

Community Monitoring Process of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009

A Photo Documentation

Centre for Policy Research
New Delhi

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This photo document is part of a larger exercise on documenting the '**Community Monitoring**' process of the **Right to Education Act (RTE)** that was rolled out by the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) in the year 2010 and was supported by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. It accompanies the report, '**Community Monitoring Process of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009' – A Process Document**'.

While community monitoring in Education is relatively new, it has already shown tremendous potential in transforming the delivery of education in India. Its strength lies in the idea that monitoring can best be achieved by the rights-holders themselves through a system that empowers them to provide feed-back to the relevant authorities on the status of implementation of the Act. This also involves building a culture of dialogue amongst the people and with the administration. Based on these notions NCPCR conducted a pilot in 12 States across the country between 2010-2013, involving several local groups and the community itself in monitoring their schools under the RTE Act. Intensive training was provided by NCPCR for the purpose and the pilot rolled out over roughly 2 years. It generated enormous enthusiasm in those who were a part of it and also gave many a platform and space to voice their concerns. The outcomes of this initiative were thus many and varied – ranging from improved school timings and teacher attendance to construction of new buildings, better mid day meals and functional School Management Committees (SMC)

While the pilot has come to end its spread, potential and success can be seen through the pictures in this document. We would therefore like to thank the following organisations for contributing photographs to this document and for helping us bring alive to the reader – the beginnings of the community monitoring process in education in India.

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- Institute for Human Rights Education (IHRE) - *Madurai, Tamil Nadu*
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Kiran Bhatt, Paras Banjara and Priyanka Varma
December 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Background	01
2. Training	05
3. Publicity & Awareness	15
4. Schools under the Scanner	33
5. Community Meetings	45
6. Focused Discussions with Children	53
7. Household Visits	59
8. Shiksha Samvad	63
9. The Facilitators & Monitors	73
10. Key Features of the Right To Education Act 2009	77

1. BACKGROUND



The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 places the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the Right to Education Act on the National Commission of Protection of Child Rights [NCPCR]. Section 31 of the Act states the NCPCR will:

- Examine and review the safeguards for rights provided by or under this Act and recommend measures for their effective implementation
- Inquire into complaints relating to a child's right to free and compulsory education
- Take necessary steps as provided under sections 15 and 24 of the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act

In fulfilling its mandate of monitoring the Act, the NCPCR took the view that monitoring can best be achieved by the rights-holders themselves through a system that empowers them to provide feed-back to the relevant authorities on the status of implementation of the Act. In order to do so, one of the initiatives taken by NCPCR was a pilot of 'Community Monitoring' in 12 States across the country.

In this pilot, monitors were identified from the 12 selected states. They were trained through the year on various aspects of the Act and on the monitoring process developed by the RTE team at NCPCR.

Broadly speaking the process involved the following steps:

- Collecting information from the government, schools and the community. The latter two sources were primary sources of information obtained through visits to the schools and households of the area.
- Collating this information in a comprehensible manner for the community.
- Corroborating the information with the community to verify and capture violations in the RTE Act.
- Presenting the findings to the local administration and eliciting a response.

In developing the tools for this exercise, a series of meetings and then trainings were held. The monitors visited schools on a regular basis to check compliance of the various entitlements under the RTE 2009 and also knocked on household doors to capture the data on out-of-school children. They held several community meetings and conducted a colorful and creative publicity and awareness drive. Dialogues were initiated with the government and the administration at different levels to address the issues that emerged in the monitoring process.

This document attempts to visually capture a first-of-its-kind monitoring process of 9^[1] of the pilot states. It undertakes a photographic journey that walks one through the trainings of community drawn monitors, into classrooms and villages in far flung corners of India and right up to face-to-face dialogues with government. The photos have primarily been taken between 2011 and 2012 and contributed by the participating organisations.

^[1] Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh



A community meeting - *Bhabhua, Bihar*

2. TRAINING



Training was an important part of the pilot in monitoring the RTE Act. All trainings conducted were hands-on. They consisted of classroom trainings as well as an intensive field component where the participants were required to undertake school visits, meet teachers, School Management Committee members and parents, talk to the children and hold meeting with the community. A total of 11 trainings (4 by NCPCR across State groups and 7 by State teams in their respective areas) were conducted and 492 people were trained in 12 states.

Amravati, Maharashtra

January – February 2011

A hands-on training was organised in the District of Amravati, Maharashtra on the process of conducting a social audit. The training consisted of 2 days of orientation on the methodology and formats developed by the RTI Division at NCPCR, followed by 6 days in the field testing the formats. The last 2 days were then spent in de-briefing and finalisation of the formats and methodology based on the experience. 80 persons identified from 9 States participated in the training and conducted social audits in 10 Panchayats of 2 Blocks (Chikaldhara and Nandgaon Khandeshwar) in Amravati District. These persons belonged to 7 different civil society organisations. Official information on various parameters of RTI implementation was obtained from the District Administration for the schools in the selected Panchayats. 10 teams were formed and sent to 10 selected Panchayats in the 2 Blocks. Apart from filling in the pre-designed checklists the teams also verified the official information through physical verification at the schools and in community meetings.



An ex-accountant explaining the difference between a financial audit and a social audit



Presenting the idea of Community Monitoring



Trainer elucidates how to collect information through the use of formats



Participants from 9 states at the 10 day hands-on training



The State of Uttar Pradesh had an all-women team attending the training



Participant sharing his experience of conducting community meetings



A resource person from Rajasthan steering a session during the training

Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh

October 2011

In Dharamshala the 6 day training was organised for 30 participants from 3 states on the concurrent monitoring process. The concurrent exercise involves a continuous, on-going process wherein the entitlements of the Act are monitored almost on a daily basis. The participants also undertook a day and a half of field work and visited schools where they collected information, held public meetings to spread awareness about the Act and spoke about the monitoring process.



Participants from Rajasthan, Odisha & Karnataka at the training on the concurrent monitoring process



Participants observing how to hold Community Meetings during fieldwork

Udaipur, Rajasthan

December 2011

Over 100 participants from Rajasthan and Orissa were trained in the social audit process. A 7 day training was conducted, which included 3 days of field work. Education officials were also invited at the end of the exercise to hear the experiences of the participants from the field.



Participants from Rajasthan, Odisha & Karnataka at the training on the social audit process

Bhabhua, Bihar

September 2011

25 Panchayat facilitators in each state were trained on both the social audit and the concurrent monitoring processes. Panchayat facilitators were locals selected by the nominated organisation and sometimes even by people themselves to monitor the local schools. Their work comprised visiting schools regularly and checking for non-compliance of the RTE Act. They were also instructed to take villagers along with them for these visits. Here in Bhabhua, a district bordering UP in Bihar, the training lasted three days with the first day spent on understanding formats and the rest on the field visiting schools, filling formats and holding community meetings.



