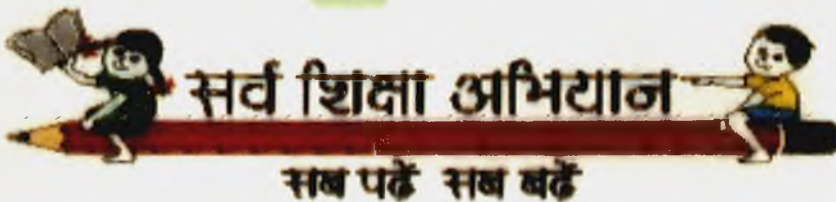


A Few Good Practices & Case Studies Under EGS-AIE

in the
North Eastern States

Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan



सर्व शिक्षा अभियान

सब पढ़ें सब बढ़ें

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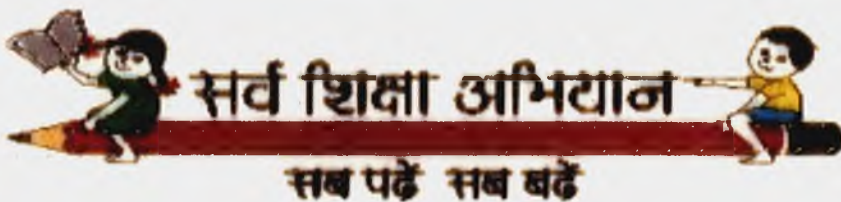
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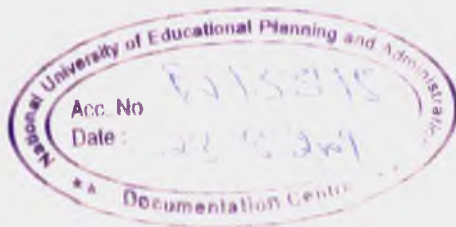
Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

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Government of India
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Department of School Education & Literacy
New Delhi - 110001,

Dated: 5th June, 2008

A.K. Rath
Secretary, (SE&L)

Foreword

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the flagship programme of Government of India to achieve the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in partnership with State and Union Territories in a time bound manner,

Children of the remotest areas, backward communities and those who are in various disadvantaged circumstances need some specific interventions to be brought under the coverage of schooling. Various flexible strategies have been followed across the states to cater to the educational needs of these children.

While providing education to these disadvantaged groups of children in such areas, a number of challenges, namely, difficulty with school language, dearth of reading materials, lack of exposure, insufficient academic support for educational volunteers, present themselves.

Efforts under the SSA to address these problems at various levels across the north-eastern State are presented in this document as good practices, for wider dissemination and should prove a useful document.

A.K.R.
- 5 6 08
Shri A.K. Rath

JOY BELLS – An innovative teaching learning material for ECS learners of Meghalaya



Interactions with the teachers during the visit to rural schools prompted the team from District Institute for Education And Training(DIET), *Thudluskem* of district Jaintia Hills of Meghalaya to find answers to some questions. It inspired the team to design an experiment with something radically different from what is being practiced in the formal schools. The situation called for innovative programmes which would enable the poor children to come to school and feel a part of it like their urban counterparts and also to simplify the teaching load for teachers especially if they have to cope with 3 or 4 classes single handedly.

The key issues with the team were:

1. To attract all children to come to school and to learn willingly and happily
2. To introduce English right from Class I so that the children will have confidence even when they move out from their villages to study in towns at a later stage.
3. To lighten the burden on children who have been loaded with excessive information through the heavy syllabus imposed on them and which is also one of the causes for dropouts.
4. To make learning a joyful experience with real life situations and active participation of children.
5. To enable the teachers to effectively handle a number of classes single handedly.
6. To enable each and every child to possess a text book in which relevant subjects are integrated.
7. To introduce an activity-based text book which is skill-oriented and which

would serve as a base for future education.

The reasons above and the support given by *Sarou Bluksha Abhijant*(SSA) functionaries gave the team an impetus to come out with a new book for children of EGS Centres studying in classes 1-4. The book entitled "Joy Bells" has Social Studies, Mathematics and English integrated, apart from a few chapters on Socially Useful Productive Work and the local language *Khasi*.

LENGTH : CENTIMETRE (cm) AND METRE (m)

FINISH

You silly! When a rabbit is 100 cms long, how many centimetres, you silly girl, it makes.

Oh, please tell me how much is a metre?

When there are 100 centimetres that it will be 1 metre.

Oh dear not! You silly rabbit! Understand, I think you are too small to be measured in metres.

