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From the Chairperson

Dear friends,

NEG-FIRE's goal of bringing education to the marginalized may look simple and easy if one imagines the traditional strategy of increasing the supply of a scarce facility so that people avail of it automatically. But if this were the case, many government plans would have solved this problem and NEG-FIRE's vision and goal would have become redundant. However, the fact that the government had to bring in a bill on the Right to Education and the difficulties that it is facing in implementing it, provide ample proof that bringing education to the marginalized is a challenge that needs new strategies.

NEG-FIRE took a far sighted decision not to invest in cement and bricks to build new schools as a strategy for universalizing education because the crux of the problem lies in the fact that the marginalized do not see education as a means of achieving social mobility and a better quality of life. For a community that moves on its stomach to survive and relies on the culture of survival, education does not offer any short-term remedies and the marginalized do not want to invest in a future that is uncertain. Their past has proven to them that they need to use the only resource that they have—their 2 working hands—to sustain them and to move into the future. Hence, engaging their children in work and thus training them for their future sustenance is more important than getting them to write alphabets and numbers. In their thinking, education is meant for the well-to-do who can afford to get involved in such a luxury. The well-to-do are also happy to continue this status quo because it helps them get cheap labour to meet their needs.

How do we change the mindset of the marginalized community? This is the challenge facing NEG-FIRE which makes its vision and goal even more relevant. Further, the marginalized are not in one pocket or in one geographical area in the country. NEG-FIRE's mission becomes all the more difficult when you think of reaching out to marginalized children in the 0-6 years age bracket spread across the length and breadth of the country. Another great challenge is adapting the content and methodology of education to suit the cultures and mindsets of the marginalized. This too is not easy as they have varied cultures and traditions.

To retain children in education, the community has to play a vital role. Hence, motivating its members so that their indifference changes to one of nurturing and owning the education process is yet another challenge. How do we change their ideology and their world vision to make it pro-education?

These are the multiple challenges that NEG-FIRE is facing. Our annual report is an attempt at sharing some of the activities that we have undertaken to meet these challenges; to some extent we are blowing our own trumpet not about our achievements but about our path-breaking attempts. We still have miles to go, and we need like-



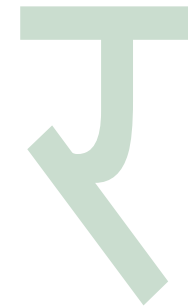
minded people with similar or even more challenging ideas to join hands with us to give momentum to our achievements. We also have to attract people who have resources to support such new ventures. Do we want India to glow with patches of lights or glow with the achievements of every one?

What we have achieved and the agenda that we have set for ourselves is a result of NEG-FIRE's members and partners coming together periodically to critically reflect on what we are doing and to rework and fix new priorities. Our agenda may be varied but the goal is the same: to bring education in an innovative way to the marginalized.

I am grateful to our support partners, presently the people of Germany through Misereor and Tata Trust. As I complete my tenure as the first Chairperson of NEG-FIRE, I leave the organization with satisfaction because of its committed staff and professional members of various bodies which are guiding NEG-FIRE. May the zeal to improve the quality of life of the marginalized ignite the fire within NEG-FIRE and keep it burning always!



Fr. Raymond Ambroise
Chairperson, NEG-FIRE





From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,
Salaam from NEG-FIRE!

As I ponder on how I spent 253 (to be precise) at NEG-FIRE during 2010-11, I discover a host of images and stories—some desirable, some unintended, and others that posed challenges for further action and serious thought—that are embossed both at the cerebral and the affective level. I wish to unfurl some of these and hope they are as meaningful for you as they are for me, and that they touch you as well at both levels.

I could bury you with figures and facts to show what NEG-FIRE has done. But what I would rather do is to try and evoke in you something of the experience of change that we have shared with the communities we work with and with our partners in the field.

Gurudas walks his talk: wisdom from the field

Gurudas Bharti comes from Shamli in Muzzafarnagar. He is being trained to be an edu-leader as part of our Edu-leadership programme in Uttar Pradesh. Gurudas re-admitted both his children, Soniya (class 5) and Ashish (class 2) to the government primary school Sevapur in block Unn after he became part of the programme. His reason? 'I would like to be an example for people, especially since I am involved in enrolling children and motivating parents to send their children to government schools. I do not want them to point a finger at me. Secondly now that I am involved in this government school and my children are studying here it will be my responsibility to see that we provide the best quality education for children.'



One of the Shikshamitras, Naushad Ali, has followed in Gurudas's footsteps and has also admitted his two children Samir (class 1) and Saima (class 2) in the same school.

Villages Bothi in Chhattisgarh and Dunggripada in Madhya Pradesh, co-create Visual Art Store Huts for their children



This collage of pictures illustrates the story of the Baiga and Gond tribes in Bothi village in Chhattisgarh and the Bhil tribe in Dungripada village in Thandla block in Madhya Pradesh. This is a first step in the awareness and active involvement of the community in the education of their children. This portrays NEG-FIRE's belief and vision of quality education going beyond the three 'Rs'. These visual store huts will house enrichment material provided by NEG-FIRE, like musical instruments, games, books, and also creative expressions of the children. Here children will spend time having fun, especially during school recess every day as these are built near government primary schools. This outcome of self-expression and collective action by the community was achieved through a series of 'live-in art workshops' with the villagers over a period of one and a half year conducted by Blasie Joseph for NEG-FIRE. These huts will continue to be symbolic of communities willing to be part of their children's learning process.

Teachers learn How to teach from children

The Child Federation Group of classes 5-7 in village Sankupada in Koraput district, decided to help children learn better in the government primary school in the village. They collected over 1,500 Odiya words from textbooks for classes 1-5 which the teachers used in class but which the children did not understand. With help from community members and SOVA staff members they translated these words into Paraja. These words have also been translated into the Gandaba and Kuvi languages with the help of community members and some teachers. These word books developed by SOVA were disseminated to 13 schools of two panchayats of Ralegada (7 schools) and Sunki (6 schools). This children's initiative has made both teaching and learning easier after 20 years as confessed by Head Master Raghunath Lenka and teachers of the Sankupada village school.



Congratulations Bhumiputra and Samaj Vikas Sanstha—Government Resolution (GR) 1984 dealing with residential hostels changed to be more humane in Maharashtra (Picture)

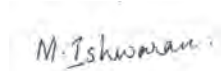
It took four years of tireless effort by Bhumiputra of the Samaj Vikas Sanstha and his network Vanchit Bal Vikas to bring about change in the archaic Government Resolution (GR) 1984 which deals with hostels in Maharashtra. The earlier resolution provided 300 gram of food for girls and 400 for boys along with Rs 20 for medical expenses and Rs 10 for tuition fee. The changed GR now provides for wholesome, nutritious food, for recreation and games, and a host of safety measures and entitlements for students studying in medical and engineering colleges. The next step is to ensure the implementation of the GR in letter and spirit, and fight against other such archaic GRs that need change.

Through almost 7,000 posters in ten languages we spread the message of RTE through our NGO partners in ten states, but more importantly we provided space for partners to re-look at some of their strategies and make relevant changes aligned with the Right to Education (RTE) Act. We also conducted workshops on RTE in collaboration with networks and organizations.

