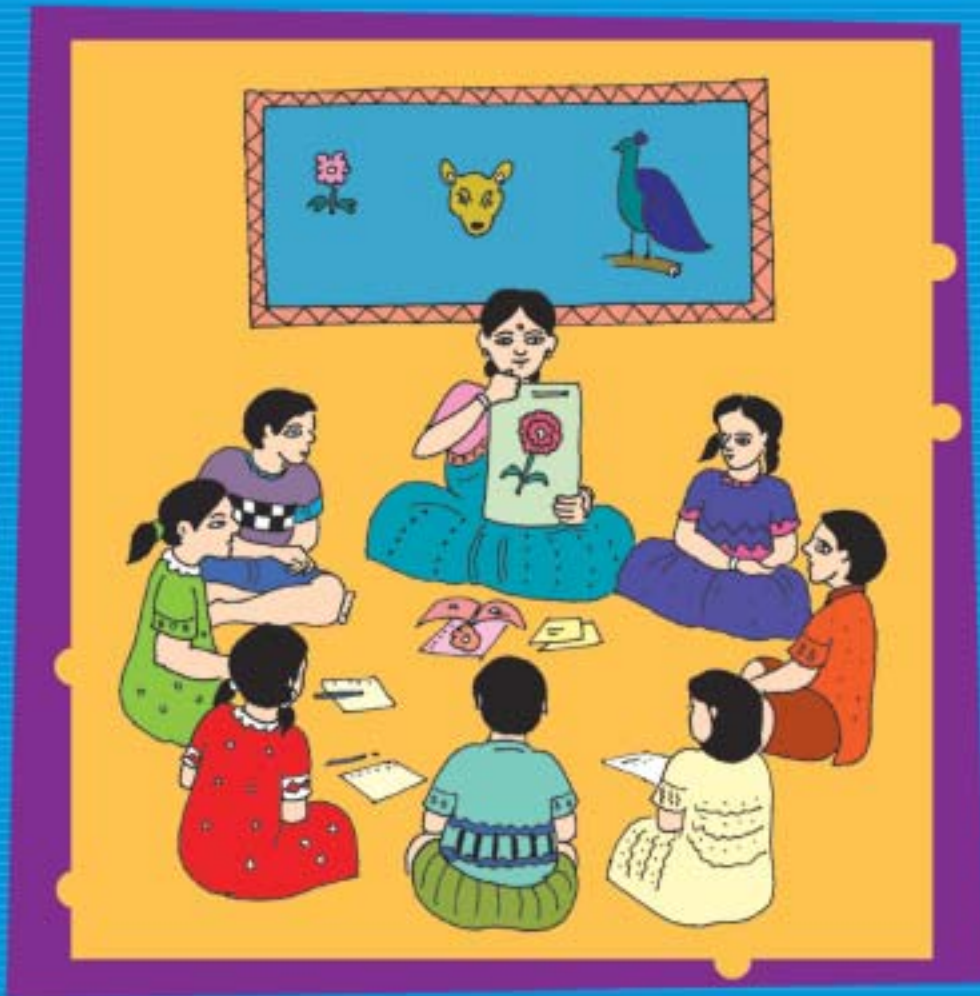


A Promising Start

Processes and Interventions of the
Janshala Programme



Janshala (Joint GOI-UN System Education) Programme
Department of Elementary Education and Literacy
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India



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Foreword

The Janshala (GOI-UN) Programme is a collaborative effort of the Government of India and five UN agencies—UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO and UNFPA - to provide programme support to the ongoing efforts of GOI towards achieving UEE. Janshala, a community-based primary education programme, aims to make primary education more accessible and effective, especially for girls and children in deprived communities, marginalised groups, SC/ST/minorities, working children and children with special needs. A unique feature of Janshala is that it is a block-based programme with emphasis on community participation and decentralisation.

Education has been recognized as one of the cornerstones of growth in India's development goals and strategies articulated in successive Five Years Plans since 1951. In the Seventh Five Year Plan, the focus on education became even sharper and it moved into the forefront of the list of priorities. The National Policy on Education 1992, reiterated the Directive Principles of State's Policy in the Indian Constitution and resolved to provide free and compulsory education to all children till the age of 14. The recently passed 86th Constitutional Amendment has now made Elementary Education a Fundamental Right for all children in the 6-14 year age group

The GOI and the UN system recognize that certain sections remain marginalised. Therefore, it is the goal of Janshala to target girls and the marginalised population of children in selected areas, and improve their attendance and performance in primary education. Children who are marginalised by the formal education system are usually working children, those belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, minorities, disabled children, and children in remote areas, and in particular, girls from these groups tend to be severely marginalised.

The five-year cycle of the Programme has just completed and it is time to take stock and look ahead. The document, 'A Promising Start', shares the approach and strategy of the Programme with reference to community participation, girls education, teacher empowerment, education of urban deprived children, etc. It is our belief that this document would help further strengthen the ongoing efforts of GOI towards achieving UEE.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all those who have contributed towards bringing out this document, particularly Shri Vinoba Gautam, National Consultant, Janshala, who has collated and put together most of the information. My thanks are also due to the participating States for their cooperation and their support in providing the requisite data. I hope that this publication will provide the reader with an insight into some of the strategies adopted by the Janshala Programme in our quest for universal elementary education.

(Amit Kaushik)

Director &

National Programme Manager

New Delhi
December, 2003

Abbreviations

AS	Alternative School
BDO	Block Development Officer
BEO	Block Education Officer
BRC	Block Resource Centre
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CBS	Community-Based Schools
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre
CRP	Cluster Resource Person
DIET	District Institute for Education and Training
DPC	District Programme Coordinator
DRG	District Resource Group
DRP	District Resource Person
DSERT	Directorate of State Education, Research and Training
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EV	Education Volunteer
IPP8	Indian Population Project 8
MGT	Multi-Grade Teaching
MRC	Mandal Resource Centre
MRG	Mandal Resource Group
MRP	Mandal Resource Person
MTA	Mother- Teacher Association
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research & Training
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research & Training
SIERT	State Institute for Educational Research and Training
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TLM	Teaching-Learning Material
VEC	Village Education Committee
VER	Village Education Register
VS	Vidya Sahayak

Glossary

<i>Anganwadi</i>	Early child care centre run by ICDS
<i>Ayah</i>	Nanny
<i>Bal melas</i>	Children's fair
<i>Basti Vikas Samiti</i>	Area development committee
<i>Chikan kurta</i>	Loose cotton shirt with embroidery, specially made in Lucknow
<i>Gram sabha</i>	Village council
<i>Kalajatha</i>	A troupe of artists or their performance, usually carrying a social message
<i>Kishori samooh</i>	Adolescent girls' group
<i>Maa-beti mela</i>	Mother-daughter fair
<i>Mahila mela</i>	Women's fair
<i>Mahila samooh</i>	Women's group
<i>Mandal</i>	Block, subdistrict unit
<i>Mata-palak melas</i>	Mother-parent fair
<i>Mata Samiti</i>	<i>Mothers' Committee</i>
<i>Panchayat</i>	Village local self-government
<i>Prabhat pheris</i>	Morning rallies
<i>Shiksha mitra</i>	Para-teacher
<i>Shiksha Samiti</i>	Education committee
<i>Vidya Sahayak</i>	Education helper
<i>Vidya volunteer</i>	Education volunteer



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Executive Summary

Janshala is a collaborative effort of the Government of India and five UN agencies – UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO and UNFPA – to provide programme support to the government's ongoing efforts towards achieving universalisation of elementary education. Janshala is recognised as the first ever programme in the world in which five UN organisations have collaborated and pooled resources to support an initiative in education. In recognition of the successful multi-agency collaboration, the Janshala programme was chosen as one of the two best practices in the world by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN, and was invited to make a presentation in its special session in New York in 2002.

Started in early 1998, Janshala is a block-based programme, in which the block is the unit of planning and implementation. The programme at present covers 120 blocks and 10 cities in nine States of the country. Originally, it covered eight states, *viz.*, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Bihar, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. With the bifurcation of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, all the programme blocks in two districts of Bihar became part of Jharkhand, and in Madhya Pradesh, one block out of ten went to Chhattisgarh. Thus a new State – Chhattisgarh – was added to the programme, and Bihar was replaced by Jharkhand. Subsequently, coverage in Chhattisgarh was increased by two more blocks and an urban area.

Though Janshala operates mainly in rural areas, an interesting development has been the implementation of the programme in urban areas of some States. Rajasthan became the first and only State with exclusive urban coverage, with Janshala being implemented in four cities of the State. In other States, too, one or two cities have been taken up, apart from the rural blocks. Janshala sometimes is also referred to as the first government programme on primary education in urban areas. The programme blocks have been selected on the basis of indicators such as low female literacy, incidence of child labour and presence of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes population in non-DPEP districts.

Janshala, literally meaning 'community school', has the primary objective to initiate and promote such processes and practices that facilitate increased involvement of community in all aspects of primary education and in effective school management. To this end the programme States have initiated a number of activities and processes at the habitation and school levels. The programme recognises the fact that more than 80% of formal primary schools in the country are multi-grade and, therefore, there is a need for appropriate teaching methods to be adopted by teachers in these schools. The States have tried to address this issue by developing the skills of teachers in the use of a variety of strategies for better classroom practices. Along with this, the effort of the programme has been to improve the performance of teachers in the use of interactive, child-centred gender-sensitive methods of teaching. Through its various other interventions and activities the programme aims to make primary education more accessible and effective, especially for girls and children of deprived communities.

