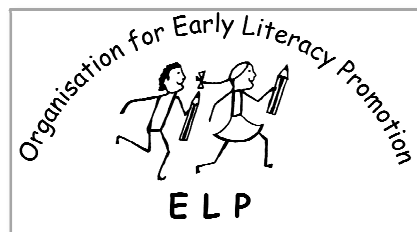




OELP's Annual Narrative Report

2013-14



B2-2198 Vasantkunj
New Delhi 110070
Email: oelpliteracy@yahoo.in
Website: www.oelp.org

OELP's Annual Narrative Report - 2013 -14

Contents

Introduction	4
Addressing children with a triple disadvantage	5
OELP's Approach	5
Objectives	6
Aims	6
Issues of language	7
Outreach and location of OELP's remedial programme	8
Implementation strategy	10
Indicators and monitoring strategy	11
Analysis of movement in impact indicators	13
Activities	21
Specific event highlight	37
Strengthening linkages with the State Education System	39
Networking and partnership building	43
Challenges	49
Key lessons	50
Future action	51
Photographs	52
Governance	54
Financials	55
Registrations	58
References	59
Appendix	60

List of tables

Table 1 : No of learners at three performance levels in the BSKs - Jan to May 2013	13
Table 2 : % of learners at three performance levels in the BSKs - Jan to May, 2013	13
Table 3. Comparison of Student performance levels in the Baseline and First Evaln	15
Table 4. The shift in performance levels from A (lowest level) towards C (end term proficiency) from the Baseline to the First Evaluation	15
Table 5. Overview of BSKs – January to July 2013	20
Table 6. Overview of BSKs – July to December 2013	20
Table 7. Enrolment in the BSKs - January to May 2013	21
Table 8 Enrolment in the BSKs - July to December 2013	22
Table 9. List of Village Libraries with the number of members in each	25
Table 10. List of Workshops organised during 2013	28
Table 11. OELP Exposure Based Training scheduled from Jan. 2013 to Feb. 2014	30
Table 12 Summary of progress against AWP for Y1 - Jan to Dec 2013	50

List of graphs

Graph 1. The performance in the Baseline Evaln of children from 16 BSKs - July 2013	14
Graph 2. The performance in the First Evaln of children from 16 BSKs - Oct 2013	14
Graph 3. Comparison of performance in Hindi in the Annual School Examination in April 2013 of the regular children and children from the BSK batch of 2011-12	16
Graph 4. Comparison of performance in English in the Annual School Examination in April 2013 of the regular children and the children from the BSK batch - 2011-12	17
Graph 5. Comparison of performance in Maths in the annual school examination in April 2013 of the regular children and the children from the BSK batch - 2011-12	17
Graph 6: No. of children who were mainstreamed i.e. brought up to grade level in 10 BSKs at the end of the academic year 2012-13	18

Introduction

The recent discourse on Education within this country had emphasised that it is learning rather than years of schooling that contributes to a country's economic growth, and that years of schooling do not automatically translate into adequate learning (Hanushek & Woessman, 2008). **However in India, this paradigm shift in focus from schooling to learning has yet to take place.**¹

In the last decade, India has made tremendous progress in improving education when measured by the quality of schooling inputs such as access, infrastructure, pupil-teacher ratios, and student enrolment, to the point that 96.5% of children aged 6-14 are now enrolled in elementary schools (ASER, 2012). However, there has been little corresponding improvement in learning outcomes, which are still disturbingly low both in absolute terms, as reflected in various government and private sector national assessments (e.g. by NCERT, ASER). These various findings suggest that our schooling system is doing well in enrolling children in school, but failing when it comes to teaching them even basic skills, leading to a situation where nearly 50% drop out before the end of the elementary cycle.

OELP realises the gravity of the situation which has been briefly outlined above. The findings which have been presented above have further strengthened our resolve to continue to work with young learners and marginalised communities towards building strong foundations in meaningful Emergent and Early Literacy. We consider strong foundations in meaningful reading and writing to be essential enabling tools for equipping young learners to become lifelong learners and thinkers. The focus of our work over the past year has been guided by our resolve to continue to strengthen our work in this direction, and also towards helping young children make friends with books and reading.

OELP's interventions over the past year have been influenced by the following recent **research evidence and insights from current literature on Emergent and Early Literacy:**

- **The foundations of meaningful and purposeful reading and writing are laid in the early years** and have a long lasting impact on a young child's later development and learning.
- **Young children do not learn in the same way as older learners.** Their learning is directly linked their experience. Using teaching methods that are inappropriate for young children can have a long lasting negative impact on them
- **The quality and stability of a child's human relationships in the early years lay the foundation for a wide range of later developmental and learning outcomes.** These relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development – intellectual, social, emotional, physical, behavioural, and moral.

¹ See UNICEF - Background Paper for the Roundtable Discussion on 'Enhancing Teaching-Learning Outcomes', 12-13th December, 2013

- **Literacy encompasses both spoken and written language.** Becoming literate cannot be limited to learning the alphabet or being able to read or write based on prescribed textbooks.

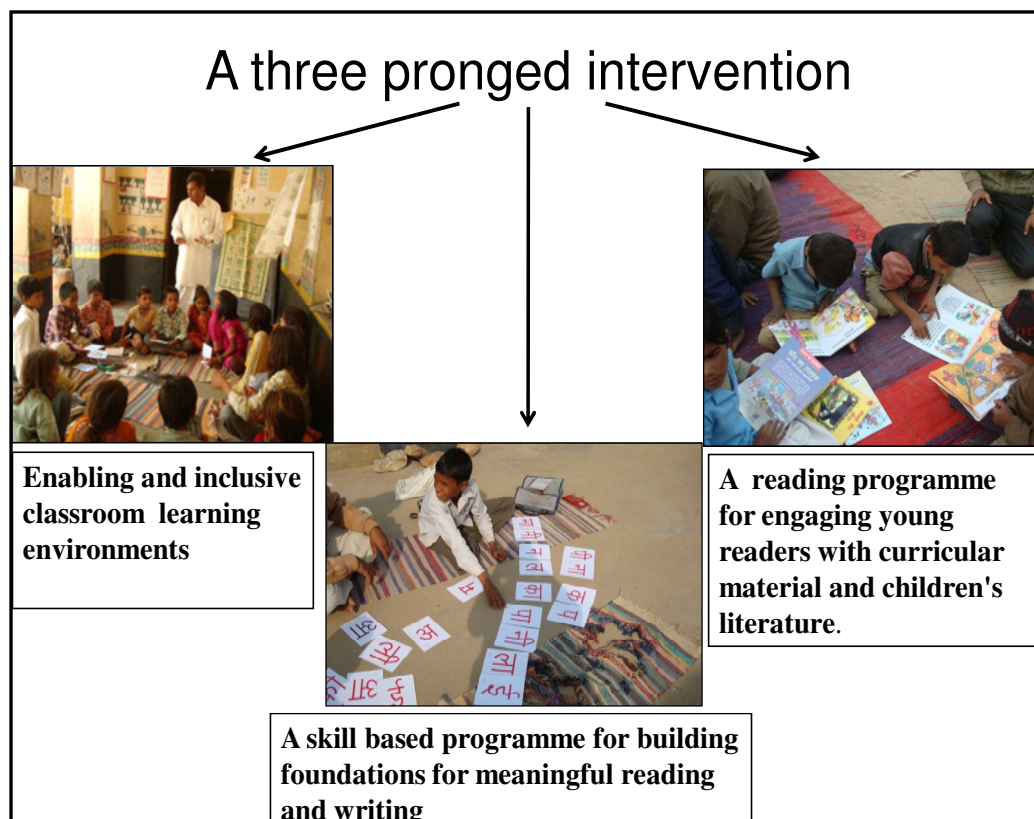
Addressing children with a triple disadvantage

OELP's Experience suggests that children from marginalized backgrounds enter school with a triple disadvantage as compared to their peers from more advantageous backgrounds:

- 1) Oracy to literacy with practically no support at home or in their social environments
- 2) Home language to school language with very little support within the school programme to facilitate this transition in meaningful and thought out ways.
- 3) Traverse challenging and inequitable social spaces inside classrooms.

OELP's approach

OELP's has evolved a three pronged intervention based insights from research and literature on Early Literacy and through on our sustained and intensive engagement inside classroom and with village communities



Highlights

1. Providing enabling conditions and planned opportunities inside mainstream classrooms for building strong early literacy and language skills which include speaking, listening, reading, writing, and thinking.
2. **Facilitating the processes of meaningful decoding** through the OELP *Varna Samooha Approach* which aims to get children to combine the sounds of written letters to create the written forms of their spoken words. Next, the children draw pictures to represent the meanings of the written words that they have constructed. Through this creative process children begin to relate to written forms in meaningful ways.
3. Aiming to address basic foundation skills and higher order skills.
4. Providing plenty of planned opportunities for meaningful and enjoyable engagement with reading and writing in a variety of ways.

The underlying thinking

OELP believes that becoming literate means:

- Being able to think independently.
- Being able to make sense of what one sees, hears or reads.
- Being able to share one's ideas, thoughts and feelings through spoken, pictorial or written communication.

Objectives

The work within OELP over the past year i.e. January 2013 to December 2013 has been guided by the following main objectives:

- To strengthen and consolidate the OELP's early literacy interventions
- To review and streamline the processes of implementation, tracking and monitoring
- To work towards expansion in terms of location and outreach of early literacy interventions through provision of training, resource support and onsite mentoring.
- To support and strengthen the Early Literacy and Language Learning components within the mainstream education system

Aims

The focus of OELP's work is children from marginalised social groups who require informed support for engaging successfully with schooling and learning in the context of the contemporary global world. The main aims of OELP's work over the past year have been on:

- Building deeper understandings of children and their lives.
- Searching for ways in which this knowledge can be used for creating enabling and inclusive classroom learning environments and methods which equip the children to build strong foundations for efficient and meaningful reading and writing.
- Using the above knowledge and engagement with current literature for creating meaningful engagement with mainstream education
- Consolidating and enhancing OELP's early literacy interventions and adapting them for new contexts.
- Reaching out to groups of children, parents and communities across wider geographical locations

Issues of language

This year OELP has been working on ways of addressing the transition that children need to make from their home language to the language of schools. OELP is trying to systematise this process through actual engagement inside Classes 1 and 2 with children from non- Hindi backgrounds. This work is currently in process.

Linking spoken language to written forms

OELP's *Varna Samoocha* approach we find has effectively helped children learn to combine the sounds & symbols of the *Dev Nagari* script to make written forms of their spoken words as shown below. Later the children draw pictures to represent the meanings of these words.

	Bhojpuri		Marwari		Malwi		Hindi / Urdu		Others	
	words	meanings	words	meanings	words	meanings	words	meanings	words	meanings
1	लईका	child	पाला	walk	रास	rope	माला	necklace	पाकी Bengali	bird
2	पाकल	ripe	नीका	likeable	पीर	saint	पानी	water	नाती "	grandson
3	माई	mother	मनकी	cat	नीर	water	कान	ear	पीकअप English	pickup
4	मकई	maize	नीपना	paint an outline	चिमनी	light	पालक	spinach / parent (MP)	कप "	cup
5	पाई	money / coin	कागला	crow	गेती	dig	मकान	house	केबल "	cable
6	लालमी	watermelon	गारा	mud	तागा	thread	नमक	salt	लीमका भ	limca
7	ललना	newborn	माचा	cot	लीपा	mud paste	नाला	drain	नई Gondi	dog
8	ईआ	paternal grandma	कतरनी	scissors	कतरनी	scissors	चारा	fodder	बीलाल "	cat
9	पीका	tender first leaves	काचरा	vegetable name	सापा	turban	नाचना	dance	मीन "	fish
10	माकल	to come running	गला	path	चकला	disc for rolling dough	गाना	sing	गल Punjabi	talk