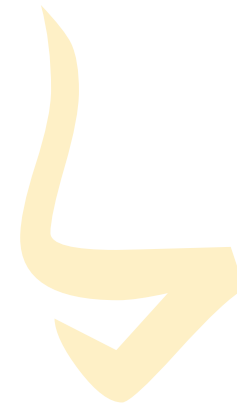
This journey was plagued with several issues and challenges, both internal and external, which we see as opportunities for more serious reflection and focused work. The partners faced non-cooperation from authorities in sensitive conflict areas and from vested groups in quarry areas in Rajasthan. Availability of technical support in very remote areas is scarce and providing this in close proximity to the organizations in their 'here and now' has been difficult. Thinking and acting within a 'results perspective' was another challenge as 'activities' are still perceived as the only vehicle for change. Another subtle challenge that emerged was the 'blind spot' of our prejudices and myths which surfaces when working with vulnerable

communities and which needs serious discussion, action, and congruence of ‘thought-word-deed’.

Finally, our gratitude to our friends, well-wishers, donors (Misereor and SDTT), board members, all committees (Finance and Process Approval), consultants, and staff members who made this year’s journey meaningful. The 34 page report details the numeric, mechanics, and dynamics of the year. I hope that you do enjoy reading the report—and if anything in it strikes a chord, do get back to us.



Marita Ishwaran
Executive Director.



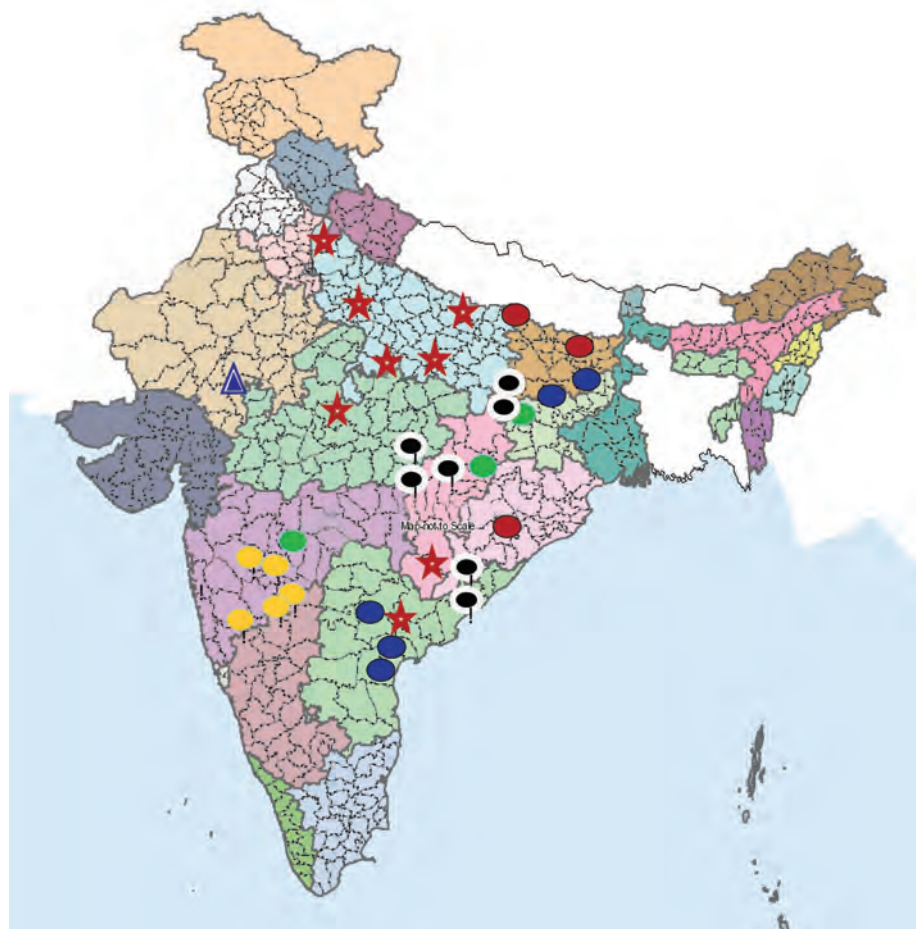


Training session on learning Maths in Patna



Partnership Promotion

NEG-FIRE's Coverage 2010-11

**COVERAGE**

52,180 Children
1,428 Teachers
1057 Schools
and 912 Villages

2010-11

35 partners
33 districts
09 states

- NT-DNT Partners
- Inter-state Partners
- Advocacy Program
- ★ Edu-leadership Program
- Fellowship Program
- ▲ Rajasthan Child Labor Program
- Other Programs

Partnership Promotion

Partnership building with various grassroots level organizations across India, with the purpose of collectively targeting strategic educational issues, lies at the heart of NEG-FIRE's approach. This is undertaken with the mission of reaching out to the most disadvantaged groups and addressing key issues related to education.

Between 2005 and 2011, the organization supported 87 partners with a total funding of Rs 110,941,813. Out of these, 52 projects had been completed by March 2011. During 2010-11, NEG-FIRE sanctioned 12 new projects, including research and fellowships, reaching out to 52,180 children, 1,428 teachers, 1,057 schools, and 912 villages with a total grant of Rs 29,977,200. At the moment, NEG-FIRE is supporting 35 grantees spread over 9 states across India.

During this period, NEG-FIRE supported 12 new programmes across 9 states. Some of these include supporting on-going programmes for a second phase. Among the on-going programmes which were supported for a second phase are:

- The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme for riot-affected children in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat. This was continued as it was felt that a longer engagement with children and their families was necessary to heal the scars and for children to become more confident learners.
- In Orissa, support to riot-affected children in residential schools in Kandhamal district was continued. Apart from providing physical and academic support to children, a new component which is integral to NEG-FIRE's belief of working with communities of these children and making them aware of the Right to Education Act, as well as encouraging parents to meet residential authorities and their children regularly, was also added.

- After evaluating the child labour project in Bundi district in Rajasthan it was felt that this was the right time to expand the programme to cover more villages so that child work can be eliminated in more quarries.
- It was also decided to support the inter-state programme in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh for the next phase as it was felt that there was a need to work more intensively in these tribal areas so that interactions could take place with schools, children, and communities with special emphasis on language learning.

Further, one more inter-state border areas programme and 3 other individual projects—one focusing on developing sports, another on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), and the third on developing a curriculum framework for children of farmers—were sanctioned along the lines of NEG-FIRE's mandate to support innovative curriculum development and programmes in the most vulnerable areas.

a) Early Childhood Care and Education Programme, Samerth, Gujarat

was supported for working with riot-affected children in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat for 3 years. This support will be used for sustaining the efforts made in the past and also working on anganwadis as centres of learning with special focus on the 0-3 years age group following the recent Supreme Court judgement. The main objectives of the new programme include:



Toddlers giving shape to their imagination in a Balwadi, Samerth, Gujarat

- to provide quality early childhood education to 1,000 children (with special focus on girls) by running 13 centres as models and ensuring a 90 per cent transition from the centres to schools;
- to create awareness about the importance of early childhood care and education among the community and mobilizing community members to monitor and ensure the functioning of anganwadis; and
- to demand new anganwadis as per the number of children in the age group of 3-6 years by following the Supreme Court's directions and exploring possibilities of merging Samerth-run centres with the anganwadis.

NEG-FIRE is supporting Samerth through a grant of Rs 28, 08,197 for a period of 2 and a half years (2010-2013).

b) Peace Education-A step towards conflict transformation in the violence affected community in Kandhamal:

In continuation with NEG-FIRE's support to 250 riot-affected children, the present programme aims to raise community awareness about the Right to Education (RTE) and the Right to Information (RTI) Acts in 10 villages of Balliguda and Nuagaon blocks in Kandhamal district in Gujarat through 10 community-based groups. These groups are working with parents of affected children to encourage them to provide much-needed support and encouragement to children at home. The groups have also been entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring entitlements to school children over a period of one year (2010-2011) with a support of Rs 14, 72,100.

c) Inter-State Border Areas Programme:

This programme is primarily designed to address the language issue in inter-state locations, apart from other educational issues. NEG-FIRE initiated this programme in 2 select border areas (Andhra Pradesh/Orissa for a period of 3 years and Madhya Pradesh/Chhattisgarh for a period of 2 years) in 2008. While one on-going programme in Madhya Pradesh/Chhattisgarh was extended to the next phase, another new programme was initiated in the inter-state border areas of Gujarat/Rajasthan.

