



# GETTING OUT OF THE DEVADASI SYSTEM

April 2019 - March 2022





# WHAT IS CHILDREN GOOD?

## Children Empowerment for Getting Out of The Devadasi System

**“Every child deserves a dignified life.”**

The Devadasi System in lower caste communities is an institutional exploitation of girls and young women, which gives a religious sanction to their prostitution.

Post puberty, girls are dedicated as Devadasis and sex work becomes their role in society. They face abuse, sexual exploitation and discrimination. Children of Devadasis who are not part of the system are also vulnerable to different forms of violence and exploitation.

Our project aims to protect and empower children of Devadasis through **education, imparting life skills, vocational training, child participation and community sensitisation.**

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

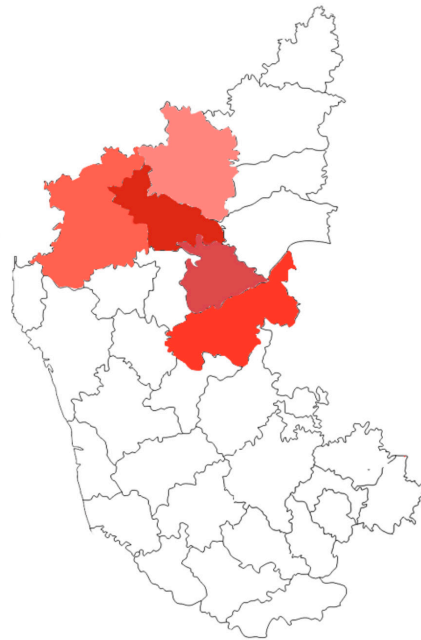
The Devadasi system began as a form of worship through art, but with time, exploitation seeped in and lower caste families became its victims.





# WHERE DOES CHILDREN GOOD WORK?

The project works in **5 districts** of North Karnataka, India where the Devadasi system is prevalent.



- Belagavi
- Bagalkote
- Vijayapura
- Ballari
- Koppal



reaching out to **81 villages**

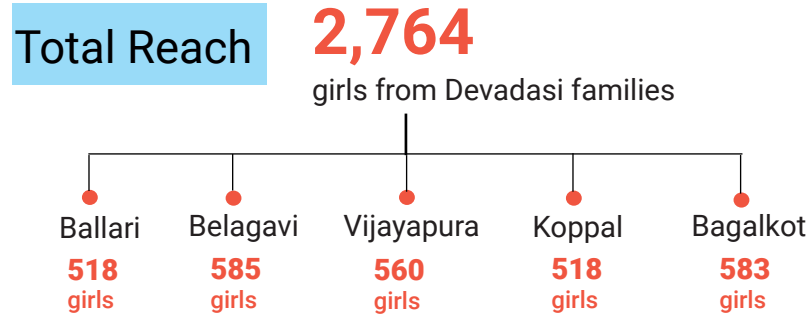


## DID YOU KNOW?

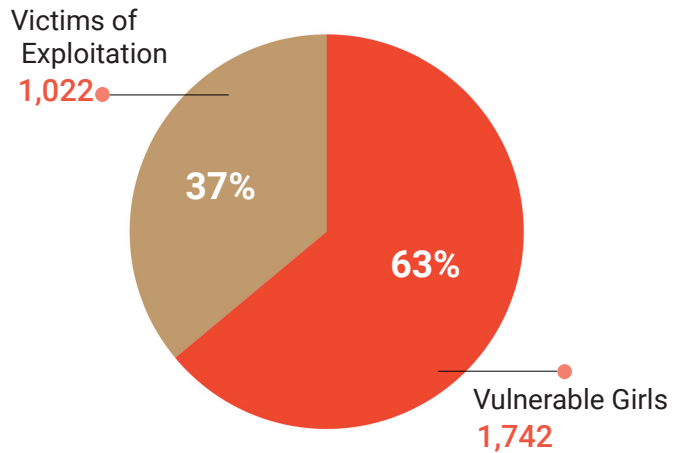
As per a survey by the Karnataka Women's State University there are

**80,000 Devadasis** in North Karnataka.

# CHILDREN GOOD ACTIVITIES



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
The project has set up village notice boards for girls to write their issues which are later addressed by relevant authorities



Distribution of Girls reached out to

## Children as Change Agents

The project organises girls into Kishori\*\* Clubs where they are trained on life skills, advocacy tools, research tools, all with the objective of empowering them through participation in their own development.

