

Annual Report

2009 - 2010



Flower art by 3 to 5 year olds from the Promise Shishukendra

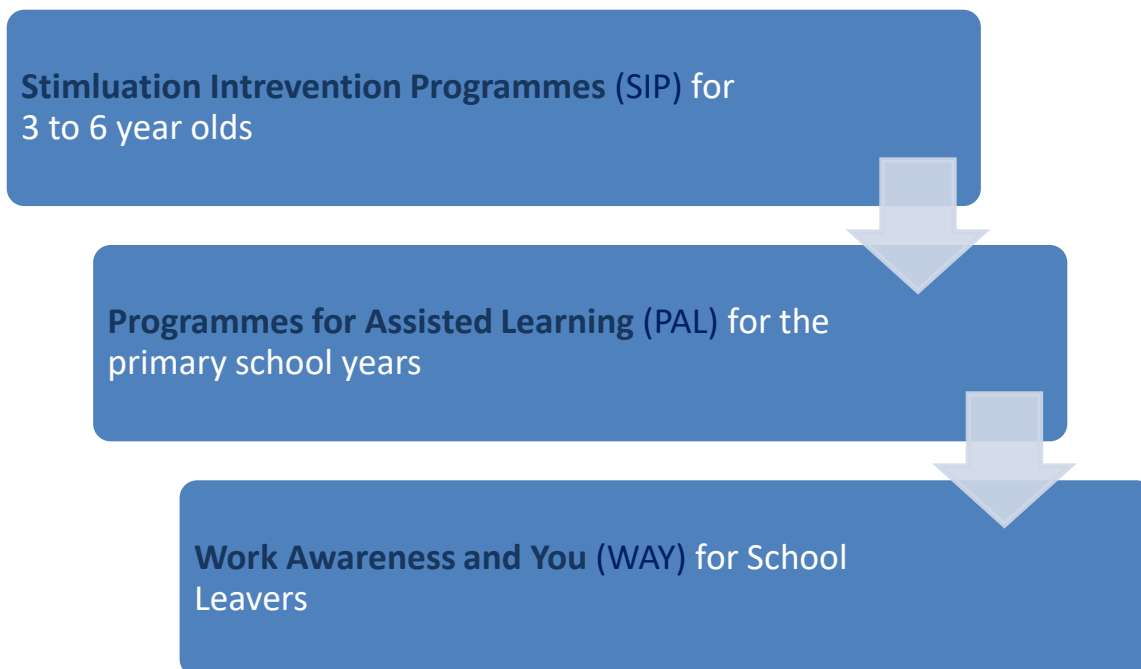
The Promise Foundation

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Introduction

Over the years The Promise Foundation has worked in the field of education, mental health and potential realisation through a series of Core projects and Extension projects. The Core projects are interventions focussed on the daily lives and struggles of children and youth in poverty. The names of the core projects with their targets are shown in the figure below.



The team that worked on these projects over the year is as follows:

Mamta Gupta, B. Kala, Robert D'souza, Laxmi Sutar, Shanthamma, Devi, Sampooramma, Shankaravva, Karuna Chandrashekhar, Ayesha Sumera, Sachin Kumar, Vijo Jose, Jayashree Vyasrajan, Shibu John, Ningappa, Ambarish Babu, Mallika Ganapathy, Sonali Nag and Gideon Arulmani.

In addition, The Promise Foundation was supported in the various projects 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 2009-2010 in our three core projects and the extension projects that have grown out of this core.

Stimulation Intervention Programmes (SIP)



Over 2009-2010 the focus of SIP was on the Promise ShiShukendra and a new early childhood education curriculum. Much of the core team's time was also spent on home visits and networking with local agencies for health, nutrition and schooling support for the families in our care. Details of the key areas of work are given below.

The Promise Shishukendra

Since the mid-1990s The Promise Foundation has been running a pre-school for the poorest children living in the neighbouring Koramangala village. The pre-school is called the Promise ShishuKendra (children's center). Over 2009-2010, the ShishuKendra continued to offer high quality early childhood care and education for 3 to 5 year old children.

Teachers Shankari and Laxmi along with team members, Karuna and Mamtha, worked on developing low cost materials that could offer a comprehensive early learning environment for the children. An example of a lesson is from the Botany month in the ShishuKendra. Take a class on the topic 'flowers'. The teachers used a local tradition of *rangoli* (floor art) to prepare hands-on activities with flowers, discuss colours and textures, weave stories of flower girls and gardens that overflow with flowers and other such language, art and physical activities.

