

**AINA TRUST, Bangalore – Proposal for Early Child Care Project for Rag Pickers Children in Chickballapur, Karnataka, India.**

**Chickballapur**



Aina is a Non-Governmental Voluntary Organization working since 1997 from Bangalore, India, for the welfare and rights of the most socially marginalized and deprived women and children. Aina has successfully guided communities to realize their deprived situation, and to reflect on their own potential, to become aware of welfare needs and to assert their rights. Aina also works with parents and 'caregivers' of the society. Aina's programmes have made a significant positive difference in the lives of hundreds of women, children and caregivers in the society.

It is a committed NGO, plans and executes its child development activities with the active participation and support of the community. It ensures child rights and child participation. Aina is working for the wellbeing of children, protect child rights and to serve for the best interest of the children. Aina is planning to organize rallies, street plays to create awareness on the social evils like child labor, child abuse, speaks about education is must for a girl child, opposes child marriage and talks to the community to ensure that every child should be in school etc. Aina will work with the support of the community, media and other govt. and non-govt. organizations for the well being of the children and women.



## **A back drop on the living condition of Rag pickers**

The total population of Chickballapur constitutes 2, 12,536, where 1, 03,682 are female and 1, 08,854 are male. 0-6 years' age group total population is 22,437 where 10,907 are female and 11,530 are male.

Around 100 rag picker families are living in Chickballapur. They are scattered in Nakkalkunte, Ambedkar colony, Kandhvara and Chamrajpet. Majority of the families are Muslims and other scheduled castes.

In Chickballapur, 35 families are living in Kandhvara. 19 families are living in Nakalkunte, 17 families are in Ambedkar Colony and 29 families are in Chamrajpet, where most of them are staying in nuclear families.

In Kandhvara which is an outer skirts of Chikballapur town, there are 65 families out of which 35 families are rag pickers and rests of the 30 families are painters and coolie. Here people are living in joint families and each household has 6 to 8 members. Only here the govt. of Karnataka has built small tin sheds for these poor families and provide electricity facilities. They have public water facility of twice a week and timings are irregular, each (65) family can get only 7 pots of water which is not sufficient and thus they face problem for scarcity of water. There are no hospital facilities here. There is no toilet facility and use open space to answer nature's call.

Their houses are very small and untidy since no awareness is given to organize the place, not much time spent in the house as they have to go hunting for rags and come back late in the night, very tired. Male members come back home fully drunk and only women has to take care of the children and home. Mothers have to carry small children when going to work since there is no one to take care of the children at home and no crèche facilities are available and anganwadi is situated very far off from where they are living. Many children of school going age follow their parents and only few children go to the nearby govt. school and a few go to Urdu school.





Most of the women 20 – 30 yrs age group are rag pickers and they are not trained for any other profession and they look forward someone will show interest and help them.

Their main other work is to clean the drainages or toilets. Generally they are not allowed into the household of people from the upper caste. Women are fully engaged in rag picking and only a few men are going for rag picking and other men are daily wage laborers, coolies, cleaning drainage channels, serving as cleaners in small hotels, chicken shops, etc.

Children are usually seen playing outside the house where dangerous waste things like cans, rusted tins and iron rods, used batteries, tyres, etc. are dumped which are unsafe, many a time snakes are seen crawling about and they have faced the consequences of the same.





Except Kanthavara rag pickers, all other rag pickers who were not allotted with govt. facilities are living in small shelters, which are constructed with sticks, covered with clothes, plastic covers and plastic sheets. These improper shelters have no water, toilet or electricity facilities. They are shabby and living in unhygienic surroundings which are pooled with drainage waters. In each and every home, we could find the household things are improperly arranged and untidy. This is very dangerous during rainy season, many a time their tents fall and all get injured. With all these problems they are staying but this also govt. and local people feel nuisance and want them to vacate.

