

MAHITA

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2024



"Empowering Communities, Achieving Sustainability Goals"

SDG 2



SDG 3



SDG 4



SDG 5



SDG 6



SDG 10



SDG 8



SDG 13



SDG 15



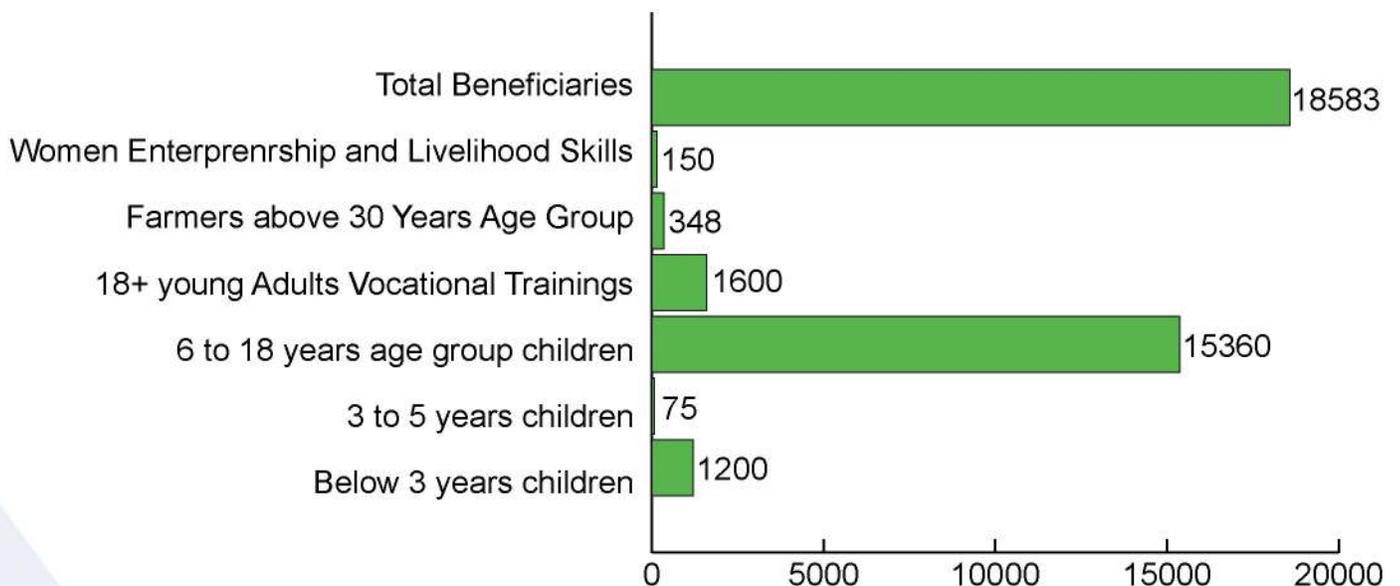
Executive Summary

Mahita's Reflections for 2023-24 outline the organization's remarkable strides in improving the lives of marginalized communities, with a special focus on children and women in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The year has been marked by commendable work in networking, advocacy, and achieving significant results in influencing major stakeholders towards child development. Additionally, Mahita ventured into new areas such as environment, water, and climate action, alongside its child-related interventions.

Mahita Reach-out program for 2023-24 targeted a total of 18,583 beneficiaries across various age groups and activities. The program catered to 1,200 children below 3 years for immunization interventions, 75 children aged 3 to 5 years for nutrition, early childhood care, and education, and a staggering 15,360 children in the 6 to 18 years age group with various school and non-school interventions. Furthermore, the program provided job-oriented courses, skill trainings, capacity building programs, and secondary certification to 1,600 young adults aged 18 and above.

The interventions also supported 348 farmers above the age of 30 with agricultural interventions, nature-based solutions, and entrepreneurship and livelihood skills training. Moreover, the program offered support to 150 women with entrepreneurship and livelihood skills training, empowering them economically. The reach of the Mahita Reach-out program extended to 230

Mahita Reach-out for 2023-24



In early childhood care and nutrition, Mahita established Crèche Centers in labour camps, providing comprehensive childcare, including nutrition, health services, and early education, aligning with SDGs 2, 3, and 4. Quality education initiatives included introducing STEM and digital classrooms in three government schools, promoting inquiry-based learning, and establishing Mithra Knowledge Centres for academic support and life skills training, contributing to SDGs 4, 5, and 10.

Mahita's efforts in women's empowerment and skill development included establishing Vocational Training Centers offering courses in computer training, beautician and well-being, and fashion designing, with 70% of trained young women securing employment. Additionally, women were supported in skill development and financial literacy initiatives, enhancing their economic participation and decision-making capabilities, aligning with SDGs 5, 8, and 10.

Child protection and participation were also prioritized by establishing children's clubs, promoting child rights and participation in governance, supporting SDGs 3, 4, and 10. In environmental sustainability, Mahita implemented water conservation and sustainable agricultural practices in the Bela Watershed project, enhancing water availability and crop productivity for marginalized farmers, contributing to SDGs 6, 13, and 15.

Mahita's health and immunization initiatives included leading the Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI 5.0) campaign in Hyderabad, addressing family resistance to vaccination and promoting immunization awareness, supporting SDG 3.

Quality, credibility, and transparency are core values at Mahita, with external audits praising the organization's good and transparent practices in financial systems. Mahita is committed to expanding its work and services to new locations while maintaining its values and spirit.

The organization is grateful for the unwavering support of its board members, funding partners, and well-wishers, including UNICEF, BENEVITY, HSBC Software India Limited, Azim Premji Foundation, Manos Unidas, DKA Austria, Charities Aid Foundation, Prince Pipes and Fittings Limited, Mobile Creche, Sattva, and numerous volunteers. To achieve any organization's objectives, a dedicated team with excellent communication skills is essential. Mahita is fortunate to have a remarkable team, which has facilitated numerous meaningful interventions and collaborative efforts at the field level. All credit goes to the wonderful team at Mahita.

P. RAMESH SEKHAR REDDY
PROGRAM DIRECTOR

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND NUTRITION



Migrant Construction Workers' Children: Transforming Lives through Comprehensive Childcare

In Gopannapalli Thanda, Labour Camp, Hyderabad, Mahita has been a beacon of hope for many families. Ms. Sony, mother of 2 children and migrated Orissa shares, "I am very grateful to Mahita for taking care of my two children while I am at work. The Centre at our labour colony not only provides hot meals and nutritious food but also health services for my children." This mother's sentiment echoes the relief and happiness of 75 other parents who entrust their children, aged 3-5 years, to Mahita's Crèche Centre. This facility, dedicated to children from migrant construction families, is a crucial support system for families who live in labour camps near construction sites.

