Annual Report

2011-2012

The Promise Foundation

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Website: www.thepromisefoundation.org

2011: A milestone year

The Promise Foundation moved into a new campus in September 2011. After more than two decades of working in borrowed spaces (with expensive rentals!),   we were at last in a space designed for our particular needs! Anticipation of the momentous move infused our work over the year. While our out-reach work continued for the year, much of our joint energy was spent in closing down an establishment of a decade and half in Bangalore city to move to a beautiful space in **Sarjapura**.   Many pictures in this report will capture facets of our new rooms and halls. But our new campus is best experienced when visited!

The Foundation has over the years worked through a set of core programmes as well as forged partnerships to extend these programmes to other locations. For 2011, we chose to dedicate much of our energies on **establishing links with the communities around the new campus**. This was a priority area for the year because we wanted to ensure that our services would be relevant and appropriate the in the new area. We had, over the preceding years, conducted activities and begun to build a relationship with key persons of the surrounding villages. These activities had been in the form of summer camps for children, home visits to discuss ideas for helping children's education and workshops in the government schools of the region. We found that Sarjapura was seeing a demographic shift. There was a big inflow of migrant workers who used this peri-urban location of Sarjapura as a base to find jobs in Bangalore city.   Many of these workers, both men and women, came with their toddler and elderly family members to live in housing that was dismal and over-crowded. Many also had accompanying children who had been uprooted from their village schools but had not managed to re-enrol into Sarjapura's schools. Many did not know the language of the schools in our area and, even when they took admission, were left unsupported by the new (and often alien) educational setup.

The Foundation's priority age group is children from ages 3 to 18, with a focus on their education, mental health and potential realisation. We began home-to-home surveys to understand the needs of the poorest families in the region for three key areas:

- early stimulation of infants,
- literacy development for children in the primary school years and
- livelihood planning for the 14 year olds and beyond.

The team that worked in Sarjapura and in projects around India over 2011-12 is as follows:

Laxmi Sutar, B. Kala, Robert D'souza, Rayan Miranda, Riona Lall, Sajma Aravind, Esther Sailo, Arpana N. M., Nivita Vijay, Amruta Bhendre, Shanthamma, Devi, Sampoornamma, Ningappa, Manjunath, Anita Rajah, Sonali Nag and Gideon Arulmani. We were supported in our work by a network of friends, well-wishers, visiting faculty, volunteers and partner institutions.

In the following pages we give a report of the work done over 2011-2012 in our three core projects and a brief over-view of the extension projects for the year.

Core Projects

The Promise Foundation runs three core projects. These programmes target three over-lapping age groups: pre-schoolers, primary schoolers and school leavers. The three inter-linking and complementary programmes are:

Stimulation Intervention Programmes (SIP). This programme is focused on the all round development of children below the age of six. This is the age group that may be either enrolled in government sponsored pre-schools called *anganwadis* or privately run, subsidised centers.   SIP brings to these children exciting activities that are culturally sensitive, focused on preserving their multilingual identities to build the foundations for school based learning. Since its inception, SIP has reached children studying in anganwadis in several States in India and informed in-service training programmes for early child care workers. We have further extended our reach by partnering with NGOs, Corporate Community Initiatives and individuals working with 3 to 6 year olds.

In areas that are under-served with mother and child care services, the below 6 year olds are particularly vulnerable to being neglected. The neglect may not be specific to their physical safety since generally the children in this age group are kept within the home, with a mother, grandmother or elder sibling as the primary caretaker. The neglect is more in the area of cognitive stimulation, and ensuring rich opportunities to explore and learn from ones surroundings and family resources. In our initial surveys of the Sarjapura area we found a small number of children who were in this situation. They were children often seen on the laps of an elder sibling, or trailing behind gangs of 7 and 8 year olds in the courtyards of hastily put-together shacks. It was clear to us that SIP had to evolve ways to reach these children in their hutments and through their child-caretakers. Over 2012, we will be piloting a series of home and community based stimulation material that particularly targets the at-home children in our neighbourhood. We are dipping into our resources library to develop our new programme. Seen below is one sample from our resources library.