I am not even 1 metre. That is, I am not even 100 cms. I know that 100 cms = 1 mt.

NOW, CAN YOU MEASURE?

Find the length of these lines.

1cm 1cm 1cm 1cm

Draw straight lines of the following lengths

4 cm
7 cm
9 cm
3 cm

One of the Activity based lessons of **Joy Bells**

The district of Jaintia Hills which has 470 EGS Centres have been using these books, and from a study conducted, it was found that the children have benefited a lot from them, and they have really enjoyed the books and the activities spelt out in them. Learning became more meaningful to them. This year 70 EGS Centres have been upgraded and these children are now using the prescribed text books of the Meghalaya Board of School Education with ease and confidence since a strong base had been laid for them and the skills required for the different subjects have also been imbibed. It may also be mentioned that some NGOs from the District have requested for a permission to use these books as they have found them to be very useful.

To ensure that the objective of bringing out the books is fully met, the DIET had trained all the EGS volunteers before the actual implementation of the books.

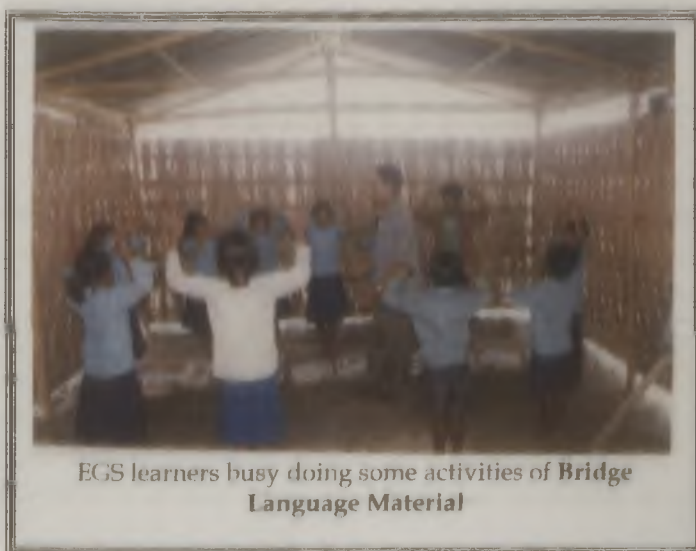
The training has enabled the volunteers to deliver the materials in an effective manner. During the training the volunteers were also made to listen to a cassette entitled "An Introduction to Phonics". This cassette is meant to teach correct pronunciation both to the teachers and students through songs and rhymes. This cassette was brought out by the DIT and it is now being distributed free.

Ghorua Bhasar Joriyote Manya Bhasa - A Material for Bridging Home and School Languages for EGS learners in Assam

Objectives

Language disadvantage in primary schools is a well known fact though it has not received adequate attention in the country. Children who come to primary schools with first language and have to learn in a medium which is different from their first language definitely have to struggle right at the beginning of their schooling.

School less habitations are generally remote and isolated, and dominated by backward community. Their home language, in most cases, is different from school language. The Children are generally first generation learners. This situation is more common in the areas where Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) centers are opened. Even though



EGS learners busy doing some activities of **Bridge Language Material**

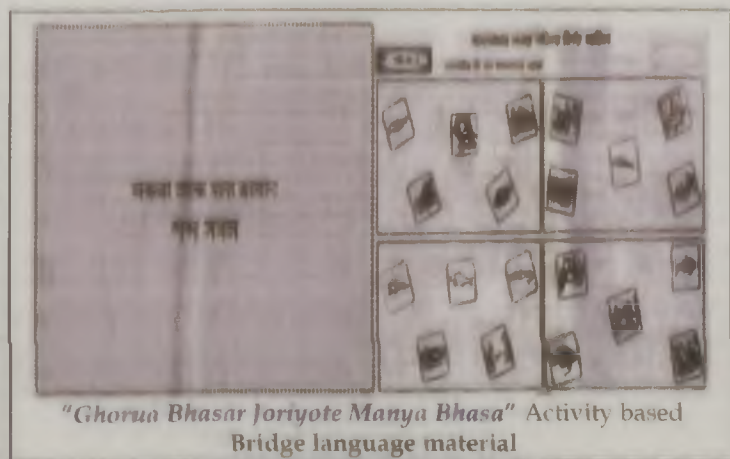
sporadic efforts are being made from time to time to address this issue in certain selected pockets or to address children of one or two groups of community these are yet to make on large scale and to address a situation having speakers of different first language. *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)*, Assam has to face such a multi first linguistic situation in EGS centers. The centers have to cater to children of tea gardens, *char* areas (riverine areas), areas dominated by different tribal people. With Assamese, Bengali, Bodo and Garo as medium of instruction in the centers, *Siksha Mitra* (Education Volunteers), along with the children, have to face language disadvantage in their respective centers. Children speaking a different home language have to learn in a medium which is altogether different from their home language. Each *Siksha Mitra* has to make their learners familiar with the school language before text book teaching starts. To make the situation easy, SSA, Assam introduced one Bridge language material "*Ghorua Bhasar Joriyote Manya Bhasa*" that can be of help for all *Siksha Mitros* to deal with children of different first