Children are untidy and playing in the sand near the drainage water. Due to water scarcity and unhygienic environment, their area is filled with stagnant water where mosquito and houseflies breed and foul smell come which is not good for health. Their hair is shabby not properly combed, don't brush their teeth but stuffed with beetle leaves, days together not bathed due to shortage of water, wear unwashed dirty clothes, have untrimmed dirty nails – they are not bothered about their personal hygiene.

Women wait for the dark to go to toilet or take bath since there are no proper facilities for the same and thus have to be done in open space area and are scared of men folk who keep loitering around.

Most of the young women are unmarried but have children and live with that man and make a family.

The women rag pickers carry their children during their rag picking work and earn a sum of Rs. 80/- to Rs.100/- per day and even some days they don't get any money. They are engaged in this rag picking work only during summer season. They walk bare feet for rag picking on rough roads, drainage, trash bins till their gunny bags or plastic covers become full most of the time, don't have bus charge to come back and sell this to waste the master rag picker shop. Sometimes they get leftover food or buy food from shops; for they are so tired after walking for miles and are not able to buy things during day time. At night after reaching home they cook food with the help of fire wood in their shelters. They have no crèche facilities for their children to stay during their rag picking work.



The poor mothers shared that most of the infant mortality are happening due to the negligence of their children's health and hygiene. They have no hospital facilities and they neglect their health care. Most of the children are delivered at home, without any medical person's support or guidance. None of them have any age proof or birth certificate for record. Most of the men are drunkards and never give any money for their family, thus women has to handle their household expenses. Govt. does not support them and no NGOs have come forward to help or support them. Though many NGO volunteers, media and govt. officials often visit them, inquire their problems and assure them that they would include the rag pickers in their intervention or work for their development, but they never return back. But the govt. dept. officials say that they implemented various welfare measures for the development of these poor rag picking community.



### **Problem Statement**

The poor rag pickers' young babies are carried by their mothers during their day work. They tie their babies with sarees on their back or the children tugged on the hip of their mothers. There is no one to take care of children at home. All these miserable children spend their entire day with their mothers under hot sun. Mothers walk long distances till their gunny backs are full with picked materials. The children are untidy, have untrimmed nails, not combed properly, no oil applied on their hairs, wear dirty and unwashed clothes, and no care given for their personal hygiene. They play in sand and their body is

smearred with dust and soil. The mothers feed their children with the unwashed hands and no drinking water facility everywhere they go hence they are subject to dehydration and urinary infection. The young babies often suffer with many communicable diseases and there is no favorable health support available for them. Much infant mortality happens and no welfare measures are reaching to this rag picking community. Many children are weak, anemic without proper nutritional support and care. Many children have skin disease. While going to the destination they carry the child but when the load is full make the child walk many a time child's leg is wounded and also mother gets frustrated and hits the baby for not walking and asking to her carry. There is no a crèche facility or anganwadi program available to take care of these babies nearby. The anganwadi centers are situated far away from their place. Due to their work situation i.e. no proper systematic timings to leave their children hence they have to carry their babies with them. Children don't have play things but while picking if they come across anything they play with it and hold it as a precious thing. This also leads to their health hazard since the child is prone to put this in his mouth and thus get infected and health is upset.

#### **Need & Purpose of the Program:**

- To give care for the children who are living in an unsafe and unhealthy environment and to help them to enjoy their early childhood years with happiness and cheerfulness.
- To train these rag pickers on child care, holistic development of childhood, women empowerment, legal rights, etc. with the support of the community.

#### **General purpose of the programme**

- To help the children of deprived rag picking communities and to keep them in a safe and secure conducive environment.
- To support unfortunate young children to have all-round holistic development.
- To educate the caregivers, parents and the community on the developmental milestones of children and to ensure that the care-givers have attained qualitative skills in child care.

