



Graduate School of Development Studies

**Community Participation and Decentralization
in Elementary Education: Pratham-NGO in
Gujarat**

A Research Paper presented by:

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTERS OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Specialization:
**Public Policy and Management
(PPM)**

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The Hague, The Netherlands
November, 2011

Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

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Acknowledgement

I would like to say a special thank you to everyone who helped me through out in this research process.

To my supervisor Dr. Rachel Kurian, Thank you very much for your understanding, guidance and always being available.

To my second supervisor Prof. Dr. Des Gasper, for your critical feedback, questions and advice, Thank you.

Thank you Dr. Joop de Wit & Dr. Jos Mooij for providing help whenever required

To all my colleagues at PPM and friends at ISS it was wonderful being with you all and I enjoyed the time spend together.

Thanks to Shipra for the help in editing.

To all my friends at Pratham Gujarat you all are special. RCA would not have been possible without you. Special thanks to Renuben, for allowing me to use Pratham as my case study.

To my mai who has being eagerly waiting for me to get back home soon. Apologies I could not be around when you really needed me.

To all my loving sisters and brothers, thanks for being there. Love to Royce, Ronan, Ravina, Sabina, Keagan and Ocean.

To Harini and Deepak thanks for always being a part of my Joy and difficulties, missed you both.

Finally to Joint Japan World Bank Graduate Scholarship Program, (JJWBGSP) for providing me this scholarship to undertake a MA at ISS

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List of Acronyms

AIE	Alternate and Innovative Education
ASER	Annual Survey of Education Report
BRC	Block Resource Coordinator
CDPO	Child Development Program Officer
CRC	Cluster Resource Coordinator
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DISE	District Information
DPEO	District Primary Education Officer
DPEP	District Primary Education Program
DRC	District Report Card
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme
GIPCL	Gujarat Industrial Power Corporation Limited
GPEC	Gujarat Paguthan Energy Corporation
GR	General Resolution
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MDM	Mid Day Meal
MIS	Management Information System
MTA	Mother Teacher Association
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NPE	National Policy on Education
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RCA	Rural Community Approach
RTE	Right To Free and Compulsory Education
SDMC	School Development and Monitoring Committee
SGS	Shikshan Gram Sabhas
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
TDO	Taluka Development Officer
TRC	Taluka Report Card
UEE	Universalization of Elementary Education
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VAG	Village Action Group
VEC	Village Education committee
VRC	Village Report Card

Abstract

The aim of the research paper is to analyse how community participation can promote elementary quality education for disadvantaged children in the context of decentralization. This research has mainly used three methodologies, literature review, appreciative inquiry and the best practice technique. The study focuses on analyzing Pratham-intervention a well known educational nonprofit in India as a best practice scenario. The results of this research suggest that process, structures of intervention, tools and mechanisms for community participation should be designed for inclusive participation of all community members. Natural inclusion does not happen as it is difficult to work with the disadvantage community. All sorts of decentralization in reality do not promote community Participation and depends on its implementation strategy. In Gujarat though there was space for community participation but it was more controlled and it comes across to bring about more efficiency. For long term sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency to be brought, it is important for volunteer's to emerge as independent bodies or groups who are committed and knowledgeable who can tackle issues related to various government schemes or issues. It concludes that Community Participation is the first step to bring about actual decentralization if community empowerment is the goal.

Relevance to Development Studies

Greater literacy and educational achievements of disadvantage groups can enhance their ability to resist oppression and organize to get a fairer deal. In India, recently there have been a number of policy frameworks towards decentralization in education. There has been a lot written on the government interventions in this direction. On the other hand successful learning's have emerged from nongovernmental organisations trying to empower the village communities and these are not scaled up by the government or other NGOs. There is great deal to learn from these organisations instead of reinventing. This is one such intervention from which one could learn.

Keywords

[Community Participation, Decentralization, Village Education Committees, Elementary Education, Universalization, Activation, Accountability, Sustainability, Gujarat]

Chapter 1: Introduction & Problem Identification

‘Basic education is a catalyst for social change’ -Dreze and Sen.

India faces a huge challenge of providing elementary education to all its children. Presently it has an estimate of 1.04 million plus government run elementary schools¹, in which an estimate of 186 million numbers of children have received education, with majority children being from rural India(DISE 2010:1). According to the World Bank, there are two critical issues that still need to be addressed in India, first reaching some 8 million children not yet enrolled and ensuring retention of all students till they complete their elementary education (Grade 8) and second ensuring good quality education so it improves learning levels and cognitive skills. The Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER²) shows that learning abilities of children in mathematics and english have not improved and only 53.4 % of the children in class 5 can read the text of grade two(ASER 2010).

In response to the huge task of universalization elementary education (UEE), India has witnessed substantial program and policy level changes by the government to provide elementary education to all children, in the last two decades. Various measures and programs have been undertaken to universalize elementary education like the District Primary Education Program (DPEP³) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA⁴). From April 2010 the Right to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE⁵) for all children between 6 to 14 years is being implemented across India. Despite programs like DPEP and SSA, the problem of providing quality education for all children is still a major challenge for both the government and civil society. In some instances, the educational policies and programs have been facilitated through community participation. With the focus on decentralization since 1987(73rd and 74th constitutional amendments⁶), local communities consisting of parents and other village residents were identi-

¹ Elementary Schools- Schools from standard one to eight are called elementary schools

² ASER: Annual Survey of Education Report, a nonprofit initiative, a citizen initiative who try to provide answers if social program deliver or not. <http://www.asercentre.org/>

³ DPEP: was a program envisage by the central government of India

⁴ SSA: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan- A flagship program of the GOI to universalize Elementary education across the country in the 2000 for a period of ten years, now extended to 2013. <http://ssa.nic.in/>

⁵ RTE: Right to free and Compulsory Education – The latest law passed by the Indian parliament, making way for free elementary education for all children below the age of 14 across India. <http://www.education.nic.in/elementary/free%20and%20compulsory.pdf>

⁶73rd and 74th constitutional amendments: passed in 1993, devolved a significant amount of power over social sector to local level governments or panchayats. <http://education.nic.in/cd50years/15/8P/HX/8PHX0C01.htm>

fied as key stakeholders to implement these educational programs and policies successfully.

Later, under the DPEP, Village Education Committees (VEC) were set up and piloted successfully. This process of involving communities in education was scaled up across India under SSA, India's flagship program to universalize elementary education. However, researchers like Ahmed and Nath in their writings on South Asia - especially Bangladesh and India - claim that the government model of decentralization, involving local communities in decision making in the education process has failed to make impact, as genuine devolution of power and capacity building of power did not take place. As such the VEC's have failed to deliver or make a substantial impact. The other salient feature of community participation in education has generally been limited to financial involvement or supplying human labour for building infrastructure related activities (Ahmed and Nath 2005:115).

A study conducted by the Institute of Rural Development and Research revealed that 46% of the members did not know about constitution of the VECs and many members did not know each other in the village VEC. The research further stated that 67% of the members claimed to be aware of the roles and responsibilities, but during discussions it was realized that the members were not at all aware. 54% of the members reported that VEC meetings were not organized every month and even if they were organized they were not informed about it (IRDR 2003:8-10).

The decentralization has been very controversial. The VEC's have been bestowed with more responsibilities than the powers given to them. Dreze and Sen write, "In many villages the top down formation of VEC in response to the government directives has failed to foster genuine participation in schooling matters. The possibilities of going beyond those gestures of decentralization and of fostering genuine popular participation in school management is one important lesson of recent experiences such as the Lok Jumbish in Rajasthan and the Guarantee Scheme of Madhya Pradesh. (Dreze and Sen 1996:176) They further state "Parents have little reason to take active interest in school management issues if their complaints and suggestions fall on deaf ears. For their role to be effective it has to receive a positive response from higher levels of the education administration."

On the other hand there are successful alternative community processes that have evolved in the last two decades. Most of these are initiatives undertaken by NGOs and a few by the local government. The interventions focus on the whole on creating community awareness- of parents, youth, communities performing school audits, contributing through land, labour, capital or strengthening of decentralized decision making bodies like VEC's, SDMC's etc. The overall intention is to bring elementary education interventions closer to the local communities. At the same time, Govinda and Diwan suggest that community interventions facilitated by the NGOs are depended on donors for their funding and thus, tend over time to become unsustainable as their interventions generally are not scaled up by the government. In spite of so many successful community interventions across the country like Lok Jumbish, Bodh, neither state nor civil society replicates these processes of intervention. (Govinda and Diwan 2003:26)

1.1 Research Objective and Questions

The aim of the research paper is to analyse how community participation can promote elementary quality education for disadvantaged children in the context of decentralization.

Research questions:

1. In which ways can decentralization promote community participation in implementing policies on education?
2. What are the structures, mechanisms, tools and processes that enhance community participation and quality education?
3. How can such processes include children, who are traditionally disadvantaged because of their caste and gender backgrounds?

1.2 Problem Justification

Dreze and Sen, mention that an illiterate person is less equip to defend him/herself or is unable to participate in the modern economy. They explain this correlation with the example of the Sothern Indian state of Kerala; historical experience in this southern state shows a powerful relationship between educational progress and social change. The traditional inequalities of caste, class and gender have been overcome to education, just as the removal of inequalities contributes to the spread of education. "The fact remains, however that an educated person is better equipped to overcome vulnerability and marginalization in modern society and it is in that sense that education has considerable value despite all the shortcomings of the schooling systems" (Dreze and Sen 1996:143)

Panchayati Raj (73rd and 74th) amendments have lead to interesting initiatives involving parent communities in the decentralization process in different parts of India. These initiatives are not only undertaken by the government but also by the NGOs, grass root organisations and there is great deal that one can learn from such initiatives and this one such attempt.

1.3 Research Methodology and Source of Information

Through literature review, I have tried to firstly, get an overview of community participation, and decentralization in elementary education processes across India. I have tried to trace the history of community participation in India with special reference to educational decentralization and built a conceptual framework of community participation and decentralization.

Secondly, in order to understand how decentralization promotes community participation in implementing policies on education, I have used the best or the promising practice methodology. As a case I have used an intervention conducted by a well known educational nonprofit in India, 'Pratham' using community participation to UEE. "A best practice is a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other

means, and that is used as a benchmark. In addition, a "best" practice can evolve to become better as improvements are discovered"(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best_practice#Use_of_Best_Practices_in_Health_and_Human_Services). Generally a best practice requires to show one or more positive outcomes amongst communities and populations, there is a comprehensive evaluation and it is supported by implementation material, training and support resources and is well documented. It should also be replicable and scalable. Below I have tried to explain how Pratham fits in as a case for best practice.

- Pratham devised ways of enabling the community to be more responsive and accountable to the educational needs of the children. Under the RCA, Pratham has evolved processes for enabling the community to own the educational agenda in villages, facilitate participation for sustained reform and for change to be in consonance with local needs and issues. The overarching goal has been to help communities to articulate their needs, so that SSA goal of UEE could be achieved (Saxena 2007: 86)
- I have also been a part of Pratham since 2000, being instrumental in building this program and implementing it, hence I will also be using my experience of working with community members, government officials and schools. During the years of working with Pratham, I have conducted and facilitated VEC meetings, village assemblies, conducted meeting with government officials at the local and the state level. I led a team of 150 people to activate VEC in the rural areas by raising awareness on retention, enrolment, and other educational quality in around 3000 villages in 12 districts in the State of Gujarat.
- Pratham in this program has also implemented standard processes, intervened at various structures, developed tools for intervention which are replicable, adaptable with changes, which the education department does not touch upon.
- Pratham intervention is also low cost intervention, which makes it a scalable and financially sustainable model.
- The intervention was also replicated by UNICEF in Gujarat, in their nodal area of Valsad in Gujarat. It is also being implemented by other local corporates like GPEC, GIPCL and SHELL under CSR projects in their respective districts.
- The intervention was also judged as one of the best practices for enabling deprived children to learn by ILO.

Alongside the best practice methodology, I have also used Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to analyze the whole RCA intervention and especially the chapter three on mechanisms. Appreciative inquiry focuses on the positive and is grounded in participants' actual experiences. It's a facilitated approach on what is working well and based on an assumption that in every organisation something works well. The positive, affirming nature of Appreciative Inquiry, where people discover and then build on the root causes of success rather than dissect problems, can be a powerful stimulus for change. It is non-threatening and

empowering. (http://www.axi.ca/tca/jan2004/facilitationrole_1.shtml)

The research also involved primary data collection using AI. Firstly, interviews were held with a few staff members who were involved with the Pratham program, like Karyakarta's and District Heads. The primary data collection helped to look at how community participation processes were designed by Pratham. The data collected helped to understand the type of issues addressed, successful case studies and tools and structures of intervention. Eight interviews were conducted in total. The research also includes primary data collected by some of the field staff of Pratham in terms of short case studies and notes written by them during field visits.

I have also reviewed secondary literature such as organizational MIS system, annual reports, evaluation reports and internal documents of Pratham Gujarat.

1.4 Research Limitations

This study is limited to an analysis of one particular intervention that I was involved with; hence the study cannot be generalized to a situation across the state. Also due to the closure of the program and people moving away, there were limitations for interviews and discussions.

1.5 Organization of Research paper

This paper is organized logically in line with its research objectives and questions. This paper comprises of seven chapters where the first chapter starts with an introduction, research questions, methodology, the data sources and the limitation of the paper. The second on conceptual framework of community participation and chapter three is Contextualising Community Participation in Gujarat, which further is divided on the, the decentralization educational model in Gujarat, a short history of Community Participation in India and brief introduction of the case I am researching- Pratham in the context of Gujarat-India. Pratham rural intervention is discussed in chapter four and the fifth chapter discusses the mechanisms that have emerged out of the Pratham rural model. Accountability and sustainability in community participation are discussed in chapter Six. Finally chapter seven focuses on the conclusions.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework of Community Participation

2.1 What is Community?

A community is complex and its concept has been contested often. Traditionally, communities are characterized by its members sharing culture, language, traditions, geography, class and law. 'On the other hand it is contested no one community has harmonious and homogeneous set of people, and poor communities are normally again more complex and divided than rich communities. For example, common division in the slums of India (which is perhaps as complex as you can get): rich(er) and poor(er) people and the destitute; men and women living in quite different worlds: Hindu, Muslims and Christians' (De Wit 2003:1). Communities specially in rural India are divided also on the basis of caste and language. Shaeffer (1992) argues, some communities are homogeneous while others are heterogeneous; and some united while others conflictive. Some communities are governed and managed by leaders chosen democratically who act relatively autonomously from other levels of government; some are governed by leaders imposed from above and represent central authorities. There are also some leaders chosen locally but undemocratically.

