



Wipro Applying Thought in Schools

Annual Update 2011-12

A compilation of the annual updates from various partnerships within Wipro's Education Initiative



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ANNUAL UPDATE - 2011-12

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INTRODUCTION

Wipro Applying Thought in Schools is a social initiative of Wipro's working on building capacities in school education reform in India. This report is an annual update of all the projects within this initiative. However before we get into the details, here is a brief account of our vision, objectives and the focus areas that come out of this.

Our work in education is driven by the belief that education is a key enabler of social change. We believe in a social vision of democracy where each citizen is not only capable in an individual sense but also sees the ethic of equity, the essentiality of diversity, the ethos of justice, and is thus driven by social sensitivity. Schools have to be spaces that nurture these principles, capabilities & values.

This means a dramatically different kind of school and a significantly revamped education system. Schools and education systems do not change overnight. We believe that a sustained effort is required and our projects are attempts to bring about a change of this kind.

Towards this we have identified three key objectives:

- We need organizations capable of bringing about quality education by working in different parts of India and in different knowledge areas.
- We need good quality educational material and literature to aid in this effort.
- We need educationists, parents, government etc to think in the right way to make this happen.

These determine our focus areas as below:

- Organizational capability building and partnerships in the education space
 - To address the scarcity of orgs and people in this space
 - For sustainable impact
 - To build a network of orgs that can learn and collaborate
- Developing Educational material & Literature
 - To address the scarcity of good material for children and educators
- Public Advocacy
 - To create greater awareness and understanding on important educational issues

We have also decided to focus on a few knowledge areas as themes: ecology and education, social sciences, language, affective education and the school environment. The reason for this is that while these areas are integral to the vision of what is good education described above they are often some of the most neglected areas within education.

These focus areas and themes increasingly determine the specific projects that we partner in. Our projects are implemented through partnerships with educational and knowledge-based organizations across India. In the sections below we have presented an annual update of our projects in the year 2011-12.



ECOLOGY & EDUCATION

Our work in Ecology and Education is inspired by Wipro's commitment to ecological sustainability. It started with a dedicated Partners' forum on Ecology & Education in 2009. Our core concerns in this area have been previously articulated in "Our Concerns on School education in India" as below:

"The earth is made up of interconnected systems, cycles and processes. Ecological education should aim at following the trails and connecting the dots. It has to often be outside the classroom and span multiple subjects. This raises issues with the 40 minute period structure of schools today and demands interdisciplinary skills from teachers."

Further there is a tendency of environmental education to be bracketed with individual contributions like reducing plastic usage and recycling etc. Many of these conceptualize the child as a consumer but fail to bring out the aspects related to the child as a future citizen. A citizen's contribution to society is not only limited to controlling one's own consumption but also in participating in a democracy at various levels including the local level to influence the production-oriented organization of society itself."

Subsequently over the last few years, we have decided to work on projects in 3 different areas within ecology and education:

A project to instill the scientific spirit and connect with nature by going outside the classroom and being with trees: SeasonWatch with National Centre for Biological Sciences

A project that makes children aware and active about their ecological footprint on land, water, energy etc starting from the school campus: Green Schools Program with Centre for Science & Environment

We have just started working on a new project that tries to bring localized knowledge created through conservation activities into school education. This is a project with Nature Conservation Foundation (since this project is just starting, the update on this will start from next year onwards)

The idea is to work on different but related areas within this theme and then slowly integrate these into a connected learning experience on ecology and education.

2.1

SeasonWatch

Program objectives

SeasonWatch is a national program in which volunteers (citizen scientists) collect information on the timing of flowering, fruiting and leaf flush for approximately 100 species of common trees. The program has three clear and equally important objectives:

- To collect this data in a large scale manner across the country and make it available freely online so that patterns in these changes across geographies or time can be studied
- To engage with schools using this as a platform to bring about more meaningful ecological education
- To increase the interest and awareness levels of the citizen scientists (individuals or school children) who collect this data

What has happened over the last year

SeasonWatch has grown primarily through two partnerships: one with 'Mathrubhumi' in Kerala which was to pilot the program in Kerala before we go national. The other is with 'The Centre for Science and Environment' in New Delhi to take SeasonWatch to more schools across India that have taken up CSE's Green Schools Program.

Partnership with the 'Student Empowerment for Environmental Development' (SEED) program of Mathrubhumi, Kerala:

- Mathrubhumi is one of the leading dailies in Kerala. Over the last 3 years they have been running SEED, a program that has 8 to 10 environment related themes that some 5000 schools register for. (<http://www.mbiseed.com>)

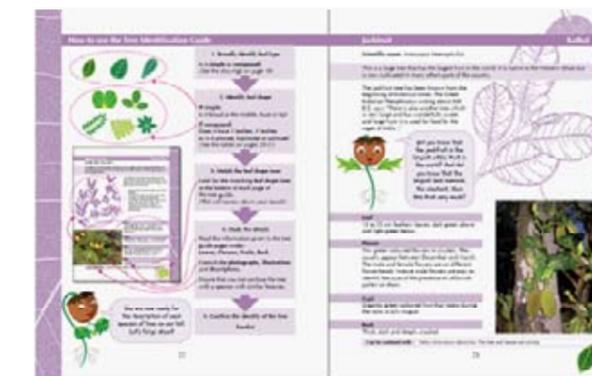
- The SeasonWatch-SEED partnership is now in its second year.
- This year we worked closely with Mathrubhumi and the SeasonWatch Handbook in Malayalam (created this year) reached out to ALL the SEED schools across Kerala.
- Nizar our SeasonWatch program coordinator in Kerala managed to build strong relationships with the 80 or so Mathrubhumi employees from across the State who volunteer their time as Mathrubhumi's SEED coordinators. It is fair to say that all these Mathrubhumi SEED volunteers now look at SeasonWatch as an integral part of SEED.
- The Mathrubhumi SEED handbook, which reached all participating schools, included 'Biodiversity conservation and SeasonWatch' as one of the 8 themes under which the schools did activities.
- We visited most of the 120 odd 2010-2011 SEED award winning schools across Kerala to find out what problems they encountered in starting SeasonWatch in their schools.
- SeasonWatch now has a firm footing in Kerala with 173 schools monitoring 1627 trees adding 10381 observations to the online database. There are also many schools who are monitoring trees and have as yet not put the data online.
- The success of the program has induced Mathrubhumi to give us a regular weekly space in their children's supplement 'Vidya' where we talk about interesting facets of SeasonWatch and try to get more schools to sign up.

2.1

SeasonWatch

Partnership with the 'Green Schools Program' (GSP) of the Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi:

- The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) is a public interest research and advocacy organisation based in New Delhi. They have an outreach program for schools called the Green Schools Program (GSP) that reaches out to 15000 schools across India.
- The GSP program coordinators from CSE directly reach out to some 300 teachers/trainers in half day workshops held at 8 to 10 centers across the country. The training is then cascaded to many levels to cover the GSP schools. This year SeasonWatch was a part of the first level training and the attendee teachers got introduced to SeasonWatch and carried away a handbook on how to start SeasonWatch in their schools.
- The SeasonWatch-GSP website is ready to launch for the 2012 academic year.
- A new design for the SeasonWatch-GSP handbook was created and this version is set to go out to the GSP schools next academic year. A sample inner page is shown below



- SeasonWatch is to launch full scale in the GSP schools in the next academic year

Other happenings not covered under the above headings:

We have the following types of possible SeasonWatchers: Children from: SEED schools, GSP schools, interested schools not part of SEED or GSP
Others: Individuals (children or adults), Groups (group of tree lovers like an NGO Nizhal)

The process of creating a single consolidated website that can cater to the requirements of all these different types of users has begun this year. This website will be ready by the time the schools reopen after the summer break. The site has a unique visual design and an intuitive user experience.

A volunteer is working on creating an Android application for SeasonWatch. A brochure is being created for SeasonWatch which is specifically designed to generate interest in the reader to want to learn more about the program and to sign up.

2.1

SeasonWatch

What is planned for the next year

SeasonWatch SEED program for schools in Kerala:

- Use the weekly space that we have got in Mathrubhumi's childrens supplement to reach out more effectively to our audience
- Identify the 100 or so schools who did good work this year and work more closely with them. They could potentially become SeasonWatch ambassadors to generate interest in their spheres of influence and to take the program to the next level

SeasonWatch-GSP program for schools across the rest of India:

- Focus on the partnership and ensure that SeasonWatch starts off in those schools which have adopted GSP better. CSE has a good idea about the list of these schools and they have good relationships with these schools.

Other plans:

- Create tools for the website that will allow users to analyze tree data
- Use the new website and the handbooks that we create to open up SeasonWatch for interested individuals and groups
- Work with the Wipro education partners like Eklavya who have shown interest and introduce SeasonWatch to their networks

2.2

Green Schools Programme II, Centre for Science & Environment

Program objectives

- To conduct customised workshop for 20 schools to enable them identify environmental practices within the schools' campus that need to be changed for better management of environment.
- To build capacity amongst the group (representative students, teacher and management of the school) to bring about the identified change in practice.
- To set a mutually convenient deadline and explain how to record and document the entire process and share the learning with the larger school community (other students, teachers, management members, parent and neighbourhood community)

What has happened over the last year?

- August 2011 - The criteria for identification of schools for the Green Schools Programme II (GSP II) workshop was that the school must have done the green schools audit at least once and the students, teachers and management of the school should be keen on taking up the task. The 20 schools should represent almost all types of schools present in India (Government, Aided, Private, Rural, Urban).
- August 2011 - 30 schools were short listed by CSE from approximately 1500 schools who have done the Green Schools Audit for their school campus at least once. Telephonic conversation was established with the Principal and Coordinating teacher in each of these schools to gauge their willingness and ability to participate in this initiative.
- September 2011 - 20 schools were identified for conducting customised workshops for every school which will enable the schools to start the GSP II initiative.

- February 2012 - All the 20 workshops in schools scattered across 10 states and 1 Union Territory of India were completed. All the schools have entered into an informal agreement with CSE on completing the tasks identified by them by the end of July 2012.
- CSE is consistently supporting the schools in the form of contacts, information and expertise required. The schools were busy with the final examinations in March. We have reminded schools of their mission and they have resumed their work. We shall be revising the reporting format with them by the end of April, 2012.

