

ANNUAL REPORT

2015 - 2016



Vimukti Charitable Trust (R)
Jeenur Road Pothnal,
Manvi Taluk, Raichur Dist

I. Introduction:

“Education is the most powerful weapon, which you can use to change the world”- said Nelson Mandela. Understanding ‘education’ in a comprehensive sense, on behalf of the Governing council of the Vimukti Charitable Trust®(VCT), I am glad to place before you, the General Body members of the Trust, the annual Report on the various activities undertaken by the trust for the period 1st April to 31st March 2016.

VCT, through its supportive partnership with *Ensemble Agissons*, France and America House of Jesuit Community, New York, continues to undertake varied programmes, to tackle problems associated with the various aspects of development. As you would know, these programmes impact hundreds of lives as they are dealing with education skills, skill-training, health initiatives, housing, women empowerment, etc. While implementing these projects, VCT is also committed to engage in advocacy lobbying work in order to promote the rights of the individuals and bring about systemic changes. With this short introduction I shall now present the detailed activities of the Trust.

II. Objectives realized

The following projects have been implemented during the year 2015-2016 so as to realize the principal objectives of the Trust:

- Main streaming school-dropouts through family counseling and combating child labor.
- Preventing children from being exposed to vulnerable and abusive conditions.
- Strengthening the children’s parliament and children’s clubs through training.
- Forming and strengthening children’s parliaments in certain targeted villages.
- Stopping human trafficking, and preventing child-marriage.
- Skill development training for the unemployed youth.
- Initiating social action groups against exploitative structures of the society.
- Promoting awareness on education/ health and social issues.
- Promoting functional literacy of the target group.
- Creating opportunities for skill development training for adolescent girls
- Facilitating adolescent girls to enroll in the distance education and thus encouraging them to complete their studies.
- Reaching out to children in vulnerable conditions and alleviating their condition.
- Steering awareness programs to eradicate child-labor, child-marriages and child-dropouts.

III. Community Welfare Programmes

1. **5th annual day celebration at Vimukti and aiding physically challenged children:** It is said that ‘*To accomplish great things we must not only act but also dream; not only plan but also believe*’. Accordingly, on 11th January 2015 VCT organized 5th annual day. It was a significant day in the history pages of Vimukti, when thousands witnessed a well-organized event held to distribute to the physically challenged children some 62,400/- rupees worth material help. All the VCT club and parliament children participated in the event and tried their best to excel. The parents and the well-wishers who were invited to the programme admired with interest the hard work of their children. (**Refer: - ANNEXURE: III**)
2. **Women’s Day celebrated at Vimukti:** On March 8th 2015, Vimukti at Pothnal joined the rest of the world in commemorating international Women’s Day at VCT premises. Ten surrounding villages and women representatives from other villages joined the celebration. Nearly 560 women benefited from this program.

3. **Sponsored-children and Parents' get together:** Well aware of the fact that parents play a major role in providing a bright future for their children, the get-together was meant to enlighten the parents of sponsored-children about their responsibility towards their children and to remind them of the need to cooperate and work together with their children and with those who empower them in their journey of life. Fr. ...the director was the resource person to address the meeting and with his thought provoking discourse informed purpose and won the hearts of them all. He also spoke of the impact of media and its veiled abuses on the present day society. At the gathering 65 sponsor families took the initiative to express their deep sentiments of gratitude to the benefactors. Altogether 120 parents who were the beneficiaries took part in the event.
4. **Leadership training for women:** On 3rd July 2015, Miss. Vidhya along with Mrs. Jecinta, organized a leadership training programme for the Dalit women at Amareshwar camp. Mrs. Basamma Assist. Manager SBI, Pothnal spoke on topics like women's leadership, women related issues, health and hygiene, home management, life skills, family planning, minimum wages, different schemes etc. The bank manager of the place explained the benefits of savings, how Government is helping women to come into the lime light and to stand on their feet. Nearly 450 women attended this leadership training programme.
5. **Awareness rally on 'Tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse':** An age-old saying goes like this "*Unless we destroy the seed of evil, it will destroy us*". To destroy the seed of evil, though, is hard, it is not impossible. Keeping this in mind, VCT organized an awareness rally to combat the evils of 'Tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse' among students. The students of Valmiki College helped us taking an active part in the rally. The rally included also a FLASH MOB, performing creatively before the gathered crowd to highlight the ill-effects of smoking, drinking and taking drugs and to know the importance of working to bring about their elimination.

