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Can Information Campaigns Spark Local Participation and Improve Outcomes?

A Study of Primary Education in Uttar Pradesh, India

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This paper reports first stage results from a study that is being undertaken in collaboration between Pratham Mumbai Education Initiative (Pratham), MIT Poverty Action Lab, and the World Bank, and thus involves the participation of many people from these institutions. We would especially like to thank Dan Keniston, Sanjib Kundu, and Mukesh Prajapati for implementation, Marc Shotland for managing the project, and Dan and Marc for the data analysis. We thank Jishnu Das, Dipak Dasgupta, Shanta Devarajan, Venita Kaul, Priyanka Pandey, Lant Pritchett, Michelle Riboud, V. J. Ravishankar, Shekhar Shah, Venki Sundararaman, Kin Bing Wu, and Salman Zaidi of the World Bank for numerous discussions and comments. We thank the Trust Fund for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development (TFESSD) for the funding to undertake the surveys and analysis.

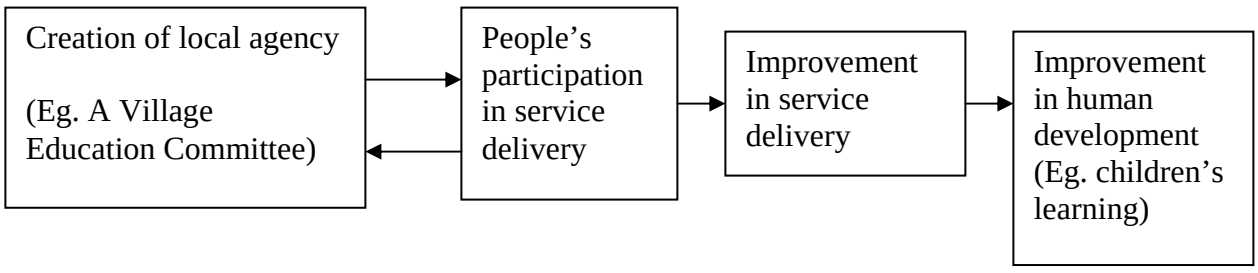
Abstract

There is a growing belief in development policy circles that participation by local communities in basic service delivery can promote development outcomes. A central plank of public policy for improving primary education services in India is the participation of Village Education Committees (VECs), consisting of village government leaders, parents, and teachers. This paper reports findings from a survey in the state of Uttar Pradesh, of public schools, households, and VEC members, on the status of education services and the extent of community participation in the public delivery of education services. We find that parents do not know that a VEC exists, sometimes even when they are supposed to be members of it; VEC members are unaware of even key roles they are empowered to play in education services; public participation in improving education is negligible, and correspondingly, people's ranking of education on a list of village priorities is low. Large numbers of children in the villages have not acquired basic competency in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Yet, parents, teachers, and VEC members seem not to be fully aware of the scale of the problem, and seem not to have given much thought to the role of public agencies in improving outcomes. That is, learning failures coexist with public apathy to improving it through public action. Can local participation be sparked through grassroots campaigns that inform communities about the VEC and its role in local service delivery? Can such local participation actually impact learning outcomes, and can any impact be sustained? We describe information and advocacy campaigns that have been experimentally implemented to address some of the problems with local participation, and future research plans to evaluate their impact.

1. Introduction

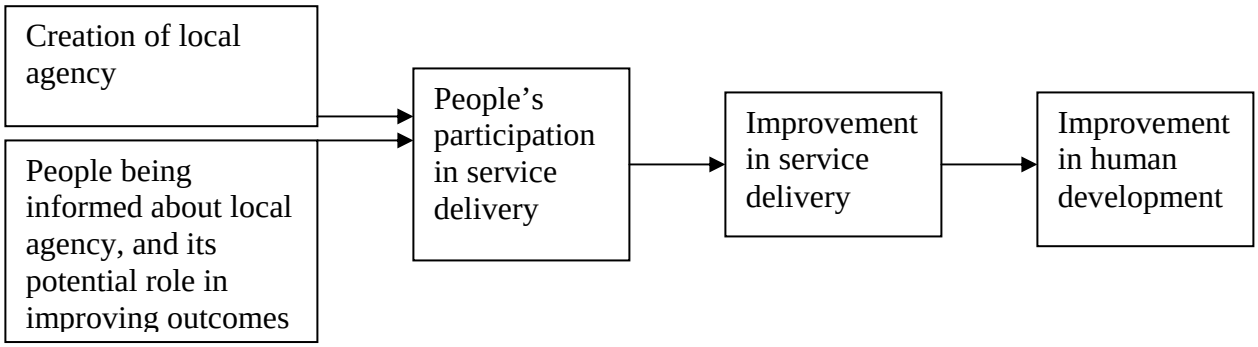
There is a widening circle of development thinkers, policymakers, and practitioners who believe that the participation of local communities in public services is instrumental in achieving better development outcomes. This has sparked the creation of new (or revival of existing) local agencies around the developing world. Yet, more often than not, these new institutions are constrained—they have no real authority to hire and fire public providers, no real resources to use at their discretion, and no real responsibility for service delivery outcomes. Nevertheless, there is a sense among development practitioners that what these institutions might do is provide a "voice" to the people, a forum for "collective action," and facilitate "bottom-up" or "demand-driven" initiatives that make a difference. The hope is that local agencies will strengthen people's participation in improving the functioning of basic services, and thereby lead to better development outcomes.

In the context of India, and in particular the primary education sector, decentralized participation has been given central importance in the roll-out of a massive government push for universalization of elementary education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). Habitation-level planning and community participation has been envisaged as an essential element for ensuring universal enrollment, retention, and achievement of a satisfactory level of learning. Village education committees in particular, consisting of village government leaders, teachers, and parents, are visualized as the mechanism through which public funds for education services will flow to the village, and planning and implementation will be coordinated.[1]



[1] Appendix 1 and 2 provide details from UP state government documents on the SSA program and the Village Education Committees.

However, simply creating local agencies might not ensure that people are informed and aware about them, which is a pre-condition for their participation. That is, there might be a lack of basic information about the existence of these agencies, what they can or cannot do, which would need to be addressed along with their creation. An information gap might be particularly salient if members of new local agencies are not required to be formally elected, and the agency is constituted by existing public officials that choose its members more informally, as is the common experience. A broader issue is that people might not be inclined to participate in a manner required to make a difference, despite the existence of new institutions that facilitate their participation, because they don't rank particular services high on their list of priorities, or because they are uncertain of the potential difference that can be made through their participation. Likely motivated by such lines of thought, there have been recent instances of grassroots information, advocacy and awareness campaigns in communities, to urge people to participate in improving public services (Jenkins and Goetz, 1999; Goetz and Jenkins, 2001; Paul, 2002)[2].



How much do people know about local agencies, that is, the provisions and processes at local levels for managing services? What do they know of actual outcomes of service delivery? How inclined are they to local public action to improve these outcomes? In this paper we report findings from a survey of parents, teachers, and members of village education committees, on what they know about provisions and processes for local

[2] Jenkins, R., and A. M. Goetz. 1999. "Accounts and Accountability: Theoretical Implications of the Right-to-Information Movement in India." *Third World Quarterly* 20 (3).
Goetz, Anne Marie, and Rob Jenkins. 2001. "Hybrid Forms of Accountability: Citizen Engagement in Institutions of Public-Sector Oversight in India." *Public Management* 3 (3): 363-84.
Paul, Samuel. 2002. *Holding the State to Account: Citizen Monitoring in Action.* Bangalore, Books for Change.

participation, what they know and expect of education services in terms of actual learning achievement of their children, and how they participate in service delivery. This survey was undertaken in one district in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP) during the early months of 2005. A local agency, the Gram Shiksha Samiti or Village Education Committee (VEC), was formally revived in UP through an Act of the state government in 2000, and for each village consists of the elected head of village government (the Gram Pradhan), the government school Head Teacher, and 3 parents of students enrolled in government schools in the village.[3] In the current government flagship program on primary education, the SSA, and in its predecessor program, the DPEP, these VECs are expected to play a prominent role in improving service delivery through community participation. Appendix 2 provides a translation of a UP government leaflet on the roles and responsibilities of a VEC.

To preview the main findings of the survey—large numbers of children in the villages have not acquired basic competency in reading, writing, and arithmetic; yet, parents, teachers, and VEC members seem not to be fully aware of the scale of the problem, and seem not to have given much thought to the role of public agencies in improving outcomes; parents do not know that a VEC exists, sometimes even when they are supposed to be members of it; VEC members are unaware of even key roles they are empowered to play in education services; public participation in improving education is negligible, and correspondingly, people's ranking of education on a list of village priorities is low.

The coexistence of learning failures and public apathy to improving it through public action raises the question of whether some form of grassroots campaign, that advocates local participation and public action, and informs people about the existence of the VEC and the roles it might play, can make a difference. We report on a project that implements information, advocacy, and public action campaigns in selected villages. Using an experimental design, we seek to evaluate the impact of these campaigns on local participation and better learning achievement of children. We describe the interventions

[3] For villages with multiple schools, the headmaster on the VEC is the one with the most seniority. VECs have existed in UP for some time before 2000, and there was extensive training of their members under an earlier government initiative for local participation in education services—the District Primary Education Program (DPEP).

that have been launched, the early lessons from this experience, and the impact evaluation study we propose to undertake in the future. This study is being undertaken by a collaboration of researchers from three institutions: Pratham Mumbai Education Initiative (Pratham), the Poverty Action Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the World Bank.

Section 2 of the paper briefly describes the survey that was undertaken. Section 3 reports the survey findings on what people know, what they expect, and how they participate in local service delivery. Section 4 describes interventions that are currently underway to provide information about local agencies in education services, and advocate public action to improve learning achievement of children. Section 5 outlines future plans for evaluating how these interventions impact local participation and children's learning achievement. Section 6 concludes.

2. **The survey**

The state of UP, where this study is being undertaken, is the most populous state in India, with 166 million persons, and according to the latest Census (2001), is one of the five worst performing states in terms of basic literacy. A survey of parents, teachers, village education committees, and learning levels of children was undertaken in the rural district of Jaunpur during March-April 2005.[4]

Jaunpur served as an appropriate location for the intervention and accompanying research because: 1) its reading level and other learning indicators were close to the state average and 2) it was relatively untouched by other Pratham programs. The first criterion is important for external validity: if the intervention is shown to be successful here, it will likely be successful in other average districts in UP. The second criterion is important for internal validity: launching the program in a district with no Pratham presence allows us to randomly assign a pure control group of villages from which we can compare and obtain a true measure of the impact of our intervention.