Panchayat Facilitators at the training on the social audit process



Training of Panchayat facilitators - *Dharur, Rangareddy, Andhra Pradesh*



Training Social Audit Committees - *Andhra Pradesh*

Rangareddy, Andhra Pradesh

September 2011

The participants in this training were mainly the Panchayat facilitators from the Districts of Rangareddy and Kurnool. The Panchayat facilitators were trained on how to fill the formats for concurrent monitoring and also undertook school visits for a practical experience of the same. An innovation of the Andhra Pradesh team was to form social audit committees in every village. Social audit committees comprised 6 members of the community who over a period of time were trained to monitor schools themselves. This innovation was an excellent example of the community monitoring the schools.

Bangalore, Karnataka

December 2011

At the 5 day training in Bangalore on social audit, the focus was on monitoring schools in an urban context, where 16 people were trained from partnering organisation SICHREM. The participants visited 3 schools and filled the social audit formats; and a community meeting was also held by the trainers for the participants to observe and learn how to conduct one.



Participants are all cars at a presentation on the social audit process



The Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Chairperson also attended the training on the first day to share the Commission's work and collaborate with the monitoring process.

Resource person from Delhi sharing his experiences of monitoring RTE in an urban context



Discussing the importance of information collection - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



Discussing how to fill forms - *Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh*

Working with Information

Collecting and collating information is an extremely important part of monitoring. It involves not only collecting and understanding data but also collating and presenting it in a manner that the right-holders are able to comprehend and consequently participate in its verification. Access to information itself is an empowering process for the community.



Corroborating official information with data collected - *Udaipur, Rajasthan*



Explaining how to present data during a training *Nuapada, Odisha*



Working groups discussing formats in detail *Amravati, Maharashtra*



Collating information in predetermined formats - *Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh*

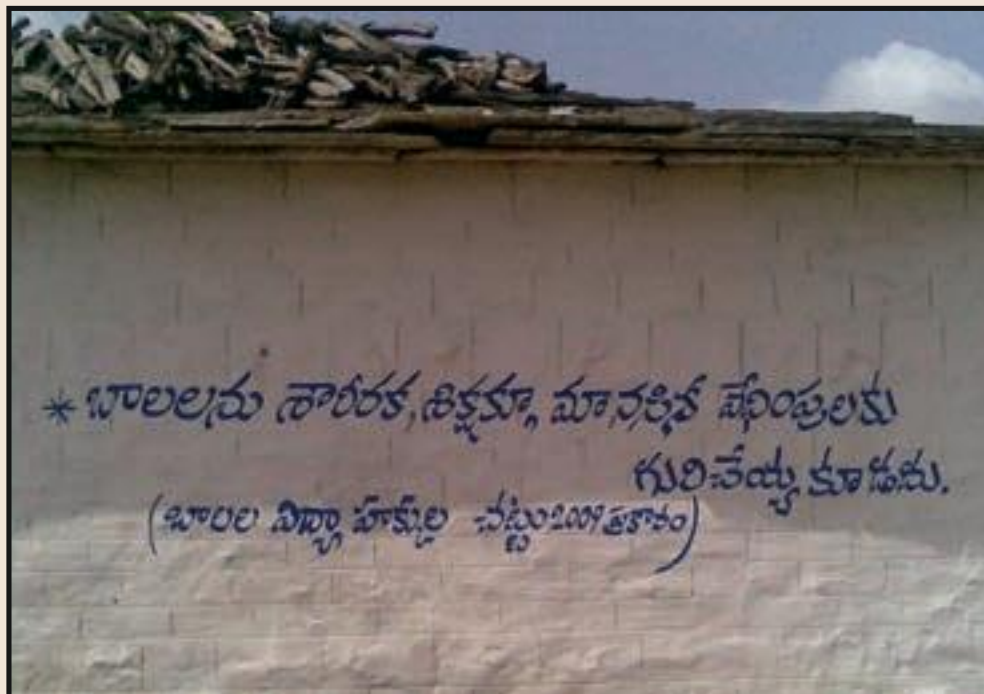


Explaining the process of data collection - *Amravati, Maharashtra*

3. PUBLICITY & AWARENESS



The community monitoring process has enabled large scale publicity of the RTE Act. Each monitoring group took up extensive awareness campaigns on RTE, using various forms of communication: Parchas in 11 languages (Marathi, Hindi, Tamil, Assamese, Bodo, Kannada, Telugu, Bundeli, Oriya, Bengali, Manipuri) on the RTE Act were developed and distributed in the community, given to school and district level administrations to be displayed and used. Traditional forms of communication such as the phad, street plays, songs, and slogans to spread information on the RTE Act, 2009 have been used across all the 12 states. Newsletters in Bundeli in Uttar Pradesh and Kalajathas in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh have also been developed.



A wall writing on the ban of Corporal Punishment under RTE - *Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh*



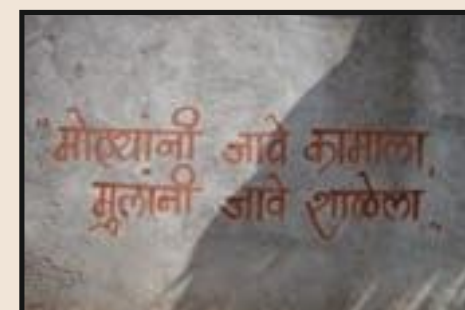
"Just like the Right to Live, is the Right to Education" - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



"It is everybody's slogan now - Right To Education is ours now" - *Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh*



Form School Management Committees" - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



"Adults should go to work, children to school" - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



"Full participation of the society and government is necessary for children to attain complete education" - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



"Every child now has a right to education, no corporal punishment instead love" - *Sehore, Madhya Pradesh*



Organising community meetings was an important part of publicity awareness - *Sorei, Madanwara, Uttar Pradesh*



A play organised in a school on the Right To Education Act 2009 and its entitlements - *Rajasthan*



Meetings were also organised at corner teashops or where a group of people were already present - *Alwar, Rajasthan*



The traditional *Phad* being used to mobilise people for a community meeting - *Banrola, Birdha, Uttar Pradesh*