What is planned for the next year?

Green Schools Programme II:

- June 2012: Follow-up with the selected 20 schools for documentation and report on progress. Supporting the schools with documentation of their success stories in terms of data, objective and measuring achievements.
- July - August 2012: 20 selected schools will document their reports. CSE will evaluate and measure their achievements by comparing last year's data with present report. The success stories will be published in a book that will be shared with schools in the GSP network.
- August 2012: 20 new partnerships will be developed with willing schools that have proven ability to bring change on GSP indicators. The criteria for selecting these schools will be willingness of the school community, the management and they should have done the GSP audit at least once.

2.2

Green Schools Programme II, Centre for Science & Environment

- September – October 2012: Issue identification and capacity building workshops will be conducted to enable the schools to start the GSP II initiative. Each school will be given a set time frame to bring the change and document the process in a manner suggested by us.
- March 2012: Consistently supporting the second batch of GSP II schools in the form of contacts, information and expertise required.

The GSP schools will also participate in the Earthian awards programme and SeasonWatch activities.



SOCIAL SCIENCES

This is a new area of work for us, though Social Science has been an important part of many of the earlier projects and was one of the areas studied within the Quality Education Study too. We have articulated our basic concern within this theme as follows:

“Unlike Natural Sciences, matters here do not fit into formulas nor is any one theory able to explain across time and space any significant aspect of societies. There is a multiplicity of ways of seeing the world and this can be very confusing and needs an attention of a different kind. In line with the NCF 2005 social sciences education has to shift out of either a nationalising frame alone or as a tool of narrow identity formation and accommodate the ‘multiple ways of imagining the Indian nation!’”

This is of course just one of the more important concerns. However, it is also true that it tends to be a neglected subject in many schools compared to Mathematics or English. We also held a Partners’ forum on History and education in 2010 and it brought out the various aspects of History as a discipline and how this can be learnt in schools.

We are beginning work in this area in partnership with Vikramshila keeping in the mind the concerns and limitations mentioned above. This project will help Vikramshila consolidate on what they have done in the past in Social sciences and also come out with tangible curricular material which is interdisciplinary and project-based.

3.1

Integrated Approach to Social Sciences, Vikramshila

Background

Vikramshila Education Resource Society (1989) is a non-profit non-governmental organization working in the area of education with the mission of “making quality education a reality for all children”. Vikramshila (<http://www.vikramshila.org/>) works in the area of teacher training, development of curriculum material and teaching learning modules and materials. Vikramshila also undertakes pilot projects from time to time in an action research mode to try out new ideas and look for practical solutions to problems in the field of education.

The West Bengal Government in their syllabus proposal aims to address contemporary issues in an interdisciplinary way as well. However, there is lack of clarity in the proposed syllabus about implementation of such a proposal. Vikramshila, through the ‘Social Science’ project, aims to develop a curriculum for contemporary issues in Social Science like ‘livelihood’, ‘gender’ etc, adopting an interdisciplinary & child centric approach. Vikramshila, from its years of experience in education, is attempting to bridge this gap with the help of organizations and experts in Social Science education. The project, started in November 2011, aims to work with schools in West Bengal to develop a resource package around contemporary social themes like ‘livelihood’, ‘food and shelter’, etc. adopting an interdisciplinary, project based approach for classes 3-8. The package developed using field experience and academic inputs from experts in the field of Social Science, is intended as a reference to be used with the existing syllabus.

Objectives of the Project

- Consolidate prior projects on social science done in Nabadisha and Bigha Schools.
- Understand how social issues like ‘livelihood’, ‘food and shelter’, ‘gender’ etc are dealt with in Social Science text books
- Identify gaps and develop an interdisciplinary and child-centered approach to Social science learning
- Develop resource package (including classroom material and teacher learning materials) around contemporary social themes
- Present the materials and the process of class room interaction before SCERT Curriculum Committee for inclusion in the larger system
- Share the learning with the wider community

Approach

- Work with children (grades 3-8) in schools by involving them to work on the identified themes. The process and the outcome of the projects in the school would form the crux material in development of the resource package. Nabadisha, Bigha and some selected government schools have been identified for the field trials. Teachers from these schools will also be involved in the process.

3.1

Integrated Approach to Social Sciences, Vikramshila

Activities so far

- Textbook analysis: Analysis of social science textbooks of history and geography used in Bengali medium schools in classes 6 and 7
- Workshop with Prof Hari Vasudevan and Prof Paromita Chakravorti on 12th march, 2012 to get a critique of the Proposal for the Social Science Project in terms of its feasibility to achieve the end product, exemplary chapter on the topics and chart the road forward
- Workshop with Anjali Noronha from Ekalavya to develop a framework for the field work and documentation process required to develop the resource packs around contemporary social issues like ‘livelihood’, ‘food and shelter’ etc.
- Consolidated the work on the curriculum in Bigha School in the workshop with Anjali
- Networked with government schools to get them on board to conduct field of projects in grades 3-8 in their schools

Plans for this year

- Consolidating the work done in Bigha and Nabadisha centers, especially process documentation of ‘Meti burz Project’ for wider dissemination
- Working with children and teachers in classes 3-8 of selected Bengali medium government schools in West Bengal (rural, urban, and semi urban) on projects to teach the concept of ‘livelihood’ for classes 3-8
- Advocacy in schools to get more support for the idea of interdisciplinary and child centric approach to teaching
- Developing/writing the textual materials of the resource package using insights and experiences of the school projects

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT & AFFECT IN EDUCATION

Our school education reform work has significantly focused on bringing about changes in the school environment be it making the environment more safe and friendly for the child, bringing about a sense of responsibility in the child for the matters at school etc. Our concerns on this span a wide array of issues:

“The most important issue is that of the freedom that the school system provides to all stakeholders.

- *How much free time does a child get to play, read or just “be” within our education system? How often does the child choose what she should learn or do and the pace of learning? ...*
- *How much freedom does the teacher have in shaping the curriculum, teaching approach and assessment?”*

“Do democratic values like the children engaging in open dialogue on some topic happen often enough in the school? Is it integral to the environment of the school?”

Equally important is the area of affective education. This covers a wide range of elements that are different from the subjects like science and mathematics: attitudes, beliefs, values, feelings, emotions, interpersonal relations etc. There are many ways in which such areas can be dealt with and we are currently working on two different approaches. The Teacher Foundation is taking forward the ‘Safe and Sensitive Schools’ project by starting work on research project that will draw on existing literature and work in this area and attempt at arriving at some kind of learning standards in this area. In a radically different approach there is also work going on which draws on the Kabir project and creates resources for teachers and schools to bring the richness of this mystic poet to classes.

We find school environment and affective education to be closely tied to each other much more than any other specific subject. This is the reason to have a combined theme for these two areas.

4.1

Learning with Kabir, The Kabir Project

Background & Objectives

In June 2010, the Kabir Project started the ‘Learning with Kabir’ initiative with the objective of exploring ways and ideas with which to take the power of mystic poetry into the classroom.

A number of workshops and events were conducted with schools, colleges and groups of educators on this theme – representing a fair diversity of classrooms – upper class and under privileged, north and south, urban and rural, formal and non-formal. The work done and materials collated were reviewed, with the objective of selecting the most dynamic ideas for the creation of tangible materials and also to put out a bank of shareable ideas and resources through a website for teachers and educators interested in working with mystic poetry and music. One might envision this effort as a strewing of seeds into a “field of education”, with the hope that some would take root in diverse and distant contexts, some eventually sprouting and growing into very different looking trees.

The Broad Approaches for the Materials

In responding to the challenge of not being reductive of Kabir’s poetry or fragmenting the integrated mystic experience into “issues/themes”, we came up with the following approaches.

Boond-Samoond: The evocation of the infinite in our small selves is a quintessential mystic or Kabirian experience.

Ghat-Ghat: The confrontation with death and impermanence is another core and perhaps only fixed and known reality that mystics urge us to confront.

Ulat-Pulat: Upside-down poetry or ‘nonsense’ verse is part of the literature of several mystic poets in different parts of India. Through these poems Kabir evokes a truth, an experience that lies beyond the rational and beyond language itself.

The Materials

Web Space – “Ideas for Educators”:

These three clusters would be cast in rich detail into a vibrant and engaging online repository of resources for educators, including Songs & Poems, School Workshops, Experiments & Scripts, Classroom Activities, Reading Excerpts & Other Reference Materials and also Stories & Lore from other Traditions.

A Resource Book – “My Experiments with Kabir in the Classroom”:

A tighter selection of the above materials would be cast into a well-designed, playful, creative, friendly and experiential resource book for teachers/educators. Teachers with no access to the web could benefit from a simple book.

A Story Book – “TotaNaama”:

An in-depth artistic experiment with children of HBP School in Bangalore led to the creation of a theatrical and musical presentation of the Parrot & the Jungle Fire tale, accompanied by the unfolding of a scroll narrative of artworks created by the children. The artworks along with the narrative are being re-cast to make a simple story book for children, along with some Kabir poems and references and a brief notes about the workshop process.

4.1

Learning with Kabir, The Kabir Project

A Story Book – “Laawaaris Topi”:

This illustrated story book will evocatively juxtapose a few ‘nonsense’ poems of Kabir along with Vishakha Chanchani’s inspired Hindi poem about the “laawaaris topi”, which is inspired by the Kabirian idea of “losing one’s head”.

A Diary – “Lapataa Patte”:

This diary would creatively bring together Vishakha Chanchani’s Hindi poem “Laapataa Patte” along with artworks and photographs of leaves and nature along with a few couplets of Kabir that evoke the idea of impermanence through the metaphor of leaves.

A Song CD-Booklet – “Chala Chali Ka Khela”:

This idea is in response to the overwhelming desire from multiple educators who want to take Kabir’s poems to their children essentially and primarily through music. This would have relatively simple songs, both from the point of view of lyrics and the tunes, for listening and singing along by children at an accessible pitch with simple no-fuss accompanying instruments.

A Poster Series – “Learning with Kabir”:

This poster series will ‘call out’ to teachers, by putting forth one carefully selected ‘doha’ per poster, bringing Kabir or other mystic poet into a challenging, mocking, witty and provocative dialogue with educators. The selected poems juxtaposed with quotations by writers/thinkers such or some simple questions, invite the audience to interrogate some of the fundamental assumptions we bring to the task of education.