- (i) NEG-FIRE supported 3 organizations in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh (Shikhar Yuva Manch in Chhattisgarh and the Samarpan Mahila Vikas Manch and Jabalpur Diocese Social Service Society in Madhya Pradesh) for ensuring quality education and care of 12,000 children belonging to Baiga and Gond tribes from 30 villages in Kawardha, Mandala, and Dindori districts located on the inter-state boundary of the 2 states with special emphasis on language development. This will be done by engaging with the school system and the community and through an interface with the tribal and education departments of both the states to specifically address the language issue; developing IEC material for language over a period of 30 months is also one of the programme's objectives. The duration of the project is 30 months and the support is Rs 60, 75,250.
- (ii) NEG-FIRE supported 2 organizations, one each in Gujarat and Rajasthan (Prakriti Foundation in Gujarat and Diocese of Udaipur in Rajasthan), to ensure that 5,500 children belonging to the Bhil tribe living in 20 villages in Dahod and Banswara districts located on the inter-state border get their entitlements and right to education by addressing inter-state issues with special focus on



Gond tribal girls painting their dreams, Mandala district, MP

language and migration. This will be done by developing 10 leaders from the community and by engaging directly with stakeholders in both the states on the language issue over a period of 30 months with a grant support of Rs 44, 85,871.

d) Rajasthan Child Labour Programme, Bundi, Rajasthan:

In continuation of the 2-year project (April 2009-March 2011) to eliminate child labour in 7 revenue villages of 2 gram panchayats of Budhpura and Dabi, the programme has been extended to cover the entire sandstone mine area spread over 39 villages in 11 panchayats. The project aims to eliminate child labour through 78 social mobilizers who will initiate and lead the process of identifying out-of-school children in 39 villages of Bundi district and try and ensure child rights, particularly in education and health. It also aims at empowering 195 women to create momentum against child labour, establish child rights and take part in social, political, and developmental processes/activities in their respective villages. The duration of the programme is 30 months (1 April 2011-30 September 2013), with a grant of Rs 50, 50,732.

e) Sports for Development with Magic Bus in Chandrapur district, Maharashtra:

An innovative programme on 'Sports for Development' has been initiated in partnership with Magic Bus. The goal of the programme is to empower children and communities to exercise their right to education using the medium of sports. The project will be implemented with the Banjara (DNT), Dhangar (NT), Gadhilohar (NT), and Vadar (DNT) tribes in Muland Korpana blocks of Chandrapur district respectively. The project will cover 3,000 children from these tribes along with their parents and community members. NEG-FIRE is supporting Magic Bus through a grant of Rs 30, 62,710 for a period of 2 years (2011-2013).

f) Education of children in Naxal-affected areas, Vedic Society, Jharkhand:

In keeping with NEG-FIRE's focus on working with children living in difficult circumstances, this year a new programme was initiated in Jharkhand covering areas where children are affected by Naxal related violence and problems. The project focuses on ensuring all aspects of quality education, protection, care, and socio-emotional support to 3,000 children in the 0-14 years age group from Naxal-affected areas in Latehar district of Jharkhand with special focus on children belonging to the most marginalized communities. Some of these communities include Oraon, Kherwar, Chiro, and Munda living in the 22 villages of Navagarh and Tarvadeeh panchayats in Latehar district. The project also aims to improve the functionality of 22 government schools and 22 anganwadi centres by focusing on pre-school education. NEG-FIRE is supporting



Children attending classes in the open in Latehar, Jharkhand

Vedic Society through a grant of Rs 26, 22,340 for a period of 2 years (2011-2013).

g) Early Childhood Centre for Learning Resources (CLR), Pune:

This is an action research project initiated in collaboration with the Centre for Learning Resources, Pune. The programme focuses on improving early childhood education within ICDS anganwadis in 2 blocks of Amravati district for ensuring quality early childhood education for 15,300 children of Dharni and Chikhaldhara blocks in Amravati district by creating 396 model anganwadis, engaging with the ICDS system and improving its delivery, involving community members in ECE and offering designs for in-service training programmes for appropriate ECE curriculum in ICDS-Maharashtra. NEG-FIRE is supporting CLR for a period of 30 months (2011-2014) through a grant of Rs 36, 42,000.

h) Curriculum for children of the farming community, Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI), Goa:

NEG-FIRE sanctioned an innovative curriculum development programme for the children of the farming community in collaboration with OFAI. The curriculum will focus on children living in the Deccan Plateau region. The objective is to prepare a unique rural agriculture-based curriculum for children in the 6-14 years age group to provide relevant education that will attract youngsters towards taking up agricultural practices and address environmental issues through education. The curriculum will be submitted to the government for its consideration and adoption under the national curriculum for the entire school system. NEG-FIRE is supporting OFAI for a period of one year (2011-12) through a grant support of Rs 7, 58,000.

G

A photograph of a classroom where students are sitting on the floor. Several students have their hands raised, indicating an interactive learning environment. The students are wearing various colored clothing, including yellow, green, and pink. The background shows a window with a grid pattern and a plain wall.

Key On-going Programs 2010-2011

"We know the answers" ...an on-going classroom in a Government school in AP

Other Key On-going Programs (2010-2011)

The Edu-leadership Programme:

NEG-FIRE's Edu-leadership programme was conceived in 2007 with the aim of impacting education at the grassroots by engaging with locally-based individuals who could understand and relate to the situation of education in their villages. With the right kind of training, edu-leaders have been engaging with communities to make them aware of the educational rights of their children, making them demand good quality education, and ensuring that they get their entitlements. The 3-year programme (April 2009-March 2012) is supported by the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT). The programme was launched in 4 districts of Uttar Pradesh—Azamgarh, Badayun, Maharajganj, and Muzaffarnagar—and has now entered its final phase. The programme will end in March 2012.

Simultaneously, NEG-FIRE also initiated a similar yet different Edu-leadership programme in select states where 4 grassroots level NGOs were identified through a rigorous selection process. Unlike the Uttar Pradesh programme which is being directly led by NEG-FIRE's team based in Lucknow, the other Edu-leadership programmes in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Odisha are being anchored by selected locally-based organizations (Sadhana in Andhra Pradesh,



Republic Day celebrations in Government Primary School, Sujahidpur, UP

Edu-leadership Programme, UP: Some Achievements

- 60% of the teachers come to school on more than 80% of the school days as reflected in the attendance registers.
- Morning assembly is being held in all the 39 schools.
- The number of children being covered by edu-leaders has gone up and stands at 7,947 (from 6,972 during 2009-10).
- There have been significant improvements in enrolment rates in all the 39 schools. In Azamgarh, 91 new students, including 46 girls took admission in the 9 intervention schools. Similarly, in Baduan 6 new enrolments and in Muzaffarnagar 25 new enrolments were done taking the total number of children to 2,749 and 1,497 respectively.
- Formation of District Education Forums (DEFs) in all the 4 districts has been the biggest achievement of this phase. DEFs have provided a platform at the district level to various stakeholders for discussing and advocating the issues of Right to Education.