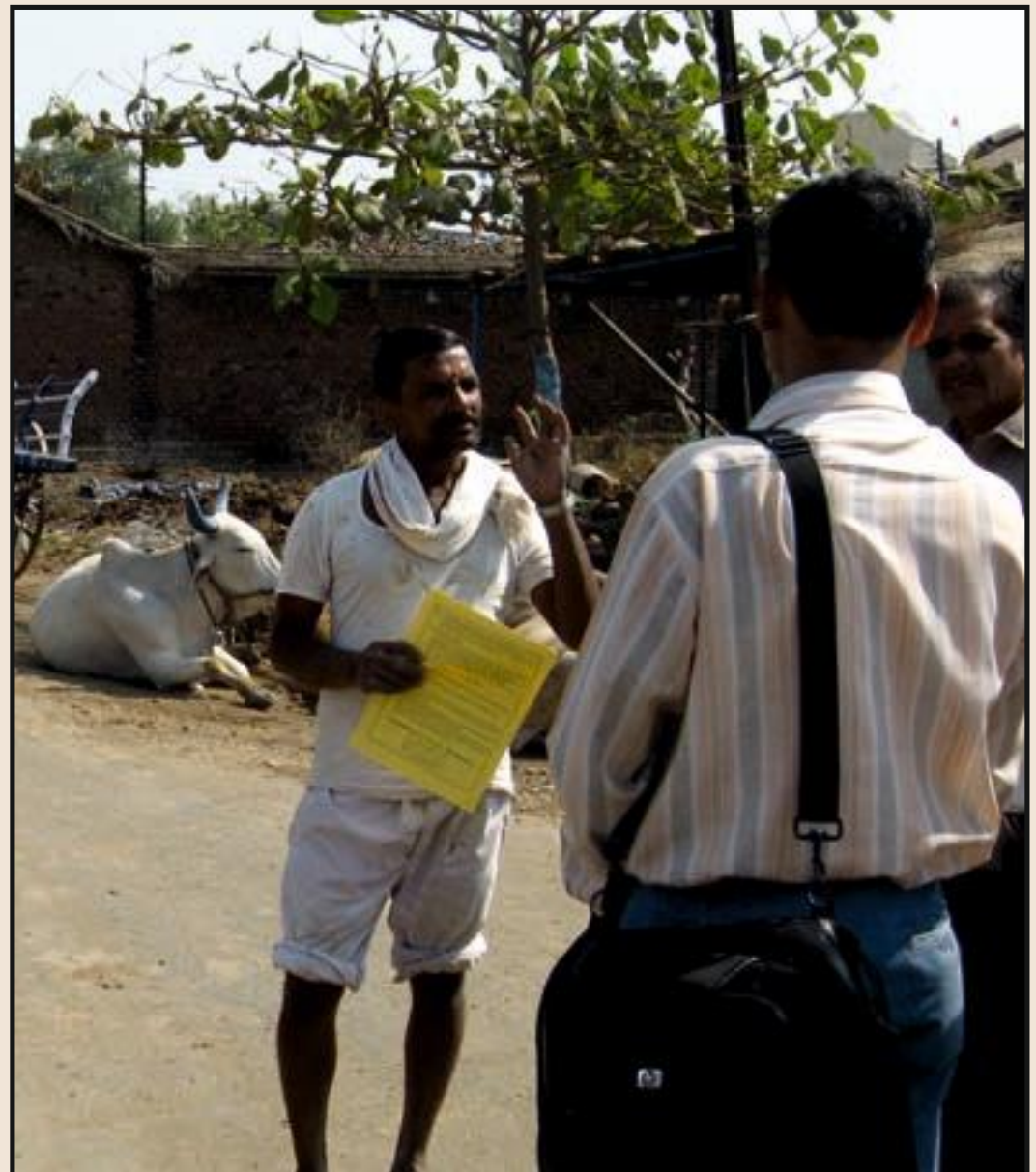
Meeting with Children - a young girl reading out a handbill on the Right To Education Act 2009 - *Maharashtra*



Traditional awareness methods like the *Phad* were used in Uttar Pradesh by the monitoring team; one such *Phad* being explained through story-telling to participants at a training - *Udaipur, Rajasthan*



An 8 page weekly local language newspaper - Khabar Laheriya, published by rural women in Lalitpur, UP spread awareness on RTE and update villagers about their local schools. It reaches over 500 villages of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar



Monitors interacting one-on-one - Amravati, Maharashtra



Parchas made a powerful impact on women; a mother reads one intently - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



Distributing handbills on the Right To Education Act 2009 - *Alwar, Rajasthan*



Handouts detailed provisions of the Act and solutions for non-compliance



Pamphlets explaining the entitlements under the Right To Education Act 2009 were also distributed - *Alwar, Rajasthan*



Women pouring over the *Parchas* distributed in a slum - *Bangalore, Karnataka*



Cycle rallies were organised with children's participation to spread awareness on the Right to Education Act 2009 - Udaipur, Rajasthan



Various important days, like Children's Day, were used to create publicity and awareness, here a rally being held - Nuapada, Orissa



Theatre and Communication Workshop *at VishwaBharati, Shantiniketan, West Bengal*

Theatre, as a traditional form of communication has always been useful and effective in building social awareness. NCPCR, as part of its publicity and awareness efforts decided to use this tool of communication to build awareness and understanding of the RTE Act.

A theatre and communication workshop was organised with Ms. Tripurari Sharma, Professor, National School of Drama, at Vishwa Bharti, Santiniketan between November 20 and 30, 2011.

35 artists from 10 states were invited to develop various RTE-related publicity and awareness material that was to be used as part of a communication campaign in the 12 pilot states.

The workshop saw creative brainstorming and provided the participants an opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences on education. Over the course of ten days, songs, street plays on RTE and other props were created; sessions on origami and puppetry were also held.

The campaign not only hoped to raise awareness on specific entitlements of the Act, but also create a forum for debate and encourage an emotional connection with the people towards a commitment to providing quality education to all children. It was felt that an important and critical space, such as theatre, must be used to ensure that the Act reaches everyone, in their language and context.



Thespian Tripurari Sharma shares some anecdotes from her student years



Going down memory lane - participants share experiences from their school days



Artists from West Bengal and Odisha - enacting a classroom scene



Behind the scenes-participants put together props in between rehearsals



Shiv Nayal, theatre artist and social activist, conducts a class on Origami



An introduction to Forum Theatre - explored in the context of education

Forum Theatre was conceptualised by Augusto Boal. Performance here is not confined to the stage. In this, theatre members of the theatre team select, construct, and narrate a social problem from their daily life. With artistic direction, this play is taken to an audience who must now find a solution to the problem. Passive spectators then become engaged spectators. Spectators come on stage to enact the solutions they have thought of, debating with trained activists about the feasibility of the solutions suggested. Thus individuals publicly engage in tackling a problem that has thus far provoked the most profound cultural silence and acceptance. This exercise gradually suggests possibilities for liberation from that oppression in real life

Source: www.janasanskriti.org/muktadharareport.pdf



Artists from Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh belt out a tune



Artists from Assam perform a humorous play on a politician's visit to a government school



Making papier maché puppets to be used as tools for communication on the Right To Education Act 2009



Ram Nivas, artist and professional puppeteer from Tilonia, Rajasthan puts the finishing touch



Many faces of art



Artists from Delhi and Odisha convey messages on the Right To Education Act 2009



School children enjoy the unexpected entertainment



Community members flock to a puppet show conveying monitoring aspects of the Right To Education Act 2009



A sneak peek - artists rehearse before the finale



The final performance

Local and National Media Coverage

The use of the media in the process helped tremendously. It helped spread awareness, increase accountability and also alerted various authorities. Sometimes immediate official action followed media reports.