language speakers. The material is designed to make the children familiar with the words, items used in the prescribed text books printed in the standard language through their respective home languages. The activity based material is to be followed intensively in the initial months of each academic calendar year for the learners of Class I. Only after the children get confidence, at least with the minimum words and concepts in school language, text book learning is started in center.

The material has scope for further development.

Outcome

The use of this bridge language material has yielded impressive result. For instance learners of *Missing* dominated areas can read or write school language Assamese perfectly as per their respective level. But formal school learner of the same community is lagging far behind in this. The same is seen in the EGS learners of tea garden and ex tea garden areas.



Language Learning Enhancement Programme under EGS in Assam

Providing quality education at the primary level is a challenging task. The situation become tougher when children belong to disadvantaged groups of society and medium of instruction becomes the second language for them. Such a situation is more prevalent in EGS centers which mostly cater to the educational needs of children in remote and most backward areas dominated by tribals, tea community, linguistic minority, etc. To address these twin issues SSA, Assam has tried out many efforts in their EGS centers. After years of experience in quality primary education in the state since the time of District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), the SSA, Assam has finally come to the conclusion that language learning needs more focused attention. An incomplete language learning impedes better comprehension of other subjects too. One of the efforts to address this issue undertaken by SSA, Assam is to introduce in all its EGS centers a **compulsory first period of activities like reading, spelling writing, sentence, paragraph writing etc. as per learning level of each child.** Such activities are not based on mere textbooks. For this *Siksha Mitras* make collection of story books, news paper etc.

A Few COE TEACHERS under EGS in Jorhat district of Assam School Bag Library (SEL)-An addition to Language learning enhancement Programme of EGS centres in Jorhat district of Assam

District Jorhat of Assam has taken a step further to make the Language learning Enhancement Programme of EGS centres more effective and child friendly

This district has introduced a "School Bag Library" programme for its EGS centers in collaboration of with "Disoi Valley Lions Club" a leading organization of that area.

The programme was started on 5th Sept' 2005. It was implemented in 42 EGS centers run under SSA, Jorhat. These School Bag Libraries carry 20 selected & profusely illustrated books & magazines.

The main objective of this programme is to increase the interest for books among the under privileged children who have not enrolled in school or dropout before opening of EGS center.

Another objective of the programme is that *Siksha Mitras* of these centers also need some learning materials to enrich their teaching capacity besides textbooks and workbook. The materials must be also child friendly at the same time. These library books have met their need and have helped them to carry out the Language Learning Enhancement Programme in EGS centres with more ease.

After opening of these libraries with 20 books, *Siksha Mitras* of different EGS center have collected more books and magazines to enrich their library. Now most of the libraries have 30 to 40 books. *Siksha Mitras* maintain records of the School Bag Library like any other formal library.

Outcome



EV helping learners in reading library books

As per the initial feedback taken during the first part of 2006, the children were found to be thrilled to read these books. Generally EGS centers of Jorhat District operating in Tea gardens and *Missing* tribal dominated area. The learners of the centers have faced problem in language learning. With the introduction of compulsory first period on reading, writing spelling etc, as mentioned above and now with this School Bag Library, improvement in language learning by the children has become quite visible.

Learners Bank at EGS Centers

Objectives

One of the major reasons of the school drop out is poverty. Families with poor economic back ground can't provide facilities to their children to continue education. EGS learners after completing Class IV also face this problem. Teaching Learning Material (TLM) and other learning materials provided by the SSA are not adequate for the learners. Also children need uniform, school bags, etc which are parts of belongings for learners of regular schools generally.

