



Progress Report

IND-REL-DAL-N02
Reporting period: Jan-June 2016

Dalit Adult Literacy Centres

Budget: \$13,575 – fully funded!

Update:

This program provides opportunities for adult members of the Dalit caste to achieve basic numeracy and literacy abilities, through providing evening classes over the course of a year. Ten different centres teaching 30 adults each are ensuring that 300 men and women will have more control over their lives at the end of the year.



Dalits are frequently illiterate and innumerate and as a result are taken advantage of. Landlords overcharge because they can't read contracts, and markets do not pay the right price for agricultural products for the same reason. When required to sign legal documents, Dalits use their thumb-print, and there is no one available to tell them what they are signing.

In all of the centres, there is a palpable pride amongst the students that now they no longer have to sign with a thumb print, but can write their own name! Not only this, but now when they sign, they know what they are signing for. No longer are they receiving less than was agreed, or paying more than was agreed.

One of the course participants, Jayamma, attends church each week, bringing her Bible, despite the fact that she cannot read. Thanks to this course, she can now read slowly. She is looking forward to becoming a faster reader so she can really get stuck into her Bible!

In another village, there was a divide amongst the Dalit community but both sides of the conflict are keen to read and so are studying together. This is breaking down walls in the community.



A final benefit from the course is that in each centre the instructor is also teaching the participants about the various forms of government help they are eligible for – previously these people had no idea they were eligible for anything. Many of them are eligible for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gaurantee Scheme, where they are assured of 120 days work within their local area. This will provide them with a much needed source of income to supplement their subsistence level agriculture and day-labourer wages.

On behalf of these Dalit communities being empowered, thank you for making this possible!