



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

in

**Foundational Learning**  
*Initiatives & Studies Across Countries*



Department of School Education and Literacy  
Ministry of Education  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



## Introduction

Community engagement in education is widely acknowledged as a vital force to achieve quality education for all. It requires the collective efforts of teachers, children, parents, and community to facilitate fair, equitable, and sustainable outcomes. Quality education system is one that succeeds in meeting its own goals; one that is relevant to the needs of children, communities, and society; and one that fosters the ability of children to acquire knowledge and critical learning skills. Successful schools do not operate in isolation. They build connections with the parents and communities to strengthen relationships to support children, and better understand children, so that teaching can be tailored to the individual needs and interest of children. Communities offer a wide range of resources that are valuable to schools and the families they serve. These resources include people who volunteer their time in the school, organizations that offer enrichment opportunities, businesses that offer career-related information and workplace experiences, and agencies that provide various social services for children and families. Communities too are rich in untapped resources that can benefit children especially, who are at the foundational stage of their learning and development. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 strongly recommends engagement of community at all stages of school education not only for contribution in resources but also for engaging in child's learning. International experiences revealed that when families and community members volunteer their time and talent in schools, both schools and children increase their capacity to do more and to do it better particularly at the foundational stage. Therefore, it has been realized in many countries that community involvement in education system is vital for effective teaching and learning. With deeper involvement of the community, school improvement and better accountability mechanisms can also be built. Empowering local community to take charge of educating their children is the foundation of effective school community relationship. Many initiatives have been taken across the globe and are well documented as good practices and studies on community engagement. These could be ready references for those who are in the process of planning or organizing community engagement programmes for foundational stage in the States/ UTs. These may be adapted or adopted as per the requirement of social and geographical conditions. In this context, this document is designed to make everyone aware about the existing community engagement initiatives and studies across the country. The best practices listed here are from 11 countries, Japan, Brazil, UK, Denmark, Finland, Austria, Spain, Nepal, South Africa, USA, and the initiatives taken at the National, Institutional and State/UT levels in India.



## International Best Practices and Studies

The following section provides the detailed initiatives and studies on community engagement across countries at the foundational stage. There are various models, strategies and practices for ensuring community involvement in these countries to help in strengthening the home-school connect in achieving deeper learning and overall development of children in the foundational years of their life. The best practices listed here are from 11 countries like Japan, Brazil, England, Denmark, Finland, Austria, Spain, Nepal, South Africa, USA and India. Studies are also quoted to suggest solid evidence based modes of community engagement. Let us understand about each one of these in detail.

### JAPAN

Japanese schools provide many opportunities to the parents for their involvement. They provide information about school norms, policies, and children's work. School also facilitate parental participation as volunteers and engage them in school activities like cooking classes, recycling activities and storytelling, etc. Schools also conduct seminars for parents on parenting and home based support to their children. Seminars on proper use of mobile phones and the internet, etc. are also conducted to make parents be aware of how such technologies can negatively affect their children. Parents also play a pivotal role in parent teacher associations (PTA) as decision makers in Japanese schools. Parents rather than teachers initiate PTA activities and they also have the authority to take decision on school matters like fund disbursement, school infrastructure, etc.

There are open and available communication channels between teachers and parents in schools. Teacher visits students' homes to talk with the parents about school concerns, child's talents and abilities, and child's safety concerns, etc. The teacher also uses other communication channels to convey messages to parents about school events and student's performance. There is also children association which is a community-based group consisting of school children and parents. It is another platform where parents can interact and exchange ideas pertaining to their children's education. Children associations are also involved in garbage recycling and camping activities organized by the parents.

#### Takeaways

- Parents volunteering in school activities
- Schools organizing various activities/seminars/skill training to engage parents
- Parents as important stakeholder in PTA
- Home visits by Teachers to interact with parents
- Children Associations

## BRAZIL

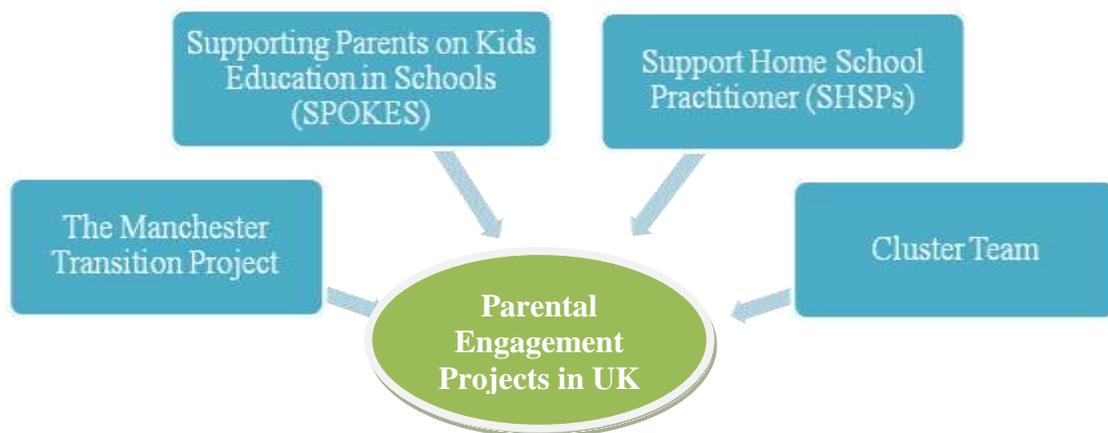
In Brazil, the school board has the authority and responsibility of school management under the decentralized framework of education. The teachers, students, and parents are the members of the school board. Studies in Brazil claimed that there is a high correlation between the degree of community involvement and student's achievement. Most important decision in Brazilian schooling system is the selection of school principal by the community. It brought greater accountability and transparency on financial and administrative matters towards parents. This also created space for process and pedagogical innovations which resulted in good learning outcome, increase in enrolment and pass out, increase in teacher trainings, improvement in teachers' satisfaction, and enhanced readiness of community to participate in improving schools without additional cost.