“Schools make children cook hot meals”



THE TIMES OF INDIA, BANGALORE
FRIDAY, MAY 25, 2012

7

Social audit throws up shockers in 47 schools

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bangalore: Students not availing of SC/ST scholarships because getting a caste certificate was a cumbersome procedure, girls having to use public toilets because their schools did not have toilets for them, and computers dumped in a room — these were the startling revelations of a social audit conducted by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPR) in collaboration with the South India Cell for Human Rights Education and Monitoring (SICHREM), on the implementation of the RTE Act. The exercise covers 47 schools across five wards in the city.

Releasing the findings to the media on Thursday, Gangadhara Reddy N, district coordinator,

SERVICES 'BOOKED': Students have to do all kinds of work

social audit, said the most shocking finding is getting children to clean toilets, and carry and wash utensils used for the midday meal. "As there are no Group D workers (ayahs) employed, despite the government's instructions, children are used to clean the campus and girls are also used as domestic help. This is a serious violation."

The audit revealed that parents had to spend anywhere between Rs 500 and Rs 1000 for a scholarship worth only Rs 250. The law requires the certificate to be renewed every five years. Among other findings, children got uniforms that did not fit them, and there were many complaints of free bus passes not being given to students.



“Dialogue on education with officials”



“Teachers draw salaries not having worked a day for 3 years”



“Convention on Right to Education organised to spread awareness among Education officials”



“School finally gets space for their school building”



“Teachers will now have to reach school on time”

9/5 '13

New means of monitoring - The Hindu

Today's Paper » NATIONAL

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New means of monitoring

Aarti Dhar



Photo: K.R. Deepak

Moving away from the much-hyped practice of social audits of government schemes for accountability, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has adopted 'samvaad' or dialogue as means to make authorities answerable to the people and, at the same time, resolve issues associated with the implementation of the Right of the Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 at the ground level.

What started as a pilot project in just one district of 10 states last year has now been made mandatory in three States and there is a huge demand for training personnel to hold such dialogues from across the country. Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have issued government orders for holding shiksha samvaad at least once a month at the block level and every quarter at the district level to review and monitor the implementation of the RTE Act. As against the social audits which only highlight deficiencies in the system, samvaad tries to resolve the issues locally with the communities and authorities, appreciating each other's constraints.

While at the national level the NCPCR struggles to hold its members back, changes at the ground are now showing. The RTE division of the NCPCR that has been entrusted with monitoring the implementation of the Act, had decided to organise shiksha samvaads as there was not much consultation with the social groups, human rights activists and child rights groups in the implementation of the Act except through the school management committees where participation of the community members was still low because of high level of illiteracy in the rural areas.

The NCPCR trained 492 people for holding shiksha samvaad in turn trained people at the block levels. "The focus now is to build the capacities of the communities to get things done themselves. The impact has been tremendous and the demand is huge," Kiran Bhatta, head RTE division told The Hindu. Instead of just an academic documentation of the RTE implementation we wanted to raise the public consciousness. In Tamil Nadu we have a human rights group involved in this, Andhra Pradesh is taken care of by a child labour group, Himachal Pradesh students have taken over the responsibility while in CP it is a women's group running the show, she said.

In Maharashtra, during the Block level public meeting in Dhamangaon, Maharashtra, it was found that children were being given only part of their incentive. Children from families affected by the large scale farmers' suicide in Vidarbha are given Rs. 500 as incentive as part of the 'Shetkari' package. But, their schools were taking a 10 per cent cut from this incentive from each child. The Block Education Officer immediately passed orders for an immediate refund, and more than Rs. 8000 were returned to 77 students in the school, in early June 2011.

The system looks much more vibrant and responsive than may be ever before in Lalitpur district of Uttar Pradesh. The changes in the schools range from construction of boundary walls to the teachers coming and leaving schools on time.

Last but not the least, the change in attitude of the teachers is a huge change that we have observed in last six months. The teachers, who could initially not accept the fact that they can also be monitored and questioned, have started acknowledging and accepting our presence as the monitors.

Instead of using the usual social audits, the 'samvaad' strategy – a dialogue between the authorities and people – is gaining ground to oversee the RTE Act

www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/new-means-of-monitoring/article2649300.ece?css=print

9/5 '13

Best implementation of RTE Act promised - The Hindu

Today's Paper » NATIONAL » TAMIL NADU

Published: February 9, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: February 9, 2012 04:33 IST

Best implementation of RTE Act promised

Special Correspondent

Consultation meeting on implementation held



Ajay Yadav

Collector Ajay Yadav has promised that the district administration will take steps to implement the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009 in the best manner in Vellore district.

Presiding over a consultation meeting on the implementation of the RTE Act at the Collectorate here on Wednesday, Mr. Yadav said the Act, under which free and compulsory education should be given to all children in the 6-14 age group, is being implemented in an exemplary manner in Tamil Nadu.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has been constituted to monitor the implementation of the RTE Act and make suitable recommendations to the Central and State governments on the implementation. Steps were being taken in Vellore district to provide free and compulsory education under the Act to the children in the targeted age group.

A social audit is to be undertaken in the village panchayats in the Anaicut, Katpadi, Gudiyatham and Alangayam panchayat unions to monitor the implementation of the Act in respect to the stipulation for provision of sufficient drinking water and toilet facilities, and construction of compound walls wherever necessary in the schools located in the above unions.

The Collector discussed with NCPCR officials, and officials of the Education Department and the Child Labour Abolition and Support Scheme (CLASS) the need to enrol children of the school-going age in schools, encouraging the implementation of the education schemes for children, monitoring the quality of nutritious meal served in schools, provision of drinking water and toilet facilities and taking steps to ensure regular attendance of the children, on the advice of NCPCR.

R. Sokku, State Coordinator-RTE Act, Sriranjani, Member, NCPCR, Henri Tiphagne, Tamil Nadu State Representative of NCPCR, S. Bhaskar, District Coordinator (Social Audit), RTE Act, Vellore district, Pon. Kumar, Chief Education Officer, A. Madhi, CBO (SSA), Menaka, Assistant Director of Village Panchayats, Rajapandian, Project Director (CLASS), Saravanan, Personal Assistant (Nutritious Meal Scheme) to the Collector, and M. Vijayakumar, District Information and Public Relations Officer, were present.

www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/best-implementation-of-rte-act-promised/article2674316.ece?css=print