Parents' Meetings

A corner stone of the Stimulation Intervention Programmes is to promote quality home based stimulation through parent training. In the Shishukendra this idea has been implemented through monthly parent meetings. Over the years, the teachers at the Shishukendra have developed a series of themes to cover issues of child development and how toys, stories and daily home routines can promote all round development in children. A key message in these parent meetings is that quality child care and stimulation does not need a lot of money, but does need time and preparation.

Over 2009 the parents of children in the Shishukendra attended one after-school meeting every month. Topics ranged from toy making to low cost nutrition ideas for the children. In September, the post-monsoon month when we had several children falling ill with flu and diarrhoea, we had a special parent meeting on child health by Dr. Veda Zachariah. Veda has specialised in community based medicine and she brought her considerable expertise in local medical concerns to comment on what parents can do at home to take care of children's health and diet.

The parent meetings were followed up with a series of home visits over December, 2009. One of the survey questions during these home visits was '*what has happened to the paper toys you made in the parent meetings?*' We wanted to know if parents were using these toys and whether they had begun making other low cost toys for their children to play with. We found more than 80% of the parents had given the toys to their children to play at home and in the neighbourhood. We also found that about 50% of the parents had replaced the toys with similar other toys using old newspapers and other recycled material. In one home we were left disappointed. The parents had decided to lock away all the toys as show pieces in the family room!

A graduation and a shift

Every year one batch of children graduates out of the Shishukendra to move onto the next level of schooling. Here is a glimpse of some of our ShiShukendra children who graduated this year and the places they have moved to:

- ✚ Mithun was 5 years and 5 months when he graduated from our Shishukendra. He has won a scholarship to study in an English medium school that follows the ICSE curriculum. The school is run by another NGO (*Parikrama*) which is committed to bring high quality English education to children living in poverty. Mithun's mother who works as a maid servant and father, a *coolie* (unskilled labourer) are thrilled that their child has an assured good quality school education for the next 10 years.
- ✚ Ramya is a self contained little girl. Now, at age 4 years and 5 months, she has shifted from our Shishukendra to the neighbouring MRP School. Her father who works as an unskilled labourer in a small printing press in the area walks her to school. Her mother works mornings and evenings as a maid servant in the rich homes down the road. Both parents aspire for Ramya to study and grow out of the area where they currently live.
- ✚ Rakshitha lives in a small room on the terrace of the building where The Promise Foundation has its offices. Like her friends in the Shishukendra, her mother is a maid servant. Her father works as a security man and office boy (a peon) in a neighbourhood English school. The parents have decided to send four and a half year old Rakshitha to their native place for her primary school education. We all miss little Rakshitha but this is a decision we have not been able to argue with the family about.

In June, 2010 the final batch of students will graduate from our Shishukendra in the Koramangala campus. The Koramangala Center will be closed after 12 years of operations! This is because The Promise Foundation will be shifting to a new campus in Sompura and the Promise Shishukendra will also shift to the new Campus. Surveys for the new Shishukendra will begin in December, 2010 and new classes will begin in 2011.

New Curriculum

Over this year the freshly revised and field tested early childhood curriculum became ready for classroom use. The curriculum is heavily focussed on the children's world and daily life, is full of stories, worksheet and hands-on activities. The topics range from Zoology (e.g. Insects, Land animals) and Botany (e.g. Special Trees, Types of leaves) to History (e.g. Tipu Sultan, Shivarama Karanth) and Geography (e.g. Living places - next to the river, the desert, in the mountains).

The Shishukendra's new curriculum will become available for SIP Teacher Training Programmes from July 2011. It is anticipated that the new curriculum will be of interest to NGOs and teacher training institutes that train early childhood workers for centers in villages and urban slums.

Glimpses from the Shishukendra



Tears on the first day in the Promise ShishuKendra,

interesting classes through the year



and all smiles on the last day of school!



Monthly parent meetings on health, child caring and home based stimulation



Programmes for Assisted Learning (PAL)



Over the last six years the Programmes for Assisted Learning has been on a strong research and development mode. The work in PAL has informed two large scale research projects. First was the four year longitudinal survey of more than 400 children from 18 schools in Chamarajanagara district. The second was the British Academy funded study to review the profiles of poor readers in Kannada, the local language. The findings from both these studies were used over 2009 to further fine-tune the core programmes of both SIP and PAL. In PAL particularly, the research findings have been incorporated in the daily lesson plans and the areas of focus in the interventions.