### Takeaways

- Teachers, students, and parents are the members of the school board
- Community selects school principal
- Community is actively involved in the management of schools

## UNITED KINGDOM

In England, the governance of schooling provided power or greater autonomy of decision-making to schools. Members in governing body in each school are elected by parents and staff members. The main role of the board of governors is to provide direction for school governance, ensure accountability, participate in decision making, and also control of the school budget for purchase of books, equipment, stationary and other goods and services. The governing boards also play a core role for new appointments of teachers and staff members. Some of the Parental Engagement projects undertaken by UK govt are as follows:



**Fig. 1: Parental Engagement Projects in UK**

## **The Manchester Transition Project**

The Transition Project was developed by Manchester Education Partnership with funding from Children's Fund. The main goal of this project was to train the teachers and school staff on the ways and means of engaging parents in schools activities. A whole school approach is further promoted through structured meetings of Project staff with head teachers and governors at key junctions in the Project. Key components of trainings includes: a home visit or one-to-one interview to build relationships between school staff and parents; a class meeting where parents meet other staff and parents and get more information about the school and other local agencies; booklets and improved strategies for day-to-day communication; a 'stay and play' session where parents can find out more about how children are taught in school and how to support them at home; a parenting workshop; and a focus group to consult with parents.

## **Supporting Parents on Kids Education in Schools (SPOKES)**

In a randomized controlled trial, (Sylva 2008) investigated the effects of a parental engagement programme: Supporting Parents on Kids Education in Schools (SPOKES), which included the 'Incredible Years' group parenting programme. SPOKES was designed to tackle behavior and literacy problems during the first years of school. 100 children from eight schools in a disadvantaged community in inner London took part over three terms in 2001-02. The programme offered 12 sessions on behavior management to parents in the first term, 10 sessions on the literacy programme in the second term, and, in the third term, 6 sessions combining the above two elements. All sessions lasted two and a half hours, and the intervention included center-based training and home visits. Parents in the comparison group were offered support through a telephone helpline; a member of the team responded to helpline queries within 24 hours on weekdays. No direct help was offered to parents; rather they were directed to the usual local authority services. The literacy outcomes for the children were assessed using the British Ability Scales II (BAS) word reading, combined with the British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS) and other measures. 104 children took part in the pre-and-post literacy tests (58 in the intervention group and 46 for the comparison group). Controlling for the amount of time parents spent reading with their children at pre-test, the effect of the intervention on reading time at post-test was near zero. Controlling for the effect of the reading strategies used at pre-test, the effect of the intervention on post-test measurements of reading strategies was highly significant. Overall, the advantage for children in the intervention group was found to be equivalent to six months of reading age.

## **Support Home School Practitioner (SHSPs)**

School Home Support Practitioners (SHSPs) provide a further example of home school knowledge exchange. The role of SHSPs is to help promote parenting skills and children's social development and also support the literacy and numeracy provision that children receive at school. Practitioners come from a range of specialist backgrounds including teaching, healthcare, youth work, social work, special educational needs, etc. Working for SHS means their roles are

not limited to one area of delivery, but rather they address all the issues faced by the students and their family.

### **Cluster Team**

This includes cluster co-coordinator, parent support adviser and information coordinator. The cluster has developed a parents' forum based in schools and children's centers. Meetings are informal to provide opportunities to share information about the services on offer and to offer ideas about improvement. Parents' forums are facilitated by a parent worker or other member of staff. It then uses data from its monitoring and evaluation to establish baselines and agree targets for parental involvement. Data are monitored on parents' completion of homework records, parents' attendance at their child's review meetings, consultation events, volunteer activities and participation in family events. The information allows staff to identify strengths and gaps in provision, and support the development of parents in taking a leadership role in cluster activities.

#### **Takeaways of Parental Engagement Projects in UK**

- **Manchester Transition Project:** Training of teachers and school staff on the ways and means of engaging parents in schools activities
- **SPOKES:** Tackling behavior and literacy problems during the first years of school
- **SHSPs:** Promoting parenting skills and children's social development and also support the literacy and numeracy provision that children receive at school
- **Cluster Team:** Identifying strengths and gaps in provision, and to support the development of parents in taking a leadership role in cluster activities

## **DENMARK**

In Denmark, Parents have played a huge role in running of schools. In 1990, Board of school governors was created for the role of parents, which is to strengthen decision making in the school governance. Five to seven members are there in each board that constitutes parents, including two members from school and two from students. The boards are responsible for developing guidelines for school's activities, approving the school budget, and making the curriculum. Parents are very responsible for their children's schooling and reports claim that they spend an average of three hours in a month at the school.

## **FINLAND**

In Finland, New Basic Education Act of 1999 provides a significant role of co- operation of parents for school education development. Schools have right to design their own curricula based on the National Framework of Core Curriculum with the help of parent-teacher meetings, parents' meetings, discussion events and one-to- one discussions between individual teachers and parents.