Migrant construction families face significant challenges. Parents, often preoccupied with their work, have little time to care for their young children. This leaves the children vulnerable to issues related to nutrition, stunting, and lack of protection. To address these pressing concerns, our intervention focuses on providing comprehensive services, including nutrition, education, health and hygiene, and protection.

Our programs are designed to be child-centric, employing a Teaching and Learning Method (TLM) approach that has proven pivotal in engaging children in learning and helping them cope with their inherent challenges. The Crèche Centers cater to children aged 7 months to 5 years, offering nutritious meals and health services while engaging them through a play-way method that promotes physical activity, social interaction, and cognitive development. For children aged 6 to 12 years, the Transit Educational Centers provide educational support to ensure continuity in education amidst their transient lifestyles.

Our child-centric program has significantly impacted the lives of migrant laborer families. By ensuring essential care and education for their children, we are helping to break the cycle of poverty and deprivation. The TLM approach has been pivotal in engaging children in learning, ensuring they remain physically active, and fostering their overall development.

We are committed to expanding our reach to more children of migrant construction workers. Our future goals include expanding services to more construction sites, advocating for the rights and welfare of these children, and empowering families through increased access to education and healthcare. Through sustained efforts, we aim to create a better future for these children, ensuring they grow up healthy, educated, and empowered. Together, we are building a foundation for lasting change and brighter futures.

Case Study :

Child Name : Moria Sahu
Father Name : Rupendar
Mother Name : Pyari
Date of Birth : 25/04/2019

Background: Moria Sahu, a 5-year-old child (56 months), resides in the Honor Homes Labour Camp, a mobile crèche center operated by Mahita in the labour camp. She has been living in Honor Homes labour camp for about 4 years. Her parents, Rupendar and Pyari, migrated from Chhattisgarh state seeking livelihood opportunities and are employed as painters at a construction site. Moria has an elder sister who remains in their native place.



Initial Situation: Moria Sahu was initially reluctant to attend the mobile crèche center. Her parents, unaware of the importance of education, were also hesitant to send her. As a result, Moria spent her time at home, often playing in unsanitary conditions and in the company of other children outside the center.

Intervention: The Creche worker made regular home visits to motivate and educate Moria's parents about the benefits of attending the center. Despite initial resistance and Moria's attempts to escape upon being brought to the center, the worker used engaging activities to gradually encourage her participation. Over time, Moria's parents began to understand the importance of regular attendance at the center.

Present Status: Due to persistent efforts, Moria now attends the center daily, maintaining cleanliness and actively participating in various activities. She follows instructions, lines up with other children, and engages enthusiastically in the tasks assigned by the worker. Moria's parents are pleased with her positive attitude and growing interest in the center.

Moria Sahu's transformation highlights the effectiveness of consistent engagement and educational activities in motivating both children and parents. Her regular attendance and active participation at the mobile crèche center reflect significant progress, demonstrating the positive impact of early childhood education interventions.

TOWARDS QUALITY EDUCATION



Revolutionizing Education with Technology Elevating Learning through STEM and Digital Classrooms

The Headmaster of Narsingi School, Hyderabad, shares, "We are very happy that Mahita has selected our school for the establishment of STEM labs and a Digital Classroom. The students are enthusiastically learning many new things, and this will definitely enhance children's learning levels." This sentiment captures the excitement and optimism surrounding Mahita's initiatives to transform educational experiences through technology.

Mahita is addressing the need for improved learning abilities and quality education by working in three government schools to introduce STEM and digital classrooms, benefiting 1877 children in grades 8-10. By shifting from memory-based to inquiry-based learning, we aim to foster strong community-school relationships, establish state-of-the-art STEM labs, digitalize classrooms, and beautify learning spaces. Our goal is to revolutionize the learning experience for children in these schools, moving beyond rote memorization to foster curiosity, research, and critical thinking skills.

At the heart of this endeavour lies the aspiration to elevate the standard of education. We aim to ensure that education not only imparts knowledge but also cultivates a mindset of inquiry and exploration. By introducing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) labs and digital classrooms, the project seeks to create dynamic learning environments where students actively engage with subjects, experiment, and apply their theoretical knowledge to practical contexts. This shift from passive learning to active participation is crucial in nurturing the intellectual curiosity and problem-solving abilities of students.

Adopting STEM Labs and Digital Education concepts is imperative to uplift educational standards and cater to diverse learning abilities. Introducing STEM labs encourages hands-on learning and provides equal opportunities for girls to pursue STEM careers, unlocking students' true potential and equipping them with essential skills for the future. Enhancing digital infrastructure, including smart classrooms, leverages technology to meet the needs of slow learners and underprivileged students, ultimately improving teaching standards and learning outcomes.

Another pivotal aspect of the project involves establishing and strengthening children's collectives within schools. These collectives serve as platforms for engaging students, especially girls, in school development processes. By empowering students to actively participate in decision-making and advocacy, the project fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among the student body.

Mahita's initiatives in establishing STEM labs and digital classrooms in three schools are making a significant impact on the educational landscape. By transforming the way children learn and engage with their studies, we are paving the way for a brighter future.

Case Study :

I'm Supriya, a 9th-grade student at ZPHS Narsingi, and I'm thrilled to share my incredible experiences with our school's STEM and Digital Labs. These innovative initiatives have significantly enriched our educational journey.

The STEM Lab has been a game-changer for me, offering hands-on exploration in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. It has fueled my curiosity, allowing me to delve deeper into these subjects. The lab's interactive approach has truly broadened my understanding and sparked a keen interest in STEM disciplines.

Additionally, the Digital Lab sessions have been phenomenal, providing comprehensive information with vivid visuals that elucidate complex concepts. These sessions have equipped me with crucial digital skills and introduced a variety of online tools. The interactive nature of these sessions has made learning enjoyable and captivating.

I'm also grateful for the school's commitment to environmental awareness, especially through the 'Go Green' initiatives. These sessions have educated us on sustainable practices like recycling and reducing our ecological impact. Understanding these principles has been eye-opening and motivating.

Moreover, the emphasis on hygiene through the WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) initiatives has been crucial. Informative sessions have highlighted the importance of cleanliness and proper hygiene practices, not only benefited my personal well-being but also instilled a sense of responsibility towards our community.



Mithra Knowledge Centres (MKC) in Tribal Areas, Adilabad



Mahita's Mithra Knowledge Centres (MKCs) are playing a pivotal role in addressing the learning challenges faced by children in rural and tribal schools of Adilabad district. With long absenteeism and lack of parental support hampering the learning abilities of many students, Mahita established 9 MKCs across 5 Mandals of the district. These centres serve as vital community hubs, significantly impacting the educational landscape of the region. The MKCs provide crucial academic

support to approximately 1,000 children aged 6 to 18 from local villages and around 800 young adults aged 18 and above, enhancing their skills and knowledge. Additionally, the centres cater to neighbouring villages, benefiting around 900 children aged 6 to 18 and 500 adults aged 18 and above.