The programme implementation was slow in its initial years. The first year for most of the States was devoted to preparation of the perspective and annual work plans. Some of the States also had to undergo change in the programme areas due to expansion of DPEP. The States also took some time in putting in place the management setup at block and State levels, which is crucial for the success of any programme. Thus, the major interventions and systematic implementation of the programme in most States could begin only from 2000. Apart from being a block-based programme, what distinguishes Janshala from other similar programmes are the flexibility in choice of activities to be taken up under the programme and the norms for their budgeting, and greater emphasis on decentralisation in planning and implementation of the programme. This has encouraged functionaries at block and sub-block levels to try out innovative strategies to address some of the local issues.

The nine States under the programme are very different from each other in terms of the issues of primary education that they have had to address. To a large extent even the blocks in the States are very different from each other. Owing to this, the priorities and thrust areas identified in the plans of blocks and different States differed significantly from each other. Thus, many exciting experiments have been carried out by the programme States, suited to their socio-economic and geographical contexts. While in Jharkhand micro-planning had to focus on the issue of access and enrolment, Karnataka's micro-planning focused more on attendance and retention. Similarly, Rajasthan had to have a separate strategy to suit the urban realities. With these varying shades of programme areas, the interventions and activities also had variety. The effort, however, in all States has been to evolve such strategies in programme areas which could be replicated at larger scale, and such processes which could be sustained beyond the programme period.

This document describes some of the activities and processes taken up by States in five focus areas – community mobilisation and micro-planning; capacity building of teachers; interventions for girls and children with special needs; and alternative schools and urban interventions. The last chapter suggests some of the lessons that the programme has thrown up in the course of its implementation for over five years. Some of them, perhaps, will be useful for future programming in the field of elementary education. Those involved in planning and implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan could also benefit from some of these experiments carried out in Janshala, though on a much smaller scale.

Vinoba Gautam
National Consultant
Janshala



Community Participation and Micro-planning

Community participation is both a development process and a communication strategy based on dialogue and consultation with the community. It aims to empower people in a community to identify their own problems, decide how best to overcome them, make plans and seek appropriate solutions and assistance.

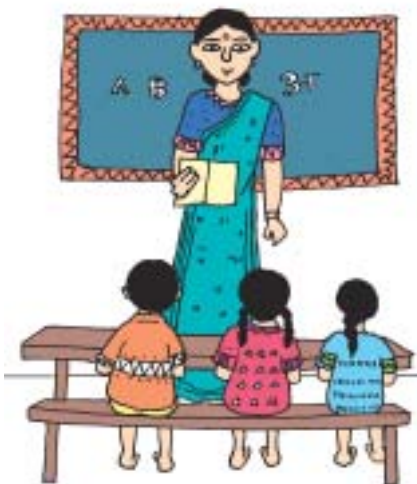
In Janshala, community participation is more than just community members utilising or participating in development programmes. The focus is on improving the community members' capacity to select, organise and manage services and programmes. Decentralisation to the block and village level for programme planning and implementation is another unique characteristic feature of the programme, which ensures that the community is a true partner in the development process.

Community participation is the cornerstone of Janshala because an empowered community is the key to the success of this programme. The basic premise of the programme is that till the community is involved in the process of education, the goal of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) cannot be reached. The programme aims at bringing the community closer to schools by empowering them and by making the formal school system more responsive to their needs and aspirations. This is envisaged in three stages:

1. Community mobilisation and sensitisation;
2. Community participation and support; and
3. Community ownership and sustainability.

Micro-planning

The goals of community participation are sought to be achieved with the help of micro-planning. This is an important tool for mobilising





Elements of micro-planning

In Janshala, micro-planning has two crucial elements:

1. Village/mandal-based planning requires involvement of the village community in mobilising people to enrol each child to achieve UEE, and provide support to schools, either financially or otherwise.
2. School-based planning aims to improve the functioning of the school.

communities, assessing their contextual needs, mapping resources, improving access and facilitating participation and retention in schools. It is usually carried out with the help of trained teachers, who conduct surveys, social mapping and resource mapping exercises.

Micro-planning was a thrust area during the first three months of the Janshala programme. Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) techniques were employed at the grassroots level to enable a realistic understanding of the major issues, including those of gender. It was a continuous process with regular feedback from the field.

As part of this programme, a team of master trainers, using advocacy material, generate awareness among the people and build a rapport with the villagers. Subsequently, they organise a meeting with all the villagers (*gram sabha*) and discuss different aspects of the programme with them. Subsequently, the villagers elect women leaders/mothers' committees, who are trained in various aspects of school management, as well as in the purpose of the programme. This is followed by a detailed house-to-house survey conducted by the women leaders to collect data about all children in the age group of 0-14 years. This helps in identifying out-of-school children and in assessing the need for more schools. The data is then considered by the gram sabha, which takes up the responsibility of bringing back all the out-of-school children to school again.

From factories to classrooms: Eradicating child labour in Andhra Pradesh

The process of micro-planning and community mobilisation has been one of the most successful aspects of the Janshala programme in Andhra Pradesh. This is largely because a lot of importance was given to this aspect during the first few months after the launch of the programme. From the very beginning, the planners were clear that the core objective of the programme was to enhance and sustain community participation in effective school management. The first priority in the state was the eradication of child labour, protection of child rights and enrolment of out-of-school children. A massive campaign was launched for this purpose and villagers were motivated to generate awareness about the ills of child labour and encourage all community members to bring children back to schools. Parents and employers were convinced about the merits of schooling out-of-school children/ child labourers through mainstreaming strategies.

As a result of these campaigns about 1,20,000 children were admitted into regular primary schools. Community members themselves came forward to identify out-of-school children/ child labourers and helped in their enrolment.





Reasons for micro-planning

- Specific attention given to needs of the target groups;
- Programme geared towards the specific needs of the area;
- Decentralised planning process;
- Closer partnership between people and planners; and
- Lowest echelons of the administration and grassroot level structures involved.

The exercise was so successful that at the end of it, the community agreed to provide free land for the opening of new schools and for the construction of school buildings (around 1000 sq. yards for each school).

Community-based schools: A vehicle for community empowerment

In Jharkhand, Janshala carried out an intensive micro-planning exercise to identify out-of-school children and school-less habitations in 10 blocks of Deoghar and Giridih districts. The exercise revealed that there were large numbers of out-of-school children in these blocks, a sizeable number living in habitations without schools. In the 10 blocks covered, about 400 such habitations were identified, with around 15,000 children in the age group of 6-14 years. A majority of these children, especially girls, did not attend any school.



Though many of these habitations qualified for having a formal school, the state government had no plan to sanction formal schools in these habitations in the near future. It fell upon Janshala to arrange some kind of a learning centre for these children. It was decided that the programme would play the role of a facilitator and the community should take the lead in the opening of alternative schools. These centres were called community-based schools (CBS).

Before opening of these centres, an intensive awareness campaign and micro-planning exercise were carried out in the school-less habitations to identify out-of-school children. Volunteers interacted with mothers and other women of the habitations to generate awareness. They were surprised to find that the women were keen on education for their children, and therefore, were ready to support any initiative for starting educational facilities in their habitation. These women were then mobilised to form mothers' committees, which would take the responsibility of opening and managing the school for their children with necessary support from the Janshala programme. The mothers' committees were given orientation training by Janshala volunteers. The committees opened bank accounts, which would receive funds from Janshala for paying salaries to teachers and for meeting other needs of the school. Some of the committees have been motivated to form self-help groups. Thus, groups formed for the purpose of education are also becoming a vehicle for women's empowerment.

Around 250 CBS have been opened in the two districts, the maximum number being in the remote and hilly blocks of Deoghar, where accessibility is poor. Around 10,000



Micro-planning: A glimpse

In Baznagar, Kakori block, U.P., the team of resource persons carrying out the micro-planning managed to reach the school only after crossing open drains and waterlogged lanes. On the way, a number of curious onlookers joined the team when they started the door-to-door survey.

In one of the houses, 13-year-old Tasneem was helping her mother, Hameeda Bano, in stitching *chikan kurtas*. Tasneem was not attending school due to poverty and disability. Apart from her, many out-of-school children were identified. In the evening, the team, along with the villagers, gathered at the school grounds. A school mapping exercise was carried out, in which many villagers such as Hameeda Bano participated enthusiastically. The villagers raised the issues and problems confronting the village, and also helped in developing the village education plan.

children are attending these schools. Girls who were not attending any school due to distance are the greatest beneficiaries of these centres. Since CBS are opened after an elaborate process of micro-planning and capacity building of the community, there is very high community ownership of the school. In some places the community has constructed rooms for the school to be used during the summer and rainy season.

Gender-sensitive committees

In Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, village education committees (VECs) and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) have been formed and their capacities developed to undertake the task of monitoring schools. The State Mission has made it mandatory for all VECs to reserve 30% of their membership for women. Gender sensitisation aspects have also been incorporated in the VEC training module. Such measures are aimed towards boosting the participation of women in community drives. On account of regular community mobilisation drives, the community has become so involved that in several villages they have pooled their resources to build new shelters and even rooms for their schools. It has been a significant achievement towards the prime objectives of the project.

IEC strategies

In an effort to reach out to people and mobilise the community, local art and cultural forms were used liberally. This not only ensured that the communication effort was in the local idiom, in keeping with the local sensibilities but had a higher impact.

