

OXFAM IN ACTION

COMMUNITY BASED MONITORING:

An Effective Tool Towards Achieving Right to Education - Learning from the field



ऑक्सफैम इंडिया
OXFAM
India

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SUMMARY

Oxfam India has been part of a nation-wide process to improve the delivery of public education system through improving the space for community's role in monitoring of Right to Education Act and government schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). It has engaged in working on influencing the mainstream education by reaching out to the most marginalised like Dalits, tribals, Muslims, urban poor and girls. At the same time, it has also engaged with the schooling system to create opportunities for creative, learning environment for the children. It has also been part of a national network to bring in larger policy reforms through a call for greater accountability of state, greater investment through a regular budget tracking and build a

constant pressure for an equitable Right to Education for all.

The current Programme Implementation Plan (PIP-2016-20) on education is aimed at increasing people's access to quality, universal and inclusive elementary education in the mainstream public education system. It also seeks to ensure accountability of public education system through innovative modelling and community empowerment while building pressure for a greater investment in education by the government. Therefore, community participation and community empowerment is one of the key strategies adopted in achieving in the above goal.

With education a Fundamental Right now, after the passage of Right to Education Act 2009, Oxfam India has emphasized through its rights based programming on citizen engagement to ensure accountability in the provision of free and compulsory education. From building capacities of the community, empowering them with knowledge and information to strengthening collective voice around issues of education has led to communities taking ownership of schools and being actively involved in monitoring performance against Right to Education (RTE) indicators.

Therefore, in the above context, this practice note looks at the different strategies adopted by Oxfam India's partners in two states that encourage community based monitoring of education. Experiences and learning of four Oxfam India partners- Shikhar Yuva Manch (SYM) in Chhattisgarh and Child in Need Institute (CINI), Nav Bharat Jagriti Kendra (NBJK), Society for Participatory Action and Reflection (SPAR) in Jharkhand. The experiences, practices and lessons have been documented in the subsequent chapters for larger learning and replication.

Some of the achievements of Oxfam India and its partners on community based monitoring in education are given:

- ▶ Ensuring early childhood education and care for children by community based monitoring of Anganwadis
- ▶ Formation of children's parliament as a platform of children to raise and address their issues
- ▶ Improving the delivery of public education through a systematic approach of community based monitoring.



INTRODUCTION

The significance of community participation and involvement in education is a well-established fact. In fact, a strong correlation between community involvement and educational outcomes has been well documented (Stiglitz, 1997. UNESCO, 2000. UNESCO and UNICEF, 2013). Schools need the surrounding community for resources and support to function optimally. On the other hand, communities have a vested interest in schools as the children from the community attend them, and they are responsible for educating and preparing future generations to be better citizens and leaders.

The government has also recognized the importance of community participation and involvement in education, by making this a core mandate of various government programmes and schemes. The RTE Act has gain brought focus on it by the formation of School Management Committees with representative participation from communities' mandatory for all schools falling within the ambit of RTE Act.

Oxfam India recognizes and appreciates the importance of community participation. In the organisation's working paper 'People as Change makers' numerous benefits have been documented. For example: citizen participation not only helps in mobilizing public awareness, but also builds a "strong sense of ownership of government policies and programs". It "creates greater transparency and accountability, holding public officials/politicians responsible on their promises."¹ It also empowers the marginalized communities and provides the possibility of having local solutions to the problems and issues brought forward.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION VS COMMUNITY BASED MONITORING

Community participation can take many forms, each with its own set of challenges and benefits. Community based monitoring can be described as logical end of community participation.

In the aforementioned working paper, community based monitoring (CBM) is described, as "a form of public stewardship, driven by indigenous needs, to increase the accountability and quality of public services and local development." Within the CBM framework, the community not only generates data, but also places demands, offers suggestions and critiques. This feedback is essential to future planning and implementation. CBM also plays a key role in promoting evidence-based policy making and program implementation.²

1 Richa Kapoor; People as Change makers, p.4; Essential Services: Community Based Management for Right to Education; Oxfam India working papers series, OIWPS II; June 2010.

2 Richa Kapoor; People as Change-makers, p.5; Essential Services: Community Based Management for Right to Education; Oxfam India working papers series, OIWPS II; June 2010.

The use and benefits of CBM are not exclusive to education. On the contrary, CBM is encouraged and helpful in many areas of governmental implementation that include health, environmental and economic policy.