CADAM in Madhya Pradesh, Suchetna in Uttar Pradesh, and PREM in Odisha). These organizations have created teams of local community members who have been capacitated to bring systemic reforms in the education situation with focus on the Right to Education (RTE) Act and targeting the issue of child labour. The programme aims to (i) mobilize society on the issues of child labour and child rights, (ii) work towards universalization of school education in the project area, and (iii) lobby with the government and the education department for policy reforms.

The SDTT supported Edu-leadership programme in Uttar Pradesh has created a multitude of ripples in a rather inert system of schooling: lackadaisical teachers, indifferent communities, and a virtually non-existent teacher-parent relationship. The inroads made by the programme have been a transformative force and the ripples need to be understood in terms of their heterogeneity. In some places there has been more community mobilization than in others. The innovations in teaching reflect the disparate, innate characteristics of the edu-leaders. Teachers' involvement in innovation has been slow but progressive. The overall impact as seen from the demand for edu-leaders from neighbouring schools in the village speaks for itself.

In the other states also the programme has succeeded in creating a rapport with the community and garnering its support through mass rallies and organizing street plays for raising awareness on the need for educating children. Another area of success has been with regard to increasing enrolments in government schools and reorganizing and strengthening the School Management Committees (SMCs).

Overall, the greatest success of the Edu-leadership programme has



A women's group meeting in progress, Badaun, UP

The Edu-leadership Programme, Other States: Some Achievements

- In March, 2011, CADAM, MP, organized a Shiksha Adhikar Yatra (education rights walk) covering 112 villages. During the yatra, street plays were performed by the team, villagers shared their grievances, teachers pledged to perform better, and the mid-day meal (MDM) group pledged to provide better food to the children.
- PREM, Odisha, formed 40 children's clubs comprising 1,191 (665 boys and 526 girls) children from 99 villages. The children were made aware of their rights in simple words involving various play-way methods.
- Suchetna, UP, focused on creating mass awareness on the Right to Education Act. This was done through street plays in 36 villages, forming bal groups (children's groups) and yuva dals (youth groups) and spreading the word through them.
- Sadhana, AP, covered 27 schools and identified 50 out-of-school children of which 4 were working as bonded labour. All the children have now been enrolled in schools and their attendance is being regularly monitored.

been in creating an environment and ethos in which community members own the cause of children's education and feel excited about it. This achievement can never be fully captured in words or shared through a rational structure of thoughts. It can be felt by attending community meetings, by participating in education marches, and by witnessing those children who had so far been out of school attending classes. A major learning has been of thinking locally and acting locally, and a cross-learning among the locals in the programme.



Neetu goes to School

An edu-leader who works in Jhabarpur village, Muzaffarnagar, informed us about Neetu, a 14-year-old girl whose parents forcibly discontinued her studies and were planning to get her married. When I got to know this, along with an edu-leader I visited Neetu's family and spoke to her parents who cited financial problems as the reason for their inability to continue supporting Neetu's education. We informed them about the various schemes and state support for girl's education in the country. Having convinced them, we were able to get Neetu admitted to the Kasturba Gandhi residential school in the vicinity, where she is now staying and completing her education.

**Shailendra, FA, Muzaffarnagar
Edu-leadership programme, UP**

Sushila Devi: An edu-leader in the making

Till some time back 40-year-old Sushila Devi was like any other village woman in Sushiar, uneducated and a mother of 5 sons, who helped her husband in the fields. However, today she is a proud lady who boldly declares: 'Even if no one else goes, I am ready to go alone to Kathgodam (to attend Edu-leadership training) as I realize how much knowledge I can gain in these programmes'. This transition was brought about by Suchetna, a UP-based NGO that organizes Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for women in Sushiar village in Pilibhit district.

Sushila Devi was an obvious choice for an edu-leader as she had displayed some leadership qualities in the SHG where she was an office bearer. Realizing the benefits of education from her own experience of being deprived of this right, she was ready to take up the responsibility of telling others about the Right to Education (RTE), of seeing that the children in her village went to school and benefitted from the government sponsored initiatives of free textbooks, bags, scholarships, and mid-day meals.

Sushiar is a remote village, far from Highway 74 which is the main road linking Pilibhit and Amaria. Sushila realized that it would be difficult for government officials and even for Suchetna animators to make frequent visits to the school and to the village. Despite being hesitant initially, she was also acutely aware of her lack of education, so she took up this responsibility as she sincerely had the development of all the children in her village at heart. 'Without education no development is possible', as she often repeated to herself and to others.

Sushila still has a long way to go in developing her capabilities as an edu-leader to be able to carry out all the duties incumbent on her. She is open to learning and courageous in speaking out her mind and therefore Suchetna is confident that she will soon be able to deal with her responsibilities as a proud edu-leader.

Programme Coordinator, Suchetna, UP

Edu-volunteers revive the system in their villages

Twenty-four year old Adi Reddy from Shetepally village in Lingampet mandal, Nizamabad district, Andhra Pradesh, worked in the District Electricity Department as a contractual worker. He voluntarily joined the Edu-leadership programme in July 2010. At that time, dropout rates in the village government school were reportedly very high as a result of seasonal migration of families. The school was also fraught with other problems, such as a high rate of teacher absenteeism and a dysfunctional School Management Committee (SMC). Adi Reddy decided to approach this issue proactively and organized various meetings, invited his friends to attend these meetings, and motivated them to form a village-level club to address these issues. The members gathered regularly and discussed these problems and started approaching teachers directly seeking responses for their late coming and irregularity in school. As a result, the teachers have now started coming to school on time. Following this success, many of Adi's like-minded friends also joined the programme as volunteers and have pledged to strengthen the education system in their area.

Programme Coordinator, Sadhana, AP

The Inter-State Border Areas Programme:

This programme was conceived as a result of NEG-FIRE's commitment of working for the education of children classified as extremely vulnerable. It commissioned a national study in 2007 which highlighted 10 border areas where children were at high risk. The poor educational indicators of these areas brought many issues to the fore: the medium of instruction in schools and the students' mother tongue were different, teachers did not understand the students' mother tongue, dropout rates were high due to migration, officials were negligent in monitoring schools, the teachers were irregular, and upper primary and high schools were located far away from the habitations.

However, the most critical issue, common to all the border areas is the 'language issue' as a result of which while the communities living along bordering states speak a common, shared language (usually a local dialect), the medium of instruction imposed by the states is different. For example, on the Andhra Pradesh/Odisha inter-state border, adivasi Odiya is spoken in the bordering villages of both the states, but the medium of instruction is Telugu in Andhra Pradesh and Odiya in Odisha. On the Bihar/Jharkhand inter-state border, people speak Bangla (locally known as Khota) whereas the medium of instruction and the textbooks are in Hindi. This creates a gap between the home and school languages. This is a major problem, particularly at the primary stage of learning and impacts the performance of children in the later stages of their education as well.

It was against this backdrop that NEG-FIRE decided to intervene and started the inter-state programme, which was primarily designed to address the language issue in inter-state locations, apart from addressing other educational issues. NEG-FIRE initiated this programme in 2 select border areas



A teacher using WRIP card for teaching Odiya in a Government School in Koraput district, Odisha

in 2008 (Andhra Pradesh/Odisha for a period of 3 years and in Madhya Pradesh/Chhattisgarh for a period of 2 years). Gradually, 2 more regions of Bihar/Jharkhand and Rajasthan/Gujarat became a part of the programme in 2009 and 2010 respectively. The programme presently covers more than 11,000 children living in inter-state border areas in the 8 states of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand, and Gujarat and Rajasthan.

