

# Headstreams

Annual Report 2014-15



*“towards fullness of life....”* - 2014-15 saw the Headstreams journey enter its seventh year. For Headstreams it has been a time filled with introspection, transitions and refreshing new beginnings organically evolving out of all the learnings and outcomes of the previous years. The narrative will recount the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the journey for the Aalamba programme, the Tackle programme and everything else that's new on the block.

## *Aalamba - time to transition*

Our initiative with women from low-income backgrounds through Self-Help Groups (SHG) moved from the hand-holding stage to facilitation for SHGs to function independently. This meant that each SHG were prepared to function independently in every sense of the word, with either minimal or no facilitation from Headstreams. Since the organisation has been working with the empowerment agenda, the year was ideal to facilitate this process through a series of trainings. The Training for Transformation held in the previous year, was followed by the Leadership Training held over a period of two days in May 2014.

The Leadership Training was one of its kind for the SHGs. It was for the very first time that women from the SHGs (two representatives and two other members from each group) participated in the training that included an overnight stay at the training venue. Despite the fact the women were from a metropolis like Bengaluru, many of them had to fight against several odds - queries from neighbours, challenge of convincing their husbands, battling remarks from in-laws and so on to ultimately make it to the training. The fact that they were able to come was a huge leap forward towards the fullness that they were looking for in their own lives and they were only too glad to have found an opportunity to live it. As they themselves said :

*“The night stay was a very good idea. When the announcement was made, we were really wondering, what kind of training is this and what is it that they are going to train us on, that we have to stay overnight. But only when we came there we realised the value of it. As **women it has given us the confidence that we too are capable to coming out and doing things on our own.**”*

- Participant from Doopanhalli

*“For the first time we were able to break the barrier of fear in our minds. As women we are very afraid. But after this overnight training, **we have gained the confidence to step out and now we know that we can come out and do things on our own without having to depend on men for everything.**”*

- Participant from Udaynagar

*It was wonderful to come together with women from so many groups. When I looked at the women and the plans that they presented and experiences that they shared I realised that women have indeed become bold and courageous.*

- Participant from K.R.Puram

*We learned how a group needs to function. I also understood that it is so important to be open and frank so that we can learn to sort out issues, understand each other. **There were women from so many age groups and even women who were older were so eager to come forward and learn.** Somewhere I felt that **women have understood that they have a life of their own beyond their husband and children.***

– Participant from A.Narayanpura

***It was like a wedding atmosphere.** It seemed as if all the women who came there were able to **focus on themselves for the first time in their lives rather than thinking of others.***

- Participant from Kodihalli

The Leadership Training was followed by a gradual and progressive withdrawal of Headstreams involvement in the functioning of the SHGs. The Headstreams team started attending one SHG meeting per month (instead of two) while closely following-up with how the SHGs fared by themselves in the second meeting. By the end of the financial year the organisation geared itself up for a transition that would soon see complete withdrawal of the organisation's involvement across SHGs.

### ***Social Security - the women take the lead***

Over the last few years Headstreams had enabled women to access the National Pension Scheme (NPS-Lite) and seats under the Right to Education (RTE). This year saw the women take the lead in informing others in their community, assisting them with the entire process of applying under the RTE and hand-holding other community members throughout the admission process. The word on the NPS-Lite also spread to several others in the community and added to the enrolment numbers for the year.

### ***Our trainings - transition from livelihood to life skills***

Headstreams intervention with women from low-income areas in Bengaluru city saw a transformation over the last one year. The organisation introduced various trainings aimed at transformation that would enable women to become change makers in the community. The trainings culminated with the leadership training where each Self-Help Group that Headstreams has been working with thus far came up with their annual plans, which basically were initiatives the women wanted to take up to bring about small but significant changes in the community. Moreover Headstreams work on the issue of livelihoods led to a few significant learnings. The first among these was the need for more specific trainings that would not just boost livelihoods but the confidence of the women. One need that was constantly expressed by the women was for training in Spoken English and Computers.

Headstreams sought to understand the relevance of the need and took the questions back to the community through the SHGs. Many of the women said that lack of basic knowledge of English and computers led to road blocks in different ways, some of them being:

*In the job sector:* Women working in the retail sector, house-keeping department, those working as peons in various offices said that knowledge of English and Computers placed them at an

advantageous position for promotions.

Women working as domestic helps mentioned that in a cosmopolitan city like Bengaluru, being able to communicate in English enabled them to secure jobs in homes that had people from other states, since they preferred to hire those with whom they were able to communicate with, over those who knew only the regional languages.

*At the home front:* Women shared that being able to understand and communicate in English enabled them to communicate to the teachers in schools and also help their children with their studies at least at the foundation stages since several of them were admitted in English medium schools.

The needs-analysis enabled Headstreams to take into account the logistics of running a course in the community. After elaborate consultations with the women, the Foundation Course was designed for a period of three months, thrice a week, an hour a day (which was later extended by another half-an-hour).

The Course was conducted in two rounds, the first being from July to October 2014 and the second from January to March 2015. The Course dissemination included use of various creative methods such as puppet shows, role-plays, puzzles, games, study tour, etc. Though the course was meant to be more of a training, over the period of the course, it transitioned into a space where the women got an opportunity to be themselves, found value in who they were (beyond the role of a wife, a mother, a sister), found fellowship with co-learners and drew strength and inspiration from each other through complimenting each other through the journey.