ORIGINS OF COMMUNITY BASED MONITORING:

The importance of community participation is widely recognized, for it helps not only in increasing community awareness but also helps in building ownership. It further helps in creating transparency and accountability at the service delivery level. This increased emphasis on participation has also given way to the growing recognition of the need to involve communities in monitoring and management of the programmes. Involving community in monitoring government programmes and schemes has taken participation to the next level. It is helpful to try to unpack the term community based monitoring for a common understanding.

Monitoring is usually defined as a process of assessment and measurement of progress in during the implementation of a development programme/project. The information collected during the monitoring process must help in making informed and necessary decisions to improve performance. These decisions could range from planning, making mid-course change in the implementation, reorganizing the strategy or the activities etc. Thus establishing mechanisms for civil society and communities to monitor government programmes and schemes which are aimed towards service delivery, in a process that is supported by, but independent of, government should deepen accountability and promote greater community participation in planning, implementation and monitoring. To sum it up, "Strategic public engagement in providing



an oversight role in the delivery of public services is an essential dimension of building public accountability in local government” (Smith, 2011).

The UN stipulates the concept of citizen engagement within an overall governance framework. Citizen engagement is “the desired outcome or logical end of participatory governance” a strategy of development governance which “pertains to planning, budgeting, monitoring and accountability of socio-economic development policies and programmes”³

COMMUNITY BASED MONITORING OF EDUCATION

Community based monitoring process to be successful and achieve its purpose, needs to be based on a law and the usage of an existing framework within the law. Though community participation has a historically presence in the country, with various educations programmes and policies giving a thrust to it in their formulation and implementation. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments paved way for the decentralization process and the legal push to the Government’s attempts to institutionalize community monitoring in its programmes. It is the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the national flagship programme of universalization of primary education, launched in the year 2001-2002, that assigned the highest importance to systematic mobilization of the community and creation of an effective system of decentralized decision-making. SSA in its efforts to universalize quality education had recognized the need for having adequate, rigorous, inclusive and continuous

monitoring and supervision are one of the most important keys to successful implementation of any educational programme. It was realized that in order to be continuously informed about the parameters and issues related to quality elementary education, both at the classroom level as well as at the systematic functioning level, some monitoring systems had to be put in place. This was further supported by a strong need for periodic monitoring and regular feedback at elementary levels within and outside the classrooms with emphasis on a holistic and comprehensive approach.⁴

The Right to Education Act, continues this process with a clear mandate of community based monitoring. The SSA has been revamped to align the existing provisions with the legally mandated norms of the RTE Act. Monitoring mechanisms and processes anchored at the community/ village, school, block, district, state and national levels have been revised to accommodate the RTE dimension. The School Management Committees (SMCs), to be constituted in all government elementary schools are the drivers of community based monitoring. The SMCs whose members are mostly parents (around 2/3rds, of which 50% are women), has the primary responsibility of managing the functioning of the school. A clear set of roles and responsibilities have been laid out for the SMCs to institute a community based monitoring system. The SMCs should also prepare a School Development Plan as per the guidelines and support and supervise the implementation of the same. SMCs along with village organisations have been vested with responsibility of communicating this

3 Citizen-based service delivery monitoring: Research into current practices

4 Monitoring Format for Quality Dimensions under SSA- accessed online at <http://www.educationforallindia.com/ncerttools.pdf>

information to all in the neighborhood of the school.⁵ One of the limitations of the SMCs as per the roles defined in the Act, is that it has been given a 'management' role with 'monitoring' role vested with the Local Authority. Despite this, the main purpose of having SMCs is to enhance community participation and build ownership in monitoring of functioning of school and in effective implementation of the Act. The important aspect is that the information and data from the community feeds into the larger monitoring systems at the block, district, state and national level.

LIMITATIONS OF COMMUNITY BASED MONITORING

As with all development practices and concepts, there are certain limitation with the process of community based monitoring. The most important being, participation of all communities equally, especially marginalized communities. The CBM process doesn't not automatically ensure that marginalized communities play an equal role with the required decision making authority. This becomes a much more of a challenge in a hierarchal framework, with members in the process belonging to different caste, religion and gender. Another limitation is gender, usually women though being an active participant in the process do not necessarily have the same influence as men in the group. Finally, certain issues though very relevant and have a consensus among the community cannot be raised with the higher authorities, if there is a conflict of interest between both the groups. It becomes even harder with the existence of a complex bureaucratic system. Moreover, CBM process is no magic bullet that would address all issues of education in the community with regard to implementation and governance. It should be viewed as the means to an end, which needs to be followed up by a concrete plan of action to address the gaps and challenges identified.