Children everywhere love to hear about children in another places, how they play and find solution to problems. These easy-to-make storycards are part of a set that illustrates the many activities of Cuoi, a little Shephard boy. The story is from Vietnam and talks about learning to look after our trees and friends from the jungle.

The Promise Shishukendra

We opened the promise Shishukendra in the new campus from November 2011. Our focus was four villages (*Sompura, B. Hosahalli, Yemre, Kadagrahara*) and the several 'colonies' of cramped hutments in our neighbourhood. Our teams visited all of these areas to forge partnerships. In the colonies, the liaison person was usually a 'contractor', the liaison man between new work contracts and the daily wage earners. Partnerships in the villages were with health care workers, interested farmers and sometimes, after an exceptionally wary start, with the local anganwadi workers and teachers.

We began with low intensity programmes. Children and their families were invited for activity classes. These programmes were advertised through brightly coloured posters prominently plastered on the entrance doors of hutment clusters and the fences and gates of friendly farmers and village aunts. These programmes were week-long. The lessons were planned around themes from the Shishukendra's Annual Plan. For examples, one week the theme was 'Plants', another 'What People Wear', and third 'Places Where People Live'. The backbone of these sessions was art and craft and plenty of storytelling.

By December, the Shishukendra was functioning about 30% of the time. The rest of the time, the SIP Team visited families in the villages and colonies.

We hope to run the Shishukendra to full capacity over the next year.

Programmes for Assisted Learning (PAL) are for children between the age of 6 and 9 who are in primary school or out-of-school. The main focus in PAL is to promote the skill of reading, which we believe is a life skill. Our partners for this programme are typically government schools and our work is always in the local language.

The four-part PAL session

Talk, hands on, text and publish are the four sections of a PAL session. A typical PAL class lasts for about two hours. The sessions begins with exploring ideas in one's own words (*talk*). The activity next moves to writing out words that a teacher has picked (hands on). These may be words which must begin with the /k/ sound, or must are attached to the meaning 'from' or be long so we need five claps to break them up. From here children move to reading the passages for the day (Text). This is when children must voice their understanding of the chosen passage. In Kannada we call this summarising activity as '*nanna arivu*' – '*the essence as I see it*'. From these moments of drawing out the meaning of written texts, children move to writing their own materials (Publish). Children author books and in looking around the room, they encounter many other books, printed editions , teacher developed books and other child-authored books.

For the children of the Sarjapura area we offered these PAL sessions during any long school break available through the year. We also attempted to offer a before-school hours programme but ran into several difficulties with this. Some school teachers minded terribly that their children were finding another class 'more interesting'. One teacher even went house to house informing parents

that she would not recommend them for a free government scheme if they continued in the PAL session. We realised that our presence with Pal was creating more discord than support. We therefore withdrew the before-school hours programme. Alternate models of offering Pal to the children of our area continued to be debated as the year 2011 drew to a close.

There can be no doubt that PAL is urgently needed in the Sarjapura area. Given below is an excerpt from an observer's dairy. As will become evident, a small push goes a long way in children becoming skilled with their lessons, and more mature as readers.

First PAL Teacher training programme in our new campus!

And group pictures ...

The Work Awareness and You-Jiva programme (WAY-Jiva). This programme targets the school leaver. The main focus of this programme is on livelihood planning and support with career preparation. Our sessions run for a full day or in short modules through the school term. The WAY-Jiva activities for the year 2011-12 can be described under 2 broad categories: the career counselling services and the training programmes.

WAY-Jiva Career Counselling Services

a) Career Resource Centres

In the academic year of 2010-2011, the WAY-WAY-Jiva programme has reached more than 300 students through the career resource centres established in the partner schools of The Promise Foundation. The WAY-WAY-JIVA programme is regularly conducted in these schools by a team of teachers/counsellors trained by The Promise Foundation through its Certificate Course in Basic Skills for Career Counselling. The WAY-Jiva sessions in these schools are held over 8 units spread across the academic year.