Outreach & location of the OELP Remedial Programme -2013

- 4 States
- 8 Districts
- 12 Blocks
- 170 Centers
- Approximately 5500 children

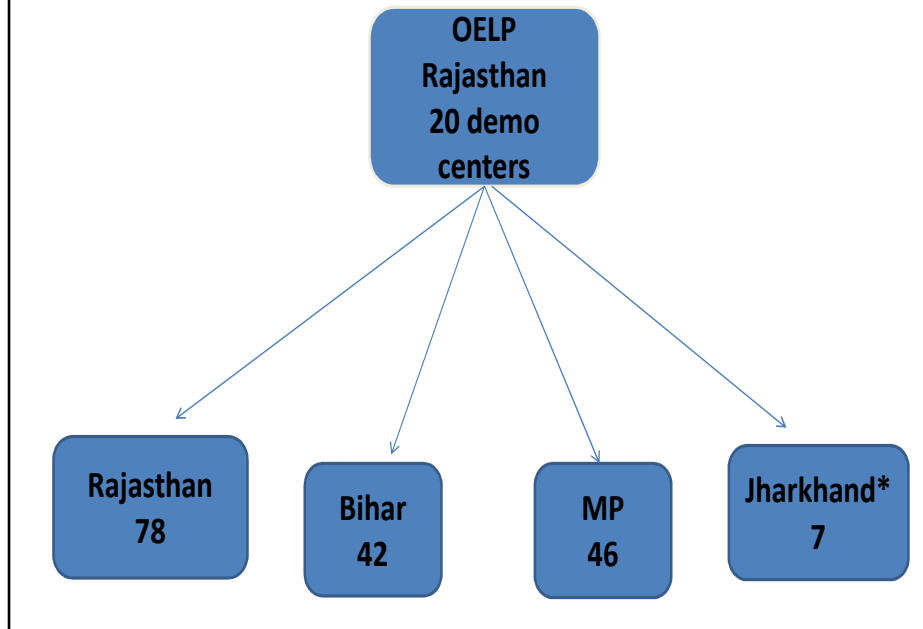


Outreach through OELP and partner organisations

State	Organisation	District	Block	No of villages	No of centres		No of children
					Centres	Schools	
Rajasthan	OELP - SRTT and SWRC	Ajmer	Silora	40	20	20	1500
	SWRC		Arain	8	8		165
	"		Jawaja	17	17		354
	"		Kekri	4	4		86
	"	Jaipur	Solavta	9	9		200
	"				58	20	2305
M.P	Jan Sahas – SRTT, support	Ujjain	Tarana	15	3	15	500
	"	Ujjain Urban		5	5	5	100
	"	Dewas	Sonkachh	18	3	15	663
	"				11	35	1263
Bihar	ALOK – SDTT support	West Champaran	Nautan	10	10	16	910
	"		Gaunaha	8	8	8	560
	"				18	24	1470
Jharkhand	CWD- Torpa SDTT support	Khunti	Torpa	5		5	250
	"		Rania	1		1	50
	SPS - SDTT support	Girdih	Girdih	1		1	40
	"					7	340
Total					87	86	5423

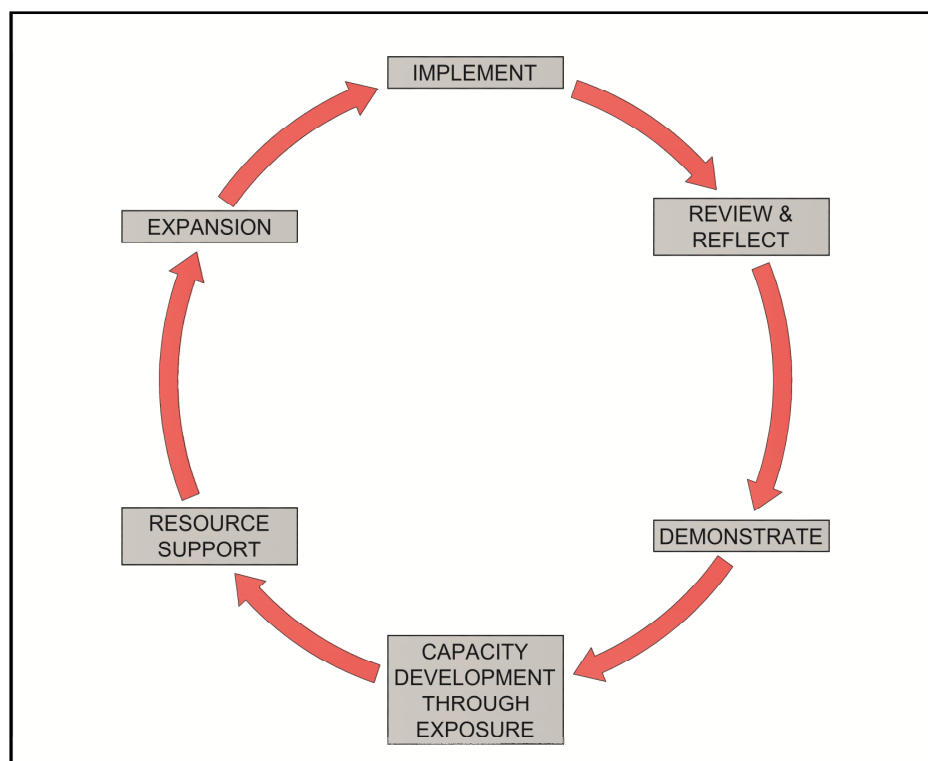
Expansion of OELP - 2013

Decentralization through NGO partners



Note: *Initial inputs of OELP in Jharkhand have received a very positive response. Further approvals are awaited from the donor agency for taking the OELP interventions forward in these locations.

OELP's Implementation strategy



The focus of OELP's implementation strategy in 2013 has been on the following:

1. To strengthen the implementation of the existing interventions.
 - a) To develop classroom learning environments which are inclusive, non- threatening, and facilitate active literacy and language learning in a variety of meaningful ways while catering to the individual needs of different learners.
 - b) To implement Early Literacy interventions as remedial support for low achieving children within mainstream government schools, as well as, in community centres for children who are still out of school.
 - c) To design a programme for building strong foundation skills in Class 1 within mainstream, government primary schools based on conceptually sound principles of Emergent Literacy and Early Learning through a process of professional guidance. This programme, which is at its initial stages also aims at facilitating smooth home to school transitions.
 - d) To implement a library programme for promoting culture of reading amongst children and their communities.
 - e) To build strong linkages with parents and community members for increasing their involvement in their children's learning.
 - f) To tap local forms of knowledge and explore ways of bringing them into the purview of the formal education system in the early years of schooling.
 - g) To streamline processes of assessment, review and monitoring.
2. To use OELP classrooms as demonstration sites for exposure based capacity building of representatives from NGOs and GOs towards promoting the conceptually sound, reflective practice of Early Literacy interventions.
3. To expand the OELP interventions to other locations and contexts.
4. To provide mentoring and resource support to the interventions in the new locations.
5. To engage with advocacy and networking which supports the effective implementation of conceptually sound Early Literacy programmes

Indicators and monitoring strategy

A. Learner Tracking

- **Competency based summative assessments** are under taken every quarter and each child's progress is tracked. Based on their performance children are grouped into three levels. Children's transitions across levels are tracked every quarter, and

implications that these may have for the teaching- learning process are discussed in the monthly review meetings which are held with the education workers / teachers.

- **Profile folders** are maintained for each child, with at least one piece of written work being included every week. The analysis of these is undertaken periodically during the monthly meetings for matching children's written work from the profile folder with her performance in the quarterly summative assessments. The profile folders are also very effective for sharing the children's progress with their parents during parents meetings, despite the fact that most parents cannot read and write.
- **An observation based qualitative checklist with a five point rating scale** for the quarterly formative assessment of individual children.

For the purpose of tracking the progress of individual learners OELP uses two sets of indicators

a) The competency based indicators for individual Reading and Writing performance levels. These have been categorised into the following five broad competencies.

- **Phonemic awareness** - awareness of sound units in spoken words.
- **Phonics** - awareness of sound – symbol / alphabet relationships.
- **Word recognition and vocabulary development**
 - a) **Development of oral vocabulary** i.e. Recognizing and understanding spoken words and their meaning and using them correctly this includes both words that children listen to and words that they speak
 - b) **Development of written vocabulary** i.e. recognising and understanding written words and their meanings and using them correctly both while reading and while writing.
- **Fluency in reading** - being able to read with a flow, with expression and correct pauses.
- **Reading and writing with comprehension** - being able to read and write with understanding and expression.

b) Observation based qualitative indicators

The checklist is in two parts.

Part 1 focuses on observation of an individual learner's reading and writing behaviours which are specifically related to reading and writing skills.

Part 2 focuses on a wider range of learner behaviours which include participation in class activity; involvement in storytelling, social behaviours etc

B. Programme Monitoring

The processes of programme monitoring includes the following:

- Systematic monitoring of each centre
- Classroom observation schedules
- Clearly specified monitoring indicators
- Monthly planning and review meetings
- Regular parent meetings
- Meeting with SMCs
- Periodic external reviews and feedback from professionals / academics
- Feedback from Government Schools and Education Department functionaries

OELP revised its monitoring formats in January 2013, to include indicators for monitoring the classroom learning environment and teaching / learning practices. Three monitoring formats were developed. These are:

- a) Checklist for observation of classroom environment and instructional practices
- b) Format for observation of classroom practices, materials and their usage
- c) Observations of children's reading and writing behaviours / practices.

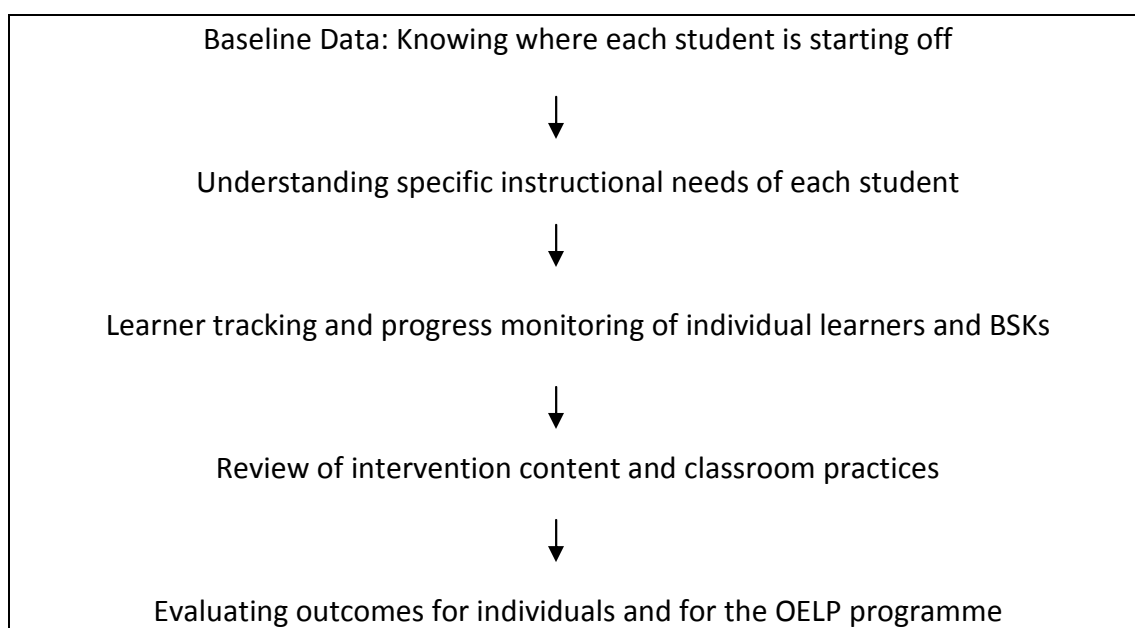
These formats were trialled and the feedback from the OELP facilitators and partner organisations (Jan Sahas) was incorporated. The monitoring mechanisms have also been streamlined with each facilitator is monitoring now 5-6 BSKs and spends one full day per week in each school to observe classrooms and support the BSK worker. The monitoring formats are used by them as an observation framework. They are however encouraged to note details or any special occurrences; learning behaviours; teaching practices etc in their diaries, and use these for onsite mentoring. They do a monthly reporting for each centre at the team meeting. The monthly reporting is based on their monitoring formats and diary notings, and includes their suggestions for future action and comparison across clusters.

Analysis of movement in the impact indicators

During the past year the following indicators have been used to assess impact:

1. Learner tracking data.
2. Follow up of learners who had undergone the OELP intervention two years ago.
3. Mainstreaming data of BSK learners.
4. Feedback from stakeholders i.e. school managements, parents and communities.

Process of analysis



1. Movement of impact indicators based on learner tracking

While analysing the progress in indicators it is important to appreciate the fact that the **reporting period of January to December covers two different sets of learner cohorts**, since the OELP interventions are aligned to the school academic year which extends from July of Year 1 to early May of Y2, while the reporting period is from Y1- January to December. **We will therefore be presenting two sets of learner tracking data.**

1. Learner progress for Cohort 1 from January to June 2013.
2. Learner progress for Cohort 2 from July to December 2013.

1.a. Learner tracking - Jan to June 2013.

Challenges of learner tracking

Implementation of the BSKs in 2012 proved to be challenging due to the following reasons:

1. Several BSKs shut down due to a number of situational factors, and new ones were opened. See Appendix 1 for details.
2. On account of the above there was variation in the starting dates and dates of the Baseline Tests that were conducted in the BSKs.
3. The variation in the starting dates and dates of the Baseline test made learner tracking a complex exercise.

4. For ease of analysis the data for movement across performance level data has been clubbed together across BSKs without reckoning which evaluation it is from i.e. the first or second evaluation.

5. Subsequently, in 2013 we have been able to give greater consideration to factors which bring in stability and ensuring the continuation of the BSK. Therefore the problems on account of variability in starting dates have been taken care of to a large extent.