Beyond academic support, the MKCs offer a comprehensive range of services, including career guidance for 400 young students, life skills training for 200 youth, and menstrual hygiene management training for 300 adolescent girls, contributing to their holistic development.

The establishment of these centres reflects Mahita's commitment to enhancing access to education and fostering academic development among children in the targeted areas. With the cooperation of youth volunteers, village sarpanches, school teachers, and community members, the MKCs were launched to provide after-school tutoring, ensuring children completed their homework and received additional study support.

The impact of the MKCs has been profound, with teachers reporting improved academic performance among students. Children, previously struggling due to a lack of parental education, now attend school happily after completing their assignments, thanks to the support provided by the centres.

There are number of impactful stories and ne remarkable success story is that of Pottipelli Sai Neeraj, a 22-year-old youth from Talamadugu Mandal. Neeraj credits the MKC for providing him with information, guidance, and constant coaching towards the Agneepath Scheme – National Army Recruitment. As a result, he was selected in the Indian Army in February 2023 and is currently stationed in Pathankot, Punjab.

Neeraj's journey serves as an inspiration for youth to persevere and utilize the resources offered by the MKCs. His success underscores the importance of these centres in providing career guidance and nurturing the aspirations of young individuals. Furthermore, the MKCs have mobilized 600 youth members across the 5 Mandals, who are actively supporting Mahita's efforts in identifying out-of-school and

child labour cases, ensuring that every child in the community has access to education. The Mithra Knowledge Centres have proven to be crucial in addressing educational challenges and improving learning outcomes in tribal schools of Adilabad. By providing comprehensive support, fostering community engagement, and leveraging technology, these centres are making a significant impact on the lives of children and young adults, paving the way for a brighter future.



Empowering Youth through Secondary School Certification

Mahita's commitment to providing educational opportunities for youth in Adilabad district has yielded remarkable results. Through the Mithra Knowledge Centres (MKCs), Mahita has been instrumental in empowering young dropouts aged 20 to 22 years to continue their secondary school education through distance learning modes, in collaboration with the Education Department of Adilabad.

In the pursuit of academic excellence and empowerment, we take immense pride in presenting the commendable achievements of our students in securing Secondary School Certificates in distance mode. During the reporting period, a total of 244 students successfully obtained their Secondary School Certificates, marking a significant milestone in their educational journey. Among these achievers, 64 are resilient young girls, and 180 are determined young boys. Their dedication and perseverance exemplify the spirit of resilience and determination that defines our community.

Moreover, our commitment to inclusivity is evident in the statistics: 201 students pursued the Open SSC program, while 43 students embarked on the Open Inter journey, demonstrating our unwavering dedication to providing flexible and accessible educational pathways for all. Despite the hurdles, our students have displayed remarkable resilience, culminating in an impressive pass percentage of 40%.



These achievements underscore the transformative power of education and serve as a testament to our collective commitment to nurturing talent and fostering academic excellence. The MKCs have played a pivotal role in providing academic support and guidance to these aspirants, enabling them to pursue their educational dreams and secure a brighter future.

As we celebrate these milestones, Mahita reaffirms our dedication to supporting every student on their journey towards success and self-fulfilment. We remain steadfast in our mission to empower youth through education and create a more equitable and inclusive society.



Case Study :

Akhila, 19, lives with her father, stepmother, and brother in Arli-T village, Bheempur mandal. Her father is a potter, and her stepmother ran a small store. Akhila studied up to 10th grade but had to quit due to her father's belief that girls don't need further education. For three years, she did household chores until Mahita, an organization promoting child protection, intervened. Mahita motivated her father to let her continue her studies at their Mithra Knowledge Centre.

Akhila resumed her education but was again stopped when her parents arranged her marriage. Mahita's counsellor, Praveen, and the village sarpanch convinced her father to allow her to attend classes until her exams. Grateful for Mahita's support, Akhila continued her studies and expressed deep appreciation for the organization's efforts in her village.

Empowering Girls through Education: Mahita's Scholarship Initiative in Sanga Reddy District

Education is a powerful catalyst for breaking the cycle of poverty and empowering individuals, but financial constraints often hinder access to quality education, especially for girls from underprivileged families. Mahita has taken a significant step towards promoting gender equality and empowering young girls through its scholarship initiative in SangaReddy District.

In collaboration with the District Collector and the Education Department, Mahita has provided scholarships of Rs. 10,000 each to 50 deserving girl students currently studying in the 10th class. These scholarships alleviate the financial burden on their families and enable them to pursue intermediate examinations with confidence and determination.

The beneficiaries are girls from families living below the poverty line, facing socio-economic challenges that often hinder their access to education. By providing financial assistance, Mahita aims to remove these barriers and create an environment where these girls can focus on their studies without financial stress.

The scholarship program represents a profound commitment to empowering girls and promoting gender equality in education. Education is a fundamental human right, and by investing in girls' education, Mahita contributes to the overall development and progress of society.

Educated and empowered girls have the potential to break free from the cycle of poverty, challenge gender stereotypes, and become agents of change within their communities. They are more likely to delay early marriages, have better access to employment opportunities, and actively participate in decision-making processes that impact their lives and those around them.

Mahita's efforts are part of a larger vision to create a more equitable and inclusive society. By addressing financial barriers hindering girls' education, Mahita paves the way for a future where every girl has an equal opportunity to pursue her dreams and aspirations.

This scholarship program serves as a powerful message to the community, highlighting the importance of investing in girl child education. It encourages families and communities to recognize the immense potential of their daughters and support their educational endeavours wholeheartedly.

Mahita's commitment extends beyond the financial aspect, recognizing the need for a holistic approach that addresses the multifaceted challenges faced by underprivileged girls. By collaborating with local authorities and educational institutions, Mahita aims to create a supportive ecosystem that nurtures and encourages these girls throughout their educational journey.



Gorreikanti Manusha, a student from ZPHS Konapur, faced potential disruption to her education after the 10th grade due to challenging family circumstances – marked by her mother's daily wage labour and the loss of her father, Racchanna. In a fortuitous turn, a scholarship from Prince Pipes not only provided crucial financial support but also ignited a surge of emotions, blending joy and tears.

Beyond the monetary assistance, the scholarship symbolized empowerment for Manusha, transcending financial barriers to illuminate her path toward higher education. This impactful intervention resonated emotionally as she expressed profound gratitude for the timely support.

The scholarship's transformative impact extended beyond Manusha, touching her mother's life and representing a commitment to breaking the chains of limited opportunities. As Manusha ventured beyond the 10th grade, the scholarship not only eased immediate financial concerns but also fostered newfound confidence and determination.

This narrative isn't just Manusha's success story; it mirrors the transformative power of initiatives supporting 50 bright girls, emphasizing the importance of targeted interventions in breaking the cycle of poverty.