Name of school	Target Group	Location	Number of students
Sri Kumaran Children's Home (CBSE Board)	Class X	Bangalore	132
Sri Kumaran Children's Home (CBSE Board)	Class X	Bangalore	71
Sri Kumaran Children's Home (State Board)	Class X	Bangalore	84
TVS Academy	Class X and XI	Hosur	46

b) Individual Career Counselling Sessions and small group workshops

The WAY-Jiva programme has been offered to 68 students through the individual and small group career guidance sessions held at The Promise Foundation Youth Centre. The idea of small group workshops was conceptualised in March 2011 as a strategy to accommodate the increasing requests for career guidance at Promise. The individual counselling session was adapted to suit a small group,

comprising about 5 students, without altering the content. The first small group workshop was tried out on 4th April 2011 and a total of 14 small group workshops were held throughout the year. The small group workshops have helped the WAY-Jiva programme to reach out to a larger client number than was possible with Individual career counselling sessions.

	Number of students
January - March 2011	15
April - June 2011	40

c) WAY-Jiva Workshop with Mentor Together

In June 2011, The Promise Foundation associated with a Bangalore based organisation, called Mentor Together. Mentor Together works with the Balakiya Bala Mandir, a Government Home for Girls, run by the State Department for Women and Child Development. The Home takes in girls in the age group of 6-18, under the State's mandate to provide care and protection to deprived youth and children in the district.

The Promise Foundation conducted a career guidance workshop for 16 girls in the Balakiya Bala Mandir. The workshops were spread across 2 days and were held on 4th and 11th June 2011. The workshops were attended by girls, studying at the higher secondary level.

Students at the Bala Mandir work with the Jiva learning cards

*Post about the **Jiva Career Discovery Workshop** on Mentortogether website*

Career Workshops by the Promise Foundation
We took a break from the mentoring in April and May 2010 as most of the mentees had exams and some of them also went home for the summer to see their relatives. In June 2011, the mentoring resumed with a 3-part career workshop by the Promise Foundation , noted career psychologists who have over 3 decades of experience conducting research and trainings to prepare young people for the world of work. Their JIVA workshop was a big hit with the mentees. The workshop focused on 4 components :
a) Understanding self,
b) Understanding the world of work,
c) Career alternatives and
d) Career preparation.
Each mentee got a detailed report after the workshop listing out her potentials, possible career choices and paths.

Source:
http://www.mentortogether.org/p/programs/

Glimpses of the WAY-Jiva programme for girls

Training programmes

The **Certificate Course in Basic Skills for Career Counselling** is a 7 days skills based course conducted by The Promise Foundation. In 2011, 3 batches of the certificate course were conducted.

Batch number	Date	Location	Number of participants
Batch 8	31st January to 7th February	Martin Luther Christian University, Shillong	26
Batch 9	9th to 16th July	Bangalore	4
Batch 10	19th to 25th September	Bangalore	5

Note:

- Batch 8 is the 2nd batch of WAY-Jiva counsellors in Shillong. The earlier batch was trained in 2009 and had 18 participants.
- Batch 10 is the first batch to be trained in the new TPF Campus.
- Two staff from The Promise Foundatio, Kala and Arpana, were trained in Batches 9 and 10.

Glimpses from the Certificate Courses

Batch 8: Shillong, Meghalaya

The Inaugural Ceremony at Martin Luther Christian University

Trainees learning to use WAY-Jiva Worksheets

Trainees making presentations

Practicing skills

Successful trainees receive their WAY-Jiva Certificates

Batch 9: Bangalore

Another batch of WAY-Jiva trainees go through the training cycle:

- Comprehension of **theory**
- Development of **skills**
- Skills **Practice**
- **Certification**

Batch 10: The FIRST batch in NEW Campus!

Learning Theory and Developing Skills

Practicing skills with real students!

Receiving the WAY-Jiva Certificate and the Jiva Kit!

The WAY-Jiva Certificate course is quite successful and individuals from a number of other institutions come to us regularly for training. These individuals then implement WAY-Jiva in other parts of the country.

One of our trainees for example is from the Agha Khan Educational Services. She has taken WAY-Jiva to remote parts of Gujarat (another Indian state) is working with young people there.

Extension projects

International Symposium *http://www.linguaakshara.org/llcd_symposium_2011*

We organised one of the first international conferences on reading and literacy development held in India. Issues of interest to Promise's SIP-PAL programmes were presented by academics and practitioners in this Symposium. The picture here shows Promise Chairperson, Mrs. Sujatha Kaul inaugurating this Symposium which saw more than 175 registrations. Participants were from NGOs, university departments, free lancers, school counsellor and teachers.

