

**Report to Anuradha Foundation**

**On**

**Balwadis in Non-Notified Slums  
in  
Bangalore City**



**For the year 2010 - 11**

From,



**Akshara Foundation**

Every Child in School & Learning Well

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## Introduction

Rapid urbanization has posed many challenges across the globe but developing countries like India are finding it difficult and to respond to these challenges and act accordingly. With over 575 million people living in cities and towns by 2030, India will have 41% of its population in urban areas from the present level of 28% and 286 million people. A worrying feature of this kind of urban growth is the substantially high proportion of people living in poverty. Slums are a physical and spatial manifestation of urban poverty. Census of India<sup>1</sup> 2001, defines slum areas as:

- (i) All specified areas in a town or city notified as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration under any Act including a 'Slum Act'.
- (ii) All areas recognized as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration, Housing and Slum Boards, which may have not been formally notified as slum under any act.
- (iii) A compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities.

The basic characteristics of slums are – "dilapidated and infirm housing structures, poor ventilation, acute over-crowding, faulty alignment of streets, inadequate lighting, paucity of safe drinking water, water logging during rains, absence of toilet facilities and non-availability of basic physical and social services." The living conditions in slums are usually unhygienic and contrary to all norms of planned urban growth.

NSSO<sup>2</sup> further classifies the slums as "*notified slums*" and "*non-notified slums*". A "*non-notified slum*" is a compact urban area with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions, if at least 20 households lived in that area. Urban areas notified as slums by respective municipalities, corporations, local bodies or development authorities were treated as "*notified slums*".

This report also provides the following insights:

- (1) On an average, about 205 households live in a notified slum and 112 in a non-notified slum.
- (2) About 65% of slums are built on public land, owned mostly by local bodies, state government, etc.
- (3) For 93% slums, major source of drinking water is either tap or tube-well. Only 1% notified and 16% non-notified slums do not have electricity connection.
- (4) The non-notified slums are worse off as compared to notified slums in terms of drinking water, electricity, pucca roads, latrine facility, septic tank/flush latrine and underground drainage system.

1 Census India 2001 : <http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-common/CensusDataSummary.html>

2 NSSO Non-notified slums;in CONDITION OF URBAN SLUMS (2002) PRESS NOTE, Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 8 March 2004

Looking at the findings of the NSSO survey, it is clear that the non notified slums are the worst affected settlements in the urban areas. None of the urban local bodies and the government institutions has any obligations to make public amenity provisions in these areas thus making the living conditions of the households in this area dreadful.

It was against this background that Akshara Foundation found that there are a number of children living in non-notified slums without access to any pre-school education either through government or private centers. To address this issue, Akshara Foundation has started *Balwadis* in such slums giving access to quality pre-school education to around **305 children** attending 10 centers. In 2010, Akshara Foundation, with the help of Anuradha Foundation set up **10 balwadis** (preschool centers) in **5 non-notified slums** in Bangalore City.

This Report describes:

- The project goals
- The outcomes of the project
- Case studies of children enrolled to the school.

The report covers the academic year 2010 – 11.

## **Project Goals**

The goals of the Programme are:

- Set up 10 *balwadi* centers in 5 non-notified slums in Bangalore City.
- Ensure that around 250 children get preschool education.
- Provide training 10 preschool teachers in current methodologies in preschool education in order to ensure 'school readiness'. This includes focusing on early language and math skills.
- Provide Teaching Learning Material (*balwadi* kit) to each center.
- Assess the learning outcomes of the children twice a year.
- Create a database of all children and update the information.
- Capture accurate and timely data of children's information year after year in order to monitor enrollment and school performance. The preschool data will be projected on the website <http://www.klp.org.in/>.

## **The Project**

Akshara Foundation conducted a feasibility a feasibility study, adopting a Survey Method or collecting the data from non-notified slums. This was done with the help of various authorities like BBMP, the Slum Board and the Welfare departments to collect secondary information. The analysis of this information resulted in listing down 6 to 8 such areas for the survey.