சிவகங்கை மாவட்டம் கல்லல் பகுதியில் அடிப்படை வசதியில்லாத பள்ளிகள்

சிவகங்கை, ஜன 31-
சிவகங்கை மாவட்டம் கல்லல் ஒன்றியத்தில் இலவச கல்வி உரிமைச் சட்டத்தை நிறைவேற்றுவது தொடர்பான ஆலோசனைக்கட்டம் மாவட்ட ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் பிரமன் தலைமையில் நடைபெற்றது. இக்கட்டத்தில் கல்லல் வளர்ச்சித்துறை ஆணையாளர் ரகுவீரகணபதி உதவி கல்வி அதிகாரிகள் சத்திரன், சகந்தி ஞானவரம், நரியங்குடி ஊராட்சித் தலைவர் மல்லிகா, துணைத்தலைவர் அழகன், நரியங்குடி ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் ராதிகா மற்றும் கல்வி அதிகாரிகள் உள்ளிட்ட பலர் கலந்து கொண்டனர். இக்கட்டத்தில், பேசிய இலவச கல்வி உரிமைச் சட்ட ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் தலித், பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட மாணவ, மாணவிகளுக்கு வழங்கப்படும் உதவித் தொகை 76 குழந்தைகளுக்கு வழங்கப்படவில்லை. பொன்னாகுடி பள்ளி இடித்து விழும் நிலையில் உள்ளது. கன்னியப்பட்டு, மேல்குடி, கிய பள்ளிகளில் சத்துணவுக் கூடங்கள் மோசமாக உள்ளது. ஆலங்குடி அரசு உயர்நிலைப்பள்ளி வகுப்பறைக்கட்டிடம் மோசமாக உள்ளது. கண்டர மாணிக்கம் மெய்யம்மை ஆச்சி பெண்கள் உயர்நிலைப்பள்ளியில் அடிப்படை வசதிகள் இல்லை என பல்வேறு பிரச்சனைகளை கட்டிக்காட்டினார். இக்கோரிக்கைகள் மீது அதிகாரிகள் நடவடிக்கை எடுப்பதாக அதிகாரிகள் உறுதி அளித்தனர்.

“Schools in Kallal block, Sivagangai district lack basic facilities”

கல்லல் ஒன்றியத்தில் இடிந்து விழும் நிலையில் இயங்கும் பள்ளிகள்

சிவகங்கை, மார் 3: கல்லல் ஒன்றியத்தில் அடிப்படை வசதியில்லாமல் பள்ளிகள் இயங்கி வருவதாக இலவச கல்வி உரிமைச் சட்ட அமலாக்க குழு குற்றச்சாட்டியுள்ளது. இலவச கல்வி உரிமைச் சட்டம் நிறைவேற்றுவது தொடர்பான ஆலோசனை கூட்டம் கல்லலில் நடந்தது. மாவட்ட ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் பிரமன் தலைமையில் தார், ஒன்றிய ஆணையாளர் ரகுவீரகணபதி, உதவி கொடக்க கல்வி அலுவலர் கர் சத்திரன், சகந்தி ஞானவரம், நரியங்குடி ஊராட்சித் தலைவர் மல்லிகா, துணைத் தலைவர் அழகன், ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் ராதிகா உள்ளிட்டோர் கலந்து கொண்டனர். இலவச கல்வி உரிமைச் சட்ட கல்லல் ஒன்றிய அமலாக்க குழு ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் ரகுவீரகணபதி, உதவி கொடக்க கல்வி அலுவலர் கர் சத்திரன், சகந்தி ஞானவரம், நரியங்குடி ஊராட்சித் தலைவர் மல்லிகா, துணைத் தலைவர் அழகன், ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் ராதிகா மற்றும் கல்வி அதிகாரிகள் உள்ளிட்ட பலர் கலந்து கொண்டனர். இக்கட்டத்தில், பேசிய இலவச கல்வி உரிமைச் சட்ட ஒருங்கிணைப்பாளர் தலித், பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட மாணவ, மாணவிகளுக்கு வழங்கப்படும் உதவித் தொகை 76 குழந்தைகளுக்கு வழங்கப்படவில்லை. பொன்னாகுடி பள்ளி இடித்து விழும் நிலையில் உள்ளது. கன்னியப்பட்டு, மேல்குடி, கிய பள்ளிகளில் சத்துணவுக் கூடங்கள் மோசமாக உள்ளது. ஆலங்குடி அரசு உயர்நிலைப்பள்ளி வகுப்பறைக்கட்டிடம் மோசமாக உள்ளது. கண்டர மாணிக்கம் மெய்யம்மை ஆச்சி பெண்கள் உயர்நிலைப்பள்ளியில் அடிப்படை வசதிகள் இல்லை என பல்வேறு பிரச்சனைகளை கட்டிக்காட்டினார். இக்கோரிக்கைகள் மீது அதிகாரிகள் நடவடிக்கை எடுப்பதாக அதிகாரிகள் உறுதி அளித்தனர்.

“School buildings in Kallal falling apart - findings of RTE monitoring team”

மின்சார கட்டணம் கட்டாத பள்ளிகளின் மின்இணைப்பு துண்டிப்பு

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“School don't pay bills, electricity cut”

4. SCHOOLS UNDER THE SCANNER



As part of monitoring, visiting schools, talking to teachers, observing children and classroom transactions as well as observing infrastructure conditions is crucial to understand how the Right To Education Act 2009 is unfolding and whether the environment is conducive for children to learn. Following are the pictures from visits conducted to over 650 schools in over 439 panchayats.

Children in Schools

Monitors were encouraged to observe classrooms and record what children were doing at various points in the day. The monitors found children engaged in a range of activities; while most of the time they were in class, at other times they were found cleaning the schools, serving or cooking mid-day meals and many a times wandering outside school as well.



Pot-placing before the day begins - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



Children studying in “classrooms” separated by thin air
- *Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh*



Older girls cleaning the school - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



Lack of classrooms sometimes force teachers to teach out in the open - *Bhabua, Bihar*



Facilitator noting his observations about the school - *Udaipur, Rajasthan*



During a group discussion with children - *Madhya Pradesh*



Observing a class being taken - *Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh*



Children open up to a Facilitator at school visits - *Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh*



Let's hear the ABC's and 123's - A Facilitator checks the learning levels - *Udaipur, Rajasthan*



Facilitators interacting with children through games in a school - *Udaipur, Rajasthan*



The ground beneath, the skies above and nothing in between. 2 classes in a school
Tandur, Rangareddy, Andhra Pradesh

Mid Day Meal (MDM)

The MDM programme is the world's largest school feeding programme and aims not only to address the nutritional requirements of children, but also to prove to be one of the significant contributing factors towards their retention in school. However the manner of implementation of this scheme showed several anomalies. Many schools did not have kitchen sheds to cook meals, the food grains received were of poor quality and quantity, the utensils to cook and serve were inadequate, the meals served were often insufficient and not in accordance with the menu.

Furthermore, since most schools do not have appointed cleaners, children were found cleaning the school premises at the end of their lunch session. Some schools did not have cooks appointed either and children were found cooking instead of attending class. The distribution of mid-day meals also showed a blatant picture of the nature and extent of discrimination in practice today.



Something's cooking, and it's by the children
- Amravati, Maharashtra



A cook preparing MDM in a makeshift kitchen shed in a school - Rangareddy, Andhra Pradesh



A cook preparing MDM
- Bhabhua, Bihar



What's for lunch? Children being served MDM
- Nuapada, Orissa

Toilets

One of the most disturbing aspects of school visits across all States was the condition of toilets. Poorly constructed toilets, inadequate number of toilets, lack of separate toilets for boys and girls, non-functional ones owing to lack of proper drainage or water facilities, functional toilets locked for use by teachers only – the pictures reveal all.