Views about the Symposium

- This symposium should prove highly valuable in improving literacy development in India. Your efforts to bring experts together in India should be applauded and I wish you the best of success in your symposium and your future endeavours in solving literacy issues in India.
  Prof. Malathesa Joshi, College of & Human Development, Texas A & M University, USA.
-
- I think the conference is a joyous celebration of Indian research in psychology of language and there should be no doubt that it has a presence in the international scene.
  Prof. J. P. Das; Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada
-
- We know that the effects of poor literacy are wide-ranging, affecting not only educational achievement but also career prospects and adult well-being. My hope is that our discussions will highlight the fact that the science of reading can inform education and there is no reason to wait for children to fail before implementing intervention.
  Prof. Margaret Snowling, Academic partner of the Symposium.

So What?

This last session of the Symposium was led by Gideon Arulmani of The Promise Foundation. As the session name indicates, the aim of the half day meeting was for all participants to discuss the implications of the Symposium proceedings for their own settings.

Seen here are Sonali Nag and Margaret Snowling collating the messages gathered in the session.

Glimpses from the international symposium: Introductions, discussions, presentations, workshops and posters

The Book of Abstract from the Symposium contained information on all the presentations, workshops and posters.

These abstracts and longer version of the presentations can be found on the Lingua Akshara website (www.linguaakshara.org).

Dissemination

Dissemination of SIP-PAL

- Vice Chancellor's Interdisciplinary Seminar on Megacities, University of York, UK(March, 2011): *Bengalooru and Bangalore: How does the multilingual context of an expanding city play out in its classrooms?,* (Sonali Nag)
- Language, Cognition and Development Seminars. School of Psychology, Bangor University, Wales (March, 2011): *Reading acquisition across writing systems* (Sonali Nag)*.*
- International Symposium on Language, Literacy and Cognitive Development, The Promise Foundation and University of York, Bangalore, India (December, 2011).
   a. *Keynote: Multiple pathways to literacy: Findings from two longitudinal studies* (Sonali Nag).
   b. *Poster: The tiger who had a cold. Changes in children's story writing following a language programme* (Riona Lall, Laxmi Sutar & Sonali Nag)
   c. *Spelling development in young Bengali readers*, (Shruti Sircar & Sonali Nag).

Other SIP_PAL Accomplishments

Early Childhood in India: A Status Report.

Written by Anita Rajah and Sonali Nag, this review of early childhood care and education (ECCE) in India was commissioned to bring an up-to-date perspective on services for children below age 6 in India. After a quick summary of the budgetary outlay for ECCE in India's five year plans, the review collates information on the variety of service providers available in the country (e.g. the Government's internationally recognised Integrated Child Development Scheme, the Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for Working Mothers, the crèches and day care centres for women in the work force and the many innovative schemes by NGOs across the country). Excerpts from the report can be seen in Appendix 1.

We also made excerpts from the report available to partners. One such partner is the Corporate Social Responsibility wing of IBM India Ltd. These organisations used the Report for internal strategic planning keeping in mind issues such as which states in India a) have the lowest early childhood services, and b) the highest commitment to private-public partnerships.

Lingua Akshara: a website for literacy, language and related issues

This website attempts to collate work pertaining to the Asian languages that have adopted the akshara writing system. While this may seem like an easily defined area of exploration, the reality is far more complex. Researchers of the akshara languages are routinely confronted with some of the most vexing questions facing current cognitive science research.   The contexts are often multi-lingual, literacy learning is rarely in only one script and teaching environments are diverse. We think that this decade will see an unprecedented rise in collaborations across languages, writing systems and socio-cultural contexts and this will give us, not just fresh insights into the akshara but also a more robust science of cognition, language and literacy. **Lingua Akshara** hopes to capture some of these exciting new explorations as they evolve and go public.

For details visit www.linguaakshara.org . Some screen shots from the website can be seen overleaf.

Lingua Akshara
Language, Literacy and
Cognitive Development: The interface.