**Training on Advocacy, Child Rights and Child Protection Laws**  
2,764 children

**Child Led Research**

**Community Mapping**  
Children draw a village map and mark issues in different areas of the map  
220 children | 108 Clubs

**Kishori Clubs**  
Girls organised into a group for child led activities  
108 clubs  
1-2 clubs per village

**Life Skills Training\***  
training on self confidence, decision making, communication  
2,764 children

**Photo and Video Research**  
Children learn photography and videography to document village problems  
220 children

\*\*A Hindi term for adolescent girl  
\*A life skills training book was provided with 10 modules Self awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Creative thinking Decision making, Problem solving, Effective communication, Inter-personal relationship Coping up with stress and Coping up with emotions





A Kishori Group Meeting



Advocacy with Government Officers



Children advocated for the need of street lights and succeeded



# CHILDREN GOOD ACTIVITIES

## Education

*Provision of school supplies, education awareness and other education support - creating an enthusiasm for learning and academics.*



### Formal Education Support

Books, stationary, uniform, school bag, tuition fee

**810 girls**

### DID YOU KNOW?

Children of Devadasis are discriminated against in schools, making them drop out. Being out of school, makes them more vulnerable.



### Libraries set up

With supplementary reading material, and activity books

**83 libraries**



### Computer and Tally Course

**352 girls**



### Tailoring Course

**195 girls**



### Auto and 4 wheeler driving

**21 girls**

## Livelihood Support

*Job Oriented Vocational Training of older girls in in-demand skills which have job prospects in the region. After they get jobs, the girls are financially independent and do not have to resort to sex work for a living.*



## Community Awareness

Community members sensitised on the negative consequences of the Devadasi system and need for protection of Children of Devadasis.



**Temple priests sensitised**  
who practice dedications  
**243 priests**



**Community Awareness**  
through IEC material, outreach  
**14,661 people**

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Kishori girls took the initiative to sensitise communities on gender-based violence by pasting IEC materials in prominent places.



## Interface with the Government, Law Enforcement Agencies and Media Houses

Training and sensitisation of Government officials and Law Enforcement Authorities on the laws against the Devadasi System and their role in protecting children from the system. Media houses sensitised on the need for reporting stories on the system, keeping in mind the sensitivities of the context.



**Sensitising Para-Legal Volunteers**  
**229 people**



**Lobby and Advocacy with the Government**  
**33 meetings**



**Sensitising Government Officials**  
**362 officials**



**Media Sensitisation Workshops**  
**422 media officials**



# CHILDREN GOOD COVID RESPONSE



## Dry Ration Distribution

A kit contained cereal, dal, spices, oil and sugar for 2 months use.

**7,374** kits

**6,913** families



## Hygiene Kit Distribution

A kit contained facemasks, sanitiser, hand soaps, towel, hand gloves.

**3,315** kits



## COVID Awareness

Preparation of leaflets, posters, banners and audio visual materials and awareness raising by Kishori girls.

**15,000** community members



## Distribution of E-tabs

E-tablets with pre-loaded educational content, specifically for girls writing their Secondary School final exams

**102** e-tabs

shared by 5 districts



## Psychosocial Care

To reduce anxiety and panic during the pandemic, girls were given drawing kits and took part in art contests.