Children are taken to the rag picking areas along with their mothers. Children spend their days with their mothers on the dusty, polluted roadsides, drainage channels, and garbage under the hot sun light without any protective measures. They play with the waste hazardous materials collected from garbage and keep those things on their mouth. Often babies are infected and die due to the negligence of their health and nutrition. Many children are malnourished. The mothers feed their children with their dirty hands and the foods they eat have no nutritive value. No proper daily routines are followed for the children. Children do not enjoy their childhood years playing and afternoon nap but only are with their mothers from morning to late night and go to sleep after eating and the routine repeats. Even when the child is sick with the running nose and fever or loose motions etc the child has no rest but be carried by the mother when she goes out. Many a time while picking rag, dogs come chasing them and often they get bitten without any medication they move on.

Since they have no crèche facilities for their children, establishing a crèche would help the mothers to leave their children and engage themselves in their work without any stress or strain. The children have also enjoyed their early childhood years in a safe conducive environment with happiness and content. This would help them to attain their holistic development.

#### Objectives and activities for **Each Year**:

With the support of the community Aina Staff members visited the rag pickers and observed their living conditions. We interacted with the families of the rag pickers and learnt their miserable living conditions. The learning from the rag pickers were put forth to the community and took their opinions how to improve these children's future and give awareness to the mother on parenting and childcare with their support. When Aina approached the women members of the community and discussed on the how the child developmental milestones should be and these children are deprived of it and no space or opportunity to come over this. The community accepted this and said will give full support to give awareness on this field. When rag pickers shared what they are undergoing, some women who are not engaged in anything said we are willing to take care of these children hence Aina planned to train these supporters on childcare and suggest them to run small in-home care centres within their homes for the children.

#### ***Specific Objectives:***

- a) To give quality child-care for 50 selective children from the rag pickers' community.
- b) To provide healthy nutrition, health care and the right immunization for all children under care.
- c) To train the care-givers on the importance of early childhood developmental milestones and safe and secure home environment.
- d) To orient the caregivers on their commitment and job responsibilities and also help them to understand their job as a profession and cultivate a passion for their jobs as caregivers.
- e) To encourage the community to take up the responsibility assign.

#### ***Specific Activities:***

- a) The day care centre will be started with 5 children in each and appoint a women who are not occupied in work and train them in child-care and they will acquire skills in child-care, and help to start a day care centers' in their own homes, with one house mother. Regular salaries will be paid in the initial years and the women member will be engaged profitably.
- b) Aina will support the other women to form core-groups and on weekly basis there will be monitoring by this core group members. A contribution of Rs. 20/- to 30/- will be collected from the mothers who are sending the children to the child care centres and this incentives will be used for hospitality expenses during their meetings.
- c) To give quality Health care and to ensure good physical growth and development of children, the programme will cover the following; (i) To examine the health status of

children and whenever the child is noted there is a need of extra protein rich food for the child, it is seen that Aina provides the low cost rich protein food through this programme. (ii) The program includes various awareness and health camps for the community and also insists the importance of immunization schedules for the children. (iii) Based on the age group the children will be engaged in various activities with the support of the caregivers.

For the regular caregiver training program the following topics will be covered: 'Job responsibilities and specific role as a care-giver'; 'Commitments, Essentials of childcare and Schedule of Work'; 'Hygienic ways of taking care of children'; 'Feeding and Food Preparation'; 'First Aid'; 'Common Illness in Children and Prevention'; 'Nutrition and Balanced Diet for Children'; 'Play Needs of Children' & 'How would you play with children?'; 'Home care and child safety'; 'Caring for sick child'

- When the caregivers are illiterate's demonstration and Illustrations methods will be used to train with a number of activities.

### **Specific activities/Intervention**

- Many awareness, street plays, camps and training programs' have to be organized for them on health, hygiene and environmental sanitation. These programs are necessary/essential for this poor community to get rid of infant mortality, maternal mortality and communicable diseases.
- Vocational training opportunities for the young boys and girls would help the families to improve their economy and to lead their life with confidence. Because many of them, don't know other work than rag picking and it is a seasonal work.
- Formation of women self help groups would help these women folk to become self reliant and self confident. It gives economical support also.
- Counseling and rehabilitation programs have to be conducted/organized for the drunkards and drug addicts.
- Education and legal rights awareness programs are essential for women and children.
- Emphasize the govt. and NGOs to work for the welfare of these rag pickers through conventions and rallies. Proper documentation like case studies and reports are essential for lobby.