Inspired by the programme, VCT also initiated a new campaign of "Stickers". The students and other volunteers were invited to distribute personalized Anti-Tobacco message Stickers to shop keepers, four and two wheeler owners, auto drivers and other people. All those who supported the cause, used the stickers on their vehicles, on the walls of shops and houses to underscore the key message: "*put it out before it puts you out*". The number of students who benefited from this programme is nearly 950.

6. **Awareness programme on the importance of breast feeding:** In 10 units of our working area, awareness was given to some 580 mothers of pre-school children regarding child-care and development regarding the importance of breast feeding, weaning practice, low cost nutritious food preparation, immunization etc. During the house visits, the animators continued to remind and educate of them further about child care and development. Mothers were informed about the compulsory birth-registration and to avail the free Government facilities like '*madilu kittu*,' '*Bhagyalaxmi yojane*,' etc.
7. **Health awareness programme:** The month of October is a time of holidays for the school going children; hence under the leadership of VCT, health awareness programmes were organized in different villages. More than 820 children and adults were made to involve in these awareness programmes, meaning there spouse from children and adults was indeed significant. The children themselves were guided to demonstrate through their skills and talents, especially of speech, dramas and other activities the importance of health and hygiene.
8. **Workshop on "Promoting and Protecting child Rights:** On 14th to 16th October VCT organized in its premises three days' orientation and strategic planning workshop for "Promoting and Protecting child

Rights”. On our invitation, nearly thirty NGOs from different districts also came to participate in the training. The burning issues like, infant mortality, violation of child rights, child trafficking, child marriage, child labour, illegal adoption, lack of quality education and health care, plight of HIV infected children etc. were dealt with and discussed. The workshop stressed and concluded with the understanding of the necessity of working together in order to eradicate the existing evils and to build up a vibrant society.

9. **Home based Survey on Mentally challenged children:** *Special children need love and opportunity-not merely sympathy.* In view of providing love and opportunity, a home based survey on mentally challenged children was done in our entire project area. People often come to say that it is better to have physical illness than mental illness, as they feel deficient and inferior to others. Also, it is difficult for the family to accept and manage patients suffering from mental illnesses. It is right awareness regarding mental illnesses and the way to handle it that can reduce the problem to a great extent. Our staff visited the houses having mentally ill children, especially to find out how severe the disability is. According to statistics available with VCT, there are nearly 136 children in the age group of 6 to 14 years with various grades of disabilities.
10. **Vimukti observes World AIDS day:** VCT observed World AIDS Day along with Parijatha, a State AIDS Control Society, various NGOs and allied departments. The theme was: “Getting to Zero” - zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. More than 300 participants walked in the rally from Vimukti premises to the Primary Health Center in Pothnal, creating awareness among people at large on HIV/AIDS and seeking to reduce stigma and discrimination shown to people infected with HIV/AIDS. After the rally, a public meeting was organized. Eminent personalities from the public health sector participated in the meeting, and overall 550 people benefited from this entire programme.
11. **Vimukti celebrates World otherwise-abled-day:** On December 7, 2015, VCT observed the World otherwise-abled-Day in its premises. With great vigor and enthusiasm, Vimukti worked to bring as many as possible such otherwise-abled-people to make their day a memorable one. Sports and games were organized for all the differently abled people. As many as 189 otherwise-abled-persons took part in various sports and competitions. Important people were present to give the relevant messages.
12. **Gathering of Multi-Person Re-ability Workers (MRW) & Village Responsibility Workers (VRW):** On 8th of December 2015, the Multi-Person Re-ability Workers (MRW) and Village Responsibility Workers (VRW) from various parts of the district gathered at Vimukti premises. All the MRWs and VRWs who participated in the meeting demanded certain facilities and equipment like, tri-wheel chairs, blind sticks, Crutches, etc., from the government. Though there is 3% percentage flow of money to every panchayat to meet the needs of the differently-abled persons, the needy do not get the required help. MRW and VRW leaders, therefore, gave a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner to take note of their situation in this regard and do justice. Around 79 representatives were present to claim their just dues at this gathering.