Table 1: No of learners at three performance levels in the BSKs - Jan to May 2013

Evaluation	Evaln Month	Total BSKs	Total Student	B	G	Student Level			Absent	Migrate
						A	B	C		
EvIn in Feb 13	Jan/Feb 2013	21	769	346	423	306	176	198	49	40
EvIn in April 13	Apr-13	21	731	327	404	85	153	412	15	66

Table 2: Percentage of learners at three performance levels in the BSKs - Jan to May, 2013

Evaluation	Evaln Month	Total BSKs	Total Student	B	G	% Student Level			Absent	Migrate
						A	B	C		
EvIn in Feb 13	Jan/Feb 2013	21	769	346	423	45 %	25.8%	29.1 %	49	40
EvIn in April 13	Apr-13	21	731	327	404	13 %	23.5 %	63.3 %	15	66

Percentage shift in levels from January to April 13

Level A - There is a shift of 32 % to a higher performance level

Level B – There is a shift of 2.3% to a higher performance level

Level C – There is shift of 34.2 % to a higher performance level

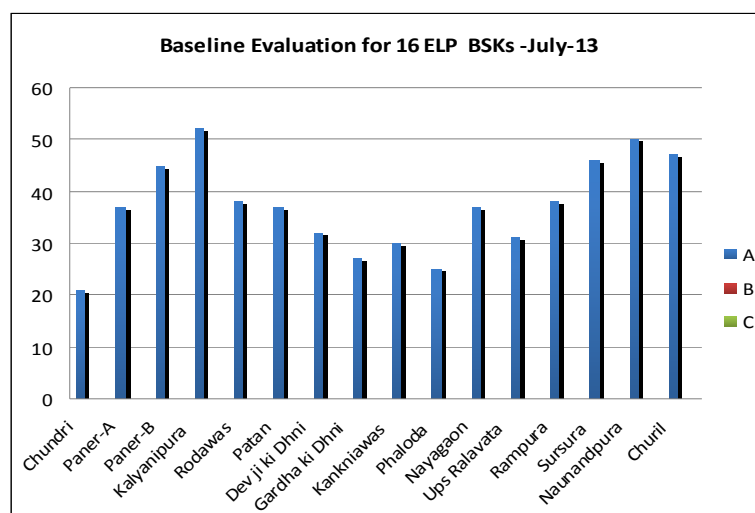
Total % of shift to a higher performance level in this time period is 68.5 %

Total % of children at the end term proficiency level is 63.3%

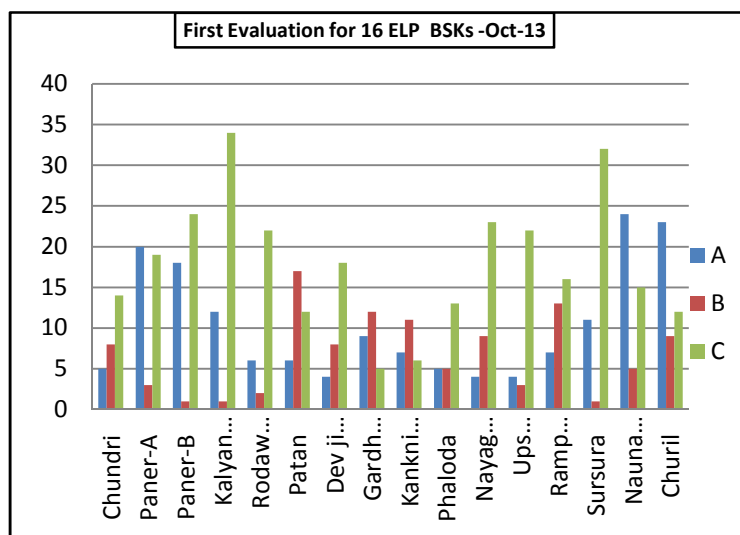
1.b. Learner tracking - July to Dec, 2013.

The First evaluation was carried out in October for children from Classes 2 to 5 in 16 BSKs located in the government schools. The levels A, B and C were determined on the basis of competencies and reading and the writing skills developed. For instance children at level A should now have come up to the word level i.e. combining sounds for constructing simple meaningful words. Level B should be at the sentence level i.e. reading and writing simple sentences with understanding and level C should be able to read and write small passages. A comparison between learner performance on the Baseline Evaluation with that on the First Evaluation shows shift of 70.4% from level A (the lowest performance levels) towards levels B and C. See Graphs 1 and 2 below:

Graph 1. The performance levels in the Baseline Evaluation of children from 16 BSKs located in government schools - July 2013



Graph 2. The performance levels in the First Evaluation of children from 16 BSKs located in government schools - October 2013



A comparison of the children's performances which are indicated in Graphs 1 and 2 indicates a visible improvement in the performance levels, with 19.2 % children performing at level B; 51.2% at level C. This indicates greater increase in learner proficiency in reading and writing at the word, sentence and text levels over a period of three months. 30% of the children are still at the first level. There is however an increased complexity within each level, therefore there is enhancement within the level itself. We have found that learner irregularity and home pressures are the two likely reasons for this slow movement

Table 3. Comparison of Student performance levels in the Baseline and First Evaluation

Evaluation	Evaln Month	Total BSKs	Total Student	B	G	Student Level			Absent	Migrate	Shift to Private
						A	B	C			
Base Line Evaluation	July - 13	16	607	309	298	607	0	0	0	0	0
First Evaluation	Oct 13	16	607	309	298	165	108	287	6	30	11

Table 4. The shift in performance levels from A (lowest level) towards C (proficiency) from the Baseline to the First Evaluation

Evaluation	Evaln Month	Total BSKs	Total Student	B	G	Student Level in %			Absent	Migrate	Shift to Private
						A	B	C			
Base Line Evaluation	July - 13	16	607	309	298	100	0	0	0	0	0
First Evaluation	Oct 13	16	607	309	298	29.4	19.2	51.2	6	30	11

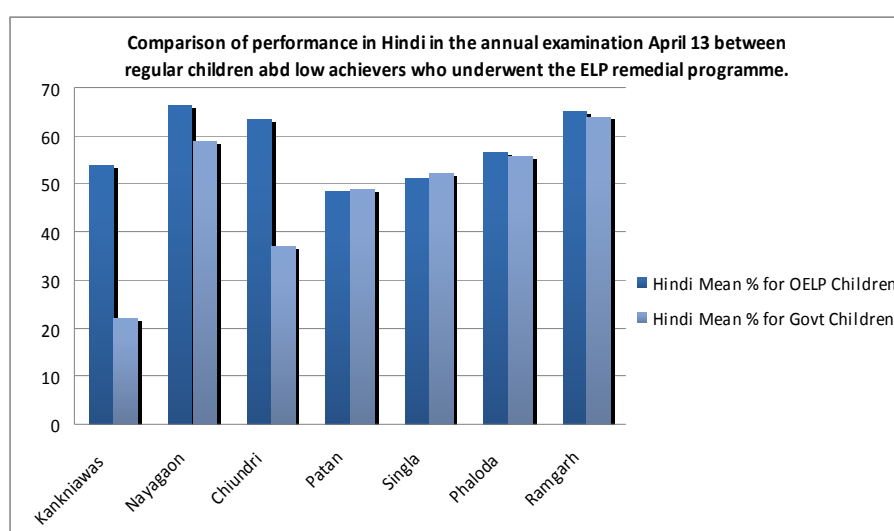
The above tables show that at the time of the Baseline evaluation conducted in July 2013 all the students were at level A. Whereas in the first evaluation carried out in Oct 2013, the number of students at level A was reduced to 29.4 %, while the number of children at level B increased from zero in the Baseline to 19.2 % and 51.2 % of the children were performing at level C. 30 children have migrated which is reflected in the 30% who are still at level A.h

2. Follow up of mainstreamed children who underwent the OELP remedial programme in 2011-12

Seven BSKs had functioned without closing through the academic year 2011-12. In these BSKs we followed up all the children who had undergone the OELP remedial programme and then been mainstreamed in beginning of the academic year 2012-13. The performance of these children during the annual examination conducted by the government teachers in April 2013.was compared with that of the regular children from the class. The results in three subjects were looked i.e. Hindi, English and Mathematics. The comparison of the two groups of students within 7 BSKs presented in the graphs below. Details are available in Table 2 in Appendix 2.

HINDI

Graph 3. Comparison of performance in Hindi in the Annual School Examination in April 2013 of the regular children and children from the BSK batch of 2011-12

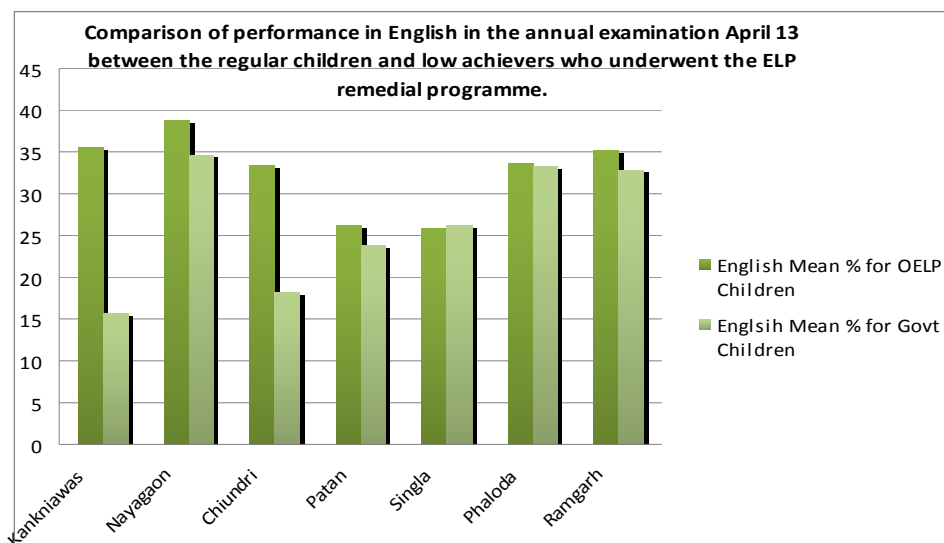


Mean percentage scores for Hindi across 7 BSK - Regular children - 39.3 %

Low achievers who underwent the ELP remedial programme – 57.1 %.

ENGLISH

Graph 4. Comparison of performance in English in the Annual School Examination in April 2013 of the regular children and the children from the BSK batch - 2011-12

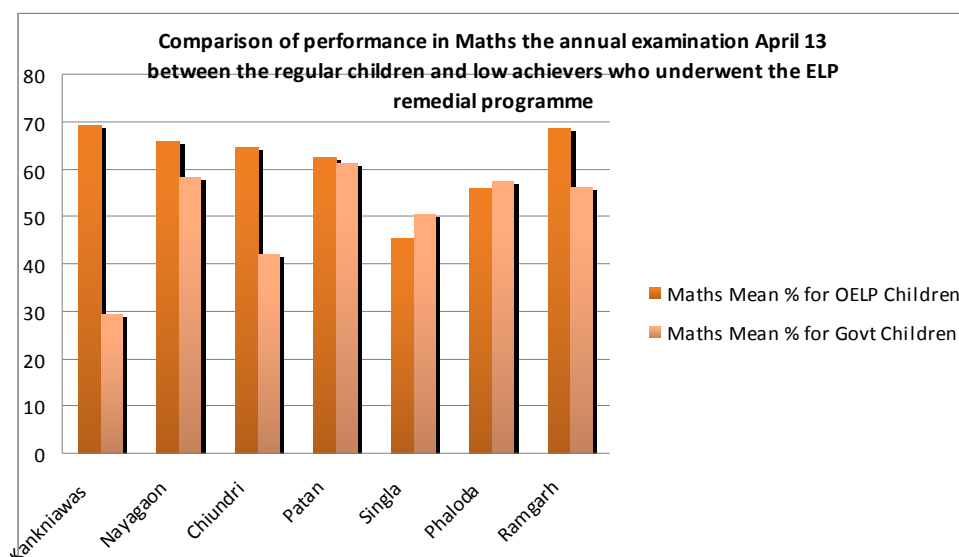


Mean percentage scores for English across 7 BSKs : Regular children - 21.7%

Low achievers who underwent the ELP remedial programme – 32.6 %

MATHS

Graph 5. Comparison of performance in Maths in the annual school examination in April 2013 of the regular children and the children from the BSK batch - 2011-12

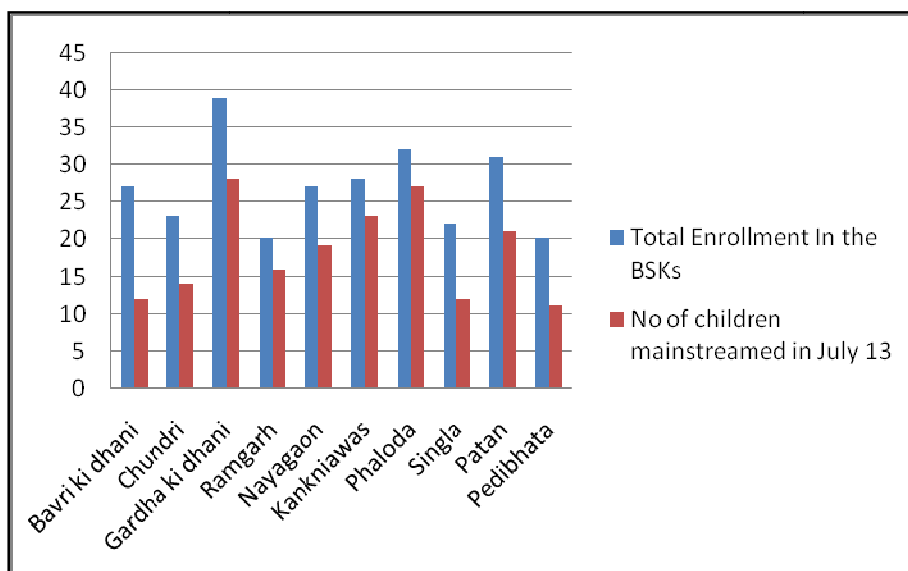


Mean percentage scores for Maths across 7 BSKs - Regular children - 42 %

Low achievers who underwent the ELP remedial programme – 61.6%.

