



## ***Updates from Gramin Shiksha Kendra***



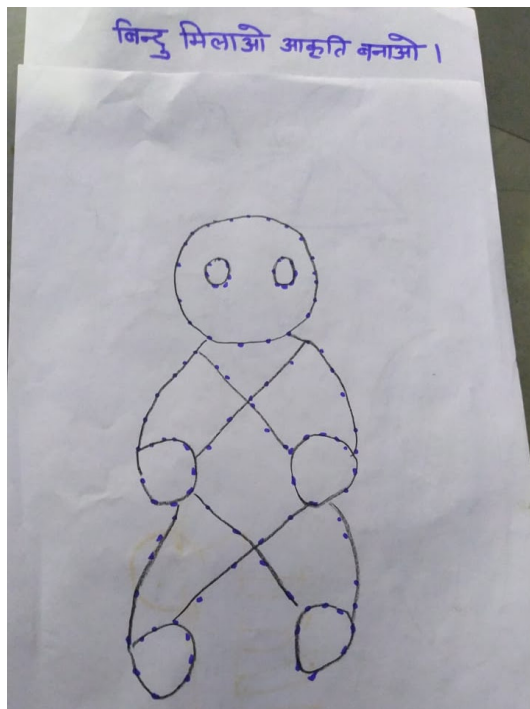
*Dearest friends,*

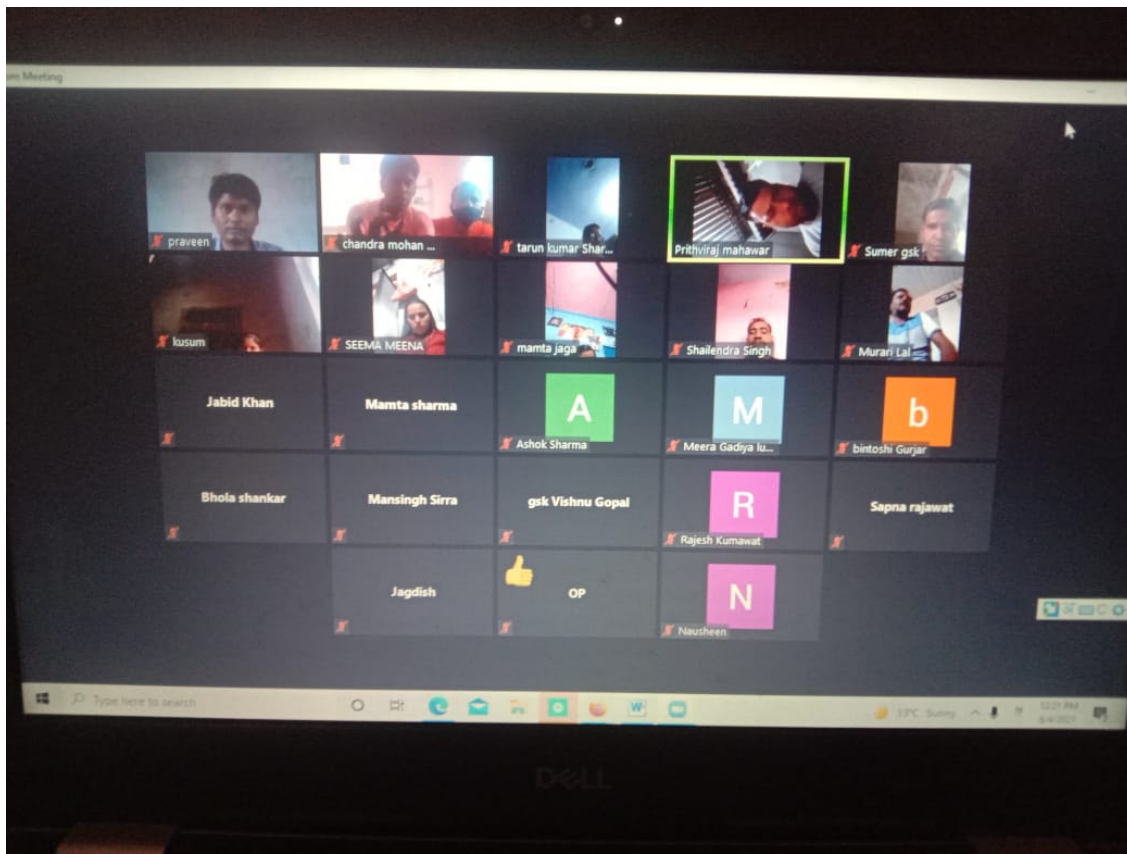
*During these extraordinarily trying times, I sincerely hope that you and your family are safe and well. We had an eventful and busy April- with an enduring focus on innovative academic practices, enhancing the agency of adolescent girls through the Umang programme, building our teachers' capacity, engaging with De-notified and Nomadic Tribes, and strengthening community outreach. May, however, brought with it a fresh series of second wave-induced lockdowns, stopping us in our tracks and forcing us to re-adapt. Your valuable support has kept our morale boosted, helping us continue crucial efforts in the face of unprecedented challenges. As always, I take this opportunity to convey my sincerest gratitude! Read on to learn about our operations in April & May.*