Lok Sampark Abhiyan

The Lok Sampark Abhiyan (LSA) was a major participative micro-planning exercise, which facilitated the compilation of people-centred information on the status of primary education in Madhya Pradesh. This initiative helped in identifying the problem areas and in monitoring the success of strategic interventions.

Door-to-door surveys were undertaken to record information, which was subsequently compiled to prepare the village education register (VER). Local





groups comprising *panchayat* representatives and literacy activists were assigned the responsibility of collecting information as opposed to the conventional tradition of just employing the services of teachers. As part of the survey, the status of primary schools was assessed, and lists of children of school-going age and those out of school were compiled. The survey was also used as a medium to encourage and motivate greater participation of the community in educational planning and convince everyone about the merits of primary education.

Kalajathas and Chinnara melas

In Karnataka, a mobilisation campaign was launched in each block at the beginning of the academic year to ensure universal enrolment. During the campaign, block officials, teachers of local schools, village leaders and persons from all walks of life went from house to house and spread the message of primary education, especially for girls and SC/ST children.

Kalajathas, involving streetplays, drama and songs, were used as tools for awareness generation, capacity building of the community, and community mobilisation. They also provided a forum for discussion and encouraged people to express their views. So far, a total of 512 *kalajathas* have been conducted in the Janshala blocks of Karnataka. These evoked a tremendous response from the community. They specially focused on the importance of educating girls. There has been a marked improvement in enrolment of girls after the *kalajathas*.

Chinnara melas provided a platform for interactive participation among children and teachers of different schools and helped to generate an interest in education. These *melas* exposed children, as well as teachers, to forms of joyful child-centred teaching and learning. As of now, 23 *Chinnara melas* have been conducted in the project area.

In UP, groups of children have been organised into *kalajathas*. These have contributed greatly to ensure community participation in the Janshala programme. The children have succeeded in spreading the message of education among out-of-school children. Nine *kalajathas* have performed in several remote and slum areas of Lucknow. Their repertoire includes plays and songs on empowerment of the girl child, child labour and polio vaccine.

Kalajathas: A success story

In Karnataka, *kalajathas* have not only resulted in bringing back out-of-school children but they have also been instrumental in securing infrastructure for the schools. In Koppa, the villagers of Halagodu donated two acres of land to the local school. The villages have also pooled Rs 25,000 to provide drinking water facilities in the school. In Hiriyur, 200 schoolchildren from poor families have been adopted by their relatively better off neighbours. In Sira, the schools of Kyakamaruvu and Vaajarahali have received furniture from the villagers.



Campaigning at the micro level

The response of the community in the programme areas of Rajasthan has been tremendous. It has been estimated that contributions in the form of materials for schools amounted to around 50 lakh. The contributions came in the form of construction of classrooms, tin shades, iron gates, fixing of doors and windows, donations of steel almirahs, fans, tables, chairs, jugs, plates, woollen clothes for the needy, arrangements for drinking water, water tanks, pipelines, water pipes, pump sets, handpumps, etc.

The success of community mobilisation activities in Rajasthan can be attributed to the well-thought out, discreet and rational tactic of campaigning at the micro level (e.g. door-to-door survey) rather than at the macro level (e.g. rallies, meetings, etc.) and can be taken up as a model by other states. Other activities, including health check-ups, *bal melas*, celebrations of festivals at school levels, puppet shows, street plays, film shows, health and hygiene camps, meetings, and rallies at *basti* levels, and creative arts and socio-cultural activities at cluster/zone levels, were organised to encourage community participation.



In addition to the above activities, forums have been set up to facilitate community participation. These include the Basti Vikas Samiti (to manage the needs of the community as a whole), Shiksha Samiti (to manage the academic and educational needs of the community) and parent-teacher collective (to manage the steps taken to facilitate the overall development of children).

School Chalo Abhiyan

Under the School Chalo Abhiyan organised in July 2001 in Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, rallies, songs, street plays and *maa-beti melas* were organised to generate awareness. Apart from these, meetings of VECs, gram sabhas and parents were held, in which participants expressed their determination to enrol all children of school age, especially girls, into schools.

Subsequently, the task of enrolling out-of-school children was taken up. Both dropouts and those who had never enrolled were brought to school. Poor children were provided free textbooks. During this campaign, the Chief Minister addressed a gathering of about 10,000 people on the importance of education for all. As a result of this campaign, about 90 percent of Lucknow's children are enrolled in primary schools.

Ninad

Ninad (resonance) was a campaign for community mobilisation in 10 blocks and two urban slums covered under the Janshala programme during August 2000 in Orissa. It aimed at putting every child in school and creating a responsible community to monitor and support school activities.

During the campaign, 12-15 Ninad teams undertook door-to-door community contact, village meetings, and theme-based cultural programmes with focus on the girl child. Songs, skits and street plays were used to highlight the importance of education for all. In



Sahaj Shiksha Kendra

In Madhya Pradesh, Janshala has called upon the community to come forward and help make the government school a child-friendly learning centre called 'Sahaj Shiksha Kendra'. The community is encouraged to contribute towards school improvement by providing fencing, gardens and play items like swings, see-saws, etc., to make the school attractive. The Sahaj Shiksha Kendras have evoked tremendous community involvement. Villagers and VECs vie among themselves to make their school more attractive!

some blocks, school children were involved in the cultural programmes, along with professional troupes.

Other initiatives

To achieve 100% enrollment, a rigorous survey of eligible children in the age group of 6-14 was carried out and then mass movement campaigns were organised throughout the project area in Maharashtra. These included special enrollment campaigns like *prabhat pheris*, parent-teacher programmes, *mata-palak melas* and welcome to newcomers. A special enrollment fortnight was celebrated in every school. Cultural programmes were organised in schools at cluster and block levels to mobilise children and parents. Programmes like *balanand melas* were held at every village school. *Mahila melas* are held every year at various places in the districts to focus attention on the importance of girls' education.

Mother-teacher associations (MTAs) have been formed in all the blocks in Maharashtra. MTAs have a special focus on girl children and in their meetings, members discuss the problems of irregular attendance among girls with the parents. They also help in organising cultural and educational programmes. They visit schools, and some educated members review the achievement level of their wards. VECs have also been formed in each school, and these keep a constant vigil on the attendance of children enrolled in the schools. As a result of better and cordial relations between teachers and VEC members, the retention rate has increased and dropout rate has come down.

A community awakened

Community participation all over Nashik (Maharashtra) has been tremendous. People have helped in various ways—by donating furniture, by making a fence around the school or by constructing a small hall for extra-curricular activities. It is amazing to see the tribals, most of whom are below the poverty line, making such efforts for the schools. They also take part in school activities and make sure that the school is kept clean. They grow plants and level the ground regularly with dung and mud. In some areas, parents make extra efforts to collect water for the plants. For instance, in Gadaipada, of Peth block, the MTA comes to the school every couple of days, and all the water that has not been used in their homes is used to water the plants. They walk at least 8-10 km to fetch water from the river!



Teacher Empowerment and Capacity Building

The ultimate criterion to judge any programme on the universalisation of primary education is the extent to which it manages access and retention in schools, enhances the teaching quality and improves the levels of child achievement.

The success of any educational process depends on the quality, commitment and expertise of teachers. It has been widely recognised that periodic in-service training is essential in order to keep teachers refreshed about recent pedagogical developments. The training also serves an important purpose of raising their motivational level. In view of this, in-service teacher training, of varying durations and frequencies, is an important component of Janshala.

Apart from teacher training, quality improvement is being brought about through development of teaching pedagogy appropriate to multi-grade, multi-level situations, and introduction of activity-based, child-centred pedagogy. Mechanisms have also been set up to provide technical and academic support.

Teacher training

Several teachers' training programmes are being carried out in the states, in both urban and rural settings. Apart from subjects, the training programmes mainly focus on understanding children and their learning processes, activity-based (joyful) learning and its components, developing activities in the classroom, managing multi-grade situations in the classroom, preparing teaching-learning material (TLM) and handling the problems of disabled children. Training modules have been developed keeping in mind local contexts, and teams of trainers are in place in most states. Workshops, training camps and exposure visits are also conducted. Some states have devised innovative programmes for teacher training.



Chaithanya

Chaithanya is an in-service training for teachers, designed by DSERT. The training module includes the concept of theatre in classroom transaction. A three-day training was given to the project personnel on theatre in teaching and learning language, mathematics and environmental science. *Chaithanya* is a child-specific but textbook-oriented method of teaching.



In addition to teachers, headmasters of all primary schools are oriented to child-centred pedagogy and to the concept of *samudaya shala* (community school). The headmasters are also imparted training in management aspects. A Bangalore-based NGO, Jagruthi develops their training module.

Training of Shiksha Karmis

In Madhya Pradesh, programme blocks have three types of teachers—traditional assistant teachers, teachers appointed by local bodies called *shiksha karmis* and the *gurujis* of EGS schools. All teachers and *shiksha karmis* were given training under the programme on techniques of effective teaching in multi-grade classrooms and preparation of TLM and self-learning materials. Teachers have also been trained to impart computer education through the HeadStart programme. Student-friendly educational software has been used in the training.

Teachers' training camps are organised at regular intervals. Each camp comes up with easy teaching techniques, new teaching aids and kits.