The sample was selected as follows:

[4] The survey was designed by research collaborators from the three institutions mentioned here, funded by the World Bank, implemented by Modus Analysis and Information Pvt Ltd (Mode), and monitored on the ground by Pratham.

- First, four blocks were randomly selected from a total of 22 blocks in the district of Jaunpur, namely, Maharajganj, Shahganj, Sikrara, and Ramnagar.
- Second, 280 villages were randomly selected (out of 313 villages in these four blocks).

In each of the 280 villages, 10 randomly selected households were surveyed about the status of education services, perceptions of children's learning achievement, and the role for public action to improve outcomes, as were all government primary schools headmasters, and all VEC members. Data on school resources and functioning were also collected through direct observation of the interviewing teams. The final sample consists of 2,800 household interviews, 316 school interviews and observations, and 1,029 VEC member interviews from the 280 villages.[5]

Data on actual learning achievement of children were collected through a testing tool developed by Pratham. All children between the ages of 7 and 14 were tested from 30 randomly selected households in each village (including the 10 households from which the other information mentioned above was collected). The final sample consists of 17,608 children from these 280 villages.

3. **Findings of the survey**

The survey has provided new data on actual outcomes of education service delivery—the extent to which children are learning, in terms of the basic competencies of reading, writing, and simple arithmetic. In this section, we first describe what the basic learning outcomes are, and then contrast this with the stated perceptions of learning by parents, teachers, and VEC members. Although there is no clear evidence of a knowledge gap about the state of actual learning in the village as a whole, illiterate children in large part are not identified by their parents as such. Furthermore, parents show through responses to a range of questions that they have not paid much attention to the role of public action in improving outcomes. Quite strikingly, they are completely unaware of even the existence of a VEC, let alone being informed about its roles and responsibilities.

[5] In obtaining averages for the survey as a whole, all responses and results are weighted by their relevant populations.

Actual levels of learning

Learning levels were recorded using a measurement instrument developed by Pratham—a rapid assessment test it has termed the "dipstick." Surveyors are provided with sheets of paper with a series of Hindi letters, words and short, simple stories consisting of a few paragraphs, to code a child's reading level on a scale of 0 to 4. The child testing was undertaken by an independent survey company, trained by Pratham staff to conscientiously provide a child with several attempts at the test at different levels, and to encourage the child in her efforts during the test. A similar test was given to measure competency in writing and basic arithmetic. Whether a child can write or not was coded on the basis of a child's ability to write down short simple, dictated sentences. Similar to the reading test, the test for basic math competencies was coded on a scale of 0-3. Pratham considers children at a math level of 2 or 3 to be numerate. Table 1 summarizes the significance of learning level scores. Appendix 3 provides more details on how the testing was undertaken.

Table 1

READING Level Number and Description		
Level	**Level Title**	**Level Description**
4	Story	Can read a story with comprehension
3	Sentence/Paragraph	Can read a sentence (or multiple sentences to form a paragraph), with proper intonation Does not comprehend the meaning of paragraph
2	Word	Can recognize 5 of 8 one-syllable words Cannot put words together to form a sentence with proper intonation
1	Letter	Can recognize 5 of 8 letters (or more) Cannot recognize 5 of 8 one-syllable words
0	Nothing	Cannot recognize 5 of 8 letters
WRITING Level Number and Description		
Level	**Level Title**	**Level Description**
1	Can Write	Can write a dictated sentence
0	Cannot Write	Cannot write a dictated sentence
MATH Level Number and Description		
Level	**Level Title**	**Level Description**
3	Division	Can perform simple division problems
2	Subtraction	Can perform simple subtraction problems Cannot perform simple division problems
1	Number Recognition	Can recognize numbers Cannot perform simple subtraction problems
0	Nothing	Cannot recognize numbers

Roughly 60 percent of school-aged boys can read (levels 3 and 4) and fewer than half of the girls can, as shown in Figure 1. Figures 2 and 3 show that only 56 percent of boys and 44 percent of girls can write a short, simple dictated sentence; and only 43 percent of boys and 22 percent of girls can perform simple numerical calculations.

Figure 1. Reading level by gender

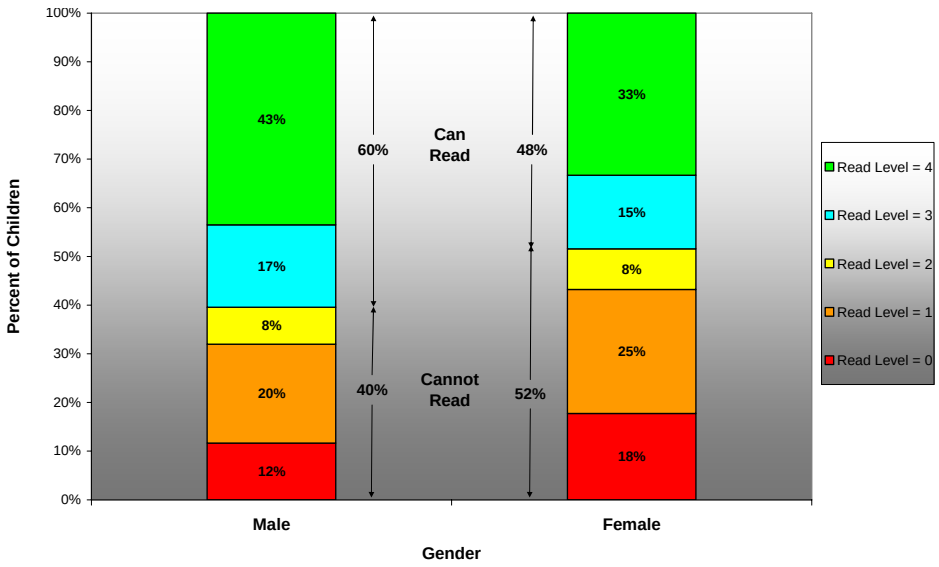


Figure 2. Writing level by gender

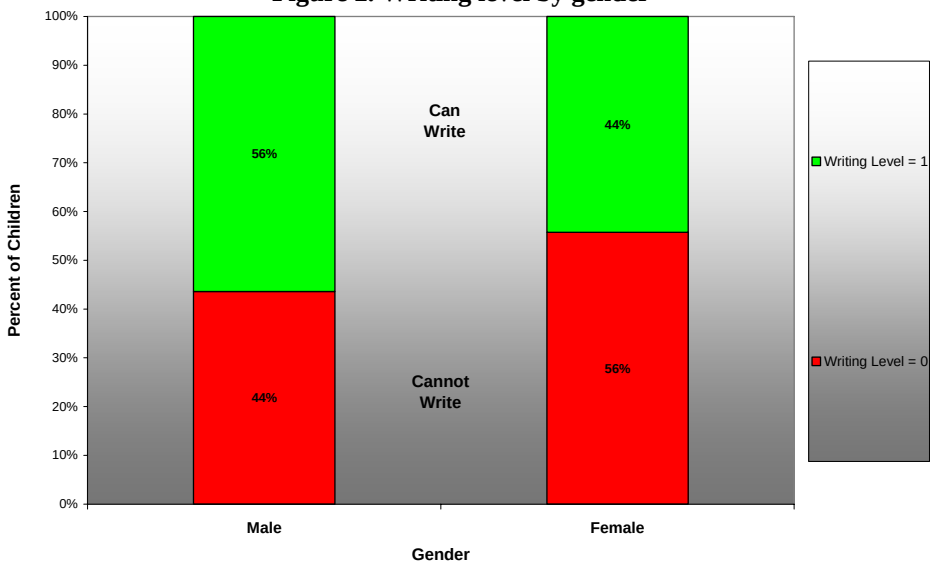
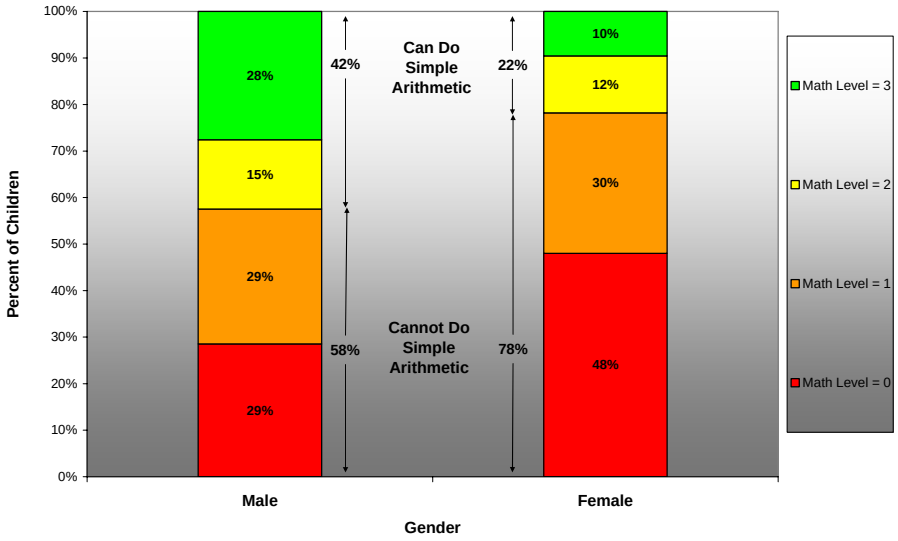


Figure 3. Math level by gender



Figures 4, 5, and 6 show that children do pick up some competencies as they get older, but even among 14 year olds, more than 20 percent cannot read, write, or recognize numbers. Less than 50 percent of 14 year olds can perform simple arithmetic.

