



"Helping ignite culturally relevant heart worship, especially in places where Christ-followers are restricted, persecuted or unknown."

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Children's Recordings Launched in India



"No one like you. No one like me. There's no one in the world like you and me. I'm special, I am unique." So begins one of the songs that will be taught soon to the thousands of Dalit children across India that attend one of the seventy OM India Dalit Educational Centers. This song is part of an "eight values" project that will be featured on the first of 10 children's recordings for these and other schools across India. The songs

Dalit children--restoring value

are meant to not only instill values and restore worth and dignity to kids who have been downtrodden and mistreated, but also give them a chance to learn English.

Week One: Choosing Songs in Lonavala

A team of ten people came together at the YWAM base in Lonavala, near Pune to review songs that had been written for the project. The team included musicians from OM India, YWAM India, a couple from the United Kingdom and two of us from the USA. Also on the team was Jackie Peters, a famous model who had become a believer and received training at the YWAM base. Jackie worked closely with Amanda Sunderaj



Song selection team in Lonavala

(not her real name for security protection), one of the coordinators of the children's recording project. Together they helped polish the songs and wrote the final songs needed to complete the eight values.

Amanda guided the process to divide various songs into four categories: English and Hindi language "values" recordings that did not specifically mention Jesus, and English and Hindi kids worship recordings that were songs of devotion and obedience to Jesus. We then made demo tracks of all the songs for the first recording, using YWAM's new recording studio. The first week concluded with a one-day kids festival that included a competition to choose the kids who will sing on a future English vocal

recording.

Week Two: Recording Through Difficulties in Hyderabad



Makeshift studio in Hyderabad

Following an overnight bus trip, the second week's activities shifted to the OM headquarters in Hyderabad. A makeshift studio was set up to tweak the tracks that were chosen for the Hindi language kids recording. Peter John, a seasoned arranger and husband to one of the Dalit Educational Center teachers

worked with me to re-Record various instrumental tracks using a synthesizer. We battled not only the 100 degree heat but electrical and electronic battles as well. Unexpected power failures in the midst of recording sessions meant re-doing our work. Peter's computer started recording erratic noises. Unable to isolate the problem Peter reformatted the computer, not once but twice. The relentless noises returned. Once a borrowed computer was found work continued, though we faced another trial—incessant tiredness. I fought endless fatigue day and night from persistent jet lag, getting only short spurts of sleep day after day during the two week trip.

Unprecedented Moment in Bangalore

While all of this was going on in Hyderabad, something thrilling was shaping up in Bangalore in the home of Jackie Peters, the model who had joined us in Lonavala. Hearing that Peter John preferred to focus on the Hindi songs, we needed a different arranger for the English recording. So Jackie took action and contacted her husband, Suresh Peters, an accomplished Bollywood lyricist, singer and music director, working in the world's largest entertainment industry. Bollywood churns out twice the number of films as Hollywood. Suresh also does work at the studio of A.R. Rahman, probably the most well-known present day Bollywood film composer.

To help explain the strategic importance of these recordings, Jackie invited Amanda to fly with her to Bangalore to meet Suresh and share the vision with him. Soon we heard the good news that Suresh thoroughly enjoyed the demo tracks we made of the "values" tunes, and was moved by the enthusiasm of two high-powered ladies speaking for the needy children of India. Suresh seemed open to do the kids English project. If it all comes together to use him, we may have something unprecedented about to happen in India--an elite Bollywood film composer producing a recording project for the despised Dalit kids of India.

Thank you for praying with us that God will bring it to pass!

Frank Fortunato
HSI Coordinator

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