### **Implementation**

- The execution of the activities and the project of this programme is the full responsibility of Aina
- Near the areas of rag pickers 10 women members will be selected by the community and Aina will set up 10 day-care centres in their homes.
- Experts from the various fields and Aina's staff members will address on different child development topics keep a growth chart and further monitoring and supervision will be done with the support of the community.
- Though few volunteered to take up this task to look after the children in their respective houses we were not for it, after seeing condition of the houses which were very bad and any time will collapse, no toilet facilities, unhygienic, no water on whole, no basic facilities are available. Hence we have to select a house which is kept clean and basic amenities are



available and are willing to take care for a minimum salary and no rent to be paid. Aina will encourage the community to have a check and see the centre is equipped with necessary play material which is given by the programme.

- The regular meals for the children will be provided by the families as this has been discussed at the community level and has been accepted by the parents of the children. This is consciously done, so that the parents take responsibilities for their children and the project assist them to take better care of the children only.

### **Details of the number of children, number of families and the target groups the number of resources persons involved in the programme**

- This pilot programme we will target 50 children within the age group of 0-6 years from the poorest households of rag pickers' families from Nakkalkunte, Ambedkar colony, Kandhvara and Chamrajpet of Chickballapur Town.
- 10 child caregivers and their families who are from the communities, who are unable to work outside, will be selected for the Early Child Care Centres.
- For close monitoring and follow-up 2 full time staff will be appointed by Aina .
- Part-time external professionals who will be engaged as consultants coming in to train care-givers in the different phases of child care.

### **Expected Results:**

- The programme is mainly a community based programme and it will run by and for the community.
- The selected 10 community members are trained in childcare and management of the child care centers catering to the needs of the 0-6 yrs children from the poorest households.
- 50 children from the age group of 0-6 yrs from the poorest rag pickers' community are cared and helped with healthy nutritional diet, physical & mental health care every year.
- Sustainability Aspect: Over a period of time when they have achieved good skills of care, then they can continue and start similar independent child-care centers elsewhere in the town which will be paid by the beneficiary mothers of the children themselves.
- This will help mothers from carrying children from place to place which was also an additional weight for them now they can cover the places little fast and come back soon to be with the child and also carry extra rags every day. Even the child will be in a secured place and enjoy all the benefits a child should get and thus enjoy the early childhood years.
- Due to Doctors intervention and regular follow-up the children will be healthier and not be prone to the skin diseases which they used to get traveling from place to place in the hot sun.
- Children will be disciplined, and this childcare centre will become a base for the school education.

- Many awareness and training programme for the mothers and caregivers will help them to groom themselves and also help in parenting, childcare, personal hygiene, clean surrounding, child rights, women rights etc.
- The programme will motivate them to approach the govt. official and become aware of all the welfare measures implemented by the govt.
- Aina will emphasize the various govt. departments to ensure that the several welfare measures which are implemented by them should reach this impoverished rag pickers community.
- Aina will strengthen its network with NGOs and media to improve the living conditions of this rag pickers community.

***Expected short and long term impact on the target group***

***Long Term Impact:***

- The Chikballapur town community members will take care of children (0-6 years) from the most under-privileged rag picking community.
- The child-care will be managed by the women members from the respective community themselves with a nominal fee paid by the beneficiary families over a period.
- Substantial numbers of women members from the community are equipped in child care for holistic development of child-hood experiences.

***Short Term Impact / Results:***

- Training on childcare will be given for 10 women members to build confident to care for the young children with quality care.
- For 50 children 10 home-based child care centres will be set up and be provided with quality care in nutrition, health and mental development.