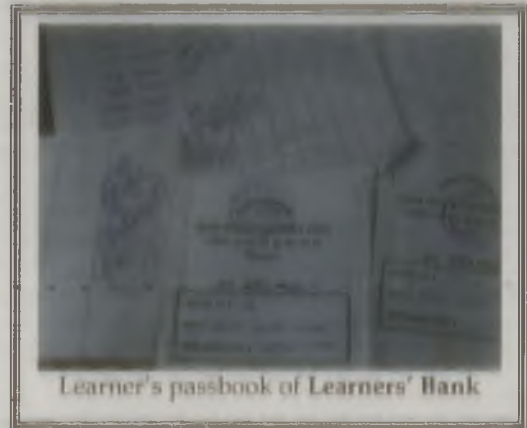
To address this issue, district Jorhat of Assam started "Learners' Bank" at the Gobindapur EGS Center in 2004. The experiment became popular in the area. Later the district extended this practice in all EGS centers of the district.

The EGS centres maintain Passbook in the name of individual learner and one Deposit Register to keep a record of the amount deposited by each child and also to make the entire process a transparent one. The children or their parents deposit money weakly /daily or periodically in the bank. *Siksha Mitra* deposits the amount in the local bank where there is an account in the name of individual EGS Center

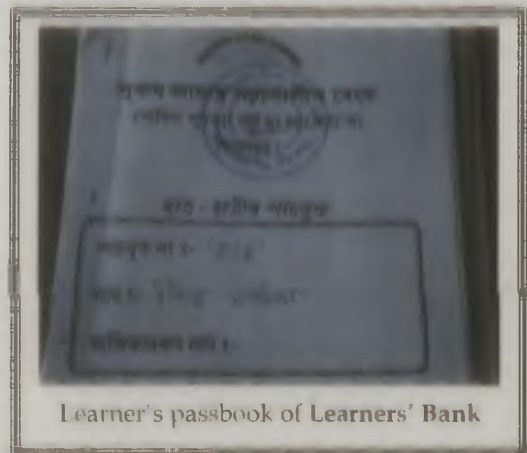
Outcome

Amount deposited in the name of the centers directly contributes to meet learners' needs particularly when they join regular Upper primary school. This has helped retention of EGS learners in upper primary schools as well.

Also EGS learners always find difficulties to participate in different children's programme organized at block or district level. Hidden cost of participation in such programmes (MaxmumRs20/) is not affordable for their parents. But now with their bank deposit which is just of Rs 2/gr5/weekly or as per their convenient interval, they can afford this cost. More and more learners of



Learner's passbook of Learners' Bank

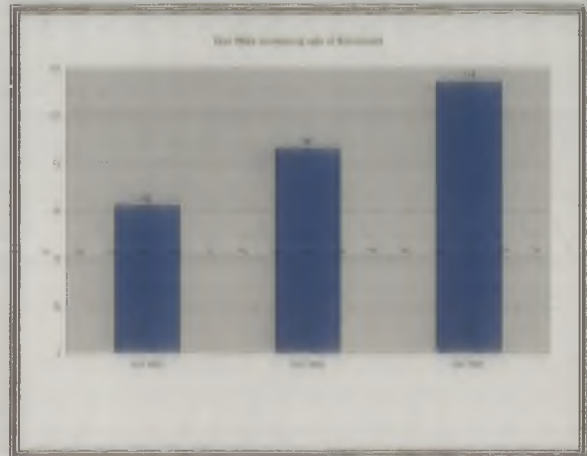


Learner's passbook of Learners' Bank

EGS centers are seen participating in such children's programmes along with children of regular formal schools. Their performance in such programmes are also encouraging.

Good Practices In *Natun Line* EGS Centre of Sivasagar District of Assam

Till the month of October, 2004, there was not a single school for children of *Natun Line* (a labour line) of Bimalapur Tea Estate in Sivasagar district of Assam. The garden is located in the border of Arunachal Pradesh. The residents of the garden belong to tea tribes and they work in the garden. Although the management have provided them with quarters, but no school has been set up for their children. In such a situation the tea labours could not think of education of their children.



However, in the month of October 2004, one EGS center was set up in the *Natun Line* of Bimalapur Tea Estate under *Sarba Siksha Abhijan*.

Time moves on. The *Natun line* EGS center is also leaping ahead with a clear vision of facilitating good education to the local children. The academic packages introduced by the SSA, Assam was duly followed by the *Siksha Mitra* which help the learners in acquiring the competencies in the desired manner.

