

MELJOL

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An Idea Takes Off. . .

AFLATOON BANKS

Who would take the responsibility of the money collected?

Where would the children get the money from?

What would happen to the savings of children who move to the secondary section or those who drop out of school?

Would teachers get the time to undertake administrative tasks related to the children's bank?

These were some of the concerns initially expressed by the teachers, when MELJOL introduced the concept of savings through the initiation of Aflatoon Banks in the Zilla Parishad schools of Thane district in 2001. Although the concept of small savings already existed in a few schools, a systematic process through which children were encouraged to save money, was introduced by MELJOL, with an emphasis on the child's right to participation.

Objectives:

- To enable children to save money (even in small sums) and thereby inculcating the value of saving.
- To encourage children to spend money responsibly.
- To help children to understand the concept of small savings/banking and the functioning of the bank.
- To enable children to be actively involved along with their teachers in the process of banking.
- To provide children with an opportunity to exercise their right to make decisions regarding the spending of their money.

Achievements:

In spite of the initial resistance of the teachers, the concept of Aflatoon Banks was introduced in the Zilla Parishad schools. These banks have taken off successfully in the schools.

- 60.9% of the schools have initiated Aflatoon Banks (i.e. banks are functional in 312 schools out of the 512 schools reviewed for the year.)
- Children collectively have saved from Rs. 50 in Manivili School, Block Murbad to Rs 15,000 in Ganeshpuri School, Block Bhiwandi to Rs 19,000 in Shirale School, Block Bhiwandi.
- A majority of the banks are being managed by children and in some cases, in consultation with the teachers.
- 48% of the withdrawals have been made for the purchase of books, pencils, footwear or the payment of school fees. 23% of the withdrawals have been made for school excursions.
- The children from remote tribal schools (Sarangpur, Dist.Shahpur) have been able to go for a picnic using the savings from the bank, which would not have been possible otherwise.
- Children studying in Std. VII felt that they could use the savings to study further.
- The children have realised the importance of planning for the future and saving accordingly.

These small efforts by the teachers and the children have paid off in a big way. The children have realized that even small savings can make a great difference!

MELJOL

INTRODUCTION

MELJOL is a non-governmental organisation, focussing on fostering healthy attitudes in children, sensitising them about children from different backgrounds, in order to create a society wherein different people co-exist. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child serves as the framework within which MELJOL bases its interventions. MELJOL was initiated in 1991, as a field action project of the Department of Family and Child Welfare, Tata Institute of Social Sciences. MELJOL is now registered under the Societies Registration Act (1860) and Bombay Public Trust Act (1950). Besides Mumbai, MELJOL has branches in Thane (Urban and Rural), Pune and Bangalore.

MELJOL believes that children have rights and linked to these rights have responsibilities which they need to be made aware of. It is only when children are aware of their rights that they can respect the rights of everything in the environment (living and non-living). MELJOL seeks to develop children's citizenship skills by focussing on their rights and responsibilities and providing them opportunities to contribute positively to their environment. Thus, 'Equal rights, opportunities and respect for all,' forms the basis of MELJOL's philosophy.

MELJOL'S VISION:

MELJOL works towards developing citizenship skills amongst children by focussing on their rights and responsibilities, and providing them opportunities to contribute positively to their environment. It aims at promoting Child Rights Education in the formal school setting as well as amongst out of school children.

MELJOL'S MISSION:

MELJOL's mission is to work towards an equitable social structure within a pluralistic society i.e. one that is an integrated society, where different cultures co-exist. By educating children and their significant others on Child Rights and responsibilities, MELJOL addresses prejudices focusing on key concepts such as equity, ageism, gender, ethnicity, classism, and ableism.

Primary constituency: MELJOL primarily works with school children in the age group of 10 to 15 years in urban, rural, and tribal areas. In urban areas, MELJOL's intervention extends to private schools, as well as schools run by government and local bodies. In rural areas, MELJOL works with zilla parishad schools.

Secondary constituency: MELJOL also works with significant adults in the child's environment such as teachers, parents, individuals in the administrative system, government functionaries and so on, to reinforce Child Rights education for children, and to make them responsible towards ensuring a society conscious of rights. MELJOL also partners with NGOs, State and local bodies to achieve its mission.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION:

MELJOL's programmes include children in private, government, special and rural schools. The approaches in these settings vary. They are:

Intervention through teachers:

MELJOL considers teachers as resource people and partners towards achieving its goal of Child Rights Education for all. This strategy has enabled the organisation to reach out to many more children and also to create an awareness within the system on the need for the inclusion of rights education in the curriculum. Thus, teachers are trained to impart rights education and to create and strengthen the processes, which allow for the participation of children at the school and community level.

The Aflatoon Programme: This programme is implemented by the teachers (trained by MELJOL) with the help of the Aflatoon books series created by MELJOL. The programme works towards enhancing the self-esteem of children in local government / zilla parishad schools, to make them confident to be active participants in affecting their immediate environment. In this programme, children are encouraged to form school level councils to lead them into being active participants to bring about desired changes in their environment. The programme focuses on-

- Sensitising the children to one another and to their environment.
- Boosting the children's confidence to take positive steps towards bringing about a change in their environment.
- Helping them to identify issues of concern and working towards positively changing their environment.