**2,161** children

**100 families**

**257 girls**

trained in vocational skills



## Income Generation

Through vocational training to girls and a sum to families to invest in livelihood activities such as cattle rearing, vegetable sales, ration shops





Children spread COVID-19 awareness



Ration kits being distributed



E-tabs during COVID-19 helped the girls study



# CHILDREN GOOD IMPACT



## Girls display more courage

Girls speak out boldly, develop confidence displaying a positive change in personality.



## Girls solve village problems

Girls have solved civic issues, stopped 38 child marriages, 12 dedications and enrolled 32 girls in school.



## First Generation Graduates

588 girls become the first to pass secondary school in their families.



## Mother's encourage girls' development

The women are encouraging their daughters to go to school, learn job skills and step out of home.



## Increased financial security and freedom

Through access to vocational training and loans, families have the choice to take up alternate/additional livelihood opportunities.





### Changes in Community Attitudes

In many villages, discrimination has been reduced, some families are getting more respect and attitudes towards children have improved.



### Issue gets more cognizance in the government and media

The Devadasi agenda is being discussed in meetings. Articles have been published in newspapers, gaining issue visibility.



### Girls work to influence policy level changes

Girls' demand for making father's name optional in forms, resurvey of Devadasis as well as property rights are being taken forward in government discussions.

Children learn photography and videography to document evidence of problems





# CASE STORY

Seventeen year old Sarita\* says “Now I feel just as equal as a boy”.

Sarita’s newfound pride comes from an autorickshaw where she learned how to drive. Before her lessons, she was not as chirpy and driven. Belonging to the Devadasi community in India, she was very vulnerable and often in despair to sexual exploitation as a child.

“Driving the rickshaw has liberated me. It has given me hope”, she said. Sarita added, “If not for these lessons, I would have been in a desperate situation to make an income. I would have succumbed to exploitation.”

Sarita’s mother is a Devadasi woman who has had her share of trauma and abuse. Her meagre income is not sufficient to make ends meet. Terre des Hommes Netherlands’ Children GOOD (Getting Out of the Devadasi System) programme empowers children of Devadasis and Sarita is one among them. She was enrolled in a driving training course as driving is a popular profession in the area.

“We live in a town which is near a UN Heritage Site. People from all over the world come to visit and there are no female drivers. This demand will make me a good income. I can also drive for the people in my town”, she said.

Sarita’s mother was also linked to a revolving fund with which she invested in vegetable sales, and reported an average of 20% income increase per month. After successfully attending the training sessions on safe driving and skills needed to navigate, Sarita feels confident to ride her way each day towards financial independence.

*All names of children have been changed to protect their identity*





# FEEDBACK

from stakeholders



**Ms. Ranjini**  
Kishori Club Member

“ I was supported with study material to write my SSLC\* exam. The guidance and preparation helped me pass and now I am a secondary school graduate.”



**Ms. Navsa Singhe**  
Gram Panchayat Member

“ After the project, the girls have stopped child marriages and solved many civic problems. The community is also recognising their efforts and appreciating them.”



