Experiences of Aide et Action imparting MLE through teacher training in India

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There is a significant population of children mainly belonging to linguistic minorities from forest-dwelling Adivasi tribal communities who do not have access to education due to various exclusion processes.

Schools in these areas reflect the multilingual society, which poses a great educational challenge. Aide et Action provided the following professional development for teachers to give pedagogical support, and encourage innovative and sensitive approaches to support students to cope with linguistic gaps:

- Preliminary assessment was carried out to understand the training needs of teachers who are working with tribal children.
- Training tools were prepared based on the needs assessment. For example, a pictorial language dictionary in a tribal dialect and the regional language (Tamil and Kannada) was prepared in consultation with the community.
- In the initial stages, as a help to provide multilingual education (MLE) in primary schools, teachers from 20 schools were selected and given training in how to use the language dictionary.
- After practicing using the language dictionary in their respective schools, those teachers then created a bilingual and trilingual dictionary with English, the state language, and the tribal language.
- Teachers developed systems and tools for assessing children’s language skills and other knowledge and competencies during the primary years of education.
- Teacher training on language usage, innovative techniques, approaches for multilingual classrooms, collaborative learning to develop higher-order skills, lexis, functions, listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and subskills was provided to the teachers working in the forest schools. This has resulted in enhanced learning levels of children from tribal communities.