PAL in Government Primary Schools

Every year The Promise Foundation receives fresh permission from the office of the Director of Public Instruction (DDPI) to offer PAL for children in Bangalore's government sponsored primary schools. Over 2009-2010, we chose to continue PAL in the Bangalore rural district, in schools that had shown interest and support for the programme. Given below is the Case Study of PAL in the Dommasandra Government Primary School.

The Dommasandra Government School is a mid-sized school in the seemingly chaotic, yet economically thriving community of Dommasandra. Surrounded by mushrooming private schools that offer affordable English education, the school mainly enrolls children whose parents have very low income. Historically, Dommasandra has been a trilingual place with Kannada, Telugu and Urdu speaking families living together. The Dommasandra School, though a Kannada medium school, has majority of its children with either Telugu or Urdu as their home language. The focus of PAL in this school is to support children's reading and writing in Kannada, the school language. But, we have a strong focus on the vocabulary and use of Kannada for daily communication because a disproportionately large number of underperforming children in the school have a home language that is not Kannada. PAL builds on the Kannada spoken language base to develop Kannada literacy.

In the year 2009-2010 we called the PAL intervention in Dommasandra School '*Chili Pili*'. A total of 35 children aged 8 – 9 years and studying in Grade 3 were enrolled in Chili Pili. A comprehensive screening programme allowed us to identify the areas of difficulty and strengths for each child. Based on these individual profiles we divided the children into 3 groups. Fifteen children were poor in Kannada spoken language as well as basic reading skills and were grouped together in a group called *Surya* (sun). The middle group with nearly grade level spoken language proficiency in Kannada and just below class levels in reading were called *Chandra* (moon). There were 7 Chandra children. The highest achieving children but with low scores on reading comprehension tests were in a group named *Nakshatra* (stars). There were 13 Nakshatra children.

Laxmi, our PAL teacher, with the behind the scenes help of Kala, Shankari and Karuna, conducted 37 sessions between July 2009 and March 2010. This was far short of our target for 60 classes, but we were constrained by school holidays and days when classes were called off for other school events. [It is because of these issues of PAL classes being cancelled often that we are considering a more modular PAL intervention for the year 2010. We now think it may best to plan intensive interventions in short bursts around school months that are least disrupted by external events.]

A brief profile of Laxmi, our SIP-PAL teacher.

Laxmi has been with The Promise Foundation for more than 12 years. She first came to the Foundation as an intern when she was training to be a pre-school teacher. Soon after the course she became a teacher in the Promise Shishukendra.



Laxmi Sutar

The history of SIP and PAL is closely associated with Laxmi's changing work roles in the Foundation. Beginning with a routine programme, Laxmi went on to try many innovations at the Shishukendra. These innovations informed our SIP Training programmes and our extension programmes with IBM International Foundation's early childhood work in India, the International Labour Organisation's work in the Southern Indian State of Andhra Pradesh and the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) in Early Childhood Education, to name a few.

Since the year 2000 Laxmi has been the main teacher for the PAL classes held in government schools. Laxmi has trial tested several programmes for children with difficulties in reading. Her latest work is to develop child authored books for the class libraries, which she calls '*Gammaththina Pettari*' – the box of fun!

More than a teacher, Laxmi is an artist. She has been an illustrator for most of the Promise publications. Over 2009 – 2010 she forged a very creative partnership with another primary school teacher-artist, Evangeline Sukumar, to illustrate a Handbook on Early Learning. The paper collages below are samples of Laxmi's art.



Glimpses from a PAL class



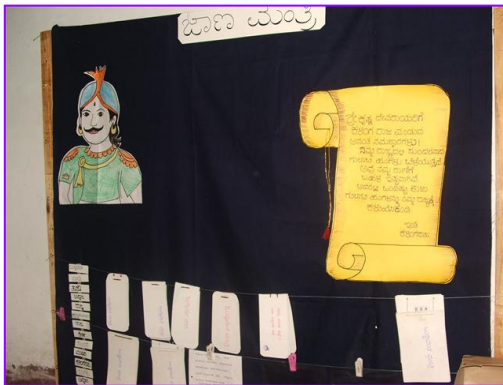
The Nakshatra children,

the Surya children in the far corner...

... and the Chandra children closest to the camera.