One of the key objectives of the programme is bridging the language gap in border areas by developing/providing multi-lingual material, strengthening government programmes on multi-lingual education through ne2rking, and building linkages between the tribal and education departments and DIETS so that language does not become a barrier in children's learning. The partnering organizations have used various strategies to address the language issue specific to the context of their area and as a response to local conditions and problems. Some interesting case stories have emerged during the intervention highlighting the success of the strategies being used and these have also been replicated in other places.

The Andhra Pradesh/Odisha Programme:

- SOVA, the Odisha-based partnering organization, has developed in-house multi-lingual material to enable children to learn in their mother tongue and participate confidently in the learning process. Simultaneously, it has implemented the Writing Reading Improvement Programme (WRIP) which was specially developed to enable children to read and write in the new language through the use of different pictorial cards. Nineteen WRIP centres are being run in the Koraput region and so far 344 out of 587 children have benefitted and are now able to read and write (at different levels) using this methodology. Using the WRIP principles, SOVA developed material in maths which was pilot tested in 9 schools in 9 villages in Pottangi block in Koraput district, Odisha; 258 children benefitted from this. One hundred and twenty-four children were identified as being weak in maths, they were mostly unable to identify numbers. WRIP number cards were developed and children were introduced to numbers through group activities and peer support. Gradually, the children were introduced to simple addition and subtraction sums. Children's levels in maths improved after 6 months of introducing the new methodology. Also, as a result of continuous dialogue with government officials, 12 WRIP centres have now been merged with government schools and government teachers are successfully using WRIP methods in their daily classroom practices.
- **NATURE's** strategy of addressing the language issue was different from the one being used by SOVA. Here it worked with the tribal department and SSA and advocated the development of bilingual primers for children and teachers which could help them cope with the language issue. Due to regular contact and community demand the tribal welfare department in Vishakhapatnam developed bilingual primers in Kuyi, adivasi Odiya, and Kondadora languages. These primers were disseminated in 32 schools in 25 villages among children of classes 1-3 in Dumriguda mandal in Vishakhapatnam district for pilot testing. After testing, the tribal department has decided to disseminate these primers on a large scale. Due to regular pressure and demand by the organization and the community, district level SSA officials are also planning to recruit language volunteers in all the tribal villages. These people will be bilingual and will work with school teachers and children to bridge the language gap.

The Bihar/Jharkhand Programme

Language initiative by the Poornea Social Service Society (PSSS)

PSSS has had regular dialogue with the tribal department and has demanded that bilingual material be developed in Hindi and Santhali. Despite

many follow-up meetings, the tribal department did not take any action on this so looking at children's needs, PSSS developed bilingual material (cards and posters) in Santhali and Hindi in consultation with teachers. The cards are regularly reviewed and updated after receiving feedback from the teachers and children. In the beginning, the cards were developed to introduce Santhali alphabets with pictures; gradually words and sentences were also included. Due to networking with government officials these cards are being used in 4 schools in Manihari block in Katihat district and have benefited 189 children in classes 1 and 2. One teacher from village Harlajudi said that the cards were useful not only for the children but also for the teachers who did not understand the Santhali language, especially when they were transferred to these villages from outside the area.

Initiatives by Abhiyan

In Jharkhand, bilingual posters have been developed for classes 1 and 2 where pictures which have Hindi and Bengali alphabets have been included. Government funds for TLM are also being used for developing the material. These posters are used in schools in all the 8 operational villages. A postcard campaign was carried out in Shahibganj district where 200 children sent postcards to the District Education Officer (DEO) asking him to provide books in their mother tongue and also teachers who understood the language. Abhiyan has also developed bilingual pictorial posters with the help of teachers which are now being distributed in 8 villages—this is something they learnt from SOVA.

Initiatives by the Gramin Prodyogik Vikas Sangh (GPVS)

Varnpatika (a bilingual alphabet board) has been painted in 8 anganwadis where alphabets in 2 languages are written on the wall with black strips which children can write and rub. Children like writing on the wall and try to copy the alphabets already written there. To further enhance children's reading skills and improve their understanding of the 2 languages (Bengali and Hindi), they have been provided books through networking with Room to Read.



Bilingual material in Santhali and Hindi developed by children and animators in Katihar district of Bihar

Children as role models for teachers

Members of the Child Federation Group collected words that the teachers spoke in Oriya which they could not understand. The children listed these words and with the support of community and project staff members they translated these words in the local language in the form of posters. This helped both the children and the teachers understand each other's language making classroom transactions easier for both of them. The posters are being used in 13 schools in 2 panchayats of Ralegada (7) and Sunki (6).

Where there is a will there is a way

Village Faridpur is located on the inter-state border of Jharkhand and West Bengal. There are 2 schools in this region. The primary school on the Jharkhand side is a Hindi medium school, but the children living here are from West Bengal and speak Bangla. The middle school is situated on the other side of the road and falls in West Bengal; this is a Bangla medium school. When the project started, the teacher in the Jharkhand primary school spoke Hindi. The children from both the schools play together, share their lunch, and sometimes share books without bothering about state boundaries. After passing primary school in Jharkhand, the children go to the Bangla medium middle school which is in the same area but which falls in West Bengal. However, here the children are admitted to a class lower than what is sought, as teachers in this school feel that children from Jharkhand are slow learners and it will take them time to reach an appropriate level. Thus, every child loses one academic year. This issue was being addressed by Jharkhand district government officials. Regular dialogue by Abhiyan, NEG-FIRE's partner in this area, led to 3 positive outcomes: i) a Bangla teacher was appointed in the Hindi medium school, so children also learn Bangla, ii) the children in the Jharkhand primary school are allowed to take exams in Bangla. Bilingual material is introduced in classes 1-3 where children are taught in both the languages. This has boosted children's confidence, and iii) as a result of regular dialogue, teachers in the West Bengal school are now convinced and admit children in an appropriate class in the middle school.

Samaj Vikas Sansthan (SVS), Maharashtra (April 2009-March 2011):

SVS started working actively on the issue of inappropriate implementation of the Government Resolution (GR) of 1984 which provides hostels for students of backward classes in Maharashtra. Their main fight was with the fact that there had been no change on the ground since 1994-95 onwards. Children faced a number of problems because of this non-implementation like non-provision of nutritious and sufficient food, petty stipends, dismal condition in the hostels, and poor hygiene and sanitation. SVS took up this issue as part of the Vanchit Bal Vikas Manch, a forum started in 2001 to focus on issues of marginalized children, especially those living in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra. This culminated in the first phase of the project during 2007-09 which was supported by NEG-FIRE and which focused on studying the issue and following it up at the government level. The second 2-year phase started in April 2009 with the goal of bringing about change in the GR and ensuring that the Government of Maharashtra made appropriate changes in the existing policy to provide facilities (especially hostels for boys and girls) for quality education of backward students and implementing the scheme properly.

Key Provisions under the Government Resolution, 2011

- All students living in the hostel will be provided with a well-balanced and nutritious meal on all days of the week, the details of which have been spelled out in clauses 1-5 of the resolution.
- All students will be provided a stipulated monthly stipend; girls will be provided an additional Rs 100 per month.
- All students will be provided 2 sets of uniforms; college students to get course appropriate uniforms (for example, white coats for medical students).
- All hostels will be provided stipulated amounts for their infrastructural upkeep such as installing water coolers, air coolers, and fire alarm systems.
- All hostels to have well-equipped libraries.

2 years hence, SVS has succeeded in getting the Government Resolution passed through a GR dated 26 July 2011. This can be considered as a big achievement for the programme which is a result of concerted advocacy efforts at all levels.