Challenges

While a lot of work happened this year on the research, ideation and collation front, many things have not progressed at the expected pace. Some serious bottlenecks have arisen due to not finding the right creative and technical resources to work with. That apart, the Kabir Project team is itself over stretched due to too many commitments and claims from various quarters.

Plan for this year

The team took the strategic decision to suspend work on the education front for 3 months to work on other pending projects, and then resume with fresh and focused energy on the education project in July 2012, and work towards a completion by Dec 2012.

4.2

Safe and Sensitive Schools (SASS), The Teacher Foundation

Program Objective:

The Teacher Foundation started the Safe and Sensitive Schools (SASS) initiative, a pilot action-research project supported by Wipro with the sole objective of making the selected schools safe and sensitive through embedding policies, spaces and interactions that are positive, constructive, nurturing and collaborative for all – students and staff alike, using the Whole School Quality Circle Time structure developed by Jenny Mosley Consultancies, UK.

What was done:

The focus during the 1st year of intervention (2009 – 2010) was training the teachers in the Whole School Quality Circle Time (QCT) and familiarizing them with the structure and approach and the SASS ethos (of gentleness, respect, open honest communication, warmth and positivity), to enable them to conduct QCT sessions with their students in the right manner. The intervention during this time largely looked at providing support to the teachers through QCT demos, QCT lesson planning sessions and observation of teachers conducting QCT and providing feedback.

The 2nd year of the intervention (2010-2011) focused on helping the teachers set up processes and systems in the school that would help instill listening and appreciation as part of the school culture. This was done by conducting sessions with teachers in setting up Listening Systems and a process for Rewards & Sanctions. The teachers were engaged in a dialogue as to why these systems are necessary and how to go about establishing systems that are both effective and doable.

It also looked at helping the teachers improvise on the quality of Circle Time meetings by encouraging them to engage their students in topics that were far more evolved, in interesting and innovative ways.

Specific Outcomes:

- The non-verbal listening systems helped children open up and talk. They use the Suggestion/Think box to give suggestions to teachers on teaching-learning process or to suggest themes for Circle Time meetings.
- Bubble time, a one-on-one listening system has been widely and effectively used by many of the teachers to discuss problems with students, get to their root and help resolve them.
- Children are aware of the School’s Golden Rules, follow them and remind each other when these rules are flouted.
- A democratic process of formulating the Whole School Behaviour Policy, incorporating inputs from the school management, teachers and students, helped bring to surface some underlying concerns and issues which in turn have brought about positive changes in the schools’ systems.

4.2

Safe and Sensitive Schools (SASS), The Teacher Foundation

A Few Challenges:

- Teachers find it difficult to change their demeanour, trust their students and go with the flow.
- Some teachers fail to see the connectedness of values education, life skills and SASS
- The SASS ethos in some schools is limited to the Quality Circle Time Sessions alone
- Some teachers are still not fully equipped to handle sensitive issues that come up during QCT, nor are they able to use other listening systems – one-to-one and non-verbal.
- In a few cases, there's lingering resistance from management and teachers to make SASS components an integral part of school curriculum
- Lack of realisation on the part of management and teachers that the onus of making schools safe and sensitive and QCT an effective group listening process, lies with ALL stakeholders

Key Learnings:

- Involvement and Sustained Interest of key people in the school necessary for a project of this nature to show any kind of change.
- A project of such nature needs more than a year and half to show any substantive impact or change in the school culture. However a 1 ½ years' intervention will help provide the catalyst for deeper, more sustained changes in the school's culture.

The SASS Action Research

A pre-intervention study was carried out with teachers and students in 3 schools to assess 3 key aspects of the school environment: nurturing, constructive and collaborative. A qualitative study was carried out to delve deep in to the

student and teacher responses that emerged from the quantitative study. Post the intervention, a quantitative study was carried out on the same sample to assess the impact and changes of the SASS program.

Post study findings:

- Teachers in all 3 schools said that they now praise children for behaviors other than academic.
- Students across said that their teachers now notice them and are open to being approached
- The above was corroborated by the teachers' responses indicating an increase in approachability between teachers and students
- In aspects of Discipline, teachers in all 3 schools realized that there are positive ways of dealing with student behaviors and hence incorporate that in their interactions with them

Conclusion

Some of the significant changes that have emerged are

- Teacher interactions with students have increased in a positive manner
- Teachers' perception with regard to discipline has considerably improved
- Teachers' recognition & praise is not restricted to academic achievement
- The overall impact is seen across different facets of teacher-student relation
- The collaborative aspect has significantly increased across the schools.

4.2

Safe and Sensitive Schools (SASS), The Teacher Foundation

Going forward:

We now believe it's important to broaden the current base of SASS and move beyond a feel good augmentation of the weekly time-table towards an approach that enables children to grow socially and emotionally. Along with the long-term benefits of nurturing self aware, responsible, confident, happy individuals, it's important to actively nurture and assess students' social and emotional development.

A research study is now being undertaken on the theory and practice of social and emotional learning in schools in India and other countries, further leading to design and develop affective learning standards for Indian schools. These standards will be well-researched indicative milestones that would span multiple aspects of the affective domain – personal communication, team working and collaboration, handling of success and failure, critical thinking/dialoging.

Plan for this year

- Conduct a detailed literature review of how other countries and organisations within India are addressing the affective domain.
- Gather and study primary data on experiments and work already done by a wide range of organizations like Udaan, Digantar, Rishi Valley School, Centre for Learning, Kabir Project etc.
- Conduct focus group discussions across the country to both understand the perspectives of heads of schools, teachers, students, teacher educators and NGOs' on the issue as well as raise awareness of the need for standards.
- Develop standards and assessment tools for Social & Emotional Development for Grade 1-12.

These will be peer reviewed and piloted in a few schools during the following year

5

HOLISTIC SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

We started working on Holistic School engagement programs to build capacities and understand school reform work better. 6-7 years back it was a move away from high-scale teacher workshops to engaging with all stakeholders in a school and at a lower scale, which meant deep engagement with a few schools. Most of those projects have concluded and these two are the last in that series.

One of them is with 100 government schools in Phagi block in Rajasthan and the other with the West Bengal Madrasah Board schools. In the former, we have worked for 6 years on various fronts: helping the teacher become more effective by demonstrating alternate pedagogic practices, helping children learn better and become more responsible, the community more engaged with the school and the teacher support personnel to provide more relevant and better quality training and inputs to the teacher. In sum total this project is about better functioning of the government school system. In the Madrasah project, intensive work was done with 10 schools to improve the quality of education and with the Board by helping them in planning and policy and in reviewing and developing curricular material.

5.1

Shiksha Samarthan Project, Phagi, Digantar

Special Objective:

Exploring the possibility to develop 5 Nodal centre schools according to the original intent of RTE and work towards achieving this goal.

Work area

Direct work with 550 children and 20 teachers of 5 Nodal centre schools in 5 village panchayats of the block and provide academic support to 40 schools associated to these nodal centres.

Nature of work

Nodal coordinator will visit the nodal centres every day and will support the nodal-in-charge in developing the schools according to the original intent of RTE.

Focus points for support

- Build dialogue with the teachers about relevant subject matters and motivate them towards developing their capabilities. If required, provide demonstrations.
- Work to increase participation of school management committees in nodal centre schools.
- Organise meetings at nodal centres to understand RTE, CCE and Child centric education. Motivate nodal-in-charge and support them in building their capacity in this direction.
- Providing academic support to the 40 schools associated with the nodal centres. Identify issues to be included in terms of RTE norms, planning and working towards this direction.

Main activities and their effect

● **Baseline study**

A baseline study was conducted during April-May 2011 to understand the circumstances in these 5 nodal schools. After The level of understanding in 4 subject areas of 250 children in standard I to V were assessed. Interviews were conducted to know the understanding and view of the nodal-in-charge, teachers and SMC's.

● **Meetings at nodal schools**

Initially, the nodal centre in charge used to be busy with gathering information, now has started organising monthly meetings with the teachers at their schools. They have started preparing monthly work targets and started understanding the status of the academic work going on in schools. Seven meetings per nodal has been organised on an average.

● **Work with teachers**

Initially nodal-in-charge, principals and teachers used to take RTE as an official order only. Teachers used to consider RTE as a hindrance to their convenience as well. After continuous interactions and dialogues, 3 of the nodal principals and some teachers started understanding the original intent of RTE and the idea of schools in appropriation to it. They have started asking for help and support in implementing it, for example, constituting SMCs, planning for CCE with the help of nodal coordinator and implementing it.

5.1

Shiksha Samarthan Project, Phagi, Digantar

- **Environment of nodal schools**

Meaningful and positive changes can be seen in three of the nodal schools. Almost 50% of the teachers in these schools have well written plan in hand before entering the classrooms. Context based teaching learning materials can be found in the classrooms. One of the nodal schools has started working with children in sub groups.

- **Learning of the children**

The learning status of the children in nodal centre schools has improved. Though this cannot be considered satisfactory, regular teaching learning activities are being done with children in standard I and II, who used to sit idle in the classrooms or go home after lunch. These children have started reading and writing. Now, almost 75% children in standard III and IV can read and write, in comparison to 15-20% in past. Similar situation is seen regarding maths too, in which similar number of children can comfortably use number system and perform basic operations like additions, subtractions etc.

- **With SMC**

SMCs were formed in all 5 nodal schools in compliance with the original intent of RTE. Quarterly meetings were regularly conducted. In these meetings, decisions regarding the schools were taken and implemented, i.e. providing water facility, building construction, organising programmes (admission ceremony, Independence & Republic day celebrations etc.) in schools. SMCs took the responsibility of organising these programs systematically.

Members of the committee were interested in knowing the learning status of the children as well.

- **With other schools associated to nodal centres**

Nodal centres have moved one step ahead in developing academic support structure to support schools associated to them. The role of nodal-in-charge, earlier restricted to information exchange, has now changed. He has started visiting the schools along with the nodal coordinator to understand the school situation (classrooms, learning of the children, environment, other arrangements and systems in the school etc.). Nodal-in-charge has visited other schools at least once a month. They have started playing active role in motivating teachers and providing support to them, if required, to improve the status of the school.