IV. Child Welfare Programmes

13. **Training on ‘POCSO and Child Rights’:** The District Child Welfare committee (DCWC) and VCT jointly organized a day’s training on POCSO and Child Rights at Manvi, for the School Development and Monitoring Committee (SDMC) presidents and members of the Manvi taluka. Mr. Ragavendra Bhat, a member of UNICEF, was the resource person. He highlighted the role of the SDMC members in developing schools for education and creating awareness of child labour, child dropouts, and child

marriage. He elaborated the POCSO Act 2012 and emphasized its effects in detail. Some 43 people attended the meeting and found it beneficial.

- 14. Campaign on girl education and early marriage issues:** With the help of District child protection unit, awareness was conducted in various schools and villages about the importance of education of the girl child and the related issue of early marriage. Many school children and villagers participated in the program and benefitted from this campaign.
- 15. Career guidance Training:** VCT organized a career guidance training programme for all those who had completed S.S.L.C studies. These students were guided through input sessions throughout the day to know the relative importance of arts, science, diploma in computer, agriculture, tailoring, electronics, beautician course etc. The subjects and their merits were explained in detail to the students. About 150 students living in and around Pothnal came and benefitted by this training.
- 16. Free distribution of clothes, Gift Boxes and stationery articles:** Since many years VCT has been taking keen interest in helping the poor school going children. Primarily it consisted in distribution of free notebooks, uniforms and stationery articles to them. Around 250 poor children have been selected every year for this purpose. This year too arrangement was made for the free distribution of this material to poor children studying in the primary schools, in the various adjoining villages of Pothnal.
- 17. Formation of child-rights clubs and awareness program:** Child-rights clubs have been formed in 31 Gram Panchayats of Manvi taluka; with regular visits and organization of meetings once in a month, the children are taught to know their right to education and to live a disciplined life, to gain their rights and to enjoy their childhood. At the same time, we aim at making children aware of the powers of a parliamentary democracy. We teach them the four basic rights like 1. Right to Live 2. Right to Protect 3. Right to Progress and 4. Right to participate. Children are trained to teach other children to involve in social action and help vulnerable children to gain their right to education and health. So far 42 such clubs are formed and 855 children are benefiting from this program.
- 18. From child labour to the School:** With ceaseless effort VCT has succeeded to bring 41 Dalit children back to the school from their tragic situation of being forced to work for the debt they did only inherit. In the given society freeing these children is indeed a herculean task. But we could perceive a sense of satisfaction and immense joy that was visible on the faces of these 41 children, who were freed and admitted in different schools instead. There was, however, a bit of struggle to keep 12 of these children in a hostel, because of their earlier history when they had escaped twice. The reason for their escape was that they found it difficult to live in a different atmosphere. After a lot of persuasion and guidance, gradually there came to have some change in these children and now they are comfortable and living happily in a hostel.
- 19. Swacch Abhiyan Campaign:** Cleanliness is next to Godliness, we all know. We also know that a journey of thousand miles starts with a single step. Keeping this thought in mind the children-parliament team with the collaboration of other school children conducted in 11 Schools cleanliness campaign to maintain the school environment clean, neat and tidy. The objective of this campaign was to make the children realize that action speaks louder than words and it is good to act rather than merely complain. Accordingly the campaign was well planned and executed with the co-operation and support of the school children. Through the campaign this awareness was created in nearly 970 children.
- 20. Children Camps:** Holiday Camps for the Children play a vital role in the development of their personalities. On 10th, 12th, 14th, 16th, 18th of October 2015, a camps were organized in different villages of our project area, with the collaboration of local people. A camp included input sessions on leadership

qualities, personality development, stage art, awareness of child rights, plastic eradication, preparation for board examinations, health and hygiene, discipline, environment protection, religious harmony, time management etc. There were a number of competitions and matches among the teams to help develop a spirit of team-work. Nearly 890 children were the participants of these camps.

