

Concept Note: Bridging the Learning Gap

Introduction

As many as 1.5 million schools remained closed during 2020 due to the coronavirus lockdown, which saw the study opportunities of 247 million children enrolled in elementary and secondary schools in India damaged, a UNICEF report has found.

The report stated that online education is not an option for many children, as only one in four has access to digital devices and internet connectivity. Pre-COVID-19 crisis, only a quarter of households (24%) in India had access to the internet and there is a large rural-urban and gender divide, the [study says](#) (UN).

“In India, closure of 1.5 million schools due to the pandemic and lockdowns in 2020 has impacted 247 million children enrolled in elementary and secondary schools. In addition, there are over six million girls and boys who were already out of school even before the COVID-19 crisis began,” - UN

While the Covid-19 pandemic has made online education the buzzword, a recent report by the global education network Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) says that the Indian internet infrastructure is still far from ready to support the shift. Only 24 per cent households have access to the internet, according to a 2019 government survey. In rural India, the numbers are far lower, with only 4 per cent households having access. A 2018 NITI Aayog report revealed that 55,000 villages in India did not have mobile network coverage. A 2017-18 survey by the ministry of rural development found that more than 36 per cent of schools in India operated without electricity. The emphasis on technology-driven education is also alienating many children from the underprivileged sections, preventing them from continuing their studies. Even other stakeholders are struggling. Teachers are not always trained and equipped to transition to online teaching.

Challenge

As e-learning becomes the "new normal", the authorities have been taking steps to make digitisation of education accessible and affordable for all. Subsidized Broadband connectivity in gram panchayats is expected to help rural schools provide online education to students who do not have internet access at home. Besides building the digital infrastructure, training has to be given to the teachers to use the system to provide authentic and seamless education to the students. Successful delivery of education is also in question because learning in colleges varies from that in schools. Digital education cannot be applied the same way at every level.

If the Indian education system has to transit to online learning without creating a digital divide, the Centre and state governments must raise the spending on education to at least 6 per cent of GDP. At present, central and state allocations to the sector is less than 3 per cent. Ironically, the education ministry's budget for digital e-learning was slashed to Rs 469 crore in 2020-21-the year Covid struck-from Rs 604 crore the previous year.

In a study conducted where, the income slab of Rs 5,000 to Rs 20,000 per month makes 19.8% of the entries (36 entries) out of which 27.77% of children are not attending the online classes. The major problems faced by 61.11% of this slab are, unavailability of gadgets required for online education for all the children (in case of more than one child), increase in fees charged by the schools plus the high rates of internet connection and the cost of gadgets, poor network connection and difficulty in getting used to the online platform of education.

Solution provided by Gram Vikas Trust

Summary

The fundraiser targets to donate 80 devices in 8 villages towards all students who are involved in all to continue their online classes. Our project school students are hardworking with visions of achievement and social progress. We do not want any student left behind and ensure that they continue education. We want to ensure that our students continue to pursue their dreams unhindered with the same diligence and enthusiasm.

Challenge

The emergence of virtual education during the lockdown seems to have further created a 'class division' among the rich and the poor, especially those from the economically weaker section (EWS). According to the government, in private schools about nearly 10 to 15 per cent of students from the EWS do not have access to the digital medium to attend the online classes. But private schools have claimed that 90 to 92 per cent of their students have access to digital platforms, and most students from the EWS managed to attend the classes. While online learning has opened doors to continued education and innovation in teaching for many, students from lower socio-economic strata, like the ones associated with Government, are losing out on the opportunity to learn and grow. 80% of Government tribal rural students cannot attend online classes due to the absence of smartphones. Seldom, the family has only one phone used by the parents, and the students have to wait till they come back home. To administer our online classes and reach out to more students, we have a massive smartphone requirement.