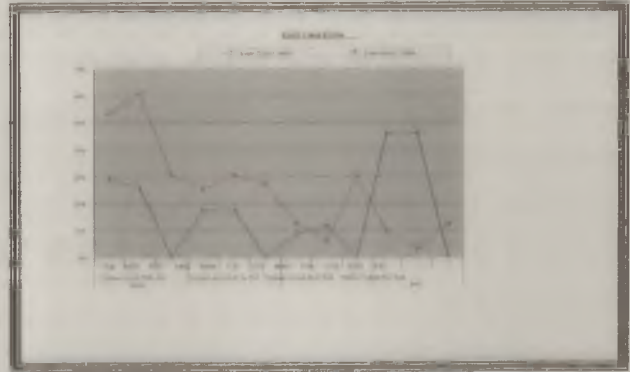
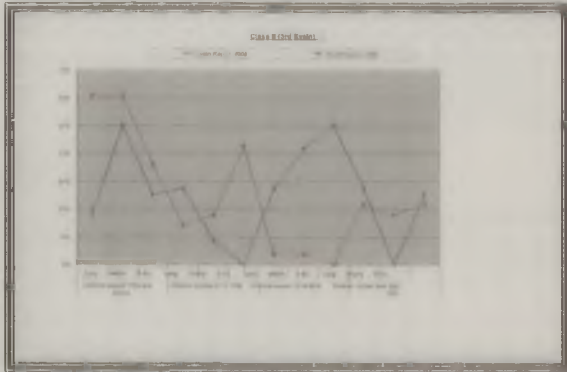
The materials namely *Nathi 4* and *Nathi 6* given to the *Siksha Mitra* during the training period helped them running the center effectively. The *Nathi 4* is a guide for the *Siksha Mitra* to keep record of learners right from their admission to academic progress. *Nathi 6* directs the *Siksha Mitra* regarding classroom transaction with all the details of desired elements of

- Teaching techniques
- Activity based teaching
- Proper use of TLMs
- Group activities
- Peer group learning
- Self learning
- Proper sitting arrangement in multi grade and multi level situation
- Continuous & comprehensive evaluation
- Community participation in teaching learning process etc.

The enrolment in the centre in the year 2005 was 62 which was increased to 86 and 114 in the year 2006 and 2007 respectively.

Academic Progress

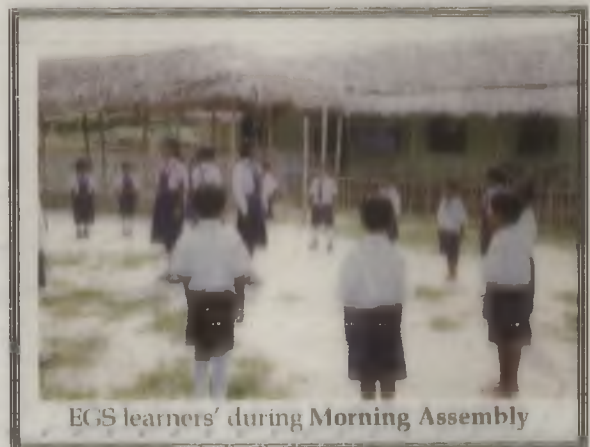
In the initial stage, the academic progress of the learners was slow but gradually children started showing better performance. The training inputs & introduction of Academic Calendar [*Aamar Parhashalir Samayik Bhattic Shaikhik*



Karyyasuchi] helped the *Siksha Mitra* to make academic transaction in an effective manner which resulted in students' visible improvement in attainment of competencies over the years. The Academic Calendar is a complete planning of academic activities to be undertaken for one academic year. "The Academic Calendar itself is a teachers' guide book. An untrained teacher also can transact the course effectively with the help of Academic Calendar", says Shri. P. Arandhara, *Siksha Mitra*. Analysis of reports of evaluations, undertaken thrice in a year, during the 2005 and 2006 shows subsequent improvement of learners in attainment of competencies in Language, Mathematics and Environmental Science (EVS).

Morning Assembly

Compulsory "Morning Assembly" introduced in EGS centre is indeed an additional boon for the learners of the EGS centre. Prayer, reading of daily news, quiz, extempore speech, etc. are part of the morning assembly. Now the learners of *Natun Line* EGS center can recite, sing, and dance freely. Most of



EGS learners' during Morning Assembly

the learners can also deliver speech fluently.

Rangsara

As per weekly time table for EGS centre, the *Natun Line* EGS center has been organizing regularly the *Rangsara*, a children's platform for displaying their innate talents, once in every fortnight. As a result, an excellent *Bihu* group has been formed by the students of *Natun line* EGS centre. The group has performed *Bihu* Dance in different places of the district.

