

SHIKSHA Initiative in Action

IN THIS ISSUE...

SHIKSHA+ 1st Batch of Male ... p.2



First male batch with 8 SHIKSHA+ learners has been formed in village Maheshpur

First Term Exam p.3



First term exam was conducted for all the subjects in SHIKSHA enabled schools of Kasmanda

Stories from the field p.4



7 year old energetic Chanchal, Grade 1, Bhagat Convent School, Chithera, Dadri

For any queries, ideas and suggestions please contact shiksha@shivnadarfoundation.org

Expansion of SHIKSHA Initiative in New Blocks of Sitapur

During October 2017, SHIKSHA Initiative expanded its operation to 5 blocks of Sitapur district, i.e. Biswan, Khairabad, Gondlamau, Sidhauri and Machhrehtha. To initiate the process following activities were conducted:

- A meeting was held with the Hon'ble District Magistrate (DM) in order to formalise the approval for project expansion into 5 new blocks. The respected Chief Development Officer (CDO) communicated the formal approval to the officials and schools of these blocks on the behalf of the Hon'ble District Magistrate.
- Secondly, a list of schools in the range of 5Km with Kasmanda block with power supply, was provided by the respective Block Education Officer (BEO).
- Thereafter, a survey was conducted by the field team in order to discern the viability of successful ICT integration with the classrooms of



the schools listed out by the BEO. A total of, 77 schools were surveyed in 5 blocks.

In Khairabad block, an introductory meeting was held in the presence of the respective BEO and Block Development Officer (BDO), wherein the vision and mission of the SHIKSHA Initiative was clarified. They were familiarized with the prerequisites to the setting up of ICT integrated smart class. The meeting was led by Field Supervisor (FS) Zeeshan Ali and IT Support Engineer (ITSE) Chandan Kumar.

Impact Evaluation Study

SHIKSHA Initiative has signed an agreement with Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Lucknow to conduct in-depth impact evaluation study of SHIKSHA elementary. The study will be conducted in the primary schools of Kasmanda block of Sitapur District in Uttar Pradesh. It will explore and investigate the introduction of ICT in schools, in order to understand the potential impacts on various stakeholders i.e. students, teachers and parents. The survey that will be conducted by the research team will be four layers. The first two layers will identify the affected and unaffected cohorts. The third layer of the survey will include teachers and students, wherein both teachers and students will be surveyed and tests will be administered on the students to get a sense of the actual level of achievement. The fourth and the most important layer of the survey will be conducted on parents to get a sense of other inputs from the family.

With this objective, IIM Lucknow has initiated their work and following activities have been conducted till date:

- To initiate the process, first level of school visits have been done and accordingly draft of baseline questionnaire has been developed
- Pre-test of the students and teachers questionnaire has been administered to identify gaps or problems that might affect the response. Furthermore, to gauge the learning levels of students ASER tool has been used in four government primary school (PS.) i.e. PS. Manapara, PS. Jyoti Shah Alampur, PS. Baherimau and PS. Chitrehtha.
- Based on the inferences obtained from pre-test, research team is in a process to re-frame the baseline questionnaire.

The timeline for the impact assessment is August 2017- May 2018 and a mix of quantitative and qualitative approach will be adopted for the same.



MOBILIZATION DRIVE for SHIKSHA⁺ in CoE

Community mobilization is a key strategy to raise awareness and bring together as many stakeholders as possible for a programme. It helps people to identify their own needs, to respond to and be a part of the solution. Mobilization is a continual and cumulative process that strengthens community participation for sustainability and self-reliance as communities are empowered and capable of addressing their own needs.

SHIKSHA⁺ team organized mobilization drive in 8 different villages of Sikandrabad and Dadri block. Door to door mobilization, house visits, focus group discussions, referrals from Panchayat leaders were some of the major tools employed for mobilizing the adults. As a result, it encourages collaboration between the community and SHIKSHA staff promoting local ownership and decision making.