The Schedule of the RTE Act mentions that each school must have separate toilets for boys and girls. During the pilot, the Commission expanded the interpretation of this provision to include the aspect of functional toilets which referred to a structure with a door that locked from inside, had water supply and plumbing in working condition.

Crumbling Toilets



Broken toilet doors - Narsullaganj, Madhya Pradesh



Faulty construction - Birdha, Uttar Pradesh



Unfinished construction - Madanwara, Uttar Pradesh



Toilet with no roof or door - Narsullaganj, Madhya Pradesh



Ramshackle toilet - Sakshara, Maharashtra

Dirty and Badly Maintained Toilets



Unusable toilets - *Sakbara, Maharashtra*



Unhygienic surroundings - *Sakbara, Maharashtra*



Clogged toilet bowl - *Sebore, Madhya Pradesh*



Toilets with no plumbing or sanitary fittings - *Majrimasla, Maharashtra*



Toilet with no water facility - *Narsullaganj, Madhya Pradesh*

Locked Toilets



Primary School Midarwaha
- Meheroni, Uttar Pradesh



Ichhwar block - Sehore, Madhya Pradesh



Ashta block - Madhya Pradesh



Upper Primary School - Bankapur, Odisha



Locked toilet - Birda, Uttar Pradesh

Meeting Teachers

The monitoring process requires dialogue with the head teachers and teachers as well. This enabled the Monitors to gauge the level of training and understanding of the Right To Education Act 2009 amongst them, ability to interpret and translate its provisions into a reality and their willingness to co-operate with the process of community based monitoring.



Understanding school records - *Ashta, Madhya Pradesh*



Detailed records were accessed during the monitoring process. Here interacting with a teacher - *Nuapada, Odisha*



Collecting school information from teachers - *Amravati, Maharashtra & Udaipur, Rajasthan*

School Buildings

The Right To Education Act 2009 stipulates a standard for infrastructure like

- All weather building
- One classroom per teacher
- Separate and functional toilets
- Safe, adequate drinking water
- Boundary wall with gate
- Clean, usable playground
- Library

3 years have passed since the Right To Education Act 2009 was implemented and yet schools are far from meeting the stipulated standard.



Cracked wall and ceiling - *Mehrauni*



Two classrooms for classes I to V - *Bhabhua, Bihar*



A school running in a hut - *Madhya Pradesh*



Crumbling school building exterior - *Tandur, Andhra Pradesh*



State of a ramp in a school - *Sehore, Madhya Pradesh*



The bell has rung: 'students' emerge from a classroom
- *Madanara, Uttar Pradesh*



Classroom or storeroom? - *Melapasaalai, Tamil Nadu*

5. COMMUNITY MEETINGS



Community meetings are important to generate awareness on the various entitlements guaranteed to children by the RTE Act as well as make education a collective issue. The school as an institution comes into collective ownership and its improvement becomes a matter of common concern. As part of the community monitoring process, monitors shared data collected from various sources of information (official as well as primary data collected directly by them) and p and take' process led to the emergence of local volunteers from the community who in turn, supported the monitoring team in engaging with schools on a regular basis.

More than 600 community meetings were held by monitors across all States. A small glimpse into the nature of and participation at these meetings...



A Sarpanch along with the Community Monitoring Team discussing the Right To Education Act 2009 with villagers - *Karyarkoil, Tamil Nadu*



A villager sharing his grievances about his village school - *Bhabhua, Bihar*



Planning meeting with villagers on how to monitor their schools - *Sebore, Madhya Pradesh*



Special meetings with women - *Tandur, Rangareddy, Andhra Pradesh*



A late night meeting - *Narsulaganj, Madhya Pradesh*



People gathered to discuss about their local school issues - *Bhabhua, Bihar*



Addressing National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 workers on the monitoring aspects of the RTE Act 2009 - *Manamadurai, Tamil Nadu*



A women's meeting - *Bhabua, Bihar*



Children take active interest in community meetings - *Sehore, Madhya Pradesh*



Community meetings proved to be an important source for information collection and corroboration about the school - *Sehore, Madhya Pradesh*



Verifying information with people - *Nuapada, Orissa*



Meeting with parents - *Nuapada, Orissa*



Community Meetings also provided space to find local solutions to problems faced in the school - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



These meetings also helped in increasing awareness of the people about the entitlements under the Right To Education Act 2009; such as the one here one taking place - *Udaipur, Rajasthan*



Mobilising people for a community meeting - *Nuapada, Orissa*



Focused discussions were also held with the community - *Nuapada, Odisha*



Meeting with School Management Committee members - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



Explaining the entitlements under the Right to Education Act 2009
- *Amravati, Maharashtra*



A facilitator sharing information about the local village school - *Bhabhua, Bihar*

6. FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION WITH CHILDREN



Feedback from children was a crucial component of the monitoring process. A separate method of interaction was devised in order to understand their personal experiences on schooling.

