

Non-Profit Organization
providing Assistance to the
Physically Challenged in
India for Education and
Income Generation

ASHRAYA

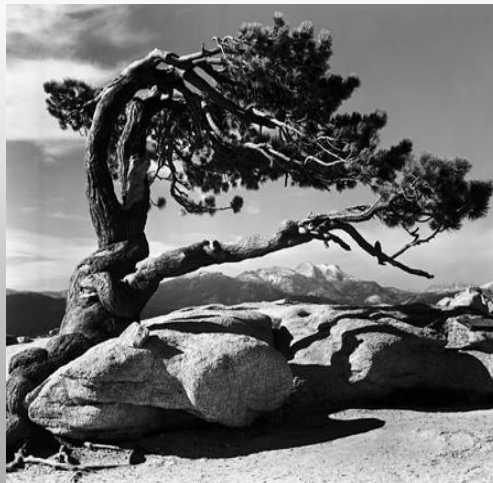
*Hey Look! The pine tree is bending
Over the rocks like a frail old man blessing
A burly child with his stick,*

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*The scorching sun whips its back,
And the heat smacks its branches,
Shaking off crumbled leafs of shade
That scramble for refuge in craggy folds.*

*As God's children go on a star-hunt,
The world of ASHRAYAs stands on its head,
A top spinning in perfect harmony.*

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ASHRAYA 2010 Project for Funding

Skill Development in Rural Primary Schools in Hanur Taluk, Karnataka Phase II

I. Introduction

This is a document made by ASHRAYA describing a project on skill development in Rural Primary Schools in Hanur Taluk, Karnataka. This project will be executed directly by ASHRAYA in collaboration with the Deputy Director of Primary Education (DDPI), Chamarajanagar District, Karnataka.

ASHRAYA is a non-profit organization incorporated in the US, established in 1991 with an aim to provide assistance to the physically challenged and rural communities in India in the areas of education, vocational training and income generation. Our focus is on various challenges such as visual, aural, mobility, learning and rural poverty; and on different age groups, i.e. education for children, vocational training for teenagers and income generation for adults. We strive to use **assistive technologies** wherever feasible so as to increase sustainability and leverage. ASHRAYA is registered in the state of New Jersey and has obtained tax-exempt status from IRS (Tax ID 52-1791311). Beneficiary organizations we have worked with in the past include National Association for the Blind (NAB), Blind Persons Association (BPA), Madhya Pradesh Blind Welfare Association (MPBWA) and Mobility India. Over the last few years, we have focused on rural based and smaller organizations so as to increase impact. ASHRAYA works strictly under the following guidelines/edicts:

- 1) We do not donate money to a general cause nor support organization level operational expenses
- 2) We do not deduct any overheads during fund disbursement (i.e. founders absorb all overhead expenses)
- 3) All funds are used to purchase aids and equipment for direct usage by beneficiaries
- 4) We solicit only project-specific and not general funds from donors and sponsors

II. Background and Context

The state governments in India have done a lot for primary schools (1st to 7th standard) in rural parts of the country, pouring in investments in school buildings, trained teachers, text books etc. The state government in Karnataka has already invested the following in each rural school (other than school buildings and teacher salaries)

1. Mid-day meals for every school child
2. 500 rupees per teacher for teaching aids and materials
3. 45,000 rupees per school for maintenance
4. Text books for every child and 3 note books and school bag for each SC/ST child
5. Daily newspapers
6. 2,800 books for the library
7. Bicycles for 8th standard students
8. Geometry boxes in 7th standard
9. Radio & TV to run educational programs aired by the government daily

However, children passing out of these schools have gaps in many areas such as handwriting and math skills. These gaps are higher in rural areas (i.e. farther away from the main cities). The following are the identified areas of gaps along with interventions that could help reduce each of these gaps