## **AUSTRIA**

In Austria, schools' autonomy scheme for school management was introduced since 1980. The main role of this scheme was to enhance the involvement of parents. A board is constituted by a representative of parents and students in each class by voting. Since 2000, boards and other community representatives control the management of schools.

## **SPAIN**

In Spain, there are two major parents' association: Spanish Confederation of Parent Associations (CEAPA) and National Catholic Confederation of Parents and Parents of Students (CONCAPA) which take part in the management of schools. CEAPA is a social, a-confessional and an independent entity that is made up of 45 Federations and Confederations that, in turn, group 12,000 Associations of Parents and Mothers of students, from public non-university education centers. It works to achieve a quality public school, democratize education and improve the conditions of childhood. CONCAPA was founded in 1979 to promote the interests of the family and ensure that their children receive, in school life training in accordance with their Catholic beliefs and convictions.

## **NEPAL**

In Nepal, new provision for the School Management Committee (SMC) in the 7<sup>th</sup> Amendment has wide implication in the implementation of educational programs and plans for enhancement of quality education. The SMC has a significant involvement in improving the efficiency related management that includes planning, monitoring, supervision, and evaluation of the schools. There is a legal process for electing four representatives from guardians or parents including one female member in the management committee. Nepal has another community involvement which is Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The main role of PTA is to strengthen the quality of teaching learning, advice the school about fees structure, and communicate the parent and community about the educational programs of the school.

## **SOUTH AFRICAN SUBCONTINENT**

Several States namely Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have adopted fee-free or fee-reduced basic education. A wider group of stakeholders, including sub-national government personnel, teachers, principals, parents, and occasionally students are involved in the construction of frameworks for improvement in the quality of education. Parental and community involvement in schools has affected quality in several ways such as providing an oversight of school budgeting; teacher attendance and performance; managing student attendance and homework; providing resources (labor, money, etc.) for school building, teacher hiring, and other school infrastructure and services; and advocating at local and national levels for changes that may improve educational access, retention, and completion.

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In USA site-based management plan was made for improving schools' governance. It proposed two key strategies for achieving this goal (i) The transfer of power to make decisions regarding budget, staffing, and instruction from the central/regional offices to the individual schools and (2) Participation of all stakeholders such as administrators, teachers, parents, and the local community in decision making at the individual school level. Different strategies were adopted by each state to improving the education system. The Education Improvement Act enacted by South Carolina had seven main components, which affect the operation of schools.

### Components under Education Improvement Act in South Carolina

- Raising student performance by improving academic standards
- Strengthening the teaching and testing of basic skills
- Elevating the teaching profession by strengthening the training, evaluation, and compensation of teachers
- Improving the leadership, management, and fiscal efficiency of schools at all levels
- Implementing strict quality controls and rewarding productivity
- Creating more effective partnerships among schools, parents, communities, and business people; and
- Providing school buildings conducive to student learning

In Chicago, comprehensive legislation is introduced for the decentralization of school governance wherein each school should be governed by an elected council consisting of eight representatives of the parents and community and two teachers with the principal as an ex-officio member. Each council is authorized to appoint the principal on a four-year contract, allocate budgetary resources, and prepare long-term plans for school improvement. The principal is entitled to appoint teachers on merits.

## INDIA

### *National and Institutional Level Initiatives*

Several initiatives to ensure community awareness and community engagement have been taken by the National and Institutional level mainly by the Department of School Education & Literacy at Ministry of Education (DoSE&L), and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) so that learning continues. Multiple resources have been developed and shared with the teachers, parents, and students through alternate modes of content delivery. Given below are some of the initiatives taken to ensure community awareness and their engagement in the learning and development of children.

## Awareness Initiatives taken by the NCERT

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) took the initiative and organised a number of awareness programmes on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) that covers foundational stage in the community since 2014 in different states and UTs. Functionaries working in the area of ECCE who are the members/faculty of SCERTs, SIEs, DIETs, SSA offices and ICDS of different States and UTs.

### Objectives of Awareness Programmes Conducted

- Create awareness among teachers and parents about the importance of ECCE.
- Sensitise the educational planners, educational administrators, teachers, parents and community members about their significant role for improving the quality of ECCE.
- Motivate them for performing their roles effectively and strengthening ECCE programmes and provisions.
- Build the capacity of ECCE functionaries for organising similar awareness programmes in their own States/UTs.

To support this initiative a ‘Resource Package for Awareness in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)’ has also been developed. It contains a set of exemplar media of communication such as folk, print, and electronic to reach out to the masses. The package is developed in both Hindi and English languages.



**Fig. 2: Resource Package for Awareness in ECCE**

The package is supported by a ‘Manual’ having suggestive models for generating awareness among different stakeholders. It also offers easy steps for planning and execution of awareness

programmes. It is a user-friendly document and mentions ways of organising awareness programmes for different stakeholders. It gives the detailed steps for planning, preparation, execution, implementation, feedback and evaluation of the programme. General guidelines for conducting the awareness programme have also been incorporated. The manual suggests two different models (Model I and Model II) for different target groups viz. Group I (educational planners and educational administrators) and Group II (teachers, parents and community). Overall, the manual aims to help the programme organiser and his/her team for smooth functioning and implementation of awareness programmes by using the package. The first set of resource package was developed in the year 2017 and was extensively used by the states/UTs. In the light of the NEP 2020 recommendations, NIPUN Bharat Mission objectives and new developments in ECCE, this package is modified to meet the present demand for awareness generation.