Research and Documentation



Children rallying for their Right to Education in their village organized by a fellow in Chattisgarh

Research and Documentation

All NEG-FIRE programmes and researches are conceptualized with the belief that every child has a right to quality education in an enabling environment for his or her overall development. While educational transformation is the wider goal, as a process it is necessary to understand and act upon different dimensions of education to ensure that quality education is accessible to all children. NEG-FIRE through its various research and documentation programmes attempts to address this need with a focus on children from socially and economically marginalized groups. One such attempt is the programme 'Fellowship for Innovation and Research in Education'.

This fellowship programme was designed with the belief that research as a process needs to be de-mystified and simplified so as to move it from the domain of academic circles into public discourse. The programme aims at motivating grassroots level educational practitioners, to ask the why, what, and how of a situation, follow a process, and be able to generate new knowledge based on evidence.

Between 2008 and 2011, NEG-FIRE initiated fellowship programmes in 5 states. Beginning with the Maharashtra Fellowship Programme in 2008, this programme was extended to Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand in 2009-10. The on-going fellowship programme in 2010-11 is covering Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. The programme is an attempt to bring research closer to grassroots workers so that the perspectives, concerns, experiences, efforts, and voices of the local people engaged in education on the ground and in different capacities, are heard. Therefore, the fellows are primarily selected from marginalized groups, some of whom are social activists, while the others are working with local NGOs or in balwadis/anganwadis. As the researches are primarily done by fellows who are often new to the concept of research, they are expected to understand the situation and practices in the field and bring about change on the ground.

Fellowship on RTE and RTI:

In 2010-11 the second round of the fellowship programme that focused on a common theme of sensitizing community members towards rights of children to free elementary education by creating awareness on the Right to Education (RTE) Act and using the Right to Information (RTI) Act as a tool to seeking information and bringing transparency in the functioning of village level schools came to an end.

This flagship programme was also extended to Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand though with a slightly different approach. The programme was anchored by NGOs who not only selected the fellows, but also provided regular guidance and support to them. In Chhattisgarh, the Parivartan Samaj Sevi Sanstha anchored the fellowship programme while in Jharkhand it was anchored by Swaraj Foundation.



Communities being made aware of the RTE/RTI in Chhattisgarh

Forty-two fellows are now well-versed with the provisions of the Right to Education Act and the Right to Information Act and are sharing their knowledge with community members. Meeting with children helped fellows in understanding their views and problems, and now these fellows are focusing on the methods used by teachers to teach. Fellows have shown great skill in terms of community mobilization and have built good rapport with teachers, head masters, and Village Education Committees. To reduce gender, caste, and creed discriminations, the fellows organized various games and song competitions. Through various workshops and guidance from their mentors the fellows have developed planning and report writing skills as well.

Fellowship on Agrarian Crisis: The third round of fellowships (2010-11) was an initiative to understand the impact of the agrarian crisis on a child. Fellows were expected to capture the diverse forms in which the agrarian crisis is affecting children through field studies. At a later stage these outcomes will be used to devise advocacy measures. The programme has 3 main objectives:

- i) to generate data on the life and education of children affected by agrarian crises,
- ii) to help NEG-FIRE/NGOs be better informed about appropriate/relevant intervention strategies and policy recommendations, and
- iii) to help NGOs in developing resource persons and building research and documentation capacities of grassroots staff members.

The programme covered the 4 most affected states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. NEG-FIRE partnered with 4 local NGOs—Timbaktu Collectives in Andhra Pradesh, Community Development Foundation in Karnataka, Parivartan in Chhattisgarh, and Dilasa in Maharashtra. Each organization mentored 7-10 fellows for undertaking research. Mr. Bharath Bhushan helped NEG-FIRE as a consultant and provided technical guidance and support to the local NGOs. Each fellow developed cases from the field by interviewing family members of the deceased. Out of these, about 40-50 cases were carefully analysed to understand the root causes and factors behind the suicides and the family's plight thereafter with focus on the educational status of children. The programme is in its final stage where the fellows have compiled case studies in regional languages which have been translated and are now being analysed.

Fellows share their experiences about the fellowship programme-

I saw the power of information and how it helps in mobilizing people and dealing with government officers – Shesharao.

I learnt to take decisions in critical situations, and plan and write reports. I am planning to complete my education and have taken admission in class 12. I think the fellowship programme has encouraged me to do this – Mangala.

I learnt a lot about RTI and RTE, I have used it and also got results. Now I know that information is power – Avinash.

Trying for a functional school

Mota Jabra Paharia and his wife Kanil Paharin are residents of Bhatbhanga village. They have 3 children – Prema Malto (17 years), Johan Malto (15 years), and Sunita Malto (10 years). The children were studying in a Christian Mission school, which charged no fee for 3-4 years but later introduced fees, which the parents were unable to pay. As a result, the children had to discontinue their studies and help at home by engaging in activities like looking after the fields and bringing firewood and water. There is a government school till class 8 in the village but as the villagers say it is 'only on paper'. The school is dysfunctional, does not impart any education, and remains shut most of the time. When villagers insist and make a noise mid-day meals are served to the children. However, there is no teaching in the school. Hence, people do not have faith in government schooling and prefer to send their children to Mission schools or engage them in work at home. I motivated the villagers to send group applications to the Block Education Officer (BEO) complaining about the government school to which there was no response. We have submitted another application and will try again.

Fellow Paul Malto

A photograph showing a line of young children sitting on the floor of a school, eating their mid-day meal. They are using metal plates filled with rice and vegetables. The children are of various ages and are looking towards the camera. The floor is made of dirt or concrete, and there is some food spillage. In the background, the legs of an adult are visible. The image is divided into four quadrants by a green and yellow border.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Children enjoying their Mid-Day meal in a Government school in AP

Monitoring and Evaluation

At NEG-FIRE, regular and continuous individual monitoring visits by programme team members are undertaken to review the progress made against the set objectives and addressing any serious issues that the project might be facing; on 2 occasions NEG-FIRE visited its NGO partners along with other NGOs. Fifty-2 individual visits were made during 2010-11. Alongside, the year also saw the introduction of the 'cluster mode' of monitoring that emerged as a result of discussions held during the Partners Meet' in October 2010 where this approach was suggested by Dr. Vimala Ramachandran and collectively accepted by the partners. As a result, theme-based cluster monitoring was organized for Bihar/Jharkhand inter-state partners and state-based cluster monitoring meetings were organized in Maharashtra, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, and Odisha in which all the state partners took part.

Cluster monitoring is an approach that helps partners to come together within a state or on a specific theme to take stock of the progress made, collectively find solutions, and cross-check with each other on the approaches, processes, and strategies being adopted. It is a transparent process that helps build accountability. Due to its collective nature, the cluster mode of monitoring leads to better time utilization, and also provides a platform for cross-sharing and learning. As a process it also helps in cross-learning and builds accountability, especially when the partners make their presentations and receive feedback from other participants. This approach also helps in developing capacities of the partners on how to observe, monitor, and give feedback.

Evaluation Studies 2010-11:

Apart from monitoring visits, a number of key evaluations were also conducted for projects that had either completed their programme cycle or were near completion. These evaluation studies were primarily conducted by external consultants and experts from the field. The main objective of the evaluation studies was to understand the changes brought in by a project, the challenges that emerged during its implementation, and accordingly assessing its future course of action. Twelve partners (8 NT-DNT partners, RDSS, ATMA, and 2 from the Andhra Pradesh/Odisha inter-state programme) were evaluated during 2010-11.