Hosted by
The Promise Foundation
For Mental Health, Education and Potential Realisation

Some images of akshara inscriptions

Edakkal, South India

Angkor area, North Cambodia

Spreading across South and South East Asia are several aesthetically distinctive *akshara* scripts that have their roots in *Brahmi*, the ancient writing system of Central India. The scripts stand out both for their visual features as well as the ingenuity with which they represent sounds in the language. While the uninitiated hardly manage to get past the bewildering set of dashes, loops and squiggles of these writing systems, to those in the know, the commonalities in the symbol architecture of each avatar is immediately familiar.

Lingua Akshara has brought together academics and practitioner who have written in the area of early childhood education and literacy, the two areas of interest to SIP-PAL.

There are published papers from peer reviewed journals, special issues from technical journals, power point presentations from conferences and workshops and more.

These resources can be found through this weblink:
http://www.linguaakshara.org/resources

Dissemination of WAY-Jiva

- Budapest, Hungary (5th -7th December 2011): Keynote speech at the plenary session of the 6th International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy; Facilitator for Them on: *Political, economic and social changes and the changing role of career guidance and career guidance policies*. (Gideon Arulmani)
- European Training Foundation, Turin, Italy (14th - 15th November): Keynote presentation: "*The Impact of social and economic change on traditional work-based learning, a framework for culture resonant approaches in India*". (Gideon Arulmani)
- Shillong, India (4th - 5th November): First National Conference of the Indian Association for Career and Livelihood Planning (IACLP), organised by the Martin Luther Christian University and the Meghalaya Association of Professional Counsellors. (Gideon Arulmani)
- Interview for a Liechtenstein Publication (Gideon Arulmani with Georg Kaufmann). Excerpts from this interview can be found in Appendix 2.

Other WAY-Jiva Accomplishments

Handbook of Career Development: International Perspectives

This is a handbook comissioned by Springer New York. It is a compendium of 44 chapters written by authors from 20 countries on a wide range of themes related to career guidance and is anticipated to be a landmark publication for the field. The Promise Foundation is coordinating the production of this handbook.

This handbook is being designed as an academically-sound teaching and reference book to be used for senior classes/advanced educational levels in countries around the world. Some of the key aims are to compile a handbook that would:

a. extend existing theory, models and methods into wider contexts
b. unveil and document hitherto undescribed orientations to work, livelihood and career
c. discuss new directions, having relevance across cultural boundaries
d. exemplify sensitivity to culture
e. present ideas pertaining to lesser explored aspects of career guidance
f. be relevant to the wide range of newly emerging career counseling contexts around the world

Indian Association for Career and Livelihood Planning(IACLP)

 Through the WAY-Jiva prgramme The Promise Foundation has been instrumental in founding the Indian Association for Career and Livelihood Planning (IACLP). The central objective of the IACLP is to provide a strong academic and culturally resonant scaffolding for the development and professionalization of career and livelihood planning services in India as well as to create a network amongst professionals in the field. The association is growning and we have 110 members from all over the country. Further details are available the association website: www.iaclp.org

The IACLP Logo

Career development is often understood to be linear in its course, moving from one point of accomplishment to another. Common experience tells us that a career rarely develops in a linear and sequential manner, moving seamlessly from one success to another. In reality, new possibilities open, paths diverge and expectations may need to be readjusted.

Ancient Eastern philosophies present a cyclical approach to life whereby actions of the past qualify the present and the actions of the present qualify the nature of the individual's future existence. Life is portrayed as a spiral: nonlinear in its progression; characterised by continuous elaboration and construction; and by adaptation, discovery and renewal. Nature too is full of examples of spirals ranging from the structure of galaxies, to the shell of a snail and the blossoming of a rose bud.

The Indian Association for Career and Livelihood Planning draws upon the image of a spiral to describe career development. Accordingly, career development is understood not merely as achieving mastery over age-specific developmental tasks. Instead, it is portrayed as a collection of overlapping movements whereby the individual's engagement with work is an ongoing process of renewal. These movements may not necessarily always point in the 'forward' direction. The world of work may require new learning to face new challenges, it may require the individual to return to earlier learnings, it may also require the individual to let go of earlier positions and begin anew. A healthy career develops upon previous development, whereby one constantly learns from the past while remaining open to the new in the present, accepting all experiences as integral to development.

It is these images and sentiments that the IACLP logo tries to capture.