- **Monthly academic meetings at nodal level**

Nodal centre has been transformed into a centre where monthly meetings are being conducted regularly. 29 such meetings have been held in 4 of the 5 nodal centres. In these meetings, the status of the schools, academic issues etc were discussed and further planning done to improve the situation. The role of nodal-in-charge is becoming more and more visible in making these meetings more meaningful. His belief in regularity and making them more academic in nature has increased.

5.1

Shiksha Samarthan Project, Phagi, Digantar

- **Workshops**

- **With nodal-in-charges**

A three day workshop was organised with all 5 nodal-in-charges. In this workshop, it was attempted to help them understand RTE and work to make the schools RTE compliant.

- **With team**

Capacity building workshops were organised at 4 different occasions. In these workshops, preparation to work with nodal centres, preparation for base line study were done, attempts were made to understand to RTE and work done on language teaching.

- **Documentation work**

Report writing was done for various meetings and monthly and annual progress as well. Baseline study report and progress report of the nodal schools was written. Apart from this, support was provided for documentation on Shiksha Samarthan Project (from beginning of the project – 6 years).

- **Visits**

During this period, Vandana, Kamala (CFL), Nisha (TARU) and Prakash (WIPRO) have visited the program to know, understand and document the program.

- **Critical consolidation**

Working with nodal in charge, teacher and community and regular communication has helped the nodal centre to develop as a capable centre to provide academic help.

The teachers have developed trust in the nodal centres because of the regular monthly academic meetings. Teachers have started having conversation with nodal-in-charge regarding status of the school, teaching plan etc.

Nodal-in-charge has played an active role in improving the status of these schools. They have started making attempts towards changing the situation in the school.

The project has been concluded in its stipulated time by March 2012. Hope this short term intervention with the nodal centres will sustain and will keep on helping the nodal in charges to improve the schools status in future as well.

5.2

Madrasah Quality Improvement Project, Vikramshila

The Sachar Committee had recommended that Muslims should be ensured equity and equality of opportunity in educational as well as workspaces. The inverse relationship between the proportion of Muslim population and availability of proper educational infrastructure is a matter of concern. There are 600 govt. aided Madrasahs in West Bengal that have been granted equivalence on paper. They follow more or less same curriculum as the Secondary Board and have their teachers recruited through centralized testing and yet face discrimination in the larger social sphere. Keeping this context in mind, Vikramshila started a project to build and enhance the academic quality and ensure the overall development of these Madrasahs by working intensively with a few of them. Vikramshila collaborated with Wipro Applying Thought in Schools, West Bengal Board of Madrasah Education (WBBME) and Department of Minorities Development & Welfare of Madrasah Education on Madrasah Quality Improvement Project. The project started in July 2007, with an aim to transform the 14 existing High Madrasahs into model centers whose good practices could be taken forward to other Madrasahs of the state.

Objectives of the project:

The main aim of the project was to build and enhance the academic quality and overall development of Madrasah system. For this, 14 lab Madrasah had been selected with the aim to convert these into model centres with a view to disseminate this learning in the system.

Activities had focused in the following areas:

At the Madrasah level

- School culture and environment
- School management

- Teacher development
- Strategic planning within the school

At the Student level

- Academic improvement
- Co scholastic development

At the Systemic level

- Planning and policy
- Reviewing and developing curricular materials

About the project

The focus of the project was to transform the whole school by working with all stakeholders – children, teachers, managing committee members and the Board. At the Madrasah level, VERS worked on certain core areas for transforming school environment by making it more open and participatory through Head Masters' workshop, school level micro planning and also changing the physical environment of the school by decorating the premises. At the classroom level, focus was on providing remedial support to children through regular remedial classes and camps. Students' cabinet, soft skill camp and Children's festival were organized to increase students' ownership and spontaneity and build their confidence. To strengthen the system, various orientation programmes were organized. A central assessment system was developed to track the progress of students on the same scale. Record keeping and data analysis were some of the key parameters to make the systemic level informed.

5.2

Madrasah Quality Improvement Project, Vikramshila

Coverage

No. of Madrasahs	No. of Teachers passed through training	No. of Teachers supported	No. of children benefitted
14	72	210	8500

Highlights of April 2011 – September 2011

This was the last phase of the project where VERS mainly focused to consolidate the activities and learning of the past 4 years. Along with regular classroom activities at Madrasah level, VERS laid focus on two components

- Consolidation of the lesson plans provided for Classes V- VI on 6 subjects (Bengali, English, Mathematics, History, Geography, and Science) in the form of resource books. Here, the experiences from the work with the students at the classroom level and teacher's view were taken into consideration. The resource book addressed the different levels of the students, the teaching learning material and the exercises.
- The field level experiences along with the transformation in the Madrasahs were documented. A documentary film was prepared which highlighted the changes that took place in the Madrasahs in due course of time. A report was prepared to capture the journey of the project in each of the Madrasahs and the work at various levels. This report was handed over to the individual Madrasahs where work was done as well as the Madrasah Board. A project closure meeting was organized by Vikramshila with the Board representatives and 14 Madrasahs. A representative from Wipro was also present. This meeting gave an opportunity for all the participants to share their experiences, learning, feelings about the project in a common platform.

The project that had started in 2007 came to an end in September 2011. Process documentation was done to capture the high and low points of the journey. In due course, the work with the Madrasahs had gained depth – at times, it was successful in overcoming the challenges, and at times, it was not. Several issues were raised and some could be resolved. Five years is a long time for a project, but very short compared to the kind of shifts that are needed. Some changes are visible and at the surface whereas others take place at a subterranean level, and it is these that will determine whether the changes that were initiated during the project, will sustain. The closure meeting made it obvious that a lasting impression had been created in the minds of the stake holders at various levels. They were now able to think critically and the group had developed a common understanding of quality education.

Wipro Applying Thought in Schools has supported a network of organizations engaged in school education reform. In the case of established organizations this has helped them gain new experiences in working with schools or improve the competencies within a team. We have also supported newer organizations doing work aligned to our strategy in establishing themselves in the initial years and gaining field experience.



The work in the year 2010-2011 took place in two phases. Work in the initial six months continued in the direction of the school transformation project that had been charted out in the previous years. The period from October to March was spent in reflection on the achievements of the project and planning for the next years with a focus on rebuilding the work in VB schools and implementing the learning from this work in other schools.

Objectives:

- To revisit the leadership and management processes
- Help the schools in becoming partially self-sustainable and financially more viable
- Use VB schools as learning labs for developing ideas for wider implementation:
- Documentation and material development - To compile the material for primary school language and maths that has been developed so far, for dissemination in more schools

Key Activities:

- Principal's forum – as in the past years, the principals from the four VB schools continued to meet for sharing and planning. Senior teachers from VB Sr. Secondary school were also involved in this process and it is planned that more teachers will eventually be involved in the leadership process.
- As part of the move towards self-sustainability, a vision building exercise was carried out and the schools (principals and teachers) have developed a five year plan as well an annual plan. Teachers from the Basic school worked on developing a possible financial model for their school in the new circumstances and are moving towards introduction of class XI and XII.



- VB Public School has expanded to include classes 3-5.
- Class library – the concept of children's portfolios is being piloted in the Basic school
- Six month planning for Support classes and Activity classes was carried out. Activity classes have been introduced in VB Basic School and in Jhamarkotra as well. The idea was to help the primary class math teacher in planning for the class through use of activities and an ERC member worked along with the teacher in planning and implementing. The extra person also proved useful in carrying out group work with children.
- Capacity Building, be it of the ERC team, the school leadership or the school teachers, is a major objective of the intervention in all VB schools. As a part of this,
- VBERC undertook the training of private school teachers from the schools in the urban slums of Udaipur. In-house resource team underwent preparation, did workshop design, material development etc.
 - It was decided that VB school teachers would be asked to help in trainings conducted by ERC. This would give them a chance to test their understanding of education developed so far through their work and interactions with the centre.
- VB collaborated with SSA in conducting their annual in-service trainings. From May 11 - 15, members from VBERC and other VB institutions took part in a master training after which they conducted Science, Social Science, math, and language trainings for Upper primary teachers from the Govt. Schools of Udaipur.

6.1

Vidyabhawan

- A second round of trainings for primary school teachers in collaboration with SSA was conducted from 11-16 June and 19-24 June. School teachers from VB Sr. Sec school as well as Basic school acted as resource persons in these trainings.
- Many experienced teachers in VB schools who were on govt. grants left as they were absorbed by the govt. system. Therefore, all mechanisms that have been set up in the past years for sharing, capacity building etc. had to be revisited and a plan formulated where a large number of new VB entries would be oriented towards VB philosophy and vision.
- Work was done towards documentation of (Continuous and Comprehensive assessment) CCA experience and developing a shareable note.

Outcomes:

- VB schools have served as learning labs for work in the govt. and pvt. schools in the bastis (urban slums) of Udaipur. The concept of classroom library has been extended to about 15 basti schools. Books and other material has been provided by VB and plans are on to hold a workshop on library usage with the teachers of this school. Teachers from VB will share their experiences in these workshops.
- Several teachers attended the SSA training for resource persons and conducted primary school in-service teachers training for SSA
- Activity classes in the VB schools resulted in modifications in activities and worksheets designed by VBERC. Worksheets on topics such as patterns, place value were modified on the basis of the feedback and then used in basti schools.
- Orientation workshop for new teachers in August and periodic follow up interaction meetings and sessions with teachers

6.2

Eklavya

This year we continued the work of supporting the government schools and networking with other organizations working in education in Bhopal. This work was supported by both Wipro Applying Thought in Schools and Sir Dorabjee Tata Trust. The following were the main components of the work this year.

- Supporting Schools and organizations;
 - Setting up resource centres;
 - Workshops & Courses;
 - Studies;
 - Networking and meetings.
- Supporting Schools and organizations: As part of this aspect of the program, we have been working with 22 primary and middle schools of the government school system in developing a library based language and school support program. We have also been working intensively with an organization called Oasis that works in mainstreaming and supporting out of school children through holding classes in groups in different museum settings. A brief review of both these aspects is given below:
 - Supporting government schools: In the 22 primary and elementary schools, we have been developing a library based language education and school support program.

The following are the main features of the program:

- Provision of about 400 selected children's books to each school. The books have been selected carefully keeping in mind their critical, creative and literary quality and association with the perspective and psychology of the child at different ages. We have not strictly graded these books, but allow them to circulate among classes 3 to 8. There is, however, a broad division between primary and middle school books.