OXFAM'S INDIA SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY BASED MONITORING

Oxfam India has made CBM an essential component in its educational programme and has encouraged its partner organisations across the country to adopt CBM as a major strategy. This document captures the experiences and lessons of four partners from two states of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. Both these experiences are quite unique and distinct from each other.

COMMUNITY BASED MONITORING: EXPERIENCE FROM SHIKHAR YUVA MANCH (SYM), CHHATTISGARH

Shikhar Yuva Manch (SYM) is a non-governmental organisation that works for the development and empowerment of the marginalized communities especially the tribal communities in the districts of Chhattisgarh. In

the past SYM had partnered with various organisations to promote the education of children in the age group of 6 to 14 in various districts of Chhattisgarh. With Oxfam's support SYM works with around 38 schools (31 primary and upper primary schools, 3 residential schools) and 35 Aaganwadis of 32 villages in Pali block of Korba district. The total outreach of children through this initiative are 1700 in Aaganwadis and 2200 in Schools, and roughly 500 community members are mobilized for better implementation of RTE.

Set in a context of very poor status of education, one of the major problems in the area was poor or almost nil monitoring of the government programmes. Geography one of the challenging factors that made monitoring difficult. Surrounded by hills and forests, the topography of area makes the process slow and unaccountable.

Therefore, in the above context, the primary objective of the aforementioned project is "to ensure availability of quality education and entitlements, to all children, as per RTE norms, through a process of People Centred monitoring and advocacy." It is important to note here that although SYM works on a range of issues relating to Right to Education, this paper focuses on their interventions related to community based monitoring of education with particular focus on anganwadi centres (AWC).

To make its approaches and the process of monitoring 'people centric', SYM applies a number of mechanisms, the most important of which are outlined below:

VILLAGE VOLUNTEERS - These are a cadre of motivated individuals who belong to local communities and act as primary point of contact between SYM and local communities. Volunteers are trained on various aspects of RTE and community based monitoring as well as on roles and functions of AWCs with regard to Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). Passionate individuals are selected from the local area and are empowered to lead initiatives on community based monitoring and RTE implementation. The volunteer cadre are highly active and mobile within the community. Their key roles include paying regular visits (more than 3 visits per month) to AWCs, build capacity of the anganwadi Workers (AWWs) on their role in child development processes, counsel parents (mostly mothers) about the importance of ECCD and the availability of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), facilitate meetings of Bal Panchayats (children's parliament), awareness generation on RTE and ICDS through Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) members and last but not the least to identify potential CBO members who can play an active role in the SMCs.

COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS (CBOs) - Community Based Organisations have been formed with a purpose of creating better interface between public services and community at large. They are meant to provide better representation of community views, better understanding and negotiation for public service delivery. CBOs are an important agency

5 SSA- Framework of Implementation- accessed online at http://ssa.ap.nic.in/FrameWork_Final.pdf

for effective implementation of the public service delivery. Their purpose is to plan, implement, and monitor social and economic development programmes and provide technical and financial help to the communities. This role is particularly important from the viewpoint of concurrent monitoring at the community level, as a pressure group and for taking up issues with authorities locally. According to the baseline report for Oxfam India's Essential Services-Education programme in Chhattisgarh, SYM supports 18 total CBOs, which have a "formal structure." Women make up over half of the members and hold 2 out of 3 key positions in almost all of these CBOs (94%).⁶

Village volunteers meet the CBO members and the larger community to sensitize them regarding their rights and spread awareness on the various welfare schemes. Specific examples of monitoring by CBOs that the project encourages are: Midday Meal Scheme, regularization of teachers and children, retention of children, children's entitlements in schools.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SMC) - Another key agency for effective implementation for delivery of education is the School Management Committee. Their role is especially important from the viewpoint of concurrent monitoring at the community level, as a pressure group and for taking up issues with authorities locally. SMCs (as mandated in the RTE Act) are expected to meet regularly to discuss and deliberate on various issues pertaining to the schools, its management and quality of education being provided.