All the partners dealt with various kinds of educational issues in their respective regions. The NT-DNT programme partners aimed at ensuring quality education for 5,043 children from 9 NT-DNTs in western Maharashtra and Marathwada region through developing 24 edu-leaders from 6 NGOs over a period of 2 years (2009-11). RDSS in Madhya Pradesh aimed at creating an educational



Facilitator engrossed with an activity with children at the centre in Burumguda village, ATMA, Odisha



Children playing at the RDSS run crèche at Silwani Block in Raisen district, MP

environment in 40 villages in Silwani block in Raisen district by building capacities of school teachers, crèches teachers, helpers, and SHG members by covering 900 children in the 3-6 years age group and 417 children in the 6-14 years age group. Another partner from Odisha, ATMA, aimed at providing basic primary education to approximately 750 non-school going children through special community-owned classes. ATMA runs 15 support classes for tribal children in 15 villages in Mohana block. These support classes cater to the needs of 2 categories of children – those in the 3-5 years age group and those in the 6-14 years age group. The 2 inter-state partners in the Andhra Pradesh/Odisha programme (SOVA and NATURE) aimed at addressing the language issue and bridging the language gap by developing/providing multi-lingual material, strengthening the government programme on multi-lingual education through ne2rking, and building linkages with the tribal and education departments and DIETS so that language does not become a barrier in children's learning.

Key Findings:

- NT-DNT partners succeeded in enhancing the social environment of children of all castes and communities. They helped and facilitated the community in understanding the various government schemes and educational facilities that can be accessed for children from NT-DNT communities. Schools too have started taking keen interest in the teaching-learning process. As a result of this increased awareness community members are taking more interest in mobilizing resources for their children.
- NT-DNT partners worked on demanding adequate number of schools/anganwadis and infrastructure, a demand which was well received by government authorities; these are now being made available.
- RDSS crèches and residential schools have made learning a reality for children in both the 0-6 years age group as well as for 6-14 year olds. Through their age-appropriate methods, children are learning without fear in a safe and sound environment.
- RDSS's work is reflected in the bright and smart children living in residential schools, and in the fact that they achieve good results in government schools and in board exams. The training provided to children in the boarding schools on street plays and other forms of extra-curricular activities is also a crucial element in their holistic development.
- According to ATMA, post NEG-FIRE's intervention in Odisha several key psycho-social changes can be observed in the riot-affected children. Children today are vibrant, vocal, and more confident as compared to the past. Parents stressed upon the increased sense of cleanliness and hygiene among the children. The facilitator felt that the children participating in the programme were psychologically well prepared for schools.
- ATMA education centres addressed the learning needs of 361 children in 2009-10 and 203 children in 2010-11. Out of this, 9 children in 2009 and 11 in 2010 were admitted to nearby schools.
- The Andhra Pradesh/Odisha inter-state partner, SOVA in Odisha, implemented the Writing Reading Improvement Programme (WRIP) methodology to prepare children to write and read in the new language through the use of different pictorial cards. Nineteen WRIP centres are being run based on this methodology and so far 344 out of the 587 children have benefitted and are now able to read and write (at different levels) using this methodology.

- NATURE's strategy of addressing the language issue was different from SOVA's. It worked with the tribal department and SSA and advocated the development of bilingual primers for children and teachers which could help them cope with the language issue. In Vishakhapatnam, due to regular contact and community demand, the tribal welfare department developed bilingual primers in Kuyi, adivasi Oriya, and Kondadora languages which are being used by 32 schools.
- SOVA has developed 40 community based groups in Koraput district called Village Development Committees (VDCs). Each committee consists of 11 members from PRIs, are tribal leaders, from SHG groups, and youth. The committees are working actively with the schools. Through the efforts of these committees, 14 schools and 16 anganwadis (covering 187 children) have been regularized and 204 children have been enrolled in Sdifferent ashramshalas.

Key Challenges:

- In most of the programmes, especially the NT-DNT and the Andhra Pradesh/Odisha inter-state border areas programmes, it was felt that more long-term and sustained efforts were required to address the long-standing educational issues in these regions. The overall impact at the community level would take longer given the complexity of the educational issue, governmental attitude, and livelihood issues in these communities.
- With the NT-DNT programme it was felt that the education programme could succeed only if it was provided help through other inputs such as livelihood or employment generation. Given the high levels of poverty among these communities, educating their children often takes a backseat.
- In the case of programmes related to early childhood care and development such as the one that RDSS is engaged in, it was felt that there was a need to constantly provide inputs to teachers in anganwadis to enable them to understand the developmental needs of children in the 3-5 years age group. Community involvement and ownership of crèches is another issue that needs to be addressed, both in the training of crèche teachers and SHGs.
- In case of the inter-state programme it was felt that the focus at present was more on project management and achieving plans and targets but what was needed was more intensive handholding specifically on the language issue. The project should try and focus more on addressing the language issue by tying up with the tribal welfare department, the education department, etc. Collaborative learning with other inter-state partners is also a must.



Children in their class during the interstate cluster visit in Bihar

Happy and smiling We will be
The Right to Quality Education for You and I
Teachers, Parents and Government to
Join Hands to make Our Dream come True

Give us the space to play
the space to learn
the space to grow.
the space called 'THE SCHOOL'



Institutional Development

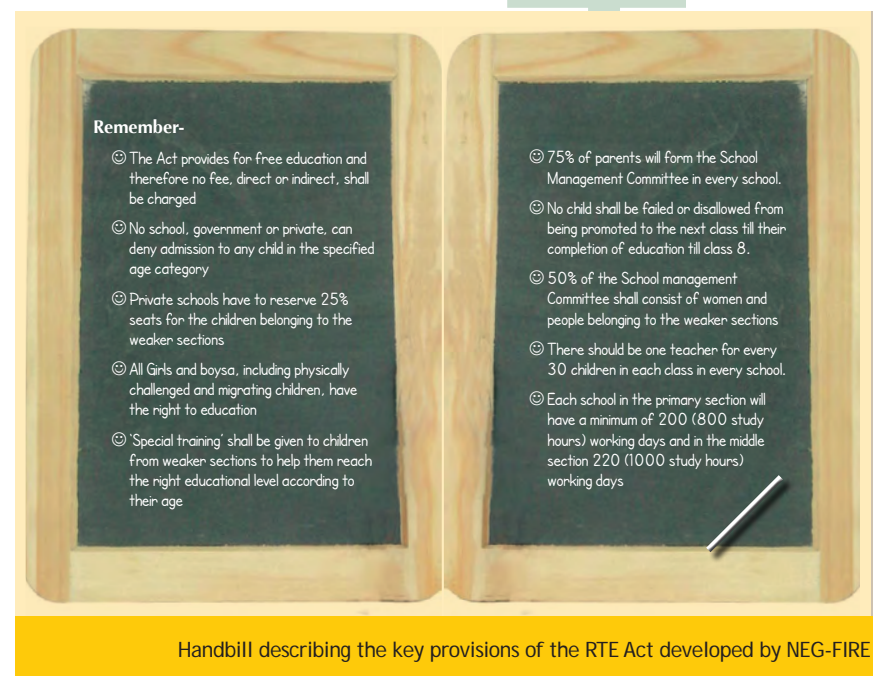


The Right to Education Act, 2009, gives every child in the age group of 6 to 14 years, the right to free and joyful education.

The Right to Education Act, 2009, gives every child in the age group of 6 to 14 years, the right to free and joyful education.