Intervention with children:

The Private School Programme: The programme works towards sensitising private school children to issues related to the marginalised child within the context of Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990). The issues worked on with the private schools include child labour, street children, slum children, literacy, gender etc.

The Twinning Programme: This programme focuses on getting children from two backgrounds to interact with each other (private schools, government schools, special schools, street children etc.) to address prejudices and respect the differences, and at the same time being able to see the possibility of transcending these boundaries.

MATERIAL CREATION:

MELJOL is constantly developing material, which enables teachers and other facilitators to conduct sessions on Child Rights education effectively. Various fact sheets and handouts are created to reinforce MELJOL's messages during sessions with children.

The material created by MELJOL during this academic year is as follows:

- Creation of fact sheets on Child Rights & responsibilities and leadership skills.
- Module was developed for the "School In Development" programme, the main messages in this module were on issues of personal health and hygiene, sanitation, banks and councils.
- Module was developed for leadership camps.
- Creation of posters promoting the concepts and messages of the Aflatoon programme.
- Creation of the Aflatoon song book.
- Fact sheets and Activity sheets for the Private School Programme.

ADVOCACY:

During this academic year, meetings were held with the Secretary, Education, Maharashtra State; the Director – MPSP (Maharashtra Prathamik Shikshan Parishad) and the concerned authorities at SCERT (State Council for Education Research & Training). Their response to the programme has been positive however due to major financial limitations, MELJOL has been unable to replicate the programme. Efforts are ongoing to fund raise for the same.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The major emphasis during this academic year was on sustaining and improving the impact achieved in the previous year.

The following structure for training was evolved in this academic year:

1. Training of Trainers Workshops:

- In MELJOL Rural, Pune and the Kalyan Dombivili Municipal Corporation schools, workshops for trainers were conducted with identified Kendra Pramukhs and teachers who in turn trained teachers to implement the Aflatoon Programme in their respective schools.
- In MELJOL Mumbai (BMC) and Thane (TMC) workshops for trainers were conducted, to enable the identified teachers to implement leadership camps with children.

2. Teacher Training Workshops:

Workshops were conducted, for new teachers and refresher workshops for those teachers already implementing the Aflatoon programme, in all the participating schools in Mumbai, Thane (Urban & Rural) and Pune. This year the emphasis was on sensitising teachers to various issues like gender, health etc. Aflatoon Banks and Kendra, Block and district level councils of children were new concepts introduced in the Rural programme in this academic year.

3. Camps:

In this academic year, for the first time, trainers (teachers), as part of the MELJOL Aflatoon programme conducted camps for children. These camps were conducted in all the branches except Pune, where the MELJOL team members conducted the camps themselves.

4. Events:

Bal Anand Melas were held for the participating schools in Mumbai, Thane, and Bangalore. A residential Bal Anand Mela was organised for the Zilla Parishad schools by the MELJOL Rural team.

“ It is our right to live in a clean environment and we shall have it” – said the children of Zilla Parishad Prathamik Shala, Kunde, Block Bhiwandi.

Children from this school implemented a campaign to clean up the area around their school, which was being used by villagers as an open-air toilet. The stink and germs that was emanating from this and spreading into the school became a matter of great concern to the children. They decided to approach the ‘village police patil’ through the Aflatoon club. The children constantly followed up on their complaint and were successful in preventing the villagers from defecating around the school.

The club members also decided to repair their classroom which was in a badly shape. They collected funds from the villagers and were able to repair their classroom thereby creating a comfortable and clean environment conducive for learning in their school.

LEARNINGS:

- It was realised that good and regular communication with officials in the education department is essential for a positive impact. It has been observed that the support and cooperation from the official heading a Department, (for e.g. CEO, EO, Superintendent) is crucial to the effective functioning of the programme.
- Teachers appreciate and enjoy implementing new and innovative activities introduced by MELJOL every year. According to them these activities help in keeping the programme from becoming monotonous. At the same time, the MELJOL team has observed that with the introduction of different activities, the focus shifts from the regular Aflatoon Programme to the new activity.
- It has been realised that MELJOL needs to have a multi-disciplinary team for expertise not in MELJOL's purview. For e.g. setting up vermiculture pits, the methodology involved in water harvesting etc.
- All training material required for implementation in an academic year must be finalised before the year commences for smooth functioning of the planned programmes.
- Additional activities like leadership camps have boosted the impact of the programme.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

1. Permission has been granted to implement the MELJOL Aflatoon Programme in Std. VIII Marathi medium schools of BMC from the next academic year 2002-03.
2. Aflatoon Banks – a concept introduced for the first time by MELJOL for children in Zilla Parishad schools has proved to be extremely successful.
3. The participation levels of the teachers implementing the twinning programme has significantly improved in Mumbai and Pune. Teachers are now more confident of conducting the programme on their own.
4. In the second year of implementation, the Aflatoon Programme in 51 PMC (Pune Municipal School) schools has shown encouraging results.
5. MPSP (Maharashtra Prathmik Shikshan Parishad.) has shown an active interest and encouraged the MELJOL team to a great extent. MPSP has invited MELJOL as resource organisation to train teachers on “conducting district level Melas” in all the districts of Maharashtra.
6. MELJOL has been invited as a resource organisation in the State committee for planning distant education programme.

