

Kollegal CLAP training for Early Married Girls

Brief

Over the past ten years, we at Headstreams, have created global networks in the fields of play pedagogy, promotion of 21st century life-skills and empowerment of individuals and communities both in education and livelihood. We work, primarily, with children and youth of marginalised socio-economic backgrounds. Through our work, across 3 districts of Karnataka, we have directly impacted more than 15000 children, 200 pre-service and government school teachers, 1000 youth including volunteers (corporate), interns and college students, 1000 women from 50 SHGs and initiated over 100 livelihood units. Our program CLAP (Community Library Activity Program) aims to facilitate a model of problem-solving and self-directed learning in government schools/ low -budget schools and marginalised communities.



Terre des Hommes Netherlands or TdH-NL works with the children who are in worst form of child labour, married adolescent girls, children of Devadasis, children rescued from trafficking in 4 States (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Jharkhand) of India. They partner with an organisation namely 'People Movements' for Self Reliance (PMSR)' and they are part of IMAGE consortium, working with 630 Early married girls (EMGs) in 23 Panchayats of 2 blocks in Kollegal. 25% of EMGs they are working with, belongs to the tribal community from remote villages. The organisation has 5 field facilitators, 1 counsellor and 1 project coordinator and lead by Rev. Adiss Arnold.

Allied to the organisations' initiative to empower adolescent girls who are married early, Headstreams organised a CLAP workshop for more than 50 early married adolescent girls from Kollegal taluk of ChamaraJanagar district in Karnataka. The objective of the workshop was to

understand the environment of the Early Married Girls in Kollegal to eventually understand how the CLAP program could be adapted to their context. The long term goals of a CLAP program starting here would be:

- To improve the existing capacities of the children (as agents of change) to gain insights and decision making
- Children learn to set their long term and short term goals and work towards achieving the goals
- Motivation and ability to address the challenges with courage and confidence
- Develop resource champions among the children on life skills



Workshop Design

The children of the Early Married Girls were given the option of leaving their children to play with our facilitators so that they could be more engaged in the workshop.

Schedule:

Time	Activity
10:00-10:30	Games and Songs
10:30- 11:00	Challenge 1 - Story
11:00-11:30	Challenge 2 -
11:30-12:00	Challenge 3 -
12:00-12:30	Skill – Jewellery Making
12:30-13:00	Songs, Games and Closure

Energiser Song: Ram Sam Sam



Energiser Game 1: Hand Clap

The participants sit in a circle and place both their hands on the floor in front of them. Everybody then takes their left hand and crosses over the person's hand next to them. Anyone in the circle can start the game with a single hand tap on the floor. The next person then needs to tap their hand

once (clockwise). The tap is then passed around the circle in a clockwise direction. If anyone double taps their hand, the direction of hand tapping changes from clockwise to anti-clockwise. If someone makes a mistake, the game is restarted. The aim of the game is to get the hand tapping in either direction as fast as you can.

Energiser Game 2: Fruit Salad

The participants form a circle and are randomly assigned a fruit name –banana, apple, mango or papaya. When the facilitator calls out a fruit, all participants assigned to that fruit need to exchange their places. The last person to exchange places will call out the next fruit as so on.

Group Creation Game: Yeshtapa Yeshtu

The participants run around in a circle. The facilitator calls out 'Yeshtapa Yeshtu' and the participants in return yell out 'Neeve Yeshtu'. This continues until the facilitator calls out a number. All the participants need to then get into groups of the number called out. A few rounds of this are done until three groups of equal numbers are formed. These groups will work together for the rest of the workshop.

Challenge 1:

The story is about a girl. The name and age of the girl is taken from the participants. Create a story in your group focusing on the challenges faced in the different scenarios and how you would want to overcome them. The story creation is done with every person in the group adding to the story one line at a time and presented at the end to the other groups to form one full story. These are the topics:

- Group 1 – You have decided to do a three month course to study in a nearby city. Start the story with the events that happen at home before you leave
- Group 2 – You are ready to leave. Tell us about how the journey was from your village to the new city
- Group 3 – You have reached your new destination. Tell us what happens in your new world

This activity is used to help participants think about the challenges they could face and work together to question the problem and understand how they can overcome them together

Challenge 2:

The groups have to work as a group to create miniature models to solve different problems. The situations are:

- Group 1 – You are leaving the village to study for three months. You can only take 10 items with you on the trip. What are 10 items you would take with you?
- Group 2 – You are in the new location. Your child/ parent is missing you and you want to send back something for them. What can you make with beads?
- Group 3 – You are missing home. What is the one thing you would take with you everywhere you go so that a part of home is always with you? Make this out of clay



Challenge 3:

The groups now work on problem solving with a skill involved in the different scenarios keeping in mind their local culture:

- Group 1 – You need to create a hair style that looks nice, and would be protected from the rain
- Group 2 – You need to create apparel that you would use which would be suitable for running and playing sports
- Group 3 – You need to create footwear that is comfortable, will not skid and should look



well decorated

Skill: Jewellery Making

The groups were given enough material and guided on the basic technique required to make earrings. They were given the freedom of creating whatever design they liked.