3. Number of children who were mainstreamed in 2012-13

Graph 6: No. of children who were mainstreamed i.e. brought up to grade level in 10 BSKs at the end of the academic year 2012-13



A total of 67.1 % children were mainstreamed from the 10 BSKs which had remained functional throughout one academic year. Out of these 3 are community BSKs in which irregular attendance is a major issue.

4. Feedback from stakeholders

4.1 Parents and community members – A total of 760 parents participated in parents meetings across the 20 BSKs. This is a visible increase from previous years. Further, there is a greater involvement of parents. Earlier the discussion centred on their own children. However, we have now noticed a shift with the discussions also being focused on the performance of the entire BSK. For example some parents/ community members expressed concern at the irregular attendance of children from their neighbourhood and said they will follow it up. Parents also wanted to know the new activities.

4.2 School Principals – OELP got feedback from a total of 16 principals from government schools where the BSKs have been located. The gist of the feedback is given below –

- In all the schools there has been marked improvement in the language skills (reading and writing) of children who were enrolled in the BSKs as low achievers.
- Most of the children who have been mainstreamed from the BSK are reading and writing with understanding and their confidence has increased.

- The OELP methodologies are simple and easy to implement.
- The OELP interventions should continue and also be spread to other schools.
- Parents are satisfied with their children's performance.
- The SMC members are also impressed with the BSK results.
- Children mainstreamed from the BSKs are coping well in the regular classes.
- OELP should also work with Maths and English.

Activities

1. Bal Sahyog Kendras (BSKs) as observation sites

The total number of children enrolled in the BSKs is approximately 1100. These centres are viewed as informal, non threatening spaces which are programmatically designed to equip underachieving children to meet the language and literacy demands of the mainstream government primary schools. An important focus of the BSK programme is on building strong foundations in reading and writing so that the children are able to become independent readers and writer and engage meaningfully with the school programme. However the programme also engages with the building of a facilitative learning environment which supports the building of learner confidence and self esteem and equips them for school expectations such as regularity and punctuality; respect for other learners and the learning environment; neatness in their work etc. These aspects help to make the home to school transitions less threatening.

There are two categories of BSKs

a) Remedial centres within existing government schools – These centres run within the premises of the Government Primary school. The thrust of these centres is on providing remedial support for one year to low achieving children from Classes 2 to 5. The children who are enrolled in the BSK are identified on the basis of OELP's baseline test which covers all children from Classes 2 to 5. After one year of remedial support through the OELP interventions, children who have transited to the more advanced learning levels are mainstreamed, while those who are still at the initial level, and have not advancements are put through an intensive 3 month skill based remediation with a focus on strengthening their foundation skills for reading and writing, so that they can be sent back to their classes. Children who do not move forward at the end of this three month period, remain in the BSK for another year

b) Community based BSKs – The thrust of these centres is on children who have been excluded from schooling. These centres run in a space which is made available by the village community. Most of these children are working in the day; the timings of these centres are decided as per the convenience of the children. Working with *out of school* children, is a vital component of the programme, as it focuses on bringing excluded children from marginalized communities into the ambit of mainstream schooling as an effort to implement the RTE Act,. The BSKs have been designed to provide non threatening buffer spaces which try to enable children from extremely disadvantaged and resource poor backgrounds, to participate in school based learning.

Implementation of existing BSKs and setting up of new ones

Enrolment in the BSK

The Tables below gives an overview of the existing BSKs

Table 5. Overview of BSKs – Jan to July 2013					
Govt BSKs in this period	Comm. BSKs	Closed	No. of Govt. BSKs currently running	No. Of Comm. BSKs currently Running	Total
16	4	Nil	16	4	20

Table 6. Overview of BSKs – July to December 2013					
Govt BSKs in this period	Comm. BSKs	Closed	No.of Govt. BSKs currently running	No. Of Comm. BSKs currently Running	Total
19	4	3 (govt)	16	4	20

Table 7. Enrolment in the BSKs - January to May 2013

	Village	Total No from Classes 2 to 5			Total No in Class 1		
		B	G	T	B	G	T
1	Chundri	10	13	23	13	9	22
2	Gardha ki Dhani	16	23	39	7	3	10
3	Ramgarh	20	6	26	9	5	14
4	Nayagaon	11	15	26	5	10	15
5	Kankniawas	11	17	28	11	15	26
6	Phaloda	21	11	32	6	10	16
7	Singla	13	10	23	5	7	12
8	Patan	11	22	33	7	9	16
9	Mundoti	16	27	43	4	6	10
10	Devji ki Dhani	8	17	25	10	10	20
11	Rodawas	33	27	60	10	8	18
12	Relavata	24	27	51	4	9	13
13	Rampura	26	15	41	5	10	15
14	Naunandpura	37	40	77	18	16	34
15	Paner	43	69	112	21	25	46
16	Sursura	26	17	43	14	12	26
17	Bavri ki Dhani (Community BSK)	12	15	27			
18	Bagrion kiDhani(Com. BSK)	7	13	20			
19	Pedibhata (Com BSK)	1	19	20			
20	Phulolion ki Dhani(Com BSK)	4	25	29			
	TOTAL			778			313

 Community based BSKs
  BSKs in Govt Schools

Table 8 Enrolment in the BSKs - July to December 2013

	Village	Total No from classes 2 to 5			Total No in Class 1		
		B	G	T	B	G	T
1	Chundri	15	13	28	13	10	23
2	Gardha ki Dhani	13	14	27	6	4	10
3	Ramgarh	BSK closed, all children mainstreamed					
4	Nayagaon	17	20	37	15	12	27
5	Kankniawas	10	20	30	16	12	28
6	Phaloda	15	10	25	4	5	9
7	Singla	Teacher left, no replacement found					
8	Patan	17	20	37	12	7	19
9	Mundoti	BSK closed, childn shifted to pvt schls					
10	Devji ki Dhani	14	18	32	8	3	11
11	Rodawas	23	15	38	4	11	15
12	Relavata	16	15	31	4	19	23
13	Rampura	23	15	38	11	14	25
14	Naunandpura	28	22	50	6	6	12
15	Paner A	36	8	42	9	11	20
16	Sursura	28	18	46	14	12	26
17	Kalyanipura- New	24	28	52	17	15	32
18	Paner B- New	9	36	45	8	11	19
19	Churli- New	21	26	47	10	16	26
17	Bavri ki Dhani (Community BSK)	12	15	27			
18	Bagrion ki Dhani(Com. BSK)	8	7	15			
19	Pedibhata (Com BSK)	9	21	30			
20	Phulolion ki Dhani(Com BSK)	7	27	34			
	TOTAL	345	368	713	157	168	325

 Community based BSKs
  BSKs in Govt Schools

2. Class 1 programme

Work in Class 1 began in February 2013 after formal permission was obtained from the Block Level to ensure the active involvement of the regular government teacher. The first two months were used just to familiarise ourselves with the children and do some informal activities since we were getting close to the end of the academic year.

A competency based qualitative Baseline Evaluation was conducted for the Class 1 children in the month of August, 2013, by which time most of the new admissions were over. The children were assessed for foundation skills such as print awareness, finer muscle coordination; phonemic awareness, representation of objects through the pictorial form, relating meaningfully to a story and understanding of some simple concepts such as inside and outside or near and far etc. The children's performance was scored on a three point rating scale. Based on their performance the children were grouped into three performance levels.

The following activities were planned and implemented:

- Activities for language development and free expression such as informal conversations; experience sharing; recitations; action rhymes, word games etc.
- Activities for building finer motor skills and eye hand -coordination
- Opportunity to represent objects, experiences and feelings through drawings
- Introduction of simple concepts such as near and far, up and down
- Activities based on the children's names
- Stories, book talk and free handling of story books.
- Activities for creating awareness of initial sounds of naming words
- Introduction to a few alphabets as symbols related to spoken sounds
- Opportunity to learn to share and work with others

Emphasis was also laid on planning a routine keeping in mind the short interest span of little children. Some of the measures that were introduced were:

- Beginning with a collective activity
- Planning activities for short time spans
- Alternating between sedentary work and an action activity
- Short action poems
- Story books with attractive pictures
- Print awareness
- Sharing responsibility in the BSK
- Creating awareness of classroom cleanliness and using dustbins

As the children in Class 1 were very small it was decided to focus more on creating conditions to help a smooth transition from home to school. The importance of creating a stress free learning environment and allowing space for free expression was emphasized,

along with the use of spoken Marwari which is the children's home language. However being located in the context of the government school and a social milieu that gives very little attention to young children made it more difficult for us to introduce these programme components. The ongoing GoR Reading Campaign also put a huge pressure on the teachers to achieve results, and the time available to us in the class was reduced to 45 minutes only. In many BSKs the tendency therefore was to steer towards a more structured pattern of teaching and focus on teaching alphabets through the *varan samooh* approach. In some BSKs the workers even had to be told to go slow on this front.

During our monthly review meeting in September we realised that the OELP team was also battling with their social conditioning. Many of the ideas of Emergent Literacy that were being attempted were unfamiliar and alien for them. In the face of a fairly hostile context, they had chosen the easiest way out, i.e. to fall back on a structured programme. Although we had undergone in-house capacity building sessions, we realised the importance of exposing the team to a conceptually sound Emergent Literacy Programme. This led to the exposure visit to the Kamala Nimbkar Bhawan Balwadi Programme in Phaltan, Maharashtra. The OELP team attended workshops on different aspects of an Emergent Literacy programme, which were conducted by Dr. Neelima Gokhle.

3. The library programme

OELP views the library programme as an effort to promote a culture of reading within the BSKs and in the surrounding villages. The attempt is to provide children as well as members of the community an opportunity to interact with books and build a dynamic and engaging relationship with books. This programme initially had three components in January 2013, namely:

- The field library
- Mobile Libraries which were later replaced by Village Libraries
- Reading corners in BSKs

At the start of the year OELP was implementing mobile libraries. Later in the month of September these Mobile Libraries were converted into village based Libraries as it was found that a Librarian and volunteers who belong to the village itself were more effective in running this programme, since they knew the children and could motivate them much better. Further these were more cost effective, as not travel costs were involved.

a) The Field Library

The Sarpanch and members of the Gram Panchayat of Patan Village began to appreciate the work of OELP over the past year. In response in June 2012, they made accommodation available to OELP as a site for implementing some of our activities. We have set up a Field library in one of the rooms. This has been visualised as a reading room cum lending facility

with membership, which caters to children from Patan and its neighbouring villages. At present the Library has 125 members. We have recently started lending books. The library opens for a few hours, three times a week. It is run by the Library Coordinator and Field Librarian. Their work is supported by one or two volunteers, from Patan Village, depending on the need. We have worked over the past year towards streamlining the Library processes and record keeping. The Patan is called *Apna Putakalya* . It has approximately 8000 books with 600 titles. Multiple copies are used for the BSK reading corners and village libraries, so that they have access to the same books. This has been done with the idea of facilitating sharing experiences across villages, as well as reader tracking. We are still in the process of streamlining reader tracking. The Patan Library also serves the purpose of feeding the village libraries and the BSK based reading corners.

b) Village libraries.

Four village libraries were started in Phaloda, Chundri, Rodawas, and Naunandpura in the month of September. Their numbers was increased to eight in the month of October. Their list is given below:

Table 9. List of Village Libraries with the number of members in each

S.No	Village	B	G	T
1	Naunandpura	19	12	31
2	Chundri	12	20	32
3	Mundoti	16	18	34
4	Kankniawas	25	33	58
5	Thal	24	8	32
6	Phaloda	14	14	28
7	Rodawas	25	17	42
8	Rampura	30	26	56
		165	148	313

These libraries open twice a week in the evening. Currently each library has around 150 books. However, very soon the number of books will be increased, as around 250 new titles have been purchased. Most of these libraries are run by the BSK workers along with support

from village volunteers and from the respective supervisor. The village library at Thal is being run by two supervisors with support from the villagers. In Chundri a volunteer runs the library. Each of these libraries was started through village meetings. The location of each library was decided by the villagers. All the village libraries have received an enthusiastic response from the children so far. We propose to gradually bring in some reading material for older people into the libraries as well.

c) Reading corners

The Book Reading Corner has been established as an important component of each BSK. A mechanism for linking the BSK Book Reading Corner with the Field Library has been worked out. Every two months a bag with 25 books is sent for each reading corner and the earlier lot of 25 books returned. Some suggested activities based on story books are worked out by the field library team. These are shared with the teachers at the teacher meeting. The idea is to motivate teachers who are not as yet comfortable with book engagement. The teachers are however free to work out their own activities should they choose to do so. Many have got to this stage now, and they prefer to engage children with books in their own ways.

During the latter part of the year there was a feeling within the BSKs that written activities related to books were becoming mechanical. It was therefore decided focus more on getting children to read books, engage in book based conversations, read aloud stories and book sharing and other related activities. Teachers also felt that the scheduled time for story books and free reading in the weekly plan was too little and they were not able to do justice. It was unanimously decided to set aside two days a week for this purpose.