The Read Me Wall and *Gammaththina Pettari* (the Fun Box of books)



The box has many child authored books as well as books published by the teachers.
The Wall carries texts and discussion points from the day's PAL lesson

Work Awareness and You (WAY) and the Jiva Project



The Jiva project is a three year project that has extended The Promise Foundation's WAY to a wider audience of Indian youth across the country. It is expected that by the end of the Jiva project in October, 2010, we will have a completely new intervention for school leavers who are living in poverty and are unclear of what they can do next. The Jiva team worked closely with the WAY team over 2009-2010 on two important areas: developed the complete Jiva Kit in Kannada for the WAY programme and developed a comprehensive teacher training programme for schools and NGOs that traditionally cater to the WAY target group. Details of these two WAY-Jiva areas are given below.

New Jiva Kit in Kannada

The Jiva Kit comprises several career counselling resources including the following:

- teacher resources such as flip charts of daily activities
- student worksheets
- careers dictionaries
- software to search for courses and programmes and
- a bag of careers information meant to stimulate interest in a variety of career options.

This kit was first developed in English, and was launched in a National Seminar in February, 2009. In the picture below are the high school children who symbolically released the Jiva Kit. Also seen in the picture, from the right, are Padmashree¹ Dr. Sudarshan, the chief guest of the function; Dr. Glenn Khorkhongar, Vice Chancellor of Martin Luther Christian University which recognises the Jiva Certificate Course in Basic Skills for Career Counselling; Dr. Gideon Arulmani, who lead the Jiva project and Ms. Constanze Lulles from the Jacob's Foundation, that made the Jiva project possible with a generous grant.



¹ The Padmashree is one of India's highest civilian awards given by the President of India to persons of eminence in their field.

Over 2009-2010 the WAY-Jiva team reached a total of 459 students from 6 schools around North and South Bangalore. Among these schools was the Agara School, a WAY school since 2002. The Kannada Jiva Kit was field tested in this school. Given below is a case study of the Agara School.

Career Resource Center in Agara Government High School

The Agara School is one of the more successful government sponsored High schools in the Bangalore South area. Catering to about five feeder primary schools, the class sizes in Agara School are large – between 50 and 60 students to a class. Most students in Agara School come from low income families or families with financial crisis because of the unsteady job market. Approximately 20% of the children show severe academic underperformance and there is a real possibility that this group of children will fail in the school leaving exam and enter the job market completely unskilled. In addition, more than 50% of the students leaving school do not have any major family savings, and if they make an unstrategic choice for the next stage of education, may well be left without employable skills. The Agara School is therefore a place desperately in need of quality career counselling services.

In 2008, the school agreed to become a Model Career Resource Center where the Promise team would train staff and introduce a career counselling service within the mainstream school calendar. It was anticipated that the career counselling service would then be showcased to the government with potential for being taken to other similar schools.

In 2009, a total of 231 students in 5 sections in Grade 10 participated in the programme. Sessions were held on a weekly timetable developed in consultation with the school. Nagesh, supported by Mohan, Vijo and Jayashree, led the programme in the school.

The class-wise sessions at Agara School doubled up as demonstration and training sessions for interested school teachers who wanted to be skilled in career counselling. In a typical round of a Career Counselling class, Nagesh, the Promise team member, would run the session with the first section of Grade 10. He would demonstrate the use of the flip charts and the student worksheets and discussion points. The same session was then conducted with sections 2 and 3 by participating teachers, with Nagesh available to fill in gaps and support the discussions. The final sections would be jointly completed by the teacher-Promise team.

A review of the Agara Career Resource Center in March, 2010 showed mixed results. The school showed clear commitment to run the programme in 2010-2011 by planning an annual timetable, a calendar of events for Careers Day and parent sessions and allotting teachers for career counselling duties. This is a big achievement but nearly not enough. This is because we found the school struggling with finding the budgets to print workbooks and student materials to run the classes. They needed to find a sponsor and Promise is waiting in the wings to see if this remarkable school can continue the work begun in the Career Resource Center.

Basic Skills in Career Counsellor training

The Promise Foundation won the opportunity to train government school teachers to set up Career Counselling services in their schools. The WAY-Jiva team members ran this programme. Participating teachers received a Kannada Jiva Kit and training to run small group sessions. From this one training programme alone the potential reach of WAY-Jiva will be close to 5000 students.

Glimpses from WAY-Jiva Programmes

The Programme in different government and NGO run schools for children from low income families



A typical session



And our training courses and the certificate ceremony for basic skills in career counselling



The Basic Skills Course has small group discussions, demonstrations and practical sessions.
All batches of trainees receive a University Recognised Certificate.