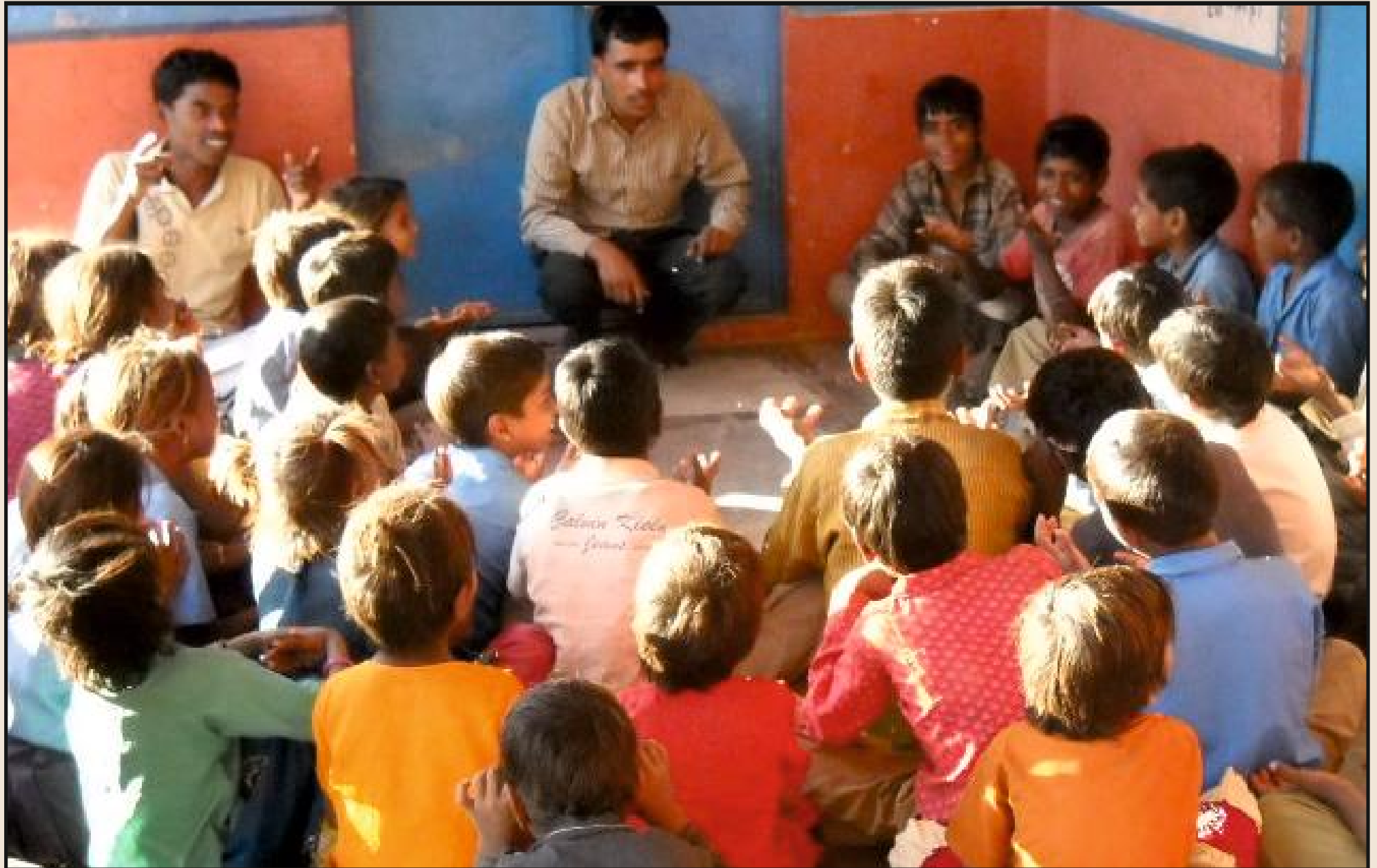
Monitors had to conduct focused group discussions (FGDs) exclusively with children to capture their voices. Children who participated in these focused group discussions were across all classes and included those who were out of school. In many cases the facilitators had to adopt innovative methods to get the children to open out and interact – like games, creative exercises like holding a debate on how the school runs, or playing a true and false game on the status of the school they went to. This not only helped develop a relationship with children but also became an authentic source of information about the school.



A children's meeting - *Madhya Pradesh*



Various strategies were adopted to interact with children ranging from games to quiz competitions to story telling and group discussions



Conversations with children had to be held through games - a facilitator in Udaipur in action



It's all in the game; a Facilitator interacting with children - *Amravati, Maharashtra*



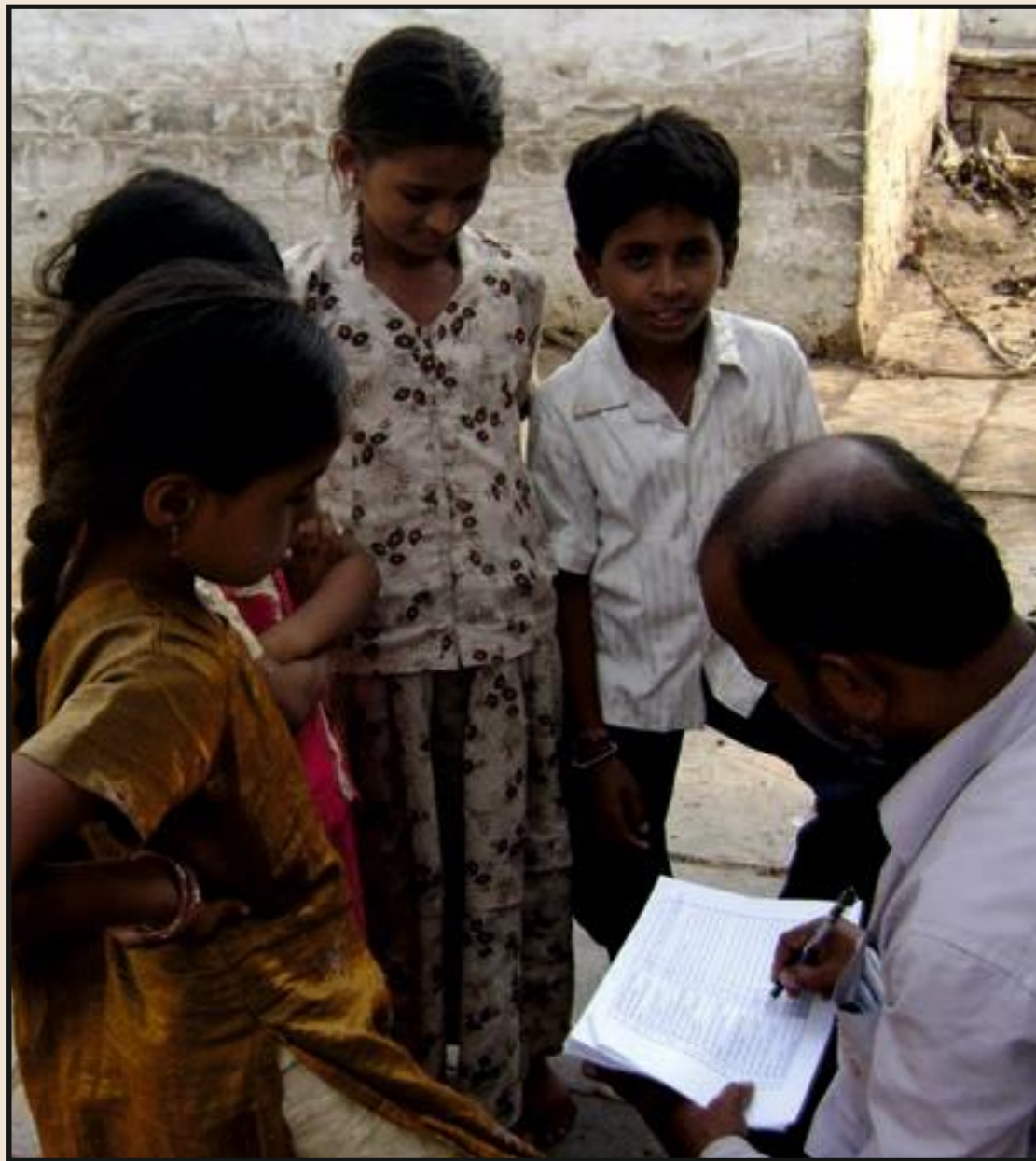
Kids don't lie; taking down information from children - *Rangareddy, Andhra Pradesh*



Sharing information with children on the Right To Education Act 2009 through songs



Children proved to be the best source of information to identify cases of discrimination and corporal punishment



Do you like going to school? Tell me all about it - *Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh*



Don't forget to write this down; children reel off observations of their school at an FGD



Spare the rod; explaining to children about Corporal Punishment

7. HOUSEHOLD VISITS



Enumeration of the total child population between the ages of 6 years and 14 years in a community is crucial before making any plans for their education. This data must be collected by visiting every household and interacting with parents or guardians to collect complete data on all children in that particular household on whether they are in school or out-of-school. Such visits also help reveal the reasons for children being out-of-school. The data collected must be juxtaposed with government data obtained to get the accurate picture of out-of-school children. The RTE Act makes elementary education a universal and fundamental right, therefore no child between the ages of 6 and 14 years can remain out-of-school. The monitors found more than 10,000 children who were out-of-school for various reasons ranging from “never having been enrolled” and “dropping out due to disability and illness” to “being engaged in labour”.