Dissemination of Promise's philosophy of culturally resonant methods for promoting mental health and potential realisation:

- Singapore International Story Telling Festival, Singapore (September 1st to 4th):
    - Keynote: *Myths Within: Exploring the Story's Psychological Elements* (Gideon Arulmani)
    - Master Class titled '*Touching Tales: Storytelling as a Culturally Resonant Counselling Technique*' (Gideon Arulmani with Kamini Ramachandran, see poster below!)

MASTERCLASSES

TOUCHING TALES:
Storytelling as a Culturally Resonant Counselling Technique
By DR. GIDEON ARULMANI & KAMINI RAMACHANDRAN

WHEN   1 SEPT 2011 (THU), 10.00 AM – 5.30PM *(Registration starts at 9.30am @ The Foyer, Level 1)*
WHERE   NATIONAL MUSEUM: *Seminar Room 1 & 2, Level 2*
FEES   S$220/PERSON *(inclusive of 2 tea breaks)*

In Eastern cultures the central function of storytelling is not entertainment. Traditional counsellors (the wise elder, the healer, the shaman, the guru, the soothsayer, the grandparent, the uncle or the aunt), typically use illustrations from parables, stories from the holy books and folk tales that depict the gods, folk heroes and other characters whom the help-seeker is already culturally prepared to revere and respect. The attention of the help-seeker would be drawn to how the characters in the stories deal with life's vicissitudes and the help-seeker would be exhorted to emulate them. The discipline of counselling could learn from these methods to consider techniques that have a strong cultural grounding.

Presented by a clinical psychologist, DR. GIDEON ARULMANI, Director of The Promise Foundation India, and International Fellow of the National Institute for Career Education & Counselling (Cambridge, UK) and a professional storyteller, KAMINI RAMACHANDRAN, Co-Founder of Moon Shadow Stories and President of the Storytelling Association (Singapore), this workshop will bring two disciplines, namely, storytelling and counselling together and explore storytelling as a counselling technique. The speakers will present the cultural preparedness approach as a conceptual framework that could guide the development of counselling interventions that are responsive and relevant to felt needs.

- Asian Congress of Storytellers, Singapore (September 1st to 4th): Workshop in the: *Happily Ever After: Using Stories to Help Adolescents Meet Life's Challenges* (Gideon Arulmani with Kamini Ramachandran)
- Nirmala Niketan College of Home Science, University of Mumbai, Mumbai (September 30th): Keynote: *"Professional Counselling across the Life Span: Challenges, Innovations and Future Directions"* (Gideon Arulmani)

Financials

Overview

Projects executed at The Promise Foundation for the year 2011-2012 were supported by Grants and Donations. The Foundation received support from friends of the foundation, as well as institutions and long term donor agencies. The table below gives details.
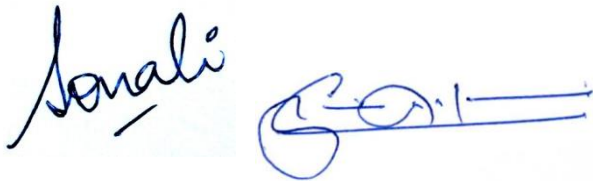
Project Costs and Source of Funds: Year 2011-12

Project	In Rupees	Project Status
TPF Direct Programmes: SIP, PAL and WAY	*Cost of Project*: 11,909,160 *Source of Funds:* FTPF (fundraising in Liechtenstein)	Ongoing, will continue as core to all projects.
Language, Literacy and Cognitive Development – An International Symposium: an extension of SIP-PAL	*Cost of Project*: 432,540 *Source of Funds: University of York*	This International event was successfully executed in December, 2011. More than 175 participants from across India and other countries participated.
The IBM KidSmart Programme for setting up Early Learning Centers: an extension of SIP-PAL	*Cost of Project:* 11,10,996 *Source of Funds:* IBM International Foundation.	The PAN-India project had trainees deputed from ten States. A second, smaller outreach was in Madurai town in Tamil Nadu (South India).
TPF General Programmes: Documentation and administrative support for SIP, PAL, WAY projects	*Cost of Project*: CHF 14,72,850 *Source of Funds:* FTPF (International fundraising)	The project focussed on setting up of new documentation and research support for TPF's core projects, and administrative processes for the new campus.
The Promise Foundation Building Campus Project	*Cost of Project:* 22,85,010 *Source of Funds: FTPF (Funding raising in Liechtenstein & International)*	The Youth Center, training halls & library were inaugurated in October, 2011. Work continues for the external areas including water harvesting, fencing and children's area.
The Promise Foundation Center for Early Learning & SIP-PAL Resource Center: an extension of SIP-PAL	*Cost of Project:* 733,05-0 *Source of Funds:* IBM India Ltd., other sources	Training programmes began in the new Center began from October 2011. Development of SIP-PAL Resources continued over the year.