Some Innovative Practices in the centre

Banking system

Aimed at facilitating saving concept and promoting savings habit as well, the EGS center has started a Bank namely '*Aamir Bank*' involving all the learners. There is no any rigidity in depositing money. Children may deposit an amount as per their capacity and accordingly that is recorded in their passbook given separately in the name of each learner. It needs mention that children may withdraw their savings also, if they like. Children are encouraged to utilize their savings preferably in education related expenditure.

Annual Convention

At the end of academic session the Annual Convention is organized in the center, where the best performers, best students are being facilitated. This encourages learners to perform cultural and other co curricular activities.

Wall Magazine

The Wall Magazine namely "*Akanir Chara*" is prepared with the articles collected by the *Siksha Mitra*, learners, community people. It is emphasized that all the writings are knowledge based. The basic objectives of it is to encourage the learners to creative writing, collecting paper cuts, making collages, drawing, developing wall magazine, etc.

That a school can really bring changes in the life in a tea garden is proved by *Natun Line* EGS centre. Now the tea labours come in every morning to drop their

children in the center with school bags and water bottles. Monitoring of the children in completing the home tasks and reviewing the progress of their children has become a regular practice of the parents of the children. The centre's performance has also attracted many children of nearby private schools to shift to this EGS center.

Experiment for Enhancement of Learning in *Sanjogi Siksha Kendra* (Center under Alternative Innovative Education (AIE) programme) of Jorhat District of Assam

Objectives

Under AIE intervention, SSA, Assam has set up *Sanjogi Siksha Kendras* in areas where children either drop out or they never get enrolled in spite of having schools in their easy reach. Such children are to be motivated to continue their education and at the same time they are to be provided education that they have missed as per their age in these *Kendras* so that they can be made fit to get enrolled in age specific classes in the regular school. These children, generally over aged, inherent with talents equal to those who are in school but lack the motivation of learning need very specific attention.

Initially to make them regular in attending the *Kendra* is a big challenge initially. To address this issue, Jorhat district of Assam started different activities like making of wall magazine by learners, gardening, and competition on different areas like Story Telling, Quiz, Extempore Speech, etc. Saturday is kept for taking up these activities in *kendras*.

Outcome

Attendance in many *Sanjogi Siksha Kendras* have increased tremendously. Till the Month of Nov 06 attendance in AIE centers of *Salalbari, Mundaline, Balijanbosti, Changmai bosti* and *Poja bosti* was less than 50. But now attendance in these *Kendras* has gone up to 70 to 75. Learners eagerly wait for Saturday. Attendance on this day is higher than any other day of the week.

The development of language skill of



Wall magazine of one Sanjogi Siksha Kendra



Wall magazine of one Sanjogi Siksha Kendra

learners of these centers is impressive. Their hand writing, spelling are far better than learners of regular formal schools of their areas. They are found to be quite rich with word stock, general knowledge, etc.

Learners develop competitive mind because only the best performer in different activities gets prize. Also all are inspired to participate in these activities. Parents are now of the view that learning level of learners of these *Kendras* are far better and they are now more willing to admit their children in theses *Kendras* rather than in regular formal Schools.

A few Case studies under ECS-AIE in Assam

Story of Omar

Omar is a child who lost his father at a young age of 8 in this char area. Words hardly can express the horrors of life that this young boy faced. Omar who was attending a distance school stopped going to school because he had to find ways to feed his widow mother and himself. He started a small *Pan Shop* and kept



Omar with his mother



Omar (in red border) with his class mates at present

himself busy in that. Can the shop only be a solution for Omar?

District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), the primary education project of India, came as an actual path finder for Omar. An Alternative Schooling centre called *Amar Parhasali* was set up in Pub Bandia Char Area, the area where Omar lived, under DPEP. But Omar couldn't think of attending school then as he had a bigger responsibility of running his *Pan Shop*. When the children of his age started going to *Amar Parhasali* the days of his schooling began to disturb Omar. The day he was approached by *Siksha Mitra Saiful* to convince him to get enrolled in AP he could not respond. But the next day Omar visited the centre and he became a regular student of *Pub Bandia Amar Parhasali*. Perhaps his hidden dream of getting educated made him make a division of his time into two so that he could attend school and run his shop as well. Omar's life gradually changed. He was not just regularly attending the centre; his hidden talents also gradually became visible. Slowly he started giving more and more time in different activities of the AS centre. He devoted time in studying at home also. Gradually he gave the entire responsibility of running his shop to his mother and he just extended help to his mother as and when required. He started taking part in centre activities like

singing, drawing, participating in exhibition in centre's annual day and many more. Omar became an active student of the centre.