The council has also developed the capacity and created a cadre of key resource persons in 17 states and Union Territories for organising awareness programmes.

#### States having KRPs Trained in Awareness Programmes

1. Himachal Pradesh
2. Uttar Pradesh
3. Chhattisgarh
4. Madhya Pradesh
5. Gujarat
6. Arunachal Pradesh
7. Sikkim
8. Mizoram
9. Assam
10. Jammu and Kashmir
11. Rajasthan
12. Andaman & Nicobar Islands
13. Karnataka
14. Andhra Pradesh
15. Kerala
16. Delhi
17. Uttarakhand.

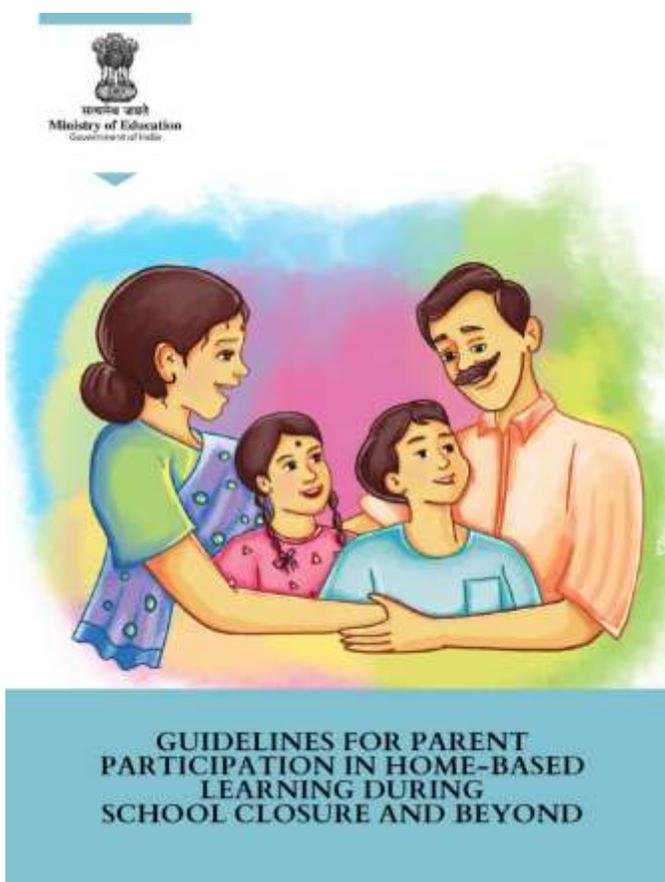


**Fig. 3: Mock training of the participants on the use of 'Resource Package for Awareness in ECCE'**

## Guidelines for Parent Participation in Home-based Learning during School Closure and Beyond

Parenting is of great significance in the current age of disruption in all spheres of life. The lockdowns due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic forced the children to be confined to their homes and having to adapt to different modalities of learning. Closed schools have also meant little or no scope for play, fun, or any outdoor activities with friends for many children. Additionally, learning is increasingly shaped by technology, which is marked by increased access to information and less interaction with teachers and peers. Parents too are facing multiple challenges. In addition to the physical and emotional stress in the wake of the pandemic, loss of dear and near ones, ill health of family members, there are challenges of job security, income, working from home, grappling with new modes of working and above all to help their children in learning from home. At the same time, it is providing them with myriad new opportunities for exploring pathways and performing new roles. It is also felt that the role of school, teachers, community, and volunteers are pivotal in assisting parents and caregivers participate in supporting Home-based learning for their children.

In order to support home-based learning, the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education has developed 'Guidelines for Parent Participation in Home-based Learning during School Closure and Beyond'. This document is a collation of many simple tips for parents to support and facilitate children in Home-based learning. The guidelines include a brief description of salient characteristics of each stage of child development from foundational to adolescence. The activities are simple but suggestive, which can be adapted to local needs and contexts. State/UTs are requested to get this document translated into regional languages for easy access and widespread use. Also, grade-wise activities can be disseminated in the form of simple pamphlets for parents with activities, visuals, and illustrations.



**Fig.4: Guidelines to Support Home-Based Learning**

The guidelines will be relevant and useful for a diverse set of stakeholders including parents, caregivers, other family members, guardians, school heads, teachers, teacher educators, and children. These guidelines have been prepared keeping in mind the diversity among our schools ranging from rural to urban; government to aided and unaided. Separate sections have been included on using art as a therapy, assessments, parent-school partnership, and supporting parents with low literacy levels and children with special needs. It is hoped that in times like the prevailing pandemic and beyond, we shall collectively work to create an environment where children learn how to learn and parents and other caregivers learn how to be co-partners in their children's learning, thereby laying the foundations for a learning society. Guidelines can be accessed using the following link:

[https://diksha.gov.in/play/collection/do\\_3134178342566871041739](https://diksha.gov.in/play/collection/do_3134178342566871041739)

## **Vidyanjali**

### **A School Volunteer Management Program**

Vidyanjali is an initiative of Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, for facilitating the community and volunteers to directly connect with the government and government-aided schools to contribute their services and/or assets/ materials/equipment through a dedicated portal. The programme has been launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021. With the help of Vidyanjali - alumni of educational institutions, serving and retired teachers, scientists, government/semi government officials, retired armed forces personnel, self-employed and salaried professionals, homemakers, persons from the Indian diaspora and any other organisation/group or company may volunteer to participate in schools of their choice by sharing their knowledge and skills or by contributing assets/material/equipment. Schools having UDISE+ code will have to register on Vidyanjali portal and post a list of required service/activity or assets/material/equipment on the web portal. Depending on the request raised by the school, the