2.2 What is Community Participation?

In the context of India Govinda and Diwan advocate Community participation for "involvement of parents and community leaders as partners in supporting educational activities that contributes to improvement in their own lives" (Govinda and Diwan 2003:15). Uemura claims that "community participation contributes in maximizing the limited resources, identifying and addressing the education problems, developing curriculum and learning material which are relevant to the lives of the community, contribute in promoting girls education, creating and nourishing community partnerships , increasing accountability of the schools towards the community and ensuring sustainability of various educational programs"(Uemura 1999:4-8)

Vimala Ramchandran in her writings on the Rajasthan experience mentions 'Community Participation' is the most misused and misunderstood word in development and community means very little in itself- it is like saying India, Rajasthan or Kerala. She defines community participation in a specific context of involving people who have no or little access to elementary education. She refers specially to people who are left out or participate from the margins. In the context of Rajasthan, where there is untouchability , Balmiki children are made to sit on the floor or outside the room or the situation of girls is very disturbing as they are not counted as children, in this context, Vimala Ramchandran further writes "Community participation implies the participation of the disempowered. Ideally it would involve people who have little or no access to basic education- as a community, geographical area or gender. However, this

is easier said than done because it is these very people who are the most difficult to reach out” (Ramchandran 2003:57)

Based on the experience of community participation in Karnataka- south India, Mohan, Dutt and Anthony define “Community participation and empowerment in primary education is comprehensive one and encompasses two important principles. On one hand it can be construed as the total participation of the community in the system to facilitate the achievement of the goal of UEE. On the other hand, complete community participation could be considered as a tool for self development and empowerment of the community (Govinda and Diwan 2003:153)

Various research studies have defined community participation in various ways. These are based on specific issues on which, communities can participate or get involved in children’s education. Colletta and Perkins (1995) illustrate various forms of community participation based on their work in Africa. They state community participation would involve : (a) research and data collection; (b) dialogue with policymakers; (c) school management; (d) curriculum design; (e) development of learning materials; and (f) school construction.(Colletta and Perkins 1995:13-20)

Heneveld and Craig (1996) recognized parent and community support as one of the key factors to determine school effectiveness in sub Saharan Africa. They identify five different categories of parent and community support that are relevant to the sub Saharan region: (1) children come to school prepared to learn; (2) the community provides financial and material support to the school; (3) communication between the school, parents, and community is frequent; (4) the community has a meaningful role in school governance; and (5) community members and parents assist with instruction. (Uemura 1999:3)

Based on Pratham experience of working with communities, community participation would mean a) mobilisation of additional resources for school b) accountability towards school c) improving efficiency d) taking part in decision making e) demanding teacher accountability f) democratisation and social cohesion g) acquiring new skills to participate and h) a means towards decentralization.

2.3 Why is Community Participation Important?

The absence of participation of communities from the education activities might have its effects on the availability of the resources, inclusion of the underprivileged and the accountability of the school towards the community and society. In the context where the governments are not able to provide required sources and sufficient support for the functioning of the public school, either due to financial and geographical or administrative challenges, it would be useful to collaborate with different actors in education delivery(Bray 1996:5) However it has been pointed out that “parents and communities are powerful resources to be utilized not only to the improvement of educational delivery but also in becoming the core agent of the education delivery”(Uemura 1999:4)

2.4 Links between CP and other key concepts/agendas

Decentralization goes hand in hand with community participation. Decentralization in general terms refers to a planned and deliberate transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from one level to another. It includes three major forms of decentralization -- deconcentration, delegation, and devolution each have different characteristics (The World Bank:<http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/decentralization/what.htm>).

There are different types of decentralization and is a complex multifaceted concept. Different types of decentralization should be distinguished because they have different characteristics, policy implications, and conditions for success. Types of decentralization include political, administrative, fiscal, and market decentralization. While the objective of political decentralisation is to provide greater opportunities to locally elected bodies in decision making, administrative decentralisation aims to redistribute the functions of one level of government to lower levels.

Community participation when associated with decentralization has the potential to bring about governance close to the local people and communities for whom the services are directly targeted. It is assumed that participation can create opportunity for the local people to develop local specific plans, to build sense of ownership, to generate additional resources and utilize available limited resources and to contribute in the decision making. Musch indicates that the World Bank propagates participation as in which “stakeholders influence formulation, alternative design, investment choices and management decision affecting their communities and establish the necessary sense of ownership” (Naik 2006:18). Govinda and Diwan further state “When people are entrusted with some power or given power or opportunity to show their capabilities participation becomes the mean of empowerment leading people to feel and act empowered”(Govinda and Diwan 2003:16)

On the other hand Vimala Ramchandran based on the Rajasthan experiences states “the community members- the disempowered do not readily participate in larger societal forums and bodies - whether it is the Panchayat or the Village Education Committee or the Village Women's Health Committee. Even if they are made mandatory members, they rarely speak out - even if they attend. Being at the bottom of social ladder, their interaction with the rest of society is from a position of disempowerment. In a patriarchal society like Rajasthan, women shoulder the additional burden of gender-based discrimination. Women in poor communities face the added pressure of sexual abuse and oppression”. She further mentions “Community participation is the heart of democracy and decentralisation commentators argue that nothing short of a social reform movement will shake up Rajasthan society from its feudal mind set. And this remains the most formidable challenge”. (Govinda and Diwan 2003:4)

Dreze and Sen, while discussing accountability and community participation, write “accountability from below relies first and foremost on the vigilance of parents as parents have strong personal interest in the improved performance of schools teachers. The problem is that as things stand they have no easy means of taking action. In most states, teachers are accountable to the education department and not to the village community. Reforming the chain of ac-

accountability and bringing the levers of control closer to the village community are important means of improving schooling standards. In Tamil Nadu too it has been observed that close monitoring by politically conscious parent community has been an essential factor in the success of preschool education and MDM. Accountability to the village community is also an important reason why Para teachers have done reasonably well in many states in spite of limited formal qualification and difficult work conditions. For example in many villages the top down formation of VEC in response to the government directives has failed genuine participation in schooling matter". (Dreze and Sen 2003:175&176)

On the issue of sustainability of community participation, Vimala Ramchandran based on her writings of Lok Jumbish and Shiksha Karmi in Rajasthan mentions, CP is not a onetime affair. Sustaining meaningful participation demands vigilance. We need to organize activities and develop mechanisms for continuous involvement year after year; this requires high level of commitment. CP is high resource intensive and needs people with commitment and vision. Sustainability has remained a big issue. Programmes and projects have been identified with founders. Despite positive evidence there is still little appreciation of CP and empowerment in primary education. These are seen as NGO processes that do not have legitimate space in the mainstream. People across the country are asking about sustainability of innovation especially when the bureaucracy does not wholeheartedly endorse such innovation (Govinda and Diwan 2003:70&73)

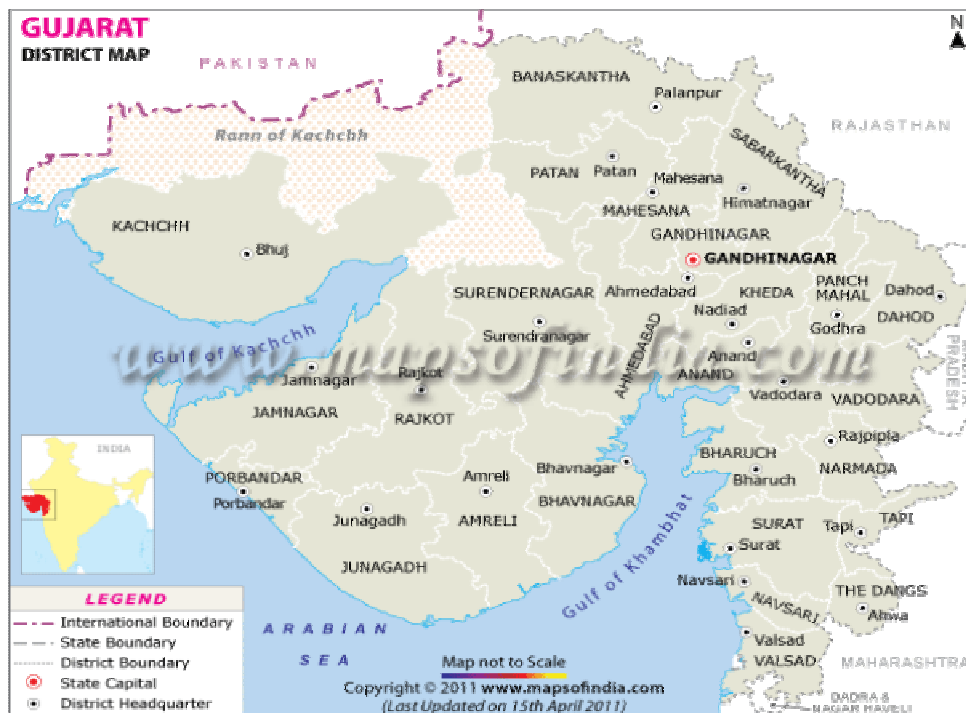
Based on the above experiments it was recognized that community mobilization is not a one type job and cannot be always carried out by external forces. Community mobilization is the process of bringing people together for a common cause from various sectors to raise awareness. It facilitates change and development as per the need of the community. Hence if interventions need to be sustained for long term educational development, people need to organize them. People need to come together voluntarily for a common cause. This coming together for a common cause gives a sense of empowerment to them. Programs like Lok Jumbish in Madhya Pradesh created village teams and got them involved in the process of village education. "This formation of village teams has laid the foundation of building a system of self determination and decentralization management from below. The involvement of these teams has successfully imparted to community members the habits of rational decision making with respect to education". (Govinda 2003:223) This has led to fundamental transformation in the social structures.

Chapter 3: Contextualising Community Participation in Pratham

3.1 Demographic Profile of Gujarat State and a picture of Elementary Schooling

Gujarat state is divided into 26 districts and 224 blocks. The population of the state, as per figures provided by Census 2010, stood at 60.3million. The highest density of 890 persons per sq. km. was observed in the district of Ahmedabad. The sex ratio of Gujarat is 918 females to 1000 as per Census 2010. The literacy rate in the state (excluding children in the age-group 0-6 years) has increased from 69.14 percent in 2001 to 79.31 percent in 2010. Among males, it has increased from 79.66 percent in 2001 to 87.23 percent in 2010, whereas among females, it has increased from 57.86 in 2001 to 70.73 percent in 2010. The literacy rate for rural areas is 61.29 percent, while it is 81.84 percent in urban areas. As per the Census 2001, 37.35 percent population of Gujarat resides in urban areas. (Census of India 2001 & 2010)

Map 3.1: Map of Gujarat



Map source: <http://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/gujarat/gujarat.htm>

Gujarat is flourishing state with a rich cultural diversity, which dates back to history with the Harappan Civilization⁷. The state is a confluence of many religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and the Buddhists. About 85% of the population of Gujarat are Hindus, followed by Muslims who are about 8% of the population. About 2% of the population are Christians and rest are Jains, Sikhs etc. Gujarat is also the home for India's best institutes in higher education, like the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) and National Institute of Design (NID). It is also well known for its cooperative movement, 'AMUL' a model for rural development which spurred the White Revolution of India.

Around 60% of Gujarat resides in its villages. A typical village of Gujarat consists of cluster of houses belonging to different castes and sometimes religions. These clusters are further divided based on the various castes which are followed across Gujarat. For example, the agricultural and the trading caste will live in one central area, the upper caste- the Brahmins live in a separate cluster and the Harijans (the untouchables) live on the boundary of the village or outside the village. Discriminatory practices like, untouchability (still exists in the villages of Gujarat. There are different types of discriminatory practices that are followed from serving of tea to the entry of dalits into temples or getting water from separate wells. These practices have often been witnessed in government schools where children from different castes are made to sit in different groups away from each other. If a mid day meal is cooked by the member of the dalit community, it has been witnessed that the children of the upper class would often refuse to eat. Gujarat is also a communally flared up state since decades. Over the years riots have taken place between Hindus and Muslims, deeply affecting the social fabric of the state.

The elementary education department is responsible for the administration of elementary education across Gujarat. The department is also aided by the Gujarat Council of Elementary Education where SSA is responsible for teachers training, decentralization, providing schooling infrastructure, and other various programs for out of school children, girls and many others. There were 33425 elementary schools in Gujarat in 2009-10. The density of schools was 1.42 kilometres. There were 227 instructional days in total. The average student classroom ratio was 27: 1. In all there were 1.42 % single teacher schools. Off all schools, 90 % schools had water and toilet facilities. The student teacher ratio stood at 32:1 in 2009-10 and the average number of teachers per school was about 6 in 2009-10. (Detailed status of rural school in Gujarat is attached in appendix 1)(DISE 2009-10)

Under SSA, cluster level trainings are organized for community leaders with the BRC and CRC support. Each year a total of six members, two each from VEC, MTA and PTA are identified and oriented on playing a crucial role in UEE at village level..“The community leaders were trained on their role in implementation of the project. Training has been imparted on the use of

⁷ Civilization dated back 3300-1300BC
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indus_Valley_Civilization

School Grant, Teachers Grant, School Repair and Maintenance Grant.”
<http://gujarat-education.gov.in/ssa/index.htm>)

Table 3.1: Total numbers of VECs/MTAs/PTAs in Gujarat

Formation of VECs / WECs, MTAs & PTAs in Gujarat				
No.	District	No. of VECs	No. of MTAs	No. of PTAs
Total (Districts)		22906	30446	30446
Total (Municipal Corporation)		115	1132	1132
Grand Total		23021	31578	31578

Source: <http://gujarat-education.gov.in/ssa/index.htm>)

3.2 A Background of Pratham, Gujarat

Pratham is an educational, not for profit initiative aimed at UEE across India. Pratham works with both children in and out of school, engages government officials towards improving quality of education and facilitates in activating VEC in the rural areas across 22 states in the country. Pratham is a tripartite partnership between the government, citizens and the corporate sector. Pratham, across all states has been promoted by local citizens who were known in the social and developmental field. Pratham also has a large workforce of women and young men from the local slum communities and villages who have taken responsibility of teaching children on a part time basis. Its work is supported by several national and international corporate’s like ICICI Bank, Reliance Industries, CITI Group, BILT, British Gas, and multilateral foundations like UNICEF, World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO, American India Foundation and Oxfam Novib. Pratham firmly believes in working with the government to bring about large scale change. Therefore all its programs are aimed at supplementing rather than replacing governmental efforts (www.pratham.org)

Pratham’s mission is to ensure universal elementary education, which has been summarized in a simple statement of “Every Child in School and Learning Well” (www.pratham.org). Pratham is founded on the firm belief that elementary education is a fundamental right and no child can be denied of it, due to lack of access or resources. Thus while working with children in difficult situation like child labourers, Pratham’s stand has been that children should be completely withdrawn from work and there should be proper rehabilitation for them. Pratham has played a key role for advocating the Right to Education and has been a key member of the team that played an important role in advocating abolition of child labour.

All Pratham programs are also based on three important principles followed across India. Firstly, sustaining change- the program should not only achieve the goal but should also sustain changes beyond the deadlines. Secondly, program should be developed in such a way that it has the ability to be

replicated and scaling up. Finally, the program developed should be a low cost model which makes replicability easier and scalability faster.