GUTKHA will go.... even before the ban by the state government, children in the Zilla Parishad Prathmik shala at Biloshi district, Wada, succeeded in eradicating sale of Gutkha packets in their village.

The Aflatoon club of this school focussed on “Gutkha eradication”. They met all the pan shop owners in the village and appealed to them not to sell Gutkha. Almost all responded positively when children explained to them the harmful effects eating Gutkha was having in the lives of the villagers. The children boycotted one shop whose owner refused to co-operate. They passed a resolution in the club that no child will purchase anything from that shop until he stopped selling Gutkha. The shop owner felt the impact of the boycott and ultimately relented and stopped selling Gutkha.

MELJOL'S Outreach

In the academic year 2001-02 MELJOL has reached out to **936** schools, **3780** teachers and **1,40,884** children.

Programmes	No. Schools / Organisation	No.of Children	No.of Teachers /Participants
I. MUMBAI			
a. Aflatoon School Programme	35	14200	191
i. Leadership Camps	30 (8 camps)	213	22
b. Twinning Programme	18	1260	43
c. Private School Programme	4	416	12
d. Mela	33	700	100
II. PUNE			
a. Twinning Programme	8	823	-
b. Aflatoon School Programme	51	14000	327
i. Leadership Camps	22 (4 camps)	110	30
III. THANE			
a. Thane Municipal Corporation.	93	19000	261
i. Leadership Camps	93 (8 camps)	385	-
ii. Mela	93	800	150
b. Kalyan Dombivali Municipal Corporation.	50	6500	126
i. Leadership Camps	(6 camps)	186	
c. Ulhasnagar Municipal Corporation.	20	3000	60
IV. BANGALORE			
a. Government School Programme	8	695	-
b. Private School Programme	1	110	-
c. MELJOL Explorer Book Series	2	880	4
d. Bal Sabha cum Mela	13	750	-
V. RURAL			
MELJOL Aflatoon Programme	646	80000	2756
i. Leadership Camps	(14 camps)	565	153
ii. School in Development Programme Camps	104 (50 camps)	2500	-
iii. Residential Mela	646	700	250
TOTAL	936	140884	3780

The highlighted numbers reflect MELJOL's outreach for the year.

PROGRAMMES:

MELJOL MUMBAI

A. Aflatoon School Programme: Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) Schools:

In this academic year, MELJOL Mumbai conducted a series of activities in order to continue and consolidate the MELJOL Aflatoon Book Series programme more effectively. The objectives of this programme were:

- To create awareness among children on Child Rights & Responsibilities.
- To enhance their understanding of the Aflatoon programme.
- To make children participate actively through the formation of Aflatoon clubs and to work on various issues.
- To share various child friendly methods in which the Aflatoon programme could be implemented, with the teachers.

In this academic year, 35 BMC Marathi medium secondary schools implemented the programme through teachers.

Activities:

Principals meeting:

In this academic year, two meetings were organised for principals of the participating 35 BMC schools in the Aflatoon Programme. The following points were discussed at the meetings:

- The plan for the year.
- The plan for the annual event.
- Details of teacher's workshops.
- Details of the leadership camps.

Refresher workshops:

These workshops were conducted with teachers who have been implementing the programme in their schools. The objectives were:

- To review previous year's implementation of the programme.
- To discuss methods in which the programme could be more effectively implemented.
- To identify trainers to conduct leadership camps for children.
- To give additional inputs to teachers with a focus on attitudinal change towards social issues related to children.

Seven refresher workshops were conducted for 138 teachers, for duration of 2 days each.

Freshers workshops:

Workshops were organised for teachers who were new to the programme. The objectives of these workshops were:

- To orient the teachers to MELJOL, Child Rights & responsibilities.
- To orient the teachers to the Aflatoon Programme.
- To discuss various methods through which the programme could be implemented.
- To sensitize teachers to various social issues and their attitudes towards the same.

Two workshops were conducted for the duration of 3 days each for 31 teachers.

Training of Trainers:

Training for trainer's workshop was conducted with identified teachers, to enable them to conduct leadership camps for children. At the workshop, the emphasis was on creating an awareness about the existence of various types of leaderships, the ways in which to ensure effective functioning of the Aflatoon Club, the importance and need for good communication skills, creativity, developing sensitivity on various issues like gender, environment etc. This training has enabled the trainers to implement the leadership camps effectively and handle the above topics sensitively.

Leadership camps:

At the leadership camps, children were given various inputs to enhance leadership development qualities, and instill confidence in them to select issues, and work, both at the class and at the school level, to bring about a positive change in the environment. During the camps the emphasis was on children's Right to Participation and building sensitivity towards various issues through various interactive games to make them understand their importance in the environment and their responsibility towards all concerned issues.

Eight leadership camps for the duration of one day each were conducted for class representatives elected for the Aflatoon Club. 213 children from 30 schools participated in these camps.

School Review meetings:

The schools were visited twice in the year to assess the implementation of the programme. The first visit was made in all the classes of all 35 schools and the second visit took place in random classes of all the 35 schools. A questionnaire was prepared to evaluate the performance of the school.