- The broad categories of contribution include services/activities as well as assets/materials such as basic civil infrastructure, basic electrical infrastructure, digital infrastructure, equipment for extra-curricular activities & sports, yoga, health and safety aids, teaching learning materials, maintenance & repairs, office stationery/furniture/support services/needs etc.
- So far 141590 schools have on boarded, and 19015 volunteers have registered on the Vidyanjali portal.
- The Vidyanjali portal may be accessed at <https://vidyanjali.education.gov.in>

Volunteer based on his/her area of expertise/interest or assets and materials can express his/her interest to contribute to the schools' request partially/ fully. Volunteers have expressed interest in several areas such as subject assistance, mentoring of gifted children, teaching vocational

skills, sponsoring projector, laptop and library for schools etc. Students enrolled in Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary and Senior Secondary schools across the country. Recognizing the importance of community involvement in all spheres of education right from foundational level to adult education, the program will go a long way in improving the quality of education in schools across the nation and in achieving the outcomes of the National Education Policy 2020.

### ***State/UT Level Initiatives***

In India, there has been a history of community managed schools. But after independence, the major step in this direction has been through 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments act where three tier governance structure at district, block, and panchayat level were given powers to manage primary and secondary education. Another crucial decision in this regard has been through passing of RTE, 2009 act which mandated that all government, government aided, and special category schools shall have to constitute School Management Committee (SMC) as per Section 21 of the RTE Act. SMC will comprise parents of children studying in the school, teachers, head teacher and local elected representatives. The purpose is to monitor the working of the school, prepare and recommend School Development Plan and monitor the utilization of the grants received from the appropriate government or local authority or any other source. Apart from this, the SMCs are also expected to perform such other functions as may be prescribed.

The majority of the best practices in the states/UTs are about seeking support from the SMC members to ensure community engagement. Some of them are described below as exemplar:

### **Himachal Pradesh**

#### **Community Participation in Pre-primary Education**

Government of Himachal Pradesh has been working on strengthening community participation ever since the beginning of the program in 2018. These concrete efforts have led to the enrollment of approximate 43,000 students in 4787 Primary schools in the year 2022-23 where Pre-Primary sections are operational. Following activities were carried out under this initiative:

- 📍 **Enrollment Drive:** Enrollment campaign to connect with the community and ensure age-appropriate admission of children in Pre-Primary sections was done through online mode due to COVID restrictions. Pamphlets, brochures, and e-posters were used across the state to motivate eligible parents to enroll their children in Pre-Primary classes. Wherever possible door to door campaigns were also done in many districts to create awareness among parents and orient them about the presence of Pre-Primary classes in the vicinity of their nearby primary schools.



Fig. 5: Enrolment Drive Poster

⊙ **Community Mobilization:** Community Mobilization is also being done through awareness drive using Pamphlets, Brochures, e-posters, Radio Jingles and Mother Meetings (in person) where the situation is allowed.



Fig. 6: Community Mobilization Resources

⊙ **Mothers' Meetings:** Engaging the mothers has been a vital part of ECCE as the child is connected to the mother and spends most of the time with her. Engagement of mothers in ECCE program has been focused on orienting them in a way so that they can work on the developmental capabilities of children. For this mother meetings were conducted through online mode during the period when COVID restrictions were in place. In person mother meetings were also held where the situation so allowed. During these meetings, mothers got the opportunity to interact with each other in a big group and engage with teachers to understand the requirements and challenges of their children.



*Fig. 7: Mother's Meeting*

These meetings were conducted throughout the year in different districts. Pre-Primary State and District Resource team members participated in these meetings. This gave them a fair idea of ground reality and the innovations that needed to be carried out to make this intervention better.

- © **School Readiness Fairs:** ‘School Readiness Fairs’ also constitute a vital part of community engagement. These also serve as a medium for orientation of community at large to make parents understand the relevance of Pre-Primary education for their

children. School Readiness Fairs are also being held in different districts whenever allowed. In these fairs, developmental activities are being done through a range of fun activities. These activities have been designed in such a manner that they cater to the five developmental domains of Pre-Primary education. Mothers have been special invitees in such fairs and such readiness fairs provide mothers an opportunity to understand the readiness of their children for being enrolled in Pre-Primary.



***Fig. 8: School Readiness Fair***

- **Community Centric Material:** The role of parents especially mothers have always been considered vital in the holistic development of child. Considering this fact, a range of community centric material has been prepared for ECCE in Himachal Pradesh. This includes story cards, worksheets, mother engagement booklet, picture reading cards and idea card booklet. With help of this engaging material, the mothers are able to contribute to the holistic development of their child and strengthen their basic learning skills which are then addressed firmly in Pre-Primary classes being run across all the 12 districts of Himachal Pradesh.