Unfortunately, the status of SMCs in SYM's intervention areas is not as encouraging as that of CBOs. The baseline study for Oxfam's Chhattisgarh State Report, states that out of 24 total SMCs, only 67% had an attendance of more than 50% women (at the last two meetings). Even more alarmingly, only 12% conducted meetings regularly, 2% recorded minutes of meetings and 2% had attendance of more than three-fourths of its members at the last two meetings. Monitoring by SMCs was also somewhat discouraging. Although 87% were found to undertake some monitoring, only 33% were doing it regularly.⁷

One of SYM's continuous efforts is the facilitation and strengthening of SMCs on its functions. Specifically, SYM holds regular meetings with existing SMCs on RTE norms and project functioning. In places where SMCs do not exist, SYM helps facilitate its formation and trains members on monitoring the functioning of schools. In addition, capacity building is also provided members on advocacy issues to build confidence of the members while meeting with the government officials, filing applications, and using RTI. These all contribute towards the community's ability to take forward their demands to the government.

6 Oxfam India Project (2010-2015) On Education Services. Baseline State Survey Report: Chhattisgarh. TARU. April 2013.

7 Oxfam India Project (2010-2015) On Education Services. Baseline State Survey Report: Chhattisgarh. TARU. April 2013.

(1) A school shall constitute a School Management Committee consisting of the elected representatives of the local authority, parents or guardian of children admitted in such school and teachers:

- a) Provided that at least three-fourth of members of such Committee shall be parents or guardians.
- b) Provided further that proportionate representation shall be given to the parents or guardians of children belonging to disadvantaged groups and weaker sections.
- c) Provided also that fifty percent of Members of such Committee shall be women.

(2) The School Management Committee shall perform the following functions:

- a) Monitor the working of the school.
- b) Prepare and recommend school development plan.
- c) Monitor the utilization of the grants received from the appropriate Government or local authority or any other source.
- d) Perform such other functions as may be prescribed.

Source: Right To Education Act 2009

BAL PANCHAYATS - (Children's parliament)- SYM recognizes that the entire community should be involved in monitoring, including the group of stakeholders who are often overlooked—children. Although they are the most affected by the lack of quality of education, the ability of children to identify problems and issues is usually ignored. Therefore, SYM organizes and facilitates (through village volunteers) regular meetings each month. One of the main objectives is to improve regularization and retention of children in schools. However, members of the panchayat also help in cleaning school premises and monitoring the Mid-day meal. The children are encouraged and empowered to identify and discuss issues related to their schools and education. The children have even been able to make applications on issues concerning appointment of teachers, regularization of teachers, and problems in delivery and quality of MDM.

As of December 2013, a total of 33 Bal Panchayats were active and functional with 396 (198 Girls & 198 Boys) members. In the new villages 5 Bal Panchayats were formed and active. These meetings give children a platform to identify and discuss issues concerning their education.

PRI INVOLVEMENT - The village volunteers engage with PRI to make them aware of the RTE provision and role of Panchayat in delivery of education services. On the other hand, community members are encouraged to participate in panchayat meetings (Gram Sabhas) and raise their concerns regarding functioning of essential services including AWC and School.

In 2013 SYM conducted 12 Gram Sabha meetings in four gram panchayats on RTE issues. Eighteen applications regarding drinking water facility in school, boundary walls,



teacher recruitment, mid-day meal, ramp and electricity were submitted to Panchayats. In response, toilets were constructed in three schools, hand pumps installed in three schools, kitchen sheds were constructed in four schools and ramps were constructed in six schools.

DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

Recognizing the limitation of the RTE Act is aimed at children between the age group of 6 to 14 years, SYM had decided to take up a step before primary schools to reach out to the younger children. The organisation believes that early education and child development which begins before the age of 6 set the foundation. Therefore, the focus is towards EECD along with the health and nutrition services being provided through anganwadi Centers.

When SYM initially began working with AWCs in the year 2012, they realized that the overall situation was highly unsatisfactory. Many of the centers were either functioning poorly or not at all. They were not opening regularly and as a result (and perhaps an important contributing factor) parents and children were not coming. It was also found that anganwadi workers' awareness regarding their roles was fragmented and insufficient. The first step was to improve the overall quality and delivery of services at the AWCs, without which it would have been impossible to imagine specific gains in education. SYM took measures to activate the centers and the anganwadi workers on all

parameters expected from them, not just education. This included capacity building of community, linking them to the existing government schemes, capacity building of anganwadi workers, motivating them to ensure regularity, consultations with line departments, monitoring of children's attendance, ensuring quality nutrition and of course monitoring and advocacy.

