



VILLAGE RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



Appeal for Establishing
Vocational Training College
for Students of
Marginalized Communities

Bridging Gaps and Building Capacities

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Appeal for Establishing a VOCATIONAL TRAINING COLLEGE for Students from Marginalized Communities

Background of Applying Organization:

Village Reconstruction and Development Project (VRDP) is a non- governmental organization having its headquarters in Salem but involved in various projects in about 17 districts in the state of Tamil Nadu with special focus on tribal development. In its 29 years of service the organization has carried out a number of programmes for achieving and protecting the fundamental rights of the tribal communities. During these years of service, VRDP has been witnessing a very slow growth in the education status of tribal communities. The tribal students could not pursue higher studies for various social reasons enumerated later.

CONTEXT

Government of India has passed the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act in 2009 and formulated rules for the implementation of the Act in 2010. It has been notified in the Gazette of India in 2010 and brought into force with immediate effect. Even before this the Government of India has introduced an ambitious education scheme in the name of Education for All (Sarva Shiksha Abiyan- SSA) and allocated huge sums of funds for achieving 100% enrolment and retention.



Even though Indian children are governed by the above laws, acts and schemes to ensure their fundamental right to have free and compulsory Primary Education, the literacy level of the tribal communities in Tamil Nadu is 41% as against the national average of 47%. The Union Government's document on the Status of Education in India – National Report openly admits that 70.1% of tribal children drop out between I – VIII standards. (Ref: Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future). If this were the case in the primary and Elementary level, one can imagine the number of tribal students who will reach the higher secondary level. It could be definitely below 20%. Thus no acts and laws could guarantee the right to education of tribal children. The education of tribal children is still a neglected and compromised reality in India.

ISSUES:

§ Higher Education - A difficult mountain to climb for socially backward communities:

The tribal children climb the building of school education with some ladders like legal provision (the right to free and compulsory Education) and social support (Government scholarship and free education support materials). But after primary and middle school level it becomes very difficult to reach the destination of Higher Secondary School because the teaching standards and learning environment in tribal areas are far below the normal standards in other areas. Hence these students score poor marks.

Even though a good percentage of students from these two communities get promoted in high schools and higher secondary schools in the last few years, because of their education in rural schools without proper facilities and exposure, motivation and encouragement, with few teachers, less coaching and lack of proper guidance and counseling, they are unable to compete with their better placed counterparts in the urban areas. Only the fittest survive in the general competition

§ Commercialization of Education:

Education has become highly commercial in India and also the privilege of the socially upper class and economically well to-do. Due to this, vocational education and professional courses are inaccessible to socially and economically backward communities.

Normally a student has to pay / spend a minimum of Rs. 50000/- per year to follow a vocational group in the polytechnic. There have been instances of some tribal children committing suicide because their ambition could not be fulfilled.

§ Failure of Reservation system in Education:

The Government reservation for the tribal Student is only 1% when compared to their population. Even this reservation quota is not filled up by the tribal students because of the high cost of education in India even in Government colleges.

We have alarming statistics about the percentage of tribal students following Diploma in vocational courses and Degree in professional courses.

Number of tribal students (Boys and Girls) who joined in Diploma courses

Year	Total enrolled	OC (Other communities)	Backward Community	Most Backward	Scheduled Caste (Dalit)	Scheduled Tribes
2006– 07	66741	5406	36259	16312	8506	258 (Girls 39)
2007 - 08	82086	6354	43213	21743	10493	283 (G:49)
2008 - 09	101366	7442	51577	28711	13303	333(G:38)
2009 - 10	107047	8246	52749	30144	15480	428 (G:54)
2010 - 11	117081	9659	55300	33134	18472(15%)	516(0.44%)

In the same way, statistics about admission in Professional Courses (Bachelor of Engineering and Medicine) reveal that in 2012 – 2013, only 468 tribal students have got admitted in these courses as against 22,264 dalit (scheduled caste) students.

§ The percentage of tribal students as against the total admission of 1,82,491 students is 0.25%.The percentage of Dalit (Scheduled Caste) students is in better place – 12.2%.

§ Thus it is established that even by a very conservative

assumption that is only 20% tribal students appeared for Higher Secondary examinations and out of the 20%, only 15% of them get promoted in the exams, not even 0.5 % of the tribal students are able to get admission in the vocational or professional courses in Tamil Nadu.

Note: All statistics are from the Directorate of Technical Education, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Solution:

It is proposed to establish a Polytechnic College primarily for Tribal boys and girls and students from other marginalized communities in Tamil Nadu with the following objectives:

1. Training at least 250 tribal youth every year in five types of engineering skills.
2. Ensuring 50% admission to girls in the engineering courses.
3. Reduce the gap in the percentage of higher education by tribal youth

APPEAL:

It is estimated that US\$5.6 Lacs will be required to establish the Vocation Training College in a rural area in Salem District. 50% of the estimated cost will be mobilized from within the country.

We appeal to the philanthropists, educationists, academicians, industrialists, corporate magnets to support this noble cause by way of Cash or In-kind Donations to construct a vocational Training College to provide Quality Higher Education to Tribal and other marginalized youth in Tamil Nadu.

Giving Fish is Charity. Teaching to Catch Fish is Empowerment. Please join hands in empowering the tribal youth.

SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW YOU CAN DONATE

1. You can donate for construction of one / two Class Rooms
2. An Individual or group can sponsor one Block in the name of your beloved one.
3. An organization can support the administrative block
4. Hostel Building can be donated by a school or institution
5. Materials required for college and hostel can be donated in Kind
6. You can donate for a corpus fund for paying the Capital Amount to get Government approval and affiliation for the college
7. Small amounts of donation (any amount more than US\$ 100) also can be donated in the name of Village Reconstruction and Development Project College Fund.
8. You can organize fund raising events on behalf of VRDP for Polytechnic college construction.

How you will be acknowledged?

1. You will receive information about the progress of the activity by News Letters or e-mails
2. The names of those who contribute more than 1000US\$ will be engraved on the plaque
3. The names of all Donors will be published on our website
4. You will be invited to participate in the Annual Days or Sports Day functions as Chief Guest or Guest of Honor.



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