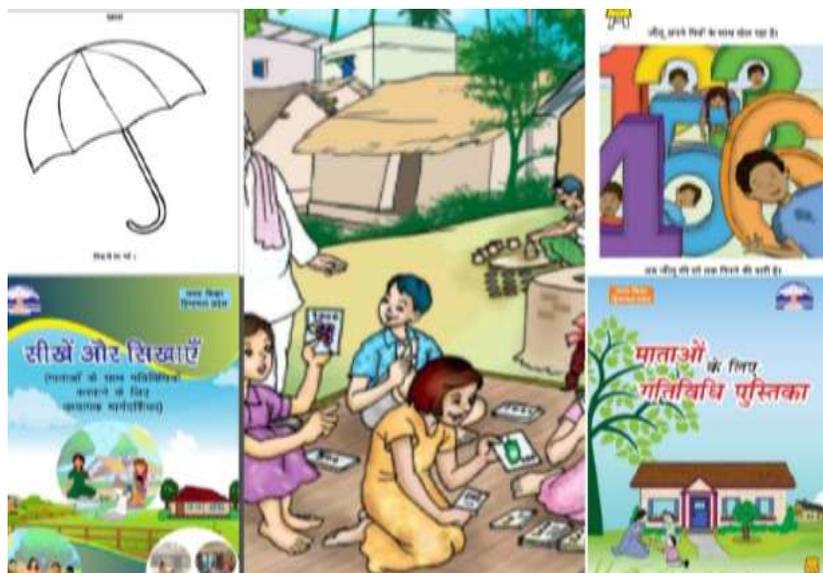


Fig. 9: Resources for Community

## Delhi

### PadhoBadho Sandesh Vahan Campaign

Padho Badho Sandesh Vahan under Community Mobilization activity is happening all around Delhi covering all the key major slum areas of Delhi. This ‘Vahan’ has already covered a population of approximately. 40 lacs in the Jhuggi Jhopadi/Slums/ unauthorized areas of Delhi. Under this activity out of school children have been successfully enrolled into schools. The Sandesh Vahan has a setup of LED 6’8 in which a motivational movie is being played around in the community which focuses on the ‘Importance of Education’ along with the facilities provided in government schools specially focusing education of girl child and the overall development of children. The objective of this activity is to attain ‘Maximum Admission Enrollment’ and to create awareness regarding the ‘Importance of Education in Community’. Progress of this activity:

- Improvement in enrollment (Ger/NER) at all levels
- Reducing drop-out at all levels
- Increasing parental involvement



*Fig. 10: PadhoBadho Sandesh Vahan*

## **Jharkhand**

### **New Ways of Learning Amidst the Pandemic**

#### **📍 Children in A Mini-Library at Latardih Village, Khunti after the School Reopened**

The pandemic has been detrimental to tribal students' educational journey. The pandemic posed challenges, and there was a struggle all around. The issues were aggravating for children living in remote areas as there was limited access to technology to attend online classes. The disruption caused by the pandemic pushed everyone to think about education holistically and creatively. A group of School Management Committee (SMC) members from different schools who were aware of the situations, acted upon the issues. They initiated discussions with the community and the District Education Department, Khunti to resolve the issues. In the process, they met the

district commissioner, appraised him about the situation of children and requested him to support in developing five mini-libraries. Immediate action was taken and development of twenty-one mini-libraries had been proposed.



***Fig. 11: SMC Members having Discussion with the District Commissioner***

Commissioner envisioned that the libraries will be developed in each panchayat of the district. Accordingly, the libraries were set-up.



***Fig. 12: The Library Building at Latardih after Renovation***



***Fig. 13: Together with SMC members, District Department, Khunti is supporting in developing 21 mini- libraries***

SMC members were actively involved in each process by identifying available spaces for libraries, sensitizing the community, selecting books, monitoring the work, and ensuring the utilization of resources provided. The whole process took nearly six months. The results were encouraging to see. The walls of the dilapidated buildings now had paintings; chairs, tables, and books for children were made available. Not only the children but the community also had access to books. A few of the libraries are complete. Work in a few is still ongoing. Through developing libraries, the SMC and community members turned the adversities of the pandemic into opportunities and supported in bridging the educational divide for children. A love for reading among all was visible. SMC members played a pivotal role in bringing about this change.



***Fig. 14: Renovation Work in Progress***



**Fig. 15: SMC Member Seeing the Purchased Books**

- 📍 **A case study of collective efforts of SMC and Community towards creating promising environment in School**



***Fig. 16: Work in progress at Govt. primary School, Mailburu, Khunti***

Primary Government School, Mailburu, located in Murhu block of Khunti district, opened for children after almost two years. The school was closed due to a pandemic. Although the children happily and eagerly started coming to the school, the school's environment required an overhaul. The walls of the classrooms were without charts and Teaching Learning Materials (TLM), which made them look dull. The bio-fence of the school had broken. The library room was no more print-rich or attractive for children. There was no kitchen garden in the school. Due to closure, the school had lost its charm. There was a need to create a favorable environment as it was necessary to continue children's learning with enthusiasm. The SMC organized a meeting to discuss the issues and the solutions around making the school environment better for parents and community members also participated actively in the forum such as creating a bio-fence in school, cleaning the premises, developing a kitchen garden, creating a print-rich classroom environment, rearranging the library, and ensuring that the children get clean and safe drinking water facility.

The SMC members and community members fixed the day of "Gram Sabha" in the village to contribute to the school's activities. They collectively built a bio-fence in the school, developed a kitchen garden, rearranged the library, and made the classrooms print-rich using the already available TLMs with the headmaster. The children in the school now have a better study environment, which was made possible only with support from SMC and community members.