- 21. Formation of Balika Sanghas:** These were formed in various Schools of Manvi taluka and their main objective is to educate and guide the adolescent girls to understand and accept their physical maturity and emotional changes they undergo. They also need to take good care of themselves during this period avoiding all kinds of fear and superstitious beliefs, prevalent in the villages. They must know their rights to save themselves from child labour, child marriage, child trafficking, school dropout, etc. Nearly 2550 girls, who profited from the programme expressed that they were ignorant about these things and were happy to be the members of this *balika sanghas*.
- 22. Students enjoy visit to police station:** VCT organized for the children a visit to the Police Station to understand its functioning as part of our Programme of Inquiry. Police Sub-Inspector spoke to the children about how a police station operates. Students visited the control room, jail, FIR room and were informed about arms and ammunition like gun, pistol etc. They learned how to call no. 911 in an emergency situation, ways to protect themselves and to avoid dangerous situations. Children were told what happens when a person is arrested, how police personnel works and how it helps officers do their job. Around 298 children were part of this educative program.
- 23. World Child rights day:** A rally and a public function marked the celebration of World Child rights day at Udbal Government primary School on 29th November 2015. The main theme of the day centered on the protection of the rights of children. Speaking on this occasion the director of Vimukti appealed for greater involvement of civil society towards the protection of child rights and a concrete action oriented towards achieving their goals. There were positive results in making the day very special. 490 children participated in the campaign. They took active part in the rally and campaigned in village streets carrying placards in their hands spreading the message of protection of child rights. The children also held press meet to highlight their findings. The campaign was greatly appreciated and extensively covered by the regional newspapers.
- 24. Training on health at adolescent stage:** Adolescents in villages being a neglected lot with regard to human growth and development, an awareness programme was conducted so as to make them know the adverse effects of early marriage and improper knowledge of physical and sexual development. Topics like physical and psychological changes during puberty, maintaining physical and mental hygiene during adolescent stage, having the right sex education etc. were dealt with. 620 students gained knowledge on various issues.

V. Ongoing Programmes

- 25. Training of Animators:** VCT has to date 17 animators, whose job it is to take care of the children's clubs and their parliaments in the targeted villages. The animators, though trained, are still to be made competent for their task. To this end, and especially to train them in matters like "communication skills" "mental health and retardation-problem in families", "children's rights and issues of empowerment" etc. they are to be further equipped. Accordingly, they were sent to different agencies to learn the mode of working in the villages more efficiently.
- 26. Free tailoring center units:** For the past seven years, VCT has tried to open free tailoring centers in the project areas, in order to impart tailoring skill free of cost. Students are trained by a well-qualified and professional teacher. Further, as a sign of appreciation and encouragement certificates are also given to

those who successfully complete the course in tailoring. These classes enable women/Girls in rural and sub-urban areas to earn their daily living, making them self-confident and self-dependent. Last year, 108 women/ girls benefited from the program. (Refer: - ANNEXURE:VI)

27. Free Tuition Centers: At these Free Coaching Centers, VCT provides supplementary and special classes to the school going children, especially of backward communities. The supplementary classes, because of its relevant teaching methods help children attending primary and high schools to cope with their school curriculum. It is not a tuition that helps students to attain high grades. But here, limitations of students, in terms of cognitive and psychological needs are identified and appropriate teaching methods used, psychological support given and thus children's self-confidence and self-esteem are enhanced leading to an ability to cope within and outside the school. Currently there are nearly 1200 students availing the services of these Centers.

