

Annual Report 2007-08



Gramin Shiksha Kendra

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Gramin Shiksha Kendra

Shikshan mein Gunvat-ta (Quality in Education)

Preface

Gramin Shiksha Kendra(GSK) has been running UDAY Samudayik Pathshala, Jaganpura (Khawa) since July 2004. In July 2005, we have, on the request of the community of Bodal, Mordungri established the second UDAY Samudayik Pathshala at Bodal. The third school with an intention to cater the needs of the urban middle class and popularize the idea of child-centric innovative education system which GSK has been practicing was opened in June 2007 and started with 15 children a small space provided within the organization's administrative office. GSK is slowly but surely growing to meet the challenges that it set for itself. Uday Samudayik Pathshala began as a thatched structure. We have now built eight pucca classrooms for our primary section; from 60 children, we are now working with 300 children; from a three-member team, we are now a 18 -member organization and we have made a strong field-presence in the district as well as in the state. Most importantly GSK has been able to practice its pedagogical principles in true sense in the schools and the glimpse of the positive impact is visible in the schools.

The current financial year has a special significance for we have started to consolidate our pedagogical practices, evaluated our practices whether we are moving in the right direction, developed some school-infrastructure, introduced new subjects in the school, Initiated a new front for rural Youth – Umang (Umang is a collective of youth (15-25 years) seeking to realize their present and prepare for a better future for themselves and their village/country).

The current Annual Report is an attempt to capture all the regular activities, new initiatives and developments during the year.

Introduction

Gramin Shiksha Kendra¹ was set up with the belief that in order to have a more equitable society, there is a need to provide access to good quality education to all children. The idea originated after spending time in the area, talking to the people and visiting the schools. Even in the early nineties, when the idea originated, it was

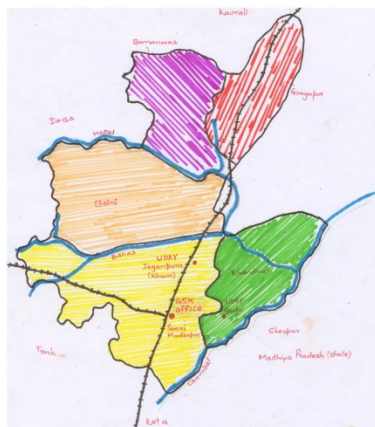
¹ Gramin Shiksha Kendra is registered under Societies Registration Act, 1958 (Rajasthan Act Number 28) and its registration number is **51/Sawai Madhopur/95-96**. The organization is also registered with Income Tax with its PAN Number **AAATG8963C** and TAN Number **JDHG06812B**.

obvious that people saw education as a possible way out of their current life. It was the poor education that the government system offered that kept people away from schools. Visits to schools and interactions with children and their parents indicated that they were not at all happy with the status of the government schools where the school environment was not encouraging and the academic achievements were abysmal. The community could not articulate in clear terms what they were looking for in an education system but could provide enough indicators to develop a vision. To be fair, their exposure to any other kind of education system was also absent. What was apparent to them was that there was a difference in the 'end products' of rural government schools, urban government schools and private schools. This noticed difference is reflected in the increase in the number of private schools and reducing enrolment rates in the government schools.

The vision of GSK therefore is to demonstrate to the community an alternative model of child-centred education so that they are in a position to demand quality education from the government; it is to demonstrate the same to the government system so that they are in a position to appreciate the impact of an alternative approach on the children, especially in terms of attendance, academic achievements and retention levels.

The mission of GSK is to have in the coming ten years 100 schools in Sawai Madhopur and Khandar provide good quality education to children

Area Profile



Gramin Shiksha Kendra works in two blocks (Sawai Madhopur and Khandar) of the district of Sawai Madhopur in Rajasthan. **Sawai Madhopur** in east Rajasthan is best known for Ranthambore Tiger Reserve. It is also one of the most backward districts of the state, especially in terms of education, industry and infrastructure. With the creation of the Tiger Reserve the local communities were affected the most as their grazing and other rights were restricted. There are two major communities - the Gurjars, who traditionally rear animals and Meenas - a Scheduled Tribe, but basically

agriculturists. Tourism was meant to offset some of the losses that resulted from the restrictions from the creation of the national park, but it never happened. Tourism is dominated by outsiders and benefits to the local community, especially the rural community are negligible. That leaves few options apart from agriculture.

I Our Programmes

1. Uday Pathshalas



A. Uday Pathshala Jaganpura

The fourth session of the Uday Samudayik Pathshala, Jaganpura began on 1st July 2007. This academic year the number of children had risen to 172 and many more parents wanted their children enrolled. We had to refuse the community and put them on a waiting list as our resources are limited. We also had cases of a few dropouts, 15 children left the school for one reason or other during the year. This year has also seen a high drop out in teachers. The session started with ten teachers at the school. At the end of the year the number of teachers went down to seven and almost half of the teachers changed. The reasons were various, some left because they got some government job, admission in B. Ed colleges and some female teachers got married and had to leave.