Training of SJ and RJ teachers

In Rajasthan, the Bodh Shiksha Samiti trains prospective Samudayik Janshala (SJ) teachers for 60 days. The first 40 days are spent in classroom transaction. The major topics covered during this period are concepts and issues of education, psychology and sociology of learning pedagogy, understanding community mobilisation and school mapping, teaching of language, mathematics and environmental science, etc. The remaining 20 days are spent in interaction with the community in the field—the slums—and with their coordinators. Here, they get trained on how to initiate an SJ.

Rajkiya Janshala (RJ) teachers are trained by master trainers at the zonal level for 15 days, with special emphasis on child-centred teaching methodology and community involvement in education. The headmasters of the schools are also given a week long training. A total of 2536 RJ teachers, 389 headmasters and 92 master trainers have been trained. Bodh Shiksha Samiti, a Jaipur-based NGO, acted as a technical support agency for preparation of modules for these trainings and training of master trainers.

Other Initiatives

Training of Core Trainer Team

In Orissa, a Core Trainer Team (CTT) has been constituted, consisting of 45 members drawn from DIETs and primary schools, along with resource trainers. The CTT plans and



prepares training modules for pedagogical activities, and conducts training programmes at the state, district and block levels. It also monitors the work being done at the block level. Almost all categories of primary school teachers, Cluster Resource Coordinators (CRCs), School Inspectors, Block Resource Coordinators (BRCs) and headmasters have undergone two rounds of training.

Ten-day training in UP

The DPEP training module was adopted for training of teachers in UP. Modifications were made in the module according to need, for example, development of module on multi-grade teaching for the first time, which has been replicated in other training programmes. The 10-day training programme consists of training on teacher sensitisation, use of textbooks, multi-grade teaching and time management, group learning, TLM development, classroom activities, and exhibition of TLM. All teachers have received this training. To improve the quality of teaching, a number of exposure visits have been organised for teachers and resource persons in order to observe various aspects of teaching and learning.



'Ujala' & 'Samajh' training in Jharkhand

In Jharkhand, almost the entire target teacher population—2470 primary school teachers—has been administered training by a team of 12-15 master trainers. The initial 10-day residential training programme is similar to the "Ujala" module of the Bihar Education Project (BEP). Theoretical classes are conducted during the first five days and experiential training, complemented by the preparatory theoretical background, is discussed during the remaining five days.

The second training module called "Samajh" has been developed by teachers themselves. All teachers of the two districts have received training on the "Samajh" module as well. Community-based schools (CBS) have been opened in many habitations of Jharkhand which do not have a school within a radius of 1.5 km. CBS teachers are given residential training of 30 days. During the first fifteen days, theoretical background in subjects such as education, child development, women's empowerment and girls'

Nursery teachers trained

Under the ASHA project in Maharashtra, 24 nursery schools were set up in Talasari district in the year 2000. As the teachers were not trained, a training programme was arranged in the Savings Hall Panchayat Samiti, Talasari. During this programme, 24 nursery school teachers were trained by two Resource Persons and Extension Officers.

The training focused on methods to run nursery schools, attracting children to school, and making nursery education activity-oriented with songs, stories, nursery rhymes and action songs. This training helped the teachers in improving educational standards, as well as administration of the primary schools. In a remote place like Talasari, having a nursery school is a boon, as there was no nursery school or *anganwadi* here. More than 800 children have benefited from the 24 nursery schools that have been set up.



education is taught. During the subsequent fortnight, they are trained in new teaching methods.

In Andhra Pradesh, in-service teacher training has been conducted for all teachers, headmasters, ECCE instructors, mandal resource groups and the monitoring and supervisory staff in all programme areas. The training programme was conducted in two sessions, each of which was for a fortnight. Workshops to prepare model TLM were also conducted. Eighteen-day induction training has been conducted for para-teachers to help them understand the various aspects of classroom pedagogy. The training programmes were conducted during the summer break to avoid disruption of the academic calendar.

Multi-grade teaching

Teaching in schools generally means each class having one teacher teaching all the subjects or several teachers, each assigned a different subject. This kind of instruction is known as single-grade or mono-grade teaching.



Janshala has a strong mandate to experiment with strategies for addressing effectively the multi-grade situation existing in schools. One of the major objectives of Janshala is *to improve performance of teachers in the use of interactive, child-centred, and gender sensitive methods of teaching in multi-grade classrooms*. Towards that objective, the Janshala states took different initiatives to improve the teaching learning in formal schools, which were mostly multi-grade in nature. In-service teacher trainings were organised and some of the existing models of so-called multi-grade teaching (Rishi Valley, Bodh Shiksha Samiti and Gram Mangal in particular) were adapted in states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

The emphasis in all these experiments was on dividing a grade into homogenous groups of children on the basis of learning levels, introduction of learning ladders within a grade and use of certain varieties of teaching-learning materials which would supposedly encourage peer group learning and self learning. The emphasis, however, differed between states, depending either on their conceptual design of multi-grade teaching method or on the approach of the model adapted by the state. Though there has certainly been remarkable change in the classroom activities, the essence of multi-grade teaching could not be captured fully which could transform the multi-grade situation into an opportunity to promote better learning compared to the mono-grade situation.

There experiences threw up a number of important issues related to effectiveness of the new teaching-learning process. It is felt that grouping alone does not affect student learning. Successful learning is dependent not only on organisational strategies but also on the quality of the instructional practices. At present, there is a need for developing further understanding on the part of teachers and trainers alike about the instructional practices suitable for multi-grade or multi-age classes. The most popular instructional practice in most of these experiences has been to teach a lesson to one grade while the other grade works on follow-up activities to previous instruction (individual seat work). The teacher time is usually divided between two or more groups. Moreover, in most



Joyful learning: Attracting children to school

Mukesh was a student of class III in the State Primary School, Naveen Gandhi Nagar, Jaipur. He had not attended school for three months. In the meantime, children of his school went on trips, took part in kite-flying competitions, birthday celebrations, clay modelling, drawing, singing, and story-telling. Mukesh came to know of these activities from his sister, who was also in the same school.

Mukesh had always wanted to do these things. Now, he wanted to go to school but was afraid that the teacher would not be happy, as he had been absent for so long. When the teacher heard of this, she immediately sent for Mukesh and welcomed him to the school.

cases single-grade level instruction is emphasised, wherein, the groups are homogenous in terms of the age and learning level of children. The students in multi-grade classes, though sitting in group, are not necessarily engaged in learning from each other. Students are rarely regrouped for instructions across grade lines. The Studies have time again shown that cross-grade grouping can result in consistent positive achievement affects. Using ineffective grouping arrangements and relying on single grade instruction make the multi-grade class no different from the single grade class and thus minimise the potential positive effects of multi-grade grouping.

Janshala has analysed the performance of these experiments. Based on the analysis, the second phase of the experiment will be directed towards eliminating their shortcomings and development of a model of effective teaching-learning process in multi-grade/multi-level classrooms. The multi-grade situation will be taken not as a problem but as an opportunity to create a school where children learn better, their innate abilities are enhanced and each of them learn at their own pace.

Nali Kali of Karnataka

Under *Nali Kali*, learning takes place systematically in accordance with age-wise competency in an interactive situation. All teaching-learning processes take place through songs, games, surveys, story telling and use of educational toys. In keeping with the decision to implement Nali Kali in the blocks from the academic year starting June 1999, training of teachers began in the month of January itself. Teachers undergo a 12-day intensive material preparation workshop, which lays emphasis on internalising the entire Nali Kali teaching mechanism, whereby the teacher's role becomes that of a facilitator.



MGT Training in Maharashtra

In Maharashtra, MGT training is being provided under the guidance of Gram Mangal Aine. ASHA has launched the programme in some selected schools in the programme blocks. The training covers the use of TLM, SLM and peer learning. The new approach in teaching learning has not only solved the problem of teacher shortage in the schools but also improved the rate of attendance and retention.



Samakhya: Transforming schools

The Samakhya programme in Madhya Pradesh has brought about a dramatic change in pedagogical communication. The teaching method based on rote learning has been consigned to history. Students are taught alphabets, numbers, colours, etc., by means of action songs and riddles. There is a constant effort to involve them in play-way and activity-based learning. Many of them prepare their own TLM after some initial training. Teaching aids are developed from low-cost material or no-cost material such as torn cloth, pebbles, used paper, old bottles, flowers, leaves, tamarind seeds and other such things.

One of the teachers exclaims, “The change is visible. Parents never used to visit the school. Now that children go back and sing the songs that they have learnt, parents know that something is happening in the school. They come to see the newly painted school.”

Ananda Lahari of Andhra Pradesh

In Andhra Pradesh, orientation training has been given to teachers on ‘Ananda Lahari’, a method of joyful learning in multi-grade situation. Almost all the schools have been supplied with kits.

MGT Cards

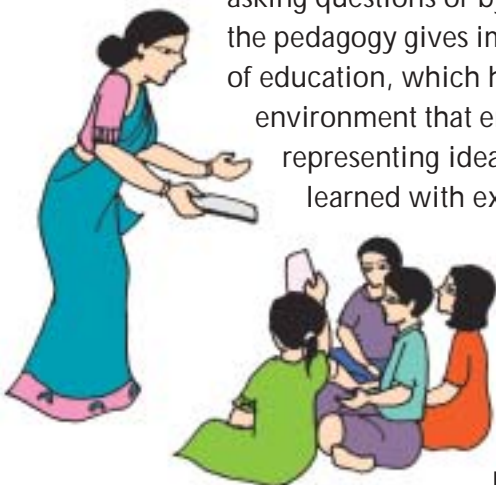
In Rajasthan, teachers in both SJs and RJs are given training in MGT to teach children of primary school. For multi-grade teaching, MGT material has been prepared at state level. Every lesson is divided into three parts and every part is further divided into three sub-parts. On each sub-part, MGT cards are prepared. The cards include teacher-directed activity cards, group-directed co-learning cards, and individual self-learning cards.