After analyzing the secondary information, the Akshara team conducted the survey in all the households of the 5 non-notified slums in Bangalore. The main objectives of the survey was collecting information pertaining to: the socio-economic information of the households in these areas, demographic information of the members of the households, status of children in the age group of 3-6 years so far as preschool facilities are concerned and perceptions and expectations of the parents for such facility. Few of the main observations were:

- Out of 1225 households, 829 children in the age group of 3-6 years were found during the survey.
- More than 90% of the households said that there is a need for a preschool in their area.

After examining the survey results, Akshara Foundation with the support of Anuradha Foundation set up 10 pre-school centers in 5 non-notified slums in Bangalore City. The areas where these centers are set up are: Pantharapalya, Verabhadra Nagar, Yarab Nagar, Asraya Nagar and OMBR Layout. Each center has around 30 children on an average in the age group of 3-6 years and one volunteer trained by Akshara Foundation who imparts the pre-school education to these children.

Akshara Foundation's preschool curriculum promotes the holistic development of children and prepares them for primary schooling. It has been designed as child-friendly, participatory, supportive and developmentally appropriate. The curriculum concentrates in five key areas namely – Language Development, Cognitive/Intellectual Development, Social and Emotional Development, Creative/Aesthetic Development and Physical Development.

## Project Results

### The Pre-School centers

10 pre-school centers have been started in 2010 across 5 non-notified slums in Bangalore. Each center has approximately 30 children. Akshara Foundation has identified a volunteer from the same community to run the center. The below table gives us center specific information:

Volunteer	Center	center
Sagaya Mary	Pantharapalya	30
Nagarathnamma	Pantharapalya	30
Suguna	Pantharapalya	30
Deepa	Pantharapalya	35
Bharathi	Veerabhadra Nagar	20
Prabhavathi	Veerabhadra Nagar	35
Monsina	Yarab Nagar	35
Yasmeen Taj	Yarab Nagar	30
Rajalakshmi	Asraya Nagar	40
Munirathna	OMBR Layout	20

A typical pre-school center runs between 9.30 am and 1.30 pm. Children are taught the basics of language, which may be Kannada or Urdu depending on the locality. The balwadi focuses primarily on oral teaching. The volunteer teaches children rhymes, alphabets, numbers, colors, shapes, the names of animals, fruits, vegetables and familiar objects in their environment. Activities are conducted for eye and hand coordination like coloring, threading patterns on a board, and arranging puzzles. Some outdoor and indoor games are played in a manner conducive to making learning fun, with emphasis on the overall development of the child.

### Training-Learning Material (TLM)

The TLM for the programme was developed using the help of preschool Subject Matter Experts (SME's). The TLM includes Rope, Construction squares, Number Blocks, Vegetable / Fruit basket, Alphabet and Number Charts (Kannada and English), Alphabet and number strips, Drawing Book and Pencils, story cards, story books, work books, pencils, vehicle peg board, wild animal puzzles and conversation cards.

The TLM is distributed to all the 10 centers and volunteers are trained by Akshara Foundation to use them. The volunteers use the story books to tell stories to the children, some conduct loud reading sessions for the children. Some mothers and young girls are also taking part in this.

## Training

All the 10 volunteers have been trained in the use of TLM. The training mainly focuses on to bring the inner talent of the volunteer and show their capacity, and make them self confident to start their own balwadi centre. The training contains group discussions, group activities and case studies. The five-day comprehensive training broadly covers the following topics:

" Preschool " package explanation.
Planning for " Preschool " setup.
One-month timetable explanation.
Physical Activities.
Language games.
Activities cognitive development.
Rhymes (kan, Eng,) and Games.
Interaction with Independent bal wadi volunteer.
Demonstration class.
Exposure visit to a independent balwadi center.
Preparation of TLM (teaching learning materials).
Child assessments.
Case studies.
Group discussions.