Figure 4. Reading level by age

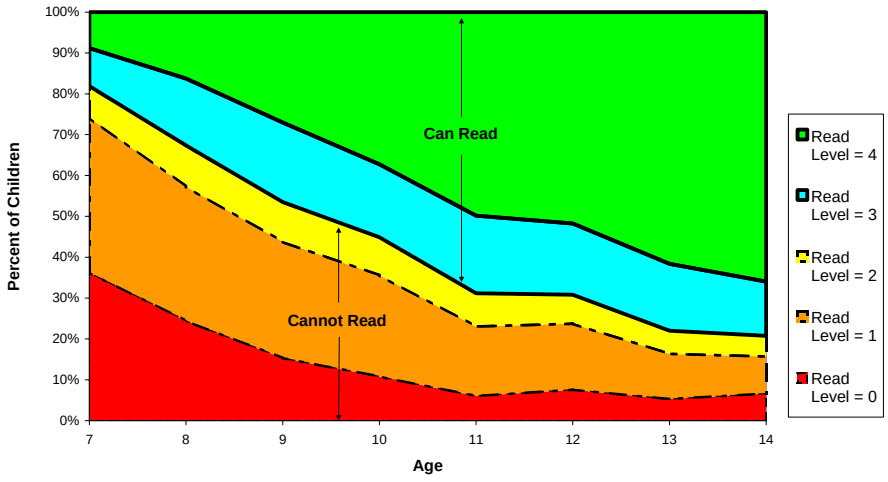


Figure 5. Writing level by age

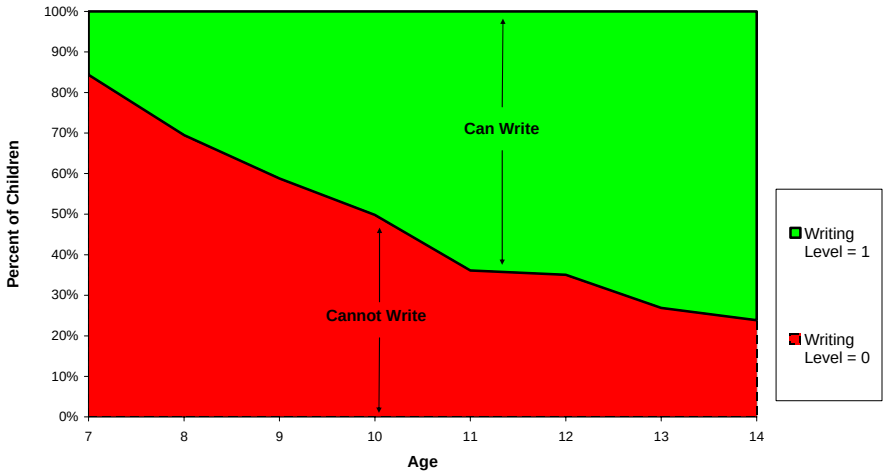
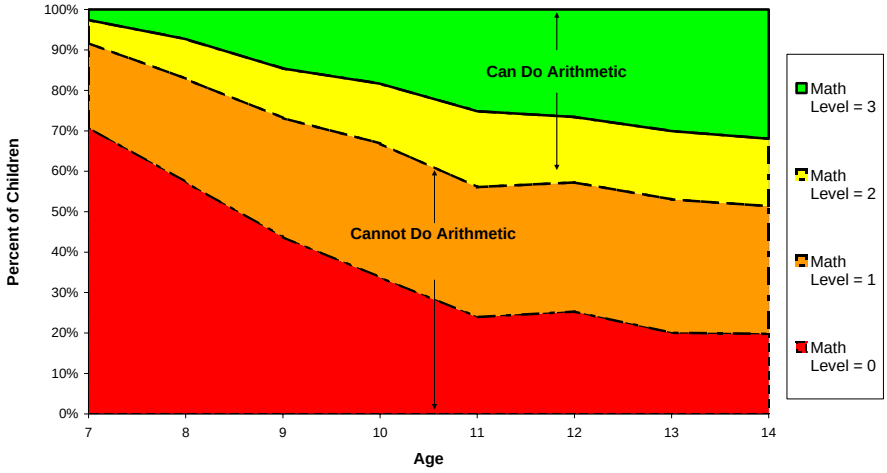


Figure 6. Math by age



Comparing learning outcomes by type of school shows substantial differences between public and private schools. Whereas 55 percent of children in the village as a whole and 71 percent of those who got to private school can read, this is only true of 50 percent of children who attend public school (Figure 7). Similarly, Figures 8 and 9 show large differences between children in public and private schools in writing and arithmetic competencies.

Figure 7. Reading by type of school

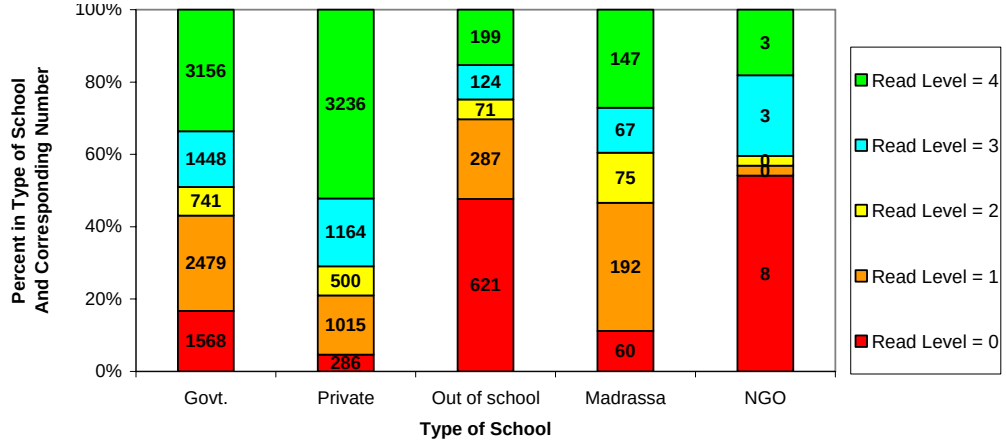


Figure 8. Writing by type of school

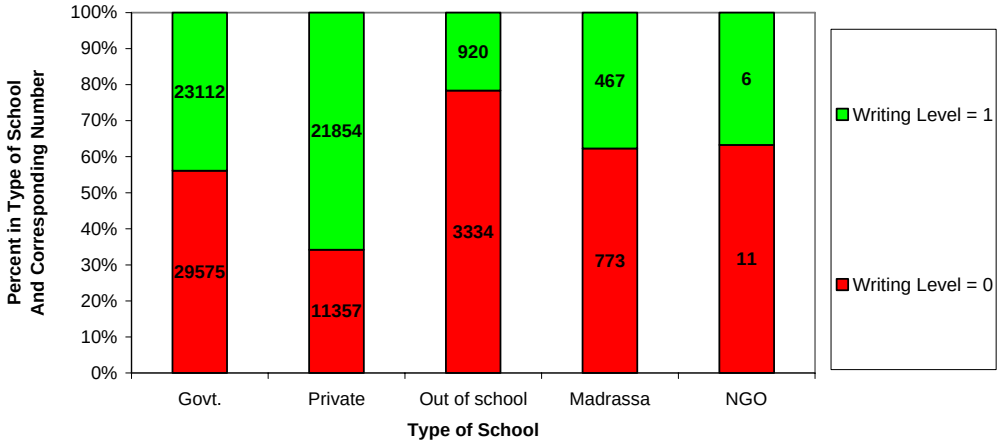
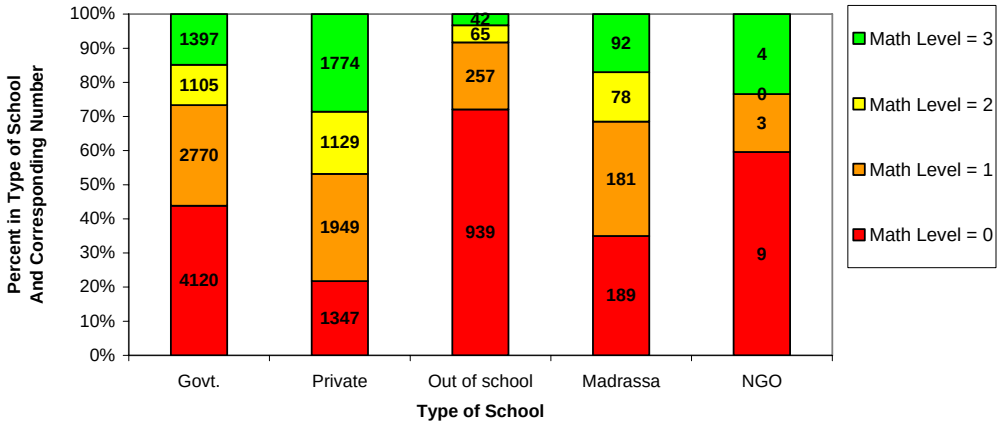


Figure 9. Math by type of school



The discrepancy across school types cannot be attributed directly to the relative performance of public schools, because children who attend private school are likely to be systematically different from those that are in public schools, in income and family

education background, for instance. However, it does indicate that public spending on education is translating into very few children being able to gain basic literacy and numeracy in a village. These results thus suggest that the main issue for public engagement in education services might no longer be one of universal accessibility and enrollment—93% of children, even in a disadvantaged district like Jaunpur, are enrolled—but one of whether children are indeed learning basic skills.

Perceived levels of learning

The survey asked parents, teachers, and VEC members what proportion of children in the village in their opinion would be able to read, write, and do simple arithmetic. Figures 10 to 12 contrast these responses against actual learning levels. They show a larger disconnect between actual learning and people's perceptions of learning in writing and arithmetic, than in reading. However, it is hard to interpret the gap as evidence of a knowledge gap, because reported perceptions might be biased upwards. Headmasters, in particular, might be consciously inflating their responses upwards because they view the question as a reflection on their performance, and don't know that the information they provide can be verified.

In fact, one could argue that what is striking from these pictures is not the disconnect between perceptions and actual learning, but the fact that almost 40 percent of headmasters and parents do recognize that large numbers of children in the village are not learning basic skills, especially when it comes to writing and arithmetic.

Figure 10. What percent of kids can read?