28. Hostel: VCT is taking care of a hostel, Last year there were 41 poor children belonging to 1st to 10th std. and studying in 3 different schools. Their presence in our campus brings joy and liveliness. The parents visit their children on every second Saturday or Sunday. A warden and a cook render their service to take care of them. We are grateful to the post-novitiate brothers of Clara Vihar for taking tuitions in the evenings and helping the children in their studies.

29. The Joy of Working: St Francis admonished his brothers, *"Let the work of each brother be an expression of the entire fraternity. Let each one, according to his God-given talents and the condition of his age and health, make full uses of his energies with joy, keeping in mind the needs of the fraternity."* It is wholly true of VCT organization. For, the director, along with VCT staff members work hard to reach out to many who are in need. The director is particular to motivate and guide the VCT staff so that they dedicate themselves totally in the service of the vulnerable in the society. There are various burning issues in our society like, Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality (MMR), Low Birth Weight (LBW), Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR), violation of child rights, child trafficking, child marriage, child labour, etc. We are therefore to continue to work together as a team collaborating and cooperating, for the development and good of the Society. (Refer: - ANNEXURE: II)

VI The total impact of a year's work:

- Formation of 34 Children's Clubs in 16 villages to promote talents and personality development. Over 1200 have benefited from this program.
- Child right clubs and *Balika Sanghas* formed at school and village level comprising of 12 to 15 members in each clubs and in 30 Panchayats to build leadership, get involved in local governing in voicing out their problems. Around 3,000 children benefitted.
- 7 school health programs conducted to make over 1600 school students health conscious and live a healthy life style.
- Over 6 mass awareness programs conducted reaching out to over 800 people.
- Awareness rallies conducted on Dengue, HIV / AIDS, cleanliness, open defecation, Tobacco and Alcohol, Children's Rights, Child Marriage, Child Abuse, Child labor, and communicable diseases etc. 2,300 benefited from this awareness.
- Panchayat level training conducted in 36 GP centers for the adolescents on health and hygiene and their physical and emotional development, which benefited around 7,000 adolescents.
- Organization involved in advocating and lobbying with the Government to implement the schemes and benefits at the local level, particularly those concerning the children.
- Network with like-minded NGOs, Government Health and Education Departments, local Panchayats etc. to avail and facilitate the programs reach the people.

- Vocational training like Tailoring and Computer science courses for the young and adolescents to build confidence and generate income. 108 benefited from this training.
- Evening tuitions in 16 villages with a reach out of 970 children.
- Encouragement of children to open up and realize their full potential through various co-curricular activities like songs, dance, recitation, skits, art and meetings
- Rehabilitation of Physically challenged people.
- Demanding government concerned authority to start seasonal hostel facility to stop children from migrating.
- Conducting awareness programs in order to eradicate child labor, child marriage and child dropouts.
- The organization conducted fees distribution to the most likely to be dropped out poor school and college students to continuing their education. (Refer: - ANNEXURE: IV and V)

VII. Challenges faced

- Remoteness of the target area.
- Illiteracy of the target group
- Changing consumption pattern and price hike that hinder visibility of the increased income in the family.
- Inability of the poorest among poor to raise local contribution.
- Strengthening and sustaining the present ongoing programmes.
- Rehabilitation of physically challenged people.
- Strengthening Human resource Development.
- Sexual Health & HIV/AIDS Education of Adolescent & Youth

VIII. Conclusion:

In conclusion, we wish to affirm that **“It is faith that makes all things possible while it is love that makes all things easy.”** Still, it is the generous helping hands of friends and benefactors that made it all possible to achieve what we have accomplished. Hence, VCT is very grateful to its president and members for their continuous support and timely interventions and to the members of the funding agency and well-wishers for their continued support, visits and encouragement. It goes without saying that without the selfless sacrifice of the beneficiaries, it would not have been possible to make the lives of so many poor people happy and healthy one. The Trust will always remain indebted to Ensemble Agissons of France, American House Jesuit community of New York and all other local benefactors, well-wishers for their generous contribution to carry out the activities at various levels and to reach out to the most vulnerable segments of the society.

Fr. Robin Victor D’souza
Secretary