Area	Deficiency	Suggested Intervention Mechanisms
Basic Amenities		Plates and glasses for midday meals Benches and desks in the classroom
Skills	Handwriting Indigenous Knowledge Sports Education Creative Arts General Knowledge Debating/ Quizzing Science and Math Skills Health Education Water Hygiene Experimental Science Music Peer Learning Communication Skills Computer Training Competitive Spirit Fun Days Adventure	Copywriting Books, Pencils, Erasers, Stencil Sets Silk Rearing Models, Books on Sericulture, Industry Visits Football, Cricket Set, Etc Coloring Books, Origami books, Crayons, Paints Encyclopedia, GK Books, Atlas, Globe, Charts Competition Conducted by Volunteers and Teachers ¹ Science and Math Kits, Nature Models First Aid Kit, Health Charts Water Filters Lab Equipment, Chemicals Music Equipment Consultant Based Training Consultant Based Training Computers Gift Book Sets Picnic, Movie Day Summer Camps like Trekking, Industrial Visits

Our aim is to provide supplementary materials that could enhance the skill sets of children passing out of these schools (into high school). We selected Hanur Taluk (sub-division of Chamarajanagar District in Karnataka State) since it is primarily rural (200 Kms away from Bangalore) with very few NGOs active in the area.

Hanur Taluk has 3 Hoblis (sub-divisions of a Taluk which in turn are sub-divisions of a district) with the following higher primary schools, i.e. schools with 1st to 7th standard classes (HPS) and student populations:

Hanur Taluk Sub-Division ("Hobli")	Number of Higher Primary Schools (HPS)	Total Number of Students	Average Students per School
Hanur	17	3,043	179
Lokkanahalli	14	2,168	156
Ramapura	46	7,151	155
Totals	77	12,362	160

III. Past History with Beneficiary Organization – Phase I

In Dec 2008, we embarked on **Project Terra Firma** focusing on skill development in Hanur Taluk primary schools. We worked with the past BEO of Hanur Taluk Mr. Lingaraj Urs and identified two projects for Phase I (2009-10):

1. **Create Model Schools:** We selected one model school (Kannur school). A model school is defined as a school that has a dedicated and motivated set of teachers, displayed proficiency in at least one area, has a clean and hygienic infrastructure and study environment; and wherein teachers have expressed interest and desire to do better. Our goal was to showcase this school to motivate other schools to improve performance on their own. We completed the following at this Kannur school.
 - a. **Basic Materials:** We identified specific gaps they have in terms of materials covering basic amenities and all skills (math, science, creativity, sports, handwriting, general knowledge and music) and supplied materials to fill these gaps.
 - b. **Fun Projects:** We conducted an exam for all 250 students, scored the exams and selected top 100 students. We conducted fun educational projects for groups of 5 (20 groups in total) that were focused on learning and promoting curiosity. We conducted a fun project exhibition in which all

groups displayed their projects and presented awards to the top 3 groups (students and teachers) and top 2 students per grade based on the results of the final exam.

2. **Improve Select Skills Across All Schools:** We worked with the BEO to identify two skills for development, handwriting and creativity. We selected 17 schools in Hanur Hobli and supplied materials (copywriting books, pencils, erasers and paper) to all schools related to handwriting improvement in Kannada and English. We administered tests at beginning to identify scope for improvement at the individual, grade and school levels. We inspected the usage of materials and improvement in skills on a continuous basis (once every 45 days). This project was temporarily stalled due to change in BEO which prevented us from monitoring and following up with all schools.

We also put together a multi-phase deployment plan as shown below.

	Phase I 2009-10	Phase II 2010-11	Phase III 2011-12
1. Create Model Schools	1. Kannur School – Provide Basic Materials and Execute Fun Projects	1. Kannur School a. Set up and start Science, Sports and Nature Clubs b. Set up and run a library 2. Deploy Fun Projects to All Schools in Hanur Hobli 3. Identify two more Model Schools and provide basic materials	1. Kannur School – Continue running Clubs and Library 2. Expand Clubs and Library to Other 5 Model Schools 3. Deploy Fun Projects to All Schools in Lokkanahalli and Ramapura Hoblis
2. Improve Select Skills across all Schools	Handwriting for all Schools in Hanur Hobli (17 Schools; 3,043 Students)	1. Handwriting for all Schools in Lokkanahalli Hobli (14 Schools; 2,168 Students)	

IV. Project Description – Phase II

A. Project Overview

We would like to continue working in the Hanur Taluk area over the coming 3 years. In Phase II of this project (2010-11), we would like to do the following:

1. Complete the handwriting skill development project taken up in Phase I. We would like to monitor usage, administer a test at the completion of usage of all materials to register improvement. We will give awards to schools, teachers and students who have shown the best improvement across all the schools.
2. Set up and run educational clubs for select students in the model school. We will identify and procure materials and equipment for each club, define a session plan, nominate a teacher in a school to run the club and continuously monitor the execution of the session plans. We will nominate teachers to run the clubs on a regular basis and ensure that the students prepare project reports at the end of each activity. We will fund all local visits and activities. We will bring experts to train students on the various activities (e.g. science teachers, chess experts, experienced trekkers). These experts will conduct interactive seminars on required topics. We will also run a competitive display of all project materials to all school students at the end of the year. Clubs will be in following areas:
 - a. **Science Club:** This club will have an active science lab with experiments. The club will revolve around conducting experiments and arranging visits to science museums.
 - b. **Nature Club:** This club will have an active biology lab and involve trips to nature spots in the vicinity (e.g. botanical gardens, wildlife sanctuaries, plantations and adventure treks)

B. Impact Summary

- 20 students in Science Club will learn how to conduct science experiments, complement science education and build scientific temper
- 20 students in Nature Club will learn how to conduct nature experiments, complement environmental education and build environmental awareness

C. Key Monitoring Indicators

- Project status reports to be generated by ASHRAYA every 3 months
- Select students for fun projects and various clubs through administration of tests. Top 20 students in each of the 5 schools based on overall scores will be selected for the fun projects. For each club (science, nature and board games), 20 students will be selected based on scores in science, geography and math respectively
- Conduct competition days to determine excellence
- Document all projects and experiments conducted
- All field trips undertaken in clubs will be documented through field reports
- ASHRAYA volunteers visit Hanur Taluk every month (or for specific occasions like administering exams and fun educational projects) on Saturdays
- BEO of Hanur Taluk will provide certificates of accomplishment to students and teachers based on progress made.

D. Project Expenditure

Expense Parameter	Unit	# of Units	Unit Rate (Rs)	Costs (Rs)
I. Library Establishment @ Kannur School in 2010				
1.1 Books (1000 Books x Rs 30 per Book)	Per Book	1,000	30	30,000
1.2 One Librarian + Administrator	Per Month	12	5,000	60,000
1.3 Furniture	Lump Sum	1	5,000	5,000
Sub-total Library @ Kannur School				95,000 (2,000)
II. Science Club @ Kannur School				
2.1. Equipment & Materials	Lump Sum	1	20,000	20,000
2.2 Educational Videos	Per Video	6	600	3,600
2.3. Training at Anubhav Science Foundation	Lump Sum	1	10,000	21,550
2.4 Field Trips	Per Trip	2	8,000	16,000
2.5 Paid Lecturers by Experts	Per Lecture	2	1,000	2,000
Sub-total Science Club @ Kannur School				63,150
III. Nature Club @ Kannur School				
2.1. Equipment & Materials	Lump Sum	1	5,000	5,000
2.2 Educational Videos	Per Video	6	600	3,600
2.3. Training at Merlin Nature Club	Lump Sum	1	5,000	5,000
2.4 Field Trips	Per Trip	5	8,000	40,000
2.5 Paid Lecturers by Experts	Per Lecture	2	1,000	2,000
Sub-total Nature Club @ Kannur School				55,600
Totals Science & Nature Clubs @ Kannur School				118,750 (\$2,500)
IV. Library Operations in 2011				
2.1. One Librarian + Administrator	Per Month	12	4,400	52,800
Library Operations @ Kannur School				52,800 (1,000)

Total Expenditure for Phase II	Rs	266,550
	\$	5,500

V. Summary

This is a document prepared by ASHRAYA describing a project on skill development in Rural Primary Schools in Hanur Taluk, Karnataka. This project will be executed directly by ASHRAYA in collaboration with the Department Director of Primary Education (DDPI), Chamarajanagar District, Karnataka. Please contact Vasuki Subbarao (+91 997 203 1318 or +1 630 270 2056) for further details on this project. If you would like to contribute towards this project, please make a check in the name of ASHRAYA, and mailed to D-1004, Laburnum Block, Brigade Millennium, JP Nagar 7th Phase, Bangalore 560078, INDIA. The ASHRAYA tax-ID number to be used in your tax returns is 52-1791311 (US only). We will send you receipts for the received contribution right away. We look forward to hearing from you