Each teacher was asked to observe children while reading and track their reading behaviours and strategies. The idea was to sensitise them to the different ways in which children read, so that they are better equipped to offer the right kind of support as and when it is required. Their observations, along with the experiences of observing were shared in a monthly review meeting. Observations of the different children's reading behaviours within BSKs were discussed and shared. There was also discussion on the teacher's role. Experiences of working with children within the different BSKs were also shared. Short video clips to show the different reading behaviours were taken in the BSKs during this period were shared with the entire OELP team. The quality of the clips were not so good, however they managed to generate an animated discussion. This proved to be a rich learning session.

Some activities that were undertaken within the Library Programme during the course of the year

- **Stock taking and coding** of new books took place from 20th to 25th July 2013
- **Membership** – A total of 125 members at the Patan field library filled their forms and were given their membership cards.

- **A system for reader tracking** has been put into place at the Patan field library and is in a trial stage.
- **Appointment and training of the new OELP Library Team.** The OELP Library Coordinator as well as the Library Assistant discontinued work from the beginning of August and went on three months study leave. They subsequently left since they had found government jobs. This was a setback for the OELP Library Programme, as we had to recruit completely new people and train them. Two new people were appointed in mid August. Orientation training was conducted for them in the month of August in the Field Library at Patan to familiarize them with the library systems.
- The teachers and supervisors working in the Patan cluster have been involved in the library work and were familiarized with the library procedures , such as -
 - Coding and covering of books
 - Arranging the books in the cupboards according to levels and codes.
 - Procedures for membership
 - Tracking of library readers
 - Maintenance of records
- Levelling, coding and covering of approximately 4000 newly purchased library books was done in November/ December 2013.
- Some book related activities which were learnt during the Udaipur course were shared with the team.
- Issuing books for the reading corners and field libraries.
- **OELP participation in VBS Library Educators course** –Two members from OELP are attending VBS Course for Library Educators.
-

4. Capacity building of the OELP team

Capacity building workshops and monthly planning and **review meetings** are conducted to enhance the quality of the BSK programmes and provide support wherever it is needed. These are also opportunities for sharing and learning from each other.

a) OELP core team monthly review and planning meeting. At the end of every month the OELP team meets to review the work plan for the month and plan for the next month. A reporting for each BSK is done based on the monitoring formats and classroom based observations. Apart from reviewing the progress of each BSK areas which require further strengthening are identified and academic inputs for these are worked out. Best practices and strengths are also shared. These are then shared with the BSK workers in the monthly meetings. The team meeting precedes the meeting with the BSK workers.

b) Monthly meetings of the BSK workers These meetings are structured in a way that apart from routine reporting and documentation they also provide an opportunity for additional academic inputs and resource enhancement. Each month specific need based issues / topics to be focused on during the teachers meeting are decided in the core team meeting based on the suggestions of the facilitators. Planned academic support is provided in these areas during the teachers meeting. This is then followed up by the supervisors and Core Team members. An attempt is made to provide additional inputs at regular interval in order to sustain the dynamism. We also encourage interactions with outside resource persons as well as members of other organizations. In addition to the sharing at the monthly meetings the workers are also encouraged to visit other BSKs and learn from each other. Some topics that have been discussed during monthly meetings are listed below as examples:

- A recap of the ELP methodologies and intervention
- Strategies and activities for Class 1
- Introduction of new poems and songs.
- Ways of strengthening meaningful engagement with story books / guided reading
- Ways of doing experience based shared children's writing
- Activities for free expression
- Focus on building accuracy within selected task based writing and worksheets
- Building self correction skills in children
- Focus on hand writing and spellings
- Sharing responsibilities and spelling out some non-negotiables within a classroom.
- Classroom management techniques which help build self regulation in children
- Sharing of the new government text books and ways in which these can be used
- Classroom based observations – What? Why? And How?
- Ways of creating an open, active and facilitative classroom learning environment.

Table 10. List of Workshops organised during 2013

S No	Date	Resource Person	No. of days	Topic
1.	31 st January	Usha Sharma	1	Introduction to NCERT Text Books - Rim Jhim
2	26to 28 th April	VBS Udaipur	2	Library Course development workshop.
3	30 th April	OELP Team	1	Presentation of OELP programme for GoR officials from the State, District and Block level.
4	4 -5 th May	Muskaan Bhopal	2	Narration of Stories. Ways in which to relate to stories/ story books.
5	17-18 th May	OELP Team	2	Capacity building workshop for SWRC night school teachers

6	21- 24 th May	Jaya Iyer and her team	4	Exploring elements of a story. Reflecting upon ways in which stories build connections between feelings, thoughts, imagination and experience. Ways of presenting stories.
7	26 - 28 th May	Jaya Iyer and her team	3	Capacity building for planning an event.
8	8 th - 10 th June	World Comics team	3	Workshop for children from 4 villages on making comics related to local issues.
9	21-22 nd June	Kahani Mela	2	20 parallel workshops for children from 40 villages in the Silora Block of Ajmer District.
10	27- 28 th June	OELP Team	2	Workshop in Dewas to provide resource support to Jansahas Libraries.
11	29 th August	OELP	1	Training the OELP team in the Library systems.
12	7 th = 8 th Sept	Keerti Jayaram	2	Building an understanding of R/W competencies and creation of a classroom learning environment.
13	25 th Sept	OELP Team	1	Capacity Building workshop for Government teachers in ELP methodologies.
14	26 th Nov	Keerti Jayaram	1	One day workshop for the OELP team on classroom observation in the Paner school.
15	23-24 Nov 13	Keerti Jayaram	2	In- house OELP workshop on Emergent Literacy.
16	19to 20 th Dec	Prabhat	2	The focus of this workshop was on ways of meaningful engaging children with storybooks and poems.

5. Strengthening linkages with village communities

This is being done by involving parents and village community members in the processes of

- a) Setting up the BSK and the selection of the BSK worker
- b) School and BSK enrolment
- c) Monitoring of their children's learning.

The strengthening of the SMCs involvement with children's learning is viewed by OELP as an important part of the engagement with SMCs/ community. As mentioned earlier, parents and SMC members are invited periodically to the BSKs to view their children's work and discuss the learner profile folders. This activity has received a very positive response from the parents, and we plan to strengthen it in the next phase by spelling out indicators and

modalities for monitoring of the BSK by the SMCs. In the second year plan we will also try and work out clear mechanisms for involving the SMC / community members in the village library programme and provide an additional component of reading for adult readers within these libraries. At present the OELP engagement with the SMC is limited to their role *vis a vis* the BSK.

At a later stage, depending on the resources available, OELP aims to

a) Expand the linkages with local communities and parents to include support for their wider roles with regard to the school and children in the village,

b) Explore ways of compiling and using local knowledge, folk lore and children's rhymes. These collections may then be used in a variety of ways as a rich resource for mainstream education, as well as within the OELP programme.

6. Exposure based training for teachers & education workers

Table 11. OELP Exposure Based Training scheduled from Jan. 2013 to Feb. 2014

No	Month	Days	Training Phase	Organisation	No.	
1	January 9 to 12	4	Initial exposure based training	Jan Sahas	6 12	Supervisors Edu Coordinators
2	16 to 19 J	4	Initial	SWRC, Rajasthan	17	Education workers
3	February 12 to 16	4	Initial (in Rajasthan)	Jan Sahas	30	Teachers and mobilizes
4	March 14- 18	5	Initial (in Rajasthan)	SDTT Partners Bihar – ALOK Sansthan Jharkhand – SPS, Giridih CWD, Torpa	24	Education facilitators, Coordinators and Supervisors

5	May 7th to 9th	3	Onsite mentoring and review meeting - MP	Jan Sahas	40	Preraks, supervisors, mobilisers and coordinators
6	August 29-31	3	Onsite mentoring and review meeting - MP	Jan Sahas	35	Preraks, supervisors, mobilisers and coordinators
7	30-31	2	Initial (Rajasthan)	SWRC – Tikavara; Kadampura and Kakalwada	25	Education workers
8	October 23 to 26	3	Initial (Rajasthan)	ALOK - Bihar	24	Education facilitators, coordinators and supervisors
	29 to 31	3	Initial (Bihar)	ALOK - Bihar	11	Facilitators (who could not participate in the Oct training inRajasthan)
9	November25 to 29	6	Intensive capacity building & planning (Rajasthan)	ALOK - Bihar	2	School programme coordinator Learning centre coordinator
10	2014 January 16 to 20	5	On-site mentoring (in Bihar)	ALOK - Bihar	36	Facilitators of school prog and learning centres , as well as supervisors coordinators
11	February* 5 to 8	4	Second (Exposure to advanced method)	Jan Sahas	30	Preraks, supervisors, mobilisers and coordinators

*To be conducted

7. Development of supportive material

- The OELP resource pack has been revised. New sets are to be printed soon.
- Skill practice worksheets
- Activity cards; word cards; sentence cards

- Poem posters
- Assessment and tracking formats
- Monitoring and classroom observation formats
- Classroom based videos and CDs. These are in process
- We are in the process of exploring ways of compiling and sharing the rich resource of local knowledge and folk lore that is available within the villages that we work in.

8. Training for introduction and use of an MIS software

Introduction to MIS software by SRTT - A one day orientation workshop was organized on the 16th of July 2013 in the OELP Field Library in Patan to introduce the OELP Team to the MIS software. The workshop was conducted by Urvashi Nangia from Sir Ratan Tata Trust.

- **MIS training-** A two day training in the MIS software was organized on the 13th and 14th of Sept 2013 by Microware, for the entire OELP Team OELP agreed to start entering data in the software for the academic year 2012-13 under guidance from Microware who have created the software.

The progress so far – Data feeding was completed for all the OELP BSKs in the government schools as well as in the communities, for the year 2012-13 in November 2013. The data bases as well as reports were shared with Microware as and SRTT. This data included the DISE data for these schools.

9. Exposure visit

While OELP has designed and is implementing a preliminary Class 1 program, this exposure visit was planned to familiarise ourselves with a conceptually sound programme for building strong foundations for Language and Literacy. We realized that the ground was ready for us to revisit our Class 1 programme, since there was eagerness in the team. The trip was planned with the idea of engaging with conceptually sound programme components which are based on an understanding of children's learning behaviours; their contexts, their interests and are rooted within the perspectives of Emergent Literacy. After exploring existing programs all over the country, we decided that exposure to the KNB Balwadi Programme which has been developed by Dr. Neelima Gokhle will provide us with the learning opportunity that we are looking for. During orientation sessions some of realized that some of the concepts are perhaps too alien for most BSK workers and facilitators and therefore difficult for them to grasp. We felt that the exposure visit will greatly help to provide a deeper understanding, despite the fact that the contexts of our two programmes are not comparable in many ways.

In addition, to the Phaltan programme, as suggested by Amrita Patwardhan we also decided to visit the QUEST programme in the Thane district of Maharashtra..

These visits were undertaken in two groups of about 11 -12 persons, for the convenience of our host organizations. The first visit was from 3rd to the 10th December. The second visit was from 1st to 7th January. The visits included the following:

1. Observation in the KNB Balwadi, Apli Shala and Classes 1 to 3
2. Interactive sessions with the KNB teachers and sharing of planning, materials, activities, and other aspects of the programme.
3. Sharing of the KNB projects.
4. Interactions with the Library Programme with a focus sharing and discussions based on books made by the children. An idea that appealed to many.
5. Intensive follow up workshop on Emergent Literacy by Dr. Neelima Gokhle
6. Visit to Datta Awihale's school and exposure to the organization's reading and writing methods
7. Day long visit to Mumbai – boat ride on the sea and a look at the ships and the port and time spent at Juhu beach were the high points of the Mumbai trip!
8. Visit to the QUEST. Group 2 was fortunate to be able to visit the Quest Exhibition which was on in Thane during the dates of their visit.
9. We visited the Bal bhavans, Anganwadis and remedial programmes in Ashram Schools as an exposure to the programme components, methods and materials.
10. Follow up discussions were held with Mr. Nilesh Nimbkar and his team on the QUEST vision and the various aspects of their programme.

Both the Phaltan and QUEST visits provided several rich learning opportunities to the OELP teams. The teams returned feeling recharged and energized. Although there are serious challenges in translating some of the new learnings into the resource poor and constrained environment within rural State schools in Rajasthan; it will be a help to engage with these challenges through an informed understanding and through some new lenses. We are hoping that the Class 1 programme will emerge as a planned process of guided change that will be supported through an ongoing professional guidance by Dr. Neelima Gokhle. She will be visiting our sites in mid March and then we will discuss and work out the finer modalities of the future professional engagement supported by her. We believe that through this engagement this programme can be conceptualized as a robust programme and put on a sound footing over a period of time which will commence in the new academic year. OELP is exploring various support options for this programme. Dialogues with the State machinery for back up support to this programme will also be undertaken post the Lok Sabha elections, by when the new officials will have taken charge.

