

# RAYS OF HOPE



4/15/2010

ING Vysya Foundation - Annual Report 2009 - 2010

## INTRODUCTION

### The salient features of the Right of Education Bill:

- Free and compulsory education to all children of India in the **6 to 14 age group**.
- No child shall be **held back, expelled, or required to pass a board examination until completion of elementary education**.
- A child who completes elementary education (**upto class 8**) shall be awarded a certificate.
- Calls for a **fixed student-teacher ratio**.
- Will apply to all of India except **Jammu and Kashmir**.
- Provides for **25 percent reservation** for economically disadvantaged communities in admission to Class One in all private schools.
- Mandates improvement in **quality of education**.
- School teachers will need **adequate professional degree** within five years or else will lose job.
- **School infrastructure** (where there is problem) to be **improved** in three years, else recognition cancelled.
- **Financial burden will be shared between state and central government**.

The year 2009 was a very important year for the children of India. The Right to Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 was finally been notified on 26th August 2009, after receiving the assent of the President of India.

Article 21-A, as inserted by the Constitution (Eighty-Sixth Amendment) Act, 2002, provides for free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right. Consequently, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, has been enacted by the Parliament.

**"This was a matter of national importance for UPA (United Progressive Alliance). This bill is just not about taking children to school. This is a bill that speaks about quality education, it speaks about the physical infrastructure, teacher-pupil ratio, qualification of teachers," Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Kapil Sibal said.**

Though the Act was passed in 2009, it came into force from April 1, 2010. NGOs across the country has welcomed this move of Government of India, but has raised concerns over its implementation. Following are the key challenges to implement this historic fundamental right<sup>1</sup>:

- Shortage of funds. In the first year of implementation, the act is likely to face a shortage of Rs. 7,000 crore (Rs. 70 billion);
- India needs at least 500,000 more teachers and

without them the act will not be able to see success.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/major-challenges-in-implementing-right-to-education\\_100342235.html](http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/major-challenges-in-implementing-right-to-education_100342235.html)

- The number of untrained teachers in the country ranges from 10-40 percent of the total strength.
- Hundreds of thousands of schools still don't have adequate infrastructure.
- There is no clear road map on how the government wants to help 8.1 million out of school children back to classroom
- There is no proper monitoring system to assess the impact of its implementation by States and Central government.

The Act has also specified the need for public-private partnership to implement this ACT in its truest sense. Many NGOs have already joined hands with Corporate Foundations (CSR divisions) to promote and provide education to the under-served children in India. ING Vysya Foundation is one among those which has worked since 2004 to help realize the right to education for under-served children in India. We are happy to present the initiatives undertaken during the year 2009-2010 to further the cause of education for under-served children in India.



*Anjali, 4 yrs, Great Indian Dream Foundation*

## The report:

During the year 2009 – 2010, Foundation has worked with 12 NGO partners, catering to children from 6 states of India. The primary goal was to **a)** enroll children (never been to school and out of school) back to school **b)** to prepare children through bridge schools and pre-primary schools for enrolling in formal schools **c)** retaining and continuing education of children who have already been enrolled. Working towards this, Foundation has adopted different approaches to cater to various groups of children. For eg: The community learning program was supported to help attain the age-appropriate learning skills of children living in slums. The residential program is aimed at providing an opportunity to be in school for the drug addicted children and child laborers living on the streets. Learning centre models have been adopted for children, those are living in slums or in rural areas and also children from red-light areas. The variation in approach adopted is primarily based on the children that we cater to. Below is a brief overview on each of the initiatives by the Foundation during the year:



### NGO partners those we worked with:

**Akshara Foundation (Community Library program), Bangalore:** The aim of this project is to optimally run six Community Libraries, covering children in 6 slums in different part of Bangalore. The Library Programme helps children to attain age-appropriate learning. The Library Programme aims to make every child in every government primary school a Library member and bring in methodologies to ensure that they are reading and learning well. These libraries

serve as a vital function of fostering the reading habits among the children living in slums. These libraries are also equipped with computers and internet connections for child members to become computer literate as soon as they enrol in the library program. Each library has a membership of 200 – 250 children. Membership includes children going to government schools, local private schools as well as children never been to schools. Books and curriculums vary from one another, depending on age and the learning capabilities of children. ING Vysya Foundation supports six community libraries, covering around 1500 children.



**Akshara Foundation (Pre-school program), Bangalore:** The aim of this project is to prepare under-served children from the slums to get enrolled in the formal schools at the age of 6. Balwadi curriculum promotes the holistic development of children and prepares them for primary schooling. It is designed to act as a child-friendly, participatory and supportive learning platform for children below 6 years. The program maintains a timetable of development attainments for children to monitor the progress of each child's learning and cognitive skills. It tracks

children's progress even after they are enrolled in formal schools in Std. I. This preschool education initiative is a link to primary education. It facilitates the process of admission into formal schools, whether private or government. ING Vysya Foundation supports 30 pre-schools centers in Bangalore that cater to around 900 children from the slums in different parts of Bangalore.