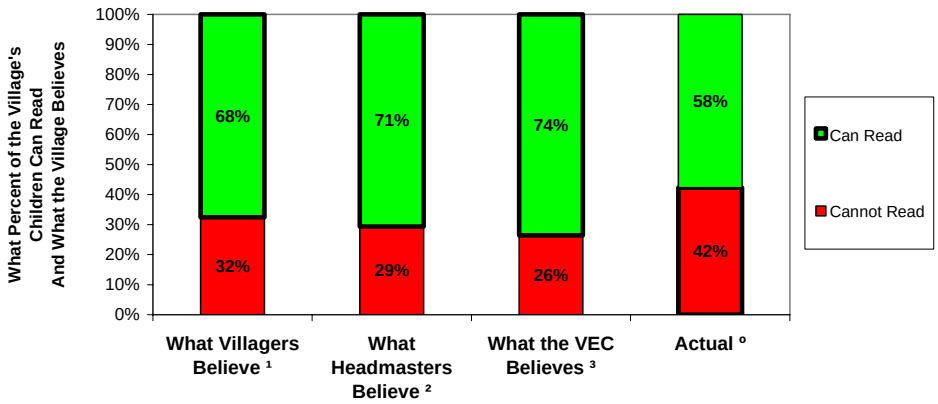


Figure 11. What percent of kids can write?

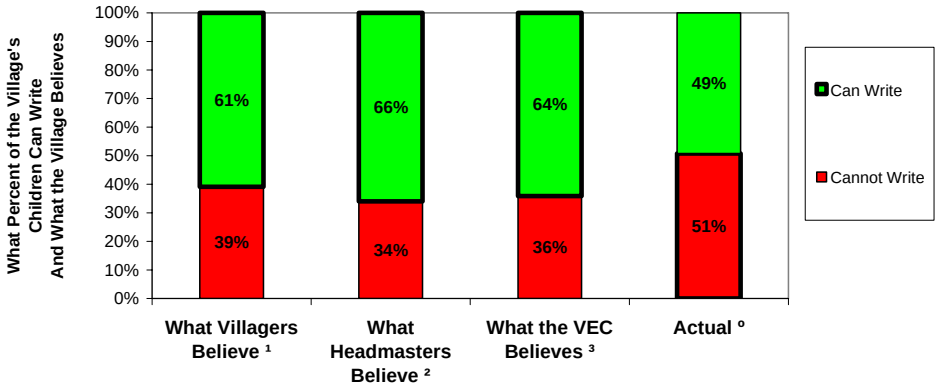
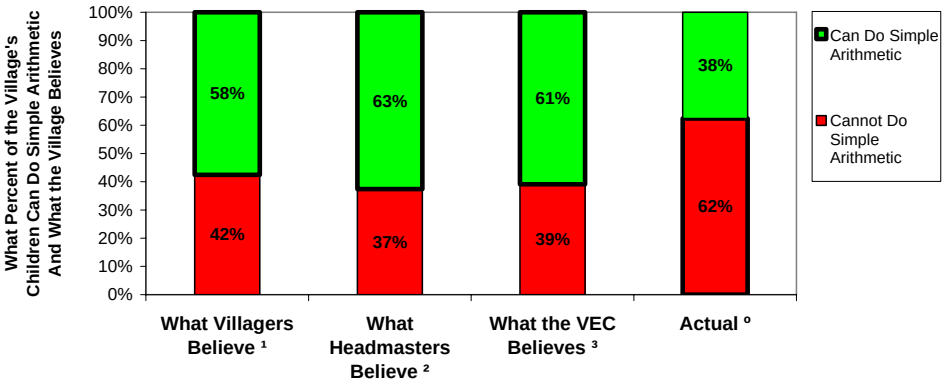


Figure 12. What percent of kids can do simple arithmetic?



The survey also asked parents about their opinion on the learning levels of their own children. Figure 13 on parents' perceptions of reading level of their own child shows that parents of children with low learning achievement are more likely not to be aware of or acknowledge the problem. Among children who couldn't even recognize letters, 26 percent of parents responded that they thought their child could read sentences or short stories. Amongst children who could only recognize words, 84 percent of parents reported that they could likely read sentences and stories. Figure 14 shows that the disconnect between parents' perceptions and actual achievement is even larger for arithmetic. We conclude from this that either there is a genuine knowledge gap among parents whose children have not acquired basic competencies, or that they are more likely to be dismissive of the problem and not give it careful consideration or proper acknowledgement.

Figure 13. Perception versus reality: reading

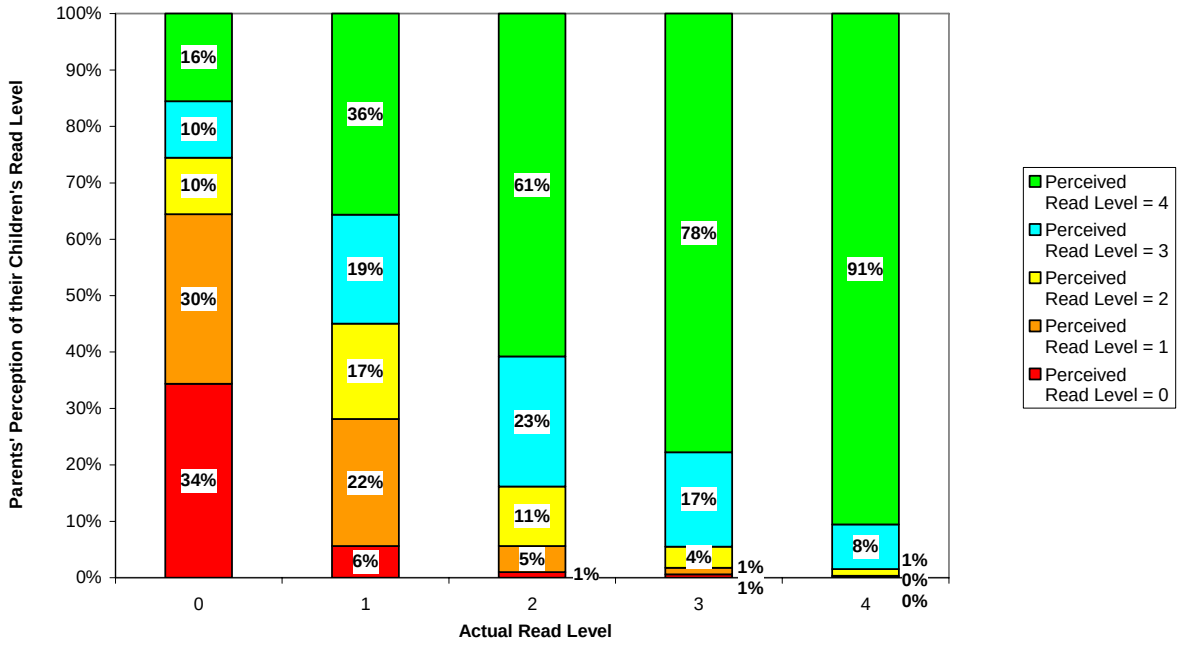
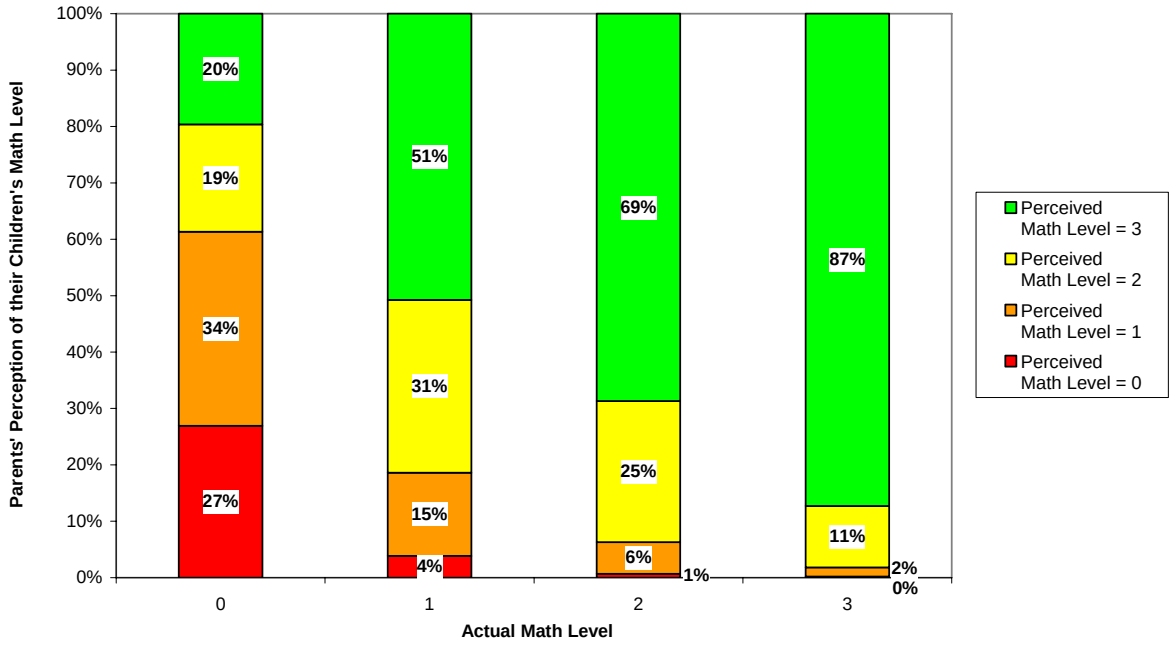


Figure 14. Perception versus reality: Math



* Data based on surveys of 2,803 households, and the testing of 5,377 children in 4 random blocks in the District of Jaunpur, UP. Child tests are weighted by number of children in village divided by number of children tested in surveyed households.

Participation in school functioning

Perhaps the most important indicator of parents' participation in their child's education is to ensure child attendance in school. We asked parents how many days of school their child had missed in the last 14 calendar days. We find that 42.55 percent of parents say their child missed 4 days or less, but an almost equal number (40 percent) say their child was absent from school for 5 days or more. This suggests there is a problem of regular attendance by children in schools. There is no significant difference between the number of days missed by children in public and private schools.

There are negligible instances of parents contributing funds or their time to school functioning. Almost all parents interviewed (98 percent) report not knowing how much money is provided to their public school from the government for its maintenance.