10. Literacy interventions with women SHG members

A pilot project for resource support by OELP to GMVS for the development of Literacy Centres for women learners from SHGs has been approved by SRTT under the Small Grants Programme. The duration of this pilot project is one year, wef December 2013. The main aim of the proposed project is to develop functional literacy in adult women members of existing SHG groups which are being implemented and monitored by GMVS. The underlying vision is to adapt and extend the intervention methodologies of the Early Literacy Project (ELP) for beginning level literacy learners as to make them meaningful and effective for this new group of older learners. This pilot project is being implemented in two villages in the Silora Block in which both OELP and GMVS are working. Within the time period of the project resource support will be taken from more experienced professional groups for streamlining the processes and content and components of this programme

On 11th Nov, 2013 a planning meeting was held in the GMVS office in Kishangarh. Those present in the meeting included Mr. Shanker Singh from GMVS, Keerti Jayaram, Kiran Dubey and Pukhraj Mali from OELP and Sarita Sharma from CMF, Jaipur. Some of the major decisions that were taken included the following:

1. Mr. Ghanshaym Singh will coordinate the project
2. The project will be located initially at Ralawta (2 centres) and at Singhara (1 centre), since there is a demand from the women in both these villages. It was decided that work will commence from December 1. In the meanwhile, preliminary meetings were to be held with the members of the communities and SHGs. The proposal and work plan were discussed and finalized. Subsequently planning meetings were held with the communities in both these locations. The following activities were undertaken in the month of December:
 1. Community meetings for introducing the programme; selection of learners; venue and education worker
 2. Setting up the centre – purchase of material
 3. Training of education workers by OELP
 4. Finalizing the list of learners and starting a profile folder for each.
 5. Baseline test.
 6. Monitoring by OELP

There have been some teething troubles, mainly due to the inclement weather conditions, which made it very difficult for the women to attend classes. Hopefully, things should pick up now that the weather has improved.

Specific event highlight

The OELP Summer Programme around the theme *Kahani*

For almost six weeks i.e. in the months of May and June, 2013, children from 40 villages in the Silora Block of Ajmer district were engrossed in different ways with the worlds of stories. This was a part of an effort to create an ethos of reading and writing in these villages of Ajmer district, and link them with storybooks. Through this experience we discovered that reading and sharing storybooks, and capturing the fables and legends of village elders in written and pictorial forms became effective means of drawing children and adults from oral cultures into the world of storybooks and other written forms.

Our idea was to engage children during the summer months with stories in many different ways. This idea grew organically into a host of exciting activities. The children began by reading and sharing a range of story books with each other. Their favorite stories took the forms of little enactments, or puppet plays. Next, the children read aloud and shared their favorite storybooks with older people in their villages. The response was truly amazing. We found fascinated old people and younger adults listening to the children read aloud their stories. Some were happy to browse through the pictures in the storybooks and then discuss the characters and events in the stories with a great degree of involvement. There were also times when a young child was found to be patiently narrating the story that had just been read aloud to an older person who had not understood it.

Slowly and organically a chain of stories grew, as grandparents and people from the village communities happily listened to the children read aloud their stories and then narrated their own. Kishen Singh from Phaloda village, Kali Devi and Dayal from Rampura had the children enthralled in their fables and lore. The children listened with rapt attention and then tried to capture some of these stories in the written form. Some children illustrated these stories. Soon a rich treasure trove of stories grew. The children listened with fascination to stories about how and when their villages were established. Whose house was built first? Who built the village *mandir*, the *chhatris* or the *naadis*? How and why? These stories and the legends that surrounded them recreated for the children what their villages had been like when their *Daadi* was a young girl. Village histories began to appear in the form of the children's written stories and drawings, as young ones engaged with the older and wiser members of the village communities. This was a truly empowering experience for the children!

Some children mapped their villages, while others brought out little village newspapers. After a month of intensive engagement with this process of sharing stories the children presented their stories, plays, puppets and other creations at little village *melas* which were

organized by the parents and community members through their own contributions. These *melas* were held in 40 villages, and many village children and adults participated in them.

Through the months of May and the first half of June groups of busy children could be found completely engaged with story books, colours, pens and paper inside their schools; within community spaces; under trees or on village *chaupals* and in other common spaces in all the 40 villages,. Some children made plays based on the stories they had read while others presented the stories using stick puppets. It was encouraging to note that several children who had never been to school and others who had dropped out of school were participating in all these events with as much enthusiasm as their counterparts who attend school. Amin a 12 year old child from Kankniawas has never been to school was not only a regular participant but after this experience he has also decided to join school. The same is the case with Kavita, who is a school dropout from Gardha-ki-dhani. Children who spend their days grazing their goats in Dhantiyon ki dhani carried storybooks with them, and we were pleasantly surprised to find them rehearsing their little plays far way in the outdoors while they watched over their goats. In all theses villages, storybooks brought children from diverse backgrounds under their mantle.

This journey of six weeks ended with about 1200 children from 40 villages coming together at a *Kahani Mela*. The idea was to use stories to bring together children from across 40 villages and connect them with each other and with more distant, wider worlds. Many children had stepped out of their villages for the first time. They got an opportunity to share their experiences of the past month. For many children it was a great experience just to be together, to eat together; to sleep on mattresses under a big tent, to run about and laugh and meet children whom they had never met before; just to celebrate their joys through song and dance and moments of complete chaos!

During the *Kahani Mela* the children also participated in twenty parallel workshops which were conducted by resource people who had come from different parts of the country and are deeply involved with children and stories. They included nine representatives from Bookworm, Goa; World Comics India, Jaya Iyer, Zubair and other resource persons and volunteers from the Hamsa group Delhi; teachers from Ankur Education Society, Delhi and teachers from Katha, Delhi. Children's writers who conducted workshops included Prabhat from Sawai Madhopur and Sharada Kolluru, a writer for Tulika Publishers. Freelance resource persons included Vijay Parasher; Janit Jain; Ramesh Bora; Hemlata Shukla; Anita Mahato and Shamim Ahmed. On the last day an early morning "prabath pheri" in which 1200 children did a round of the Tilonia village and chanted slogans which welcomed the villagers and their children to their *Kahani Mela*.

In the end the participants from each village chose a representative child. There was a meeting with all these representatives to give form to the future course of action. In this meeting it was decided to set up *Bal Manch's* to continue the engagement with books. The

group resolved to bring those children into the fold of stories and books, who have so far been excluded from the world of books.

This experience has provided us with deep insights about the meaningful and purposeful ways in which stories can engage children and enhance natural ways of learning. It has opened up exciting possibilities of bringing meaning and fullness into learning situations. There were many challenges and many lessons to be learned. We realized that stories tend to get completely lost within the noise and din of large events while they blossom and thrive in the cosy smallness of communities. This was a major lesson for us in a journey that we believe and hope has just begun.

Strengthening linkages with the State education system

Overview

- **Participation in policy level interactions at the National level** – The Director / Secretary, OELP has been included as a member of a recently formed Advisory Group on Early Literacy set up by the MHRD, GoI. This group is currently involved in setting up guidelines for the Early Literacy Programme for the States.
- **Participation in State level policy meetings and exchanges**- this has included meeting for the GoR Reading Campaign and Sambalan; and professional interactions towards the implementation of the GoR Early Literacy Programme
- **Presentation of OELP's work at the State level** for Government officials and functionaries
- **OELP intervention** in approximately 80 Govt. primary schools across 4 states
- **Workshops** for government teachers and block level functionaries
- **Participation in GoR in service teacher training** programme at the District level as trainers
- **Regular** liaison with the District and Block level officials/ functionaries to developing mechanisms to coalesce the ELP interventions with Government programme
- **Member of the GoR Reading Campaign Monitoring Committee**

Details of interactions with the State education bureaucracy

The National Level

Keerti Jayaram, Director OELP, has been included as a member of an Advisory Group on Early Literacy which has been set up by the MHRD. At its meeting on the 10th of January one of the decisions of this body was to prepare guidelines for the State governments for taking forward Early Literacy Programmes. In response OELP has worked out a set of suggested guidelines and these have been shared with all the members of the Advisory Group.

The State level

- **Meeting with the Principal Secretary Education GOR** on the 5th of April '13 members of OELP met the principal secretary education GOR, Smt. Veenu Gupta and shared with her the ELP intervention and the progress so far, and invited her to the OELP presentation which had been scheduled for late April in Ajmer.
- **Meeting with Addl Comm SSA, RCEE, Jaipur** on the 5th of April '13 to share progress of OELP in Silora Block and invite him for the OELP presentation in Ajmer.
- **Meeting with the Dy. Comm SSA, and in charge the Ajmer District** on the 5th of April '13. The current status of the ELP intervention and possibilities for the future engagement with the system were discussed. We invited her to the OELP presentation to be organized in Ajmer later in April.
- **Presentation for government officials and functionaries from the State, District and Silora block of Ajmer district, along with representatives of local NGOs** on the 30th of April 2013.

OELP presented its work to the GoR. This event was inaugurated by the Zila Pramukh Ajmer in the presence of CEO Zila Parishad Ajmer; Ms. Abha Beniwal, who is Dy. Commissioner. RCEE. Jaipur, and had come especially from Jaipur for this presentation. The presentation was very well received by the Government representatives. Ms. Beniwal was of the view that NGOs like OELP could play an effective role in supporting the government for improving reading levels. However, since the GoR had just undergone an exercise of renewal of its Textbooks, it will be important to support the transaction of the TB as well. She also spoke about the reading Campaign which the government is proposing as an effort to implement the spirit of CCE, as well as to bring in teacher accountability.

There was a good representation from GOs at the District, Block and School levels; as well as from representatives of local NGOs. These included the following:

The State Level: Ms. Abha Beniwal, who is Dy. Commissioner. RCEE. Jaipur along with some members of her team

The District level: the Dy.Dir. Elem. Education, Ajmer; Addl. DPC. SSA, Ajmer; APC. RTE (DEO office) Ajmer; 3 APCs, SSA, Ajmer; PC, SSA, Ajmer; Senior Consultant SSA, Ajmer.

The Block level : 2 RPs, SSA , Kishengarh; BEO , Kishengarh ; 2 Addl BEOs , Kishengarh; Dist.Literacy Officer, Ajmer;

The School Level: 16 school Principals from schools where ELP intervention is taking place.

NGOs representatives: Dir. Doorsa Dashak, Pisangan, Ajmer; Educ. Coordinator and other members from SWRC, Tilonia;; Prog. Officer Raj. Mahila Kalyan Mandal, Ajmer; Secretaries of the. Garib Nawaz Mahila and Bal Kalyan, Societies, Ajmer; Coordinator AMBWL, Ajmer; Lecturer PTC, Ajmer; Prog. Coordinator SASVIKA, Ajmer.

- **State level meeting with NGO organized by Raj. S.SA.** On the 17th of Sept. 13 a meeting organized by SSA Jaipur to discuss the experience of the reading campaign and plan for the Sambalan programme. The meeting was chaired the Dy. Comm. SSA. Several NGOs from across Rajasthan attended the meeting along with representatives of SSA and the GoR.
- **Conversations on use of the OELP work sites as demonstration sites for exposure based training for Government teachers with senior State level officials of the GoR have been ongoing.** Decisions on this are pending. As already mentioned ,due to the formation of the new government at the State level most of the senior bureaucrats, including the Secretary Education, GoR, and Commissioner and Addl. Commissioners, SSA have been transferred, While other officials are in the process of being transferred. In the light of all these challenges we are hoping that some forward movement takes place while the Dy.Comm. SSA is still holding office, however since the top level officials are new there may be stumbling blocks
- **Proposal for exposure visits of government teachers from Silora Block to the OELP BSKs.** A proposal from OELP has been forwarded by the District Programme Coordinator SSA with a recommendation, to the State Commissioner, SSA. This proposal is under process at present. OELP is following this up with officials at the State level

The District level

- **Meeting with the SSA officials in Ajmer** on the 4th of April '13 for detail planning of the proposed OELP presentation for government officials and functionaries
- **Meeting with the Zila Pramukh, Ajmer** on the 16th of April, to fix the venue of the OELP presentation at the Zila Parishad hall and invite her to be the chief guest.

- **Visit of the SSA team to the "kahani mela",** on the 22nd of June '13 the APC , SSA Ajmer along with two RPs from Kishengarh visited OELP's 'Kahani Mela ' at Tilonia. Their report is available in Annexure 3.
- **Meeting with DPC SSA at Ajmer on 4th July** – to discuss the GoR Reading Campaign
- **Meeting of NGOs from Ajmer** with Dy. Comm. SSA on 1st August, 2013 - This meeting took place between the NGO's from Ajmer to present experiences based on monitoring of schools as part of the reading campaign. In this meeting OELP was also included in the list of NGOs selected by the govt. for monitoring the reading campaign.
- **OELP registered by SSA** as NGO for monitoring reading campaign. On the 5th of August the formalities were completed.
- **Training for Sambalan campaign.** On the 22nd of Sept. OELP participated in the training programme for the Sambalan campaign organized by SSA.
- **Proposal to promote the OELP intervention** through government teachers in 5 schools has been submitted to the Commissioner SSA

The Block level

a) Silora Block

- **Meeting with BEO Silora block** was on the 4th of July 13 to discuss the changed scenario in the government schools on account of the Reading Campaign. In many government schools the ELP BSK workers were not being able to function as the govt. teachers were now under pressure to show results. As a result they insisted that the OELP programme be adjusted within the time table made out for each class. Each school had worked out its own system and there was no uniformity between BSKs. In previous academic sessions, children from Classes 2 to 5 who were enrolled in the BSK attended the BSK together at the same time. Through our discussions with the Block level functionaries it was agreed that this year the ELP programme within the govt. schools be scheduled separately for each class during the Hindi period. Accordingly an order was issued to all the concerned school Principals. They were also required to appoint one teacher to assist the OELP BSK worker. Later some schools showed flexibility and some rescheduling has been done.
- **BEO Silora Block visited the Patan BSK and Field Library** on the 9th of July BEO Silora visited the Patan BSK and the Patan Field Library to see whether there was coordination between the OELP BSK and the school classes. He also spent time with the OELP team to understand the ELP intervention as well as the library programme.
- **Training workshop for block level functionaries and government teachers from Silora Block** . This workshop was conducted by OELP at the behest of SSA. It was held in Kishengarh on the 28th of June 2013 as a part of the regular SSA in-service training. A total of 62 teachers; 2 SDIs from Silora Block; and 2 RPs from SSA attended the training workshop. The workshop focused on the OELP methods for creating a learning environment within classrooms and the community. The experience of the

'*kahani mela*' was also shared as suggested ways of promoting a reading culture within village communities. The workshop was well received by the teachers. A few teachers have expressed an interest in taking up the ELP methods, and we plan to pursue this further.