As Manusha continues her academic journey, the scholarship's enduring impact highlights the potential for positive change through education, reinforcing the belief that, with the right opportunities, individuals can overcome adversity and shape their destinies.

Empowering Children through Education: Mahita's Distribution of Educational Kits

Mahita has taken a significant stride towards empowering children and promoting their right to education by distributing educational kits to 1,600 children in Adilabad District, 725 children in Hyderabad and 600 children in Sanga Reddy District. These kits were provided to potential child labourers, dropouts, and working children, accompanying their enrollment in formal schooling and encouraging their continued education.

The educational kits, thoughtfully curated by Mahita, comprise essential items such as school bags, notebooks, geometry boxes, pencils, pens, pads, and other necessary stationery. These kits not only alleviate the financial burden on underprivileged families but also instill a sense of excitement and motivation in the children, encouraging them to embrace their educational journey wholeheartedly.

Mahita recognizes that education is a fundamental right and a powerful tool for breaking the cycle of poverty and empowering individuals. By providing these educational kits, the organization aims to remove barriers that impede children's access to education and create an enabling environment for their academic growth and development.



The distribution of educational kits is more than just a material gesture; it represents Mahita's commitment to ensuring every child has an equal opportunity to pursue their dreams and aspirations. Education has the potential to transform lives, opening doors to better employment prospects, improved living standards, and a brighter future for these children and their families.

Moreover, Mahita's initiative sends a powerful message to communities, underscoring the importance of prioritizing children's education and recognizing their immense potential. By supporting these children's educational journeys, Mahita not only contributes to their individual growth but also fosters a more educated and empowered society.

The educational kits serve as a source of encouragement and motivation for the children, instilling in them a sense of responsibility and ownership over their education. With the necessary resources at their disposal, these children can now focus on their studies without the added stress of lacking essential materials.



Mahita's efforts extend beyond the distribution of educational kits. The organization recognizes the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses the multifaceted challenges faced by underprivileged children. By collaborating with local authorities, educational institutions, and communities, Mahita aims to create a supportive ecosystem that nurtures and encourages these children throughout their educational journey. As these 2,925 children in, Hyderabad, Adilabad and SangaReddy districts embark on their educational paths with renewed enthusiasm and the necessary resources, they represent hope for a brighter future. Their success stories will inspire countless others, encouraging more families and communities to prioritize education and invest in the potential of their children.



CHILDREN AND GOVERNANCE...CHILD CLUBS



Promoting Child Rights and Participation: Mahita's Children's Clubs

Mahita's establishment of children's clubs in Hyderabad and Adilabad district is a significant step towards strengthening child rights and fostering child participation. With 10 clubs in Hyderabad comprising 450 members and 91 clubs in Adilabad engaging 3,729 children, including 2,010 girls and 1,719 boys, these clubs serve as vital platforms for education and advocacy.

These clubs play a crucial role in equipping children with essential knowledge about their rights, the perils of child labor, and the risks associated with early marriages. By enhancing their understanding of these critical issues, Mahita paves the way for a culture of robust child participation, where children become active agents in shaping their own futures.

The inception of these children's groups offers a unique opportunity to strengthen children's networks within schools and villages. Through collaboration and collective action, these networks evolve into formidable advocates for addressing priority issues affecting children. Mahita empowers children to become catalysts for positive change, ensuring a brighter future for generations to come.

Within these clubs, various groups are formed to address different aspects of children's well-being and development, including education, culture, monitoring, environment protection, and child rights protection. Children are encouraged to report any violations of their rights, both within the school premises and in their communities, to parents, teachers, Mahita members, or the child helpline (1098). The clubs foster a sense of ownership and participation among students, with designated leaders representing their issues and ensuring their resolution through school authorities.

Mahita's efforts in establishing these children's clubs have resulted in increased awareness among children about their rights and responsibilities. Regular meetings are scheduled to discuss problems and formulate solutions, fostering a sense of ownership and participation among students. Active engagement in sports competitions, academic pursuits, and cultural activities within schools is promoted, empowering children to actively contribute to their school environment.

These clubs facilitate dialogue between students and school authorities, ensuring a conducive learning environment where children's voices are heard and respected. By promoting child rights and child participation, Mahita is paving the way for a society where every child can thrive, grow, and realize their full potential.

Through these initiatives, Mahita is not only addressing the immediate needs of children but also nurturing a generation of informed and empowered individuals who will drive positive change in their communities. The children's clubs serve as a testament to Mahita's commitment to upholding child rights and fostering a culture of inclusivity, equality, and respect for all children.

Case Study :

My name is Shailaja I'm studying in the 10th class in Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), Tamsi Mandal. I am the member of the Child Club/Bala sangha. I have learned about the Rights of the Children and the Right to Education. I have learnt that children are the future citizens of the country and that it is better to start early to learn how to be part of the change the society.

The Club has given me the confidence to speak in front of elders and to play a part in improving the school facilities here. "All my child club members are raising their voices with lot of confidence. I think this is the major positive change, I never seen before" Culturally children are not to be heard or involved in decision making. Girls have even less voice.

They are married off Girls and children are supposed to be free and have the right to education and to progress in life. We learnt all this from the Mahita team when they came and established our Child Club/-Balasangha.

We learned a lot through our child club/balasangha meetings about our rights and how we can participate in school affairs.

The Suggestion Box also gave us a lot of space to resolve the issues. We could put our suggestions into the Box and the Principal opens the Box once in 15 days in front of child club members and the teachers. The complaints or suggestions are read out and then discussed by all of us. We also interact with the sarpanch. We could not do this before!



Promoting the Right to Play: Empowerment of Children through Play

The right to play is fundamental to a child's development, offering benefits that extend beyond recreation. Play is essential for the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth of children, fostering creativity, problem-solving skills, and resilience. Ensuring that all children have this right promotes balanced development, preparing them for future challenges and fostering a well-rounded adulthood.

Towards encouraging this right, Mahita organized sports meets at the Mandal and school levels, with 1,450 children (900 girls and 550 boys) from 60 government schools in Adilabad participating. This event not only celebrated the right to play but also fostered inclusivity and active participation among children. Through sports and games, children develop critical life skills such as teamwork, discipline, and perseverance, equipping them with invaluable tools for future success.

Mahita's Sports Meet serves as a platform to promote this right, encouraging children to engage in sports



like Carrom Board, Chess, Koo-Koo, Kabaddi, Volleyball, and Cricket. By offering a wide range of activities, the event caters to the interests and abilities of all participants, fostering a sense of inclusivity and ensuring that every child can explore their talents and passions.

Mahita's efforts extend beyond the Annual Sports Meet. The organization provided sports kits to 20 government schools in Adilabad, promoting physical fitness and enabling children to engage in sports and recreational activities throughout the year.

By promoting the right to play, Mahita contributes to the physical and mental well-being of children while instilling valuable life lessons. Sports teach children the importance of perseverance, resilience, and sportsmanship—qualities that will serve them well in their personal and professional lives.