When asked if they thought teachers attended school regularly, 62 percent of parents responded yes, while 33 percent said they did not know. This response is at odds with independent survey estimates that find that teachers are absent for no official reason from public schools in UP 26 percent of the time, and with anecdotal evidence of parents complaining that teachers are frequently absent from schools (Chaudhury and others 2004; PROBE team 1999)[6]. From direct observation of the physical presence and activity of teachers in schools in our survey, we found 69 percent of teachers actually present in the school, and of those present in schools only 55 percent were observed to be actually engaged in teaching at the time of the unannounced visit.[7]

Public school characteristics, financing and the SSA

Almost all schools have heard of the SSA (313 out of 316 interviews), and know that they are supposed to be entitled to resources from the program. We tried to measure how much resources schools have received from the SSA and separately from the state

[6] It is possible that the response to this question is biased since respondents often assumed that surveyors were sent by the government, despite informing them that the surveyors were indeed independent. People might be hesitant of being critical of the government out of fear that the service providers will retaliate by withholding various entitlements. Chaudhury, N., J. Hammer, M. Kremer, K. Muralidharan, and F. H. Rogers "Missing in Action: Teacher and Health Worker Absence in Developing Countries." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20(1): Spring 2006. PROBE Team. 1999. *Public Report on Basic Education in India*. Oxford University Press: New Delhi

[7] Most of the survey team visits (77 percent) were made between 9 a.m. and 1p.m. on a day schools are supposed to be open. All the visits happened between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

government in the past year. The survey was done in beginning March 2005, so toward the end of a fiscal year, and relates to the just passed fiscal year. School respondents were asked: "How much money did your school receive in the last year from the state government/SSA/parents/Gram Panchayat?" For the state government and for SSA, the question was asked for total funds and separately for funds received for maintenance, teaching and learning materials, and an "other" category.

The pattern of responses to these questions suggest that school respondents are not able to distinguish between different government sources of funds (the specific SSA program from other state government funds), nor between different categories of funding (for maintenance, teaching materials, etc.). How truly factual are these responses was also not verified. Hence, the survey data is not helpful in telling us about the actual size and source of funds available to the school from higher tiers of government. What it does tell us is that higher tiers of government are the only sources of funds—negligible number of schools cited receiving anything from parents and the Gram Panchayat—something perhaps already known to education departments in India.

We have tried to estimate the size of funds coming from the government, and find that it is in the tune of a few thousands of rupees, and close to what one might expect from SSA guidelines. For general school maintenance and equipment, most schools reported either receiving nothing from the SSA (59 percent) or between Rs 4000-7000 (30 percent), which is in the ballpark of SSA rules of allocation (See Appendix 1 for a table summarizing the SSA rules of allocation). For teacher assistance and learning materials, the majority of schools reported receiving nothing from the SSA (74 percent), while 15 percent reported receiving Rs. 500 per government teacher.[8] Six percent reported receiving between zero and 500, while 5 percent reported receiving more than Rs. 500 per teacher. When asked how much the *state* government had provided the school for maintenance, 70 percent of schools reported receiving between Rs 4000 and Rs 7000, which, as above, is the expected range of SSA allocations. That is, the responses to what a school received from SSA and from the "state" are likely to be substitutes and not additive, and together

[8] Para-teachers (*Shiksha Mitras*) do not receive money for teaching and learning materials and were not figured in this calculation.

provide a rough, albeit confused, picture that the size of funds available to schools are in line with what is described in SSA guidelines.

The median school reports 200 students enrolled, divided about equally between girls and boys. About 91 schools report enrollment between 200 and 300, and 65 schools report enrollment greater than 300. The student population is dominated by students from so-called "Backward" and Scheduled castes. On average, schools are likely to have 82 enrolled students to each indoor classroom, and 14 students to each mat and/or desk. However, on any given day, teachers report on average that 14 percent of enrolled students will be absent, which reduces these ratios but only by a small amount.[9] The average student-teacher ratio, using enrolled students and employed teachers (including Shiksha Mitras and volunteers) is around 80 students per one teacher. Factoring in student and teacher absence, as estimated by the interviewed teacher, it seems that on each particular day, there is an average of 82 children for each present teacher. At the time of the visit by our surveyors, however, average class size was directly observed to be 57 students per teacher, and the median school was observed with 42 students per teacher present. This observation re-emphasizes the problem of child attendance that was identified during interviews of parents.

Most teachers interviewed reported that the large majority of children have textbooks. On average, half the classrooms in a school have blackboards, and 38 percent have maps and charts; 54 percent of schools don't have toilets; 98 percent don't have electricity available but only 7 percent report having no drinking water available.

Teachers' responses to questions probing teacher absenteeism suggest, as expected, that absenteeism is not a problem. However, when asked how many days in the last 2 weeks, including weekends, was the school open, only half reported 11 or more days (which is the official norm), and 17 percent reported being open for 8 days or less.

In sum, as one might expect from a populous state like UP, there is substantial crowding in public schools, with close to double or more enrolled student-teacher and student-classroom ratios than the officially prescribed guideline. However, actual student-teacher ratios on any given day are likely to be much smaller because of irregular child

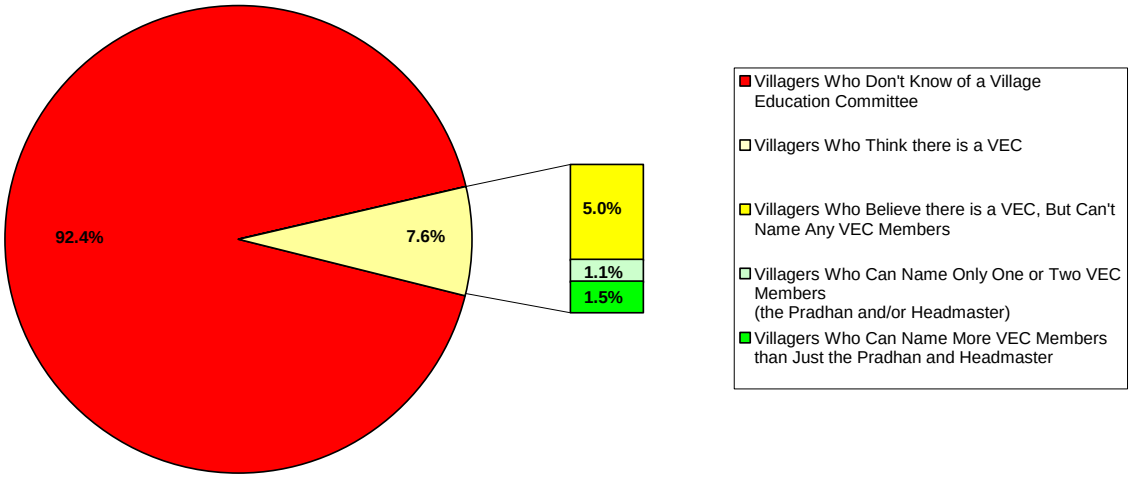
[9] Reported student absenteeism is not correlated with total enrollment size.

attendance. Most students in public schools come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. Schools don't have access to any significant amount of discretionary funds for maintenance and equipment.

Knowledge of local agency and attitude to public action

Household respondents were asked whether there was any committee in the village to deal with issues related to education services. A startling 92 percent responded that they did not know of any such committee. Of those that claimed to know that such a committee exists, only 2 percent could name actual members of the VEC. (See Figure 15.)

Figure 15. Has anyone heard of the VEC?



* Based on 2,803 household surveys in 4 random blocks in the District of Jaunpur, UP. Each household is weighted by total number of households in village divided by number households surveyed in village.

This high percent ignorance of the public school institutions remains at 92 percent after narrowing the sample down to only parents of public school children. It is clear that even if interested, most parents are uninformed of the very institutions designed to encourage their participation.

Very few households participate in any local governance at all. Only 14.2 percent of respondents know of a household member having ever attending a Gram Sabha (village meetings), that were institutionalized as part of a country-wide decentralization initiative in 1993. The overwhelming excuse given by parents (over 90 percent) is that they do not

know when or where the Gram Sabha is held, implying that if they knew, they would participate.

Of the households who do participate, education seems to be low on their priority list. Of those who have attended any Gram Sabha, only 5.8 percent mention education when asked about which issues were covered in the last meeting.[10] So those village members who *are* active in local governance appear relatively apathetic toward education as a public issue.

Apathy toward education is not reserved for those who participate in village decision making. This characterization can be applied to all segments of the community. Asking parents about what they consider the most pressing issues in the village, education ranks fifth on the list of village problems, with only 13.9 percent of respondents including it at all, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

When Asked What Three Most Pressing Issues In the Village Are,
What Do Villagers Respond?

Issue Rank	Issue	Percent of Villagers Who Include Issue: As Their First Issue	As Their Second Issue	As Their Third Issue	In the Top Three
1	Roads	19.7%	13.6%	6.3%	39.7%
2	Drinking Water	15.7%	11.9%	4.4%	32.1%
3	Electricity	14.5%	11.0%	5.0%	30.5%
4	No Problems	22.1%	17.3%	25.2%	22.1% [1]
5	**Education**	**5.8%**	**4.5%**	**4.0%**	**13.9%**
6	Irrigation	4.1%	3.6%	3.4%	11.1%
7	Drainage	4.6%	4.3%	0.3%	9.2%
8	Poverty/Unemployment	3.3%	2.2%	1.5%	6.9%
9	Other	1.3%	1.3%	3.8%	6.3%
10	Agricultural Problems	2.3%	1.8%	1.2%	5.4%
11	Toilet/Sanitation	1.9%	1.8%	1.2%	4.8%
12	Housing	1.0%	1.2%	0.9%	3.1%

[1] In this table, "No village problems" in the "Top Three" column should be interpreted as "no problems in the village".

Although unaware of the VEC per se, households seem to believe that responsibility for education lies at the local level, primarily within the household and secondly within the school, as shown in Table 3.

[10] This number increases to 25 percent when asked specifically about whether education was discussed.

Table 3

When Asked Who are the Top Three People/Institutions Responsible for
Ensuring Quality Education for the Children of the Village,
What Do Villagers Respond?

Rank	Persons/Institutions Responsible for Education	The Percent of Villagers who Place the Responsibility of Education on the Following People			
		First	Second	Third	Top Three
1	Parents	75.1%	18.3%	2.9%	96.1%
2	Teacher or Headmaster	20.9%	66.4%	5.1%	92.3%
3	The Children Themselves	0.9%	4.8%	35.3%	41.0%
4	Don't Know	7.1%	6.1%	18.0%	30.4%
5	Pradhan or Panchayat	1.6%	2.9%	12.4%	16.8%
6	State Government	0.6%	0.9%	6.5%	8.0%
7	Other	0.1%	0.2%	1.4%	1.7%
8	VEC	0.1%	0.2%	1.1%	1.5%
9	Nobody	0.2%			0.2%

VEC functioning

The VEC consists of an average of 5 members, with one being the school headmaster. Table 4, below, indicates that roughly one of those members is unaware of his position on the VEC. And of those four who *are* aware of their membership, roughly two-thirds are unaware of the SSA—the body responsible for establishing the VEC and funding primary school education. One of the four non-headmaster VEC members is the Pradhan. The remaining three are parent members. Table 4 suggests that the average number of parents in a VEC who are aware that money for education is provided by the SSA is less than 1.