B. Uday Pathshala Bodal

The second session of the Uday Samudayik Pathshala Bodal started with a high increase in the number of children. The number rose to double- from 74 to 142. The community showed a higher level of interest in the processes and identified a pasture land for the school and made a thatched structure of 20x60 square feet. We had to increase the number of teachers to seven. This school also faced similar problems with the teachers as the Jaganpura school. This village was in the mid of action in gurjar reservation movement in June 2007. All the teaching and learning material of the school had been kept in the forest office of the village. During the movement - annoyed

with the police action, the villagers burnt the forest office but only after taking the things of the school out to a safe place.



C. Uday (the urban school)

A school in the urban area of Sawai Madhopur was started in July 2007. This school was opened with an intention to cater the needs of the urban middle class and popularize the idea of child-centric innovative education system which GSK has been practicing. The school started with 15 children and two teachers in a small space provided within the organization's administrative office.



D. New Initiatives at the schools

Extension of the art education: We have never seen fine arts or performing arts as 'extra-curricular' activities. We were keen to include these in our curriculum since inception but lacked the financial and human resources to do so. During the period under review, we have been able to include Carpentry,



Pottery and Theatre as part of the school curriculum for all children. The carpentry and pottery classes are being run by the part-time Resource Persons. We have however been able to recruit a full time teacher for theatre.

We are in the process of developing the curriculum for each of these subjects for all levels. With the presence of a full time teacher, we have made greater progress in theatre as compared to carpentry and pottery.

Teaching at Upper Primary section: From this session ten more of our children, graduated to Upper Primary section. In the start of the session, we faced some difficulties in teaching the upper primary section. During this period, learning from the past experiences, we planned and executed the teaching in the section in sync with the goal of teaching in Upper Primary section. We have initiated the work of development of subject wise spiral of subject-matter content for the Upper Primary section. We propose to recruit separate teachers for the section from the coming academic session.

Theater Group: A group of twenty children and community members went to Paudi Garhwal in a cultural mela. Some 20 teams from

different parts of the country participated in this mela. Our team was adjudged the joint winner of the event.

E. Capacity Building of Teachers

Workshops: Regular fortnightly workshops are being conducted since April 2007 (22 till April 2008). The teachers present the report of the activities done in last 15 days and the work plan for next 15 days. These workshops are also the forum of discussions on academic, personal and administrative matters. Teachers also present the innovative methods of teaching and new TLM in the workshop and the team of teachers approve/disapprove the ideas after long discussions.

Winter Workshop: The winter workshop for this year was organized from 26th December 2007 to 1st January 2008.

F. Infrastructure development

School Building: We are getting closer to having our own building to run the school in Jaganpura. The community generated funds to make a *kuttcha* boundary wall on the school land. Last year we were able to begin construction of four classrooms of 15X20 sq. feet began at the school in June 2006. The cost of construction of 4 classrooms was Rs. 150000. We have been able to complete the construction of all the eight classrooms of the primary section. The construction of remaining four classrooms and cementing and colouring the exteriors was Rs. 180000.

2. Vistaar (The outreach Programme)

Vistaar is an initiative of Gramin Shiksha Kendra to support the process of formation of a teachers' collective and facilitate the process of qualitative improvement in selected government schools of the district. The project was initiated in the month of June 2006 as a joint initiative of Gramin Shiksha Kendra, Save the Children, Finland and Department of Education, Government of Rajasthan. All the three parties had quite a few meetings for coming up to an understanding for the Memorandum of Understanding.

The idea of the project had to be put down because we were not able to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with the state government.

3. Community Initiatives

A. **Kilol:** The annual function-KILOL of Gramin Shiksha Kendra was celebrated as an "Integrated" activity where the children's work was presented and guest children had the opportunity to draw, paint, play

as well. The children and community members from at least 10 villages surrounding Uday Pathshala participated in the event. Government officials, representatives of district education department, representative of PRIs (Sarpanchs), government school teachers, private school teachers and children also encouraged us by their participation.



For us the annual function is the occasion where Gramin Shiksha Kendra demonstrates its pedagogy to all its stakeholders. It also presented a glimpse of the educational activities being done in the UDAY Pathshala.

The most encouraging part of the initiative was the significant attendance of the women from nearby villages. Besides, youth from different villages participated in the programme and three friendly cricket matches with the community members and the team of GSK was organized. The community of the Uday Pathshala arranged for food for some 300 children for two days. It was a joyful event for the team.

- B. **Community Theatre Group:** The theater group of youth initiated last year is now taking up shape. The initiative of youth is called UMANG. The theatre teacher at the school has been helping them understand the basics and minute details of acting, plays, script etc. The idea is to promote creative activities amongst the youth and expression of their thoughts.

4. Training and Support



A forty-five days induction-training programme of teachers was organized 28th May 2007 to 12th July 2007. This training is organized every year for all the new teachers. The total number of participants in the training was 12. Two teachers from Prayatna joined the training.

II New Activities

1. Research

- a. This year we completed a research study *“Revisiting the pedagogical principles and teaching-learning processes at UDAY”* with the support of NISTHA Foundation, New Delhi.
- b. We have also prepared a first draft of the proposed curriculum for pre primary section, primary section and an outline of the upper primary section.

- c. UMANG- (Umang is a collective of youth (15-25 years) seeking to realize their present and prepare for a better future for themselves and their village/country.) initiated.