As the AWCs had gradually become more regularized, SYM has started to shift and sharpen its focus to ensuring and improving the quality of services being delivered. For instance, in the field of education, the organisation started to focus on the psycho-motor-sensory development of children as well as the learning materials that should be available in all centers.

STIMULATING CBM OF ANGANWADI CENTERS

The village volunteers played a proactive role in this process by visiting each anganwadi center regularly (at least three times per month) in order to complement the workers' knowledge and efforts. While these visiting help in AWCs becoming more aware of their roles in child development, it also provided an important opportunity for first hand monitoring.

In addition, the volunteers regularly meet with community members to raise awareness regarding early childhood education and development. Parents (mostly mothers) coming to the anganwadis were counseled on the features and services of anganwadi centers and the benefits they can avail from it. This is important to increase attendance and utilization of anganwadi centers, but also the first step in CBM. If the community is not aware of how services are supposed to run, they cannot properly monitor them. A form of informal/indirect monitoring has been observed. As community members utilize the centers they observe their functioning and increase expectations, demand and pressure.

This is further complemented by awareness generation measures with community at large, beyond those who visit the AWCs. Volunteers meet with CBO members, elected PRIs and the general community to inform about the importance and proper functioning of anganwadi centers.

RESULTS

- ▶ SYM has been successful in improving both elementary and pre-elementary education by engaging multiple stakeholders in monitoring of education-based indicators.
- ▶ Capacity building initiatives with the existing CBOs and SMCs, and new committees have been created where none previously existed.
- ▶ SMC members stated that their understanding of child rights and their respective roles has improved their capacities of monitoring and implementation of the Act.

- ▶ Community demand and monitoring has had an important impact on the anganwadi Centers. Many that were under performing or not functioning at all are now regularized and offering quality services to their communities.
- ▶ Some new anganwadis were initiated where none previously existed as a result of community demand.
- ▶ Intervention with anganwadis began in 2012, so the first group of students are now in their first year of schooling. Therefore, statistical results are not yet available. However, the organisation has noticed some important changes and is working towards sustaining the results as they progress. These include:
 - Increased enrollment as parents are more familiar with the educational process and education schemes.
 - Higher trust and interest among students and parents, because of lessened apprehension about school, etc.
 - Developmental benefits which result in better academic performance.

USING SCORE CARDS AS A CBM TOOL: EXPERIENCE FROM JHARKHAND

Oxfam's commitment to education in the state of Jharkhand had deepened with the formation of Oxfam India, and with the identification of Jharkhand as one of the states for focal intervention in line with the organisation's focus on poverty-endemic states.

Currently, Oxfam is supporting a multi-partner project entitled 'Supporting Civil Society Movement towards Right to Free Public Health and Education in Jharkhand'. The project is implemented jointly by three organisations, a short description of each can be seen below.

These diverse partners have collaborated to implement the initiatives of the above mentioned project. As the name suggests, focus is on improving the provision of essential services i.e. public health and public education. The project is carried out across three districts of Jharkhand- West Singhbhum, Hazaribag, and Gumla, with sixty villages as focus, twenty from each of the district. The idea is that if delivery of essential services is to be strengthened, it is necessary to leverage community demand on education and health systems of the state. One of the primary components of the project for both education and health is community based monitoring which is seen as an essential prerequisite for strengthening the functioning of the education and health systems.

The objectives of CBM in this project are:

- ▶ Providing regular and systematic information about community needs, which will be used to guide the planning process appropriately.

CHILD IN NEED INSTITUTE (CINI): was originally established in Kolkata in 1975. Their key areas of intervention are education, nutrition, health and child protection. It is currently active in 7 districts of Jharkhand including some of the most remote tribal districts of the state. Its successful initiatives can be seen at the community, block, district and state levels. Key areas of CINI's expertise include community mobilization, technical planning, research evaluation and management support.

NAV BHARAT JAGRITI KENDRA (NBJK): was founded in 1971 with the vision of establishing a progressive, peaceful and just society based on the values of equality, fraternity and mutual help. From humble beginnings, it has now expanded its reach to more than 500 villages. Primary areas of work are education, health, hygiene, sanitation, socio-economic development, advocacy and governance.

SOCIETY FOR PARTICIPATORY ACTION AND REFLECTION (SPAR): was founded in 1991 with the aim of empowering rural people. SPAR organizes rural poor at the local grass-root level and facilitates planning, implementation and monitoring of development activities. This Participatory Process of development is today spread across more than 600 villages in eastern India. Areas of expertise include capacity building, tribal development, people's participatory planning and advocacy.