**i. Quantitative and qualitative indicators for measuring impact**

- a) As per the community's requirement the day-care centre is modeled and replicated.
- b) Per year 50 children (0-6 years) from the poorest households of rag pickers are provided day care.
- c) The physical / motor skills and cognitive, understanding, learning & intellectual skills of the children are far superior to the children who were not part of the day care.
- d) From the community 10 women will be trained in child care skills and equipped to manage home-based day-care centres.

**ii. Monitoring progress**

***Internal review & monitoring:***

- Internal review and monitoring will be done through monthly basis with the caregivers and staff members.
- The Project Director and Project Coordinator will make this programme run easily.
- The review process will help to ensure the implementation and the proper path of the progress of the project.

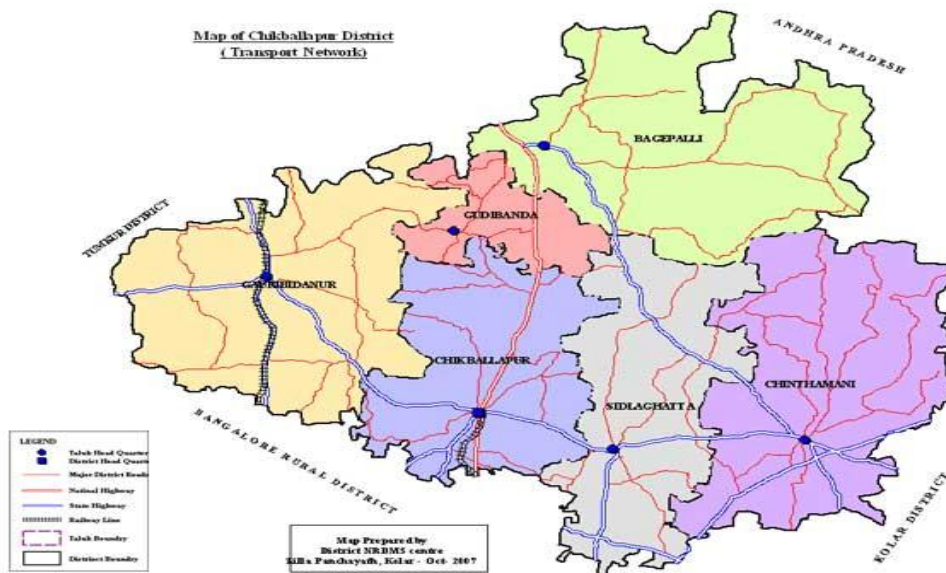
iii. Evaluation Methods we will use to determine the success of this project

- For the Interview review & monitoring, the methods will be the monthly reports from the project staff, discussion & interactions among the staff, the care-givers and the beneficiary mothers.
- The external review and evaluation, the methodology will be determined by the evaluator. However, the evaluation methods will base the project impact / result indicators. The process will be participatory involving all the project stakeholders – project staff, care-givers, beneficiary mothers / families and the communities.
- The methods will have Focus Group Discussions, Interviews and Simulated Exercises.
- In both the cases there will be proper reporting and documentation, and the same will be disseminated to the stakeholders (funders, project staff & community) for accountability and transparency.

i. Project activities will concentrate:

- The rag pickers' dwelling areas Nakkalkunte, Ambedkar colony, Kandhvara and Chamrajpet of Chickballapur district in Karnataka State of India.
- Refer the Map provided above under this section.

***Chickballapur district at a Glance:***



Chikkaballapur district is a newly created district in the state of Karnataka. It was carved out of the existing Kolar district by moving the taluks of Gowribidanur, Gudibanda, Bagepalli, Chikkaballapur, Sidlaghatta and Chintamani into the new district.

Chickballapur town is the District Headquarter of the newly created (2007 August) District of Chickballapur in the state of Karnataka and it is approximately 57 km north of Bengaluru (formerly Bangalore). The north-south National Highway NH-7 goes through the town.