**Mr. Marutappa**  
Temple Priest

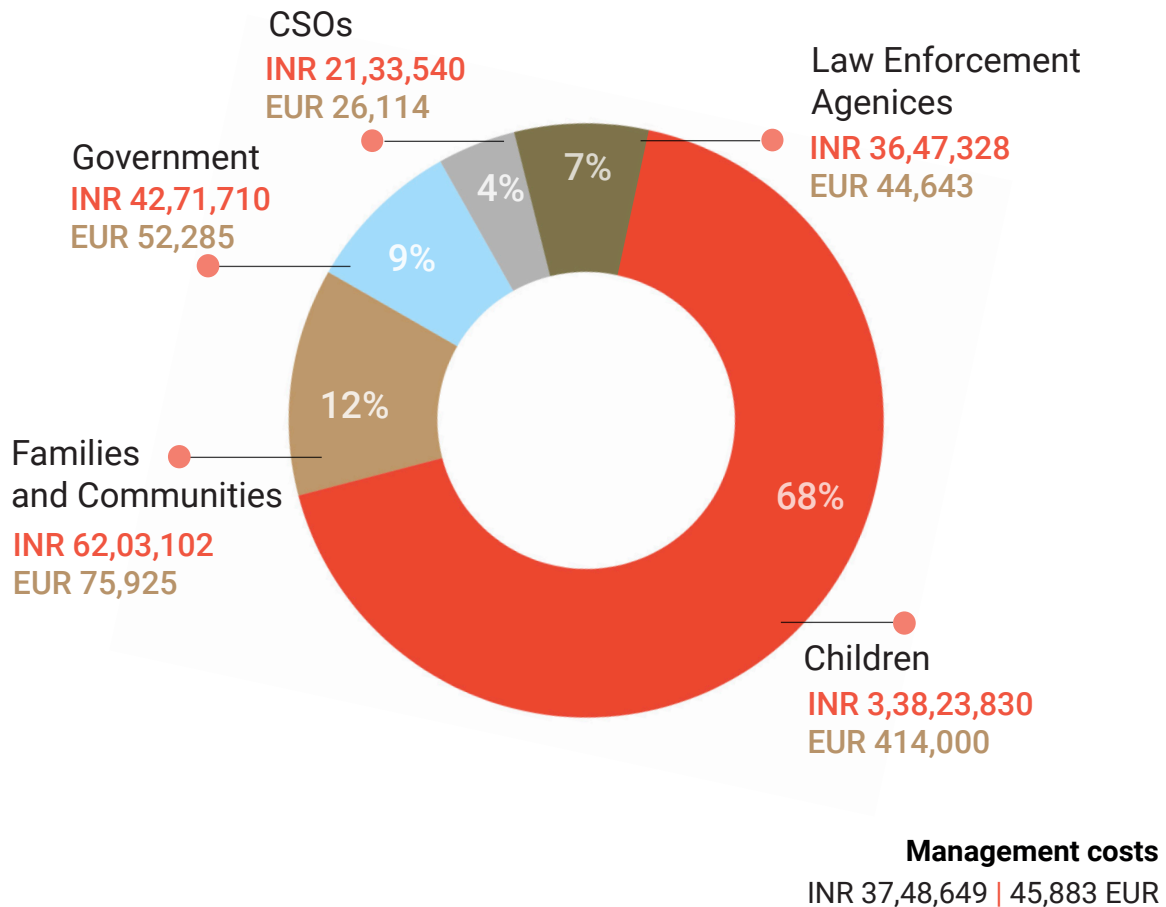
“ After the project we have learnt to spread awareness about the Devadasi system in temples as well as in our sermons.”



## Stakeholder Wise Expenditure

At Terre des Hommes Netherlands, we tackle child exploitation holistically by focusing on children and stakeholders that help in creating a conducive environment for children to be secure, thrive and develop.

The following is our stakeholder wise expenditure for the Children GOOD Project from April 2019 - March 2022.