- A weekly period for library reading and activities for each class, in which a group of resource students, teachers and Eklavya resource persons conduct sessions and issue books.
- A periodic wall newspaper in which each child of the class participates.
- A teacher and resource student orientation and periodic review meeting so that leadership abilities of students are also developed.
- Periodic interaction with teachers and with parents to discuss issues related to the library work and some other issues of language education.

Supporting Oasis museum school:

- The Oasis museum school attempts to address children who are out of school and bring them into school and also support them outside of schools. Instead of running centres in congested environs of the slums, they bring the children to museums of the city, group them according to their abilities and teach them. They also use the museum exhibits as a resource. Eklavya has been supporting them in language and maths – for the early level groups – the 5 to 10 year olds. We are attempting to consolidate this work in a graded curriculum and materials and a rubric of teaching for maths and language.

Setting up Resource centres:

- Last year, we set up a main resource centre and one extension resource centre at a cluster level. This year we continued our activities at the main resource centre and set up two more centres at two clusters (Jan Shiksha Kendras). We held meetings on literature and films with interested persons. We also discussed aspects of RtE compliance and the issue of SMCs, libraries in schools and age appropriate classes with

6.2

Eklavya

other NGOs at the main resource centre. Five writers in Hindi literature read their stories and poems and had discussions with the audience.

The idea is to develop some collaborative programs and studies on education in Bhopal in the coming years. One of the issues which three organizations have agreed to work on together is bilingual education in the elementary classes. This program will begin in 2012-13.

This year we set up two more resource centres at two Jan Shiksha Kendras. We provided education books for teachers, brought out the books they already had in the school and organized them, provided resource materials for Maths and Science. We held children's and teachers' workshops in these resource centres and also parents' get-togethers on education. These Jan Shiksha Kendras also act as hubs or nodal centres for the school based programs.

Workshops and courses:

- Workshops: This year we did two workshops on science, and one on art. The science workshops were attended by around 25 teachers and members of organizations working in education. They were focused on using small kits on different concepts which are used to do experiments and arrive at an experiment based conceptual understanding. The concepts worked on were the microbial world, light and nutrition.

The drama workshop was a smaller one with about 15 participants. It attempted to get people rid of their inhibitions and acquainted with the basics of drama. The participants were mostly people from NGOs. The art workshop got us and members of different NGOs to interact with good national artists Atanu Roy and Naresh Saxena and understand the nuances of different art forms – creative literature, visual arts, drama, music.

- Courses: We are trying to develop a course for government primary school teachers to learn English and improve it so that they can teach children English in more participative ways. About 30 teachers in three different batches undertook 50 to 80 hours of classes at the very basic beginners' level. Through these experiences we are trying to develop a draft of an 80 hour course for absolute beginners – this is implemented in different formats – viz an hour a day, three days a week for 6 to 8 months / or an hour a day three days a week for 3-4 months and a ten day workshop of 5 hours a day. Those who have some ability in English are given 50 hours and those that begin from scratch go through 80 hours.

Studies:

- National study on Inclusion and exclusion in schools: The urban resource network team participated in a nationwide study on exploring and understanding social inclusion and exclusion in rural schools. We were responsible for the study in Madhya Pradesh. Having participated in this study in the rural schools, the team has developed capability to do such a study in urban areas as well and we plan to do a similar study in Bhopal next year.
- Pilot study on working children in one school: While working in the government schools of Bhopal, we found that there are schools in a particular area where a large proportion of school going children work and come to school. These children attend school for a much shorter period in the day. In order to keep the children in school, the headmaster and teachers negotiate this time with them. This issue provoked us to do a small study and understand why children are going to work and what they feel about work. It is a descriptive study whose findings will be shared.

6.3

Education in Dil Se Homes, Centre for Equity Studies

Background

There are three Dil Se homes in Delhi operating out of buildings provided by the Delhi government – Ummeed in the Qutb area houses about 105 boys ranging from age 3 to age 18, Kilkari in the Kashmere Gate area is home to about 110 girls under 14 years old except two girls who are older and pursuing vocational courses, Khushi in the Okhla area has about 100 girls all under 14 years old. The homes are run on democratic principles with the voice of the children dominating the discussions. Regular sabhas, review and planning meetings, provide opportunities for reflection and feedback, and ensure that children's needs, opinions, desires are heard and acted upon. All major changes are tabled and negotiated with the children before decisions are taken. The approach empowers them, builds confidence, raises self-esteem and establishes a sense of ownership of the home and its processes. A fourth home has been added in the last month for older boys as it was a legal requirement to keep separate home arrangements for older and younger children.

Education Planning & Management

The education programme for the children is structured to provide:

- Preparation and readiness for school (Bridge Courses and Pre-School)
 - Bridge Courses
 - Pre-School
- Admission into mainstream schools
- School Support and Remedial
- English Conversation
- Computer Literacy
- Life skills Education

- Education for children with special needs
- Enrichment Programmes (Non-academic activities)
- Transition Preparation - Programme for Life Beyond the Home (ensuring employability, higher education, career planning, vocational skills)

The implementation is achieved through:

- A group of coordinators
- Curriculum Development & Educational Research
- A group of full time and part time teachers
- Teacher Training, Development and Support
- Panel of individual artistes or organisations providing expertise for extracurricular activities
- Dedicated Volunteers – full time, part time and long term residential

There is a system of monitoring & supervision, feedback and planning through regular observation schedules, meetings and reviews. Children's learning is tracked regularly. Education Progress Reports are prepared three times in the year for every child.

Current Status

Bridge Courses have been developed in four subjects – Hindi, Math, Social Studies and Science. Each subject comprises of – a) baseline assessment tools, b) a four-level course which the child goes through c) material for use in classroom such as worksheets/songs/poems/games d) assessment tools. All development has taken place with the active participation of the teachers who implemented the course in the homes.

A 10 or 11 year old child who should be in class 5 but has never been to school, would take between 6 months to 2 years to complete the course and be ready for class 5. In

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Education in Dil Se Homes, Centre for Equity Studies

cases where the child has accelerated understanding, he/she may begin formal schooling earlier.

Teacher Training is an integral component of the curriculum development process. The teachers have gone through

- relevant and focused residential trainings twice in the 1st year, annually in the next 2 years
- fortnightly reviews and trainings to take care of gaps in subject knowledge and concept clarity and classroom management techniques for specific topics to be taught in the next 2 weeks
- weekly planning sessions of lessons and material development

In addition, they are also provided class room support through observation and feedback, demo lessons and assistance in class room processes. Teachers prepare 3-month long term plan, weekly plans and daily plans with exact teaching units and material details for each day. 4 hours every week has been set aside for them to prepare the weekly plans.

Since we do not take trained teachers, this pattern of teacher training and intensive handholding is essential to develop them into effective, sensitive and creative teachers.

English Language: In order to jump-start a diverse group of children of approximately the same level but with many different needs, an in-house English Language program has been developed that imparts the same material in various manners in order to accommodate and relate to the variations in all three major learning and cognitive development contexts. To achieve these goals,

the English language program has many more activity options and teacher-support systems than most other English language programs, which are normally geared to one major learner-group.

A child having passed through the course, regardless of their age and cognitive development level, should be able to slip into an NCERT-based English class of their age appropriate grade-level. Depending on a student's age and education status, the program can be used either as an English Bridge course or as an at-level learning program. As with the Bridge program, the English language program's expected time-frame is 12-18 months, as per student learning speed.

Computer Literacy: We are using the Microsoft Unlimited Potential Curriculum which we found to be a methodical and straightforward curriculum imparting basic computer skills set which covers word processing fundamentals, spreadsheet fundamentals, presentation fundamentals, using the Internet and the World Wide Web, as an introduction to using digital media. When adapting the modules to our needs into the "e-Masti" program, we essentially

- cut down the modules into shorter segments of more bite sized knowledge chunks
- reduced or cut out the detailed theory part
- replaced the corporate examples with those from the children's lives and background

The teaching methods and transaction inputs were largely developed in-house. It gave the teacher freedom to assemble and develop class activities based on the curriculum and the lesson at hand and the age, cognitive development, and basic interests of the students.

6.3

Education in Dil Se Homes, Centre for Equity Studies

The Life Skills Education Program has been a challenge. We seek to achieve behavioural changes in life therefore it demands a multi-faceted approach of input, reinforcement and practice to be effective and requires a mature, sensitive approach to designing and developing the components of the course. Linking the Life Skills Education Program with other aspects of managing the home is also essential for maximizing impact.

Design, development and planning is not just defining the components that will be included, but also how much at particular age levels and finding the right implementing partner who will collaboratively design and implement the interventions. The coordinator for the life skills curriculum has to ensure that the complex combination of people, organisations and processes are organically integrated and reach the child in a manner that he/she can engage with it. The life skills programme is still in the process of design and development.

Mainstreaming Children: This year, all 315 children in the three homes of Dil se have been mainstreamed into regular schools both private and government. It is a momentous achievement and Dil se is proud of this.

Extracurricular Activities & Achievements: During summer, the older children went for a trip to Kashmir. The younger group went for overnight stay and picnic. Five children participated in a ten-day art/craft festival at the Sanskriti Kendra. The boys have composed lyrics and performed their song on stage. Children of all three homes participated in the Delhi Youth Festival and presented dances and group songs. The boys participated in a martial arts competition and won gold, silver and bronze medals. Besides, there are regular celebrations of birthdays, festivals and other national days. The combined sports day was organised in January.

Next Steps: In the forthcoming year, we need to - set up a strong and consistent school support system; develop the transition preparation programme, ensure a robust volunteer support, increase the use of CAL systems, enhance the personal development of each child.

6.4

Teacher Education & School Interventions, CEVA

Centre for Education and Voluntary Action (CEVA) started working in the education space in the year 2000 with the objective of exploring and bringing into practice and advocating, alternative approaches for educating children. The main focus of CEVA's work is to initiate, facilitate and sustain dialogue and change. CEVA works through deep engagement with schools and colleges in Chandigarh and Punjab.

