



Underprivileged kids at the Parikrma Humanity Foundation

With an aim to unleash the potential of children, thought to be 'undeserving', Parikrma Humanity Foundation has been instrumental in touching thousands of lives from economically weaker sections over the past 15 years. Working with the premise that quality education is important for each child, this NGO began as a roof-top school in Rajendranagar in the city in 2003.

"We began with the support of eleven staff members who had the innate drive to inspire the initial 165 students who hailed from slums surrounding the institution. We had learnt right from the beginning that giving each student the right opportunity and exposure as to what their counterparts from financially well-off homes would bring them on par or even at higher levels in terms of being achievers in life," remembers Shukla Bose, Founder-CEO of Parikrma Humanity Foundation.

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At Parikrma, children are supported from the age 5 to 25, till they are capable enough to find a good job to support and further empower their family and their respective communities.

Fondly called Shukla akka by children, she elaborated on why she gave up on her very successful corporate career, which spanned across 26 years, to chase a life striving towards social welfare. Bose credits the motivation to Nobel laureate Mother Teresa with whom she volunteered for almost a decade in the early 70s.

“Working with her had helped me realise what people needed at the grassroot levels. Even while pursuing a privileged career as a CEO of a multinational company (for eleven years), the very consciousness that a huge divide persists between people who have access to all opportunities and a very large share of others that are deprived of even dreaming of the basics that the former had kept pushing me from inside to do so and hence the thought of a full fledged NGO cropped up,” she said.

Ever since the right stage was set for Parikrma, there has been no looking back. With four schools in Jayanagar, Koramangala, Sahakarnagar and Nandini Layout and a junior college, the team continues their journey of transformation reaching out to more than 63,000 children over time. Their services also extend to children from four orphanages and over 71 slums located in and around the city.

‘One child at a time’ is Parikrma’s success mantra and offering individual attention to each student at all schools and institutions managed by the school seems to have become a game-changer in the education domain. “It is essential to create an environment at school that nurtures a sense of wanting in each student to come everyday. While most of them face problems of hailing from unstable families, students are motivated to come to school as they feel they are loved and there’s someone putting in hard efforts to make them feel better,” Bose told Deccan Chronicle.

Statistics from Parikrma institutions prove this right as there has been less than 1 per cent dropout across years with an average of 97% attendance per academic year, a statistic that may appear a formidable target for most government schools.

“Undoubtedly, it is our education system that needs to take blame for failing our children,” Bose asserts. She said that schools encourage children to ‘elbow out’ others to succeed in life and this has contributed to the younger generations losing out on values.

To tackle this and many other problems attached to education in the country, team Parikrma reaches out to their beneficiaries through three different innovative solutions – Education Transformation Centres (ETCs), Community Development Projects (CDPs) and ‘Parikrma Inside’.

ETCs offer teacher training modules to teachers, school administrators, volunteers and workers from other NGOs, and social entrepreneurs to foster excellence in the teaching and learning process.

“This is done to ensure that the sense of pride in teaching is resurrected by enhancing the teaching community’s self-worth. The teachers are also further equipped with the right motivation, attitude and skills to motivate children in turn to become responsible and compassionate citizens-cum- changemakers,” Bose said.

Parikrma has so far reached out to more than 200 teachers and 60 headmasters from over 120 government schools and has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT) to train teachers from 330 more government schools.

CDPs, which consist of social workers with strong grassroots experiences, get in touch with students' families and are often the first point of contact with them building a good rapport.

These workers then act as a bridge between the school and the family, constantly collaborating with teachers on solving problems stemming from the community.

More than a thousand families have successfully been part of the Adult Literacy Programme while the self-help groups formed within communities have jointly saved huge sums amounting to more than Rs 1 crore.

Skill development programmes, health checkups, counselling sessions against domestic violence, alcoholism and other health issues are also provided to empower families to be stable, which Parikrma believes, would further foster education opportunities for children.

'Parikrma Inside', their exclusive model on which all outreach initiatives are based has tasted success right from its inception in execution and this has urged the team to further spread the model across national boundaries to other countries as well.

"We are also planning to further enter the e-learning platform so as to ensure the word reaches out to many more which in turn would contribute towards setting up a better tomorrow for all with access to all possible resources in an equitable manner," Ms Bose concluded.

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