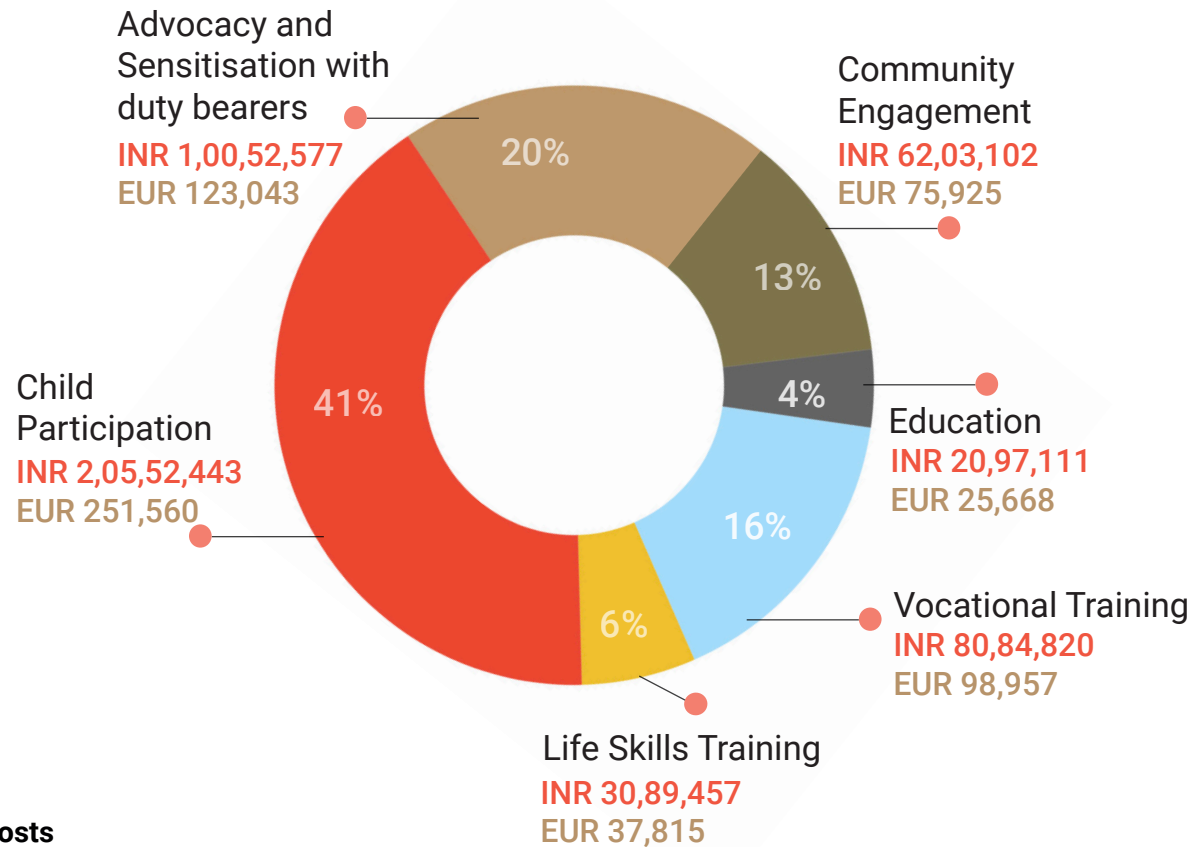




## Thematic Wise Expenditure

Project Children GOOD addresses child exploitation through child participation, education, life skill training, vocational training, community awareness and advocacy & sensitisation with duty bearers.

The following is our thematic wise expenditure for the Children GOOD Project from April 2019 - March 2022



### Management costs

37,48,649 INR | 45,883 EUR

## Total Project Utilisation

INR 5,38,28,159  
EUR 658,851



**Hartelijk dank** voor uw onmisbare steun.

**Thank you** for your invaluable support.

Terre des Hommes Nederland is een internationale kinderrechtenorganisatie die zich inzet om uitbuiting van kinderen bij de wortel aan te pakken. In India werkt Terre des Hommes NL aan de aanpak van kinderarbeid, het mondig maken van slachtoffers van kindhuwelijken, de aanpak van kindruitbuiting binnen het Devadasi-systeem en pleit zij tegen kindhuwelijken en kinderhandel.

**terre des hommes**   
**stops child exploitation**



Stichting Terre des Hommes Nederland Zoutmanstraat 42-44 2518 GS Den Haag  
T (070) 310 5000 E [info@tdh.nl](mailto:info@tdh.nl)

© Terre des Hommes Netherlands, 2022

Ana Redondo Hernando  
Stichting Partnerschappen Manager | E [a.redondo@tdh.nl](mailto:a.redondo@tdh.nl)

Angélique van Oversteeg  
Relatiebeheerder bijzondere giften | E [a.vanoversteeg@tdh.nl](mailto:a.vanoversteeg@tdh.nl)