Case studies under Intervention of Deprived Urban Children in Assam

(a) Guwahati

I

Farida Begum, aged 12 years working in a household in Hijubari, Hatigaon area of Guwahati and earns Rs. 300/- per month. One day, one *Siksha Karmi* (Education Volunteer), Mafida Begum met her while the child was coming for work. The *Siksha Karmi* enrolled her name in the *Jyoti Kendra* set up for education of children like her, deprived urban children. Now Farida is attending the Centre regularly at 2.30 pm after finishing her work at the household. She achieved the Class I competencies successfully and secured highest marks in the monthly evaluations. She enjoys learning in the centre and wishes to continue it.

II

Hena begum, aged 8 years. Her family members migrated to Guwahati from a remote village of Boko of Kanrup district. She lives with her mother in Hatigaon area of Guwahati who is working as a daily wage labourer. Farida works in a fish Market in the morning and earns Rs. 5-10 a day. *Siksha Karmi* Md. Rejaul Karim enrolled her in Hijubari *Jyoti Kendra*. She is attending the centre regularly and now a child of Class III level and her achievement is very satisfactory. The *Siksha Karmi* has planned to mainstream her in class IV in nearby formal School in 2008. Hena's aim is to be a Nurse in future.

Motibur Rahman, aged 8 years. He is reading in *Dhirenpara Tilla Jyoti Kendra*, Guwahati. He lives with his family in Dhirenpara area. His father, mother and four elder brothers work as daily wage labourers and all are illiterate. One day, his mother Nurzahan Bagum met one *Siksha Karmi*, Rupanjali Kalita and she enrolled Motibur's name in the *Jyoti Kendra*, August' 2006. Now Motibur is attending the centre regularly and his achievement in class I is satisfactory. In the free time he reads Kaida and practices singing by hearing music system. He enjoys learning in the centre and performed very well in the District level and State level Children Conference. Motibur's aim is to be a singer in future. The *Siksha Karmi* has planned to mainstream him in class III in nearby formal school in 2008.



Matibur Rahman performing song to an audience

(b) Silchar, Cachar District

Anjali Dev, aged 10 years is a student of Class V of Tarini Mohan Das Laskar Academy, a formal Middle English (ME) School of Silchar town. Earlier she was a child of *Jyoti Kendra* No. 10 in Silchar town. She worked as a part time worker in three households and her monthly income was Rs. 1000/- per month. She regularly attended the *Jyoti Kendra* and completed the Lower Primary section successfully. The concerned *Siksha Karmi* has enrolled her in the formal School in January, 2007 and regularly monitor her.

Can education be possible only with community support?

A case study in a *Char* area (riverine area) of Darrang District of Assam

Bandia is a vast *Char* area in Kalaigaon block of Darang district in Assam. 82% people of this *char* area were illiterate in the year 1998-99. The main livelihood of the majority of people is agriculture. Education was a remote dream for the children of these people about a decade ago. Helping fathers in field by boys and mothers in household work by the girls were the normal routing work for majority of children. A negligible number of children managed to attend school available only at far distance. People lived with age old social evils like child marriage, etc. Economic backwardness farther crippled the life of the people of Bandia *Char*.



District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) came as a boon for the children of this *Char*. An Alternative Schooling (AS) centre called *Amar Parhasali* was set up in Pub Bandia *Char*, a *char* village within large Bandia *Char Gaon Panchayat* under DPEP for providing education to the hitherto out of school children of the *char*.

Almost every year flood creates havoc to the entire Bandia *Char* area and for this, the Pub Bandia AS centre also suffers. Many a times the entire Pub Bandia *Char* gets completely washed away by flood. But the inhabitants of Bandia and *Siksha Mitra* of the Alternative schooling center Md. Saiful did not let their children's dream to be washed away. Every time their area was washed away, they shifted to safer areas where they made completely new settlement and set up the Pub Bandia AS centre thus enabling the children continue their education.

The news of completion of DPEP's term in 2003 was a bolt from the blue again for the Bandia *Char* people. Because without DPEP's help Bandia AS centre could not survive. There was no decision from state government to set up any

primary school in the state. To have a government school in *Char* area was nothing but a mere dream for the *Char* people. But this time *Sarba Shiksha Abhiyan* came as a respite to the Bandia people. They came to know that under SSA, EGS centre would be set up in all school less habitations. The people of Pub Bandia tried their best to keep their centre alive till officially the area was selected for EGS centre. After the official processes completed the same Pub Bandia AS center continued to run, now as EGS centre with the same nomenclature.