SHIKSHA⁺ 1st Batch of MALE LEARNERS in Sitapur

First male batch with 8 SHIKSHA⁺ learners has been formed in village Maheshpur of Gram Panchayat Kaima. It was an achievement for the field team to convince male members to attend the classes as it involved numerous challenges. The foremost challenge for them was to overcome the apprehension of being stigmatised.

The other noteworthy challenge for them, was to manage time to be engaged in the programme since they are primarily engaged in agricultural activities.

A counselling session was conducted by the field team before registration in order to enable the aspirants to make an informed choice. Significance of education was communicated with them during number of community mobilization visits and the same was



SHIKSHA⁺ Learners with Instructor Ram Lakhan (Extreme Right)

reiterated during the counselling sessions. The aforesaid enabled the team to incentivise eligible learners to enrol themselves in the centres.

After their successful enrolment the time of class was decided. The prospective learners shared that it would be difficult for them to attend a class after performing exhausting agricultural activity throughout the day. In response to the aforesaid, the respective instructors suggested that the classes could be conducted early in the morning. However, the suggestion was

deemed infeasible since the learners start their agricultural activities in the morning. After the concerned instructor and field team interacted with the learners a conclusion to attend the class during the lunch hour was arrived at. Currently, the centre is in session during the lunch hours, however this group needs regular motivation and attention. From their past experience, team has learnt that the quality of candidates mobilized has a significant impact on the degree of retention during training.

Challenges in Implementation of Phase-2 of SHIKSHA⁺ in Sitapur

The key challenges faced during the implementation of SHIKSHA⁺ are as follows:

- Migration
- Agricultural activities (cultivation and harvesting season) leading to low participation of the villagers
- Seasonal festivals

Due to the above challenges, team has experienced that enrolment of the identified learners is difficult than generating awareness and sensitisation. Community participation is encouraging during door to door visits, focussed group discussions and village mapping exercise. However, enrolment and retention is very challenging. This is more prevalent during the peak agriculture season. Thus, to make the initiative successful learners need to take the ownership of their learning

and contribute in making a difference in their lives. With the purpose of enabling community to make an informed choice and have a sense of ownership, it is essential to counsel and make people understand the importance of being literate.

During October 2017, 2nd Phase of SHIKSHA⁺ was initiated in the district of Sitapur to reach out to more people. Since October is a peak season for paddy harvesting so it was challenging for the team to mobilize and subsequently form a batch. Availability of villagers and assembling them at one platform at same time was a big challenge. However, continuous efforts were made by the team to generate awareness of education and develop a sense of ownership among the community. Subsequently, the team was successful in setting up 21 centres in 11 new villages of 11 Gram Panchayats.

Visit of Ministry of Home Affairs and of Prime Minister's Office to Schools in Kasmanda

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India in collaboration with the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) is conducting an impact evaluation study to analyse the performance in the domains of basic education, Integrated Child Development Programme, Health and Swachh Bharat Mission in Sitapur District. Mr. Ritesh Kumar from MHA and Mr. P.K. Sinha from PMO steered the study in three blocks of Sitapur i.e. Kasmanda, Khairabad and Machhrehta. Subsequently, they visited 30 schools of Kasmanda block wherein SHIKSHA Initiative is established. They had the opportunity to observe live teacher-student transaction in the ICT integrated classroom. After their visit to school, they approached SHIKSHA Initiative team in Kasmanda and shared their experience. They expressed that in all the 30 classes SHIKSHA ICT content was running and teachers were motivated to use it. Moreover, students were enjoying the class and were actively engaged with the ICT content. Observing the motivation of teachers, they were under the impression that teachers conducting the class were SHIKSHA staff. However, after being informed by the team that the classes they witnessed were being conducted by government employed teachers they were amazed and appreciated the dedication and enthusiasm of SHIKSHA team.

