

PASUMAI TRUST

Project Proposal

Educating and Eliminating child labour from Brick Industries

In recent times there is a growing awareness about the child labour issue. Both Government and Non-Governmental Organisations are involved in the process of eliminating child labour. But only certain sector of Child labour is given importance and focus. In Tamilnadu children working in Match and fire crackers industries of Sivakasi and children working in Beedi industries of Vellore are given more focus. Even the government programme like National Child Labour Project is implemented in those districts.

One of the important sectors of child labour neglected is the child labour in brick industries. More than 30,000 children are working in brick industries near by districts of Chennai city. Being migrant laborers their problems are worse than many other child laborers. The children who work in brick industries are the children of migrant labourers; they accompany their parents to the brick chambers and help their parents in their work. Since it is piece rate work these children do not get their wages in their hands; usually their parents get it. Since it is seasonal work during rainy season their parents would have received some advance money from the brick kiln owners; a major portion is deducted for that advance. Brick industries are a hazardous industry because it produces lot of dust and we can see it in the work place. Because of this most of the workers including children suffer from respiratory infections. They have to work from early morning 5 a.m. to 12 noon; again they will start working from 3.p.m and continue till 7.p.m. If they cut 1000 raw bricks they will get Rs.80 to Rs.100. A family of 4 members, parents with children work hard a day to cut 1500 to 2000 bricks. They work 5 days in a week. During rainy season for 5 months they will not get any work so they go back to their native villages and involve in agricultural work. Nowadays the agricultural work is also reducing.

They usually work in the small line huts provided by the owners. Usually during August month that is during rainy season they go back to their villages. They will come back to the brick chambers during January after the Pongal festival. When they are in the villages

they take some advance money from the owners, to celebrate the festivals and for other family occasions. The agents will go to the villages during festivals like Deepavali and Pongal and give advance money to the workers. So it becomes compulsory for them to come back to the brick chambers to work and repay the advance loans. Because of this migration from village to brick chambers and from chambers to villages the children could not continue their education. They drop out of schools, accompany their parents and become workers. Since most of the brick chambers are situated out of villages children feel that the schools are far away to attend. In the survival struggle parents do not bother about children's education. Because their living area will not come under the Village area no government development programme like drinking water, street lights reaches there. The worst affected are the children and women.

Pasumai Trust was involved in educating the child labour in brick industries from 1997 onwards. We have been running 3 motivation centres for the children in 3 brick chambers; nearly 75 children are attending these centres. The objective of these centres is to help and motivate these children to continue their formal education. The dropout children and children who do not attend any formal schools and work in brick industries benefit from these centres. They learn literacy and numeracy and later join the formal schools and also motivated to appear for the Government examinations as private candidates. One of our big achievements is to get admission in two formal schools that is in an academic year children will join two schools. First they join in their village school and when they come to the brick chambers they will get the transfer certificate and join in a school near to the brick chamber. We have been motivating and helping the parents to enroll children in schools and also in getting transfer certificates and admissions. We also got the support of District Education Officer in our attempt. After running the evening motivation centers for three years only last year we have evolved this idea of admitting children in two schools. During 1999-2000 we have enrolled 30 children in schools.

We believe that only when their parents that are the workers of brick chambers get fair wages and a relevant education system for migrant workers children they can educate

their children. So we are also educating and organizing the brick chamber workers. We are in the process of organizing them as a trades union.

So far all our work is carried out with local contribution and volunteers. Mr.K.Murthy the project coordinator and Managing trustee of Pasumai trust is a Fellow of CRY (Child Relief and You) and has been getting a stipend from July 1998 – June 2002. As mentioned earlier that no social work organization is working in this area, we feel that it is very important to continue our work not only to educate children but also to create awareness about the conditions of children working in brick industries among the public. Through our work we also wish to bring in suitable changes in the present education system so that migrant children get a proper education and break the poverty cycle. Towards this direction we are planning to implement a program “Educating and Eliminating Child Labour from Brick Industries”.

Objectives:

- To create educational opportunities for the children working in brick industries
- To motivate children to enroll and continue their formal education
- To organise the parents (Workers in brick industries) of the children working in brick kilns.
- To eliminate child labour from brick industries
- To carry on advocacy and campaigning activities to change the education policies of the government to make it relevant for migrant labour children.
- To create an awareness about the child labour in brick industries among the general public.