Mahita's commitment to the right to play aligns with the broader mission of empowering children and creating a more inclusive society. By providing opportunities for children to explore their talents, develop essential skills, and forge lasting friendships, Mahita paves the way for a future where every child can thrive and reach their full potential.

Safeguarding Children's Rights: Mahita's Unwavering Commitment to Child Protection

Child protection is a fundamental human right, and Mahita has been at the forefront of ensuring that every child is protected from exploitation, abuse, and neglect. In the reporting period, Mahita initiated a series of interventions in Adilabad and Hyderabad, aimed at addressing the critical issues of child labour, child marriage, and child abuse.

Recognizing the deep-rooted cultural and socio-economic factors contributing to child labour, Mahita adopted a multi-pronged approach. In Adilabad, the organization worked closely with tribal groups, influencing the Tribal Councils (RAI Committees) and developing their capacities on children's issues. This collaborative effort led to the RAI Committees issuing notices in villages, urging parents to prioritize their children's education over child labour.

Mahita's collaborative efforts with various departments in conducting child labour rescue drives have yielded significant results. A total of 560 children have been successfully rescued from exploitative labor situations and enrolled in schools. By addressing root causes such as financial struggles, parental ignorance, transportation barriers, and lack of interest in studies, Mahita is working towards creating a conducive environment for these children to access education and break free from the cycle of exploitation. Mahita's commitment to child protection extends beyond addressing child labour. The organization has also been working tirelessly to combat the issues of child marriage and abuse within schools and communities. Adopting a preventive strategy, Mahita has been working with community structures, raising awareness about the legal framework of the Child Marriage Prohibition Act. Through these efforts, several early child marriages have been successfully prevented.

Furthermore, Mahita has been providing information and developing capacities on the legal framework of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act among teachers and communities. By raising awareness about these Acts, Mahita is safeguarding children and ensuring their rights are protected.

Mahita's efforts have also included developing a Child Protection Policy for schools, providing a comprehensive framework to ensure the safety and well-being of children within the educational environment.

Child protection is a collective responsibility, and Mahita has been at the forefront of fostering community engagement and empowerment. By working with various stakeholders, including tribal groups, child protection committees, youth members, and government departments, Mahita is creating a strong support system for children and ensuring that their rights are upheld. Mahita's unwavering commitment to child protection is driven by the belief that every child deserves a safe and nurturing environment to grow, learn, and thrive. Through their tireless efforts, Mahita is not only rescuing and protecting children but also laying the foundation for a more equitable and just society where every child's rights are respected and upheld.

Case Study :

Child Labour rescue drive was conducted in Bheempur Mandal to safeguard children's rights. A dedicated team including the Operation Smile team, MPDO, village VLCPC Chairman, GP members, an Anganwadi Teacher, and MAHITA members, successfully rescued nine children (five boys and four girls) from agricultural labour in Bheempur, Gunjala, and Laxmipur villages. MAHITA coordinated efforts among all stakeholders, ensuring effective communication and action.

The team identified the children, rescued them from labour, and organized counselling sessions for their parents to emphasize the importance of education and legal requirements regarding child labour. The rescued children were then enrolled in the nearby ZPSS Bheempur school, providing them with the opportunity for education and protection from exploitation.

This intervention underscores MAHITA's commitment to promoting children's rights and empowering communities to combat child labour effectively, creating a safer environment for vulnerable children through proactive initiatives and strong partnerships.



Empowering Youth through Vocational Training: Mahita's Commitment to Skill Development

In the pursuit of breaking the cycle of poverty, Mahita has established 6 Vocational Training Centers, becoming a beacon of hope for 650 young women. These centers offer courses in Computer Training, Beautician and Well-being, Fashion Designing, and more, equipping individuals with valuable skills and fostering a sense of dignity and self-reliance.

The majority of beneficiaries hail from the poorest of families, where a single income source is a constant struggle. For these young women, the vocational training courses have been transformative, enabling them to earn respect from family, neighbors, and friends while breaking free from poverty and societal norms.

By the end of March 2024, the initiative had successfully trained 650 youth from disadvantaged urban communities. An impressive 70% of these beneficiaries have secured employment in various companies, experiencing increased income and an improved quality of life. The employed candidates have demonstrated enthusiasm and happiness upon receiving their salaries, sharing their success with families and serving as inspiration for others.

Empowering young women has been a key objective, as Mahita recognizes the significant role they play in driving economic and social progress. By promoting their economic participation, Mahita has provided these women with financial independence, instilling confidence and self-worth.

In addition to vocational courses, life skills and communication training have played a crucial role in preparing candidates to face job interviews confidently. The project has not only developed vocational skills but also boosted participants' overall confidence and mobility, equipping them with the necessary tools to navigate the professional world.

The impact of these job-oriented courses has been profound. Trained youth have acknowledged the importance of such courses, which have led to decent employment opportunities. Awareness meetings, Job Melas, and Mock Interviews have generated considerable interest in the significance of vocational courses, highlighting how they create stable employment and improve families' economic status.

Mahita's vocational training initiative is driven by the goal of providing employment opportunities to young men and women from disadvantaged communities through job-oriented training based on the principles of Decent Work. By providing access to quality vocational training, Mahita is transforming individual lives and contributing to the larger goal of creating a more inclusive and equitable society where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

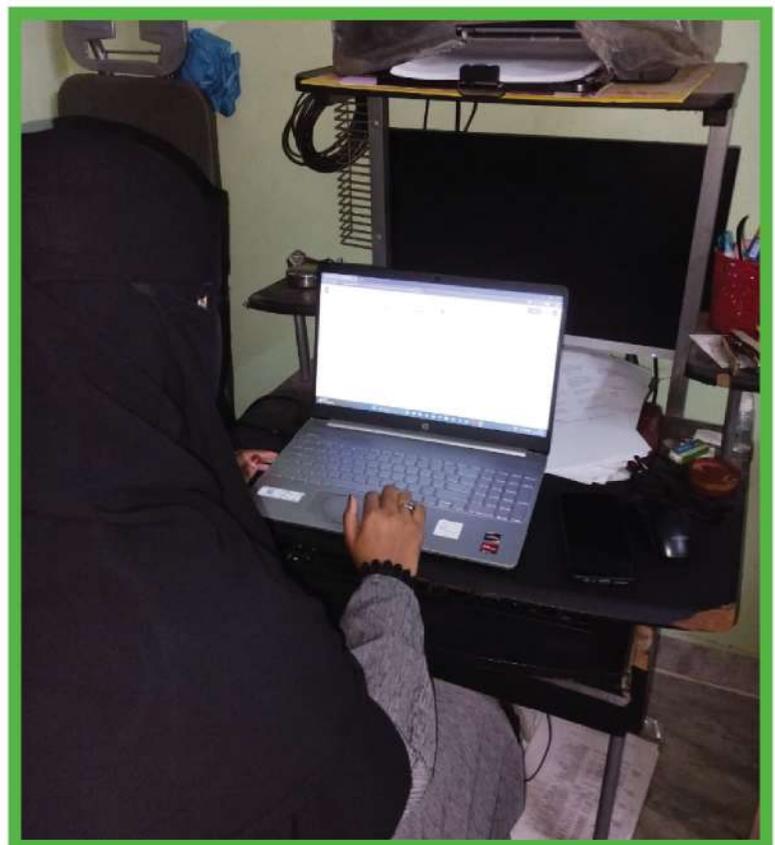
Case Study :