*Fig. 17: A Re-arranged Library Room*

📍 **हमर पहुना, पढ़ाई तूँहर दुआर 2.0 और अँगना म शिक्षा**

'हमर पहुना' के अंतर्गत प्रतिदिन ऑनलाइन कक्षा लेने के साथ साथ समुदाय के सहयोग से ऑफलाइन कक्षाएं भी जारी हैं। बच्चों को 'हमर पहुना' कार्यक्रम के तहत वर्क शीट दी जा रही हैं तथा स्वयं और समुदाय के सहयोग से बच्चो

में सीखने के प्रतिफलों की प्राप्ति हेतु समय-समय पर घर से बाहर विभिन्न गतिविधियां कराई जा रही हैं। इन गतिविधियों में बच्चों के द्वारा खेले जाने वाले खेल में पढ़ाई को जोड़ा गया है, साथ ही बच्चों को साप्ताहिक वर्क शीट ऑनलाईन और ऑफलाइन दोनों ही माध्यम से दी जा रही हैं। जिसे बच्चे हल कर ऑनलाईन भेज रहे हैं तथा जिसके पास मोबाइल नहीं है वे अपने आस-पास रहने वाले पालकों के मोबाइल से भेज रहे हैं। गरियाबंद जिला में कुल 977 प्राथमिक एवं 450 पूर्व माध्यमिक विद्यालय के प्रधानपाठक व शिक्षकों के प्रयास से सक्रिय शाला प्रबंधन समिति व समुदाय के सहयोग से जिला शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में निरंतर विकास जारी है। समुदाय के सहयोग से कई विद्यालयों में पेयजल, स्मार्ट शाला के लिए टी. वी., हैंड-वाश आदि सामग्री दी गई है।

'पढ़ाई तूँहर दुआर 2.0' के अंतर्गत बच्चों में विभिन्न कौशलों के विकास को समुदाय के समक्ष रखने के लिए स्कूल स्तर, संकुल, ब्लॉक व जिला स्तर पर प्रतियोगिताओं का आयोजन किया जाता है, जिसमें निर्णायक की भूमिका के लिए समुदाय को आमंत्रित किया जाता है।



*Fig. 18: Teacher doing Activity with Children*

'अँगना म शिक्षा' में कक्षा 3 तक के बच्चों को शाला के साथ-साथ घर पर उपलब्ध सामग्री का उपयोग कर कैसे बच्चों को सिखाया जा सकता है इसके लिए समुदाय के द्वारा माताओं को जोड़ कर पूरे जिला में चलाया गया जिसका प्रतिफल सन्तोष जनक मिला। लॉकडाउन के दौरान छः शिक्षकों की टीम के साथ अलग-अलग विषयों पर ऑनलाइन क्लास को चलाया गया जो सफल रहा।

## **Maharashtra**

### **Ensuring Child Learning Through Community Participation: A Case Study of Bilgavhan Hamlet**

Bilgavhan is tribal hamlet situated in Navapur block of Nandurbar district having 1120 population with around 215 households. There is Zila Panchayat (ZP) primary school in the village where 29 students from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> class are studying. Students have to travel about 3 KM for their further schooling. To ensure and sustain the quality of education in ZP schools, it is necessary to have ownership with the Local Panchayat Body (Gram panchayat) and SMC. As per the guidelines given by SCERT, Equity department, school has initiated the process of reconstitution of the SMC with support from local NGO. They connected to teachers, SMC members, and some active parents in the village. The roles and responsibilities of each member of the SMC was discussed. Head Master (HM) took initiative thereafter and SDP was prepared and later presented in Gramsabha Education. In Bilgavhan, Special Education Gramsabha was conducted and discussed the priority needs of the school and defined the responsibilities to complete the tasks. Regular support, follow-up, and discussions with Sarpanch, Parents, SMC members, and teachers in the village resulted in all the priority needs to be planned in SDP are now completed and the next action plan is made by SMC themselves with support from local NGO. Parents reviewed the learning status of their children regularly through Parent Academic Review meetings. Monthly SMC meetings are regularly streamlined with proper agenda with almost 100% active participation of the members. The SDP is merged with the Village Development Plan. From March 2020 schools remain closed due to Covid 19 Pandemic. Parents in this village realized that there will be a major learning loss if the school will remain closed for a long time.

Also, they have limitations for online education as many parents do not have android phones and internet connectivity to have online classes for the students. So, immediately meeting was conducted, and the decision was taken that learning of children should continue in small groups and must be supported by the active parents. So, four study groups were formed, assigned responsibilities to the youth volunteers in the village itself. Teachers supported these volunteers to prepare an everyday plan for their groups. Village volunteer conducting Abhyas gat. Still, these study groups are active. Irrespective of the covid situation, the villagers of Bilgavhan have ensured the quality of learning for all their children with support from the Teachers, SMC, and local NGO. In just three years, including the pandemic period, a massive transformation was brought about. Now, unlike earlier, not a single child remains absent from the school and study groups. Bilgavhan set an example of ownership of ensuring child learning. The most noteworthy change is that villagers have gained the confidence that they can contribute and improve the quality of learning for their children.