**Sukrupa (residential program), Bangalore:** This initiative aims to support under-served children escape a background of poverty, slum life, illiteracy and ignorance by using education as a tool for development. This program includes food, nutrition, academic instructions to children, health care, recreational activities and cultural opportunities for the overall development of children. Under the residential care, there are 10 children, mainly orphans and children who have single parents, living in slums. Apart from providing overall care to these 10 children, the program also provides nutritional food, health care and after-school coaching to 440 children under Sukrupa's school sponsorship program.





**Makkala Jagriti, Bangalore:** This projects experiments with the belief that children learn best in an environment that encourages exploration, experimentation and freedom. The learning center, supported by ING Vysya Foundation provides a respectful environment and creates opportunities for learning and growing, which nurtures supportive relationships between children and adults. Most of these children who come to the centers lack an environment that encourages learning and reading outside school, as their own parents are often illiterate or minimally educated and are battling social and economic odds every day. To expose these children to quality learning opportunities, ING Vysya Foundation have partnered with Makkala Jagriti in a project located in the government school 'Munichinappa Municipal School' near Audogudi. 300 children will be catered to under this project to attain age appropriate learning skills.

**Christel House, Bangalore:** The program aims to provide an interactive flexible learning environment for young urban children coming from deprived communities who have no access to regular educational program. A number of the children come from one parent homes and a significant number are first generation learners. Education is provided in environment that is conducive to constructive education and enable the implementation of a curriculum that integrates different subjects and enrichment activities resulting in a more seamless and comprehensive education. A very important component is the value education and community service program. The children are taught to value school, home and family and give back to the communities through service learning activities. ING Vysya Foundation supports 40 students in grade 10 in the age group 15-17.



**ARDAR, Hyderabad:** ING Vysya Foundation has adopted 2 schools in Hyderabad under its 'school adoption programme'. The Foundation has sponsored 100% of the funds for the construction of both the government school buildings, located in MRC Colony of Hyderabad and Rasoolpura in Secunderabad. Enrollment of children in both the schools has gone up to 250 from a mere 35 students. English Medium has been introduced in both the schools. This year (2009), English Medium was

introduced in 1st standard and gradually they will become exclusive English Medium Schools under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. In MRC Colony School and the Film Nagar, the government of Andhra Pradesh has also approved construction of one more floor to make it a high school.



**Aurobindo Chaudhari Great Indian Dream Foundation, Delhi:** The objective of the programme is to provide children from under-served communities a stimulating & enriching environment as per their developmental age. Under this program, Pre-school education is provided by the using joyful learning methods. The priority of the programme is to inculcate motivation and interest in education among the less privileged children and their parents. This is achieved by using playway methods and building the capacity of the peer group towards the importance of education in the villages/slums that these children come from. ING Vysya Foundation supports 50 children under this pre-

school program.

**Hamari Muskaan, Kolkata:** Muskaan is working among the group of vulnerable children, living in Bowbazar red light area. Most of these children live in dingy rooms which they share with others. They are exposed to sexual exploitation, physical and mental abuse and gross violence from an early age. As they grow up, they also become aware of the brunt of social stigma. As a result, they develop a strongly negative self-image and poor self-esteem from a very early age. Therefore, they soon start dropping out of the school even if admitted due to lack of any caregiver to follow up their cases. Most of them take recourse to substance abuse including drugs; both the boys and girls get sexually abused and the girls are trapped into the vicious cycle of sex-trafficking without even being able to explore her other life-options. The boys too are more likely to become easy recruits for the organized criminal networks, drug peddlers and traffickers. Muskaan's effort is to provide a protective mechanism by using education as a tool for overall development of these children. The centre, presently has 20 children and all are doing well. Out of 20 children 7 children will be enrolled in Class I of a Government aided school as they are prepared to cope with mainstream education, others 10 are still in the age of 4, rest are below 4 years. For these 7 children, Muskaan will run support classes to help them in their regular studies along with the learning centre for 3- 6 years old children.



**Pratham Vulnerable Council for Children, Mumbai:** ING Vysya Foundation supports Pratham's residential centre for rescued child labourers in Mumbai. The project aims to rehabilitate former child



labourers by providing them an opportunity to be in school and learn well. There are 45 children in the shelter home. 40 children go to school and 5 children are new residents of the shelter. These 5 children will be enrolled in the school from this April 2010 (new session). There are 2 children who will be appearing for their 10th standard board exam this year in March 2010 and one child (Shazid) will be appearing for his 12th standard exam in the month of April 2010. Shazid has also been nominated by the 'Red-dust Foundation' to be part of a one-year long course in music in

Australia.