- **"Changing Tracks" at Rayat and Bahra College of Education (RBCE), Sahauran, Punjab**

Closely following the recommendations of the NCFTE (National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, 2010), CEVA worked with the college to bring in a changed perspective by enabling the teachers to transact a part of the B.Ed curriculum in an interactive manner. 3 years back, CEVA had started a once a week 'add-on' course in Higher Order Thinking Skills for B.Ed students in RBCE. "Changing Tracks" (<http://changingtracksrbce.blogspot.com/>) is an experiment, resulting from this engagement, to discover what it takes to bring in a culture of higher order thinking and participatory classrooms in an education institution.

- **The initial planning phase. (May 2011)**

The Principal and teachers at RBCE participated in visualising and planning the project. The teachers drew up the basic outlines of the process during a 2-day participatory workshop.

- **The second phase. (July 2011)**

A 20 day Workshop with the teachers, for sharing ideas about interactive teaching-learning processes; designing learning situations for the B.Ed students; negotiating the curriculum in a way that would allow the students the maximum opportunity to construct

their own understanding, acquire the skills necessary to create a Higher Order Thinking Culture in an interactive classroom. Accordingly, a few lesson plans in each subject was developed by the teachers during this workshop

- **The third phase (August – September)**

For the new B.Ed batch that joined this year, teaching-learning was carried out according to the lesson plans developed in 2nd phase. Classes were conducted in a workshop mode, with extensive student participation and use of higher order thinking in activities. The film "Changing Tracks" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_Ql8S5uqZY captures the experience of these 6 weeks through the eyes of the teachers and students.

- **The fourth – (Dec & January 2011)**

Workshops to conduct a formal evaluation with teachers as well as students. The teachers as well as students participated in day long workshops to express their evaluation of the program in a particular format.:

- **Science program - Mindtree School, Ambala**

Science Clubs – These happened twice a week, with children of class III & IV through July to October, 2011. The modules were designed to enhance science process skills. 16 children worked with one facilitator, so there was space for conversations around the children's hands-on experiences with science concepts. The Science Clubs have initiated a long-term relationship with the school.

Sharing ideas with teachers: We have started a Year-long Science program in the school with a 12 day Science Teacher's Training Workshop (March 19th to 31st 2012) on Teaching Science through Inquiry based methodology.

6.4

Teacher Education & School Interventions, CEVA

A learning spiral: The teachers came to a decision to strengthen the process of inquiry based science teaching in the school. A process was charted out, during this workshop, in which the teachers would prepare their lesson plans, with help from CEVA team; try out their ideas in the classroom; plan the next phase based on their learnings in the earlier phase and so on.

- **Maths Program – The British School, Panchkula (TBS)**

The maths program at TBS has been initiated with some sessions with the students during 2011. An initial 10 day workshop with the Math teachers is on the cards in May, 2012.

- **Language Development through Theatre Activities – Mindtree school, Ambala & TBS**

In each of these schools, we have initiated the program with story-telling sessions. We have drawn up the plans to work with the children of Class IV through the year 2012 -2013.

- **Sri Guru Harkrishan School Senior Secondary School, Chandigarh**

We worked with the children of the school from July to October 2011. We had prepared a learning spiral for the students of Classes 3, 4 and 5, for Mathematics, Language and Science with an underlying intention of focusing on life skills.

The initial opening up phase was followed up with a 6 days story-making and storytelling workshop. The students worked in four groups and had a chance to engage with different forms of storytelling – puppets, the Rajasthani Phar, Kamishibai (with picture cards)

and theatre improvisations. As the stories were being woven, drawn and performed, the accent was also on co-operative learning, talking about emotions and engaging with values. Phase 3, impact evaluation, has not happened yet. However, we feel the school staff needs more time to reflect on the implications of the work done and be more open to bringing in a deep change.

- **In Public Libraries**

CEVA has been conducting several workshops for children in 3 public libraries of Chandigarh, a popular bookshop, as well as a private 'Toy Library'. We have done story performances, story-telling with Shadow Puppets, community theatre, Science process skills, Math Fun and creative writing. This is part of our effort (apart from street melas) to engage with children and families.

- **Future Action**

At **Rayat & Bahra College of Education** - On the basis of our experiences and the feedback from the teachers and students, we have planned the program for the year 2012 – 2013. An active Resource Centre, participatory research projects conducted by the M Ed teachers and the teachers of the college, a commitment on the part of the college as well as CEVA, to create a learning community consisting of other teacher training colleges and some schools, workshops by facilitators from different organisations engaged in innovative work and focusing on school subjects as well as several kinds of dialogues about education, have been planned.

At the schools – We are evolving the Science, Mathematics and Language programs in schools according to the needs of a change process. On one hand, a dialogue with the managing and academic staff has been initiated.

6.4

Teacher Education & School Interventions, CEVA

On the other, a process is drawn up where the teachers have opportunities to try out the ideas thrown up during our workshops and participate in a formal process of reflection, after which they test out their own responses to what needs to be done.

A change space – CEVA believes that organizational change emerges when there is acceptance, authority and ability to allow and catalyze ongoing as well as episodic adjustments. Such a ‘change space’ is required to ensure contextual readiness for change and to foster progression through different stages of the process. We intend to keep this in mind as we dialogue with the school community, show them the possibilities that are within our reach and suggest action on the ground level. The idea of creating a Resource Centre at each of the schools has been accepted by the respective institutions. We are in the process of finding and creating resources.

6.5

Courage to Lead, Disha-India

The Purpose and the Program Overview

The purpose of the program is to re-define learning and education for school leaders through a challenging and engaging experience. If we can change the way children learn and interact in classrooms –the structure of the whole schools will change. To make this happen in schools, the school leaders and educators need to experience it at the personal level. The idea is to initiate thinking and dialogue on ‘how can we make learning more engaging and exciting for our children’ and ‘what it takes to create a culture of learning, excellence and care in schools.’

The program objective is to develop the leadership capacity in schools for bringing the desired change and in the process build a network of schools for collective learning and sharing. It is a 10-day residential program consisting of two expeditions spread over 3 months with pre and post project work.

We do one ‘Courage to Lead’ program in a year.

The work done so far and the impact.

- Three programs done so far –75 principals, vice-principals and program coordinators have participated in three programs.
- Around 15 schools have been really impacted by the program. And the impact has been in terms of
 - Building the critical mass of positive change agents in the schools. More than two members of the leadership team have participated in the program from these schools. This has helped in building the shared vision and understanding on learning and the desired change in the schools.

- Initiating the work of curriculum design and classroom implementation of project based learning.
- Making of the school improvement plan and how to implement the plan
- Teachers’ capacity development for project based learning.
- Building a team of 9 faculty members for the program from different disciplines and organizations.
- Last year we did our first Courage to Lead site seminar where school leaders and educators who have been part of our earlier programs came and shared their experiences of implementing the experiential learning inside the classrooms. Around 15 school heads and educators from 7 to 8 schools shared their work. The objectives of the seminar were:
 - School head/educator to share their journey so far i.e. what all they have been able to implement in the area of experiential learning in their classrooms and school, how they went about, their challenges, success stories, etc
 - What has worked for them? What are some of the challenges they are facing?
 - The middle program educators from the Heritage School, where Disha India has been working for last 4 years on how to use projects and expeditions as pedagogy of teaching and learning, shared their experiences and work, key projects, their flow, the end products, etc with all the school heads. Children who have been part of the projects also shared their learnings and experience.
 - Disha India shared the expedition design framework and process with all the participants.

6.5

Courage to Lead, Disha-India

- There was also a session on how to bring change in schools.
- Disha India has designed KHOJ –a learning expedition for children through which we model how to use experience as a source of teaching and learning and how to design and facilitate specific projects for children. Last year, we implemented it in the middle program of the Heritage school. This year we will be doing it in three other 'Courage to lead' schools - DPS, Surat, Akanksha Foundation, Mumbai and Al-ameen Mission, Kolkata. This is really working out to be an effective strategy.
- Disha India has initiated a research project on creating a theory of experiential learning for K-12 education with Experience Based Learning System (EBLS). EBLS is a research organization founded by Dr Kolb. The objectives of the research is to :
 - Re-design and adapt experiential learning cycle and processes to the K-12 school education domain.
 - To work on the Educators role profile (ERP) for school educators i.e. what is the role of an educator in facilitating the experiential learning cycle inside the classrooms.
 - To work on creating the classroom learning cycle based on the theory of experiential learning.
- Last year we also finished the second 'Courage to Teach' program for school educators. So far 50 school educators have been part of the program. It is a 15-day residential program.
- Disha India is also designing a school wide framework for re-inventing the school. It will be for school heads. It came out as one of our learnings from the seminar.
- This year we will be launching the 'Courage to Lead' and 'Courage to Teach' programs in partnership with Experience based Learning Systems, USA.

Action-plan for next three years .

- To redesign the program based on the experience of last 4 years. To build the shared understanding among the faculty members on the purpose, objectives and design of the program
- To further strengthen the network of schools those have been part of Courage to Lead programs by having annual Courage to Lead Seminar for sharing of their success stories, planning and challenges. This year we are having the seminar in the month of September.
- To work on program documentation i.e. documenting the experiences, questions, challenges, dialogues, case-studies, project work, action-plan, reading material and assignments.
- To build the scholarship fund for the deserving participants/schools.
- To have 20 to 25 percent participation from government public schools
- To continue our exploration of the possibilities of joint certification for our programs with an established educational university/organization.