Solution

The donation drive will help 8 school children and students, who do not have digital resources to get learning opportunities at their homes, with their teachers or volunteers. Apart from this, it will also help in our efforts to overcome the learning deficiencies of all those students who are learning at home through various alternative online mediums. Gram Vikas Trust plans to provide 80 tablet devices and ensure seamless education for these students. Funding from the fundraiser shall be used to obtain smartphones / Tablet from the identified vendor and be equipped to beneficiaries. A smartphone/Tablet is a critical need in order to continue their studies. A digital device could be a valuable game changer for children, youth and women of the less privileged communities across India and transform their future.

Presence in Geographies

GVT possesses 20 years of experience in implementing education programs in Gujrat- India. Since 2015, GVT implemented a project named "Education and Community Program" with

Reach to Teach-UK to improve children's learning outcomes in 70 Villages. Through this project, GVT able to influence the desired results in attendance, parental engagement, and community ownership through structured interventions. These structured interventions led to improved foundational literacy and numeracy outcomes in the students. GVT has a field presence in 236 villages of Bharuch and Narmada, and these all villages are falling under this project, which will create a synergy to implement the project. GVT has already developed community ownership in Attendance Program. GVT is implemented its project by involving people from planning to evaluation. Possesses a strong community footprint to carry out activities in the area. These models and modules can be replicated in the project area.

Adopting a holistic approach to learning:

The program takes a holistic approach towards EdTech – through increasing awareness, on boarding proven solutions, increasing adoption with the support of parents, and making solutions more affordable. Ensuring equitable access for girls is a key focus area of the program

On Boarding:

Gram Vikas Trust, Bharuch is already partner with Byju's whom were chosen through a strict evaluation of their EdTech learning solutions during the pandemic, have been on boarded.

Programme Aim:

The initiative aims to provide access to quality EdTech (Byju's) learning solutions for students from underprivileged communities and change the way students learn at school & home.

Outreach/ student acquisition model

- ✓ Activities for acquiring students
 - Awareness Program
 - Home Visits
 - Follow up
 - Buy in with school

The indicators we measure for success of our programs?

- # of students regular in learning
- # of students achieved grade wise learning outcomes
- # of teachers created learning environment for students
- # of parents supported children to continue their learning

Model of engagement

Activities for acquiring students

- ✓ Awareness Program
- ✓ Home Visits
- ✓ Follow up
- ✓ Buy in with school.

Strategies for nudging students

- ✓ Follow up and supportive supervision
- ✓ Pairing (Online / Social distance)
- ✓ Online Quizzes
- ✓ Rewards

Activities for ongoing online engagement with Parent / Students, Peer group-based support

- ✓ Follow up
- ✓ Sharing of activity to supplement online learning
- ✓ Parental Engagement activity

Offline engagement activities to ensure adoption

- ✓ Engaging with school to share creative works

Project area Schools:

Sr.No.	Name of School	No of Children								Total
		Std 1	Std 2	Std 3	Std 4	Std 5	Std 6	Std 7	Std 8	
1	Zagadia kumar	22	15	21	21	27	30	38	43	217
2	Umarala Kaniya	33	25	32	17	32	33	29	26	227
3	Ranipura Primary	35	20	39	33	31	34	56	47	295
4	Rajpardi Kaniya	21	23	29	29	34	36	32	46	250
5	Vankhatpor Primary	30	26	27	22	23	44	32	38	242
6	Amalzar Primary	11	15	15	17	17	75	62	40	252
7	Dadheda primary	28	12	31	32	34	25	19	24	205
8	Kapalsadi Primary	21	23	29	29	34	36	32	46	250
		201	159	223	200	232	313	300	310	1938

Direct targeted Beneficiaries are std 1st to 5th as school is yet not open for them.

Help us make this a reality for 1015 beneficiaries who have lost their touch with education and are in ardent need.

Project Budget:

Cost of one Tablet with Byju's learning app Rs.10,000

Considering the strength of children in one village: 10 Tablet & Total 80 Tablets.

Total one time cost Rs. 8,00,000.00

Cost per child per year Rs.788 In USD 10.65

Note: Gram Vikas Trust will bear the cost of running entire programme including teacher mentors and NGO monitoring and reporting plus administrative cost. We request only one time tablet cost only.