- ▶ Providing feedback according to the locally developed measures, as well as some key indicators.
- ▶ Providing feedback on the status of fulfillment of entitlements, functioning of various levels of public systems and service providers, identifying gaps, deficiencies in services and level of community satisfaction, which can facilitate corrective actions in framework of accountability.

In Education, the CBM process involves identifying, activating, motivating, building capacity of multiple actors and groups including: community based organisations (CBOs), SMCs, people's movements and voluntary organisations.

DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

COMMUNITY ADVOCATES - As with SYM in Chhattisgarh, this project also recognizes the importance of working through local community members. For this purpose, they identify and engage 'community advocates'. One individual is identified for each village through community meetings and receives training in order to support and communicate regularly with village level actors and institutions such as

VHSC, SMCs, Teachers, and anganwadi workers. In order to ensure access to all, efforts are made to select community advocates who either come from or can effectively work with and within marginalized communities.

Monitoring is conducted not only to ensure quality and regularity, but also to increase accountability. Community advocates, along with community mobilizers also orient committee members on financial tracking. Based on their understanding and increased capacity, these members have started keeping track of the finances of schemes and programmes. SMC members also receive training on budget tracking of education at the school level.

Additionally, all community advocates are oriented to facilitate the community based monitoring process at the village level, and are subsequently responsible for the preparation of village report cards.

CBM SCORECARDS - Monitoring is a regular ongoing process, so in order to simplify, optimize, and standardize efforts 'village report cards' are prepared and shared with village and block level functionaries. Joint plans are then devised in collaboration with appropriate service providers based on the gaps that were identified. This type of approach though has been in place in the field of health for some years now in Jharkhand, but its use in education is more recent.

The community members, who have been selected and

trained by the community advocates, complete scorecards. Five such individuals are chosen from each village. This is conducted every six months and the findings are then sent to the NGO partners (CINI, NBJK and SPAR) who assess the findings, synthesize the important issues and then present the findings to the appropriate officials along with community representation.

Scorecards are relatively simple and user-friendly. They contain 58 questions related to education and schools in the village. For each question the evaluator indicates one of three colors: Green for good, yellow for satisfactory, and red for bad. The questions are divided into eight different sections:

- ▶ Nomination and stability (9 questions)
- ▶ Basic structure (12 questions)
- ▶ Human resources (7 questions)
- ▶ Community participation (7 questions)
- ▶ Mid-day meal (6 questions)
- ▶ Quality based education (8 questions)
- ▶ Inclusive education (4 questions)
- ▶ Pre-school education (5 questions)

The following image gives a sample of one of the pages from an actual village scorecard (Courtesy CINI).

शिक्षा का अधिकार कानून पर आधारित ग्राम शिक्षा रिपोर्ट कार्ड

ज़िला का नाम
गाँव का नाम
संस्था का नाम

प्रखण्ड का नाम
विद्यालय का नाम

पंचायत

नामांकन और उदरगत					
क्रम	प्रश्न	अच्छा	संतोषजनक	बुरा	टिप्पणियाँ
1	क्या आपके गाँव के बच्चों के लिए एक किलोमीटर पर प्राथमिक विद्यालय उपलब्ध है?	1 km	2 km	2km से अधिक	
2	क्या आपके गाँव के बच्चों के लिए दो किलोमीटर पर माध्यमिक विद्यालय उपलब्ध है?	2 km	3 km	3 km से अधिक	
3	क्या आपके गाँव के 6 से 14 साल के सभी बच्चे स्कूल में नामांकित हैं?	100%	70-90%	70% से कम	
4	क्या सभी नामांकित बच्चे नियमित रूप से स्कूल जाते हैं?	100%	70-90%	70% से कम	
5	क्या सभी बच्चों का नामांकन उनकी उम्र के अनुसार कक्षा में हुआ है?	100%	70-90%	70% से कम	
6	क्या नामांकन के लिए किसी तरह का शुल्क माँगा जाता है?	कोई शुल्क नहीं		शुल्क माँगा जाता है	
7	क्या स्कूल द्वारा किसी बच्चे का नामांकन जन्म प्रमाण पत्र या टी.पी. के अभाव में	नहीं		हाँ	