## Assessments

Our assessment methodology follows an approach which helps children develop basic skills that are aligned to child development processes. Children have been assessed on 7 sets of competencies using 56 indicators:

1. General Awareness
2. Gross Motor Development
3. Fine Motor Development
4. Language Development
5. Intellectual Development
6. Social and Emotional Development
7. Pre-academic Skills

The below table gives us an idea of the assessment domains and the indicators:

Domains	Number of Indicators
General awareness	5
Gross Motor	4
Fine Motor-Self help skills	4
ordination	2
Language	13
Intellectual	5
Socio-emotional	4
Pre-academic-reading	3
Pre-academic- writing	9
Pre-academic-mathematics	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

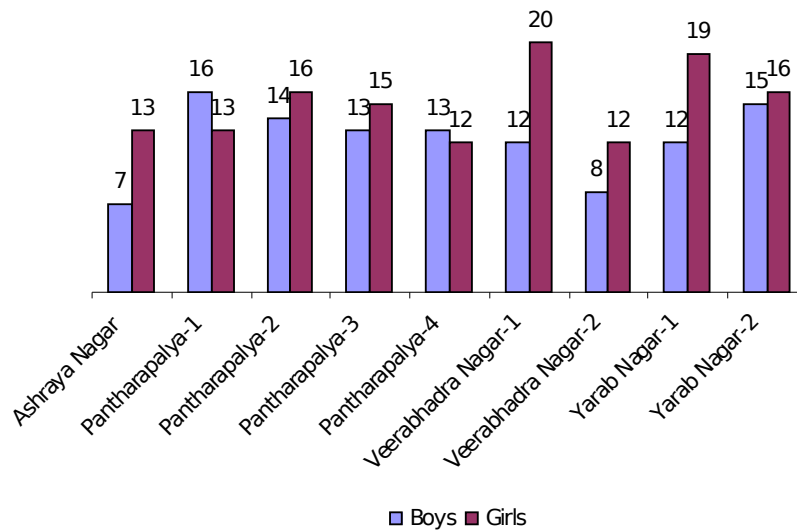
Child assessments were done across 10 centers. The pre-assessment was conducted in December 2010 and post-assessment was conducted in April 2011. The pre-school center at OMBR Layout is not considered for assessment analysis as the attendance of the children is very inconsistent which will result in inaccurate assessment observations. The inconsistency in attendance is because most of the children's parents are migration workers and hence they keep moving from one place to another. We see a lot of new children every week in this center.

#### **Analysis of the pre-assessment:**

1. Participation : A total of 246 children from across 9 pre-school centers underwent the pre-test. It included 110 boys and 136 girls. The below table shows the participation from each center.

Center	Boys	Girls	Total
Ashraya Nagar	7	13	20
Pantharapalya-1	16	13	29
Pantharapalya-2	14	16	30
Pantharapalya-3	13	15	28
Pantharapalya-4	13	12	25
Veerabhadra Nagar-1	12	20	32
Veerabhadra Nagar-2	8	12	20
Yarab Nagar-1	12	19	31
Yarab Nagar-2	15	16	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>246</b>

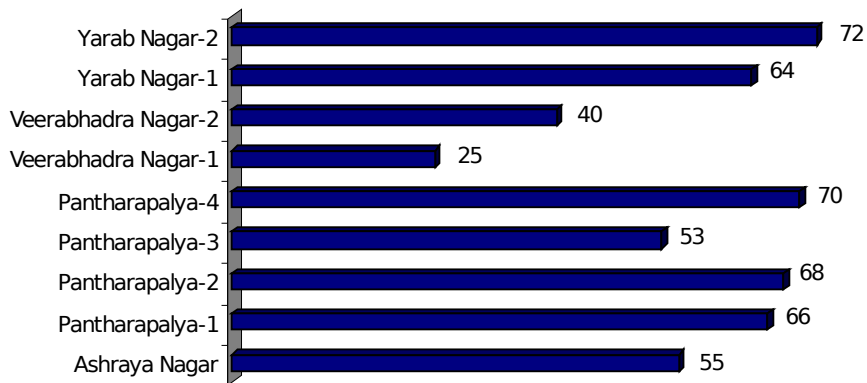
### Participation of Children (actual) in Pre-Test



2. Learning Outcomes by Centers : The pre-test measures the learning levels of the children before program intervention. The average of the learning levels across the 9 centers was seen to be 57%. Children from Yarab Nagar-2 center scored the highest percentage points (72%) against children from Veerabhadra Nagar-1 center, who have scored just 25% percentage points.