It was observed that the participation and involvement of the teachers in the programme was much higher during this academic year. In many schools the programme was implemented, as a result of which children were able to select issues to work on at the school level. Issues selected by children were cleanliness and sanitation, lack of infrastructure in the school, water supply. All the members of the Aflatoon clubs worked together to solve these problems. It was also communicated by the teachers that they were unable to complete the Aflatoon books since they were also involved in other school activities or due to sudden transfers of the teachers to another school.

B. Twinning Programme:

A meeting was organised for principals and teachers of schools who had shown a keen interest on conducting the twinning programme in their schools. At the meeting the participants were oriented to MELJOL and a few present shared their experiences of being a part of the MELJOL programme over the years.

Seven principals and teachers attended this meeting.

As a follow up to this meeting, an orientation workshop for teachers was organised for the schools agreeing to participate in the twinning programme. The focus of this workshop was on how teachers could carry forth the twinning programme in their respective schools with the help of MELJOL's twinning manual.

Twelve teachers from 10 schools participated in this workshop. In this academic year, 18 schools were part of the twinning programme covering 1260 children.

School Review meetings:

In the academic year 2001-02, the twinning programme was implemented enthusiastically by teachers (from new schools) although MELJOL did have to conduct sessions in a few schools. It was observed that, in this academic year, teachers did not conduct orientation sessions, which are important to the programme, in majority of the schools. But overall teachers were very supportive and cooperative during the interaction sessions. They conducted games and activities from MELJOL's Twinning manual very effectively. Private school teachers felt that their twin school teachers could have been more involved in order to make the sessions more effective. The importance and need for orientation sessions was stressed on during review visits to the teachers. The teachers realised that if orientation sessions had been conducted, the interaction sessions could have been more effective.

From the feedback given by children, it was understood that the interaction sessions were eye openers for private school children and an awareness was created amongst them that municipal school children were as good as them in various ways and in fact were definitely better behaved than themselves.

C. Private School Programme:

In this academic year, the private school programme was implemented in 4 private schools covering 416 children. In total 107 sessions were conducted on various issues selected by children like street children, child labour, gender and differently abled. The feedback was positive; children enjoyed the interaction sessions with street children and special children, which were organised as part of the programme.

School Review Meetings:

At the end of the year, the children translated their awareness into action in the form of assembly presentations in their respective schools. Through the medium of theatre and art, they expressed their understanding (to other students of their school) of Child Rights and the various issues selected by the children in the beginning of the year. The levels of awareness about the selected issues were definitely more than at the beginning of the year.

Mela:

MELJOL Mumbai organised a Bal Anand Mela for all the participating schools.

The Mela provided an opportunity for children to creatively express their understanding on Child Rights and Responsibilities through the medium of theatre and art. Children enjoyed themselves with activities like face painting, pottery, warli painting, vegetable painting, origami, calligraphy, one minute games, Aflatoon drawing, cartooning, cap making etc. The children learnt a lot about superstitious beliefs and their irrelevance in the world today, through the stall put up by Andhashradha Nirmulan Samiti.

The Mela provided an opportunity to the children, to express their concerns, thoughts and opinions regarding various issues that they had worked on through the year in their schools. The Mela also provided a platform for the children to present the activities they had undertaken through their Aflatoon clubs during the year.

Approximately 700 children from municipal, private and special schools and from various NGO's participated in the Mela.

Children take a step towards exercising their right to recreation.... Erangal school located at Erangal Village (Malad), worked towards developing a Gymnasium in the empty place near their school. Since the school is located in the village all the members of the aflatoon club wrote a letter to the Grampanchayat and participated in a discussion to set up a gymnasium near their school. The grampanchayat has agreed to give this a thought and work something out. This has created a hope in the children that their efforts will materialize in the development of a gymnasium outside their school. They are pursuing the matter with the concerned authorities.

MELJOL PUNE

The Pune branch has reached out to 59 schools, approximately 14,000 children, and 300 teachers including corporation, private and cantonment board schools in this academic year.

Activities:

A. The Aflatoon Programme:

Training of Trainers:

- With the increase in the number of participating schools under the Aflatoon programme it was decided to conduct trainers workshop for selected teachers who would in turn conduct training for the teachers in their own schools as well as other PMC schools in their geographical vicinity. The participating schools were divided into 4 zones and three trainers workshops were conducted covering 55 teachers. This strategy has worked successfully as most of the school trainers and teachers have willingly implemented the programme in their respective schools.

Internal workshops:

- The trainers conducted 11 internal workshops for teachers. These workshops aimed towards providing teachers with inputs and skills to effectively implement the Aflatoon programme in their respective schools.

Refresher workshops:

- These workshops were conducted with the teachers who had already implemented the programme in the previous year. Three refresher workshops were conducted in this academic year.

Leadership camps:

- 4 leadership camps were conducted in this academic year with the elected members of the Aflatoon Clubs that were formed in the school. The children participated enthusiastically and enjoyed all the activities at the camp.

Review visits:

- Review visits were based on discussions with teachers and children on the basis of an evaluation form. Two review visits were conducted by the team for 33 schools. It was observed that the implementation of the programme at the school level was better in comparison to the previous year. The internal workshops had worked very effectively and led to active participation from the teachers.