***Fig. 19: Village Volunteer Teaching Children***

### **Tamil Nadu**

In Tamil Nadu, the School Management Committee (SMC) is responsible for all the activities including planning, collection of data under EMIS, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and taking corrective/remedial actions on all the components/intervention of the scheme infrastructural as well as academic and others. The active participation of local authority, SMCs and PRIs and the community can facilitate the process of identifying gaps, highlighting violations and create space for initiating education dialogue and sharing of learning outcomes in order to improve quality of education. Some of the initiatives undertaken at the Primary Level are as follows:

- Parents raised awareness in their community regarding various issues like usage of plastics, and good nutrition, etc.
- Students contributed in creating awareness among their peers and surrounding community through wall painting
- Based on the needs of the school, items like laptops, library books, tables and benches were donated to the school through the initiative of the community
- Awareness activities were conducted for girl children regarding Health and Hygiene
- Other community initiatives taken in building classrooms and toilets in the school as per the requirements
- Self-defense classes and awareness drives were organised for girl children
- Free dental camp was conducted for the students in the school
- Through initiatives of SMC, classrooms were renovated
- Continuous interaction between the parents and SMC members

## **UNICEF SUPPORTED PROJECTS**

The involvement of community members in school is particularly useful to mobilize financial, material, and human resources. Community members can also participate in changing the community's attitudes toward schooling. School Committee members can visit reluctant parents, explain the benefits of education and convince them to enrol their children to school. They may help the school authorities, as well as local and national authorities, to identify factors contributing to educational problems such as low enrolment, for instance, in Malawi, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania. Tools such as the Community-based Education Management Information Systems (C-EMIS) can be used by the community members. Indeed, the C-EMIS is a decentralized tool used by community members to collect information about marginalized children in and outside the school system, which acts as a complement to the national EMIS, and that has been piloted in countries such as Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan (with the support of Save the Children and UNICEF).

### **AFTER SCHOOL MULTI FAMILY GROUPS: F.A.S.T. (FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS TOGETHER) and F.A.M.E. (FAMILY EDUCATION)**

McDonald and Moberg conducted a randomized controlled trial to evaluate a parent engagement strategy with Latino parents of elementary school children. Ten urban schools serving low-income children from mixed cultural backgrounds participated. Classes of children were randomly assigned either to an after-school, multi-family support group (FAST: Families and Schools Together) or to receive eight behavioral parenting pamphlets with active follow-up (FAME: Family Education). There is no set curriculum for the FAST project, and up to 60% of the provision may be changed to fit cultural preferences. Of 180 Latino parents assigned to FAST, 90% came once and 85% graduated. Two-year follow-up teacher data were collected for 130 Latino children. Significant differences were found in favor of an assignment to FAST rather than to FAME, particularly in relation to academic performance and classroom behavior, including aggression and social skills. The difference in attendance between the two groups was marked: of the 80 Latino families assigned to the FAST programme, 90% attended at least one session, and of these, 85% attended at least five sessions and therefore graduated from the programme. These families then attended on average 9.9 parent-led family support groups over the next two years. Of the 50 Latino families involved in FAME, all were contacted with booklets, mail shots and phone calls but only 4% attended the FAME formal lecture. After two years, teachers were asked to evaluate the children, without knowledge of whether their families had been involved in the FAME or FAST programmes. Teacher reports showed that FAST students had significantly more social skills, exhibited less aggressive behavior in the classroom and had better academic skills than those whose families had attended the FAME programme. The evidence from McDonald and Moberg suggests that after-school, multi-family groups can

increase parental involvement and, in turn, help to improve attainment outcomes for disadvantaged children. An evidence-based model that looks to build relationships across the family, the school, and the community can improve outcomes for low- income, culturally marginalized families..

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## KEY LEARNINGS

Above diverse examples shows that parents and community could be a strategic partner in achieving the goals of foundational literacy and numeracy under NIPUN Bharat Mission. They should be meaningfully engaged in this process by creating various platforms and opportunity. Some key lessons which we could draw from above practices are:

### **Strengthening Existing Institutions created for Community Participation**

Existing institutions like education sub-committee under Panchayati Raj and SMC under RTE act should be followed. Members of these committees should be made aware about their roles and responsibilities. They should actively discharge their responsibilities in school management, school improvement plan, fund management, joint audit etc. This will bring school and community closer as these committees be design consists elected people from parents and community only. To create a climate of collaboration and trust, schools/panchayats need to create spaces for parents and community to voice their ideas/concern through a process of dialogue and consultation. Some of the measures for this could be doing PTM or SMC meetings at parent/community's convenient time, holding large community meeting in community itself, invite community members for interaction with children on their occupation (farmer/carpenter/postmen/defense personal, etc.). A pool of community volunteers or volunteers from 'Vidyanjali' can be used to catalyze community participation in school education. They can be engaged in connecting with parents and guide them how can they engage with child at home. They can be provided training and resources to support this.

### **Capacity Building of Stakeholders**

As a system we need to build this thought process among our teachers, school staff, education functionaries that parent and community are co-partners in education journey of a child. And they must be engaged meaningfully in this process. This could be done through designing orientation training for teachers, school staff, and education functionaries that how and why engagement of parent and community is important in child's learning. Some good case studies could be shared with them that how such collaboration brings positive results.

### **Innovative in Outreach**

It is important for school that they come out with innovative ideas to connect with parents and community. In Indian context, where our government schools largely cater to first generation learners, this initiative must be taken by the schools/panchayats. Apart from regular home/community visits, use of technology can be explored to expand the outreach and quality of engagement. Others could be doing meetings in community itself. Parents and community could be engaged in school events and can be assigned responsibilities either for arrangement of

resources or performance of local art/folk/music/vocation, etc. Further, community can ensure that all children undergo regular health check-ups and nutritious meal is served to children in school. Community can play important role ensuring that all children regularly attend school particularly girls and children from socio economic disadvantaged category)

### **Resource Development**

Covid 19 pandemic particularly taught us that home learning is very important in child's learning. But in our context in government schools where most of the parent illiterate or have no idea how to support child at home, there is need to develop good resources and material around it and then guide parents how to use it. Similarly other resources can be developed for their awareness.

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