Song: Chicken Dance

Closure:

The participants were asked to reflect on the following questions:

- How did you feel about the session?
- One thing you had done in the workshop that you haven't done before or have never done
- One thing you did today that you would like to continue doing in future meetings
- One thing in your life that you were reminded of while creating your story

Facilitator Observation and Feedback – Kollegal Village



Number of participants: 36

- Story creation –
 - When asked to create their own story about the girl Prakruthi, the girls connected the stories to their own lives and started telling us their own stories. We then encouraged them to think about the situation and come up with alternative solutions. Even though some of the girls were a bit hesitant to speak, everyone participated in the activity
- Prototypes
 - 10 things to take - The girls were given material. There was no hand holding. They were able to make their own decisions on the top 10 list and make prototypes
 - When creating gifts for their loved ones, the girls were unsure of what to make to till the very last minute. They then made gifts for their husbands as well
- Skill problem solving
 - Hair-do - Girls used plastic covers and foam sheets to create their hair-do and were able to voice out the reasoning for why they chose that hair style
 - Apparel – The group initially thought of a churidar with a t-shirt on top so that it would be comfortable to run with but then made a dress at the end when they heard that the apparel should look nice. Everyone was involved in the activity
- Jewellery making – the girls were very excited to see the different new material and were happy that they could take the product home to use. Some of them were even motivated to create a livelihood out of jewellery making

General Observation from Facilitators

- When we first started the camp, the girls were a bit shy and confused. It took them a while to get in the flow to dance and participate

- They started blending in and shared their stories with the teams while narrating the story of the girl Prakruthi of their age. Groups were connecting to their own life stories and thought about how they would like to lead their life as an individual and make decisions for themselves
- While being involved in the activities, the girls told us that many of them got married at the age of 13 or 14. They said that it was difficult to handle things at home because they were not allowed to leave the house on their own. Some of them are widows and some of them have been divorced. Our facilitators were able to empathize with them through this
- Their energy level was high to learn new things even though their babies were disturbing them
- Few girls said that it was the first time that they are playing and dancing and its makes us feel happy and if we keep conducting such activities, they would be happy to attend sessions and learn new things
- I observed that the girls have lots of dreams in their life. They just need the right support and motivation to succeed

Facilitator Observation and Feedback – Kollegal Tribal Village



Number of participants: 22

- Games and Songs
 - As this was our first time meeting the girls, we weren't sure if they would enthusiastically participate in the presence of our male facilitators so the first few activities were conducted only with of female facilitators. They slowly opened up as the session flow continued
- Story creation –
 - The EMG's said that they would explain the importance of studying further to their parents, along with how their future will change when they can earn more and save money for their children. They also said that their status level would increase
 - One girl stated that their parents strongly believe in the fact that if girls go out to work or study, it is not safe for them. Also, they would be misled by the city girls, and hence they would refuse to send them alone. We then said that our own team has come far away from the city to conduct the workshop at their place. I advised them that people should not be judged by their appearances
 - One girl said that she put herself in Anusha's shoes (The character that was created in the story), their parents would not be willing to send them out of the house and setting up a new world would be unimaginable
- Prototypes
 - 10 things to take - While discussing the important things to carry one member said wanted to carry her baby along with her. The point was turned down as the group members said that if the baby is carried along with them they could not focus in their studies and simultaneously there would be problems in taking care of them

- Skill problem solving
 - Footwear – The girls were not able to focus on the activity as their children were crying and needed to be taken care of. In the last 10 minutes, they were finally able to create a small shoe for their child
 - Apparel – Initially, they were a little hesitant as they did not know how to stitch but later got motivated to do the activity once they saw the other groups being involved
- Jewellery making – As we started almost an hour late, keeping to the schedule was difficult. The girls enjoyed creating jewellery but was not able to complete the task so they took the materials home with them to complete later
- End Action Song – The girls were finally getting the hang of the workshop and were involving themselves but they took a step back for the action song possibly because their were male facilitators around and they got shy again

General Observation from Facilitators

- EMG were unable to express themselves initially due to various social and personal barriers. Later as we tried to make them feel comfortable, they started participating in the activities
- It was observed that by the end of the workshop session that these women were very active, happy, willing to consider new ideas and open to new objectives. Thus similar trainings and workshops conducted regularly can help in upraising women's status in these diverse ecological areas and social groups in the long run
- Women in a tribal society play a vital role in their social, cultural and economic ways of life and their society. But they are still lagging far behind in the different walks of life like education, employment, good health and economic empowerment. Though they are diligent and hardworking they have limited control over resources and economic activities. Therefore, there is a need for empowerment of these women in order to overcome inequality, discrimination and exploitation and to achieve an all-round development in the society
- There was a definite need for a facilitator to take care of the girls' children as this gave the girls the opportunity to involve themselves in the workshop without worrying about the children

Way forward

Headstreams and TdH-NL to work together and understand how we can create a platform for early married girls to internalise their ability, creativity and to express their emotions to others. A suggestion brought out in the combined meeting after the workshop was for their facilitators to come to Bangalore to get trained and they will in turn train specific interested EMGs on so that the program becomes sustainable even if the current TdH-NL facilitators leave.