- **OELP team monitors govt. schools along with block officials as part of the reading campaign.** In the month of August the OELP team visited one primary school and 6 upper primary schools in Silora block and carried out evaluation of children from classes 2 to 5 according to the prescribed norms of the reading campaign.
- **OELP team monitors govt. schools as part of the Sambalan drive.** On the 23rd and 24th of Sept. '13 there was a two day Sambalan drive in 6000 schools across the state of Rajasthan to assess the impact of the reading campaign. OELP participated in this programme and visited two schools in Silora block along with block officials.
- **Capacity Building workshop for government teachers from Silora Block in the OELP field centre in Patan Village – 25th Sept '13** a one day capacity building workshop was organized for teachers from 16 government schools in Silora block where the ELP intervention is taking place. Some of the aspects of ELP taken up in the workshop included:
 - The OELP methodologies
 - The underlying competencies
 - The evaluation and tracking system
 - The enabling environment within the classroom
 - Reading corners and the importance of story books.
 - The reading campaign
 - Issues related to coordination and working with the BSK
 - Feedback

Networking and partnership building

1. Resource sharing with existing partners

We view our relationship with our partners as interactive professional relationships based on openness and mutual sharing. Some of these aspects are being highlighted below as examples:

Jan Sahas

a) Meeting for planning and coordination of the library programme. On the 11th, May 2013 a meeting was held in Patan, Rajasthan with the senior members from Jan Sahas, Madhya Pradesh to discuss the Jansahas library programme. This meeting was attended by the OELP

team as well as by senior representatives from Jansahas. The different aspects of the OELP library programme were shared and measures for strengthening the Jansahas library programme were discussed. OELP re-shared and clarified its coding, membership and other library procedures with Jan Sahas. Jan Sahas was advised to review the book coding procedure that they had adopted, since this was based on levelling of books and children and was therefore problematic.

b) Visit to the 'kahani mela ' by Jansahas. Four members from Jansahas visited and actively participated in the "*Kahani mela*" at Tilonia from the 22nd to 23rd June 10.

c) Resource input for the library workshop. The OELP team provided resource inputs for the two day workshops for Jan Sahas libraries held in Dewas on the 27th to 28th June

d) Ongoing resource support OELP has regularly made available evaluation and monitoring formats, worksheets and poem posters as well as learner tracking formats to Jan Sahas. Resource packs have also been made available for all the new centres. We are in regular contact with Jan Sahas and offer clarifications or support as and when required, even through long distant modes. We have gained from the informal and periodic feedback and that Jan provides us with on these materials.

e) Jan Sahas has in turn shared their experience and expertise and made available their pamphlets on different issues. We have also learnt from their rich experience of implementing Bal Manch's. This is an idea that OELP intends to explore further with them at a later stage, so that some elements of it may be incorporated into our Village Libraries.

SWRC

a) Workshop on different ways of presenting stories – conducted by Muskaan , Bhopal on the 4th and 5th of May 13.. Apart from the OELP team, 15 SWRC teachers and education workers also participated.

b) Summer programme – In the summer months of May and June 13, SWRC and OELP jointly planned and organised several programmes for promoting a culture of reading and writing ,using stories as a central theme.

c) Capacity building workshop – on planning and organising an event. Organised by the Hamsa group on the 21st to 24th of May 13. 20 members from SWRC participated.

d) Capacity building workshop – 26th to 28th June 13 by Hamsa group on effective ways of working with story books, and ways of involving the community and tapping local resources.

d) Ongoing resource support OELP has regularly made available evaluation and monitoring formats, worksheets and poem posters as well as learner tracking formats to SWRC. Resource packs have also been made available for all the new centres. We have also given inputs for the bridge course organised by SWRC and the ELP methodologies have been introduced. OELP team members have been accompanying the SWRC team for the evaluations and participating in the monthly planning and review meetings.

ALOK. Sanstha, Bihar

Provision of material – OELP resource packs, word walls pockets, worksheets, poem posters

Capacity building for coordinators – with continued long distant support, when required.

2. Visits

28th March – Visit to Idtada in Alwar by Pukhraj Mali and Keerti Jayaram to study their women's' literacy programme

1-3 May – Exposure visit for the Muskaan Team from Bhopal

16 May – Visit by Amrita Patwardhan and Rakesh Gupta for SRTT to the GMVS SHG centres at Relawta to review the feasibility of the OELP-GMVS proposed pilot project for building functional literacy in women SHG members

19-21st November – Visit by Devika Sharma, faculty member from CECED, Ambedkar University, Delhi to understand OELP's work and explore possible areas of linkages.

3. Interactions with teacher education & academic institutes

June 2013 – involvement of DU students in OELP's summer programme. 20 students from different colleges in Delhi University worked as volunteers from the 20th to 24th June to support OELP in organising a Kahani Mela. These volunteers were interning with the Hamsa Group. They helped with the organisation and implementation of various activities.

October 12th, 2013. Meeting with Dr. Rekha Sharma (Professor), Dr. Neelima Chopra (Asst. Prof) and the research team at CECDR, Jamia Milia Islamia to discuss inputs and provide feedback for their ongoing research projects on Classroom Observations and on designing a programme for the teaching of English to children from the CECDR Pre School. Various possibilities for linkage of OELP with the Jamia programme were explored.

November 19th to 21st. -Visit of Devika Sharma – Faculty member from CECED, AUD.

The purpose of this visit was twofold a) for Devika to explore areas that she wants to study b) explore areas of possible linkages between AUD and OELP.

December 10th, 2013 Meeting at AUD with Prof. Venita Kaul and some of the other CECED Faculty member for preliminary discussion on possible areas of collaboration between AUD and OELP. These were initial discussions since the AUD programmes are still in the exploratory stage.

December 27th, 2013 Meeting with AUD to provide feedback on their course outline for Early Literacy.

4. Conferences, seminars, professional exchanges

NCERT Committee for Review of Children's Literature. Keerti Jayaram represented OELP on this committee.

Review of the Mathura Early Literacy Pilot project from the 4th to 6th March, which was implemented by the Reading Cell, Department of Elementary Education, NCERT. This review was conducted. Keerti Jayaram was a member of the review team

VBS Library Course development workshop from the 26th to 28th April, 2013

Narender Mali, Ajit Sen attended a workshop in VBS, Udaipur for Vidya Bhawan under the project "Library Resource Group- Capacity Building of Library Educators". This was a preliminary workshop to discuss the proposed course outline and design towards developing a training module for capacity building of library workers.

VBS Library Educators Course from September to February 2013

Leelawati Yadav and Shabana Begam are participating in this course as members of the OELP, Library team

E9 Technical Meeting on the 27th and 28th June, 2013 in New Delhi

Keerti Jayaram, OELP, participated as an expert in one of the 5 sub groups as a part of the Technical meeting of E9 countries on "Inclusive, relevant and quality education in E9 countries" which was jointly organized by MHRD and UNESCO. This meeting aimed at arriving at a E-9 work plan for 2013-14 along with recommendation for E9 involvement in the 2015 EFA review process. Keerti Jayaram participated in the sub group on the theme "Developing Institutional capacities for assessing learning outcomes" and helped in the preparation of the thematic paper. The sub group was chaired by Prof Venita Kaul and included Rukmini Banerji of Pratham, John Kurien from CLR; Sridhar Rajagopalan from EI and Prof Srivastava from NCERT

Research Consultation on the Impact of Early Childhood Education India Study (ICECI study) and follow up panel discussion on December, 3rd - 5th, 2013.

OELP was invited to participate in this consultation. This was also an occasion to celebrate the completion of five years by CECED and at the same time review the flagship national level Longitudinal Research Study, which CECED and ASER Centre are jointly conducting

which has also completed its first preschool phase and we have now entered the second phase. The data and initial results on all three strands of the IECEI study were shared with the idea of consolidating the information/ results from all three strands in a consultative mode. There was a special session titled “Scaling up Access, Equity and Quality in ECE” which was a public event which was organized collaboratively with CARE India in which Prof. Hirokazu Yoshikawa who is an international expert in Early childhood made a presentation titled ‘Final Report of UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network on ECD and Education’.

The organisers took this opportunity to commemorate and honour Prof Saraswati, Prof S. Anandalakshmy and Ms. Mina Swaminathan, the pioneers of this field in the country

Roundtable Discussion on ‘Enhancing Teaching-Learning Outcomes’ organised by UNICEF on December 12-13th, 2013.

OELP participated in these Round Table Discussions which were organised with a focus on the issue of ‘Enhancing Teaching- Learning Outcomes’, to discuss how assessment systems in India can be strengthened and more effectively feed into improving teaching and learning outcomes in Indian classrooms. The objective was to contribute to greater conceptual clarity and a way forward in this domain. The Core Working Group organising this Round Table includes Rukmini Banerji, Poonam Batra, R Govinda, Dhir Jhingran and Sridhar Rajgopalan. A group of approximately 30 experts participated. They included academics, government officials, and organizations that have worked on assessment of learning outcomes.

Some important outcome of the discussions were a) to facilitate the shift in focus from schooling to learning b) there was emphasis on the need to link macro programmes with intensive field based micro programmes so that the macro programmes remain grounded in field complexities and diversities and b) the need to focus on the assessment – feedback, review loop.

5. Documentation and dissemination

OELP maintains a detailed documentation of our work. This includes narrative report; field based diaries; photographs and video clips; records of minutes etc. These are used from time to time for our internal reflective reviews, as well as during external reviews.

The NDTV team spent a week with OELP during the summer programme and widely filmed various activities in the 40 villages which had participated. This resulted in a documentary called Storybook Literacy which was aired on national television in the programme India Matters on 8th September i.e. on the occasion of World Literacy day. This documentary can be viewed through the web link: [u](#) Subsequently, we have come across great enthusiasm from the village communities where we work. In response, we have

started eight new village libraries. It has been a delight to experience the children's excitement in the libraries. Many of these children are now reading. This has been truly encouraging for us and we are eager to build further on this momentum.

Film clips at present being used for our in-house capacity building purposes. We hope to compile these and make them available more widely as training packages for different stakeholders including the lower level education bureaucracy at the Block level.

We are in the process of making posters and simple handouts on different aspects of Emergent and Early Literacy, and of the OELP interventions.

We propose to upgrade our Website and start a blog in the near future to facilitate our access and use of social networking sites for sharing our work more widely in interactive ways.

6. Advocacy at the local level

1) Meetings with the school managements- During the months of January - February meetings took place with the school Principals and staff of all the government schools where the BSKs are located. The broad conceptual understanding with which we are undertaking early literacy work was explained in simple ways. In addition to this future plans and strategies were discussed with them. In a number of schools the vacant posts for teachers have been filled so it will now be possible to work along with the government teacher for the ELP interventions. Apart from the BSK working as a remedial centre for children from Classes 2 to 5 the proposed work with Class 1 with the active involvement of regular class teacher was discussed. A formal permission letter had been obtained from the BEOs office, in response to which the schools have made available the name of the teacher has been deputed for Class 1, and will work along with the OELP BSK worker. However, the Reading Campaign which came into effect later in the year put a lot of pressure on the Class 1 work.

2) Meetings with the Panchayat functionaries

Meetings with the Panchayat functionaries take place at regular intervals. In fact some of the OELP monthly meetings in Patan take place in the Panchayat premises. These have been opportunities for sharing our work with members of the Panchayat. The Patan Sarpanch visited the OELP BSKs and gave a positive feedback. Earlier, in June 2012 the Patan Panchayat had made available a building to OELP for housing the Field library.

3) Meetings with SMCs

Regular meeting have been held with the SMCs in all the villages in which the OELP school based remedial work is being undertaken. These have been opportunities for highlighting the roles of the SMCs under the RTE. They have also been used as opportunities by us to

share our work and seek support from the members of the SMCs. Most SMCs have actively supported our work. During the summer programme many of the small village melas and other activities were actively supported by the SMCs and some other CBOs. They have also helped us to find workers and venues for the village Library Programmes.

4) We have maintained a close interaction with functionaries of the Education Department at the Block and District level, and from time to time shared different aspects of our work. This has helped towards building positive professional relationships and obtaining their support as and when we have needed it.