B. Twinning Programme:

- The team initiated a meeting with the principals and teachers of private English medium schools to discuss the possibilities of the twinning programme being implemented by the teachers. A number of meetings were held subsequently with the school authorities and teachers to motivate them to take on the twinning programme in their respective schools.
- The MELJOL team conducted 86 sessions with the children participating in the twinning programme.

In this academic year, 8 schools were part of the twinning programme covering 823 children.

MELJOL THANE

The Thane branch initiated in the year 1997, implements the MELJOL programme in the Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC) schools, the Kalyan Dombivli Municipal Corporation (KDMC) schools and the Ulhasnagar Municipal Corporation (UMC) schools.

In this academic year, the branch has reached out to 163 Municipal Corporation schools, 28,500 children and 660 teachers.

A. Thane Municipal Corporation

The Aflatoon programme reaches out to 93 Thane Municipal Corporation upper primary schools, 400 teachers and 19,000 children.

Activities:

Refresher workshops:

Objectives of these workshops were:

- To refresh teachers on Child Rights Education and focus on the importance of Right to Participation.
- To provide guidelines for teachers to conduct the Aflatoon Programme.
- To review the implementation of the programme in the previous year and discuss difficulties faced and highlight positive experiences of the teachers.

Six refresher workshops were conducted for 400 teachers.

Training of Trainers:

Teachers were selected at the refresher workshops and trained to conduct leadership camps for the elected class representatives (varg mantris) of the 93 schools.

Leadership camps:

These camps were conducted by the trainers for the elected class representatives. These camps aimed at equipping children with necessary skills to make them effective and responsible leaders and focussed on enhancing their team building skills.

Eight leadership camps were organised covering 385 children from the TMC schools.

Bal Anand Mela:

A MELJOL Bal Anand Mela was organised for Thane Municipal Corporation school children. The Mela provided a platform for children to express their feelings and viewpoints. In addition the Mela provided an opportunity for children from different schools to interact with one another. It also provided an opportunity for them to speak about the work they have been doing on the issue selected by them. Children enjoyed the games and entertainment stalls at the Mela. 800 children and 150 teachers participated in the Mela.

Training of volunteers for review visits:

A half-day orientation workshop was conducted for the B.Ed students of Smt. Kapila Khandvala College of Education who volunteered to conduct review visits for the Thane Municipal Corporation schools. Orientation and guidelines were provided to 15 students to enable them to visualise and assess the implementation level of the Aflatoon Programme in the schools. A questionnaire prepared by the MELJOL team, was provided to the students to help them evaluate the programme at the school level.

School Review Meetings:

49 schools were reviewed with the help of volunteers from the Smt. Kapila Khandvala College of Education. A feedback from the remaining schools will be taken when the teachers attend the refresher workshops in the next academic year 2002-03.

Private School Programme:

A proposal for the private school programme was submitted to the trustee of the Saraswati Secondary School and the team is awaiting a response from him on the possibility of the implementation of MELJOL programmes in private schools in Thane.

B. Kalyan Dombivili Municipal Corporation

In this year, MELJOL has reached out to 50 upper primary schools covering 6500 children and 200 teachers.

Training of Trainers:

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To equip identified trainers with skills to conduct refresher workshops for teachers implementing the Aflatoon Programme.
- To conduct leadership camps for children.

Thirty-one selected teachers were trained at this workshop.

Refresher workshops:

The trainers with support from the MELJOL facilitators conducted 3 refresher workshops for 95 teachers. The workshops aimed towards:

- Refreshing the teachers on Child Rights and Responsibilities.
- Providing additional skills to implement the programme more effectively involving child participation in every way.
- Providing guidelines to teachers to cope with difficulties faced while implementing the programme.
- Providing an opportunity to evaluate the programmes implemented in the previous year.

Leadership camps:

Three leadership camps were conducted by the trainers with 186 class representatives from 50 KDMC schools. The camps enabled children to effectively participate and work as a team to achieve their goal.

School Review Meetings:

MELJOL conducted review meetings in all 50 KDMC schools to assess the implementation of the Aflatoon Programme. At this meeting teachers were provided with guidelines for the Bal Parishad that has been scheduled for the month of April 02 where children will interact with individuals from the media and corporation officers and talk about their efforts during the year on the issues they had selected.

C. Ulhasnagar Municipal Corporation

The Aflatoon programme was initiated in 20 Marathi medium Ulhasnagar Municipal Corporation schools in this academic year.

Teachers workshop:

A teacher's workshop was conducted for 60 teachers to orient them to MELJOL and to provide inputs on implementation of the Aflatoon Programme.

Meeting with teachers:

It was observed during the first review meeting that the teachers in the UMC schools were not implementing the programme. A meeting was held with the participating teachers to discuss the same and plan a future course of action. The teachers expressed their inability to conduct the programme in this academic year but have given a commitment to implement the programme successfully in the next academic year.

Meeting with the Administration Officer of the Education Department:

The MELJOL team conducted a meeting with the Administration Officer. The objective of this meeting was to discuss the level of implementation of the Aflatoon programme in the schools and the future plans of the programme as discussed with the teachers.

The Administration Officer also gave a commitment that the Aflatoon programme will be included in the school's regular time - table so that it is definitely implemented. He will personally supervise the implementation of the programme in the next academic year.

D. Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation

A number of meetings were held with various authorities of the education department like the Education Officer, the Chairperson of the education council, the Deputy Commissioner, the Extension officers etc to initiate the MELJOL Aflatoon programme in the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation schools. Since the permission to implement the programme did not come through, MELJOL was unable to initiate the programme in this academic year. The authorities are hopeful that the programme will be implemented from the next academic year.

MELJOL RURAL

MELJOL Aflatoon Programme was implemented with the Zilla Parishad schools of Thane District for the first time in the year 1998. For the academic year 2001-2002, the branch has reached out to all the Zilla Parishad schools of Thane district. During the year, apart from the Aflatoon Book Series Programme, the branch has emphasised on different activities, activated children's councils, camps and has been able to provide inputs on child's right to life and child's right to participation.

The Aflatoon Programme covered 646 schools, 80,000 children and 2500 teachers and 200 kendra pramukhs.

Activities:

Training of Trainers:

The training of trainer's workshop was conducted for identified teachers from the Zilla Parishad schools of Thane district. The workshop was residential in nature and was held for a duration of five days in Safale, Palghar. The objectives of the workshop were:

- To strengthen the implementation of MELJOL's Aflatoon Programme.
- To introduce new concepts that need to be covered at the Kendra level camps.

- To provide inputs on child's right to participation, child's right to life and healthy environment and its actual implementation in day to day life.
- To introduce the concept of Aflatoon Banks.
- To prepare a plan for refresher workshops for teachers, camps for children and other activities.

Twenty seven trainers attended this workshop.

Teacher Training workshops:

The focus of the workshops was to give inputs to teachers on the inclusion of new activities and concepts in the regular Aflatoon series programme.

Thirty three workshops were concluded for Zilla Parishad teachers for duration of two days each. In all, 2000 teachers were trained through these workshops.

Children's camps for the "School In Development" Programme:

The focus of these camps was to sensitise children about their personal health and hygiene and towards sanitation in their environment. Additional concepts like Aflatoon Banks, Aflatoon Councils and Balgramsabhas were also introduced at these camps. At the camps, the emphasis was on learning through doing for which active participation of children in each and every activity was ensured.

Fifty cluster level children's camps of a duration of five days each were conducted in the blocks of Jawhar, Mokhada, Dahanu and Wada.

Workshop of Trainers for Leadership camps:

A one day workshop was organised for the identified trainers who would facilitate the leadership camps for children. The focus of this workshop was to discuss in detail the objectives of the leadership camp, the activities to be conducted, the purpose of conducting those activities and the expected follow up. In addition to these, guidelines on the responsibilities and administrative pattern were discussed.

Eleven trainers participated in this workshop.

Camps for class representatives:

MELJOL organised 14 leadership camps for the elected class representatives from Thane Zilla Parishad Schools. The camps were for 3 days each and 12 of these were conducted at the block level. Kendra pramukhs, block level authorities, teachers, B.E.O's, B.D.O's and Extension Officers as well as authorities from the Health Department visited the camps.

Totally 565 children and 153 teachers participated in the camps.

From these 12 block level camps, children elected 4 representatives, who participated in the district level camps. These district level camps were organised at Dahanu, Military campus. These camps were conducted in co-ordination with the NGO 'Magic Bus'. The children from the NGO's Apanalaya and Snehsadan also participated at these camps.

Totally 40 children and 11 teachers participated in the district level camps from MELJOL.

Children's block level meetings:

Children's meetings were organised for the first time at the block level. The objective of the meeting was to provide guidelines to the children to enable them to work effectively on issues selected and to let children express their opinion/ suggestions and their expectations from the programme.

The class representatives gave inputs to the other students on identification of issues and discussed ways to solve these issues.

Volunteers meeting:

The aim of the volunteers meeting was to orient them to MELJOL's programmes. Monthly meetings were conducted with the volunteers to share their experiences and observations regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the programme at school level.

In all, 19 volunteers were a part of the programme.

Kendra Pramukh meetings:

Kendra Pramukh meetings were conducted to ensure that they have the necessary information about the MELJOL programme and can give their suggestions and feedback about the implementation of the programme at the school level.

School Review Meetings:

Volunteers and MELJOL representatives visited the schools to review the programme. Approximately 546 schools were visited by volunteers and team members to gauge the impact of the programme.

Aflatoon Banks:

Efforts were taken to formulate children's saving groups called 'Aflatoon Banks' at the school level to inculcate the habit of saving amongst children. An evaluation form was developed to find out the advantages and disadvantages of this strategy.

Bal Anand Mela:

A residential Bal Anand Mela was organised in co-ordination with the Amachi Shala Project (ASHA) and Maharashtra Prathamik Shikshan Parishad (MPSP) at Nature Club, Sajan-Jawhar from 13th March 2002 to 15th March 2002.

The Mela consisted of various activities, which were educational as well as fun based.

Approximately 700 children and 250 teachers participated in this Mela.

Say Yes to Children Campaign:

On UNICEF's request, a signature campaign for 'Say Yes to Children' was conducted in the Thane, Wada, Kalyan, Ulhasnagar and Bhiwadi blocks. In all, 22,000 signatures were obtained from the district with the help of teachers. Completed forms were sent to Indian NGOs.com as requested by UNICEF.