“Every child in school...and learning well”... is a dream shared by all the people of Pratham Gujarat. Pratham Movement within the state of Gujarat has grown from one local office in Baroda, run by only two people training teachers under a big tree, to an organization whose influence and strength doesn't need to be proven any more (Annual report, 2005:10). Pratham Gujarat has also modelled itself like Pratham India. Pratham Gujarat is built upon a triangular partnership of the corporate sector, government, and citizens. (repeated) Pratham recognizes that primary education is fundamentally the responsibility of the government and that the greatest improvement is likely to come when the government's efficiency and effectiveness improves. Pratham also believes that any project must be accompanied by real community involvement in order to be sustainable, which means that the idea, which underlies the project, has to be accepted and owned by the concerned community.

At present Pratham runs direct interventions as well as the Read India Campaign (Rural) across the state. The urban program in Gujarat has addressed several community needs and evolved over the years. Read India is being implemented in 20 districts through a district level partnership with the State Governments. Since 2008, Pratham Gujarat had to downsize its intervention in several regions of Gujarat due to fund constraints because of the world wide economic meltdown.

3.3 The Set up of the educational decentralized management structure in Gujarat- creating space for community participation

The three-tier Panchayati Raj⁸ system was introduced soon after independence in the context of political decentralization. Sheshgari and Upendranadh state “A clearer articulation of the link between education and decentralization had to wait till the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments which provide a mandate for the control and governance of education by the elected Panchayat bodies. These constitutional amendment also specifies that ‘standing committees’ consisting of elected members could be formed for different areas/subjects, at all the levels within the three tier system. Such committees for education, if they were formed, would be expected to be responsible for all the functions with respect to the education of children/adults in the areas under their jurisdiction. While the 73rd and 74th amendments provided a broad, general and enabling framework, much depended on how the states interpreted this framework”. (Sheshgari and Upendranadh 2008:9)

Over the years, after the amendments many states have enacted their own Panchyati Raj acts and have taken steps to better local governance. It must also

⁸ Panchayati Raj- Is a system of governance, where the village panchayat is the basic system of administration, it is a decentralized form of self governance http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panchayati_raj

be noticed that following these amendments, the process of decentralization in education took place, which made space for community participation in education.

Table 3.2: Three Tier Educational System in Gujarat

District(Jilla)	Block(Taluka)	Village(Gram)
The Jilla Panchayat Shikshan Samiti (District level Committee) is expected to look at school infrastructure/basic facilities (up to secondary/higher secondary level, including Ashram Shalas or residential schools), improvement in physical access, hostel construction, support through scholarships and teaching-learning materials for SC, ST and other backward caste children.	The Taluka Panchayat Prathmik Samiti (block level committee) has the general functions of promoting education including construction, maintenance of school buildings, hostels, provision of support to marginalized children in the form of scholarships, supply of books, Teaching-Learning materials, etc.	The Gram Sabha (Village Assembly) was made responsible for adult education The Gram Panchayat (local self governing institution at the village level) is responsible for formal education through primary and elementary school, ensuring enrolment, mobilizing local communities/parents on their children's education, and undertaking school construction and maintenance.

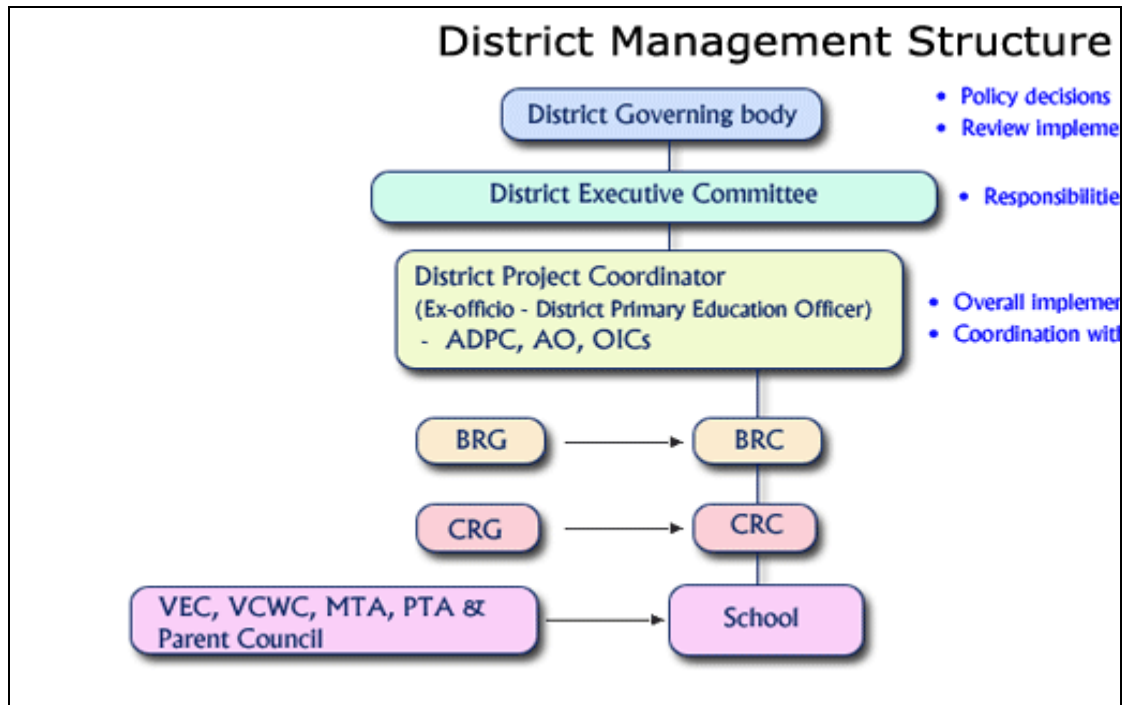
The VEC is a regulatory body set up all state governments under the directions of the Central Government. The Government of Gujarat constituted VEC in three DPEP districts i.e. Panchmahals, Bansakantha and Dangs vide government resolution No PRE-1295-2425 dated 19.10.96. The objective of setting this committee was to speed up the educational activities in the villages and supervise the same. "Drawing on the success of decentralized community structures such as VEC, MTA, and PTA in DPEP – II. The Govt. of Gujarat has institutionalized these structures through Circular PRE. 1295 - 1419 (99), dtd. 20/9/1999. These structures were been given statutory status which would certainly go a long way in making the education system of the State replicable, sustainable and transparent". (<http://www.education.nic.in/cabedecentralise.asp>)

It was common to have the Panchayat President or the Sarpanch⁹ as the Chairman of this committee and the School Principal (of where?) as it's Secretary. Other members included selected community representatives (mainly other government officials or employees), two women Panchayat members, a

⁹ Sarpanch- Head of the village panchayat

retired teacher, Anganwadi worker¹⁰, a cluster resource coordinator, the village talati¹¹ and a parent of a disabled child. In all, there were nine members.

Figure 3.1: Education Management Structure at a District Level



Source: <http://gujarat-education.gov.in/ssa/index.htm>

The role envisaged for the VEC's is to establish a link between school and community and to create awareness about the importance of formal education. It is also expected to take up the task of management of school affairs along with school administration. VECs are considered vital for promoting enrolment and retention of children in school, especially of girls. It is the responsibility of VEC to ensure that every child in the age group of 6-14 years gets enrolled in schools and completes elementary education.

Box 3.3: Functions of VEC in Gujarat

- To ensure that out of school children especially girls are brought to school by convincing the parents and help community mobilization
- To create congenial atmosphere for attracting children to attend schools and pursue studies

¹⁰ Anganwadi worker or ICDS worker- A program under the Integrated Child Development Program for children below 6 years of age. <http://wcd.nic.in/icds.htm>

¹¹ Talati- Is the administrative head of a revenue village.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Village_accountant

- To ensure attendance of teachers in schools and imparting of quality education.
- To ensure provision of essential facilities like drinking water, urinals, furniture etc. in school
- To take appropriate action for schooling of out of school children and functioning of alternate schooling
- Undertaking civil construction and maintenance works wherever assigned or needed
- Enrolment of all school-age children and ensuring cent percent completion of elementary education of all children
- Monitoring the Academic performance of children, Attendance and Quality of education.
- Organising functions and celebrations of the schools and public events which show the skills of children.
- Monitoring the functioning of EGS & AIE centres. VEC meetings are also conducted in school on special occasions such as Independence Day, Children day, Republic day, Sport days and Annual day.

Source: (<http://www.education.nic.in/cabedecentralise.asp>) and the government of Gujarat resolution

Effective decentralisation depends on the willingness of the respective state governments to transfer power and authority to the local bodies. And therefore, there are certain very obvious issues that have risen with which I have tried examined these loopholes through empirical observation made in the field over the years.

3.4 Brief history of community participation and decentralization in education in India

Traditionally, the schooling in India, in the pre British era has always being collaboration between the teacher and the local community writes Joseph Di bona in his book One Teacher One School. The community made arrangements for the students to study in local vernacular languages within the village itself. These schools were generally segregated on the basis of religion, specially the Hindus and Muslims madarssas. The community (parents, village heads and the rich influence residents) provided the teachers and students with all the facilities of space, teaching and learning etc. The content for education was outlined by the community and the teacher together. In return for the services provided, the teachers received remuneration both in cash and kind. However these schools were limited to a particular caste or community, children of poor parents had no access to schools, hence few children received education in these schools.

In the British colonial era, the local bodies like the panchayats and municipalities were set up. These bodies were entrusted with the responsibilities of organizing and administration of primary schooling for children across India, though the content of the education was decided by the British Government then. Generally a person was invited by the council for the job of the

teacher. There are evidences that showcase many a times the village elites or citizens set up private colleges or schools for children, especially for girls who would not be sent to a normal school. This would be more of a charitable gesture to promote education in the region.

Post independence, primary education became of the constitutional prerogatives of independent India. It was adopted as one of the Directive Principles of state policy. Since the late 1960's the government initiated the takeover of educational establishments as well as of the cadre of teachers. Then onwards teachers were no more recruited by the local community but centrally by the state. This marked the beginning of professionalization of the educational services and starting of distrust on the other hand. By now the teacher's job was transferable, and a policy was adopted not to post teachers in their local communities. Anjali Noronha further states 'thus in the place of a teacher who had been one of the most trusted members of the local community here was a more qualified person, perhaps but one who hardly knew her/his students or their community'(Noronha 2003:99). This also meant more qualified teachers started to look down on the local communities and did not consider themselves accountable to the local communities. Centralization of education also led to alienation from the community, people slowly started believing that everything belong to the government and not community therefore education was a government responsibility and it had to look after it (Noronha 2003:99).

Interest in community participation in formal education in India has come from two distinct sources, just as in the case of Malawi and other developing countries. With the prioritisation of decentralisation, especially at local levels, community participation emerged both from neo-liberal imperatives for more efficient use of financial and material resources promoted by organisations such as the World Bank and bi-lateral agencies, together with increased political advocacy for greater community 'ownership' and involvement in decision-making (Rose 2003; Pryor, 2005; Dunne ,Akyeampong and Humphereys 2007:10&11). It was also experienced across the world that the centralized education system has experienced bad decision making, administrative and fiscal inefficiency there were limitations to access and quality of services available. In general, it was believed that the process of decentralization can substantially improve efficiency, transparency, accountability, and responsiveness of provision of educational service compared with centralized systems.

The National Policy of Education 1986 stressed upon community participation in educational management. The NPE states that local communities of parents and village residents through appropriate bodies will be assigned a major role in the programme of school management. Community involvement would establish a close linkage between school and community and help in improving quality in education, reduction of absenteeism and irregularity (National Policy on Education 1986).

The Revised Policy in Education in 1992 also called for community participation in educational planning and management. The language used to describe the rationale for decentralization underwent a significant transformation. Phrases such as 'empowering the people' or 'grassroots level democracy' almost disappeared from the discourse putting considerable emphasis on efficiency of system. Yet, the Moily Committee (Policy in Education 1992), set up by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), argued: "It is increas-

ingly becoming evident that the bureaucratic systems are not able to manage the challenges in the field of educational development and people's participation is seen the world over as an essential pre-requisite for achieving the goal of education for all. It is in this context, that the Committee perceives the entrustment of educational programmes to institutions of local self-government as a step in the right direction" (GOI 1992:14).

The enactment of the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments in the year 1992 provided for decentralisation and facilitated transfer of power and participation of the local government institutions for effective implementation. Under the DPEP and SSA, VECs were set up and piloted successfully. A local committee, the Gram Shiksha Samiti or VEC, was formally formed across states in India under the General Regulation (GR) of the state governments in 2000. Each village education committee consisted of the elected head of village Panchayat (Sarpanch), the government school Head Teacher, the local ICDS-anganwadi teacher and parents of students enrolled in government schools in the village. These VECs were expected to play an important role in improving service delivery through community participation. Though formulation of VECs under the DPEP was very successful, the program was across limited districts and focused on capacity building of committee members. Later, this process of involving communities in education was scaled up across India under SSA, India's flag program to universalize elementary education.

Experience of local community participation in elementary education in India has also been very sporadic. Lately, the participation of parents has been very closely associated with especially during enrolment of children, at the beginning of the new academic year or in case of some corporal punishment to a particular child. Many of the state governments have been organizing enrolment melas (fairs) each year, where newly enrolled children are brought along with their parents with funfair to the schools. For events like these, some parents or village elites even contribute in cash or kind to the school. Other forms of participation are generally witnessed when parents and communities contribute their labour for building some basic infrastructure in schools. There is evidence that communities have come forward to build water tanks, compound walls, mid day meal sheds, and helped in minor school repairs etc for schools in the village.

On the other hand there are successful alternative community processes that have evolved in the last two decades. Most of these are initiatives by non profits and a few by the local government. Though the scale and the intervention of these processes vary, they have been able to create sustainable impact. Some of the interventions focus on creating community awareness of parents some have youth involvement, communities performing social audits, contributing through land, labour, capital or strengthening of decentralized decisions making bodies like VECs, SDMCs etc.

Chapter 4: Pratham Rural Intervention

4.1 The Introduction

“Pratham devised ways of enabling the community to be more responsive and accountable to the educational needs of the children, alongside, it provided technical support in the regular teacher’s training program in selected districts. For the optimal effectiveness of the program, strategically, pratham took up the approach for strengthening village institutions to catalyze communities to drive educational change in their villages as a movement (i.e. *everyone doing the same thing at the same time*)” (Saxena 2007:86). The objective of the Rural Community Program was to strengthen local development structures to participate in education processes, which would eventually increase participation of various segments of society. To be specific, it wanted to strengthen local education institutions and people for their sustainable participation and ownership in SSA to address poor functioning SSA provisions, low literacy levels and gender disparity.