Table 4

Are VEC Members Aware of the Institutions of Education?

	Percent of VEC Members Who					
	Know They Are Members of VEC		**Are Aware of the Existence of the SSA**		**Are Aware of SSA Funds Provided to the Schools**	
	Know	**Don't Know**	**Aware**	**Not Aware**	**Aware**	**Not Aware**
Headmasters	95.8%	4.2%	99.5%	0.5%	95.8%	4.2%
Other VEC Members	77.3%	22.7%	32.6%	67.4%	26.6%	73.4%

Apart from not knowing where the money comes from, VEC members are also unaware of their responsibilities. (See Table 5.) Most startling is that only 9 percent of headmasters and 3 percent of other VEC members realize that the Shiksha Mitra program– the ability to hire additional teachers at the local level to address over-crowding in schools, one of the most promising interventions for improvement–is a part of their responsibilities. (Appendix 2 provides a summary of VEC roles and responsibilities.)

Table 5

When Asked What Are the Responsibilities of the VEC
What Do VEC Members Reply?

Which Items are Part of VEC Responsibilities	Percent of Following Members Who List Item is a VEC Responsibility	
	Headmasters	Other VEC Members
School inspection/visits	61%	30%
Deciding how state money for the school is spent	20%	4%
Authorizing additional Shiksha Mitras	9%	3%
Hiring additional teachers from the community (not Shiksha Mitras)	5%	2%
Prepared development plan for the village schools or village education plan	36%	14%
Speaking to parents about child attendance	51%	14%
Speaking to teachers or headmaster about teacher attendance	22%	14%
Reporting school problems to higher authorities	32%	6%
Raising money or materials from the community	9%	3%
Monitoring distribution of textbooks	11%	5%
Monitoring distribution of scholarships / grain	21%	16%
Implementing the midday meal program	35%	30%
None	0%	2%
Other	18%	10%
Don't know	1%	24%

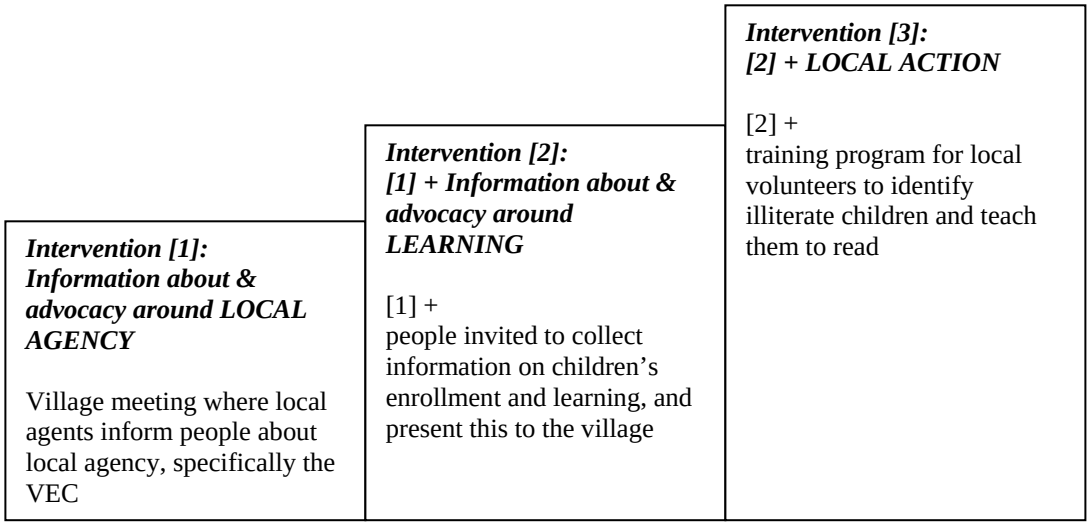
4. Interventions to inform people and advocate public action on education

The baseline findings indicate that there are large gaps in what people know of local agencies, and substantial shortcomings in public action for better outcomes. Can local participation be sparked through grassroots campaigns that inform communities about new local agencies, that is, the VEC and its role in local service delivery? Can testing children for actual competencies in literacy and numeracy help to mobilize communities for action to improve these learning outcomes? Can such local participation actually impact learning outcomes, and can any impact be sustained? That is, in a setting in which strikingly low levels of learning coexist with apathy for public action, can information and advocacy

make a difference? In this section we describe an ongoing study that seeks to address these questions through experimental design.

Through extensive field experimentation during the early months of 2005, Pratham has identified three kinds of campaigns, in ascending order of complexity, with each including all elements of the one below and adding a new dimension of advocacy and information. These three interventions are presented in Figure 16. The base campaign is relatively the most passive and simple to implement, having as its goal the organization of a village meeting on education, with the attendance of the head of the local village government (the Pradhan) and the head teacher of the village public school, from whom the village community is urged to ask and receive basic information about local agencies in primary education. The second adds learning outcomes to the campaign, where local people are invited to collect information on the enrollment and learning status of children in their village and present their findings in the village meeting. The third adds to the second a specific tool for community action to improve learning—training local volunteers to identify currently illiterate children in the village and teach them to read.

Figure 16



In the simplest terms, the base intervention (intervention 1) addresses the actual knowledge gap about the existence of and roles for local agency in education services. However, through its field experimentation Pratham found that the communication of this

information requires careful thought and design to be retained and used by people when deciding what actions to take toward their children's education.

The field experience demonstrated that it is quite difficult to get people to focus on learning outcomes, or to even agree to participate in village meetings around education. The reason the most passive intervention we are attempting is *not,* for example, that of simply putting up posters in the village about the VEC and what it can do for education services, or about the levels of learning in the village, is that we found during field tests that few paid attention to these posters. Often, the posters had disappeared within a couple of days. Pratham also discarded any model of "outsiders" coming and giving speeches to "inform" the villagers, because it appeared that few would likely retain this information or use it to change their actions. In fact, if agents from outside the village take too active a role in village meetings, the tone of the meetings invariably moves to urging outside engagement in the village and expressions of reliance on outside agents to "improve the village."

Faced with this situation, Pratham followed a consciously developed approach in which it was a facilitator of internal village discussion. In this spirit, the intervention teams approach individuals in the village by raising questions, rather than providing facts—do you know about the status of education in your village? Do you think children are learning? What issues about education concern you the most? Will you come to a village-wide meeting to get more information about the status of education in your village from your local agents? Every effort was made to have the Gram Pradhan and school head-teacher attend the village meeting. At the meeting, the intervention teams tried to facilitate discussion in such a way that it was the local agents of the village (the Gram Pradhan and school teachers) that provided the village-specific information on the existence of VECs, its membership, what resources it receives, and what roles it can play in education services.

This field experience underscores the conclusions of new research on the psychological underpinnings of social communication, which indicates that getting information to have the desired impact on actual outcomes is a particularly difficult mechanism design problem. Lupia (2003) provides a framework to assess how particular

modes of information transmission are likely to succeed or fail in getting people to retain and actually use information to achieve specific objectives.[11]

In addition to the local generation of information about local agency that intervention 1 tries to accomplish, intervention 2 tries to do the same for learning outcomes. During field experimentation it was found that the issue people raised most frequently in response to the leading questions on education issues, and about which they were most animated, was a government scholarship program intended to provide cash assistance to students from "backward" castes. Parents complained that they were not getting these scholarships, while teachers responded that many were not getting it because they were not satisfying other eligibility criteria such as having a child of school age regularly attending school. Teachers complained that parents inappropriately enroll under-age children who can't and don't attend school, to lay claim to the scholarships. The second issue that attracted attention was the new government mid-day meal program. Actual learning levels attracted the least attention, and the facilitators had a difficult time steering the conversation away from scholarships and school meals to the broader issue of learning.

Introducing the testing tool appeared to make a difference. When some Pratham workers broke away from those that were beginning to discuss education with the people, and began asking children who had collected around the meeting to read, village attention quickly shifted to the children attempting to read. Mothers would begin to push forward their children to see if they could read; when children couldn't read, there would be a sense of collective agitation and concern, and questions would begin to be raised. In intervention 2, therefore, during small meetings around the village, the intervention teams invited local volunteers to use the testing tool themselves to gather data on children's learning, and thus develop their own hamlet-level report card on children's learning status, including their school enrollment status. At the big village meeting, the aim of the intervention was to have these local volunteers share the information they had themselves collected about children's enrollment and learning status.

[11] Lupia, Arthur. 2003. "Necessary conditions for improving civic competence." University of Michigan, processed. [Retrieved on July 12, 2006 from http://www-personal.umich.edu/~lupia/necessary.pdf.]

Intervention 2 is therefore more likely to have an impact but is also more complex to implement as intended, not because of additional requirements of man-power to implement, but because it requires more capacity and inclination from facilitators to get the village community engaged in the task of testing children and in preparing and presenting hamlet-level "report cards."

Our experiments in designing interventions 1 and 2 all faced the issue of people turning around and asking of the "outsiders" what they should do to improve education outcomes. In its own programs Pratham has been experimenting with a specific tool that might be one response to this question ultimately raised in the village—a pedagogical method that any literate adult can be trained to employ in a short span of time to teach children to read. The third, and most complex intervention, therefore includes the introduction of this tool to the village, and training of local volunteers. It involves much more engagement by both the outside facilitators and the local people.

Table 6 interprets and summarizes these interventions as "information campaigns." Each addresses specific information gaps in the village, and is simultaneously an advocacy campaign that urges people to come together as a group to discuss education and ways to improve it through collective action.

