

Implementing RTE

India has made progress in many aspects which is being acknowledged worldwide. Its citizens are being viewed with respect and admiration. However its progress on basic education leaves a lot to be desired. India is also a country of young people. More than 50% of its population being young, places India in advantageous position. But this demographic dividend may turn into liability unless education and skill levels of its youth are significantly improved. Ensuring good quality education for its population particularly up to completion of secondary school is an indispensable step in the direction of bringing equity and enhancing democracy.

It is in this context that the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education, 2009 (RTE Act) is a landmark legislation. Many provisions have been made in the Act to ensure quality education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years. Specific provisions have been made for democratization of schools and for parents and local communities to play their due roles in shaping and running of the schools in the form of School Management Committees (SMC) and preparation of School Development Plan.

For communities to be able to effectively play that role, they need to be oriented/ trained and supported. Keeping this in mind, SMC trainings for the Govt. schools are arranged under IBC (Italian Bishops Conference) Project of Uday Social Development Society, Bhopal.

SMC is a monitoring group in Govt. schools to see to the developmental activities, academic performance and all other important works are overseen. But in reality, since SMC members are not educated and not informed, the office bearers of the Govt. schools take advantage of their ignorance. Even to the extreme, most of the SMC members do not know that they are members of SMC.

Therefore, SMC trainings were conducted in the villages of Sirpur Cluster; namely Bhagawa , Andharia and salykeda. It was found that among the 79 SMC members participated, majority were members our S.H.G. groups so that a greater access to improve the functioning of the Govt. schools through them.

The Resource Persons for the training were Ms. Nirmala, a social Activist from Khandwa and Mr. Gandhre, the Head of the Education department from Khalwa Block of Khandwa district. They spoke to them in creative manner about the role of SMC members, importance of Education and future of the children.

After the training, the SHG members with the help of the teaches and villagers wrote application to Block Education Officer of Khalwa block for drinking water facility in the school and to Increase the number of teachers in Andharia School. The officer accepted their request and agreed to provide these facilities. It was also interesting to see that after the training, next day onwards, the number of children increased were in the school. The surrounding of the school is kept clean and children are learning be disciplined in the class room. There are few Govt. school teachers who are dedicated and think of the future of the children.

In Sirpur Cluster, we are working in 6 villages and now expanded to 10 villages. This may be a small beginning but we are sure when we keep regular rapport with the community, it will surely bear fruit so that the children are not deprived from their right education. Let us all work towards this same goal and spread this message of the rights of every child.

Reported by

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