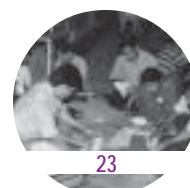
Recently, Janshala in Jharkhand has entered into a contract with Rishi valley to introduce multi-grade teaching in its schools.

Activity-based learning

Learning is made interesting through various activities, which may be indoor or outdoor, group or individual. Teachers design learning activities to correspond with the child’s stage of development. They also support an activity a child has selected, by asking questions or by giving ideas, suggestions, and providing materials. In Janshala, the pedagogy gives importance to this kind of activity-based and child-centred method of education, which has made learning joyful for children. It brings about an environment that encourages self-expression in different ways like articulating views, representing ideas, for instance, with colours and words, illustrating the lessons learned with examples, and clarifying doubts with the teacher without any apprehension or hesitation.

This method is now appreciated by teachers, as well as parents and children. Almost all schools have introduced this method of teaching and learning. This encourages competition among groups and peer-to-peer learning within a group. Learning takes place systematically in accordance with age-wise competencies in





an interactive situation. The children are grouped; they master the competency and move on to the next group to learn the next level of competency. Walls are widely used in almost all schools for painting and learning purposes.

Teaching-learning material

Teaching-learning materials (TLMs) are an important component of activity-based (joyful) learning that has been adopted in Janshalas. Teachers are trained in developing TLM, and they often guide students to develop such materials. TLMs have created opportunities for trying out different packages of learning with innovative methodologies. They have generally been well received by teachers, as they have helped ease their academic problems. TLMs have also simplified the teaching approach, which in turn has succeeded in attracting the students' interest. Teachers are given an annual grant of Rs 500 to purchase materials for developing TLMs. Many of the teachers also further improvise the available material.

Apart from the teaching packages, teachers also use locally devised techniques, utilising locally available materials like pebbles, wild fruits, etc.

Academic support and monitoring

Monitoring and academic support are an integral part of the Janshala programme. District, block and cluster resource centres have been constituted in all states. BRCs provide in-service training to teachers on an ongoing and regular basis. CRCs, consisting of groups of schools, provide technical support to teachers on a daily basis.

In all states, technical and academic support is provided by the respective Department of Education, DIETs, SCERTs, and NGOs working in collaboration with the programme.

In Rajasthan, the State Technical Support Group is led by Bodh Shiksha Samiti, an NGO in Jaipur. Besides Bodh, this group also consists of State Institute for Educational Research and Training (SIERT), District Institute for Education and Training (Jaipur), NCERT, Sandhan and other NGOs.





Education of Girls and Special Children



Education is a human right with immense power to transform, and it should be ensured to the girl child as a right and an opportunity. Education for girls is among the greatest initiators of social development. It equips them with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to make the most of their abilities, to lead healthier lives and to protect themselves from discrimination and violence. However, girls' education should not be taken up in isolation. It should include education of women also.

The Janshala programme supports and initiates activities that help girls gain access to schools and complete their education. Measures are adopted for sensitising women's groups in the community, setting up of alternative educational facilities for girls, provision of separate toilets for girls and training teachers to be more sensitive to girls' needs.

Kishori Samooh

In Rajasthan, Janshala has initiated the formation of adolescent girls' groups called Kishori Samoohs. In addition, women's groups called Mahila Samoohs have also been formed. The concerned NGO working in the area trains these groups in life skills by organising various activities such as health awareness camps, general and hygiene awareness activities and activities on HIV/ AIDS awareness.

Vocational courses such as sewing and typing have also been started in Jaipur and Ajmer cities with the help of NGOs.

Summer Camps

In U.P., Janshala organises summer camps in various blocks and urban areas of Lucknow every year in the month of June. These camps identify, enrol and mainstream dropout



and never-enrolled girls. In each of these camps, lasting 10-15 days, girls are provided training on life skills, health education, vocational training, as well as elementary knowledge of language and mathematics. At the beginning of the camp, the girls are divided into four groups according to their learning level. They are evaluated again on the 8th and 15th days to determine their progress and suitable entry point in formal school after the camp.



The camps are located in areas with high number of out-of-school girls, which are identified using cohort analysis, EMIS data and household survey figures. In 2003, camps were held at 40 such locations, each having 30-40 girls, from 9-23 June. In all, 1531 girls benefited from these summer camps. This year, 30 of these camps will be converted into alternative learning centres for adolescent girls. Another residential camp for adolescent girls will be opened, which will enable the girls to complete five years of primary schooling in one year.

Bridge Course

In Andhra Pradesh, upper primary schooling facility is not available in most parts of the project area villages. Due to this, parents are not sending their girl children to school after primary education. To redress this problem, the government has sanctioned upgradation of 48 primary schools to upper primary schools. There is a residential bridge course at Nimmakuru, organised by Mahila Praanganam. Balajyothi is a residential bridge course camp being run in the slums of Hyderabad, in which 300 adolescent Muslim girls have been enrolled and mainstreamed.

Residential and non-residential bridge courses are also being run in other states.

Kishori Programme

Various interventions are being undertaken under the Kishori Programme for the education and mainstreaming of adolescent girls in Maharashtra. Mahila melas and kishori melas are organised during enrolment drives. A special training programme on life skills education for girls was conducted with the help of MELJOL, an NGO, for representatives of the Education Department and teachers, to enable them to give extra inputs to girls, and handle their difficulties. The focus of the programme was on methods to increase the self-confidence of girls and make them realise that they were equal to boys. After the training, the participants were expected to conduct camps for girls in their respective talukas, with the help of modules provided at the workshop.



Apart from imparting life-skills training to girls under the Kishori programme, mother-teacher associations (MTAs) have been set up in each school. In the monthly meetings of MTAs, the problems of girl children are discussed, and the mothers are requested to send their daughters to school regularly. Alternative learning centres have been set up, from which a large number of girls are benefiting.



Inclusive Education

Inclusive education (IE) has evolved as a movement to challenge exclusionary policies and practices, and has gained ground over the past decade as a favoured approach in addressing the learning needs of all students in regular schools. All children should learn together wherever possible, regardless of difficulties, disabilities or differences. Such an orientation requires a concerted effort amongst teachers, schools, parents, families and the community.

The Persons with Disability Act of 1995 places statutory responsibility on the central, state and local governments to ensure that every child with disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment.

IE in Janshala

The inclusive education programme in Janshala blocks aims to extend educational facilities to all children. It includes education for all and equal educational opportunities to every child. The educational needs of special children and integrating these children into the school are among the thrust areas of the Janshala programme.

In Karnataka, the implementation of the IE programme was started with a three-phase training programme for Mandal Resource Persons (MRPs). This includes developing existing teachers as resource persons to deal with the needs of children with disabilities. The training gives the resource persons practical knowledge about the assessment of impairments, and about the unique curriculum for five disabilities through institutional visits and practice teaching. The MRPs have been provided with resource kits containing training manual, identification checklist, functional assessment guide, audio and video cassettes for training general teachers.

Bringing the light of education into their lives...

- Ashok Kumar from Guligenahalli cluster suffered from cerebral palsy, and had not stepped in a school till his 10th year. He finally got the chance to attend school after he received a wheelchair at the medical camp at Sira in Tumkur.
- In Holenarasipura, Y.B. Manjunath, an intellectually impaired child, was able to attend school due to the efforts of Venkatashmurthy, the resource teacher. Venkatashmurthy himself took care of the child's behavioural management. Initially, the child went with the teacher wherever he went. Gradually, the teacher made him sit in the class by explaining to him that he would come and see him every hour. The boy's behaviour started changing gradually, and now he sits in the class and studies with the support of his fellow students.
- Anil Kumar, a physically challenged child of eight years, was provided a wheelchair and mainstreamed under the programme "Ba Marali Shalegae" (Back to School).
- In Haliyal, the mother of a child with locomotor disability said that seeing her child stand on her own feet after receiving calipers was a greater reward than receiving gold.

All the successful examples described above are the outcome of the inclusive education programme of Janshala in Karnataka.



The MRPs have identified nearly 10,000 children with disabilities in their clusters. They visit schools in the afternoon to assist teachers in meeting the needs of such children. They maintain individual records for each disabled child, which gives information about the medical certificate, aids provided, case study of the child and individual educational plan.

Apart from the training of MRPs, the IE programme includes one-day orientation for BEOs and BRCs, as well as three-day orientation to regular teachers. A number of camps have also been organised for children with disabilities, where they were provided with aids such as calipers and hearing aids. Due to these interventions, 44 per cent of the dropout disabled children have been mainstreamed.

Under the ASHA project in Maharashtra, general teachers have been given a special 45-day training in integrated education for the disabled (IED). In five tribal blocks, disabled children have been identified through medical check-up with the help of ALIMCO and doctors at the civil hospital in Nashik. These children were provided with aids and appliances such as hearing aids, visual aids and wheelchairs.

In UP, an intensive two-day training is being provided to all primary school teachers and para-teachers (shiksha mitras) on inclusive education. The training has led to a significant impact in the areas of classroom teaching and use of activity-based mode of teaching. In addition to teachers' handbook, teachers are getting support from DIET mentors and NPRC coordinators. The achievement levels of children have also improved as a result of the training. Of the 1,67,254 teachers trained through mass training, 27,938 were trained on IED. Apart from these, 52 district coordinators, 190 resource persons and 525 master trainers were also given various types of training.