This is the program that I led, while my work in Pratham and this research is based on my direct experience of working in the rural communities in the villages over period of five years. The Rural Community Approach (RCA), which was initiated in 500 villages of Kutch, reached 2670 villages in 29 blocks of nine districts of Gujarat. Under the RCA, Pratham has evolved processes for enabling the community to own the educational agenda in villages, facilitate participation for sustained reform and for change to be in harmony with local needs and issues. The overall goal has been to help communities to articulate their needs, so that SSA goal of UEE can be achieved. This intervention of activating VEC in Gujarat started in 2005 in different point of time and phases. Once the process of working with VECs started in a particular district or Village it took about at least 3 years to complete the 2 phases mentioned in the process section. The districts mentioned below can be viewed in the map of Gujarat.

Table 4.1: Program growth of RCA in the districts of Gujarat

Districts	Time of Phase 1	Time of Phase 2
Kutch(4 blocks), Surat, Rajkot, Baroda, Banaskantha	January 2005	November 2006
Baroda, Kutch(rest of the blocks), Surendranagar,	January 2006	November 2006
Bharuch, Valsad, Tapi	2008 onwards	Did not take off

4.2 The Process

The objective of the Rural Community Program is to strengthen local development structures to participate in education processes, which would eventually increase participation of various segments of society. To be specific, it wanted to strengthen local education institutions and people for their sustainable participation and ownership in SSA. The Process – A six step process of activating VEC in 2 phases has been devised (both the phases took about 3-4 years for impact to be shown). The First Six Steps focuses mainly on activating the VECs and building consensus on the issue of education in the village. The Second Six Steps focuses mainly on capacity building of VEC members, volunteers and extended community members, on how communities should demand for their educational entitlements or provisions – like mid day meals, alternative schooling centers, learning quality, scholarships, insurance, ICDS.

The Karyakarta is a youth from the village, between the age group of 24 to 30. He or she belongs to the same village cluster that he or she would facilitate. The person has to be self motivated, friendly, approachable, seeking systemic change and the one who wants to bring about a change in his/her region. The training support by Pratham is firstly, six days of ground training in another district on the basic of the RCA. The second round of training focuses on SGSs, dealing with various problems faced and how to handle them. Every district has a monthly Karyakarta meeting and discussions, while every block have a bi monthly Karyakarta meeting.

In the initial phase, the team of Karyakarta's start collecting the relevant information about the Blocks (Talukas) of the district from the government officials like TDO, BDO and DPEO etc. This includes social, economical, political and educational data of the Talukas. Information about village sarpanches is sorted from the rural department of the district. Detailed information is gathered about the elementary education status of the blocks. Details about heads of various educational offices at different levels are also collected. Then the gathered information is assessed, feedback is received from the government officials and the strategy for intervention is decided. All relevant officials and concerned people are taken into confidence.

After sorting out all the relevant information, the karyakarta's of a particular block along with their district head meet the TDO and DPEO and propose to start a VEC activation program in their district. They discuss with these two officials, the status of education in the block and how to go about implementing the intervention. The TDO and DPEO are educated on the first six steps to implement the intervention and their role specially in the first step, where he is suppose to organize a meeting of all sarpanches under his Taluka. Pratham also makes the TDO agree to use his office funds to organize this meeting as it is one the important functions he is supposed to undertake.

The TDO in his individual capacity calls a meeting of all Sarpanches on a particular day and time, which is jointly agreed by the TDO and Pratham. On the other hand Pratham also sends out post cards to all the sarpanches telling them what would be discussed in the meeting and if they are interested activating an educational process in the village. Post this Sarpanch meeting, which is actually the first step in the process, process of activation of VECs begins.

Phase 1: First Six Steps for activating Village Educational Committees. The First Six Steps focuses mainly on activating the VECs and building consensus on the issue of education in the village that something needs to be done about it.

Table 4.2: Six Step Process to activate VECs

Step Number	Activity
Step 1	Pratham motivates the Taluka Development Officer-TDO to call a meeting of 20-30 Sarpanches in his office to discuss the VEC structure, rights and responsibilities and introduce Pratham Karyakarta
Step 2	Pratham motivates the Cluster Resource Co-ordinator (CRC) to call a meeting of all members (principal, teacher, parent, women members etc) of 2-6 VECs at his office to discuss the VEC structure, rights and responsibilities and introduce the Pratham volunteer
Step 3	Based on the above introductions, Pratham volunteer is invited to the Sarpanch's house along with all VEC members for a detailed discussion on the status of education in the village, what are the priorities and what can be done
Step 4	VEC members call a Shikshan Gram Sabha (SGS) to discuss the issues of education with the larger population of the village. At the SGS, Pratham helps to contextualise the role of the VEC members and facilitates preparation of an action plan regarding what needs to be done in education in the village. The action plan along with persons responsible and deadlines is put up at a public location and followed up by VEC members
Step 5	Pratham follows up the implementation of the action plan with the VEC members through frequent visits and phone calls and assists with ideas and dispute resolution.
Step 6	Pratham encourages a public assessment of learning levels of children by VEC members in front of parents and teachers and in case the results are bad, recommends that 1-2 volunteers from the village be engaged to assist the teacher to help children 'catch up' Material costs to be paid by the VEC/Teacher.

Source: Pratham Annual Report 2005

A sample of program or activation Implementation done by the Karyakarta's

Table 4.3: Program implementation in various districts of Gujarat

Location	Month					
	October	November	December	January	February	March
Kutch	Forming action plans across 10	Diwali Holiday	Public Testing & Volunteer mobilization across 10 talukas		Volunteers conduct remedial classes across 10 talukas	

	talukas			
Rajkot	Forming action plans across 3 talukas	Diwali Holiday	Public Testing & Volunteer mobilization across 3 talukas	Volunteers conduct remedial classes across 3 talukas
Surat	Forming action plans across 2 talukas	Diwali Holiday	Public Testing & Volunteer mobilization across 2 talukas	SGS in 2 talukas
Baroda	-	Diwali Holiday	VEC ranking, VEC meeting SGS in 2 talukas	Public Testing & Volunteer mobilization in 2 talukas SGS in 2 talukas
Source: Rural community programme calendar 2007				

Phase 2 of the program: Six Step Process on three metrics- access, enrolment and quality

The Second Six Steps Focus mainly on capacity building of VEC members, volunteers and other community members, on how they should demand for their educational entitlements or provisions such as MDM, AIE, learning quality, scholarships, Insurance, and ICDS.

Table 4.4: Six Step Process on three metrics- Access, enrolment and quality

Step Number	Activity
Step 1	VECs conduct survey of learning levels of all children in the village through volunteers. Survey data is consolidated in a Village Report Card that holds child wise data and is used by the VEC to track the progress of the village towards universalizing the village on the 3 predefined metrics.
Step 2	Next, VEC members call and conduct a Shishkan Gram Sabha (SGS, village meeting on education), which is attended by Principal, Teachers and Aganwadi representative, amongst others. At the SGS, based on the Village Report Card, the VEC drives discussion on the education profile of the village and debate on issues that need to be addressed
Step 3	During the SGS, VEC members mobilize youth volunteers to work with the school teachers in order to universalize the village on the three metrics.
Step 4	In the SGS, based on the village report card, Pratham facilitates preparation of an <i>action plan</i> for Universalization of the three metrics in the village. The action plan along with person responsible and deadlines is put up at a public location and followed up by VEC members.

Step 5	Cluster Resource Coordinators conduct cluster level Principal, Sarpanch and Parent volunteer workshops to discuss the progress on the responsibilities assigned to each member. Child Development Project Officer (“CDPO”) conducts similar workshop for the anganwadi representative.
Step 6	VECs conduct periodic dipstick survey of the learning levels in the village to update the Village Report Card and track the progress of the village in achieving Universalization. The results are displayed at a common point like Panchayat office or school premises. The progress is discussed in monthly VEC meetings.

Source: Pratham Annual Report 2007

4.2 The Tools Used

4.2.1 Ranking of VEC

In order to measure impact, Pratham developed a scale to rank VECs. During the initial experimental phase, Pratham discovered that the status of the VECs left much to be desired. Community involvement for taking up educational reform without involving the VEC would have been meaningless. So, Pratham decided to work towards activating VECs and evolved simple steps to make them confident of taking decisions on education. The process involved ranking the VEC on a scale of 0 to 4 to assess their status, followed by another step-wise process for activation.

Table 4.5: Ranking Indicators on the scale of 1 to 4 for VECs

VEC Level	Description
0	VEC members are unaware that they are members and have never participated in a VEC meeting
1	VEC members are aware of the existence of a VEC and that they are members but have never done anything substantial
2	VEC members meet regularly but few decisions have been taken and fewer implemented
3	VEC members meet regularly and take decisions but are unable to get the decisions implemented.
4	VEC has active members taking decisions with regard to education and ensuring that decisions are implemented

Source: Pratham Annual Report 2005

Using the scale above, Pratham ranked the status of the VECs in the 3 districts of which the summary is mentioned below:

Table 4.6: Sample of ranking results on the status of VECs

District	0	1	2	3	4	Total
Kutch	256	136	27	0	1	420
Rajkot	170	83	0	0	2	255
Surat	76	171	0	0	0	247
Total	502	390	27	0	3	922
%age	55%	42%	3%	0%	0%	100%

Source: Pratham Annual Report, 2005

Based on the above mentioned data, it was reflected that 55% of VEC members were unaware even of their membership on the VEC. If one includes Level 0 and Level 1 VECs together, Pratham noticed that over 97% of VECs are only on paper and have never implemented any educational activity in their village. While this was always known a large sample across districts has helped bring this fact in front of the government education administrators who have so far been boasting the existence of large number of VECs in Gujarat. (Pratham Annual report) Work then commenced on implementing the six steps in each village which framed keeping in mind the reflections of the data and first hand information brought by the Karyakarta about the educational status in the villages they worked.

4.2.2 Dhan Patrak

Dhan Patrak is a tool created towards a better decentralised village level planning. Dhan Patrak is a simple tool designed to help people collect useful data/information for making educational plans and keep track of improvement. The word 'Dhan' means wealth- which is in form of children, who are the future of a village. The education profile, learning level of every child in a village is captured through 'Dhan Patrak'. Dhan Patrak is a record of the education profile of each child, between 3-14 years of age, in a village. The data is collected according to Falia's or Vaas(habitation-wise) and is much detailed than the Village Education Register or Ward Education Register, being used by education functionaries under the SSA. It provides a villager, a Sarpanch or a VEC member a medium through which he or she can look at the educational data of his or her village and decide the intervention that can be made in the village for various categories of children – in school, out of school, those with low learning levels and children out of anganwadis etc. (Saxena.N, 2007: 88)

Pratham also collates child wise data through Dhan Patrak in its area of operation, which eventually helps in decision making. *Dhan Patraks* help in forming the Village Report Card (VRC) which in turn can be collated to form a Taluka Report Card (TRC) or a District Report Card (DRC).

4.2.3 Village Educational Plans

The VECs in their meetings discussed the baseline assessment of the reading and maths levels to be carried out in the village in Phase I. Thus three key institutions of the village – the VEC, school and community – came together

to conduct a comprehensive door-to-door survey to know the education profile of their villages. Pratham facilitated operationlization of the assessment of learning levels. It was conducted at a vaas or falia (habitation) level. Each village decided to mobilize at least 2 volunteers to conduct the assessment. In most villages, without exception, Sarpanches and Anganwadi workers from the VEC got personally involved in conducting the survey. Even government school teachers supported the survey by facilitating assessment of school children during school time. The participatory nature of the survey allowed the community to express its views on education issues which they felt needed to be addressed. This gave the VECs and Pratham opportunity to engage with the community over need for changing the education scenario in the villages

The Village Education Plan were designed to assess the education profile of the village on 3 parameters of 1) School Functioning, 2) Government Schemes and 3) Learning levels, taking into consideration the multidimensional education problems. School functioning aims to increase accountability of the school and assesses the school on indices like pupil student ratio and quality and quantity of infrastructure. The second parameter assesses the quality of functioning of 2 key government schemes, ICDS and MDM. ICDS was chosen to 1) Address issue of poor quality pre primary education as a key reason for high dropout, 2) Causes participation of village women in education efforts as the ICDS workers are all women and 3) Leverage presence of ICDS village coordinator in the VEC. MDM is government's key tool to incentivise retention and enrolment in schools and has a large amount of money being spent on it.

The rural volunteer base doubled in the phase II, it increased momentum in community participation and ownership of education agenda. Besides doubling of volunteer base, the phase also saw a substantial retention of volunteers from phase I. This symbolized the continued engagement of the volunteers in the education activities and not a onetime involvement. (*Data Source: Pratham Annual Report, 2005, 2006*)

4.2.4 VEC Program Information Booklets

Pratham's district community team also developed the required material for the VECs and other target groups. Primarily, information booklets for each of the SSA provisions were prepared in simple local language for building awareness and VEC members could use them when ever required. These booklets gave information about most of the education provisions like mid day meal, ICDS, Scholarships, Alternative Schooling, These booklets described each scheme in detail, its implementation, information of the people in charge of the program, procedures in case there are complains, complain forms and whom to approach if any of the program was not working well in their villages.

4.2.5 VEC workshops

VEC workshops with block level SSA provision authorities: Pratham sets up and facilitates multiple block level workshops of various groups of the VEC members with the SSA provision authorities and block level development officer. Such workshops 1)

create awareness about the roles and responsibilities of the VEC members and 2) provide VEC exposure to education issues through focused discussions on the status of education in their village

4.2.6 Door to door baseline survey

Pratham assists VEC to conduct a start-of-the-action participatory door-to-door baseline survey of education status of the village. The VEC members undergo training on survey mechanism and collation of data. In the survey, gender segregated child wise information was collected related to 1) enrolment and 2) literacy levels. Also, status of functioning of 1) local school and 2) SSA provisions was assessed. VEC workshops to analyze survey results: Pratham assisted the VECs to analyze the results of the annual door-to-door surveys through easy to read one page Village Report Cards. They give a snapshot of 1) key education indicators of enrolment and literacy in the village and 2) functioning of the SSA provisions. Through this analysis education needs of the village emerge which helped the VEC to prepare milestones based action plans.

4.2.7 VEC workshops to prepare action plan

Based on the analysis of the Village Report Cards, Pratham assists the VEC to prepare action plans. Pratham helps the VEC to decide the SSA provisions that it should take up for monitoring and facilitates discussions on strategies for improving the functioning of the chosen provisions. Pratham and VEC jointly discuss indicators to monitor and track within the provisions and the monitoring mechanism. The VECs hold joint village based workshops with the volunteers each month. The objective of these workshops is to track progress of the monitoring action plan, discuss experiences and problems of the volunteers, reactions of the authorities or additional information required by the volunteers. Pratham helps the VEC in conducting these workshops initially. Pratham assists the VEC to conduct quarterly evaluation of the functioning of the SSA provisions. Such periodic evaluations by the VECs help to track the improvements in the functioning of the provisions, effectiveness of the action plan and role of the volunteers.