2

8	क्या नामांकन के लिए किसी तरह का साक्षात्कार या परीक्षा ली जाती है?	नहीं ली जाती है		ली जाती है	
9	क्या विद्यालय प्रबंधन समिति द्वारा अनियमित और विद्यालय से बाहर बच्चों का गृह ब्रह्मण किया जाता है?	मासिक	साल में 2 बार	साल में 1 बार	
आपाठ्यतंत्र संरचना					
1	छात्र शिक्षक अनुपात के अनुसार कक्षा का प्रावधान है या नहीं? (1:30 प्राथमिक में और 1:35 माध्यमिक में)	उपलब्ध है		उपलब्ध नहीं है	
2	क्या सभी नामांकित बच्चों के लिए बेंच पर बैठने का प्रावधान है?	सभी के लिए उपलब्ध	कुछ के लिए उपलब्ध नहीं	ज़्यादातर के लिए उपलब्ध नहीं	
3	प्राथमिक विद्यालय में प्रधान शिक्षक के लिए अलग से ऑफिस का प्रावधान (जहाँ 150 से अधिक बच्चे)	उपलब्ध है		उपलब्ध नहीं	
4	माध्यमिक विद्यालय में प्रधान शिक्षक के लिए अलग से ऑफिस का प्रावधान	उपलब्ध है		उपलब्ध नहीं	

PUTTING CBM TO USE - Monitoring and collecting data alone is not enough to effect change. Findings must be recorded, made public and shared in a way to attract appropriate attention and stimulate action. Therefore, a framework has been established for dissemination and action. This includes:

- ▶ Gram Sabha Meetings: Regularity of Gram Sabha meetings is ensured and findings are shared on education and health. The meetings are attended by PRI members so corrective measures can be taken in a participatory way.
- ▶ Interface meetings with government departments: Block level and district interface meetings with government officials related to health and education are held every quarter. After discussion with state officials, an action plan is created. **Action-plans, in consultation with officials, were planned (and mentioned in the proposal) but progress on this component is not well documented.**
- ▶ Block level network meetings: Block level network meetings of civil societies are organized to raise issues of implementation gaps on RTE and health services. They are oriented towards CBM so that field level issues can be discussed and taken for advocacy.
- ▶ District and State-level Networks: When issues and gaps related to education and health have been identified, stocktaking and advocacy are carried all the way to state levels. For example, at the state level Maha panchayat and the Jharkhand Right to Education Forum (JRTEF) are platforms for local levels to be presented at a high level.

SUCCESS

A sample of the most pertinent quantitative and qualitative results related to CBM of the project for the year 2012-13 can be seen below:

- ▶ After training by community advocates and community mobilizers, committees have begun using financial tracking systems to increase efficiency and accountability. In addition, a total of 268 implementation gaps in public services have been identified and shared with senior officials as of 2012-13.
- ▶ After a complaint was raised about the regularity of Mid-day meal, the community filed a complaint for hearing with the NCPCR. Consequently, mid-day meals were regularized, and the Block Education Officers have taken up the matter and ensured its continuity.
- ▶ Not only does the project have a positive impact on the systems being monitored (education, health, anganwadis), but also on those who participate. For example, "most significant change" interviews revealed the many positive benefits that participants

(community mobilizers, VHSNC members, SHG members, community advocates, etc.) receive. These individuals claimed that in addition to improving their community, they recognized increased awareness, autonomy, self-esteem and self-confidence at a personal level.⁸

- ▶ SMCs have focused on monitoring and identification of dropouts and meetings with parents and children took place to ensure retention in schools.
- ▶ Positive environments for community based monitoring have been created.
- ▶ A standard tool was developed and applied which also helps in developing community understanding on their entitlements in terms of education services and the aspects they should expect.
- ▶ A motivated cadre of community level advocates who are equipped with better understanding of RTE provisions and able to work as a link between demand and supply side has been created and mobilized.
- ▶ SMCs have been created and/or strengthened and are now functional.
- ▶ Greater awareness on entitlements and grievance redress through CSOs, CBMs, and adolescent groups has been created.
- ▶ Mechanisms for liaisoning/interfacing such as the quarterly meetings with government officials is in place.
- ▶ CBOs are better linked with larger CSO alliances (e.g. JRTEF) at state level.

Similar activities and results are expected as the project goes forward and set stage for sustainability of these results.