Inclusive education has been introduced in all 70 districts of UP. A total of 56,349 children with special needs in the 0-14 years age group have been identified, and 46,952 of them have been integrated in schools. UP DPEP has also developed the Individualised Education Programme, which is a planning and monitoring tool to ensure that each child with disability is provided education and appropriate related services according to his or her needs.

In Orissa, all blocks have submitted detailed plans for IED activities to be started from June 2003.



Urban Interventions

Most of the major initiatives in education concentrate on rural areas, especially the marginalised sections such as the scheduled castes and tribes. However, large segments of the same marginalised population are constantly on the move to urban areas in search of livelihood. These people are mostly forced to settle in city slums. Hence, most Indian cities have large and rapidly increasing slum populations. Thousands of children live in these slums without any access to educational facilities.

Though Janshala has a rural focus, the programme also has a number of significant urban interventions in several states. The programme in Rajasthan operates only in slums of the four cities (Jaipur, Ajmer, Bharatpur and Jodhpur). Other urban interventions are in Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad), Orissa (Puri, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar), Chhattisgarh (Bhillai) and Uttar Pradesh (Lucknow).

NGO initiatives in Lucknow

The NGO called Better Education Through Innovation (BETI) joined hands with Janshala and took the initiative in bringing out-of-school children back to school in the two urban educational wards of Lucknow where Janshala was operating. Another NGO, Pratham, which was already associated with Janshala, Jaipur, showed its interest in working with Janshala, Lucknow.



BETI was given the responsibility of implementing primary and girls' education, training, evaluation and monitoring in the two wards. It carried out a survey in the bastis, which also helped in raising awareness about the programme and the organisation. A 25-member core group was constituted to provide educational support at the school level. The members were selected from the bastis and they



received a one-day training to acquaint them with the programme. This core group helped in bringing the programme closer to the community. The major achievements of BETI include:

- A “School Chalo Abhiyan”, during which about 700 children were enrolled in schools.
- Alternative education centres started, for which teachers (*bal mitras*) were selected by the core group, and were given a 5-day training. Now there are 52 such centres in Hazratganj and Sadatganj wards, in which 1250 children are enrolled. Six hundred children from these centres have been enrolled in formal schools.
- Bridge courses started for school dropouts.
- A school building constructed with local support, as well as a government grant of Rs 5000.
- Learning centres opened in which learning materials are provided to children.

Pratham started work in Nishatganj ward in November 2001. It first carried out a survey of Purana Takiyan basti. They found communalism and irresponsibility of parents to be major problems. Pratham adopted a three-pronged approach in their work—contact, cooperation, and self-dependence.

Pratham has started bridge courses for out-of school children in Hasanganj and Wazirganj area. There are now 60 centres offering bridge course, in which 1650-1700 children are enrolled. Fifty-five teachers of this course received a six-day training in January 2002. Pratham aims to mainstream children in the bridge courses.

Pre-schools/play schools

To successfully cope with the demands of formal schooling, children under the age of six need to have adequate nutrition and an introduction to learning through informal methods such as play-way learning. This is because even in those habitats where accessibility is not a problem, statistics show a huge dropout rate and a high number of children who have never been enrolled in schools. Detailed studies have revealed that the main cause for this is child labour, sibling care, and lack of preparedness for school.



In Rajasthan, Janshala has initiated different kinds of pre-schools such as anganwadis, play schools and early childhood care and education (ECCE) centres in the city slums. The gains of initiating such pre-schools are manifold:

- Younger children are safe and are properly taken care of at pre-schools, while older children (especially girls) are not burdened with the responsibility of taking care of their younger siblings, which prevents them from securing education.
- The retention rate of children who have attended pre-schools tends to be higher.
- Pre-school training helps the child master elementary concepts, which facilitates formal education later. It also helps the child develop basic social skills.
- Awareness regarding early childhood care and education is enhanced in the community.

There are 148 anganwadis functioning effectively in Rajasthan—97 in Jaipur and 51 in Bharatpur.



Janshala in Andhra Pradesh has started the Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme in the compound of the primary school itself. While the older children attend classes, their younger siblings stay in the play school. The timing of the play school matches that of the school. A teacher and an *ayah* are provided for each play school, which usually functions in thatched huts built by the community. Play schools are set up under the project proposal of IPP8 (Indian Population Project 8), which envisaged the setting up of such schools in urban areas. Play schools can also be termed “urban pre-schools”.

Bridge course

A residential bridge course camp for urban out-of-school girl children was organised in Hyderabad. It aims to bring back out-of-school girl children to school with active participation of the community. To generate awareness about this programme, basti volunteers, former schoolteachers and community leaders are involved in the project. There is an intense process of preparing children, their families, the community and the formal school prior to starting a bridge course.

The residential nature of the course not only keeps children away from work but also helps in building their confidence. In every slum where the number of out-of-school children is very high, a core team of activists is identified, before the initiative is started. Known as basti volunteers, these activists are those who have completed school education and are interested in working to wean children away from work and bring them back to school.

Alternative schools

Janshala in Orissa has made efforts to provide education to poor and marginalised children of urban slums in Bhubaneswar, Puri and Cuttack. One hundred alternative schools have been opened in the slums of Bhubaneswar through identified NGOs.

The teachers in these AS centres are called education volunteers (EVs). These EVs have undergone a 12-day training from the programme. More than 2000 students are enrolled in these schools. The EVs conduct classes for four hours and then spend an hour interacting

Hyderabad interventions

- Main objective is to mainstream never-enrolled and dropout girls in the age group of 9-14 years.
- Parents are motivated through intensive educational campaigns.
- Instructors are appointed in the ratio 1:40.
- Engaging para-teachers (vidya volunteers).
- Enrolment drives during Janmabhoomi.
- Teacher selection without weightage to interview.
- Convergence of anganwadi with ECCE.
- Multi-coloured textbooks.
- Free textbooks.
- Annual academic calendar.



with the community. EVs also prepare TLMs for use in the classroom. Centre supervisors visit two or three alternative schools daily to monitor, train and provide onsite help to EVs.

Samudayik Janshala

In Rajasthan, Samudayik Janshalas (SJs) are established in slums with no government schools, and in which more than 50 per cent of the children are non-school going. These are full-time alternative learning centres.

The concept of Samudayik Janshala emerged from the grassroots realities that there were areas within the city, mostly slums, where children had no access to primary education. Experience and various studies have shown that children living in these areas are not only deprived of education but also suffer from other deprivations, viz., emotional, physical and mental, arising out of poverty, scarcity and exploitation. Children who have been uprooted from their habitation in rural areas need education of a different kind. According to baseline assessment findings, the number of government schools in slum areas is grossly inadequate. Therefore, the first logical intervention was to provide them with some kind of learning centre, where they could send their children for education. Thus, the concept of SJs came into existence.



The goal of an SJ as an alternative learning centre is to target girls and children of marginalised population living in unserved city slums, to ensure their regular attendance and retention in primary education. SJs have now become an important intervention of Janshala in the cities of Jaipur, Ajmer and Bharatpur, where the Janshala programme is underway. There are 106 SJs in Rajasthan, having 137 teachers, providing education to 5284 children, out of which 55 per cent are girls.

Samudayik Janshala: Bringing hope

Moving through a labyrinth of narrow lanes, one reaches the Samudayik Janshala at Vedpur basti, where nine-year-old Ajay Sonval points to a concrete building and says, "That is my school." He goes on to say, "I love my school and teacher," his face glowing with pride and joy.

Ajay has been studying in the Janshala for the past one and a half years. Before that he used to clean toilets for the municipality. He is the eldest of five siblings, who are all studying in the Janshala.

Ajay wants to be a teacher, and says proudly, "I can write my name both in English and Hindi, and I read out the newspapers and letters to my father." At present, Ajay is the leader of a group that goes around the slum, along with the teacher, convincing parents and children in the community about the importance of education.



Bridging a gap

Bridge courses are meant to help out-of-school children achieve the competency levels appropriate to their age. After the course, children are enrolled in formal schools in classes appropriate to their age.

Bridge courses are residential camps of 4-12 months' duration. The first phase of the course, which lasts 15 days, is aimed at creating an interest in education. This is done through games, story telling and other creative activities.

In the second phase, children are grouped age-wise and are introduced to numbers and alphabets. There are no prescribed textbooks and methods, and teachers evolve their own methods and activities. Children participate in developing TLM and are encouraged to read and write. Weekly evaluation of children's progress is done.

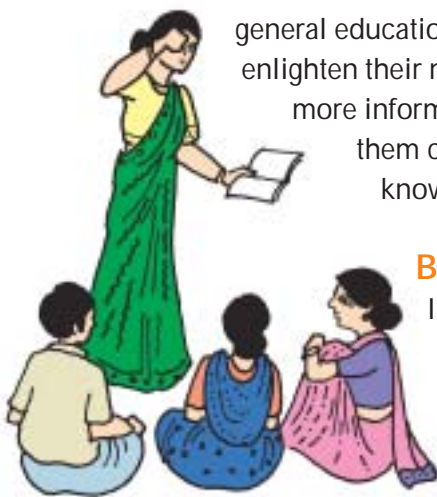
In the third phase, children are prepared for formal school and the admission test. They are grouped class-wise and textbooks are used.