6.6

Language Learning Resource Centre, Shikshamitra

Overall objective of the Project:

- To evolve effective curricula, methodology, materials to teach Bangla and English, especially under difficult circumstances
- By working in government high schools of North 24 Parganas where Swanirvar has intervened and others NGOs

Language Learning Training and Dissemination: English

Govt schools/orgs	7 Government High Schools (HS), 1 MSK & 1 tuition center in N 24 Parganas, West Bengal along with Swanirvar intervention	
Duration; for	Nov, 2009 – Aug, 2011 for classes V-VI	
Objective	To help children in class V To overcome fear of English To pick up the basic skills in English Recognition of the alphabet, Making words, Making sentences, Reading, Writing, Speaking within the first 4-5 months Extended to class VI	
Numbers	12 teachers oriented by 9 workshops & 5 visits, benefiting 881 children	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4 teachers from the old batch took class VI level training ● Some teachers feel that they have been given enough input up to class VIII 	
Special Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There was an exhibition and presentation by Rumi Ganguli (Media HS) and Rumpa Das (Mandra HS) at Swanirvar where they displayed their own material and shared their experiences. This meeting was attended by 20 HMs and secretaries of local high schools. 	
With	Jabala (NGO)	Mukti (NGO)
Duration; for	Jul – Dec, 2011 for classes V-VIII	Jan 2012 – present for classes V-VI
Objective	To pick up strategies of teaching Basic English	To pick up the foundation course and more
Number	10 teachers in 5 centers benefitting ~250 children	17 teachers in 8 centers benefitting ~200 children
Outcomes	Both teachers and children took to learning English with enthusiasm, joy and confidence. [See below *]	Teachers got very enthused by the input
With	Nibedita Seba Mandir (NGO)	Shamil (alt. school)
Duration; for	Apr – May, 2011 for 10-15 yr old children Sep 2011	for teachers in an alternative school

6.6

Language Learning Resource Centre, Shikshamitra

Objective	To gain confidence in writing English independently	To quickly acquire reading and writing skills in English
Numbers	14 children benefited by 5 weekly 1-hour classes	4 teachers attending a 2-day workshop
Outcomes	Children could express themselves in English without struggle.	The discussion with practicing teachers naturally spilled over to various aspects of children.

Language Learning Training and Dissemination: Bangla

With	Hazer Ali Smriti Bidyapith (HS)	Jabala (NGO)
Duration; for	Mar – May, 2011 for class V	Nov, 2010 – Dec 2011 for classes V-VIII
Objective	To teach basic Bangla reading & writing skills followed by other language exercises	
Numbers	80 children benefiting from 2 classes per week	10 teachers benefiting ~250 children
Outcomes	The children picked up the basic reading, writing and word formation in Bangla.	Apr follow up showed clear signs of improvements. But later training was not applied [See below *]
Special Outcomes	When under and non-achieving children found themselves learning, they brought in other children with similar learning levels	*The program got terminated by their funding agency for other reasons.
With	Marfat (NGO)	
Duration; for	Jun, 2010 – Sep 2011 for girls & women (in 14-30 yr age group) involved in bidi-making	
Objective	Accelerated Reading Writing Program	
Numbers	6 teachers, 6 supervisor & 1 coordinator trained by 3 workshops & 3 visits, benefiting 47 children	
Outcomes •	Starting from scratch girls in all centers picked reading and writing in Bangla	
Special Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New initiative with classes III-IV started to improve Bangla and math with the same teachers • Even new teachers got used to the language teaching method thanks to others in the organization • The focus of the organization has shifted from health to education thanks to the above intervention 	

6.6

Language Learning Resource Centre, Shikshamitra

Curriculum & material:

- A set of graded story cards with illustrations by children and self-guided activities getting finalized with printers
- A basic curriculum designed for 10-16 yr olds spanning 2-4 yrs drafted and the initial phases designed

Plans for the next year:

- Training – help & orient groups working with hard-to-reach children & youth, especially in language learning, math and selfdevelopment
- Developing & publishing materials, texts for students & teachers
- Complete the basic curriculum mentioned above



EDUCATION MATERIAL & LITERATURE

Quality education literature helps create an environment conducive to thinking about good education and the ability to weave better activities in schools around children's books and thus take education beyond just the textbook. Our initiatives in this area are very diverse like supporting development of a new children's book by Tulika containing mythological stories on the theme of water from around the world or supporting the Good Books Trust to review and publicize good children's books. We are also supporting the educational journal Contemporary Educational Dialogue. We had earlier supported publishing of a book that draws from contemporary literature on child psychology and presents this to practitioners. Work is also on to translate the book into two other languages.

A graphic novel based on folk stories from Assam, a series of richly visual books introducing basic concepts in science and a book on Philosophy of Education are some of the books in the making.

7.1

Goodbooks.in: A children's literature review website, GoodBooks Trust

Background

The Goodbooks Trust has, in the past, worked towards increasing the availability of children's books produced in India. Together, Wipro and The Goodbooks Trust are creating a website that will serve as a database for good children's literature by using the archives procured from The Book Review (TBR). TBR is a literary journal that has since the 1970's, published reviews of children's books in its special editions. While reviews and articles from these archives will serve as the backbone, the site will also feature reviews of newer books being published as well.

Objectives

Goodbooks.in hopes to fulfill the following purposes:

- Create a space for educators and parents to find good children's literature through reviews
- Make information and issues about children's literature accessible through articles
- Encourage discussion, debate, and sharing on children's books among parents, educators, publishers, writers, illustrators, and anyone interested in Children's literature
- Influence the quality of children's literature through critical feedback and review

Work Progress

Material Organization

The archives obtained from The Book Review have been organized in different ways in order to make it accessible to the reader.

The primary categorization is that of articles and reviews. Articles are essays, interviews, experiences and thoughts on children's literature in India and abroad. They may mention specific books but do not generally discuss them in detail. Reviews look at the featured book in detail in terms of quality and suitability to its audience. Reviews also compare and contrast several books. Articles were organized under common themes and reviews, according to author, illustrator, publisher, and genre.

Designing and Building Goodbooks.in

A usability and visual designer was engaged to design the website's usability and interaction elements, information architecture and visual design. These have been finalized. Website development is currently underway.

Future plans

- Complete website development
- Launch the website
- Engaging with publishers, reviewers and authors to share our reviews
- Exploring partnerships with organizations like TBR and the others in the book/publisher community for new reviews, and other content on children's literature

7.2

Contemporary Education Dialogue

The Aims and Objectives of Education Dialogue Trust (EDT) are the following:

- To publish our Journal, Contemporary Education Dialogue (CED), for a dialogue among researchers and practitioners to engage with each other's ongoing work so as to promote a critical engagement with issues which are of concern to Education in general and to Indian and South Asia education in particular.
- To promote publishable writing and reporting of research and field innovation in education through activities such as workshops, seminars and fellowship and grants for this purpose.
- To engage in any activity that will further the development of the discipline and practice of education.

Our Activities in 2011-2012

Contemporary Education Dialogue (CED) Volume 8, Issue 1 was successfully published by Sage in January, 2011. Contents of CED 8(2) monsoon issue, were submitted to our publisher by the deadline, 1st of March, and were subsequently published in July, 2011. The content page of CED 8(2) is attached.

We had a meeting with Sage to have an overview of their process. We also had two editorial and Trust meetings. We looked into the various issues, related to the journals and resolved them, in order to enrich the quality of the contents, get more contributions and enhance the accessibility to the readers. We decided to have one special issue on Gender and Education, for CED 9(2), which would be guest edited by Sadhna Saxena and Nandini Manjrekar, based on some guidelines for special issue, and one on Higher Education, in future. We decided that, in future, the number of book reviews should be

minimum three and maximum four, and the length of the excerpt of CWC should range from 1500 word to 3000 words.

We transferred all subscriptions to Sage and decided to continue our association with Eklavya program to promote our Journal and get new subscriptions. We also decided to plan to organize some free lectures or writers' workshop or conference for further development of the discipline of education, and engaging more academics with us, without making any commercial profit out of it. In accordance with the suggestions and decision, made in Trust meeting, an auditor from Dalip Sachdeva and Associates has been appointed for making the audited report of Education Dialogue Trust expenses. We also got 12A and 80G certificates from Income Tax department.

The Office of the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI) has sent us a title verification letter to us, according to which the title of our journal, Contemporary Education Dialogue, has been verified officially by the RNI, and 'approved in favour of Education Dialogue Trust', on 21st of April, 2011, and it has been proposed to be published from Delhi .

Major highlights:

After our agreement with Sage and having published one issue by it, we have received quite a good response in contributions, distribution and accessibility of our journal. In the period, from January 2011 to December 2011, we have received and processed more than 25 papers, through various stages of editorial assessment, peer-review, revision and final selection for publication. Some of them were also from the academics outside India, which bodes well and shows our journal is reaching

7.2

Contemporary Education Dialogue

more and diverse people and institutions. We also have two classics with commentary (CWC), with us, for the future issues. As far as book reviews are concerned, we have always been prepared adequately, as our review editors always get the new relevant books reviewed much in advance.

Secondly, we have been able to get our journal published in timely manner, as we have been able to meet all the deadlines for our issues, of our publishers.

Thirdly, since 2003, we have been able to publish two special issues. We are planning to publish two more in future.

Through our special copy editor, Malini Sood, apart from Sage's own copyediting, we have been able to maintain the academic rigour and quality of the contents of our journal.

Lastly, but more importantly, we have been able to engage more widely and critically with the development of the discipline of education, in the context of South Asia. We have communicated to and interacted with various institutions and faculty, interested in our area of concern, and tried to engage them with us through various academic activities.

Specific Challenges:

Sometimes, we have problems in getting the copyright permission for the excerpts, used in Classics with Commentary section, from some classical texts. Earlier we never used to pay copyright permission fee for it, and we used to receive the same conveniently, but it seems after our association with Sage, in every issue, we are asked to pay quite a good sum, ranging from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000 as copyright fee from the publisher of the text, from which the relevant excerpt has been taken.

Plan for the Next Year:

In the next year, 2012-2013, it is expected that volume 9 (1) and 9 (2) would be released as per the usual Sage schedule. We might consider the idea of organizing a writing workshop or a round table / conference, in our meetings. There might be some changes in the editorial board of our journal, CED and authorized signatories of the trust.

7.3

Science Picture Book Series, Tulika Books

Beginner Science Series

The series introduces fundamental concepts in science about the natural world. Richly visual and created for 5 – 7 year olds, it encourages young readers to become active learners; inspiring them to ask questions and discover the wonder of science, each at their own pace.

The five books in the series are:

- Boondi's Story – Water
- Dhooli's Story – Air
- Gitti's Story – Earth
- Bhoomi's Story – Universe
- Beeji's Story – Places on Earth

The series has been conceptualized by Tulika. The visualization, design and illustrations have been done by the students of Professional Diploma Programme of the Srishti School of Design, Bangalore, as a classroom project in the first semester of the academic year 2011-12. The students came up with the idea of introducing the concepts through the stories of small elements associated with each topic. The project was guided by Tulika.

Concept and Approach

The 'big idea' behind the Science Picture Books is that pictures are the most insightful guides to discovering the world around and seeing is the young scientist's first tool. Story and pictures engage children instantly especially at the stage when they are beginning to read. Text and pictures lead children to a particular topic and arouse their curiosity as they turn the pages and absorb both the visual and textual information on them. Visuals help children relate to the text and vice versa and facilitates the discovery of factual information at their own pace.