*“This has been an opportunity of a lifetime for each one of us who are a part of this course. I always wished that I could study, learn English and take my education forward. But in a society like ours I really did not think that was possible. But when this opportunity came my way I could not believe that my dream was coming true. I was a very different person when I came for this course and I am a very different person now. My family has noticed that change and they are surprised that I am able to read, write and understand so well. I know how to use the internet and my children are so proud of me.”*

– Foundation Course Participant

### ***Tackle - Another step ahead***

Tackle, the children’s initiative of Headstreams which focussed on positive mental health and creative learning added the School-Partnership Programme and the Resource Centre to its menu. While the Summer Camps and the Creative Learning Fest, saw a remarkable increase in the number of participants from all quarters (children, volunteers and so on), the Caravan took wheels to a new location at Kodihalli Government School. Tackle also piloted the School-Partnership Programme at A. Narayanpura Government School focussing on life skills and digital literacy for the eight standard students. Headstreams continued the Certificate Course in Development journalism and Volunteering for under-graduate students in association with the English Department of St. Joseph’s Autonomous College.

The Community Learning and Resource Centre at A. Narayanpura hosted the Child Resource Centre opened thrice a week for all the children in the community. The highlights of this child friendly space were a Children’s Library, interactive sessions in the audio-visual corner and Story-telling & Toy-making at the activity corner. The program aimed at providing children in the locality hailing from low income areas a safe, non-judgmental space where they could explore, experience and

express themselves creatively.

### ***The rural scenario - in roads into Bengaluru rural***

Headstreams has continued its work with self help groups in Bagalkot district through strengthening of youth and women's Self Help Groups (SHGs). Headstreams team members participated in the SHG activities once a month to provide supportive mentoring and necessary training.

A new rural development programme has been initiated in Malur taluk of Kolar district. Detailed needs assessments visits covering one-third of all the Gram panchayats in Malur was conducted, and discussions were held with several key informants including the Tehshildar, Executive Officer of the Zilla Panchayat, Block Education Officer, Taluk Health Officer, Panchayat Development Officers, School teachers, School Development and Monitoring Committee members and elected panchayat members. Since youth development is one of the key focus areas of Headstreams, 29 undergraduate students from Malur were short-listed for a one-year internship programme. A couple of orientation sessions were conducted for the second year and final year degree students of the college in March 2015.

## **ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS**

### ***Organisational development***

Headstreams had a series of meetings with Dr. Vandana Nadig Nair, Director of Phicus Social Solutions to explore the consolidation of the Headstreams's work and to plan for scaling of its initiatives to maximise social impact.

### **Executive committee meetings and Annual General Body Meeting**

The Executive committee meeting of Headstreams was conducted on June 03, 2014 and March 21, 2015 to discuss the matters of the organisation and to take stock of its work. The sixth Annual General Body Meeting of Headstreams was held on August 17, 2014.

**CONSOLIDATED DATA FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2014-2015**

**AALAMBA**

Table 1

<b>SELF-HELP GROUPS DETAILS</b>	
Total No. of SHGs	21
Total No. of SHG members	372
SHG Savings	Rs. 5,26,555
Interests from SHG loans	Rs. 1,21,066
SHGs own funds - loans distributed	Rs. 7,95,500
RD savings by SHG members	Rs. 1,26,450

Table 2

<b>SOCIAL SECURITY DETAILS</b>	
<b>NPS</b>	
New enrolments	32
<b>RTE</b>	
Seats secured	16

Table 3

<b>TRAINING CALENDAR</b>		
<b>Training</b>	<b>No. of Sessions</b>	<b>No. of Participants</b>
Leadership Training	Residential training – one and a half days	Members: 64 Children: 33
Training for Representatives	Half a day	51
RTE orientation	One hour each	55
Livelihood orientation for youth	Half a day	15
Livelihood orientation for women	Half a day	22

# TACKLE

Table 1

## Tackle Fest 2014-15 held on 29<sup>th</sup> November'14

Name of institution	No. of participants
Garudacharpalaya Government School	111 – children 3 – teachers
A.Naryanapura Government School	51 – children 1 – teachers
Jeevan Bhimanagar Government School	111 – children 3 – teachers
St. Joseph's Arts & Science college	160 student volunteers 45 resource persons
Mphasis	18
TCS	26
Headstreams	8
Visitors	8

*Over 270 children got an exposure to learning's in different streams in higher education and also first time exposure to a college.*

## Tackle Summer Camp 2014-15\_April & May'14

Volunteers enrolled	20
No. of camps	2
Student enrollment - Jeevan Bhimanagar April 21 <sup>st</sup> to April 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	132
Student enrollment - A.Narayanapura May 6 <sup>th</sup> to May 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	103

*Over 235 children were provided with creative tools and skills for learning*

## Tackle Resource centre 2014-15\_July to December 2014

No. of students enrolled	119
Total no. of months	6
Total no. of sessions	56

### **Tackle Caravan 2014-15\_July to February 2015**

Total no. of caravans	3
Caravan Locations	A.Narayanapura, Nellurpuram, Kodihalli
Total No. of students enrolled	1496
No. of students enrolled in Nellurpuram	514
No. of students enrolled in A.Narayanapura	516
No. of students enrolled in Kodihalli	466
Total no. of student volunteers enrolled	145
Total no. of college's participated	11
Total no of caravan weekend sessions	27
Total no. of caravan orientations	4

- Six month long youth engagement program in community development
- Certificate course for youth in development journalism and volunteering
- First time weekend creative exposure and psycho-social sessions with youth and children

### **Tackle School Partnership Program 2014-15\_July to December 2015**

No. of Schools	1 – A.Narayanapura
Total No. of children	55
Total No. of sessions	12