4.3 The Structure or level of Intervention

4.3.1 Village Education Committee Meetings

The VEC is the regulatory body set up by the education department. They are supposed to be in charge of the education process in the village and take decision for its betterment. Pratham experiences showed most of these VECs were on paper and actual meetings never took place. The school principals send the VEC register, to the VEC members residence and get it signed. Even the VEC members sign these registers without questioning the principal as most of the time they feel the principal is a superior person.

Slowly the village Sarpanch have started to call the VEC meetings. Very often the principals, teachers and cluster resource coordinators react to these meetings. Often they would try not to attend the meetings. In due course of time, the regular meetings started to happen. Pratham in the first phase of intervention drew up monthly agendas that the VEC members could discuss. For example in the month of May the VEC members could discuss the preparation need to be made for smooth opening of the new academic year. This was just

facilitation of certain agenda so that the VEC did not get lost in the first few months. These meetings also later started discussing educational entitlements, members started meetings members of other VEC's. Slowly the members stopped signing in any VEC register without being present.

4.3.2 Shikshan Gram Sabha (SGS)

SGS was an important step in VEC activation. These Sabhas were organised with prior consent of the sarpanch and VEC members on a date decided by them. To have a greater level of involvement, certain activities were conducted during the sabha, like public testing of the children present in sabha. This acted as an immediate check of the status of the education delivery system in the village. The results of 1100 public testing in 1385 villages of the four districts then revealed that 60% children assessed could not read. (Annual report, 2006) SGS was a common platform for sharing education issues, expressing views and making community-owned action plans on improving education.

Following the SGSs, action plans were made by the VEC members and people present at the sabha. The action plan was a simple document that specifies the work that villagers have decided to complete within a mutually decided time frame; and the persons who agree to take the responsibilities to accomplish the work to be done. Ninety percent of the 922 VECs prepared action plans addressing issues relating to the children's attendance, teacher absenteeism, and school infrastructure. (Annual report, 2006)

4.3.3 Public Assessments of children during Shikshan Sabhas

Typically, 100 village members would attend the Public Assessment, including VEC members, PTA members, MTA members, teachers and principal of the village school. The Sarpanch would begin the SGS by engaging the villagers to talk about the education issues facing the village. As issues related to poor school quality start cropping up, the VEC members would suggest conducting an assessment of the reading levels of children present in the SGS itself, to really know how many children in the village can read. Children would randomly be invited from the SGS, to come and read in front of the village. In such situations, the VEC drove the argument towards a constructive dialogue between the parents and teachers to jointly address the issue.

Poor reading levels of the assessed children, raised issues of accountability of the school towards the community and initiating a dialogue between parents and the teachers

- Parents: For the first time, they realized that though their child goes to school, he/she could not read. Reactions included beating the child in public and accusing the teachers and principals of being responsible for the poor learning levels of the children.
- Teachers/Principals: Some left the SGS as they came to know of the public assessment. Others present, countered the accusations by pointing out the minimal role the parents played in their child's education, not attending school meetings and not sending their child to school. They also cited additional government responsibilities and lack of enough teachers as reasons for poor learning levels of the children.

Table 4.7: Public assessments and learning levels in villages accessed by Pratham

District	No of Villages	No of Public Assessments	Approx % of Children not reading
Kutch	809	823	60%
Rajkot	187	93	64%
Surat	209	53	53%
Baroda	180	131	48%
Total	1385	1100	60%

Source: Pratham Annual Report, 2006

4.3.4 Volunteers

A volunteer is an educated community member- a person irrespective of caste, creed, age or gender taking the ownership of making children read in the village. He or she is an unpaid volunteer, wanting to contribute to their village. The volunteers come forward to help children with no reading abilities in their village and help through reading classes using Pratham's reading technique.

During the first phase of the intervention, VECs in Kutch, Banaskantha, Rajkot, Baroda and Surat mobilized 1,174 volunteers to conduct remedial reading classes for 20,000 rural children in these districts. In order to ensure that everyone in the village, including teachers and parents, took collective responsibility to improve the education scenario in the village, the VEC proposed that people from the village come forward to conduct remedial reading classes for the children (Annual report, 2006). In most cases, the youth present during the public assessment of children, volunteered to take the classes. Pratham conducted training of 1,035 such village youth from over 500 villages (Annual report, 2006). In return Pratham gave them a certificate for undergoing training.

4.3.5 Village Action Groups

In order to put the educational plans into action VAG were set up in phase two to improve the functioning of these schemes. Hence Village Action Groups took care of MDM, ICDS, school functioning and library. The members of the VAG were people from the community who expressed an interest in working for a particular scheme ICDS -functioning mostly comprises mothers of children who benefit from the ICDS. The members of the VAGs varied from youngsters in their teens to elderly people who were grandparents of the children deriving benefit from a particular scheme. The members of a VAG accepted their responsibilities in front of the entire village in a SGS resulting in

higher accountability towards the villagers. This ensured higher sustainability. (Annual report 2007)

The Village action groups kept on devising various ways of increasing the benefit derived by children from the schemes. Every VAG began by referring to the baseline assessment of the scheme and discussing the current state of the facilities of the schemes. The VAG is supported by the VEC and a Pratham team member in its functioning, especially in the form of required information or interactions with local government officials. Some VAGs get directly involved in the functioning of the scheme while others share their expectations with the person responsible for running the scheme and setting performance standards.

Chapter 5: Mechanism used by Pratham to bring about Community Participation in the villages

This chapter focuses on the mechanisms used in the intervention by Pratham to bring about community participation towards better decentralization. The section is further divided into the various mechanisms used by Pratham to bring desired changes amongst the village community and educational administrators.

Activate the existing chain and channels

Pratham has always believed in activating the existing chains and channels then building a parallel system. Since its beginning it believed in supporting the work of the government then building new structures like schools etc. In the RCA intervention Pratham decided to use this mechanism since the very first step, it decided to the use of TDO's to get all sarpanches for a joint meeting and introduce Pratham. Most of the times the TDO refuse to conduct or call for a meeting and in such a situation pressure tactics had to be used.

Using the existing channels for solving different issues had become important for getting quicker solutions. Along with Pratham, VEC members could also pressurize the government systems. Extended communities also witness that the government school system had also started functioning and they could also push for certain things to be done. The firm believe behind this was that the village community was entitle for certain rights and the government had to deliver on it. Therefore the VEC had to pressurized the Sarpanch or principal or DPEO to open up existing possibilities that were available within the system.

Examples.....

In Bhavada, the primary school in this village was on a roadside; due to this there was a need for a compound wall to protect children from road traffic. The issue was brought up in a VEC meeting. A VEC member informed the DPEO (District Primary Education Officer). As a result the DPEO had given approval to build a compound wall around the school and construction will soon be underway.

In Vankas village the Anganwadi centre in this village was completely dilapidated. The children attending the Anganwadi were being accommodated at a neighbouring house. It was also found that approval had been granted from the block level for the construction of a new centre. The issue was brought to attention in a VEC meeting; a VEC member submitted an application to the CDPO (Child development program officer). The responsibility

of managing the project was taken on by the village Sarpanch. Construction of the new Anganwadi centre is now complete. (Raval 2008: 4)

Public Sharing of Information

Information builds the self confidence, helps in taking better and informed decisions. Sharing of information amongst the VECs, parents or other villagers was a key mechanism pratham used. Public sharing of information was done in different ways and at different points of time. For examples the VEC members were informed about their roles, responsibilities, functions and powers they possessed with their positions. Secondly, during the SGS these were extensively used to educated and bring about a discussion about the educational scenario in the village. Public sharing of information help in solving issues like shortage of infrastructure etc, if also led to quicker solutions extended community, non parent members would also contribute towards bringing a solution.

Examples.....

In Pandavkhadak, the village school lacked water facilities. The issue was discussed in a VEC meeting the VEC members submitted an application to the DPEO, but nothing happened. Later a gram Sabha was held in the village to discuss this issue. A villager gave a little less than half a million to install water facility system in the school.

In Vagjari in Surat District, the village school did not have a compound wall or shed to cook the mid-day meal for school children. Hence the area around the school was being misused and cooking meals in the monsoon was a problem. After the SGS, the entire village community decided that they would get together on the weekend and build a fence and a shed for the school. On the appointed day, over 100 volunteers gathered along with material from their own houses and build a school fence and shed. (Raval 2008: 14)

Public Knowledge of Good Doing

Once there is public knowledge of a problem, it is also important that there is public knowledge of good doing. How the larger community or official have contributed towards solving the problem. The principal would put it up on the school notice board or the Sarpanch would write it on the Panchayat notice board. Hence people across the village would have knowledge of how the issue was solved and who was involved? This acts as motivator to others also.

Making good doing a public knowledge did work out well. It created a kind of pressure amongst the elite class to contribute towards a problem or

developing infrastructure for a school etc. Even middle class parents would contribute in terms to labour etc. It brought a sense of contribution to the parents towards the school that they were fulfilling their responsibility as parents.

In Rola village Ishwarbhai Desai donated 200,000 rupees for school infrastructure development. During VEC members along with the school teachers decided how the funding would be used based on the needs of the village school. Two classrooms were constructed with the donated amount and on completion a note of thanks for Ishwarbhai was put at the entrances of the classrooms.

In Asalkati village, the village primary school had a lack of classrooms. The VEC had been granted the necessary funding for building a new classroom but no land was available to build on. This issue was discussed in a VEC meeting; later the issue was brought up in the SGS that was organized. At the SGS a donor-local village resident offered to give up a portion of his own land for the construction of the new classroom. (Raval 2008: 12)

Public Shaming and treats

Public Shaming and treats were also used as mechanism. Public Shaming is not liked by anyone and creates an unpleasant feeling. But this was done with utter most care and with the intention to bring accountability mainly within the schooling system. Sometimes it was also used by the Sarpanch especially with parents in case a child was attending a school for a long duration after repeated request or other minor issues which would not embarrass the parent. This mechanism specially worked with school and ICDS teachers, after sometime teachers who were questioned on their coming in late or non attendance knew that they were watched by the whole village, so were on guard. This also helped to sort a lot of problems that the teachers were facing about transportation facilities etc. This also kept parents on guard as they knew that they could also be questioned about their children attendance etc.

In Khoba village, it was found that the teachers in Khoba were regularly absent from school. The school never functioned on time; as a result children hardly learned anything and the learning quality within the school was questionable. A VEC meeting was called to take action on the situation. At the meeting it was decided to organize a gram Sabha and discuss the issue as it was not easy to be handled. During the same month a SGS took place. In the SGS meeting the CRC took on the responsibility of improving the quality education in the village, with the help of remedial classes. The SGS also passed a resolution to the school teachers to get regular or they would force the district administration to take action against the teachers. Slowly with this

teachers got regular, there was monitoring on behalf of the community.

In Chasmandva village, the anganwadi (ICDS) worker in this village was regularly absent from the school. All management responsibilities of the Anganwadi were being carried out by the anganwadi helper. The anganwadi worker was called to the SGS and informed that if she did not fulfil her responsibility of managing the anganwadi, she would face immediate termination. The anganwadi worker is now opening and managing the centre regularly. (Raval 2008:5)

Public Testing of children

Public testing of children got parents or villagers for the first time to discuss about the educational status children in village school. Parents always believed once a child goes to school they would learn, and their responsibility was over. They were shocked to see a child of grade seventh was unable to read basic language. On two such occasions parents just abused and beat the child in public, which was unacceptable. But the Karyakarta slowly took up the matter, the Sarpanch intervene at the parent was calm down.

This came as an eye opener in many of the communities; parents amongst themselves started discussing in the villages about their concerns regards to the schools. Parents also did also realize that along with teachers they also responsible for this situation. They are also supposed to look into what their child was doing on a daily basis.

Examples.....

In Ulashpindi Village is large village, with high number of school going population. The testing reports of the village also show a large number of children were required remedial help, as the lacked behind in reading, writings and math. With the help of the Sarpanch this issue was discussed at the VEC meeting and then taken to the soon be held gram Sabha. There was public testing which took place and the villagers discussed the issue amongst themselves. They even questioned the school principal and teachers. Then it was decided to have volunteer run class and the young youth from the village volunteered to run the classes for the lagging behind children.

In Nandigam village, there were number of children that were lagging behind, this was brought to light when there was public testing of children. There were two main causes of children lagging behind that were identified, the school since long had a shortage of teachers, as the village was in the interiors, also the

village was tribal so the children spoke the local tribal language. The Village school actually taught in a different regional language. Hence the issue was discussed at length in the SGS, and local teacher on a temporary basis was appointed by the Panchayat. (Raval 2008: 7)

Focused Attention

Sometimes it's really important to draw attention of the concerned authority to a particular situation or an issue and at times things do work out. For this it is important for VECs or people in power to be well informed about the problem. Where ever necessary people need to point out the problem to the authority in charge - who has the decision making power to solve the problem. The VEC needs to be alert, discuss issues with a lot more people, who might have solution to the various problems or are capable of making decisions. It also makes it very important to VEC members to attend meetings at the block or the district level. It forces them to learn how to put forth their proposals and also get them sanctioned.

Example.....

In Bopibarda village, Bopibarda primary school had lack of classrooms. VEC members submitted an application to the block level requesting funds for the construction of a new classroom. The application was submitted to the block and district level officials, with a clear reason why they required an early sanction. Their problem was well understood and an approval was granted to the VEC member to build a new classroom and also arrange for water facilities. (Raval 2008: 11)

Visibility of actions or Public display

It is very important to create visibility or display the results of good doing. The idea behind this was whatever happens the village community should know and be updated. Once the community members saw an active participation building up, slowly more members of the community would join in.

Volunteers who had committed to conduct remedial classes for the non reading children or Library classes or reading story books or story telling would also go on in a common place. Classes generally took place in a common area, this benefited in two ways firstly since the place was common, it was just easier for any student to attend classes and secondly it helped in monitoring since classes were visible to the entire village. A little less amount of monitoring was required, as if it was not conducted for a single day then parents or passer bys used to inquire about it and find out what was wrong?

The schools principals had started putting up the names of the VEC members on the school notice board, with details regarding meeting dates, agenda and venue for past and future VEC meetings.

The village action plans , to which the volunteers had committed to where also put up with deadlines on the Panchayat wall

Examples.....

In this village primary school no library books were available to children. The issue was discussed in a VEC meeting; VEC members provided funding to buy new library books. In addition, Ramiben, a village resident also donated 4,000 rupees to purchase library set of books. A youth from the village agreed to take up the responsibility of running the library. During the library hours, he gives books to the children, reads for them, narrates stories etc. Children now regularly read the books each morning from 9am to 10:15am with the help of the youth volunteer. The class is conducted in an open place in the middle of the village, which is visible to all.