To summarize: the baseline survey identified one area where local participation might be constrained by specific lack of information, and that is, the existence of VECs and the roles they might play in improving education services. Actual learning outcomes might be another area of information constraints, but here the evidence is less straightforward to interpret. The overwhelming issue turned out to be people's apathy to learning outcomes and education as an area for greater public action. The basic interventions therefore address both of these information constraints, and use a particular transmission design to facilitate collective action by bringing people together in meetings and share information amongst themselves. Because of the odds against which the interventions are stacked—public apathy to begin with—a third intervention which requires immediate and dedicated engagement by outside facilitators is also being experimented with. Taken together, evaluating the relative impact of these interventions

puts us in a position to understand what it takes to actually create demand for public action and participation, and how long it can be sustained.

Table 6: Summary of Intervention Design

	Intervention 1: LOCAL AGENCY	**Intervention 2: [1] + LEARNING**	**Intervention 3: [2] + ACTION**
Provides information about	Village Education Committees (VECs)	VECs + hamlet-by-hamlet information on children's enrollment and learning status	VECs + Learning outcomes + Pedagogical tool with rapid impact on reading
Mode of information transmission	Facilitating local generation and public sharing of information—organizing village meetings where local agents share information with the village		
			Volunteers invited and trained in pedagogical tool
Element of advocacy	People urged to come together as a village to discuss problems in education and explore what they can do about it		
		Using the testing tool to mobilize people; encouraging focus on learning outcomes	
			Volunteers invited to make their village a "Reading Village"
Immediate Goal	Local participation in education services		Direct improvement in learning outcomes

5. **Intervention implementation and evaluation plans**

The three interventions were simultaneously launched on September 5, 2005. The interventions were separately implemented in randomly selected 65 villages each, with the remaining 85 villages being the "controls" where no campaigns take place. There were 10 intervention teams, consisting of 3 people each, and 2 additional teams for the training of local volunteers in the third intervention. The implementation was completed toward the end of December 2005.

We plan to evaluate how the interventions described above impact local participation and learning outcomes, and what local conditions it depends upon, by comparing changes within "treated" villages with changes within "control" villages before and after the interventions were implemented. Follow-up surveys will collect information on the same basic variables as the baseline survey—child learning, school functioning (funds available, facilities available, teacher performance), and local participation (VEC activity, parent engagement). New data will also be collected to examine more carefully the mechanisms of change that might be brought about by the interventions. Following is a

list of the areas where we would look for impact, by collecting panel data through repeat surveys:

- Learning outcomes—are more children able to read, write, and do arithmetic in villages that received an intervention? What is the relative impact of the three types of interventions?
- What are the immediate channels through which learning outcomes might have changed?: more regular child attendance, increase in child enrollment into schools, greater teacher attendance, hiring of additional teachers in schools, greater resource availability in schools, volunteers working with schools and children, parents paying greater attention to their children's learning;
- What are the indirect channels of change in incentives and institutions?: Gram Pradhan/VEC takes more interest in schools (meets with teachers, visit schools, etc.); VEC gets more active—hires *shiksha mitras*, organizes volunteers; other forms of community engagement in and contributions to education;
- Does impact depend upon pre-existing socio-economic conditions in villages? We will attempt to address this question using available village-level data from the Indian Census.

We began collecting new data in March 2006, six months after the interventions were launched, to evaluate the short-run impact on child enrollment and learning, VEC activity, and other forms of community engagement in education. We aim to have the mid-term evaluation report ready by August 2006. In September 2006, one year after the interventions were launched, we plan to collect another round of data for the impact evaluation, informed by what we learn from the mid-term evaluation. We aim to have the final report on the impact evaluation ready by March 2007.

How long does impact, if any, last? That is, how self-sustaining is local collective action once outside facilitation is removed? To address this important question, we would like to plan for a longer-term study, and return to these villages 2-3 years after the interventions to study how things evolve over time.

6. **Conclusion**

Increasing or widening faith in the effectiveness of local participation in improving development outcomes has led policymakers to create new institutions to facilitate such participation. However, there is little evidence on whether these new institutions indeed have an impact, or whether additional enabling measures might be required to “activate” them. The study described here aims to fill this gap. In translating policy into practice, the role of evidence and systematic preparatory ground work is critical. The broad reform agenda in education and in local self government needs more evidence for better policy design and more effective implementation.

Appendix 1 SSA Norms		
No	**Intervention**	**Norm**
1	Teacher	• One teacher for every 40 children in Primary and upper Primary. • At least two teachers in a primary school. • One teacher for every class in the Upper Primary.
2	School / Alternative schooling facility	• Within one kilometer of every habitation. • Provision for opening of new schools as per State norms or for setting up EGS like schools in unserved habitations.
3	Upper Primary schools / Sector	• As per requirement based on the number of children completing primary education, up to a ceiling of one upper primary school / section for every two primary schools.
4	Classroom	• A room for every teacher or for every grade / class, whichever is lower in Primary and upper Primary, with the provision that there would be two class rooms with verandah to every primary school with at least two teachers. • A room for Head-Master in upper Primary school / section.
5	Free textbooks	• To all girls / SC / ST children at primary & upper primary level within an upper ceiling of Rs. 150/- per child. • State to continue to fund free textbooks being currently provided from the State Plans. • In case any state is partially subsidizing the cost of text books being supplied to children in Elementary Classes, then the assistance under SSA would be restricted to that portion of the cost of the books which is being borne by the children.
6	Civil Works	Program funds on civil works shall not exceed the ceiling of 33% of the entire project cost approved by the PAB on the basis of perspective plan prepared for the period till 2010. • This ceiling of 33% would not include expenditure on maintenance and repair of buildings. • However, in a particular year's annual plan provision for civil works can be considered up to 40% of the Annual Plan expenditure depending on the priority assigned to various components of the programs in that year, within the overall project ceiling of 33%. • For improvement of school facilities, BRC/CRC construction. • CRCs could also be used as an additional room. • No expenditure to be incurred on construction of office buildings. • Districts to prepare infrastructure Plans.
7	Maintenance and repair of school buildings	• Only through school management committees / VECs • Schools up to three classrooms will be eligible for maintenance grant up to a maximum of Rs. 4,000/- per school per year, while schools having more than three classrooms would get a maintenance grant up to a maximum of Rs. 7,500/- per school per year, subject to the condition that the overall eligibility for the district would be Rs. 5,000/- per school. (**Note:** Headmaster room and office room would not count as classroom for this purpose). • Primary schools and upper primary schools would be treated as separate schools for the purpose of maintenance grant even if they are functioning from the same premises. • Must involve elements of community contribution. • Expenditure on maintenance and repair of building would not

		be included for calculating the 33% limit for civil works. • Grant will be available only for those schools which have existing buildings of their own.
8	Upgradation of EGS to regular school or setting up of a new Primary school as per State norm	• Provision for TLE @ Rs. 10,000/- per school. • TLE as per local context and need • Involvement of teachers and parents necessary in TLE selection and procurement • VEC / school-village level appropriate body to decide on best mode of procurement • Requirement of successful running of EGS center for two years before it is considered for upgradation • Provision for teacher & classrooms
9	TLE for upper-primary	• @ Rs.50,000/- per school for uncovered schools • As per local specific requirement to be determined by the teachers / school committee • School committee to decide on best mode of procurement, in consultation with teachers • School Committee may recommend district level procurement if there are advantages of scale.
10	Schools grant	• Rs.2000/- per year per primary/upper primary school for replacement of non-functional school equipment • Transparency in utilization • To be spent only by VEC/SMC • Primary schools and upper primary schools would be treated as separate schools for the purpose of school grant even if they are functioning from the same premises.
11	Teacher grant	• Rs.500/- per teacher per year in primary and upper primary • Transparency in utilization.
12	Teacher training	• Provision of 20 days in-service course for all teachers each year, 60 days refresher course for untrained teachers already employed as teachers, and 30 days orientation for freshly trained recruits @ Rs. 70/- per day. • Unit cost is indicative; would be lower in non-residential training programs. • Includes all training cost. • Assessment of capacities for effective training during appraisal will determine extent of coverage. • Support for SCERT/DIET under existing Teacher Education Scheme.
13	State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT)	• One time assistance of Rs. 3 crore • States have to agree to sustain • Selection criteria for faculty to be rigorous
14	Training of community leaders	• Limited to financial equivalent for 4 persons in a village plus two persons per school for 2 days in a year – preferably women. • @ Rs. 30/- per day per person.
15	Provision for disabled children	• Up to Rs.1200/- per child for integration of disabled children, as per specific proposal, per year • District Plan for children with special needs will be formulated within the Rs.1200/- per child norm • Involvement of resource institutions to be encouraged.
16	Research, Evaluation, supervision and monitoring	• Up to Rs.1500/- per school per year • Partnership with research and resource institutions, pool of resource teams with State specific focus

		• Priority to development of capacities for appraisal and supervision through resource / research institutions and on an effective EMIS. • Provision for regular school mapping / micro planning for up dating of household data. • By creating pool of resource persons, providing travel grant and honorarium for monitoring, generation of community based data, research studies, cost of assessment and appraisal terms & their field activities, classroom observation by resource persons. • Funds to be spent at national, state, district, sub-district, school level out of the overall per school allocation. • Rs.100/- per school per year to be spent at national level • Expenditure at State/district/BRC/CRC/School level to be decided by State/UT. This would include expenditure on appraisal, supervision, MIS, classroom observation, etc. Support to SCERT over and above the provision under the Teacher Education scheme may also be provided. • Involvement of resource institutions willing to undertake state specific responsibilities.
17	Management Cost	• Not to exceed 6% of the budget of a district plan. • To include expenditure on office expenses, hiring of experts at various levels after assessment of existing manpower, POL, etc. • Priority to experts in MIS, community planning processes, civil works, gender, etc. depending on capacity available in a particular district. • Management costs should be used to develop effective teams at State/ District / Block / Cluster levels. • Identification of personnel for BRC/CRC should be a priority in the pre-project phase itself so that a team is available for the intensive process based planning.
18	Innovative activity for girls' education, early childhood care & education, interventions for children belonging to SC/ST community, computer education specially for upper primary level	• Up to Rs. 15 lakh for each innovative project and Rs.50 lakh for a district per year will apply for SSA. • ECCE and girls education interventions to have unit costs already approved under other existing schemes.
19	Block Resource Centers / Cluster Resource Centers	• There would be ordinarily one BRC in each Community Development (CD) Block. However, in states, where the subdistrict educational administrative structure like educational blocks or circles, have jurisdictions which are not co-terminus with the CD Blocks, then the State may opt to have a BRC in such a sub-district educational administrative unit. However, in such a case the overall expenditure on BRCs and CRCs in a CD Block, both non-recurring and recurring, would not be more than the overall expenditure that would have been incurred on BRCs and CRCs in case if only one BRC per CD Block were opened. • BRC/CRC to be located in school campus as far as possible. • Rs. 6 lakh ceiling for BRC building construction wherever required. • Rs. 2 lakh for CRC construction wherever required – should be