CONCLUSION AND LEARNING

The above experiences demonstrate that community based monitoring, as an approach towards RTE implementation and improving education is necessary and relevant through implementation of distinct strategies in different contexts. The efforts of SYM in Chhattisgarh helped improve Early Childhood Education and Development particularly through running of anganwadi centers. While in Jharkhand, experiences from all the three partners shows that it strengthened community engagement in the process of education delivery.

Despite the differences in situations, some significant common lessons can be drawn. Community based monitoring for health and education are fairly similar in nature and can be carried on as a joint process. Lessons can be drawn from the implementation of both these

⁸ Supporting Civil Society Movement towards Right to Free Public Health and Education in Jharkhand. Most Significant Change stories from intervention areas in Jharkhand. 2013. Oxfam India.



services and can be taken forward as agenda for advocacy of Right to Essential Services.

In order to effectively engage and address the local community issues, it is crucial to work through local community members. Motivated and trained local community members (volunteers in Chhattisgarh and advocates in Jharkhand) are a trigger for larger community engagement. There are many advantages in working with these youth, foremost being their commitment to the local community, better acceptance by the community members, inherent understanding of local issues and their connections with local stakeholders. However, these youths require the support and encouragement at the local level from partner NGOs. The partners work towards building their capacity and help them seek local solutions to issues faced by their community.

Community based monitoring works best when constraints and limitations of service providers are identified, recognized, their trust won, and a facilitative (rather than antagonistic) approach is undertaken. In Chhattisgarh anganwadi centers were found to be under performing or completely non-functional so support at the local level was found to be most effective. However, in Jharkhand, regular interface meetings with concerned government officials led to better CBM results. Further, the tools and processes for CBM along with the accountability of the institutions for the delivery has to be clearly defined.

A specific learning from the report cards as a tool in Jharkhand is that report cards as a tool is effective to demystify given rights and entitlements. It also helps document the reflections and feedback of the community

on the services provided. Therefore, they act as both an awareness and monitoring tool. Local and context specific initiatives are essential to make service delivery more efficient and accountable. It is also important to present the local experiences at higher levels and advocate for their inclusion in the formulation and reviews of policies and practices. One way of achieving this is by linking local CBOs to state level networks and providing them with a platform to share their experiences, which can be viewed as an important outcome of the CBM process.

It is important to include as many stakeholders and groups as possible in the process of CBM. CBOs, PRIs, SMCs, Teachers, Anganwadi workers and Parents can all play an important role in the process. At the same time, it is important not to overlook children's participation and their contribution to the process of CBM. They are ultimately the group most directly affected by the non-functioning of the education system. Bal Panchayats in Chhattisgarh and Bal Sansads in Jharkhand provide an opportunity to nurture the sense of ownership and accountability among children as future citizens of the country, while are still young.

Moreover, community members and the local CBOs can help sensitise teachers in schools by building their capacity on issues like gender, caste, disability and marginalization. Similarly, it is also important to involve the larger civil society in planning advocacy and lobbying related to the implementation CBM.

The opportunities of CBM process are large and varied. From the generation of data of a particular programme by community directly affected by the programme

to supporting the process of evidence based policy making, CBM helps promote decentralized planning and governance, which is the one of the last stepson the path to sustainability.

Community based monitoring is a cost effective and easily replicable process. It would be useful for development organisations to adopt the Do No Harm framework, while initiating the process of CBM, so that the process does not fuel disagreements between the community and school authorities rather help build the mutual trust between the two, to work towards improving the education status of children in the community. It is also important to consciously position the process within a gender framework, so that issues of girl children can be addressed appropriately. Lastly, it is imperative to ensure equal participation of members, especially women and members from marginalized communities. Specific indicators can be developed for tracking this can be developed in the CBM process itself.

Community based monitoring helps overcome the barriers to meaningful participation in education process by mobilizing the community (including children) around it. It creates better awareness on education, puts pressure for its effective delivery and also help in creating a sense of responsibility and ownership in the community towards schools and education in general. The most significant aspect here is the change in practices and behaviors in the community which will help overcome not only problems of implementation and governance of the education system but also help in addressing larger issues like quality, gender and social inclusion. Education is a long-term engagement between children, parents, community teachers and the officials; therefore, it is essential to create institutionalized spaces of engagement between all of them.

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ऑक्सफैम इंडिया
OXFAM
India

Oxfam India, 4th and 5th Floor, Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra,
1, Copernicus Marg, New Delhi 110001
Tel: +91 (0) 11 4653 8000 www.oxfamindia.org

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