooling.**

 **Proposed Program: How**

**In urban areas, especially in urban slums, the norms for setting up Aganwadi or ECCED centres need innovative thinking and new norms for building and population. The child friendly and safe building with play area must be available for all the children but if we visit some of the urban deprived localities, one could easily find major chunk of populations limited to 8’8 jhuggis or tin-sheds. With these realities in mind, Asha Deep Foundation propose to initiate Gali Pre school system wherein early care and education is not limited to singing and few indoor activities but it is a complete revitalization to make a child friendly learning environment with ensuring opportunities to explore, enquire, imagination, cooperation, critical thinking ,listening and speaking etc. to explore full potential of children and to give them a good start in life. Proper c well designed curriculum will be followed in the Gali Pre School Centres.The health and nutrition education of these children is also made a pre-requisite to proper health and nutritional care of the children.**

**The proposed Program is about ensuring children grow up healthy, well-nourished with opportunities for enjoyable learning, and with a sense of identity and self-worth – able to communicate effectively and get on with others. A wide range of initiatives would be part of the interventions being planned which includes working with families to changing systems which marginalize, neglect or exclude identified beneficiaries as well as ensuring a conducive environment created for child learning before they enter into formal set up of schooling. Remedial Centres will be started for the School going children of Rag Picking Community.**

**Identifying Rag Picking Communities to open 25 Gali Pre School Centres , 20 children in each centre, reaching to 500 children and Remedial Centres ( after School Support ) for 200 children from Rag Picking Community. Total 700 children will be directly benefitted through this programme.**

**Aim of the Proposed Intervention of the Program:**

**To Develop a Continuum of Early Childhood Care and Education through setting up a Gali Pre School System and Remedial classes for Rag Picking Community Children.**

**Major Areas of Interventions being planned under the Program:**

1. **Early Childhood Care**
* **Trainings and education materials on Nutrition and Health for women and children made available .**
* **Community awareness and linkages with programme, counselling sessions with Mothers on hygiene and child care and early education**
* **Formation of mother’s group to mobilize and enroll beneficiaries, collect learning resources from the community**
* **Use of awareness materials to empower Gali Pre School workers as well as community members**
1. **Nutrition and Food Security**
* **Strengthening service delivery mechanism of AWC and community monitoring on nutritional status of the children**
* **Capacity Building of the community mobilizers/ volunteers**
1. **Health**
* **Promotion of iodized salt**
* **Support to children on issues of micronutrient deficiencies**
* **Health-Checkup camps and linkages with Poly clinic or AWC**
1. **Learning and Early Childhood Development**
* **Ensuring opportunities of psycho- social development of the children through innovative learning methods in the following areas with proper well designed curriculum :**
	+ **Personal development**
	+ **Cognitive Development**
	+ **Fine motor development**
	+ **Social development**
1. **Communication and Learning Material:**

**Development and dissemination of communication and learning materials will be undertaken to promote activities on the ground as well as to share the learnings with different stakeholders.**

1. **Community Resource Centre: The Gali School Program will also focus on developing a community resource centre which could be evolved as nodal centre of excellence for Early Childhood Care and Education Development initiatives with adequate linkages with the existing systems and services for ECCED, Community Library, Dance and Music classes, Indoor and Outdoor Sports, Information on Government Schemes, Nutrition Charts, Health related information’s , Health Camps etc.**
2. **After School Support / Drop Out Children: The children who are finding difficulties in understanding the syllabus will be provided after School Support and also those children who are drop out from School will be prepared in the Centre and will be admitted back in the Government School.**
3. **School Admission: The organization will admit the children who attain the age of 5 in Government School and through this programme will make sure all children in the community go to School and eradicate rag picking among the children.**
4. **Parents Meeting : Regular monthly Parents meeting will be held to update the parents about the children performance and the parents to understand the importance of Education, Health and Nutrition status of the children.**
5. **Events and Festivals: The organization will organize workshop, trainings, meetings for the capacity building of community people, staff etc and also celebrate all the festivals and important dates as per the calendar.**
6. **Program Implementation Mechanism of the Program:**

**Asha Deep Foundation – ADF proposes a participatory model for the Program, which encompasses participation of all its major stakeholders like local AWCs, local NGOs and the donor. The expertise of the domain specific expert will be invited to gain knowledge on the latest trends & techniques. Aligning the employees’ interaction to encourage them to work with the Gali schools to bring in social commitment. The team of donor will be actively engaged, and a strategy could be defined in joint consultation with them based on the program’s approach & scope as well as the desire of the donor.**

**ADF will be the implementing agency and run Gali Pre Schools and Remedial Centres ensuring quality delivery of program. The Program will be fully developed after receiving approval of the donor. Some of the major implementation design aspects would involve developing and conducting baseline survey, activity plan/scheduling and tracking, training needs assessment, training plan, government linkages with the state and national level agencies, community engagement, developing monitoring and evaluation plans, communication and networking etc.**

**Proposed Program : Where**

 **North East Delhi and Delhi - NCR Border of Delhi/ Uttar Pradesh**

**Overall Value Proposition:**

* **Parents realized the importance of education**
* **Children were enrolled in formal schools**
* **Successfully promoted girl child education**
* **Small children benefitted due to early childhood care**
* **Improvement in health and personal hygiene of children**
* **Prevented school drop-out**
* **Positive behavioral changes due to gainful outdoor activities**
* **Decrease of children’s involvement in rag picking**
* **Parents availing government schemes**
* **Community participation in the programme development**
* **Ownership of the Programme with the community people**
* **Community resources are fully utilized ( no rents are paid for the center, the adolescent girl from the community is the instructor/teacher)**
* **Regular attendance of children in schools due to decrease in health and improving their academic and extracurricular performances in schools**
* **Small children are no more accompanying their parents in waste picking and their health improved due to avoiding the unhygienic environment and proper care in the crèche**
* **Right to education ensured to children attaining 5 years of age**
* **Adolescent girl from the community are benefitted and become sustainable.**
* **The classrooms are set up in such a way that it is child friendly with charts and posters on the wall.**
* **Appropriate learning and teaching aids available.**
* **Remedial centers would ensure that the concepts of students are clear and that they are regular with their homework. Extra effort would be made to make the students catch up in subjects they are weak.**
* **A referral library would be set up for the students for light reading and course material.**
* **Children are not malnourished.**
* **All out of School / drop out are admitted in the School.**
* **Due to Remedial Centers the performance and results of the children will be good.**

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1. Grantham-McGregor et al. (2007) Developmental potential in the first 5 years for children in developing countries. The Lancet, 369 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. van der Gaag, J.; Tan, J. P. 1998. The Benefits of Early Childhood Development Programmes: An Economic Analysis. Washington, DC, World Bank. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)