Planning for the Aflatoon programme in the Std. I to IV schools in Thane district:

MELJOL has been working on different strategies to implement the programme in Std. I to IV of Zilla Parishad schools, Thane district. with the support and cooperation from the authorities.

Replication of Aflatoon programme for Std. V to VII Statewide:

MPSP has suggested that MELJOL should think of replicating the Aflatoon programme for Std. V - VII in the 9 districts of Marathwada region in the next academic year. MPSP has also promised to provide necessary support for the programme.

MELJOL BANGALORE

MELJOL Bangalore continued working in both private and government/corporation schools. A Rural programme was also initiated, which was to be implemented on an experimental basis in one block of Bangalore Rural District.

A. Private School Programme

The schools, where the team had worked directly in previous years, were introduced to the MELJOL Explorer Book Series. The team trained teachers, who would implement the programme. This strategy has enabled the schools, to carry on the programme independently and the team to take on new schools.

The team worked directly in just one school, where 3 daylong workshops were conducted for 4 classes. The workshops used the war in Afghanistan as a starting point for children to look at conflict, power, communalism and rights violations.

B. Government School Programme

The team worked in 3 Corporation and 3 Government schools in partnership with Sanjeevini, an organisation doing health education in schools. The programme focussed on the Right to Survival and the importance of hygiene and good health practices. The children chose to address the issue of water scarcity in their schools, it being a common problem. The members of the Bal Panchayat in each school drafted a letter listing their needs and presented it to the concerned corporators. The culmination of this endeavour was the Bal Sabha where the children were to make presentations to the Corporators and officials from the Education and Water Supply departments. Though many officials were unable to attend the Bal Sabha, it was an opportunity for the children to make presentations before members of the press, who gave the initiative coverage in their newspapers.

C. Campaign

The team also conducted sessions in the private and government schools on the detrimental aspects of nuclear weaponisation as part of the events conducted to commemorate Hiroshima Day on 6th August 2002.

D. Rural Programme

In order to move to the extensive strategy of intervention, i.e. teacher training, the team decided to pilot the MELJOL Aflatoon Book Series in Hoskote taluk, Bangalore Rural. Permission was given by the Block Education Officer to conduct the programme. The team did not go ahead with the programme in Hoskote because, in a meeting with the District Primary Education Programme, they requested MELJOL to do the programme within the structure of the District Primary Education Programme.

After a series of meetings with the Commissioner of the District Primary Education Programme, MELJOL was asked to create books for Std. I - V. These books would be piloted in 2 blocks in Bangalore Rural and Mandya Rural. After the material for the teachers as well as training modules had been created, the District Primary Education Programme organized a presentation meeting to which the cluster and block level workers from the 2 blocks were invited.

A presentation was made on the content of each book and the process that would be followed vis-à-vis training and monitoring once the programme was accepted. The co-ordinators raised several issues, chief among which was that most of the concepts in the MELJOL books were already a part of the District Primary Education Programme books. It was heartening that the values espoused by the MELJOL programme were already in existence in the District Primary Education Programme books. A decision was therefore taken that MELJOL would not duplicate these through the programme. It was suggested that MELJOL would review the District Primary Education Programme books and look at the gaps and make recommendations on these, which would be incorporated in the next edition of the books.

FUTURE PLANS

Overall

- To initiate Std I – IV programme in Zilla Parishad schools.
- To initiate replication of Std V-VII programme in 9 districts of Marathwada region.
- To organise a NGO workshop for NGO's in the state of Maharashtra and initiate NGO networking to replicate the programme in all districts of the State.
- To initiate and implement the programme for Std. VIII of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation Marathi medium schools.
- To initiate possibilities of implementing the Aflatoon programme in private schools.
- To initiate possibilities of implementing the programme in other mediums of BMC schools.
- To initiate the Aflatoon Programme in the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation & Bhiwandi Municipal Corporation Schools.
- Initiate the Private School Programme in Thane district
- To ensure effective implementation of the programme in Ulhasnagar Municipal Corporation.
- To formalise the Aflatoon Bank concept in Zilla Parishad schools.
- To integrate the Std. V-VII programme in the regular syllabus of the school.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The MELJOL team attended/participated in the following workshops / seminars:

1. Participated in the Child's Right to Participation campaign organised by CCVC.
2. Participated in a workshop on 'Role of NGOs in Primary Education' organised by IAS Training Academy, Mussorie in Pune.
3. Participated in a workshop on 'Tobacco & Advocacy' at Tata Memorial Hospital.
4. Participated in a workshop on 'Child's Right to Education' organised by CRY.
5. Attended workshop on 'Violence against the Girl Child' organised by CCVC.
6. Attended workshop on 'Sensitising teachers on non-discrimination: Caste and Tribe' at TISS.
7. Attended workshop on 'Health and Rights' in Hyderabad.
8. Active involvement in the activities of Bangalore platform club against weaponisation and nuclearisation.
9. Children from Zilla Parishad schools participated in the Kala Ghoda festival representing MELJOL.
10. Attended meeting of NGOs from all over Karnataka to discuss in the various sectors of NGO interaction and also the need for accreditation of NGOs.