Adolescent learning centres

In Rajasthan, adolescent learning centres function separately for boys and girls, as most communities in the selected cities oppose adolescent co-education. The centres are named *Kishori Samoohs* for adolescent girls and *Kishore Samoohs* for adolescent boys. In addition, there are Creative Activity Centres, which conduct various activities for the youth to increase their awareness on social issues, thereby making them better citizens of the future. Each such centre has a teacher, specially trained to deal with adolescent problems.

Adult learning centres

Socio-educational forums, *Mahila Samoohs* and *Vachnalayas* are initiated in Rajasthan to meet the educational needs of older members of the society. These centres provide general education to adults. They aim to widen their perspectives of the world, enlighten their minds with books, enable them to fight for their rights, make them more informed of the responsibilities and duties of a citizen, and above all, to help them come out of their narrow world and expand their minds with knowledge and wisdom.



Bridge courses

In Rajasthan, Janshala runs bridge schools for non-enrolled and dropout children in the 6-14 years age group. These schools primarily focus on helping children to get enrolled in formal schools, thereby increasing the retention rates by way of a smooth transition from their current situation to the formal school system.

Pratham, Mumbai, in collaboration with Janshala, coordinates and manages bridge courses in Jaipur. In other cities, the NGO in charge of the zone is also responsible for the functioning of bridge courses in that particular zone. There are 166 bridge schools in Jaipur and three in Ajmer.



Alternative Schools

It is the responsibility of the State to educate out-of-school children, as the objective of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) cannot be achieved until every child is brought into the school. Thus, when Janshala was conceived, the planners gave special attention to children who were left out of the mainstream of education due to various reasons.

Lack of access to primary education is still a matter of concern in our country. Apart from physical and geographical factors, there are social barriers and financial compulsions, which keep children away from school. One of the major aims of Janshala is to attract such children, who mainly belong to the marginalised sections like SC/ ST, children from urban slums, girl children, working children and children with disabilities. Apart from this, the programme has a special component to cover dropouts and children who have never been enrolled.

Special initiatives have been taken by Janshala in all states to reach the unreached children. Thus, while the programme aims to strengthen the existing infrastructure of government schools, it has also set up alternative schools, community-based schools and bridge courses to ensure that not a single child is left out of the education net.

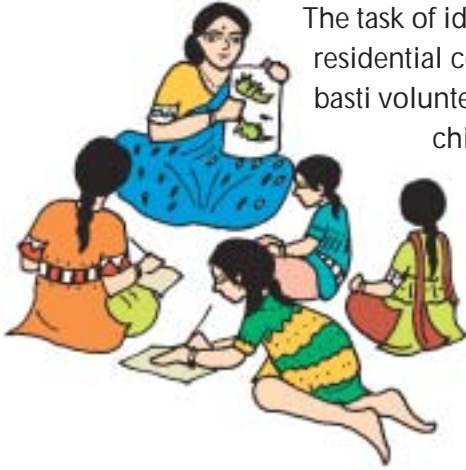
Bridge courses

A child who has never been to school or who has dropped out needs special assistance to prepare him/her for school. Such children need to learn in a short period to make up for what they have missed. Bridge courses are short courses that acquaint these children with the practices of the formal schooling system and bring them at par with other children of their age group. They are meant to facilitate the mainstreaming of these children into the formal school system. Bridge course programmes have been started in a number of states, the most notable being the Balajyothi camp of Hyderabad.



Residential camp

Balajyothi, with the help of Janshala, started a fully residential bridge course for older out-of-school girls who were working in factories such as safety-pin making, match-making, etc., in Hyderabad. The camp is being run in one of the city slums. A total of 300 girls, all of them from Muslim families, were enrolled in the camp in three batches of 100 each. The girls belonged to the 9-14 age group—many of them had never gone to school, and most had dropped out at an early stage.



The task of identifying the girls and convincing their parents to send them to a residential course was not easy. It was assigned to a core team of activists called basti volunteers, who were highly motivated people committed to eradicating child labour. In the course of their work, the activists discovered a large number of out-of-school girls who wanted to study but were too old to go to school. Realising that parents were not ready to withdraw them from wage-earning activities and support their education, Balajyothi decided that the best strategy to ensure these girls' education would be to bring them to a residential camp.

In the first batch, 100 girls were brought into the camp and subsequently, two more batches of 100 each were introduced. The teachers of the camp, all women, live with the children and guide them not only in their studies but also in various life skills. Classes are held in an informal environment and the emphasis is on the overall growth of the girls. The girls have shown remarkable achievement in their studies. After just a year and a half of support in these camps, some of the girls are ready to appear for class V and VII examinations.

Another residential bridge course camp in Andhra Pradesh is Deepti for boys and girls in East Godavari.

Chinnara Angala

Chinnara Angala is a bridge course conducted during summers to mainstream out-of-school children. A para-teacher, appointed from amongst the village youth, teaches the children. An intensive, condensed form of the curriculum is taught, at the end of which the children are enrolled in appropriate classes.

Improving access through alternative schools

Access to schools is still a major problem in many areas of the country, especially in hilly, remote, forest and tribal areas, where most children remain deprived of education due to lack of schools in the vicinity. In such areas, Janshala has set up alternative schools or learning centres, such as the Girijana Vikas Vidya Kendras and Sandhanshalas (Andhra Pradesh), community-based schools (Jharkhand), Education Guarantee Scheme (Madhya Pradesh).

Girijana Vikas Vidya Kendra

To increase access of tribal children to primary education, Andhra Pradesh Janshala in convergence with the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), has established primary schools in remote habitations where there were no schools and the literacy rate



was abysmally low. The objective of these schools is to reach out to those children who have stayed away either because of geographical constraints or because they are engaged in work.

Known as the Girijana Vikas Vidya Kendra (GVVK), these schools usually take in students up to class I and II. However, plans are afoot to expand these schools and start classes up to standard IV.

To encourage community participation and attract and retain students, the teachers are chosen from the same village/ habitation in which the school is established. The only stipulation is that the teacher should have been educated up to class X. The selected teachers are then trained by Janshala's Mandal Resource Person (MRP) to familiarise them with multi-level, multi-grade teaching techniques.

Community-based Schools

In Jharkhand, community-based schools (CBS) have been set up to tackle the problem of inaccessibility. These schools provide the opportunity of quality education to a large number of disadvantaged children in remote areas. Around 90% of the children enrolled in CBS would not have had access to education but for this programme.

The responsibility of initiating and running CBS has been assigned to women's groups called *Mahila Samitis*, whose members are trained by resource persons and Women Empowerment Workers. The teachers are selected from the community and are preferably female. As most CBS are single-room, single-teacher centres, multi-grade and multi-level teaching are practiced. The teachers are trained accordingly.

Education Guarantee Scheme

The Government of Madhya Pradesh pioneered a community-centred, rights-based initiative to universalise primary education called the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS). Under the scheme, the government has guaranteed to start a school with the provision of a trained teacher, TLMs, and contingencies within 90 days of the demand from the community.



The scheme can be implemented in areas where the demand comes from a community without any schooling facility within a one-km radius and a minimum of 40 children (25 in the case of tribal habitation), in the 6-14 years age group. The community that makes the demand is also expected to suggest the name of a suitable local resident to be the teacher (*Guruji*) to the gram panchayat, which is empowered to appoint him/ her. The local community or gram panchayat is also responsible for providing the space for teaching/ learning centre.

The EGS has organisational flexibility in terms of timings, location and academic calendar. In short, it is an effort to universalise access to schooling, focusing on the hitherto unreached sections in the quickest possible time. It has emerged as a cost-effective strategy to expand the reach of primary education without compromising quality.



Importance of Sandhanshalas

- Developing need-based curriculum.
- Developing handbooks for teachers/ volunteers and workbooks for children.
- Incentives to teacher/volunteer for retention and promotion.
- Training to instructors on the module and workbooks on MGT.
- Vigorous implementation of child-centered, activity-based teaching learning methodology.
- Academic guidance and monitoring by mandal resource person, head master and MEO.

Sandhanshalas

In Andhra Pradesh, Janshala has set up Sandhanshalas, or alternative schools, to mainstream out-of-school children, dropouts, and over-aged children in the age group of 6 to 11 years. This was done because not only is it difficult for the teacher to handle over-aged children, but because the children too have difficulty adjusting with younger children. Therefore, separate classes are held for them to enable them to cover the gap in the shortest possible time.

The village committee identifies a teacher for the Sandhanshala from amongst themselves. The teacher of Sandhanshala is trained to use the module and workbooks as well as to develop TLM.



Vidya Chetana

In Karnataka, Vidya Chetana is a programme for children who were not enrolled in schools even after the Chinnara Angala bridge course. The out-of-school children fall into two categories: (a) the never-enrolled and (b) those who dropped out in either the LPS or the HPS.

In this programme, classroom transactions start with books prepared for Chinnara Angala. Once the students master this, they are tested and given regular books prescribed by the Department in accordance with their level of achievement. They are also provided with notebooks, pencils, pens, geometry boxes and textbooks. At the end of the year, students have the option to choose regular schools or to continue in the Vidya Chetana Centre. The programme covers working children, girls who have to take care of siblings, girls who find it difficult to attend school after a certain age, children of minority communities, migrant families and disadvantaged groups, children with special needs, and children who do not have access to any school.