***Chickballapur Town - Highlights:***

Chickballapur town is 15 kms away from Sidlaghatta town. As indicated above Chickballapur is a newly formed district and the Chickballapur town is the taluk and district head-quarter. Chickballapur is about 57 km north of Bengaluru (formerly Bangalore), the silicon plateau of India. The north-south National Highway NH-7 goes through the town, functions as the Main Street of the town, and is locally known as Bengaluru-Bellary Road or BB Road.

Chickballapur town is known for its silk production along with milk production. However, the situation is now changing with the recent movement of Bengaluru International Airport closer to Chickballapur town and the conversion of the town into district headquarter. Chickballapur is also known for having the tourist place like Nandi Hill, Sai Baba Ashram and Birth Place of Dr.Vishweshraya the architect of Mysore Dam closer to the town. There is greater movement of floating population in the town and this has brought the mushrooming of hotels, restaurants and small vendors attracting children in the name of “family enterprises”. The children especially from the minority (Muslim) and Scheduled Castes (*dalits*) communities / families become vulnerable to exploitation.

***ii. The particular strengths of our organisation to undertake this work and the special strengths of the approach we have chosen.***

Aina has eight years of experience in working with minority muslim communities targeting children and the women. The programmes on Child labour has been a great success as the community is completely involved with the programme. And the field staffs of Aina are all from the community. The child labour have been abolished and the government has taken the findings of Aina and raided the factories and relieved the young children from work, Aina as such with its eight years of intervention has rehabilitated 1260 children and has stream-lined 420 children into the main stream of education. Aina has worked with early child care program with a company for the past five years educating child care-givers and parents. Aina has brought-out booklets and training materials for parents and care-givers on child care.

Child care programme with the minority group was run successfully, for this community and children were provided with childhood experience and the burden of the mothers were lightened, they become more productive and started earning more and thus economically became little better. The community women were also trained and they taught the community how to care for their young children and the community was involved, they were made to realize the importance of childcare for every child, the importance of Family Planning.

Though Rag-picking community is a new intervention for us and we have a good experience with the child-care and know how to approach community, govt. offices and anganwadi this programme will surely be beneficial to these women and also a basic foundation for the children to go to school in future. With number of awareness programme on nutrition, cleanliness, health, hygiene, home remedies, discipline, child rights, women rights etc. They will not only be a good parent but also their life style will also change. And the child will surely have a very good and secure childhood experience.

### iii. The foreseen risks - steps taken to minimize those risks

- Since some of them are transient in case they vacate and go to some other area children enrolled in our day care centre will become drop outs.
- As this is a community based programme this will minimize the risk but still we have to be alert when a child fall sick or a child has a fall then immediate attention has to be given and not wait until their parents come. The caregiver has to be always watchful of the children under her care.
- Number of protocols has to be given to the caregivers and the parents and this will also be discussed with the community and they will regularly have a watch and follow-up the programme. Rules and regulations will be written and duly signed by the caregiver and the community. Community will be more involved and thus Aina will have fewer roles to play during any eventualities.
- The functioning of the day care centres and activities will be discussed with the local police and hospital and they will also visit these centres whenever they want to see.
- Mothers or the grand-mothers will be responsible for leaving and picking- children from the crèches thus it will be ensured that the children are in safe hands.

### iv. *Net-working:*

Under the integrated child development scheme the government is doing three hours programme for age group of 0-6 years. Aina is in contact with this office. These offices are not kept well, unhygienic, there is only one centre, it is very far off from the rag pickers tents. They tried to send the children but pick-up and dropping times were not suitable for them also the duration is for only for 3 hours and rag pickers do not have any direction or timing and no one to follow-up in their absence. Aina will give training programme for the care-giver. Here Aina will become a role model and also will give training programme to Anganwadi teachers.

There will not be any publications in the first year. Small publications of the learning will begin in the second year which will be disseminated among other NGOs & govt.