During a household visit - *Udaipur, Rajasthan*



Facilitators in discussion with women - *Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu*



Sharing information about entitlements under the Right To Education Act 2009 - *Alwar, Rajasthan*



Enumerating drop out children - *Alwar, Rajasthan*



Panchayat Facilitator filling the household survey sheet - *Bhabua, Bihar*



Household visits also served useful in spreading awareness and establishing individual contact with people - *Bhabua, Bihar*



Taking down details of children between the age of 6-14 years from their parents - *Alwar, Rajasthan*



Facilitators in discussion with people during household visits - *Rangareddy, Andhra Pradesh*

8. SHIKSHA SAMVAD



No social audit process is complete without kick-starting response from the administration. In order to increase accountability at the lower level of government particularly at the block and district levels, the Commission has recommended conducting Shiksha Samvads ('education dialogues') as part of the concurrent monitoring and social audit process. The concurrent process requires that the Shiksha Samvads are held monthly at the block level and every 3 months at the district level.

The objective of the Shiksha Samvad is to strengthen people's participation and ensure transparency and administrative accountability in redressing grievances locally and within a shorter time frame.

This process has provided an opportunity to establish a relationship between the administration and the community; for both to come together on a single platform, discuss, review and address issues related to RTE.

Some State governments such as Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh have agreed to institutionalise Shiksha Samvads and issued government orders for the same.

The pictures depict Shiksha Samvads being held in Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Odisha.



Shiksha Samvads were organised at regular intervals - *Alwar, Rajasthan*



Shiksha Samvad ki Shuruaat; People from the community attending the block meetings - *Alwar, Rajasthan*



Sharing findings of the community monitoring process with block officials - *Bhabhua, Bihar*



Education became an issue for discussion in these meetings - *Ahwar, Rajasthan*



The Shiksha Samvads were attended by large numbers of women - *Tamil Nadu*



Manamadurai Block Public Hearing - *Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu*



Block Level Hearing at S.Pudur - *Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu*



Social Audit Member sharing school reports before Collector - *Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu*



Public hearing in Kandramanigam Village, Kallal Block - *Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu*



SMC president speaking before jury in a Public Hearing - *Tamil Nadu*



A Block monitor sharing key findings at a Shiksha Samvad *Sinapali, Odisha*



The Block Development Officer presiding over a Shiksha Samvad meeting - *Khariar, Nuapada, Odisha*



Shiksha Samvad - *Khariar, Nuapada, Odisha*



A Block monitor shares findings of the community monitoring process - *Komna, Odisha*



Shiksha Samvads also took the shape of public hearings which were held to redress grievances and make the administration more accountable - *Udaipur, Rajasthan*



These meetings allowed space for dialogue between the people and the administration - *Ichanur, Madhya Pradesh*



A large number of women also attended Shiksha Samvad - *Nasrullaganj, Madhya Pradesh*



Block level officials were required to attend the meetings - *Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh*



A villager registering his complaint regarding his school at a block meeting - *Dhone, Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh*

9. FACILITATORS & MONITORS



Over 400 people from 12 states were identified to engage and undertake monitoring in the selected areas. Nearly all the monitors who were part of the process belonged to the local communities and came from varied socio-economic backgrounds. The structure adopted in the process included - one District coordinator, a Block monitor for every Block and a Panchayat facilitator for every Pancha

Uttar Pradesh team had an all women team, the other states ensured that at least one third of the field personnel were women. Many of them came from eclectic backgrounds like carpenters, panchayat committee members, media stringers to ex-teachers, ex-mahila samkahya workers, trade union leaders etc.

Each one brought to the process the strength of their backgrounds which further shaped and enriched the monitoring process. According to their own admission the process helped each one of them gain confidence and build their self image. Some of them also faced violence and threats during the process – a reinforcement that the aims of questioning authority and enforcing accountability were on track. Each of them came to the conclusion that the process was a powerful one, not only because it attempted to ‘ask, question and monitor’ but it did so with the participation and involvement of the community

These monitors undertook the following tasks – visiting schools, holding meetings with teachers, parents, SMC members, focused group discussion with children, organizing meetings with officials, presenting the findings of the social audit to the administration and eliciting a response. In the process, not only did they make a difference in the schools and communities where they worked but they enhanced their own capacities too. They are now in a position to be used as resource persons for training people and groups outside the pilot area and they have become a valuable resource for the government as well on RTE and its monitoring.





10. KEY FEATURES OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT 2009

1. Every child between the ages of 6-14 years will be enrolled in a neighbourhood school and will receive her right to free and compulsory education in the manner prescribed in the Act.
2. NO child can be denied admission because of inability to produce any document/s.
3. Children/parents will NOT be required to pay fees/funds (cash/kind) for any purpose at any time.
4. NO child can be subjected to corporal punishment or discrimination of any kind.
5. All children must be evaluated on the basis of a system of continuous comprehensive evaluation. NO child can be detained or asked to leave school without completing 8 years of education.
6. Admissions must be age-appropriate; special training must be provided for older children to bring them up to their age competency.
7. Teachers must teach in class for a minimum of 4 hours every day.
8. In a year the School must remain open for :
 - a) 200 days for class 1-5
 - b) 220 days for class 6-8
9. Upper Primary Schools must have subject teachers for Science, Math, Social Studies and Language and part time instructors for Art, Health and Physical Education.
10. In every school there must be :
 - a) One classroom for every teacher and separate room for Head Teacher;
 - b) Adequate, separate and functional toilets for boys and girls,
 - c) Adequate and safe drinking water facility,
 - d) Usable playground and sports equipment
 - e) Books and magazines in the library,
 - f) Kitchen shed for mid-day meals,
 - g) Barrier free access,
 - h) All weather buildings and a boundary wall with a gate or fence.
11. There must be a School Management Committee for every school with $\frac{3}{4}$ parent members publicly elected; List of SMC members must be publicly displayed.
12. School Management Committee members must :
 - a) Monitor the functioning of the school
 - b) Prepare the School Development Plan
 - c) Ensure teacher accountability
13. Every citizen will have the right to register a complaint against any violation of entitlement under the Act.



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