In Sudamada village of Surendranagar Taluka, Village Action Group for MDM was set-up in a SGS. After discussions based on the baseline assessment and visits to the school during the MDM, the group realized that the functioning of the MDM was far from optimal. They decided to follow the method of non obtrusive, daily monitoring of MDM. At least 1 member from the VAG would visit the MDM every day, observe and record various aspects like quality of food served, timeliness and regularity of MDM operations, staff presence, and number of children using the MDM facility. When the head master saw that someone or the other visits the school every day and observes the functioning of the MDM centre, he felt the need for improving the school. Today 200 children are availing of the MDM facility from the same centre. The VAG opted for a simple and effective solution which they could devise as they knew the situation on the ground and knew who needs to be influenced to change the situation. (Raval 2008: 20)

Reward- certification

All community members like to be rewarded for the work they have done. It was most popular amongst the youth. It helped the Sarpanch, VEC and Pratham to raise volunteers for their different activities. The volunteers who underwent a three day training how to teach children the 3 R's¹² and how to run libraries got a certified of training. The gram Panchayat also provided the youth a certificate for conducting volunteer classes for the children on the

¹² 3R's-reading,writing and arithmetic

Panchayat letter head. This certification is regarded important for the youth as many of them were applying for jobs in the elementary education department as Para teachers. Hence this was an extra benefit as they did not have the formal teacher training as they were normal graduates. This was their first training towards teaching

Mithi Cher in Kutch District had no teacher appointed for a very long time as a result of teacher shortages. Even the Principal and CRC said that the appointment will take some more time. The VEC and village community forced the village Sarpanch to appoint someone from the village to help in the school and pay the person from the panchayat funds. Therefore a proxy teacher was appointed at a monthly salary of Rs 1000. This teacher was a youth from the village, who had conducted some remedial classes some for some time ago as in the same village. (Raval 2008: 18

Chapter 6: Discussing Accountability and Sustainability

6.1 Accountability

Accountability needs to be looked from two view points. Firstly, Parents accountability towards their children and School and vice versa. There are different reasons why issues of accountability arise. Another reason why parents do not demand accountability from government schools as they hold a perception that monitoring the school and demanding accountability is not their responsibility. Parents also have a feeling that their, complains and suggestions fall to deaf ears. Another important issue is that of the VEC constitution (responsibilities, roles, power and functions) and membership makes, being accountable and demanding accountability more difficult.

Parents do not hold the government schools accountable as they hold perception monitoring the school and demanding accountability is not their responsibility. This does not mean that parents do not care about their child's education, but parents do feel that sending the child to school is the extent of their responsibility. There happens to be sense of disempowerment and lack of confidence, as most of them are illiterate and hence they carry the feeling that they will be unable to influence the school and the teacher. Secondly there is a large socio economic divide between the rural communities and the teachers. Parents generally hold the perception that the teachers in the schools are more economically well off as they earn higher salaries hence this divide makes it difficult for parents to demand accountability. Thirdly, in most of the villages the children who attend government schools belong mostly to the lower caste, hence their parents always take it for granted that they did not have the right to demand accountability and they were simple beneficiaries.

The second reasons for parents not being accountable or participating in the school is no one from the educational department-teachers, principals, CRC's or BRC's never talks to them. Parents generally have a feeling that the educational administrators are not bothered about complains made. Hence parents are not motivated to participate in schools.

The committee composition played an important role for VEC's not being or demanding accountability. The major reason for this was of the nine members, eight of them were various government functionaries. Only one parent actually represented the village parent community, as a parent of a disabled child. With such a composition it becomes difficult to demand accountability from colleagues. Also the guidelines to set up VECs discuss more on roles, responsibilities and functions rather than assign certain powers to the VEC members. Though they talk about decentralization it is controlled and aims just to improve efficiency in the system rather than devolution of power to the communities. This gives a sense of being given a position without any power to take action, unable to demand accountability.

The factors responsible to bring about accountability in RCA were the context in which the Pratham intervention was introduced. Though it is not a government intervention but it was promoted by the local TDO of the block. This step gave an identity of seriousness and easy access into the existing government system. The sarpanches did not look at the intervention suspiciously and there was some amount of community participation. Secondly, the intervention focused on providing information, which led to awareness about the educational entitlements, rights, powers, duties and responsibilities. It was for the first time the community had access to information and were aware and they started to take action, which slowly build their confidence. The other factor that forced the system to be accountable was teachers started getting scared of being pulled up and being questioned in public.

The top down pressure tactics did play an important role in creating accountability. First of all Pratham did not venture into the villages on their own, the Pratham karyakarta's were introduced by the TDO to the Sarpanch and the school principals and in turn they invited the Karyakarta to visit their village, hence this made the entry point easy for Pratham karyakarta's, hence they were less seen as outsiders. Secondly, the Karyakarta made the village Sarpanch and the principal rank their VEC and other educational entitlements in the village that brought clarity amongst the sarpanches that in order to improve parent and teacher accountability was important. One of the another element used by Pratham was going public, meaning creating discussion on the status of education in the village, public assessment of children brought forth the issue of learning quality and demanding teacher accountability- it was the first time that teacher were questioned in public in most of the villages and asked why children lacked behind. Another element used was advocating and negotiating change at the district level and at the state level.

Collective action did go a long way in building accountability. With the existing constraints on the composition of the VEC committee, Pratham as a strategy decided to get the other community members of the village to participate in demanding accountability. Pratham got the VECs members to involve youth volunteers and other village residents etc participate in various activities like storytelling, monitoring or donating. Therefore it was not only the lower strata or the economically backward that demanded accountability but a collective village which no more could be ignored by the school authorities.

Creating a sense of ownership amongst the parents for the school, did bring a sense for teacher and parent accountability. Attention was drawn to the fact that parents paid for the school directly through the education cess collected in the country, whenever they purchase a particular good. On occasions analogies with parental behaviour were drawn, for example when children are sick parents act by taking their sick children to the doctor, they ought to act when the school does not function (assuming the school is sick). Parents were acknowledged for the material contribution they made to the village school, also other mechanism used were public shaming of teachers for non performance and public display of results. These mechanisms were used as motivators for parents, volunteers and helped the community to contribute as they realized that they were being appreciated for the work being done.

6.2 Sustainability

Sustainability is about maintaining and continuing program services after the funding period is over. The goal is generally long term. Building a scalable and sustainable model in the Indian rural scenario is a multidimensional problem. Even in the case of Pratham during the VEC activation Program, the VEC activation efforts have seen VECs changing from 'on paper bodies' into bodies that are taking interest in the education agenda and attempting to lead the community in addressing it and actively engage with the government for the same. The journey has been that of many practice level changes. These steps had also started forcing the government to look at required policy level changes. Thus the project saw strengthened sustainability in the program due to VECs increased capacity and willingness to engage with the local government to access educational benefits for which they are entitled.

Sustainability first and foremost would require inclusive participation of various communities irrespective of caste, religion, gender and class. Inclusive participation is a challenge in a state like Gujarat, because of its rural history- where untouchability is still exists. The region also suffered from communal riots which had destroyed the social fabric of the state apart from the class differences that had existed. Dealing with such multiple issues was not going to be easy but it was important and necessary if the face of Elementary education in Gujarat was to be changed and communities were to be made in charge of local education. The disempowered members of the village community like the lower caste parents, women need to be slowly empowered to come and participate. An intervention tends to be more sustainable for a long period of time when is well accepted by all the concerned people and they ready to participate in it.

Pratham would try and cluster villages with similar background- such as religion, similar types of educational issues and socio-cultural and economic aspects. Keeping these issues in mind the Pratham Karyakarta selected would be a person from a similar background, know to the villages, one who can represent the villages, who would well understand the ground situation with similar religious background. This increased the trust of the people in the program.

Access to information is very crucial to build a sustainable intervention. When Pratham started off with the intervention most of the VEC were defunct and had no knowledge about their roles, powers etc. Most of the members were also unaware of being VEC member. Pratham from its previous experience had learnt that it was important to make information available and transparent- roles functions and responsibilities and this would lead to more participation from different people from the village community. Pratham intervene in different ways with the VEC. In the initial stages it spoke to them if they knew that they were the members of a VEC. Then it informed them about their powers as VEC members. It spoke to them about along with power came roles, responsibilities and how they needed to fulfilled that first. Information in terms of booklets help the VEC members, the volunteers and villagers to get information on their entitlements, what were their children entitle for, and why they were not getting it. Information about their entitlements

and how they contribute to the education made the parents alert, and they recognized that they could demand their rights.

Public display of information and transparency in the intervention go a long way towards building sustainability of the program. It provides opportunity for the whole village community to participate in the activities that are being carried out. Also when there is public display and transparency the intervention is automatically monitored. It so happens that the entire intervention is owned by all and will be questioned when particular assigned activity is not happening. Transparency also leads to more and more community participating in terms of funds, labour or materials as a trust is built that things will be used for common good of the village.

There needs to be a sustained action at the village level by organizing community and engaging with the government towards the educational agenda. Working with another key stakeholder the Government to maximize benefits from key government educational interventions like ICDS and AIS as VECs understood their importance in achieving the goal of UEE. Through discussions on various government schemes held during the and through meetings, the VEC members are aware that there are many underutilized or unutilized government schemes that support increased learning levels and lower drop outs. Thus though a policy is in place but the practice to support its successful implementation was missing. This was addressed through village education plans focusing on practice changes that ensure higher utilization and benefits of these schemes to address the educational issues of their village. This involves creating a buy in, support and resources for these schemes within the village community and engaging with the local government officials as they have to be a part of the practice level changes.

Being Low cost is an important criteria for long term sustainability thus making it easily scalable and replicable. To make it low cost Pratham worked, closely with the local community and the government. It tried to do so by creating a sense of responsibility amongst the community. Each Karyakarta was in charge of 20 villages during the program and he or she generally was from a nearby village. In case if a Karyakarta had to stay in village after meeting late night, the villagers had to put him or her up. This also forced the Karyakarta to build a good relationship with the village community and provided an opportunity of creating oneness.

Pratham failed on financial sustainability as it was dependent on other donors for sustaining the program. In spite of successfully activating VECs the government failed to scale the program to other regions. The education department did not believe that the VECs were first of all defunct and required to be activated. This acceptance would force the department to relook the VEC composition and other issues.

Replication of an intervention is important, and this rural intervention had the potential for replication and adaptation in different districts and states across India. The intervention was replicated in different other districts of Gujarat later with financial support with other organisations. The intervention is more replicable, as it is simple to adapt and changes can be made within keeping the on the ground situation in mind. The Pratham rural intervention was

also replicate by UNICEF in the Valsad district of Gujarat to activate the defunct VECs of the district. The rural intervention has also created a niche for itself as its only one of the few successful interventions that address VEC activation, it does not duplicate any existing system, it's innovative and flexible and it also provides a type of process and skills that is hardly provided in Gujarat.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

Process, structures of intervention, tools and mechanisms for community participation should be designed for inclusive participation of all community members or stakeholders of the village, as it naturally does not happen. These should be easy to follow and which could be altered in accordance to the local context or needs. Process of intervention needs to be clearly stated specially if the program is being implemented on a medium or a large scale. Structures of intervention require including all stakeholders. Like parents, extended community members like youth, children or all disadvantage groups from the village. Tools- easy to used, practical, can be interpreted by even those who not illiterate. For example, parents who are not educated could join the monitoring of teachers or MDM or grandparents could participate in story telling sessions on the village history. Mechanisms for intervention should be clear, as these is what makes change happen. It's a joining thread between the process, structures and tools putting all together for implementation. Learning's from these processes, structures, mechanisms and tools need to be reflective on the experience of those implementing it- like what is actually working on the ground and what is not?. It needs to be changed timely.

Community Participation needs to be inclusive of all members of the village, especially those at a disadvantage because of caste, gender and religion biases. This sort of participation is very difficult to achieve and is always not possible. Pratham tried to make possible to a certain extent using strategies like public affirmations specially to deal with the social fabric in the village structure. While intervention strategies are being formulated it is important to design how inclusion of all community members is going to take place. It is realized that members of the disadvantage community have no inclination to participate and the upper caste/class or elite nor have an inclination to involve them. Hence it is important at times that at least to start a process of participation, important village leaders need to be forced to publicly to call all members to participate.

All sorts of decentralization in reality do not promote community Participation and depends on its implementation strategy. In Gujarat though there was space for community participation but it was more controlled and aimed to bring about efficiency. Firstly, CP in the present educational context holds a perception that participation of the communities is limited too, developing infrastructure or material support, communities are assumed to be incompetent to contribute otherwise within the system. But this perception is build by the teachers and administrators they have always encouraged only material or financial participation from parents.

Decentralization to promote community participation is it is important to have adequate community representation on bodies like VECs, SDMCs. At the present it can be concluded important roles of teacher recruitment, tackling teacher absenteeism are being kept away from the VECs as they are underestimated and due to teacher union pressure. Also teachers are not made accountable to the VECs. It is important for the VEC's to have power to under-

take changes and action if required. Presently VEC's are given all cumbersome jobs and activities that teachers don't want to conduct.

For long term sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency to be brought, it is important for volunteer's to emerge as independent bodies or groups who are committed and knowledgeable who can tackle issues related to various government schemes or issues. These groups can be strengthened by forming cluster and block level bodies that can learn from each other's experiences. VECs should also organize into cluster and block level bodies to jointly resolve education related issues and to lead advocacy efforts. However these calls for policy level changes through government buy in for such a change. Thus focus should be on:

1. VECs to equip them to strengthen the village education plans and drive their implementation through maximum possible community participation
2. Strengthening village groups to ensure regular monitoring and efficient functioning of government schemes.

Hence it could be concluded that Community Participation is the first step to bring about actual decentralization. If actual decentralization needs to be pushed for, where the community has the power to make decisions and there is devolution of power then community capacity needs to build up. Constant handholding is required at different levels if actual decentralization has to happen. There have been links between decentralization and improvement in elementary education, but the objective of bringing decentralization needs also to be clear, before implementation. The complete VEC structure along with the composition of members, powers, functions, roles and responsibilities need to be relooked, to make way for more meaningful community participation and where there is mutual accountability of parents and teachers. If quality and quantity of education needs to be improved then school teachers, management etc needs to be made accountable to VECs and community members at large.