*Best wishes,*

*Gramin Shiksha Kendra*

## Summer Workshop 2021





Remotely connecting everyday to learn together since the beginning of May, in preparation for the new academic year, our faculty is currently attending the annual summer workshop. This month-long online training engages our teachers in myriad discussions and activities to practice and evolve our interactive, child-centric pedagogy! From early primary education to innovative STEAM teaching practices, and English & Hindi language classes, our faculty is brushing up their skills in varied arenas. Pictured are teaching-learning material (TLM) they are developing during the workshop, with resources available at home.

### *A Summer Break Shadowed by the Pandemic*



With the onset of Summer, cancellation of Board examinations and rising number of COVID-19 cases, even in our remote programme areas that remained largely secure during the first wave in 2020- our three Uday Community Schools closed for vacation at the end of April, and other initiatives have been put on hold. Pictured is one of the many meetings held with parents and community members to discuss the decision to close for the Summer, the alarming rate of infection and the need to follow COVID-safety guidelines with renewed vigour.



Before dispersing for the Summer, students of classes VI-VIII across our Uday Schools wrote their final exams, to conclude the previous academic session- the majority of which was marked by the unique learning set-ups of *dhaani kendras*, that replicated our child-centric, activities-based multi-grade/multi-level pedagogy in smaller centres within village communities, when it wasn't safe for schools to be operational.

*'Umang': Enhancing the Agency of Adolescent Girls*



After the cancellation of final examinations for grade 9 at government-run schools, our current cohort of 28 adolescent girls officially wrapped up their academic year. Prior to this, as part of the *Umang* Programme, they attended daily academic and digital literacy classes, and work on life skills development either through modules developed by our teachers post extensive training, or events such as the Sports Camp, Leadership Camp or excursions, aimed at helping them grow into confident, communicative, empathetic and critically-thinking young women. Engagements with them will resume as soon as it's safe to!

*Engaging with De-Notified & Nomadic Tribal Communities*



Prior to current lockdown situation, daily learning sessions were being held with the children of the *Bawri* community (at the *Bawri* and *Bambori bastis*), seeking to provide them a structured learning environment- in an attempt to ease them into eventual enrollment to the teaching, playing and socialising set-ups at nearby government schools. After their success in steadily increasing the attendance of children and engagement from parents, similar learning set-ups have been brought to the *Gadiya Lohars*, an acutely under-resourced and marginalised nomadic community, with daily sessions being held at *Khandar* and *Allapur*. Pictured are children writing and drawing during an activity to promote creative expression.

## Relief Efforts: Ration Distribution Drives



Sawai Madhopur is home to some of the most disempowered communities, including De-notified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs & NTs)- namely *Bhopa*, *Ghadiya Lauhar*, *Moghya*, *Bawri*, *Kanjar*, *Dholi*, *Keer*, *Kalbeliya*, *Bhanjara* and *Bhand* communities, who are rag-pickers,

blacksmiths, folk performers, cattle traders, labourers and sex workers. During COVID-induced lockdowns, these landless labourers and migrant workers are left most vulnerable, with the inability to travel for livelihoods during periods of restriction on movement across villages or door-to-door, lack of access to markets, and halted tourism and social gatherings. For the DNTs & NTs, the pandemic has compounded their already acute socio-cultural and economic marginalisation, severely jeopardizing food security.