Programmes for TPF Staff



Over 2009-2010 The Promise Foundation invested in staff training as part of an ongoing commitment to nurture staff talent and increase individual skills and knowledge. One priority for investment was in the technical area of publishing and websites. These areas were prioritised for the year because of our renewed commitment to disseminate work done in the Foundation to other NGOs and individuals at a low cost and in an attractive manner. Teams, led by Kala and Jayashree, attended the following courses and workshops:

- ✚ Training in Desk Top Publishing (coral draw and photo shop). This programme was to help individual staff enhance their capacity for in-house publications.
- ✚ Training in Web Designing and Web Hosting. This programme was to help individual staff enhance skills for designing and maintaining TPF's websites.

Staff also attended workshops for developing core skills for their jobs on the Foundations different projects. Details are as follows:

- ✚ Training on early childhood care and education held in New Delhi by the National Institute for Public Cooperation and Child Development. This course was attended by Karuna.
- ✚ Training in Story Telling for young children held in Bangalore by the NGO, Sutradhaar. This programme was for the teachers of the Promise ShiShuKendra

All staff are required to write a report to share with the rest their experience in the in-service Training. Below is an excerpt from one such experiential report.

Session on Story Telling

26.06.09

We started by meditation through a small activity: Vishakha asked us to sit comfortably and close our eyes and to listen to her. Then she started telling "think you're a seed,... a small seed, smaller than smaller, small... seed. Think no one is watching you, express yourself in any way - by face expression or by body expression, anything. ' After some time she said 'now think you are tall, very tall, too tall, taller, big, too big, broader' It continued for 10 min then she asked us to open our eyes. When we opened, we saw some of the others were standing. They had grown tall to be big trees! We could see this activity working for our children!

Kala and Laxmi

Extension Programmes



The Promise Foundation extended the reach of SIP-PAL-WAY through Training programmes, Presentations and Publications. Given below is a summary of the work done over 2009-2010.

Training Programmes

Core Project	Training Course	Dates	A note about the participants	Course Sponsor
WAY	Basic Skills in Career Counselling	26 th -March-5 th April, 2009	Teachers from Hyderabad based schools identified by CfBT, India. All schools are affordable English medium schools for low income families. The potential reach of the programme: approx. 2500 school leavers.	City and Guilds, UK
		15-25 th June, 2009	Youth workers from Samvada (Urban and peri urban Bangalore), Matanga Parivar (Maddur), Vidyaposhak (Dharwad), Centre for Social Education (Kerala); Vivekanada Girijan Kalyan Kendra, B R Hills and Mahila Samakhya (Bijapur, Gulbarga, Koppal, Mysore) The potential reach of the programme: approx. 10,000 school leavers.	Jacob's Foundation
		5 th - 14 th August, 2009	College lecturers, students and educational administrators from North Eastern states. The potential reach of the programme: approx. 500 school leavers.	Martin Luther Christian Univ.
		29 th Dec, 2009 – 5 th January 2010	Government High School teachers and principals from Bangalore (South district). The potential reach of the programme: approx. 5000 school leavers.	Jacob's Foundation
SIP-PAL	Early Learning Programmes	3 modules over 9 months	School Teachers from Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Delhi and Bangalore. The potential reach of the programme: approx. 7500 pre- and primary school children in angwanwadis, rural schools and schools in urban slum areas.	IBM International Foundation.

Publications

Core Project	Publication	Brief Description	Potential reach of the publication	Publication sponsor
SIP-PAL	The Handbook for Teachers on Early Learning	This handbook consolidates TPF's work on the IBM KidSmart Programme since 2002. It gives a summary of the Model and ideas from SIP-PAL. The Handbook will be available in English, Hindi and Tamil. The audience for this publication is teachers, pre-school workers, teacher trainers and supervisory staff in the government education sector and in NGOs.	1,00,000 and more	IBM International Foundation
WAY	The Jiva Kit	This is a collection of career counselling material developed for the Indian context. The Kit has been prepared keeping cultural requirements in mind. It is now available to the whole country.	To date, the Kit has reached 146 individuals trained by TPF. This adds up to approximately 16,000 children.	Jacobs Foundation.
WAY	Special Issue of the International Journal of Educational and Vocational Guidance (IJEVG)	A special issue of the IJEVG has been dedicated to cover the proceedings of the IAEVG-Jiva Conference which is based on the Jiva Concept.	25,000 readers	Jacobs Foundation
WAY	A handbook of career counselling	TPF has been commissioned by Routledge (one of the biggest publishing houses for social science), to develop a handbook based on the WAY-Jiva Concept.	This is an international publication and the readership could be very wide.	Jacobs Foundation