Plan of Action:

Motivation Centre for working children: We are planning to run 5 motivation centres. 100 working children will benefit from these centres. From our experience we have learned that by the time children return from work they become tired, so the best time to run the centers is early morning time. This we have to try in this project. We will run the recreational learning centers from 9 am to 1.p.m. Depending on the children’s demand we can convert this in to full time centers. Multigrade, Multilevel learning materials will

be prepared, so that children can learn on their own. They will be motivated to continue their formal education. We would help them to continue their formal education by getting school admission. A local Animator will manage each centre. During rainy season children will be given learning assignments and the animators will follow it up. They will also visit the children's native villages to do follow up activities. Once the children learn literacy according to their age we will get school admission and help them to continue their formal education. The animators would also organise regular meeting to motivate the parents to send their children to schools. We would also motivate the children under the age of six years of age in formal schools. We would help them get the transfer certificates when they migrate, and also get admission in the village school or the schools near the chamber.

Organising Parents: One of the major problems of working children are their parents who are not educated and they do not value the present education. So it is very essential to educate and motivate them about the importance of their children's education. In addition to that they are unorganized sector laborers so they do not get their rights like fair wages, proper working time, medical benefits etc. Because of the continuous lobbying with the Government recently they have formed a "Manual Workers Welfare Board". In which brickwork is also included. By becoming member of the board they can get benefits like insurance, maternity benefits, children's scholarship etc. So we also have to educate and help them to become a member of the board. Hence our animators would organise regular meetings for them. From our experiences we have learned that once the women become economically independent their children would get proper education and health care. We would form local level women's organisations and also run a credit and savings programme for them. So that they can avoid taking advance loans from the owners during rainy season.

Advocacy and Campaigning activities: We are already a member of Tamilnadu Primary School Improvement Campaign- TanPIC. We are also a Regional Core Committee member of TAFRE- Tamilnadu Alliance for Fundamental Right to Education. We have been campaigning to achieve quality, compulsory and free education for all children. Since migrant workers children's problems are different we would be

campaigning to make relevant changes in the formal education system so that they can continue their education in their villages and also near the brick chambers. To strengthen TAFRE at the district level we are planning to organise regular district level meetings of NGOs, Schoolteachers and Panchayath presidents. An orientation programme on the rights of the brick kiln workers will be organised in different intervals of time.

Staff: we need 6 Animators and a Coordinator for this programme. Sixth animator will fill when one of the five animators are on leave and also help prepare course material. Initially they will be given two-week's orientation programme, to help them understand the child labour issue, Recreational learning methods, ways of conducting village level meetings. We would also organise regular monthly meetings to review our activities.

Monitoring and evaluation: We wish to run this programme for at least 5 years. The second year budget and work plan will be submitted towards the end of first year. The programme will be reviewed regularly in our monthly staff meetings. Towards the end of the year a yearly review will be organised with the help of an outside resource person to plan our future activities. The main indicators for the monitoring will be the number of children attending the Motivation centers, number of children enrolled in schools, drop out rate, number of children working in brick chambers, parents awareness.

Child's Right to Education is a Human Right

Let's Together Make it a Reality.

BUDGET

| | Rupees |
|---|-----------------|
| Recreational learning centre Sheds | |
| Rs.10,000 X 5 | 50,000 |
| Learning Materials | 10,000 |
| Animators Training | |
| Rs.200 (Food & accommodation) X 10 people X 7days | 14,000 |
| Honorarium for Resource person Rs.500 X 7days | 3,500 |
| Learning materials for animators | 5,000 |
| Nutritious Food for children | |
| 100 children X Rs2 X120 days | 24,000 |
| Salaries | |
| Rs. 1500 X 6 animators X 12 months | 108,000 |
| Programme Coordinator Rs.5000 X 12 | 60,000 |
| Meetings and Trainings for Parents Rs.1000 X 12 | 12,000 |
| Advocacy and campaigning activities | 25,000 |
| Travelling Expenses Rs. 2000 X 12 | 24,000 |
| Office rent Rs.1500 X 12 | 18,000 |
| Printing and stationery | 5,000 |
| Postage and telephone | 6,000 |
| Audit and administration | 15,000 |
| Total Rupees | 3,79,500 |
| People's contribution | 30,000 |
| Grant requested | 3,49,500 |