With minimal text (less than five hundred words per book) and imaginative design and illustrations, the look and feel of the books will ignite interest in basic science concepts. In the classroom, the books can be used by teachers to initiate conversations and group discussions about the topics. For the individual young reader reading on her/his own, the books offer a friendly and accessible way of being introduced to science – an alternative to intimidating text books which is usually their introduction to science. This is especially true in the regional languages. The books will not replace text books but will be a creative supplement to them. Used together they can effectively engage children in the learning of science.

Outcome

Like all Tulika picture books, they will be available in nine languages: English, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Gujarati and Bangla. The series will

- motivate the young readers to become empowered readers by offering an enriching reading experience in science
- reaffirm that science is for everyone and make science literacy accessible to all children
- provide creative science teaching materials for the classroom
- reach the less-privileged children in government and non-government schools
- fill the huge gap in the availability of good science books for children in the different languages

Timeline and Work Flow

August 2011 – Orientation session and briefing about the series by Radhika Menon at Srishti to a class of twenty students.

7.3

Science Picture Book Series, Tulika Books

August- September – Students worked in 4 groups each working on a different visual concept for the books.

September first week – Students made preliminary presentations of their ideas to Radhika followed by discussions

September last week – final presentation of visual concepts for all 5 books by each group to Radhika. The samples brought back to Tulika for selection of the final concept for the books.

October – The group whose concept was selected worked on the books was to finish it in a month. They requested postponing final submission to December before term break.

January- February 2012 – As the work progressed, the pages were being sent to Tulika on email and detailed feedback given at every stage. But the process was slow as the project period was over. Corrections went on through January and the final artwork was sent on February 15th.

March – The books were finalized with text and pictures in place and sent to a Science expert for review. We sent it to Mr S.Vaideeswaran (IIT) who is a father of two children, 4 and 6 years old, and helps out with science classes at the The School, KFI, Chennai. He gave us feedback in April which was very useful. It had mainly to do with the facts on the last pages of each book which was very useful. We have now sent it Rajesh Kindri of Eklavya for his feedback.

May-June – The text will be sent for translation in eight languages.

July-August – Finalising pages of all 45 books (5 x 9 languages)

September – Send to press

7.4

Graphic Novel on folktales from Assam

Background

This project was initiated for the creation of a graphic novel for young adults. The objective was to work on folk stories from the Kokrajhar region of Assam, and produce a graphic novel that would touch upon the various issues that children in a forest village in Kokrajhar during the 1990's would face. Along with a strong ecological concern – that of dwindling forests, man-elephant conflict etc. The book is also influenced by the political turbulence of 1990's Assam. The protagonists of this novel, two young people, in this environment of political instability and adversity, take the help of various characters from folklore and the traditional and current day stories, in their search for solutions and survival.

Work done this year

On an assessment of the stories, it was decided to amend the original objective of the project, and design the book for younger children. The graphic novel has been reworked for a much younger age group (seven plus), and the script and illustrations have been amended accordingly. The story has a simple narrative of friendship and courage and wit, and elements of magic, and should appeal to young children.

In the period of March 2011 to January 2012, the story has been re-written, and the sketches and illustrations completed. The coloring and script is currently being worked at.

Plan for next year

In the next four months (April to July 2012), the plan is to:

- Finish coloring the story and putting in the text
- Doing a round of edits
- Taking the book to publishers

7.5

Book on Philosophy of Education

Introduction

This is about writing an introductory book on philosophy of education within a period of two years. Vishwambar, who is the editor of Shiksha Vimarsh magazine and works for Digantar, Jaipur is working on this book. The idea is to mainly write an original book on the basic problems of education. This book can be used to introduce education and the various issues within education mainly for educational practitioners and field workers in education. This is not to be a book for scholars and academics. It will strive to introduce the educationist to the basic problems in education. Towards this there will be a brief introduction on the nature and kind of thoughts on these problems till now.

Reason to focus on Aims of education

It is commonly understood that education is necessary for all. It is also commonly thought that the aim of education is to teach reading and writing, basic mathematical operations (addition, subtraction etc) and environmental studies. Most educationists do not think beyond what needs to be taught within the classrooms. They do not often think that what is taught in the classroom is to achieve larger objectives and so aren't complete in themselves. Due to this education remains limited to merely teaching some subjects in the classroom.

When people talk about aims of education they talk about it in simplistic terms like the aim of education is the holistic development of the child, or the child's mental or physical development etc. Often there is no clarity on what these mean and even if we accept for a moment that these are the aims of education, then on how we can achieve these or what the relations of these are to classroom practices or how the relations can be established. This is the reason

to have this book on Philosophy of Education focus on Aims of Education.

Contents of the Book

The book will cover the following:

- What is the need for aims of education?
- Explore the debates in Western literature on the aims of education being the development of rationality, critical thinking, autonomy, creative thinking and physical development.
- It will also try to unravel the accepted aims of education and their relations to classroom practices

Update

The literature review of available literature on Aims of education has been completed. The writing process is to begin now.

One of the key challenges, whenever we speak about Aims of education, whatever set of aims we consider, is in how we examine the consistency of these aims. It is common in philosophy to analyse a problem with the minimum amount of entities. If there are too many entities then there maybe overlaps and if there are too little they may not cover the entire process. To give a few examples different philosophers have taken different positions within aims of education. Christopher Winch says that the aim of education is to prepare the child for the adult life. However this seems to include almost everything within education. John White says that the aim of education is individual happiness. However is saying this much enough? It is important within philosophy to give arguments that establish the position to be necessary and sufficient. Identifying these is the key current challenge being faced in the process of writing.



PUBLIC ADVOCACY

Educational thinking is driven by various ideas that are held by educationists, parents and the public in general. Different segments of people may hold different views and sometime there isn't enough interchange of ideas or original research that challenges current understanding.

With this in mind, we take up significant advocacy projects to advocate the cause of good education. These projects also provide means to schools, educators and educationists to understand a specific area and how it could be dealt with in schools.

Our objectives in this area are:

- To provide radical stimulus to public thinking on education by
- To address lack of awareness on important educational issues

This is achieved in different ways including:

- Drawing on the knowledge and experiences among our partner organisations that have worked in school education for decades and
- Generating new knowledge through original research on matter of importance to school education

In the last year the research work on Quality Education Study was completed and large-scale public advocacy was done to share the findings.

8.1

Quality Education Study with Educational Initiatives

Background:

The Quality Education Study (QES) was conceptualized by Wipro and Educational Initiatives (EI) in a partnership mode. This is planned as a multi-year study that will expand the meaning of 'quality' in education to include educational outcomes beyond cognitive learning and study the attributes of quality learning environments. In 2010-11, a large scale study of 89 schools, 54 Principals, 790 teachers and 23,000 students was carried out to systematically collect evidence towards understanding quality in education.

Objectives:

The year 2011-12 focussed on

- Analysis and reports from the data collected in 2010-11
- Advocacy and dissemination of the study findings to school leaders and general public respectively through workshops, and print, social media.
 - National School Leadership Seminars across all the 5 metros to discuss the findings of the Quality Education Study and explore the notions of quality education with schools and educationists.
 - A series of 5-7 short videos to present the study, its' making and findings in a story form.
 - Creating and Managing a website on the idea of Quality Education that will function as a discussion forum and explore the ideas of Quality Education.

Overall Approach:

● **Data Analysis and Reports:**

- Advanced techniques were used to analyze the data collected based on assessments carried out on students in the different subjects and their responses to the attitudes and values

questionnaire. Data collected from the Teacher and Principal on their background, practices and perception using the questionnaires, focus group discussions and face to face interviews were also analyzed.

- The study came up with a number of findings on student learning outcomes and learning environments in "top schools" (as identified through a popular survey) in the metro cities. Many of these findings are available for the first time in the education space in India. The study report, executive summary and media coverage can be accessed at <http://wiproeducation.com/qes>.
- **Key Findings from the Study:**
 - Students in the 'Top schools' of our country exhibit rote learning. Further, there is a dip in student performance compared to a similar study 5 years back and they are behind international averages on questions which require conceptual understanding.
 - Students exhibited diverse thinking on questions on gender equality, acceptance of cultural and religious diversity, civic, citizenship and ecological responsibilities. Some of them indicate a bias which might over time grow into prejudices.
 - Different aspects of learning environments such as Principal's instructional leadership, teacher beliefs in constructivist teaching learning practices, Principals' feelings of self efficacy are associated with better student achievement.
 - Classrooms where teachers and principals do not believe in physical punishment, where students feel involved in the classroom practices and believe

8.1

Quality Education Study with Educational Initiatives

that their teachers' treat everyone equally are also associated with greater student performance and more inclusive student attitudes.

- A majority of Principals think that co-scholastic areas are important for student's holistic development. Data reflects that there is no major emphasis in the school curriculum on these areas.

- **Advocacy and Dissemination of the Study Findings**
National School Leadership Seminars (Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore)

- 2 seminars were organised in 2011-12. The first one in Chennai on 18th February and the second in Kolkata on 24th February
- Printed copies of the study's Main report as well as the 'QES Misconceptions and Common Errors' report were shared with the participants.
- Both the seminars had a session on why Wipro did this study, a presentation on the study findings, a question hour and a panel discussion.
- The audience participation in the discussions in both the seminars showed that they were keen to interact and share their views on quality in education.

- A series of short videos about the study and the findings
 - Preliminary discussions have started on the videos, their content and presentation.
 - The ideas have been discussed with 2-3 agencies which would provide creative support for these videos.

- Creating and Managing a dedicated website for Quality Education Study

The website is undergoing development and is under the beta stage. Preliminary design planned for the website includes a section on QES findings, discussion forum on Quality Education, guest writer columns, event notifications and updates and relevant videos and other media.

Next Steps

- Conducting the Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore National School Leadership Seminars
- Production and launch of the QES Short video series and creating widespread awareness through them
- Official Launch of the Quality Education Study website

Plan for Next Year

For 2012-13, on completion of the advocacy and dissemination of the first year study findings, efforts will be undertaken to further unpack the notions students have on different social, ecological and citizenship issues through video interviews. Research to further unpack the notions of quality will also be thought through and undertaken.