Challenges

2013 brought its share of challenges for OELP.

1. Rajasthan has been in the throes of elections which were held on the 1st of December '13. The entire Education machinery was involved in the election process. Work in the school was also affected, especially during the month of November since the government school teachers were involved in the election process and polling booths were set up in many schools. Subsequently, since we have a new government in place, the officials at various levels in the State education bureaucracy are in the process of being transferred to different departments. We already have a new Secretary and SSA Commissioner, and others are due to go shortly. This is going to require the building of new professional relationships especially at the State level.

2. High turnover of education workers has always been an issue in our work area. This is partly because of the harshness of living conditions and minimal agricultural activities which compels young people towards daily wage employment in the Kishangarh Marble industry. Young educated women leave when they get married. It is difficult to find older educated women and men. In addition to a turnover of our field level workers, this time in the month of August four of our core team members left because the GoR had announced thousands of vacancies for government jobs. This was a major setback for us. However we have managed to build a new team, and have also been seriously engaged with issues of OD and team building. One of the outcomes is to make a concerted effort to get older people who will not leave. We have met with a fair degree of success on this front.

3. Reading campaign and Sambalan on account of which OELP was compelled to implement our intervention Class wise with selected group low achievers within each class. Earlier we were able to club the children into larger groups across classes. The advantage of this was that we were able to get larger chunks of time i.e. two to two and a half hours for each group. Now that we are interacting with each class separately the duration of each session had been reduced to about an hour. While this has put a great deal of pressure on the

implementation of the intervention, and we have had to completely realign our programmes, on the positive side it will perhaps help with later up scaling. However, Class 1 proved to be a major challenge as we were given only 45 minutes per day with Class 1. We have been negotiating with the State government and are hopeful that we can rework this in the next academic year.

4. Resistance from teachers For a short period of time in August / September we met with a new resistance from government school teachers. This is because the state government had announced strict punitive measures for teacher who did not meet the targets that had been laid out by the Education Department. Subsequently, however, OELP was also included as a part of the Monitoring Committee of the Reading Campaign and were able to impact the processes at the local level.

5. State assessment policies The learning outcomes that are being assessed within the State initiated Sambalan are largely based on textbooks. We have been engaging at the State level to try and build a deeper understanding of our competency based assessment approach. The State level officials have shown an interest in streamlining this process.

6. Variable climatic conditions are factors that we have to constantly contend with. The direct impact that this has is either in terms of migration or extension of non working days, especially in the extreme winter.

Key lessons

1. Work from the point at which teachers are and allow a process of learning to emerge in meaningful and real ways.

This is particularly so when we are working with unfamiliar and new perspectives such as Emergent Literacy.

2. Work to our of our strengths

Our strength is our micro level in-depth engagement. While it is useful for us to engage and dialogue with larger programmes, we need to keep our focus. This became very clear to us during our summer programme in May- June 2013.

3. Focus on team building

High turnover on account of challenging situational variables is a reality of our work. The sudden departure of four members of our core team however has made us focus on team building and systems which help to facilitate a sense of ownership of the programme within all the team members.

4. Build a support group

We have realised the need to build a support group for purposes of providing academic support, as well as helping us to raise resources.

5. Build on local knowledge

We have learnt to appreciate the wealth of knowledge and the importance of bringing it into the folds of mainstream education. This will have the two fold advantage of a) empowering the village communities and b) contextualising learning and making it more familiar for children from diverse backgrounds.

6. Need for greater advocacy

We believe our work takes on an even greater significance in the light of the new policy focus on the shift from *schooling* to *learning*. We realise that there are very few foundation level Early Literacy Programmes that have evolved organically through intensive both theory and practice. Against this backdrop, we realise that our experience can add value to both knowledge building as well as practice. For this we need much more visibility than at present. This is an area that we will now try and strengthen.

Future action

OELP proposes to explore the following areas for future action

- Consolidation of OELP's interventions with a focus on higher order skills
- Transition of OELP methods to the government system i.e. implementation through the agency of the regular school teacher.
- A two year foundation programme for Early Literacy across Classes 1 and 2 foundation skills in beginning school goers.
- Remedial programme for low Achievers from Classes 3 to 5
- Strengthening areas of Community involvement
- Extension of Village Libraries with enhancement of programme content
- Compilations based on local knowledge and stories and use them in the reading programmes
- Strengthen advocacy, upgrade the website and increase access to social networking sites
- Develop short films and training / dissemination packages which can be used with various stakeholders
- Dissemination of OELP resources in user friendly ways
- Strengthen mechanisms for internal review

Photographs

1. Early Literacy Interventions through the OELP Bal Sahyog Kendras

Designing and enabling non threatening environment within the BSKs



Building foundations for reading and writing in meaningful and fun ways



2. A supportive Library Programme

The Apna Pustakalya at Patan – our Field Library



A glimpse of a Village Library



Sharing books in a Reading Corners in a BSK



Building strong linkages with the community



3. Tapping local knowledge and skills

Listening to and writing down local stories



Discovering the history of their own village



A gathering at a Village Kahani Mela



Sharing experiences from their lives



4. Using BSKs as demonstration sites for Exposure based training of GOs and NOGs

Capacity building workshop (GOs and NGOs)



Training of Groups from other States



Governance

Our Board

NO.	NAME and ADDRESS	OCCUPATION	DESIGNATION in the BOARD
1.	Roopali Singh	Advocate	President
2.	Jaimala Iyer	Freelance trainer and artist	Vice President
3.	Keerti Jayaram,	Educationist	Secretary
4.	Kitty Varshnei	Social Activist	Treasurer
5.	Mukul Priyadarshini	Asst Prof.; Dept. of Elem Education , Miranda House, Delhi University	
6.	Shankar Chowdhury	Retired from UNESCO Office in New Delhi in Nov 2012, as Senior Programme Officer (Education)	Member
7.	Cathy Anubha Banerji	Teacher	
8.	Luve Vir Singh	Entrepreneur and market Researcher	Member
9.	Anurag Singh	Film maker	Member

Details of OELP Board meetings

	Date	Attendance
1	05.01.2013	6 / 9
2	05.06.2013	6 / 9
3	24.08.2013	8 / 9
4	01.02.2014	5 / 9

Financials

Details of Income and Expenditure Account

Year Ended 31st March 2013

Particulars	2013-14
INCOME	
Donations received	7,80,851
Other income	2,01,496
Approved project grants	47,17,000
Total	56,99,347
EXPENSES	40,18,926
Excess of income over expenditure	16,80,422

Balance Sheet as on 31st March 2013

ORGANISATION FOR EARLY LITERACY PROMOTION

B 2 /2198, VasantKunj, New Delhi - 110 070

BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31, 2014

Currency: Indian Rupees)

	AS AT 31.3.2014	AS AT 31.3.2013
<u>SOURCES OF FUNDS</u>		
GENERAL FUND	1,426,225	936,487
EARMARKED FUND	2,055,065	864,381
TOTAL	<u>3,481,290</u>	<u>1,800,868</u>
<u>APPLICATION OF FUNDS</u>		
FIXED ASSETS		
Gross Block	68,017	183,499
Less: Depreciation	<u>31,152</u>	<u>155,842</u>
Net Block	36,865	27,657
CURRENT ASSETS, LOANS AND ADVANCES		
Current Assets	<u>3,491,251</u>	<u>1,800,992</u>
(A) Less: CURRENT LIABILITIES	3,491,251	1,800,992
Audit Fee Payable	<u>46,826</u>	<u>27,781</u>
(B)	46,826	27,781
Net Current Assets (A-B)	<u>3,444,425</u>	<u>1,773,211</u>
TOTAL	<u>3,481,290</u>	<u>1,800,868</u>

Donations

Indian

S. No.	Name of the Donee	Amount (Rs)
1.	Jean Menezes	50,000
2.	Kunti Sawhny	15,000
3.	Govind Singh Saini	11,000
4.	Omega Bright Steel Pvt. Ltd	30,000
5.	Sharda Hooda	25,000
6.	Shaila Sondhi	15,000
7.	M/S Ratna Sagar .Pvt Ltd	50,000
8.	Leelajeet Sikdar Memorial Charitable Trust	25,000
9.	Shruti Gandhi	10,000
10.	Harsh Mander	5,000
11.	Kunti Sawhny	30,000
12.	Air Cdre V.M. Bhatnagar	30,000
13.	Moiza Moin	5,000
14.	Antodaya Lok Laryakram	90,000
15	Jan Sahas	26,515
16	Dr. Sudhir Oswal	25,000
17	Dr. Harendra Rupani	1,00,000
18	Dr. Harendra Rupani	5,000
19	Jean Menezes	10,000
20	Neha Awasthi	3,000
	Total	560515

Foreign

S.No	Name of Donee	Amount (Rs)
1	Dr. Praveen. K.Rohatgi	61,200
2	Dr. Dinesh. C. Khera	1,23,274
3	Dr. Vinod .K Anand	30,950
	Total	2,16,012

Local contributions

4,324

Total donations received

7,80,851

Auditor

Adeesh Mehra & Co,
Chartered Accountants
7/3 IInd floor,
Jangpura Extension
New Delhi 110014

Bankers

1. Axis Bank Ltd, Green park , New Delhi 110016
2. State Bank of India, South Extension Part II, New Delhi 110049
3. State Bank of India, Main branch opposite the Collectorate, Ajmer 305001

Registrations

1. Registered Society under Societies Registration Act of Xxi, 1860,
Registration Number: S/61052/2008
2. Income Tax Department under Section 80G of the IT Act, 1961 valid till perpetuity
Registration Number: DIT (E) /2010-2011/O-405/2267 dated 10.11.2009
3. Income Tax Department under Section 12A,
Registration Number: DIT (E) /12A/2010-11/)-405/965 Dated 10.11.2009
4. FCRA Registration: Registration Number: 231661463 dated 30.09.2013

References

- ASER (2012) *Annual Status of Education Report*. New Delhi: ASER Centre
- Hanushek, E., & Woessmann, L. (2008). 'The Role of Cognitive Skills in Economic Development' *Journal of Economic Literature*, 46(3), 607-668.
- NCERT, (2012). *National Achievement Survey Class V*. New Delhi: NCERT

Annexure 1

Table 1 - Overview of Evaluations and status of BSKs started in July 2012

	Name of BSK	Jul 12	Au 12	Sep 12	Oct 12	Nov 12	Dec 12	Jan 13	Feb 13	
1	Chundri	B.L			F.E				S.E	
2	Gardha ki Dhani	B.L			F.E				S.E	
3	Ramgarh	B.L			F.E				S.E	
4	Nayagaon	B.L			F.E				S.E	
5	Kankniawas A	B.L			F.E				S.E	
6	Phaloda	B.L			F.E				S.E	
7	Singla	B.L			F.E				S.E	
8	Patan	B.L			F.E				S.E	
9	Bhojiawas	B.L			CLOSED	Teacher left and did not get a replacement				
10	Nohria	B.L			F.E	CLOSED Teacher left and unable to get a replacement				
11	Bavri ki Dhani (Community BSK)	B.L			F.E				S.E	
12	BagrionkiDhani(Com. BSK)	B.L			F.E				S.E	
13	Pedibhata-Gujar (Com BSK)	B.L			F.E				S.E	
14	Kankniawas B(Com BSK)	B.L			F.E	CLOSED-Irregular attendance despite efforts				
15	Kalyanipura (Com BSK)	B.L			CLOSED	Number dropped as most children mainstreamed or migrated				
16	Relavata-(Com. BSK)	B.L			CLOSED	Children irregular/ most children attending day school.				
17	Mal ki Dhani(Com. BSK)	B.L			CLOSED	Large scale migration so numbers dropped				
18	Kerion kiDhani(Com BSK)	B.L			CLOSED	Most children migrate/ mainstreamed				

B.L = Baseline F.E = First Evaluation S.E = Second Evaluation Community BSK

Table 2- Overview of Evaluations and status of BSKs started in October 12

	Name of BSK	Jul 12	Au 12	Sep 12	Oct 12	Nov 12	Dec 12	Jan 13	Feb 13	
1	Rampura				B.L				F.E	
2	Devji ki Dhani				B.L				F.E	
3	Pholion ki Dhani (Com. BSK)				B.L				FE	
4	Rodawas A(Com BSK)				B.L				F.E	
5	Pedibhata*(Bagria) Com.BSK				B.L				F.E	
6	Rodawas B - Com BSK				B.L		CLOSED Teacher was not satisfactory .Could not get a replacement			
7	Paladi Pathan(Com. BSK)				B.L	CLOSED selected teacher left, replacement not possible				

Note: Pedibhata is a single school running at two locations.

■ B.L = Baseline ■ F.E = First Evaluation ■ Community BSK

Table 3- Overview of tracking in BSKs started in Govt. schools in Jan/Feb 2013

	Name of BSK	Jul 12	Au 12	Sep 12	Oct 12	Nov 12	Dec 12	Jan 13	Feb 13	
1	Relavata							B.L		
2	Sursura							B.L		
3	Mundoti							B.L		
4	Naunandpura								B.L	Alternative school suggested by BEO
5	Paner								B.L	Alternative school suggested by BEO

Note – These BSKs were opened after consultation with the BEO.



B.L = Baseline