Note: The Jiva Book Writing Grant , disbursed by Jacob's Foundation, will be received again in 2012-2013.

End note

The year 2011 was a milestone year for Promise! We shifted into our own campus! The new campus is growing more and more into a warm and friendly space, reflecting the philosophy of the Foundation. We are hopeful that over 2012 we will grow more and find our rhythm in our new neighbourhood!

Sonali Nag and Gideon Arulmani

6th September, 2012.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

'Early Childhood Education in India: Status Report'

Excerpts from (pg 23-24)

6. Conclusions and suggestions:

The World Bank, in a recent summary of the progress made by India in the broader field of school based programmes, has highlighted the following:

- The number of children out of school, has decreased significantly, from 25 million in 2003, to 8.1 million (approximately 1/3rd) in 2009

- More than 95% of children attend primary school

- The SSA caters to 200 million children living in 1 million habitats across India

- 98% of children now have access to 1 primary school, within 1 km from their home

- In 2008, only 6 districts in the country had more than 50,000 children out of school; in 2004 there were 48 districts with more than 50,000 children out of school.

The above figures reflect a positive thrust and co-ordinated efforts in the country to improve access to schools, and perhaps access to early education programmes. In parallel, government policies have ensured that no children are detained in the lower classes, with the result that many are reaching the upper grades. However, the reality on the ground remains far from rosy. While it is true that more children are attending school, the quality of their knowledge remains far from satisfactory. Many children in the higher classes have language and mathematical skills that are atleast 4 to 5 grades below the one they are studying in. Children in higher grades are without the academic skills required to cope with that grade.

Interviews with teachers and principals of Government schools revealed that there is little or no information regarding changes in policy or implementation of a new programme. For example, there is no clarity regarding what a special educator (recruited as part of the SSA) can do in school. Similarly, there is often helplessness and frustration that their views are not taken into account while framing policies.

Thus, **while the Government, in good faith has launched several flagship programmes to meet the educational needs of the deprived child, the reality is that many of these initiatives die away for want of acceptance by the community.** This disconnect between policy and reality is a recipe for failure; many good statements are made on paper and get unfailingly repeated over several programmes, even over several decades. However, the child in need continues to be deprived.

One of the first priorities in implementing a programme in such a diverse country would be to decentralise operations, as the SSA has tried to do. **Decentralisation of programmes and a greater involvement of the community can go a long way in reducing the gap between policy and ground**

reality. The village or the district, then has a great stake in the programme and may perceive greater ownership and hence responsibility for performance.

Involvement of the community would mean giving emphasis to learning by doing, along with the 3 R's. Take for example learners growing up in the forested provenance of our country - alien themes about urban life are extremely hard to visualise and quite off-putting!! Thus, **using locally available material (leaves, fruits, animals, craft) would help children find school interesting and learning of concepts faster.** As has been repeated in the NCF- learning through observation and experience is of more value than the didactic teaching by a teacher to a child.

The second aspect that might help bring change is **to gain an understanding about the key role that women play in the ECE and related programmes.** Recruitment of women, would not, in itself be a solution, because, despite the significance and the multi-faceted nature of the work they do, few have the power to create change. Economics can be a great source of power, as many micro finance groups, or the example of *Kudumbasree* movement in Kerala have shown. Therefore, there is a need to link economically viable programmes involving women that would support the ECE. For example- recycling old clothes to make rugs or bedspreads for the anganwadi would be one of the ways in which local women could get involved in a programme that caters to their children. Another example would be to give adolescent girls skills for using computers and use their services to introduce computers in anagwadis and pre-schools.