Over the years the enrolment increased in the center. Starting with a modest number of eighty seven children, the enrolment of Pub Bandia *Amar Parhasali* has got four hundred twenty four enrolment in 2007. Moreover a number of batches of children have completed lower primary education from the center. This became both a matter of joy and concern at the same time for the people of Bandia. It was natural for them to have joy when their children have become primary graduates. But to pursue education by these children further there was no upper primary schooling facility within a reasonable distance from Bandia *Char*. The *Siksha Mitra* Md. Saiful Islam and the Bandia *Char* community decided to upgrade the existing primary EGS center (*Pub Bandia Amar Parhasali*) into upper primary even though officially they did not have sanction for that. Till now the Pub Bandia *Amar Parhasali* is running with both lower primary section, supported by SSA, and upper primary section with the community support.

The present enrolment status of the center

Class	Enrolment
I	90
II	45
III	46
IV	38
V-A	60
V-B	56
VI	64
VII	25
Total	424

Till now the center is run by nine *Sikha Mitras*, seven of whom are engaged by community who have been providing honorary service to the center. Number of students from this Pub Bandia *Amar Parhasali* have completed upper primary education and presently studying in different high schools of the district. Started

initially in 1999 under DPEP with the spread of education Pub Bandia *Amar Parhasali* has indeed brought a tremendous change in this large char area of the district.

Can Education eradicate superstition

A Case Study Of "KUSTHA KALYAN ASHRAM AMAR PARHASHALI" An EGS centre of SONITPUR District of ASSAM

" *Kustha Kalyan Ashram*" was established in 1955 at Dilapakhara village covering a large tract of land under *Dakhin Kalabari Gaon Panchayat* in Sonitpur district of Assam with a view to provide care and treatment to thirty two leprosy affected families of *Missing* tribe. At present there are only fourteen such families. They



Kustha Kalyan Ashram

were victims of negligence, hatred and superstition of the common people. Because of the superstition about leprosy, these families were totally isolated from the nearby villages. They were not allowed to visit them. Children were not allowed to mix up with their children and enroll in the village schools. Thus these innocent children of those fourteen families remained deprived of schooling for long.

In the year 2002, under District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Alternative Schools were set up in Sonitpur district to provide Elementary Education to the children under the age group of 6-14 yrs. At that time with the help of one youth Sri Dilip Kumar Baruah of the nearby village, one *Amar Parhashali* named "*Kustha Kalyan Ashram Amar Parhashali*" was set up enrolling 26 children of the *Ashram*. In the year 2004 the same centre was given the status of EGS under *Sarba Siksha Abhijan*, Assam.



Learners of *Kustha Kalyan Ashram Amar Parhashali* with some of the community members

The present enrolment of this EGS centre

Class I	10
Class II	16
Class III	10
Class IV	6
Total	42

The guardians of the children of this center, who were once Leprosy patients but now they are totally cured and also their children are totally fit and of good health. So far as education and other activities are concerned, they are no way behind the children of nearby villages.

In the year 2005, three students of this *Amar Parhashali* successfully completed lower primary education. But they again became victims of superstition. They were not allowed to get enrolled in Class-V of the Upper Primary School of the nearby villages only because they were children of the people once affected by leprosy. The *Siksha Mitra* of the said *Amar Parhashali* did his level best to convince the governing body of the *Dilapakhara* Upper Primary School to allow those three students to be admitted in their school, but all his efforts were in vein.

However, finally the *Sarba Siksha Abhiyan*, with the help of civil administration was successful to enroll those three students in *Dilapakhara* Upper Primary School. This year another three students completing lower primary education from the centre have got enrolled in the same upper primary school.

It is to be noted that from the very beginning, these six children who had passed out from *Kushtha Kalyan Ashram Amar Parhashali* are showing good academic performance in the Upper Primary schools.

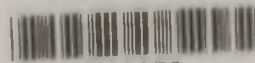
Occasional meetings, seminars, functions are arranged with the help of officials of Public Health, Doctors, Administrative Departments, and NGOs in *Kushtha Kalyan Ashram Amar Parhashali* to eradicate the superstition and fear about the disease among the common



Learners of *Kushtha Kalyan Ashram Amar Parhasuli* inside the classroom

people and children . Now, it is a matter of great rejoice that the people of the nearby villages has no more objection of enrolling the children of the *Kustha Kalyan Ashram* in Upper Primary schools of their villages .The head master of the nearby Upper Primary school also now admits that the quality of the students of the *Kustha Kalyan Ashram Amar Parhashali* are in no case inferior to that of the students of any other formal schools and in certain cases they are superior too.

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