The MELJOL team was invited to conduct the following workshops/ sessions:

1. Two workshops on 'Quality Education' were conducted for World Vision Network of Care.
2. Workshop on the 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child' for students of Kapila Khandvala College of Education.
3. Workshop on Child Rights and Responsibilities was conducted for municipal school children, organized by IAPA (Indian Association for Promotion of Adoption and Child Welfare)
4. Workshop on Child Rights conducted for CRY partners in Bhuj.
5. Session on Child Rights conducted for children from Asha Kiran Community Centre
6. Conducted session on Child Rights and Responsibilities for street children from BECC (Bandra East Community Centre).
7. Conducted workshop for children from SHARE.
8. Conducted workshop on inclusion of Child Rights awareness in organisational activities for the team members of Lokvikas, Nasik.
9. Conducted session on Child Rights for children attending a camp organised by Vidhayak Sansad.
10. Facilitated a Twinning session with special children at a camp organised by Nav Chetna.
11. Conducted a session on 'Non – Formal Education' for TISS students.
12. Conducted a workshop on Child Rights for NGO representatives organised by Rambhau Mhalagi Praodhani.
13. Held meeting to discuss IT initiatives in Maharashtra along with Ashoka Foundation.
14. Conducted a workshop for the Bal Sevika trainees of the Bal Sevika training programme conducted by the Karnataka State Council for Child Welfare.
15. Facilitated a workshop in Mehaboob Nagar, Bangalore on Child Rights.
16. MELJOL presented a paper in the State level workshop on the right to participation organised by YUVA.

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Our Donors

- ***In Mumbai***

The J. R. D Tata Trust
Bombay Community Public Trust
Indiacares – World MBA Tour
Jamnabai Narsee High School
St. Mary's High School (ICSE)
Colgate Palmolive (India) Limited
Centre for Social Action
St. Michael's Church
Kalpana Restaurant
Shagun Restaurant
Shree Siddhi Restaurant
Lion Dhondiba Kale
Mr. Rajendra Nagvekar
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- ***In Thane (Rural)***

UNICEF, Mumbai

- ***In Bangalore***

The Rotary Club of Bangalore R.T. Nagar
Canon
Nutrine Confectionaries

- ***In Pune***

Rotary Club of Poona Downtown
Rotary Club of Pune Kothrud
Dr. Kalmadi Shamrao High School.
Rewachand Bhojawani Academy

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Mr. Bhau Gawande – Education Officer
Mr. T. M. Patel – Deputy Education Officer
Mr. Bhanudas Borale – Deputy Education Officer
Mr. Nishikant Joshi – Superintendent, Secondary Municipal Schools
Mr. Damodar Patil – Administrative Officer, 'D' Ward
Mr. Bhojjaya – Head Master, Gilder lane Municipal Secondary School
Mr. Rehman – Education Officer, Primary Municipal Schools.

- **Thane (Rural)**
Mr. Narendra Kavade (Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, Thane)
Mr. Suresh Pawar (Education Officer, Zilla Parishad, Thane)
Mr. Kamble (Dy. Education Officer, Zilla Parishad, Thane)
Mr. Mali (Coordinator, Aasha, Zilla Parishad, Thane)
Mr. Waghmare (Extension Officer)
Education Officers in all 13 blocks, Extension officers and Kendra Pramukhs in the district.
- **Pune Municipal Corporation**
Shri. Jarag (Training Officer, S.C.E.R.T.)
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Officials in the Education Department of Bangalore Mahanagar Palike
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Our Collaborators:

MELJOL Mumbai

ASEEMA
AKANKSHA
Hamara Club
Prayas
Sanskardham Vidyalaya for the Hearing Impaired
Magic Bus

MELJOL RURAL

Project ASHA
MPSP (Maharashtra Prathamik Shikshan Parishad)

MELJOL Bangalore

Sanjeevini
The Karnataka State Council for Child Welfare
Spastics Society of Karnataka
YMCA
BOSCO
REDS
Association for the Physically Disabled
AVAS
Sutradhar

Our Supporters

- ***In Pune***

Shri R. Rathore (Rotary Club of Poona DOWNTOWN)
Shrinivas Patke
Shrim. Mrudula Deshmukh.
P.M.C. Primary School no. 61 & 39 G

- ***In Bangalore***

Students from the final year MSW class of Bangalore University
Rotaract Club of Bangalore R.T. Nagar
Imran Khan, Mrs. Khan and Zeba Khan
Rekha, Shashidhar, Vibha, Ayesha, Dhanya, Ram,

- ***In Thane (Rural)***

Talasari: Mr. Manohar Kate
Vyapari Sanghatana, Talasari

Murbad: Mr. Vinod Narvekar
Mr. Gothiram Pawar (MLA)
Mr. Thakur, Krushi Chikistsalaya
Prashikshan Kendra Khutal

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Mokhada: Pragati Pratishthan, Mokhada

Shahpur: Gothehar Vaphe Ashram School

Our family and friends

THE IMPLEMENTING TEAM

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Rajashri Zagade

In Thane (Rural): Sumitra Ashtikar
Ajay Devrukhkar
Hemangi Joshi
Medhavinee Namjoshi
Chitra Patil
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