Appendices

Annexure 1: Gujarat, In the Map of India



Source: Maps of India

Annexure 2: The Policy Framework for education since 1951 onwards

Period	Policy Framework	Strategies
1951-68	Constitution of India	<p>‘The state shall endeavour to provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of this Constitution, free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.’ (Article 45, Directive Principles of State Policy, The Constitution of India, 1950) Expansion of the formal schooling system; with state governments shouldering the responsibility for primary education.</p> <p>1964: Education Commission Report prescribing minimum standards for recruitment of teachers – 10 years of general education and minimum two years of training – diploma or degree in education.</p>
1968-86	National Policy on Education, 1968	<p>1973: Establishment of the National Council for Teacher Education</p> <p>1976: Education was shifted to the Concurrent List. Both the central government (GOI) and the state governments were equally responsible for promoting and managing education.</p> <p>1980s: Non-formal education introduced to supplement formal schooling, increasing thereby central investment in primary schooling.</p>
1986-92	National Policy on Education, 1986	<p>Operation Blackboard (1987): Strive for at least two teachers in all primary schools with the Government of India footing the wage bills of the additional teacher in single-teacher schools, providing minimum basic infrastructure and educational equipment in every school. Scheme wound up in 2001.</p> <p>DIET, 1988: A pre-service, as well as an in-service, training institution in every district. Objective - provide technical support to district educational administration to improve the</p>

		<p>quality of education through training of teachers.</p> <p>1987 onwards: Creation of autonomous quasi government bodies outside the formal administrative structure for implementation of education for All projects, namely:</p> <p>Rajasthan Shiksha Karmi Project, 1987 Bihar Education Project, 1991 Rajasthan Lok Jumbish, 1992 UP Basic Education Project, 1992</p>
1992 to 2002	National Policy on Education, 1986 revised in 1992	<p>District Primary Education Project (DPEP), 1993 (to channel for all substantial external assistance to primary education) Decentralisation is emphasised as a major policy thrust.</p> <p>1997 onwards: Several state governments introduced ‘contract teachers’ or ‘para teachers’ appointed by local bodies (panchayats) or during specific education projects without adhering to the qualification norms drafted by earlier policies. It needs to be noted that this was done outside the GOI policy framework and legitimised as a “project strategy”.</p> <p>2001: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan – an umbrella programme for elementary education in India. Transitional schools provided for in the scheme, legitimising, thereby, contract teachers and parateachers.</p>
2003 onwards	86 th Constitutional Amendment, 2003	<p>2003: Free and compulsory education made a fundamental right for all children in the age group 6-14 years and included in Part III (Fundamental Rights) of the Constitution of India;</p> <p>Article 21 A, Right to Education, states that “The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.</p>

Source: quoted from Ramchandran 2005:3-4

Annexure 3: A Snapshot of the Educational Status in Gujarat

Conducted by ASER, a non profit in India

GUJARAT RURAL

ALL ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 26 OUT OF 26 DISTRICTS



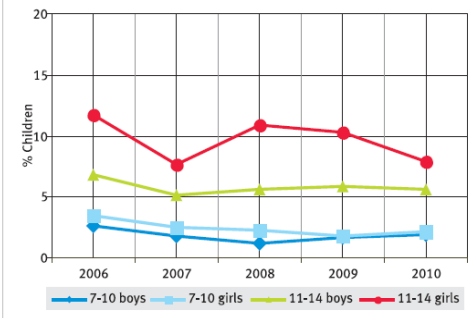
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

TABLE 1: % CHILDREN IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCHOOLS 2010

Age group	Govt.	Pvt.	Other	Not in School	Total
Age: 6-14 ALL	84.9	10.7	0.4	4.0	100
Age: 7-16 ALL	80.4	12.5	0.5	6.7	100
Age: 7-10 ALL	88.9	8.7	0.5	2.0	100
Age: 7-10 BOYS	87.9	9.8	0.4	1.9	100
Age: 7-10 GIRLS	90.1	7.2	0.5	2.1	100
Age: 11-14 ALL	79.4	13.4	0.5	6.7	100
Age: 11-14 BOYS	78.6	15.3	0.5	5.6	100
Age: 11-14 GIRLS	80.5	11.0	0.6	8.0	100
Age: 15-16 ALL	53.1	22.8	0.6	23.5	100
Age: 15-16 BOYS	56.4	24.0	0.5	19.2	100
Age: 15-16 GIRLS	48.9	21.3	0.7	29.1	100

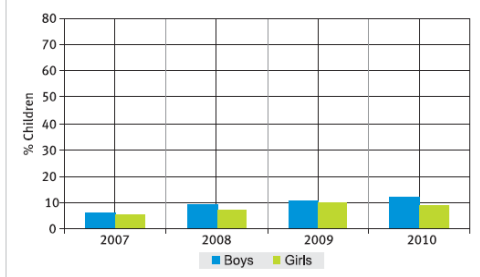
NOTE: 'OTHER' includes children going to madarssa and EGS.
*NOT IN SCHOOL' = dropped out + never enrolled.

CHART 1: TRENDS OVER TIME
% CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER 2006-2010



How to read this chart: For example, the proportion of girls (age 11-14) not in school has changed from 11.7% in 2006 to 7.6% in 2007 to 10.9% in 2008, 10.2% in 2009 and to 8% in 2010.

CHART 2: TRENDS OVER TIME
% BOYS AND GIRLS AGE 6-14 ENROLLED IN PVT SCHOOL 2007-2010



How to read this chart: In 2010, 12.2% of all boys (age 6-14) were enrolled in private school and 8.8% of all girls (age 6-14) were enrolled in private school.

TABLE 2: SAMPLE DESCRIPTION
% CHILDREN IN EACH CLASS BY AGE 2010

Std.	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Total	
I	27.4	62.4	6.7					3.6					100	
II	1.1	7.5	75.8	11.4	3.0				1.2				100	
III	1.5		6.9	75.6	11.7	2.5				2.0			100	
IV		2.2		7.2	71.1	15.3	2.2				1.8		100	
V			1.8		4.3	74.7	13.4	3.9				1.9	100	
VI				1.8		4.9	70.1	17.8	4.0			1.4	100	
VII					2.5		5.8	67.6	18.3	4.4		1.7	100	
VIII							3.5		7.5	67.9	14.6	4.6	1.9	100

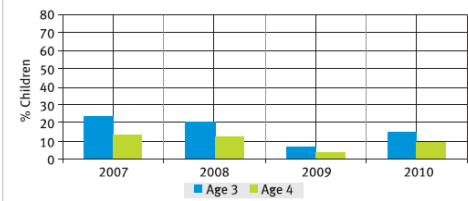
How to read this table: If a child started school in Std I at age 6, she should be age 8 in Std 3. This table shows the age distribution for each class. For example, in Std III, 75.6% children are 8 years old but there are also 6.9% who are 7, 11.7% who are 9, 2.5% who are 10 years old, etc.

YOUNG CHILDREN IN PRE-SCHOOL AND SCHOOL

TABLE 3: % CHILDREN AGE 3-6 WHO ATTEND DIFFERENT TYPES OF PRE-SCHOOL & SCHOOL 2010

	In balwadi or anganwadi	In LKG/UKG	In School			Not going anywhere	Total
			Govt	Pvt	Other		
Age 3	82.5	2.8				14.7	100
Age 4	84.4	6.5				9.0	100
Age 5	27.0	4.7	49.4	8.3	0.7	9.9	100
Age 6	2.2	0.6	85.2	8.0	0.1	3.9	100

CHART 3: TRENDS OVER TIME
% CHILDREN AGE 3-4 NOT ATTENDING ANYWHERE 2007-2010



In 2010, 97.3% of sampled villages reported having an anganwadi in the village.
How to read this chart: For example, in 2010, 14.7% of all age 3 children were not attending any kind of preschool or school.

ASER 2010

Data Source: Quoted Annual Survey of Education Report 2010

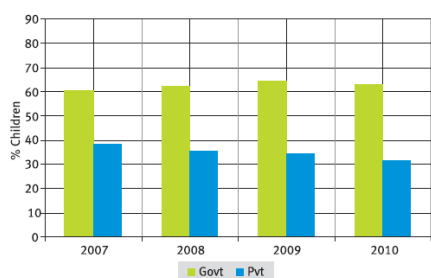
READING IN OWN LANGUAGE

TABLE 4: CLASS-WISE % CHILDREN BY READING LEVEL ALL SCHOOLS 2010

Std.	Nothing	Letter	Word	Level 1 (Std 1 Text)	Level 2 (Std 2 Text)	Total
I	28.6	50.8	14.3	4.4	2.0	100
II	8.7	35.0	36.0	12.6	7.7	100
III	4.7	17.8	37.7	25.8	14.1	100
IV	1.8	8.8	21.4	37.0	31.1	100
V	1.6	5.6	14.0	33.3	45.5	100
VI	1.4	3.4	8.1	28.0	59.1	100
VII	1.3	2.5	5.9	20.1	70.3	100
VIII	0.5	1.6	4.2	14.8	78.9	100
TOTAL	5.7	15.1	17.9	22.8	38.5	100

How to read this table: Each cell shows the highest level of reading achieved by a child. For example, in Std III, 4.7% children cannot even read letters, 17.8% can read letters but not more, 37.7% can read words but not Std 1 text or higher, 25.8% can read Std 1 text but not Std 2 level text, and 14.1% can read Std 2 level text. For each class, the total of all these exclusive categories is 100%.

CHART 4: TRENDS OVER TIME % CHILDREN IN Std III WHO CANNOT READ Std I LEVEL TEXT BY SCHOOL TYPE 2007-2010



READING TOOL

વિષયક રેકોર્ડ - ૧

બાલક

મારા મામાના ચામ પાસે દરિયો છે. દરિયો એટલે પાણી જ પાણી. એમાં ઓઠી તરે, જહાજ તરે. દરિયામાં મોજાં આવે. મોટાં મોજાં આવે. નાહવાની મજા પડે. છીપલાં વીજવાની મજા પડે. ભીની રેનીમાં પગલાં પાડવાં વધારે ગમે. રાતે દીવાદાંડી અને જહાજ જોવાની મજા પડે. કિનારે સરસ નારિયેળી ઓયા. વીલા નારિયેળનું પાણી મીઠું મીઠું. દરિયાનું પાણી તો ખાટું, ખાટું.

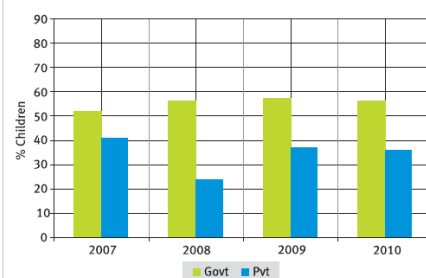
કુકલો

આ માટું ખેતર છે. ખેતર પાસે ફૂલો છે. બાપા અને કાકા સાથે મળીને ખેતરમાં કામ કરે છે. તેઓ જમીન ખેડે છે.

મ	ર	૧
હ	વ	
લ	ન	
ક	ય	

મટું	ખસે	પુષ્પ
પપ	કિચકે	
પપાટા	ખેતર	
ખામ	ખોર	

CHART 5: TRENDS OVER TIME % CHILDREN IN Std V WHO CANNOT READ Std II LEVEL TEXT BY SCHOOL TYPE 2007-2010



TUITION

TABLE 5: CLASS-WISE % CHILDREN ATTENDING PAID TUITION CLASSES BY SCHOOL TYPE 2007, 2009 AND 2010

Year	School	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
2007	GOVT	3.9	5.6	6.0	5.8	7.4	7.3	10.2	13.0
	PVT	19.8	23.5	26.6	26.1	40.3	31.1	35.2	26.0
2009	GOVT	5.5	7.1	7.1	9.0	9.2	9.0	9.1	11.9
	PVT	29.4	33.8	39.9	40.4	44.0	38.8	31.0	23.8
2010	GOVT	5.5	8.9	8.5	10.7	9.5	10.7	10.4	9.8
	PVT	21.4	36.9	44.1	35.9	40.8	39.4	39.8	28.8

NOTE: In 2007, 2009 and 2010 the ASER survey recorded information about tuition. In all 3 years, the question asked was the following: "Does the child take any paid additional class currently?" Therefore, these numbers do not include any supplemental help in learning that children may have received from parents, siblings or from anyone else who did not require payment.



ASER 2010

Data source: Quoted Annual Survey of Education Report 2010

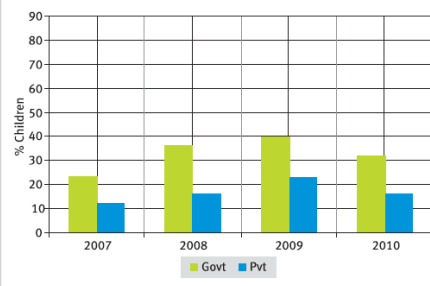
ARITHMETIC

TABLE 6: CLASS-WISE % CHILDREN BY ARITHMETIC LEVEL ALL SCHOOLS 2010

Std.	Nothing	Recognize Numbers		Subtract	Divide	Total
		1-9	11-99			
I	30.5	51.1	14.5	2.8	1.0	100
II	10.8	42.7	35.3	8.1	3.2	100
III	6.0	24.5	44.2	20.6	4.7	100
IV	2.6	14.5	33.7	38.3	10.9	100
V	2.1	8.2	26.9	41.8	21.1	100
VI	1.8	6.0	20.9	41.0	30.3	100
VII	1.7	4.3	15.8	36.6	41.6	100
VIII	0.9	3.6	11.1	30.1	54.3	100
TOTAL	6.7	18.8	25.8	28.2	20.5	100

How to read this table: Each cell shows the highest level of arithmetic achieved by a child. For example, in Std 3, 6% children cannot even recognize numbers 1-9, 24.5% can recognize numbers up to 10 but not more, 44.2% can recognize numbers upto 100 but cannot do subtraction, 20.6% can do subtraction but not division, and 4.7% can do division. For each class, the total of all these exclusive categories is 100%.

**CHART 6: TRENDS OVER TIME
 % CHILDREN IN Std III WHO CANNOT RECOGNISE NUMBERS UPTO 100 BY SCHOOL TYPE 2007-2010**



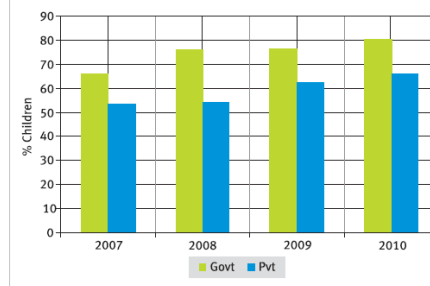
MATH TOOL

ગણિત ટૂલ - ૧

કંઈ જાણવા નથી	કંઈ જાણવા થોડું	ઠીકઠીક	ખરબખર
3 6	54 36	42 69	9) 696 (
9 8	62 23	36 64	8) 696 (
6 6	45 60	39 34	4) 463 (
4 2	26 99	54 23	3) 492 (

નોંધ: પૂર્વ, ૧૦૦ થી વધુ નાં આંક આપી શકે છે. પૂર્વ, ૧૦૦ થી વધુ નાં આંક આપી શકે છે. ઠીકઠીક નો, પૂર્વ, ૧૦૦ થી વધુ નાં આંક આપી શકે છે. ખરબખર નો, પૂર્વ, ૧૦૦ થી વધુ નાં આંક આપી શકે છે.

**CHART 7: TRENDS OVER TIME
 % CHILDREN IN Std V WHO CANNOT DO DIVISION BY SCHOOL TYPE 2007-2010**



CRITICAL THINKING AND EVERYDAY CALCULATIONS

TABLE 7: CLASSWISE % CHILDREN IN Std V-VIII ABLE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS IN EVERYDAY MATH. ALL SCHOOLS 2010

Std.	Menu			Calendar			Area			Estimation		
	Neither	One	Both	Neither	One	Both	Neither	One	Both	Neither	One	Both
V	26.7	15.5	57.8	39.9	18.2	42.0	65.0	12.9	22.1	46.0	14.1	39.9
VI	19.3	14.8	65.9	33.0	17.4	49.7	57.6	13.7	28.7	40.9	14.4	44.7
VII	15.3	13.3	71.4	25.1	16.4	58.5	47.7	16.2	36.1	34.6	12.8	52.6
VIII	10.8	11.5	77.7	16.5	17.5	66.0	39.7	12.7	47.6	23.9	12.9	63.2

NOTE: Children enrolled in school in Std V and above were given 4 tasks related to everyday calculations. For each task, children were asked two questions.