First Term Exam

First term exam was conducted for all the subjects in SHIKSHA enabled schools of Kasmanda. The process of examination started with post-test (PT) from 4-6th October and concluded with post- augmentation test (PAT) from 10-12th October 2017.



Stories from the Field

Chanchal, Grade 1,
Bhagat Convent School, Chithera, Dadri



7 year old energetic Chanchal, is a student of class one of Bhagat Convent Jr. High School, Dadri, Gautam Buddha Nagar. She lives with her grandmother, father and younger brother in village Chithera, Dadri. The family depends on the income of his father who is a farmer. At a young age, she lost her mother and it was a significant setback for the family. Even though she herself is quite young, she helps her grandmother in the household chores and also takes care of her younger brother. Every morning, Chanchal wakes up early, sweeps the house, cleans the utensils and after finishing all the household tasks she gets ready for the school.

Despite the household chores, her vigour in the class is not affected. She takes complete interest in SHIKSHA class and responds well in every subject with full enthusiasm. She is highly motivated and thrilled with SHIKSHA Initiative's animated content and her participation in the class conveys how much she appreciates this program and enjoy studying with the SHIKSHA content. She actively participates in the class and her response to the content is fascinating. She asks so many questions and aspires to learn and know everything.

Anju, her teacher has expressed that at times she is motivated by her zeal and energy, as well. Hence, she is of the opinion that Chanchal's story should be shared with wider audience so that other children are motivated and are inspired by her.

SHIKSHA Initiative has been supporting schools in ICT education so that Chanchal and children like her have the opportunity to learn and receive quality education – a right, which every child deserves.

– Anju Yadav (Teacher)

Seema, SHIKSHA+ Instructor

Seema is a SHIKSHA+ instructor from Bishada village, Gautam Buddha Nagar. She has been engaged with SHIKSHA Initiative for last 2 years: During the 1st year as a volunteer and during the 2nd year as a SHIKSHA+ instructor. As a SHIKSHA+ instructor she uses an ICT based methodology to instill the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic skills to illiterate adults who have not attended a formal school. In last one year of her association with SHIKSHA+, she has managed 6 centres and taught 58 learners.

Prior to joining SHIKSHA Initiative, she had no experience of teaching adults who are twice her age. She learnt the ropes with the continuous support that she received from SHIKSHA Initiative team. According to her, before joining SHIKSHA she didn't know anyone in



her village since she never used to go out of the house. However, when she started teaching in the centre people of her village started recognizing her.

She ecstatically expresses that she enjoys teaching and considers it as a two-way process of learning as she also gets to learn from the learners. She has stated that she feels really proud when learners who have passed out from the centre approaches her and share their experiences Viz. going to the bank themselves to withdraw money, helping their children in their homework and one lady whom Seema had taught has now become head of the village. She is extremely happy about all these experiences and about the changes she brought about in their lives.

Seema has stated that her life has changed a lot too, since she has carved out an identity of her own and people in the village respect her. Wherever she goes people recognise her as a teacher who runs the centre and teach women. Moreover, whenever her mother-in-law goes for any religious ceremony in the village other women present there acknowledge and appreciate Seema, which makes her feel proud about her daughter-in-law. Seema is grateful to SHIKSHA Initiative of Shiv Nadar Foundation for giving her new identity and for acknowledging her work.

SHIKSHA Initiative Data (as on October 31, 2017)

SHIKSHA Elementary			SHIKSHA+		
	CoE	Expansion		CoE	Expansion
No. of District	2	1	No. of District	2	1
No. of Block	2	1	No. of Block	2	1
No. of Villages	50	132	No. of Villages	10	20
No. of Schools	35	89	No. of Batches	17	37
No. of Students	2272 in 35 Schools	3153 in 58 Schools*	No. of Learners	170	367
Total staff	53	22	Total no. of instructors	10	21
Attendance (Present %) Month - September	68.82%	62.88%			

* Data available for 58 schools