We have identified 1750 such families living in the area to help them overcome this situation by providing dry ration kits. Each of the kits is composed of daily commodities (*flour, pulses, oil, sugar, salt and basic spices, sooji, tea leaves, reusable cloth mask and soap*) to last a household of 5 members for almost a month. Including this year's ration relief drive and efforts undertaken in 2020, we have distributed 3500 ration kits in total.

### *Community Outreach Resumes!*



"बावरी व बम्बोरी बस्तियों में गया लोगों का हालचाल जानने... बच्चों ने एक ही बात दोहराई-  
गुरुजी, कब आओगे पढ़ाने?"

- सुरेश चंद, Teacher

By the end of May- as the Summer break moves towards completion and the CoViD second wave begins to show an encouraging declining trend, our different program teams- from the Uday Community Schools, 'Tarang' (early childhood care) and 'Vistaar' (collaboration with government-run schools in the region), to 'Umang' (enhancing the agency of adolescent girls) and our work with De-notified & Nomadic Tribes, are going to check up on their students, parents' communities and colleagues, and do a reconnaissance, as we gear up for the new academic session!

### *Combating Vaccine Hesitancy*

  
Gramin Shiksha Kendra  
**मेरी कोविड-19 के टीके  
से जुड़ी चिंताएं  
जून 2021**



के सौजन्य से।

[www.graminshiksha.org.in](http://www.graminshiksha.org.in)



We have compiled responses to frequently asked questions/common worries regarding the CoVid-19 vaccines, in Hindi, with the aim to disseminate this crucial information among our local communities. Feel free to share [this](#) widely in your own circles as well!

### *Testimonials from the Ground*

Although hoping to step into the new academic session with a sense of normalcy, our teachers cannot help but look back at the unprecedented challenges faced in the last year. Amidst the closure of educational institutions across the country in 2020, GSK's efforts to continually and gainfully engage children in learning meant mitigating the possibility of more than 300 children dropping out. Find below their testimonials-

### *Increasing Awareness Among Our Parents' Communities Regarding the importance of Education*

“Would children forget important concepts necessary for further learning? Will they drop out due to a break from schooling? Will they lose interest in education? With the

closure of schools in accordance with CoViD-safety guidelines, these were the questions causing us great concern. After conversations with members of the community, we noticed that they were plagued by the same! They provided us with solutions such as teaching small groups around the village or giving study material/worksheets to be completed at home. They were worried that children would while away their time and not do anything productive. After discussions at the organizational level, the community themselves made available appropriate and viable locations to set up *dhaani-kendras*. GSK's constant efforts to help reform the education ecosystem by making people more aware and conscious of the importance of education has paid off in the form of their enduring support for our work, even in the face of great adversity."

- Ashok Sharma, Teacher

### ***Ankit's Success Story***

"Ankit is a student of Uday Community School, Girirajpura. His father is a farmer and his mother remains engaged in running the household. The land in front of Ankit's house was one of the identified *dhaani-kendras* that I was teaching at. However, in the initial days, whenever I would take a class, he would run away and disappear! Neither his mother, nor his classmates, were able to help me locate him or get him to attend the study sessions. One day, fortunately, I was able to get a hold of him- I tried to engage in friendly conversation, in an attempt to understand what was bothering him, and why he didn't want to learn and play with his friends. I tried my best to encourage him to come to class the next day. During that day's meeting with my colleagues, I shared my predicament with them and received some advice on how to move forward in such a situation. To my pleasant surprise, the next day, Ankit came to class! While he was still quite unresponsive and not participating actively, I was happy that at least he came. He came with a notebook and pencil, but after taking some time to evaluate his learning levels, I realized that more rudimentary, colourful and activity-based teaching-learning material (TLM) would be of greater use to him. Soon I noticed an enhancement in both his interest as well as performance in class! Even his father exclaimed to me one day, "I don't know what magic you've done, but now Ankit never wants to miss class! In fact, he refuses to go out with us anywhere, concerned that he might miss a study session and fall behind." Ankit's progress during this period is very close to my heart, and is testament to the fact that a lack of GSK continuing crucial efforts would have caused immense adverse impact to our children's education."

- Shailendra Singh, Teacher

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