EVERYDAY MATH TOOL

નોંધ: પૂર્વ, ૧૦૦ થી વધુ નાં આંક આપી શકે છે.

પૂર્વ - ૩ રૂપિયા
 પાણીની બોટલ - ૧૦ રૂપિયા
 દૂધ - ૫ રૂપિયા
 વિસ્ફોટ - ૧૫ રૂપિયા.
 દાખલકામ - ૪ રૂપિયા

કે.સી. પૂર્વ, તુલના કરીને જુઓ કે કયો વસ્તુ ખરીદવા માટે વધુ પૈસાની જરૂર છે. કયો વસ્તુ ખરીદવા માટે ઓછા પૈસાની જરૂર છે?

કે.સી. પૂર્વ, તુલના કરીને જુઓ કે કયો વસ્તુ ખરીદવા માટે વધુ પૈસાની જરૂર છે. કયો વસ્તુ ખરીદવા માટે ઓછા પૈસાની જરૂર છે?

ASER 2010

Data source: Quoted Annual Survey of Education Report 2010

PERFORMANCE OF DISTRICTS

TABLE 8 District Name	Anganwadi or balwadi	Out of school	Private school	Tuition	Std I-II : Learning levels		Std III-V : Learning levels		Std V-VIII : Everyday calculations			
	% Children (Age 3-4) in anganwadi or pre-school	% Children (Age: 6-14) out of school	% Children (Age: 6-14) in private school	% Children (Std IV-VIII) attending paid tuition classes	% Children (Std I-II) who CAN READ letters or more	% Children (Std I-II) who CAN RECOGNIZE NUMBERS 1 to 9 or more	% Children (Std III-V) who CAN READ Level 1 (Std 1 Text) or more	% Children (Std III-V) who CAN DO SUBTRACTION or more	% Children answering both questions correctly	% Children answering both questions correctly	% Children answering both questions correctly	% Children answering both questions correctly
									Menu	Calendar	Area	Estimation
Ahmedabad	95.5	9.5	5.3	3.4	69.9	70.2	55.3	40.7	51.0	35.0	19.6	26.3
Amreli	92.4	1.2	15.3	9.4	93.6	83.2	75.9	57.4	77.6	59.4	34.0	31.9
Anand	90.0	1.7	21.8	20.7	82.8	81.0	57.2	37.2	72.7	64.5	32.8	63.1
Banas Kantha	77.7	6.0	8.5	11.4	82.9	83.8	54.2	43.1	74.3	67.6	34.7	61.7
Bharuch	70.2	2.2	14.1	13.6	68.4	65.1	60.6	44.3	62.4	46.6	30.0	35.0
Bhavnagar	79.3	5.5	7.5	14.5	72.7	71.6	65.6	42.8	56.4	34.1	13.2	38.6
Dahod	95.2	2.8	1.3	6.6	71.3	67.8	39.5	29.2	62.4	40.0	37.6	47.7
Gandhinagar	80.2	2.9	21.7	26.0	69.9	73.2	62.3	41.9	59.3	50.4	34.2	51.0
Jamnagar	97.9	4.1	23.6	15.1	86.1	86.1	68.1	37.3	72.5	54.4	28.8	36.8
Junagadh *	10.5	14.0	20.9		97.9	82.8	84.1	60.9	99.4	96.4	95.4	96.9
Kachchh	72.7	8.0	10.4	20.5	65.9	60.3	55.3	32.1	56.3	43.6	31.1	46.1
Kheda	90.9	1.2	13.3	10.7	79.5	81.4	62.6	44.2	74.5	72.7	67.1	76.9
Mehsana	94.3	1.5	4.2	16.7	95.5	91.0	80.9	72.8	84.3	51.4	36.2	30.2
Narmada	96.6	7.8	4.2	3.6	71.3	69.5	46.1	23.3	39.7	11.5	7.7	41.6
Navsari	97.0	2.2	4.5	13.6	80.3	81.3	38.8	23.3	53.8	57.1	39.2	60.8
Panch Mahal	98.5	1.6	8.4	17.1	91.8	91.8	62.0	59.3	62.7	58.9	49.5	54.7
Patan	96.1	4.7	3.5	19.5	70.4	71.5	75.9	40.6	63.0	53.4	27.8	51.3
Porbandar	95.7	1.1	4.8	13.6	92.7	89.6	77.8	64.6	81.5	63.8	40.6	44.5
Rajkot	80.7	4.3	18.6	10.2	84.4	78.1	68.0	52.7	72.0	61.4	49.8	54.8
Sabar Kantha *	98.2	3.2	8.5	12.1	87.6	85.9	60.2	48.4	94.5	91.7		75.9
Surat*	100.0	3.6	7.1	7.6	84.3	85.4	66.7	61.3				
Surendranagar	90.5	3.0	12.4	12.1	90.4	83.9	67.7	37.9	64.6	50.8	37.4	54.6
Tapi	97.4	3.1	4.4	4.2	85.4	81.9	53.2	53.9	50.5	42.7	31.3	33.9
The Dangs	99.5	6.2	3.0	4.0	75.7	76.3	47.1	37.5	66.2	45.0	26.9	58.5
Vadodara	95.0	4.1	12.0	10.9	78.1	77.7	69.5	50.0	56.5	33.8	7.0	57.1
Valsad	95.6	1.5	6.6	15.2	93.4	93.4	66.5	49.4	47.3	35.7	14.2	57.5
Total	88.4	4.0	10.7	13.0	81.6	79.6	63.0	46.6	67.6	53.4	33.0	49.3

* Blank cells indicate insufficient data.

Data source: Quoted Annual Survey of Education Report 2010

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AS PART OF ASER 2007, 2009 AND 2010, IN EACH SAMPLED VILLAGE, ONE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL WITH PRIMARY SECTIONS WAS VISITED ON THE DAY OF THE SURVEY. THE SCHOOL INFORMATION IS BASED ON THIS VISIT.

SCHOOL OBSERVATIONS

TABLE 9: TOTAL SCHOOLS VISITED

	2007	2009	2010
TYPE OF SCHOOL			
Std I-IV/V: PRIMARY	76	73	66
Std I-VII/VIII: PRIMARY + UPPER PRIMARY	558	591	557
TOTAL SCHOOLS VISITED	634	664	623

TABLE 11: HEADTEACHERS 2010

	Std I-IV/V	Std I-VII/VIII
NO HEADTEACHER APPOINTED	0.0	0.0
HEADTEACHER APPOINTED BUT NOT PRESENT ON DAY OF VISIT	18.2	5.6
HEADTEACHER APPOINTED & PRESENT ON DAY OF VISIT	81.8	94.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

TABLE 13: COMPUTERS 2010

% SCHOOLS WITH	Std I-IV/V	Std I-VII/VIII
NO COMPUTERS	85.9	43.4
COMPUTERS BUT NO CHILDREN USING THEM AT TIME OF VISIT	4.7	26.6
COMPUTERS AND CHILDREN USING THEM AT TIME OF VISIT	9.4	30.1
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

TABLE 10: TEACHER ATTENDANCE

	2007	2009	2010	2007	2009	2010
TYPE OF SCHOOL	Std I-IV/V			Std I-VII/VIII		
% TEACHERS PRESENT (AVERAGE)	94.7	95.4	94.7	93.0	94.8	95.9
% SCHOOLS WITH NO TEACHER PRESENT	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% SCHOOLS WITH ALL TEACHERS PRESENT	85.7	84.1	78.7	69.9	76.5	77.2

TABLE 12: STUDENT ATTENDANCE

	2007	2009	2010	2007	2009	2010
TYPE OF SCHOOL	Std I-IV/V			Std I-VII/VIII		
% ENROLLED CHILDREN PRESENT (AVERAGE)	81.0	83.9	87.4	85.5	83.1	84.3
% SCHOOLS WITH LESS THAN 50% ENROLLED CHILDREN PRESENT	5.6	0.0	0.0	2.4	3.9	3.2
% SCHOOLS WITH 75% OR MORE ENROLLED CHILDREN PRESENT	68.1	77.8	85.0	85.9	76.8	81.3

TABLE 14: MULTIGRADE CLASSES

	2007	2009	2010	2007	2009	2010
% SCHOOLS IN WHICH	Std I-IV/V			Std I-VII/VIII		
Std II CHILDREN SITTING WITH ONE OR MORE OTHER CLASSES	59.2	76.8	56.1	28.4	38.2	33.6
Std IV CHILDREN SITTING WITH ONE OR MORE OTHER CLASSES	58.6	69.0	51.7	27.6	36.6	30.7

SCHOOL GRANTS

TABLE 15: SSA SCHOOL GRANTS RECEIVED IN FIRST HALF OF FINANCIAL YEAR 2009-10 AND IN THE FULL FINANCIAL YEAR 2009-2010, PRIMARY SCHOOLS ONLY

SSA school grants to government primary schools only	April 2009-October 2009				April 2009-March 2010			
	No. of schools	% Schools reporting grant information			No. of schools	% Schools reporting grant information		
		Got grant	Did not get grant	Don't know		Got grant	Did not get grant	Don't know
MAINTENANCE GRANT	54	70.4	22.2	7.4	59	84.8	5.1	10.2
DEVELOPMENT GRANT	53	88.7	5.7	5.7	60	85.0	5.0	10.0
TEACHER GRANT (TLM)	58	87.9	8.6	3.5	59	94.9	0.0	5.1

TABLE 16: SSA SCHOOL GRANTS RECEIVED IN FULL FINANCIAL YEAR 2008-2009 AND FULL FINANCIAL YEAR 2009-2010, PRIMARY SCHOOLS ONLY

SSA school grants to government primary schools only	April 2008-March 2009				April 2009-March 2010			
	No. of schools	% Schools reporting grant information			No. of schools	% Schools reporting grant information		
		Got grant	Did not get grant	Don't know		Got grant	Did not get grant	Don't know
MAINTENANCE GRANT	58	74.1	24.1	1.7	59	84.8	5.1	10.2
DEVELOPMENT GRANT	59	86.4	11.9	1.7	60	85.0	5.0	10.0
TEACHER GRANT (TLM)	63	95.2	3.2	1.6	59	94.9	0.0	5.1

NOTE: Table 15 compares grants received in the first half of the financial year (from April to October 2009) with grants received through the full financial year (from April 2009 to March 2010). Table 16 compares fund flows to schools across two full financial years. This table tracks fund flows to schools over time. Data reported is only for Primary schools. Data on Primary and Upper Primary Schools will be made available in the forthcoming PAISA 2010 report.

ASER 2010

Data source: Quoted Annual Survey of Education Report 2010

RIGHT TO EDUCATION INDICATORS

TABLE 17: SCHOOLS BY ENROLLMENT 2010

School enrollment	Number of schools	% of schools
1-60	27	4.6
61-90	25	4.2
91-120	34	5.8
> 120	504	85.4
TOTAL	590	100.0

TABLE 18: PUPIL TO TEACHER RATIO COMPARED TO RTE NORMS 2010

School enrollment	Number of teachers							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	≥7	
1-60	69.6	26.1			4.4			100
61-90	70.8	12.5			16.7			100
91-120		35.5	25.8	38.7				100
> 120		10.3		6.1	83.7			100

How to read this table: For example, RTE norms state that a school with enrollment of 61-90 students should have 3 teachers. This table shows that for schools in this category, 12.5% of schools are at norm (i.e. have 3 teachers), 70.8% are below the norm and 16.7% are above the norm.

TABLE 19: SCHOOLS BY NUMBER OF TEACHERS 2010

Number of teachers	Number of schools	% of schools
1	20	3.6
2	31	5.6
3	25	4.5
4	32	5.8
5	39	7.1
6	46	8.3
≥7	360	65.1
TOTAL	553	100.0

TABLE 20: TEACHER TO CLASSROOM RATIO COMPARED TO RTE NORMS 2010

Number of Teachers	Number of classrooms							Total	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6		≥7
1	0.0	0.0			100.0				100
2		0.0	16.7		83.3				100
3			5.6	11.1		83.3			100
4				14.3	21.4	64.3			100
5					30.3	39.4			100
6					26.1		8.7	65.2	100
≥7								16.0	84.0

How to read this table: RTE norms indicate that there should be one classroom for every teacher. This table shows, for example, that for schools with 3 teachers, 11.1% of schools are at norm (i.e. have 3 classrooms), 5.6% are below the norm and 83.3% are above the norm.

TABLE 21: FACILITIES COMPARED TO RTE NORMS 2010

% of schools with		
BUILDING	Office/Store/Office cum store	80.2
	Playground	75.4
	Boundary wall	84.5
DRINKING WATER	No facility for drinking water	14.1
	Facility but no drinking water available	6.5
TOILET	Drinking water available	79.3
	No toilet facility	2.6
	Facility but toilet not useable	29.3
GIRLS TOILET	Toilet useable	68.1
	% Schools with no separate provision for girls toilets	12.7
	Of schools with separate girls toilets, % schools where	
	Toilet locked	21.3
	Toilet not useable	11.3
TLM	Toilet useable	54.7
	Teaching learning material in Std 2	95.6
LIBRARY	Teaching learning material in Std 4	94.8
	No library	16.2
	Library but no books being used by children on day of visit	35.2
MDM	Library books being used by children on day of visit	48.5
	Kitchen shed for cooking midday meal	88.4
	Midday meal served in school on day of visit	96.4

NOTE: School observations for ASER 2010 looked at TLM for Std II and Std IV only.

As part of ASER 2010, in each sampled village, one government school with primary sections was visited on the day of the survey. During this school visit, RTE indicators were observed and are reported here.

Extracts from the Schedule of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 Norms and standards for a School (Sections 19 and 25)

NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN Std 1-5:

Admitted children	No. of teachers
≤ 60	2
61-90	3
91-120	4
121-200	5
> 150	5 + 1 Headteacher
> 200	Pupil-Teacher Ratio (excluding Headteacher) shall not exceed 40

SCHOOL FACILITIES:

All weather building with:

- At least one classroom for every teacher
- Office cum store cum headteacher's room
- Separate toilets for boys and girls
- Safe and adequate drinking water facility to all children
- A kitchen where mid-day meal is cooked in the school
- Playground
- Arrangements for securing the school building by boundary wall or fencing.

TEACHING LEARNING EQUIPMENT

shall be provided to each class as required.

LIBRARY

There shall be a library in each school providing newspaper, magazines and books on all subjects, including story-books.



Data source: Quoted Annual Survey of Education Report 2010

ASER 2010

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