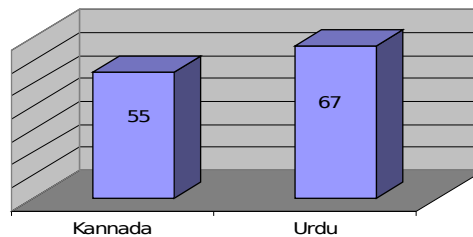
Center	Scores (%)
Ashraya Nagar	55
Pantharapalya-1	66
Pantharapalya-2	68
Pantharapalya-3	53
Pantharapalya-4	70
Veerabhadra Nagar-1	25
Veerabhadra Nagar-2	40
Yarab Nagar-1	64
Yarab Nagar-2	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>

Mean Scores (%)



3. Learning Outcomes by Mother Tongue (Home Language) : When we compare the learning levels of the children based on their mother tongues, we notice that children who speak Urdu at home have scored 67% percentage points while children speaking Kannada at home have scored 55% percentage points.

Mean Scores by Mother Tongue (%)



The post-assessment results are awaited to do a comparison and derive observations on the improvement of the child.

## Monitoring

The project is monitored by one Facilitator from Akshara Foundation. Her responsibilities included:

- Teacher Screening.
- Material Distribution
- Time Table Preparation.
- Ensuring quality of education and monitoring
- Supervision of the Assessments done by the teacher
- Management of data
- Collecting case studies of children and volunteer.
- Conducting weekly and monthly meetings with the teachers
- Attending the Community (Parents and interested community people) Meetings once a month
- Organizing Monthly Children's Competitions

- Coverage of Children. (Conducting survey)
- Weekly reporting to Program coordinator

## **Community Involvement**

The Akshara team with the help of the volunteer have implemented various initiatives to involve the community in the functioning of the pre-school center and educating them about the need for pre-school education. Few of them are:

- A Community awareness program in September 2010 – The objective of this program was to create an awareness on the need for pre-school education amongst the parents. The audience were slum-dwellers who had children between the age-group of 3-6 years. A talk on cleanliness, hygiene and good health was also part of this program.
- Monthly Meetings - To get the active participation of the parents in preschool activities, Akshara Foundation facilitates a monthly meeting of the primary stakeholders of anganwadi, i.e parents. This group consists of mothers who interact and engage with the children in the pre-school centers. There are about 3-5 mothers per center who interact and teach the children. The mothers also discuss on various important aspects like nutrition, hygiene, vaccination etc. and exchange information with each other.
- Children's Day Celebration – During the month of November 2010, a series of Talent Days and and Sport Days were conducted for the children and their parents to celebrate Children's Day. Prizes were distributed amongst the winners.
- Due to the strong community involvement in these centers, 6 of the centers are getting food from a near-by Government school for lunch. This is due to the perseverance of the community in convincing the the school to provide food to support the children.

## **Case Studies**

**Volunteer Name:** Nagarathna

**Center Name:** Pantharaplaya

Nagarathna migrated from Gulbarga and stays in Pantaraplaya. She runs her balwadi in the same slum. Nagarathana's day starts at 9 am with cleaning the center and displaying all the Teaching Learning Materials. She runs her balwadi in a rented place next to her house. Nagarathna is very active and loves children. She has a lot of interest in teaching action songs to children, and tells stories from Akshara supplied story books. She uses all the materials from the Kit provided by Akshara Foundation. When we visited the balwadi, we noticed that she takes good care of all the children. 30 children between the age group of 3 to 6 years attend her balwadi. She conducts mothers meetings and gives them a report on the progress of their child.



Nagarathna assisting a child

**Child Name:** Nirmala  
**Age :** 3 ½ years

Nirmala attends Nagarathna's balwadi every day. When she joined the Balwadi, the initial days were difficult. Nirmala was not interested to attend the center but would do so only due to the force of her mother. She slowly started adjusting to the new environment and started showing interest in learning what every her teacher taught her. She was an introvert child and used to cry whenever Nagarathna talked a little loudly. Now we can see changes in her behavior and she is very friendly with her peers. She is now very active in the class and mingles with other children. Nirmala can now identify colors, pictures and answer to the questions asked to her. Nirmala's parents are very happy to see the improvement in their daughter.



Nirmala

## **Conclusion**

We thank you for your support and look forward to your continuing partnership in ensuring that *Every Child is in School and Learning Well*.