Vidya Sahayak

In Karnataka, Vidya Sahayak is a programme for out-of-school children. The local neighbourhood woman leader, headmaster, Cluster Resource Person (CRP) and Block Resource Centre (BRC) of a village choose a local volunteer from among NGOs, retired teachers and local youth leaders to teach out-of-school children. This volunteer is called the Vidya Sahayak (VS).



Children with special needs

Gajanand, like any other first standard student, is an unassuming child. He is probably unaware of his delicate health as well as the efforts put in by his parents to keep him in good health. He suffers from valvular disease of the heart.

Samadhan, Gajanand's father, says that he has already spent Rs 15,000 to 20,000 but to no avail. The boy was treated at a Hoshangabad hospital, from where he was referred to Bhopal for further treatment. Samadhan says that they cannot afford the trip, although he is trying his level best.

Gajanand has three siblings. It is heartrending to see him sit in an almost never-changing position, waiting for his *Guruji* to begin lessons. "He can barely move four paces without getting exhausted," states the EGS-in-charge, Bhupendra Sahu.

The last health camp conducted in the area had identified Gajanand and many others. Identification cards were also issued but no there has been no further support since then.

Since the parents of such children are unable to carry such a big financial burden, Gajanand, and countless others like him, need an effective programme to meet their special needs.

Each VS teaches not more than 10 children for a minimum of four hours each day. The VS records the children's daily progress and brings them to the local school every month for a test, which is administered by the headmaster in the presence of the BRC/BRP and a School Development Management Committee member. Payment to the VS is based on the progress of the children and is on a per child count. The VS are purely honorary workers and are not entitled to any service benefits.

This programme has been taken up as a pilot project in two Janshala blocks— Arkalgud in Hassan district and Pavagada in Tumkur district.

Vastishalas and MPEGS centres

In Maharashtra, Janshala has worked towards providing access with the help of Vastishalas and Mahatma Phule Education Guarantee Scheme (MPEGS) centres. Remote habitations that are not served by any government schools have been provided with Vastishalas, whereas MPEGS centres have been set up for child labourers.

Local youths who have passed class 12th and D.Ed are selected as volunteer teachers for Vastishalas, and those who have passed 10th or 12th are selected as MPEGS instructors. They are given intensive training in joyful and activity-based learning.

Despite continuous development and expansion of formal education, children in the age group of 6-14 years, belonging to the tribal community are deprived of elementary education. In Nashik district, especially in the tribal blocks, efforts have been made to provide elementary education to such children through alternative schools and non-formal education (NFE) centres since the year 2000. A total of 61 AS and 195 NFE centres have been set up.



Mahatma Phule Education Guarantee Scheme (MPEGS)

To generate awareness among the villagers, everyone was invited to the school. A map of the village was drawn on the ground, showing each house in the village. Every villager was asked to represent their sons and daughters with marbles and beads respectively. The marble or bead was either kept inside the house (non-school going) or out of the house (school going).

During the exercise, it was seen that most of the villagers kept the bead inside the house, signifying that the girls of the village generally did not attend school or receive education. Explaining the importance of sending girls to school, the teachers told the villagers that an educated woman was an asset to her family, and could bring about positive changes in her family. This has encouraged the villagers to enroll their daughters.

In December 2000, a survey of out-of-school children was undertaken and the pockets that satisfied the norms for opening Vastishalas and MPEGS centres were identified. All AS centres have now been converted into Vastishalas, and NFE centres into MPEGS centres all over the districts.

Samudayik Janshala

Alternative learning centres started under Janshala in Rajasthan are called Samudayik Janshala (SJs). The concept of Samudayik Janshala emerged from the grassroots realities that there were areas within the city, mostly slums, where children had no access to primary education. Experience and various studies have shown that the children living in these areas are not only deprived of education but also suffer from other deprivations, viz., emotional, physical and mental, arising out of poverty, scarcity and exploitation. As children who have been uprooted from their habitation in rural areas, they form a special category and have special educational needs.

SJs have been established in slums with no government schools, and in which more than 50% of the children are non-school going. The goal of these schools is to target girls and children of marginalised population living in unserved city slums to ensure their regular attendance and retention in primary education. It is now considered an important

A working child is brought to school

Vidya Chetana often targets child labourers. Hundreds of child labourers are undergoing schooling in Vidya Chetana centres in rural Arkalgud and Pavaguda, which can be considered as havens of child labour. Krishnaprasad (10) is also among them. His family consists of an ailing father, working mother and three brothers. Even though he wanted to attend school, poverty made his life difficult and forced him into labour at the age of eight.

Krishnaprasad is now undergoing bridge course to pick up what he missed. Now his days are meticulously divided. He never misses his morning and evening classes at the Vidya Chetana centre. Once back from the class he is engaged in an arecanut cutting shed, where he has to spend nearly five hours to earn a paltry sum of Rs 10/- per day.



intervention in the cities of Jaipur, Ajmer and Bharatpur, where the Janshala programme is underway.

While the space for the school is provided by the community, the basic TLM was provided by the NGO. The SJs run for four hours in a day on the timings decided by the community. The teacher uses multi-level approach for teaching and uses a variety of TLMs. The teacher keeps a record of the learning progress of every child. The teacher also interacts with the community and parents to discuss issues related to the school. The most noticeable feature of SJs is the close relationship between the children and the teacher. The child-friendly environment and the joyful method of teaching have not only drawn children to the school but also encouraged parents to ensure their regular attendance. The teachers and the schools receive a lot of support from the local community.





Lessons Learnt

Janshala is a step towards the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. It is based on improving the existing formal system of elementary education through quality inputs, and by providing alternative learning centres with active community participation, sensitisation, mobilisation and support. In terms of coverage and scope, Janshala is a relatively small programme. However, it has achieved much, mainly due to its flexibility and innovative strategies with community participation and with special focus on girls' education, quality improvement interventions, provision of alternative schools, and intervention in urban areas.

In its five years of experience, Janshala offers some valuable lessons.

Community participation and micro-planning

The process of micro-planning and community participation has been one of the most successful aspects of the Janshala programme. Micro-planning has emerged as an important tool for mobilising communities, assessing their contextual needs, mapping resources, improving access and facilitating participation and retention in schools. Participatory rural appraisal enables a realistic understanding of the major issues and concerns of the community.

The success of the community mobilisation efforts can be attributed to activities both at the macro level (rallies, fairs, meetings) and at the micro level (door-to-door campaigns). Reaching out to women has been an effective strategy to reach the community. Participation of women in the programme has been ensured through the formation of mother-teacher associations, *mata samitis*, neighbourhood women leaders, etc.

Activities such as streetplays, folk songs, kalajathas, which have been designed in the local cultural context, have gone a long way in making Janshala a grassroots people's programme.



Quality improvement interventions

Janshala has addressed the issue of quality through teacher training, development of teaching pedagogy appropriate to multi-grade and multi-level situations, and introduction of activity-based, child-centred and gender-sensitive pedagogy. The child-centred, activity-based methodology under the multi-grade approach has evoked a new sense of enthusiasm for learning among children, and has dramatically improved the quality of teaching.

Reaching the unreached through alternative schools

Janshala has succeeded in reaching the most marginalised children—working children, dropouts, never-enrolled children, girls, tribal children, etc.—by measures such as bridge courses and alternative schools. Bridge course is a unique intervention that provides special assistance to out-of-school children before mainstreaming them into formal schools. Alternative schools such as CBS (Jharkhand), EGS centres (MP), Sandhanshalas (AP), Samudayik Janshala (Rajasthan), Vastishala and MPEGS centres (Maharashtra) have made primary education accessible for marginalised children and those living in remote and unreached habitations. These schools offer flexibility in terms of timings, location, and academic calendar. The use of TLM, flexible and local-specific curriculum, and the close partnership with the community have proved to be effective strategies.

Urban interventions

Though Janshala has primarily a rural focus, the programme has some significant urban interventions. In fact, the programme in Rajasthan operates totally in the city slums of Jaipur, Ajmer, Bharatpur and Jodhpur. In order to cater to the heterogeneous population of the urban slums, the programme has had to adopt altogether different strategies of micro-planning and community mobilisation. The use of basti volunteers, former schoolteachers and community leaders has been a notable strategy in mobilising the community.

The initiation of different kinds of pre-schools in the slums in Rajasthan has resulted in multiple benefits. It has freed the older girls from sibling care, so that they can now attend school. It has also led to better retention rates and development among the children who have attended pre-school.

Residential bridge courses such as Balajyothi (Hyderabad) and alternative learning centres (Orissa) are some of the other successful interventions in the urban slums.

Education of girls and special children

The Janshala programme has adopted measures to sensitise women's groups in the community, set up alternative educational facilities for girls, and trained teachers to be more sensitive to girls' needs. Initiation of *kishori* and *mahila samooths*, and provision of life skill education and vocational training to girls have gone a long way in building the confidence and capabilities of girls. Apart from these, ma-beti melas, summer camps, residential bridge courses and special enrolment drives have led to improved enrolment and retention of girls.





The inclusive education programme in Janshala has undertaken training of teachers and resource persons to deal with the needs of children with disabilities. The training has given the resource persons practical knowledge about the assessment of impairments, and about the unique curriculum for five disabilities through institutional visits and practice teaching. It has led to a significant impact in the areas of classroom teaching and use of activity-based mode of teaching. Camps have also been organised for children with disabilities, where they have been provided with aids such as calipers and hearing aids. Due to these interventions, a large number of the dropout disabled children have been mainstreamed.



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