Madiha Naaz, a resilient 22-year-old student, enrolled in the vocational training center with a steadfast goal of securing employment to support her economically disadvantaged family. Hailing from a financially constrained background, her father, Mohd Wajeed Ulha, works as a Driver, while her mother, Malika Begum, is a homemaker. Despite completing her degree, Madiha faced financial challenges that hindered her pursuit of higher education and led her to seek employment opportunities.

The Mahita team identified Madiha's potential and extended an invitation for her to explore the vocational center. Intrigued and hopeful, Madiha visited the center and decided to enroll in the Computer course, aligning her aspirations with the training provided.

Motivated by her desire to contribute to her family's well-being, Madiha diligently completed her training. The Mahita team, recognizing her potential, offered guidance and support throughout the interview process. In her second attempt, Madiha triumphed and secured a position at M/s Royal Embassy School, earning a monthly income of INR 9,500.

Expressing her gratitude, Madiha shared, "My parents are overjoyed that I can now financially contribute to the family, a role they never anticipated from me. This newfound responsibility has brought me closer to family decisions, and I am grateful for the opportunities provided by DKA and Mahita." Madiha's journey stands as a testament to the transformative impact of vocational training and the profound changes it can bring to individuals and their families.



RURAL INTERVENTIONS



Empowering Women through Economic Livelihoods: : A Pathway to Sustainable Livelihoods

MAHITA understands the transformative potential of women's economic empowerment in driving community progress. Through targeted skill development and financial literacy initiatives, MAHITA is steadfastly committed to fostering sustainable livelihoods for women, thus catalysing broader positive impacts.

By equipping women with enhanced knowledge and skills in areas like kitchen garden cultivation and facilitating the establishment of local livelihood units, MAHITA empowers them with a sustainable income source. This newfound financial independence not only elevates their standard of living but also fuels overall economic growth within the community. Moreover, the increased family income resulting from these initiatives plays a pivotal role in enhancing children's educational opportunities, ensuring better access to resources and sustained learning.

Through focused capacity-building programs, approximately 150 women have been empowered with enhanced skills in areas such as skill development, financial literacy, and micro-entrepreneurship. MAHITA's efforts extend beyond mere skill development; the organization prioritizes financial literacy among women, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their earnings and investments. This empowerment not only enhances their economic self-reliance but also amplifies their participation in household decision-making processes.

MAHITA's holistic approach extends to fostering stakeholder collaboration and support, recognizing their crucial role in scaling the impact of its initiatives. By forging partnerships with local communities, banks, and government bodies, MAHITA ensures effective resource utilization, promotes knowledge exchange, and sustains project interventions beyond the project period.

MAHITA's focus on women's economic empowerment is central to its mission of fostering inclusive and equitable societies. Empowered women play a vital role in supporting their families, investing in education, and actively contributing to community decision-making processes. By combining skill development, financial literacy, and stakeholder engagement, MAHITA is paving the way for sustainable livelihoods and inclusive development, where women are at the forefront of driving positive change.

"I am overjoyed to have embarked on my Saree Business journey, especially after attending the skill development training provided by Mahita. I am immensely grateful to Mahita for illuminating the path towards economic empowerment with such dignity. Their support has not only enabled me to start my business but has also instilled in me a sense of confidence and purpose." - Bagari Nagamma

Bagari Nagamma's success story is emblematic of the impact of Mahita's micro-entrepreneurship support. As one of 25 individuals who have successfully launched small livelihood units across six villages in Sanga Reddy District, Nagamma's experience underscores the transformative potential of Mahita's interventions in fostering economic independence and dignity within communities.

Case Study :

Introduction: In rural Telangana, where socio-economic barriers often hinder the progress of marginalized communities, initiatives promoting entrepreneurship among women play a crucial role in fostering empowerment and economic independence. The story of Bageri Nagamma from the village of Peddapur, Mandal Sadasivpet, serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration, showcasing the transformative power of skill training and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Background: Bageri Nagamma, wife of Chandraiah and a member of the Scheduled Caste community faced the typical challenges of rural life, including limited financial resources and societal constraints. However, she refused to be constrained by her circumstances and seized the opportunity presented by a skill training program.

Skill Training and Entrepreneurial Endeavors:

Having attended skill training programs and various meetings, Nagamma received a grant of Rs. 15,000, which she utilized to kick start her own saree business. Armed with determination and newfound skills, she sourced sarees from Hyderabad and began selling them within her village.

Impact and Results: Nagamma's entrepreneurial venture not only provided her with a steady source of income but also empowered her to become a significant contributor to her family's finances. With a monthly income ranging from Rs. 5,000 to 6,000 after expenses, Nagamma emerged as a beacon of success within her community.

Bageri Nagamma's journey from a humble background to a successful entrepreneur exemplifies the transformative impact of skill training and entrepreneurial opportunities for women in rural Telangana. She expresses her gratitude to Prince Pipes and Fitting Limited, who supported her. Her story underscores the importance of empowering women with the tools and resources needed to break free from socio-economic constraints and pursue their aspirations. Through initiatives like these, individuals like Nagamma are not only changing their own lives but also uplifting their communities, one entrepreneurial endeavor at a time.



Empowering Women through Skill Development and Financial Literacy

Mahita recognizes the pivotal role of women in driving economic and social progress within communities. By enhancing livelihood opportunities for women through skill development and financial literacy initiatives, Mahita is paving the way for their economic empowerment, which has far-reaching positive impacts.

Enhanced knowledge and skills in kitchen garden cultivation, coupled with the establishment of local profitable livelihood units, empower women with a sustainable source of income. This newfound financial independence not only enhances their quality of life but also catalyzes the overall economic development of the community. Additionally, the consequent rise in family income can significantly bolster children's education by facilitating better access to resources and enabling continued learning. Through targeted capacity-building initiatives, approximately 150 women members have been equipped with enhanced skills in skill development, financial literacy, and micro-entrepreneurship.

Mahita's efforts in promoting financial literacy among women are equally crucial. By equipping them with knowledge about financial management, budgeting, and access to formal financial services, women gain the confidence and skills to make informed decisions about their earnings and investments. This empowerment not only enhances their economic self-reliance but also fosters their active participation in household decision-making processes.

