



Children GOOD

GETTING OUT OF THE DEVADASI SYSTEM

WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

The Devadasi system, which began as a form of worship through art is today a religious sanction given to prostitution in lower caste Devadasi communities. Adolescent girls are dedicated as Devadasis after their puberty and become victims of social and sexual exploitation. Children of Devadasis are also vulnerable to and victims of abuse and discrimination. A survey conducted by the Karnataka State Women's University in 2017 revealed that there are close to 80,000 Devadasis in North Karnataka.

HOW ARE WE ADDRESSING IT?

Our project aims to take out exploited young girls and protect young vulnerable girls from the Devadasi system present in five districts of North Karnataka by training these girls as change agents in their community; using basic tools of Child Participation and Child Empowerment.

HOW DO WE OPERATE?

The GOOD project, instituted in March 2019, is implemented by partner organisations across 5 districts in North Karnataka; in districts Ballari and Koppal by Mukta Network and SNEHA, in Belagavi by Amma Foundation and SEVAK, in Vijayapura by Jagruthi, and in Bagalkot district by Chaitanya Mahila Sangha. These organisations comprise of women from Devadasi communities who have pledged to fight against the system.

Our project reaches out to around 500 young girls from each district, both vulnerable to and victims of exploitation by grouping them into Kishori Clubs (Children's Clubs) where they are



sensitised, counselled, and trained to drive their own development.

WHAT WE DO

Child-Led Interventions

We train young girls on child rights and child protection laws. We facilitate child led research and village resource mapping to make the children more informed and empowered. We also train girls on communication skills as a tool for advocacy where we teach basics of photography and public speaking. We give them platforms to represent their issues where they lobby with higher authority officials in the legal and the governing system.

Life Skills Training

Girls from Devadasi communities face severe discrimination which causes depression, anxiety, lack of morale and feelings of shame. Therefore, we train them in confidence building, decision making skills, resilience and other crucial life skills to help them cope and manage their lives positively.

Vocational Training

We conduct Jeans Stitching and Office Manager Training courses for girls where we teach them skills in demand, thereby enhancing their future employment opportunities. This gives them the necessary independence and financial security, bringing down the risk of exploitation.

Education

We enroll out-of-school girls in formal education through thorough counselling and sensitisation programmes. We also provide them with books, bicycles, school uniforms, school bags and other stationary.

Community Sensitisation

We organise key sensitisation programmes and meetings with community members and fellow Devadasi women to explain to them the threat of dedicating young girls as Devadasis and sensitise them on the opportunities for a better life.



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

2,678

girls trained as agents of change and solving village problems

4,249

community members sensitised

317

girls provided with educational services

50

girls provided with vocational training



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