In conclusion, there are several ways in which a community can view or participate in the ECE venture. Communities and multiple parties from different sectors can actively participate in looking after the education, potential realisation and mental health needs of the young child.

Anita Rajah and Sonali Nag,

30th November, 2011.

Appendix 2

Excerpts from document sent for **the LED „Blickwechsel": The Promise Foundation**

How did the link between India and Liechtenstein establish?

Our links began quite serendipitously when in 1992 George and Ingrid Kaufmann visited an Indian school that was being supported by Liechtenstein, in which we were working. Being teachers, both of them understood what we are trying to achieve through Promise. This meeting led to a Charity Dinner hosted for Promise by a group of friends invited by George and Ingrid. Funds raised at this dinner were doubled by LED and with this our wonderful relationship with Liechtenstein began. The informal group of friends grew and the Friends of The Promise Foundation was established. This is a link forged between like-minded professionals who were committed to creating the facilities for the potential realisation of disadvantaged children and youth.

What is WAY?
How did the project WAY develop and what processes where initiated?

WAY stands for 'Work Awareness and You'. It is a career guidance programme designed to meet the career development needs of the disadvantaged adolescent. WAY rests on the premise that every individual has talents and potentials that could become his or her career and source of livelihood.

Which are the biggest successes and which difficulties do you encounter?

One form of success is when young people from poor homes, find themselves, their talents and are able to maximise their potentials in the world of work. A greater form of success is when we are able to train others (e.g. teachers) to offer career guidance to their students. At the final level, our success is when the educational and government system are able to see the relevance of guidance services and the service is integrated into the overall educational method of the country.

Our difficulties are at two levels. The first is in relation to integrating careers services into the mainstream of education. Presently career guidance is seen as an 'extra' service and very often it is ignored by the authorities. Our second difficulty is in relation to resources. There is presently no fund earmarked for career guidance within the government. Hence we have to constantly rely on donations and grants.

If we compare the career counselling between Indian and Liechtenstein, which differences exist?

The differences are profound! Career counselling in Liechtenstein (as in other Western countries) is accepted by society and government, as an important service for young people

and hence is offered by the State. In India, this is considered as an 'extra' and sometimes as a 'superfluous' service.

There are differences also at the level of the relevance of the service. In Western contexts, career counselling offers guidance to a client group that already 'has' the essential requirements with which to make a life. In these contexts, guidance serves the purpose of moving a client from a situation of 'have' to a situation of 'have more', or 'have something else'. In contexts of disadvantage, the client group is largely those who do not have the resources with which to build a life. The concept of a 'career' itself is alien to such a group. Survival needs in the present maybe so pressing that planning for what could become a reality sometime in the future may not be consistent with the experience of a boy or girl from a disadvantaged background. Less privileged groups (such as those catered to by WAY) may believe that career planning may not be a possibility for them - a luxury they cannot afford. The more privileged (such as client groups in Liechtenstein) might be of the opinion that it may not be a necessity in their situation. The security engendered by wealth, social and economic status could push career planning to a lower level of urgency amongst the highly privileged. These could be some of the key differences between career counselling in India and in Liechtenstein.

Mister Gideon, last year you organized the world congress of the career counseling. What was the impact for Promise Foundation and the project WAY?

This conference has led to The Promise Foundation being recognised as a leader in career guidance not only for India, for also for multicultural contexts in the Western world. We have as a result been commissioned to edit a special issue of the International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance. We have also been commissioned to compile the conference outcomes as the International Handbook for Career Development.

The conference helped to present WAY as a special system of career guidance. WAY has been seen by leaders from the international fraternity as a viable method of delivering career guidance services to young people from disadvantaged homes.

How does the Future of "The Promise Foundation" looks like?

The future of The Promise Foundation looks very positive. All the services we offer are now considered to be relevant and useful. Of particular importance is that Promise has been supported by the Friends in Liechtenstein to build a new work centre. This is a significant achievement of the partnership between Liechtenstein and Promise. The new centre will reach completion in a few months and we will move our operations to a different part of the city.

Promise is today moving toward new challenges.

Gideon Arulmani.

 (Note: This interview also included questions to Georg Kauffman, President of Friends –TPF).