Furthermore, Mahita recognizes the importance of stakeholder cooperation and support in scaling the impact of its initiatives. By fostering enhanced collaboration with communities, banks, and government

departments, Mahita ensures the efficient utilization of resources, promotes knowledge sharing, and facilitates the sustainability of project interventions beyond the project period.

By prioritizing women's skill development and financial literacy, Mahita is not only fostering economic empowerment but also contributing to the overall well-being and resilience of communities. Empowered women with stable incomes can better support their families, invest in their children's education, and actively participate in decision-making processes that shape their communities.

Mahita's holistic approach, which combines skill development, financial literacy, and stakeholder engagement, is a testament to its commitment to creating sustainable livelihoods and fostering an inclusive and equitable society where women are at the forefront of driving positive change.



Conservation and Restoration: Empowering Communities for Sustainable Ecosystems

MAHITA's initiatives in the Adilabad and Sangareddy districts exemplify a commitment to resilient ecosystems, conservation, and restoration, underscoring the importance of environmental sustainability in community development. In the Bela Watershed project in Adilabad district, MAHITA targeted the Kolam Tribal Community, focusing on water conservation and sustainable agricultural practices to bolster local livelihoods while safeguarding natural resources.

Through a multifaceted approach encompassing trench cum bunding on 25 acres of land, well digging and deepening, and training programs on sustainable farming, the project aimed to enhance water availability and crop productivity. These endeavours directly benefited 163 individuals while also laying the groundwork for the long-term ecological sustainability of the region. Notably, in two remote tribal villages, MAHITA successfully dug three new open wells and renovated three existing ones, facilitating increased agricultural production across 80 acres of land. Additionally, the organization capacitated 50 farmers on water management and sustainable agriculture, equipping them with essential skills to navigate environmental challenges.

Similarly, in Sangareddy district, MAHITA's efforts focused on bore well recharge for 60 farmers, augmenting crop productivity and ensuring a reliable water supply. This initiative not only supports agricultural activities but also contributes to broader water conservation endeavours. With 50 bore well recharge operations completed, water availability in the targeted areas has been significantly improved. Noteworthy accomplishments also include soil conservation efforts covering 50 acres through trench cum bunding, further bolstering ecosystem resilience.

MAHITA's interventions extend beyond physical restoration activities to encompass capacity building and knowledge dissemination. By organizing exposure visits and training sessions, the organization empowers local farmers and communities with the knowledge and skills needed for responsible resource management. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and stewardship among individuals, catalyzing collective efforts towards sustainable ecosystem management.

MAHITA's conservation and restoration initiatives underscore the organization's holistic approach to community development, prioritizing the preservation of natural resources alongside socioeconomic empowerment. Through targeted interventions and capacity-building efforts, MAHITA not only addresses immediate environmental challenges but also cultivates a culture of sustainability and resilience within the communities it serves.



Case Study :



Name of Farmer/Beneficiary : Ms.Melasangam Swaroopa

Village : Konapur

Mandal : Sadasivapet

District : Sangareddy of Telangana state

In the narrative of resilience and transformation, Melsasangam Swaroop, a widowed sole breadwinner, faced challenges in cultivating her 2-acre land due to an unreliable bore well. Dependent on agriculture for livelihood, her struggles persisted until the project team intervened. Understanding her plight, the team swiftly initiated and completed the necessary work.

Expressing profound gratitude, Melsasangam Swaroop shared her unexpected joy, crediting Prince Pipes for the support that promises not just increased family income but also elevated status and dignity. With renewed confidence stemming from a now reliable water source, she anticipates enhanced crop yields, paving the way for profound economic empowerment. Melsasangam Swaroop's journey stands as a testament to the transformative impact of strategic interventions in the lives of marginalized individuals.

Campaigns, Networking, Advocacy and Collaborations



Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI 5.0) Campaign in Old City of Hyderabad: Ensuring Immunization for All Children

Mission Indradhanush 5.0 is a collaborative initiative between the Ministry of Family Health and Welfare and the Health Departments of various State Governments in India. This program represents a significant milestone in the fight against vaccine-preventable diseases, specifically targeting measles and rubella, while also bolstering routine immunization efforts. The primary focus of IMI 5.0 is to ensure that every child between the ages of 0 to 5 years who has not yet received vaccinations is reached, ensuring they receive essential life-saving vaccines.

Mahita initiated the campaign in selected UPHCs, including Jangammet Cluster, Teegalakunta, Jahanuma, Charminar, Panjasha Amannagar, and Rasoolpura areas, based on the suggestions and requirements of the Health Department, Government of Telangana. The major objective of the campaign is to address family resistance to vaccination. Some families hold reservations or concerns about vaccinating their children due to cultural beliefs, misconceptions, or fears of side effects. The campaign identified these families and sensitized them toward vaccinating their children.

Another objective is to promote awareness of children's immunization. Certain communities lack awareness of the significance and benefits of childhood immunization. It is essential to educate them about how vaccines effectively shield children from preventable diseases. Additionally, the campaign aims to tackle myths and apprehensions. Prevailing myths and misconceptions within communities about vaccinations can lead to hesitancy or fear of immunization. Addressing these misconceptions is crucial.

The campaign's central strategy revolves around raising awareness about the importance of childhood immunization. It actively engages with families and communities, providing them with accurate information about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines, debunking myths, and addressing any apprehensions they may have. Healthcare professionals and community workers played a pivotal role in educating families and ensuring every child receives the necessary vaccinations. By dispelling misconceptions and building trust, the campaign aims to safeguard children's health and protect them from vaccine-preventable diseases.

The involvement of community volunteers, the mobilization of community and religious leaders, the use of Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials in the campaign, and meetings with elected representatives are critical components of the strategy.

Through various community interventions, meetings with community and religious leaders, and door-to-door surveys, Mahita identified 1,420 left-out children and successfully administered the vaccine to 1,200 children. This initiative was carried out by Mahita in collaboration with the Health Department, ASHA workers, and Urban Health Post doctors and teams.

Empowering Youth and Advocating for Child Rights in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh

The Alliance for Child Rights (ACR) is a consortium of 200 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) dedicated to child rights in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Led by Mahita and supported by UNICEF, the consortium has initiated significant interventions, including the Youva Mithra Programme, across 12 districts in both states. This initiative focuses on high-burden districts identified by NFHS-5 data for issues like child labor, child marriages, dropout rates, and teenage pregnancy, aligning with UNICEF's Child Protection programme.



Key Interventions and Achievements for the year 2023:

Youth Ambassadors Program: The Youth Ambassadors program has been implemented across six districts in Andhra Pradesh, covering 125 villages and 24 Mandals, with 24 Mandal Level Youth Groups comprising 480 youth members. In Telangana, the program spans 20 Mandals and 115 villages, involving 420 youth members. This program aims to engage and empower youth to advocate for child rights and drive community-level changes.