		used as an additional classroom in schools. • Total cost of non-school (BRC and CRC) construction in any district should not exceed 5% of the overall projected expenditure under the program in any year. • Deployment of up to 20 teacher in a block with more than 100 schools; 10 teachers in smaller Blocks in BRCs and CRCs put together. • Provision of furniture, etc. @ Rs.1 lakh for a BRC and Rs.10,000/- for a CRC. • Contingency grant of Rs.12,500/- for BRC and Rs.2,500/- for a CRC, per year. • Meetings, Travel Allowance: Rs. 500/- per month per BRC, Rs. 200/- per month per CRC. • TLM Grant : Rs. 5000/- per year per BRC, Rs. 1000/- per year per CRC. • Identification of BRC/CRC personnel after intensive selection process in the preparatory phase itself.
20	Interventions for out of school children	• As per norms already approved under Education Guarantee Scheme & Alternative and Innovative Education, proving for the following kind of intervention. Setting up Education Guarantee Centers in unserved Habitations. Setting up other alternative schooling models. Bridge Courses, remedial course, Back-to-School Camps with a focus on mainstreaming out of school children into regular schools.
21	Preparatory activities for micro-planning, household surveys, studies, community mobilization, school-based activities, office equipment, training and orientation at all levels, etc.	• As per specific proposal of a district, duly recommended by the State. Urban areas, within a district or metropolitan cities may be treated as a separate unit for planning as required.
Source: Compiled from interviews with Government of Uttar Pradesh officials, and state documents supplied by them.		

Appendix 2
Translation of a UP state government leaflet on VECs
Community and Education
Uttar Pradesh - Education for All Program

In states like Kerala etc. that have achieved extra ordinary success in the field of education, the main force behind this achievement has been community partnership. Because of this Kerala has achieved literacy rate of 90.92% whereas in Uttar Pradesh the literacy rate is only 57.36%. If the community decides, together we all can achieve the target of total literacy in Uttar Pradesh too. With this goal in mind Village Education Committees have been formed at panchayat level under Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Ordinance Amendment 2000 and they are given responsibilities and resources.

Need of Village Education Committee - Why?

1. To get the community participation in education.
2. To help the teachers in teaching activities.
3. To manage alternative and adult education centers.
4. To prepare Village Education Plan considering problems of the village.

Structure of Village Education Committee

Pradhan	Chairperson (1)
School Principal	Secretary (1)
Members	Three parents nominated by Asst. BSA (3)

Active Women Self Help Groups should be invited to participate in the VEC activities.

Community taking steps to improve education

Mr. Azimullah, Pradhan of village Koyalighat in Jogiya Block of Siddharthnagar is altruistically taking care of school activities including education and sports, as there is shortage of teachers in the school.
The community constructed school building with their own resources in Mahavar Village of Gautam Buddhanagar district.

You too can:

- Select Shiksha Mitra.
- Manage Alternative Education Centers.
- Participate in school mapping, micro planning and preparation of the village education plan with collective efforts.
- Prepare a development plan for the school for proper utilization of the school development grant for development of the school.
- Participate in school building construction/maintenance.
- Convince people especially the mothers to send their children to school.
- Ensure participation of the community in education and environment for education.
- Inspire parents of school going children to ensure that the children are clean when they go to school.
- Visit the school once every day, talk with the children, understand their problems and solve their problems. MTA/PTA can be formed for this purpose.
- Help girls go to school if they are dropping out due to long distance between home and the school.
- Discuss the classroom education after the children come back from the school.
- Motivate weak children to study at one place after the school.
- Create better environment for education of children in village.
- Manage evening schools for the children who are unable to attend school due to special reasons.
- Especially encourage girls' education.
- Arrange for books, toys etc for poor children
- Encourage regular attendance of teachers in the school.
- Arrange funds and resources for alternative arrangements in the school.
- Help in developing educational material.

- Make classroom teaching interesting for the children with the help of local craftsmen, artists.
- Help in beautification and cleaning/gardening of the school.
- Arrange for plants, funds/ instruments for green-boundary/ compound wall for the school.
- Arrange swing-sets and sports material for the school.

Resources contributed by the project for improvement of education

- Arrangement of Funds for construction of school.
- (Funds for) Construction of additional rooms, toilets.
- Arrangement of hand pump for pure drinking water.
- (Funds for) Opening Pre-primary education centers.
- (Funds for) Opening alternative education centers.
- School development grant of Rs.2000/- per annum per school.
- Teaching Learning Material grant of Rs.500/-per annum per teacher.
- Distribution of free textbooks.

General Information about allocation of funds by the project

Primary school	Rs.191, 000 per school
Upper Primary School	Rs.383, 000 per school
Additional class room	Rs. 70, 000 per school
Toilet	Rs. 10, 000 per school
Hand pump	Rs. 18, 000 per school
NPRC (CRC)	Rs. 70, 000 per center.
Pre-primary (Shishu Shiksha Kendra)	Rs. 6, 500 per school
School Development Fund	Rs. 2, 000 per year
School Equipments	Rs. 5, 000 per school
Shiksha Mitra salary	Rs. 2, 250 per school

For selected villages

Housekeeping	
New Primary school	Rs.10, 000
New Upper Primary school	Rs.50, 000
School Maintenance (maximum)	Rs.70, 000
Girls' education	
Adarsh Sankul Establishment	Rs.75, 000
Summer camp	Rs. 4, 500
Establishment of Alternative Education Center	Rs.15, 800
Education Guarantee Scheme:	Rs.13, 800

Other grants

BRC center	Rs. 6-8 Lacs (Responsible Organization: Water Board)
Teaching Learning Material	Rs.500/- per year (per teacher)
Housekeeping	
Block center	Rs.56, 000 (BRC coordinator)
NPRC	Rs.15, 000 (NPRC coordinator)

"You too come forward for a literate future for your children."

Appendix 3

1. Steps for Assessing Reading

Children's reading level	Testing tool	How to test and what criteria to use for categorizing children
Story reading	Story or long paragraph	Child reads the story fluently, with ease and speed and reads like he is reading a long text. If he can do this, then he is marked as a "story" child.
Easy paragraph Start →	Easy paragraph	sk the child to read the easy paragraph. If the child reads fluently and with speed, then ask him to read the story. The child may read slowly. He may stop frequently; he may make 3 or 4 mistakes in not reading words correctly, but as long as **the child reads the text like he is reading a sentence**, he should be categorized as a child who can read easy paragraphs. If the child stops very often has difficulty with more than 5 or 6 words and reads like he is reading a string of words not a sentence then show him the list of words.
Word	Set of easy words	Ask the child to read any 5 words from the word list. Let the child choose the words himself. If he can correctly read at least 4 out of the 5 words with ease, then ask him to try to read the easy para again. He will be marked as a "word" category child if he can correctly read words but is still struggling with the easy para. If he cannot correctly read at least 4 out of the 5 words he chooses, then show him the list of letters.
Letter	Set of common letters	Ask the child to read any 5 letters from the letters list. Let the child choose the letters himself. If he can correctly recognize at least 4 out of 5 letters with ease, then show him the list of words again. He will be marked as a "letter" child if he can read 4 out of 5 letters but cannot read words.
Nothing		Child cannot recognize even 4 or 5 common letters from the letters list.

2. Steps for Assessing Math

Children's math level	Testing tool	How to test and what criteria to use for categorizing children
Division: 3 digit by 1 digit	Numerical sums given on page	▪ Show the child the division problems. He can choose one to try. Ask him to tell you what the problem is and what he has to do. ▪ Then write the problem on a piece of paper and ask him to solve it. ▪ Watch what he does. ▪ If he is able to follow the right method and come to the right answer, then mark him as a "division child. ▪ If he is unable to do one problem, give him another problem from the sheet. ▪ If he is unable to do either, mark him as a "subtraction child."
Subtraction: 2 digit borrowing	Numerical sums given on page	▪ Show the child the number on the top row of any problem and ask what that is (e.g., 56). If the child says 5 and 6, ask him again to say what the number is when the numbers are together. Probe to see if he can recognize and name 2 digit numbers. Show him the number on the next line and do the same. Point to the minus sign and ask "what do you have to do." Once you have established that the child knows the number then write down the sum on a piece of paper and ask him to solve it. Watch while he solves it. See if he correctly moves from the units column to the tens column and solves the problem. ▪ Give him another similar problem from the sums on the page. ▪ If he correctly does both then show him the division problem. ▪ If he does not want to attempt the division problem then mark the child as a "subtraction" child. ▪ If he cannot correctly do the subtraction problem then give him the number recognition task described below.
Number recognition: 20-100	Numbers on page	▪ Point one by one to at least 5 numbers. ▪ Ask him to name the numbers ▪ If he can correctly name at least 4 out of 5 numbers then mark him "number recog" child. If not mark him as a "nothing" child.
Nothing	Cannot do the number recogn task	▪ Cannot recognize at least 4 out of 5 of the given numbers between 20-100.

Start here

3. Steps for Assessing Writing		
Children's writing level	**Testing tool**	**How to test and what criteria to use for categorizing children**
This activity is to get children warmed up and relaxed	Give a task : write a name	Ask the child to write his friend's name or brother's name or sister's name. Don't ask the child to write her own name or her father's name (children usually know how to do this)
Simple sentence	Dictate a simple sentence. Example: "This is a tall tree." Or "The school is far away." Or "My grandfather reads storybooks to me." (Samples will be given to you).	Say the full sentence with clear and correct pronunciation. Repeat it. If the child stops halfway, repeat the whole sentence not parts of it. If the child can write the full sentence but makes a simple one or two matra mistakes then categorize the child as "can write." If the child cannot write the full sentence or makes more than 2 spelling mistakes then categorize the child as "cannot write." Save the sentences in the notebook. Let each child write the trial words as well as the actual sentence one a separate page.