**Support, Mumbai:** This project aims at rehabilitating drug addicted children living on the streets of Mumbai by providing them an opportunity to be in school. This program includes a rehabilitation programme to bring these children out of addiction and other risk behavior on the streets. After the detoxification process, the child is prepared for enrolling in formal schools. ING Vysya Foundation supports 25 such girl children to be in school and continue their education. This support includes nutritioinal food, medical aid, deaddiction care and life skill development.

**IIMPACT, Lucknow:** IIMPACT with support from ING Vysya Foundation is conducting 15 learning centers for out of school girls in Mehmoodabad Block of District Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh. These centers are instrumental in providing quality primary education to over 500 out of school girls in 13 villages. In the last 3 years, through these 15 centers, presently IIMPACT has 92 girls who are studying in class V. Almost all these girls were at nil level at the time of their entry in IIMPACT learning centers. Even those who had dropped out from formal schools had very little reading-writing skills.



**SOs Children’s Village, Nagapattinam:**



The goal of the Family Strengthening Program is to strengthen the vulnerable families to provide and promote education along with health care and nutritional food for the children, affected by Tsunami. The objectives of the Project are to ensure that families have access to essential services to the children; support families to build their abilities to protect and care for their children and to strengthen support systems for the children and families within the community.



**Chances for Children program, UNICEF:** This project focuses on the challenges of gender and social disparity in the state of Rajasthan, India. In partnership with the State Government, this project is emphasizes on Girls’ Education for Equity and Empowerment by demonstrating context specific interventions in three districts - Tonk, Udaipur and Jhalawar with the aim to bring 12,000 girls (who are still out-of-school in the project areas) into school and ensure they are retained. In order to get these girls (back) into school, the strategy focuses on both the state and district levels. The main elements of the strategy are capacity building

and technical support for implementing agencies, developing partnerships with key stakeholders in civil society, media, and the private sector, as well as NGOs in order to ensure broad levels of support.

## Volunteer Program:

ING Vysya Foundation provides opportunities to employees to volunteer for the development and growth of children, living in difficult circumstances, such as in children living in slums, child labour, children never been to school, drop outs, orphan children and so on.

**Homework Buddies:** This program is aimed at building relationships, as often both our employees and the partner NGOs see their relationship in limited terms, or under the constraints of the particular program being funded. This initiative had provided a platform for employees to interact with children to help develop reasoning and logic to gather age appropriate learning skill. **In Bangalore**, 26



employees helped NGO children to complete their homework and teach basic mathematics and English.

**In Mumbai**, this initiative has taken a different shape, wherein a 22 member volunteer team spends fun time with the rehabilitated street children, living under the care of a partner organization. The enthusiasm of employees have prompted the Foundation to launch a **long term volunteering program** where in

employees across the ING business in Bangalore and Mumbai helped children (under the care of Foundation's partner organizations) for a **period of six months** to develop their learning skills and to fulfill their recreational needs.



**Global Challenge: Chances for Children program, 20th November 2009:** On and around 20 November, the United Nations International Day of the Child, ING Vysya Foundation celebrated ING Chances for Children Day. 3500 employees from ING Vysya Bank, ING Life and ING Investment Management participated in the programme, to make a difference in the lives of more than 4000 less-privileged children in 30 locations of India. The celebration

took place in Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Lucknow, Chandigarh, Cochin, Jaipur, Chennai, Vijaywada, Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Ludhiana, Mumbai, Salem, Coimbatore, Anathpur, Bangalore, Hubli. Various activities including music and painting competition, movie shows, art and crafts were held to engage children and give employees an opportunity to spend a day, interact and meet less privileged children. This one-day volunteering program was covered by all regional and national press.

**One-day volunteering with children of STHREE, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010:** Foundation organized a volunteer program on 6th February 2010. 25 volunteers from ING Vysya Bank and ING Life participated in this program. We also had participant from ING Vysya Bank Regional Office (Ananthapur) and nearby branch). We had a fun-filled day with children aged between 2 years to 19 years and also few women. Volunteers gave away clothes/books, a water filter, a mixer, sports items and many other things which people had donated.

**Annual Fund raising Campaign – “ I believe I can Fly”:**



Foundation launched an annual fund raising campaign during the month of September 2009. The campaign was launched by CEO, ING Group Mr. Jan Hommen on 9th September 2009 and reiterated the Groups belief towards the cause of education. Employees have raised an amount of Rs. 60 Lakh towards this cause.

ING Vysya Foundation had organised an event organised to announce the total amount contributed by the employees of three business entities in India. The evening marked the closure of the campaign by a ceremony that thanked the employees whose contributions and support enabled more and more children to go to school and receive quality education. Children from the NGO partners, Sukrupa, Makkala Jagriti and Christel House, based in Bangalore, presented a special programme to thank the employees for their efforts, in their own special way. The programme included performances, songs and skit that had the audience applauding and cheering them loud!