Child-Friendly Legislators and Constituency Campaign: ACR and UNICEF, alongside various partners, launched the "Child Friendly Legislators and Constituency" campaign to sensitize Telangana State Assembly candidates. Youth forums in Mandals and Districts actively participated, with around 650 members and community representatives engaging in the campaign. Meetings with major political parties allowed children to articulate their concerns, resulting in a comprehensive "Charter of Demand."



Capacity Building and Advocacy: During the reporting period, ACR organized state-level capacity building programs for 120 selected members from both states. These programs focused on enhancing their understanding of various issues and legal frameworks. During the CRC Week in November 2023, campaigns reached 12 districts, engaging over 600 duty bearers and enabling young boys and girls to submit their charter of demands.



Children Consultations: In November 2023, CRC Week saw extensive children consultations across all 12 districts of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, engaging over 1,000 young participants. On November 18th, 120 young boys and girls participated in a consultation in Andhra Pradesh facilitated by the SCPCR, resulting in a submitted charter of demands. A similar event in Hyderabad on November 20th saw Telangana Youth Ambassadors voicing their concerns and submitting their charter of demands.



CRC Campaigns: During CRC Week, awareness campaigns were launched in nine shopping malls in collaboration with SCPCR and mall owners. Standees were displayed to create awareness about child rights, reaching approximately 100,000 people and garnering widespread solidarity.

Child-Friendly Legislators and Constituency Campaign: ACR and UNICEF, alongside various partners, launched the "Child Friendly Legislators and Constituency" campaign to sensitize Telangana State Assembly candidates. Youth forums in Mandals and Districts actively participated, with around 650 members and community representatives engaging in the campaign. Meetings with major political parties allowed children to articulate their concerns, resulting in a comprehensive "Charter of Demand."

Impact on Political Engagement: The campaign, supported by UNICEF and ACR, successfully influenced political contestants through reality-based demands and fact sheets on the status of children. Children presented critical issues needing urgent attention, leading to positive responses from many candidates. Assurances were given to ensure a child-friendly environment, quality education, safety, protection from abuse, and access to health and nutrition services.

Community and Macro-Level Advocacy: Involving youth group members in the election campaign process is crucial for promoting child participation. This strategy facilitated dialogue between children and political representatives, highlighting community concerns. ACR partner organizations played a vital role in this process, emphasizing the importance of community-level initiatives like children clubs and child protection committees, and linking them to larger advocacy efforts.

Special events, such as the blue lighting of Charminar on 20th November, 2023, significantly boosted awareness and engagement regarding child rights. These initiatives culminated in state-level meetings where a charter of demands was submitted to policymakers and administration officials.

Go Blue Campaign: One of the key global initiatives is #GoBlue, where famous landmarks worldwide are illuminated with blue light on World Children's Day (20 November) to express solidarity with all children everywhere. Since 2018, numerous key monuments and iconic buildings have been lit in blue for World Children's Day. This year, ACR is reaching out to illuminate iconic government and historic buildings, including the Charminar. Charminar will be lit up blue on the nights of 19 and 20 November.

The campaign highlights ACR's impactful efforts in empowering vulnerable communities and children across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Through collaborative initiatives and campaigns, the project has amplified the voices of marginalized groups, raised awareness about child rights, and engaged stakeholders to improve the well-being and entitlements of children in the region.

ACR's dedication to addressing the challenges faced by vulnerable children is commendable. The project's emphasis on empowering young people and amplifying their voices has resulted in positive changes, bringing attention to the urgent need for better access to education, healthcare, and nutrition.

By working collaboratively with UNICEF and partner NGOs, ACR continues to drive impactful change in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The organization's efforts are paving the way for a brighter and more equitable future for all children, ensuring their rights are upheld and their voices are heard.



Volunteers, Internships at Mahita

Beautification of the School in Hyderabad

Around 100 volunteers from HSBC Software India Limited have beautified and painted the Kulsumpura High School building. The volunteers painted three classrooms, covering a total area of 2,000 sq. ft. This beautification work has made the classrooms look very colourful and bright.



Environmental Concern

During the reporting period, volunteers planted 82 saplings and made 40 seedballs along with children, which were planted in three government schools.



Spoken English Classes

Spoken English classes were conducted for 50 students currently studying in the 8th and 9th grades at Narsingh Government School. The committed team of over eight volunteers from HSBC conducted more than 11 sessions within a span of one and a half months, ensuring comprehensive learning for the students. We are delighted to report that all 50 students from the school actively participated in the sessions. Both children and teachers expressed their utmost satisfaction and delight with the exceptional manner in which the spoken English classes were conducted by the HSBC team.



Internships

Narsamunji Institute of Business Management, Mumbai has collaborated with Mahita for the past few years. The Institute sends its MBA students for internships at Mahita for a period of 23 days in every year. This year, four students were placed at Mahita, dedicating themselves to volunteer work in different projects.

Mahita's Way Forward: Adopting Strategies for Sustained Impact

Mahita's remarkable achievements in early childhood care, quality education, women's empowerment, child protection, and environmental sustainability have paved the way for a promising future. To sustain and amplify its impact, Mahita plans to adopt strategic approaches. Firstly, scaling up successful initiatives like vocational training centers, children's clubs, and Mithra Knowledge Centers will enable Mahita to reach a larger population across regions. Strengthening existing partnerships and forging new strategic collaborations with government agencies, civil society organizations, and corporate partners will unlock additional resources, expertise, and reach.

Intensifying advocacy and policy engagement efforts will allow Mahita to actively participate in decision-making processes, shaping policies and programs related to its areas of intervention. Continuous capacity building and skill development of staff, volunteers, and community members will equip stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and expertise to address emerging challenges effectively.

Exploring and adopting innovative technologies can enhance Mahita's reach, efficiency, and impact through digital platforms for education, awareness campaigns, community engagement, and data analytics for better targeting and monitoring of interventions. Diversifying funding sources through alternative mechanisms like social impact bonds, crowdfunding, or corporate social responsibility initiatives will ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Crucially, Mahita will intensify its efforts to engage community members, particularly youth and women, in program design, implementation, and decision-making processes, fostering a sense of ownership and ensuring long-term impact. By implementing these strategies, Mahita aims to build upon its remarkable achievements, amplify its reach, and continue to be a catalyst for positive change, empowering communities, protecting children's rights, and promoting sustainable development in the coming years.



-  Mahita #12-13-484/21, Street No.1, Tarnaka, Secunderabad-500 017, Telangana, India.
-  91-04-27641858
-  mahitahyd2022@yahoo.com
-  WWW.mahita.org
-  <https://www.facebook.com/mahitango>
-  <http://www.linkedin.com/in/mahita-ngo>
-  <http://www.youtube.com/@mahita6977>
-  Mahita_NGO