Core Project	Publication	Brief Description	Potential reach of the publication	Publication sponsor
WAY	Career Counselling in the Indian context	TPF has been commissioned by Sage (a highly respected publishing house for psychology), to write a book on the outcomes of the WAY programme.	This is an Indian publication and readership would include all Indian universities.	TPF
WAY	Asian Journal of Counselling, 16 (2), 149-170	The internationalisation of career counselling: Bridging cultural processes and labour market demands in India	This is one of leading journals in counselling for the Asian context	TPF
WAY	Australian Journal of Career Development, 19 (1), 7-12	Career counselling: A mechanism to address the accumulation of disadvantage	This is one of leading journals in career counselling dealing with multiculturalism	TPF
WAY	Career counselling: Methods that work, Juta Academic, South Africa	Enough for my mealie-meal: The cultural preparedness approach to the delivery of careers services.	This was a chapter in a book called Career Counselling: Methods that work, published by Juta Academic, South Africa	TPF

The New Campus



Work has started in earnest for the new TPF campus. The Campus has been designed by TPF Trustee and Board Member, Sherin Balachandran and will be built by Pradeep and his company, Universal Engineers.

Some key features of the new campus are:

- ✚ A ShishuKendra in the basement with child friendly access (a slippery slide!)
- ✚ Workstations for a team of up to 16 members
- ✚ Individual office rooms for up to 4 team members
- ✚ Reception space and provision for up to 2 rooms for individual sessions
- ✚ a Youth Development center
- ✚ a library and a training hall

We also have plans for 2 guest rooms for short stay volunteers, visitors and visiting faculty.

All attempts are being made to make the structures Green and Environment Friendly. The bricks for the building are stabilized mud blocks, made with mud from the site and sun dried. The picture below shows The Promise Foundation Board Members holding one of these (heavy!) bricks: from right to left are Mrs. Sujatha Kaul, Col. Raghavan, Mr. R. K. Chari and Dr. Gideon Arulmani.



The pictures below give the advancing of the construction till March, 2010.



These pictures show the excavation, the column structure and the laying of the roof for the basement floor.

Financials



Overview

The Promise Foundation worked on multiple projects over 2009-2010. For all of these projects, the Foundation was supported by Grants and Donations from institutions, individuals and friends of the Foundation. The table below gives details.

Project Costs and Source of Funds: Year 2009-10

Project	In Indian Rupees	Project Status
TPF Direct Programmes: SIP, PAL and WAY	<i>Cost of the Project:</i> Rs. 885,375 <i>Source of Funds:</i> F-TPF	Ongoing, will continue as core to all projects.
Jiva: A Career Counselling and Livelihood Planning Project: an extension project of WAY	<i>Cost of the Project:</i> Rs. 1,071,000 <i>Source of Funds:</i> Jacobs Foundation	A three year project ending in October, 2010.
Jiva programmes and the Jiva-IEAVG International Conference on Guidance and Counselling: an extension project of WAY	<i>Cost of the Project:</i> Rs. 857,475 <i>Source of Funds:</i> Jacobs Foundation, City and Guilds Center for Skills Development	The International event will be held in October, 2010.
TPF Training Programme: The IBM KidSmart Programme: Early Learning Centers. an extension project of SIP-PAL	<i>Cost of Project:</i> Rs. 12,92,445 <i>Source of Funds:</i> IBM International Foundation.	Will be completed in December, 2010. The project focussed on four states, two each in North and South India.
Local Careers programmes through counselling and teacher training: an extension project of WAY	<i>Cost of Project:</i> Rs. 358,425 <i>Source of Funds:</i> Multiple NGOs and Schools .	Training and programmes completed by March, 2010.

Concluding comments



The year 2009-2010 was a year of preparation for two big events that are coming up in the next year: a) The Promise Foundation joins the league of world class universities and professional networks to host an International Conference on Guidance and Counselling and b) we are building our own campus. We turn in anticipation to the year 2010-2011 for these reasons and because of the promise of new partnerships and friendships!

Sonali Nag and Gideon Arulmani

1st Nov., 2010.