Institutional Development

- a. Enrichment Support to Partner NGOs:** Based on the positive and encouraging response from last year's enrichment support, NEG-FIRE decided to extend this support to 12 more partners selected in 2009-10 and 8 new partners selected during 2010-11. A total grant of Rs. 16, 11,000 had been sanctioned to 16 partners by the year end. The support has worked as a tool for encouragement for children that draws them to school. In some places, partners such as Samantar in Rajasthan and REAP in Bihar, have utilized the money towards purchasing musical instruments that children are learning to play and have started using it for singing during morning prayers in the school. In Sugam Jagriti, musical instruments are also being used by villagers during gatherings on important days. In project areas of Shikhar Yuva Manch in Bihar, the huts made by the villagers have been converted into village resource centres where the musical instruments and games are kept for children to come in the evening and play with. In Samarpan Mahila Vikas Sansthan area, local musicians have been identified who teach children to play the musical instruments. The sports material has helped schools attract children as they use their leisure time in playing. The materials are not just a tool to ensure children's interest in learning but also a constructive way to ensure their all-round development.
- b. 'Partner's Meet' on RTE:** A two-day Annual Partner's Meet was organized on 13-14 September, 2010 in Delhi in which representatives from 36 partner organizations (on-going, new, and old partners) participated. This time the theme of the meet was the Right to Education. Dr.Vimla Ramachandran facilitated the workshop. The major outcomes of this workshop were:
- All the partners had a clearer understanding of the key provisions under the RTE Act through detailed reading, discussions, and deliberations.
 - State-wise experiences with regard to the implementation of the Act and devising state model rules were shared.
 - Through various exercises and discussions an understanding of the role that can be played by civil society organizations within the RTE framework was gained.
- c. Monitoring and Evaluation workshop:** The two-day Partners' Meet was followed by another two-day Monitoring and Evaluation workshop for the representatives of the 36 partner organizations. The main outputs of this workshop are:
- Understanding the present monitoring system followed at NEG-FIRE and devising/suggesting changes in the present system through a participatory approach.



- Changes with regard to the present monitoring system were made to make it more effective through detailed discussions and exercises.
- The partners were provided with greater clarity on some of the good practices with regard to monitoring, documentation, reporting, and evaluation systems through participatory discussions.

One of the most important outcomes of the workshop was adopting the system of ‘cluster monitoring’ for the programme during the remaining project period. Two types of cluster monitoring approaches have been short listed—theme-based and state/language-based. A plan of organizing these monitoring meets has already been charted in discussion with the partners.

d. Financial Workshop: A Financial Workshop was organized on 13-14 September, 2010 alongside the Partner’s Meet on RTE. The participants were mainly accountants/representatives of the ongoing project partners. The purpose of the workshop was to build understanding on concepts related to financial accountability of the organizations and good practices with regard to financial accounting, budgeting, and book-keeping. A discussion on the new FCRA Bill and direct tax code was taken up during this workshop which was facilitated by NEG-FIRE’s finance team.

e. Trainings/Workshops attended by the Staff: On 26-28 August 2010 4 staff members—Mr. Avinash Singh, Ms. Asha Gosain, Ms. Nivrita Durgavanshi, and Mr. Baby John—along with Ms. Marita Ishwaran, the Executive Director, attended a 3-day workshop titled ‘Blueprint of Successes’ facilitated by well-known motivator Mr. Shiv Khera in New Delhi. A day-long workshop organized by the Aga Khan Foundation on 29 July in Delhi was attended by Ms. Parasar Priyanka Sharma, Research Assistant, NEG-FIRE. The theme of the workshop was discussing the content and usage of the directory of governmental educational schemes. AKF’s partners, a few SSA members, and principals of various government schools were also present in the workshop. A 2-day staff training on developing ‘Baselines and setting indicators for mapping progress’, was held on 9-10 March 2011 at YMCA, Delhi. The session was facilitated by Dr. Vimala Ramachandran. As a part of this workshop, the members were split into groups and they developed specific baseline formats for the respective programmes that they are handling. A 2-day workshop on mainstreaming HIV/AIDS was organized by Ms. Ellen Schmitt, Consultant, HIV/AIDS Mainstreaming, Misereor, Germany for NEG-FIRE staff members on 1 and 4 April 2011. The main objective of the workshop was to build the capacity of the participants in the concept of mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in order to make a meaningful contribution and have an appropriate response to the HIV/AIDS situation.

f. Performance Management System: An internal performance management system has been developed in discussion with consultant Mr. Francis. Staff members were provided a 2-day training exercise with the purpose of developing ‘job purposes’ and creating an ‘Annual Performance Plan’ based on this for the year. The exercise was aimed at strengthening internal staff planning and reporting systems to ensure optimal and effective utilization of time and for better managing the job responsibilities of each staff member. Also, Mr. Francis is acting as a mentor to 2 senior staff members—Senior Programme Manager and Finance Manager—in the organization and weekly meetings are held to discuss performance related matters. A half-day session on 10 March 2011 was organized by Mr. Francis to discuss various management related issues, such as supervision, leadership, and managerial skills.



Participants of the workshop on Financial Training in Delhi

- g. Visit by Misereor's financial team members:** A team of 2 members—Mr. F. Diego, Financial Consultant, Misereor and Mrs. Kerstin Klein, Financial Representative of Misereor, Germany—visited NEG-FIRE on 18 October 2010 to discuss new reporting formats and Misereor's requirements. Various dimensions of the existing financial reporting formats were discussed and based on the suggestions given by them, a new format was developed. The NEG-FIRE team also shared the status of the various individual grants with the financial team.



Finance team members in discussion with Misereor's finance team

Committees:

Process Approval Committee (PAC) Meetings: PAC is an important body that assesses the rationale, design, and implementing strategies of any new programme that NEG-FIRE proposes through discussions. The proposed projects are sanctioned and taken to the implementation stage only after collective approval by all the committee members is given. Three PAC meetings were held between April 2010 and March 2011. Twelve projects were sanctioned during 2010-11 with a total amount of Rs 29,977,200.

Finance Committee (FC) Meetings: The Finance Committee is a body that gives recommendations to the Governing Board regarding financial policies and other related matters. Three FC meetings were held during 2010-11.



PAC members in discussion during a meeting in Delhi

List of Members: April 2010-March 2011

Governing Board Members (April 2010-March 2011)

1. Fr. Raymond Ambroise - Chairperson
2. Dr. Jaya Peter. Vice –Chairperson
3. Rev. Fr. Thomas V. Kunnunkal, SJ- Treasurer
4. Bishop Thomas D’Souza
5. Mr. K.P. Fabian
6. Fr. John Ariapilly
7. Sr. Mariella CJ
8. Mr. Martin Macwan
9. Mr. Martin Pinto – (co-opted member)

Finance Committee Members

1. Fr. Raymond Ambroise
2. Fr. Thomas Kunnankal
3. Mr. Martin Pinto
4. Mr. Bhupinder Gupta, Individual Member
5. Ms. Marita Ishwaran.

General Body Members

1. Fr. Raymond Ambroise, Chairperson
2. Dr. Jaya Peter, Vice-Chairperson
3. Rev. Fr. Thomas V. Kunnunkal, SJ, Treasurer
4. Bishop Thomas D’Souza
5. Archbishop Joseph Augustine Charanakunnel
6. Mr. K.P. Fabian
7. Fr. John Ariapilly
8. Sr. Mariella CJ
9. Mr. Martin Pinto
10. Mr. Martin Macwan
11. Mr. Mohammed Atyab Siddiqui
12. Dr. G. Pankajam
13. Dr. Ranjana Srivastava
14. Mr. Gagan Sethi
15. Dr. Prakash Louis
16. Dr. I. Devasahayam
17. Ms. Annie Namala
18. Mr. Dayaram
19. Mr. Lourdes Peter Baptista

Process Approval Committee

1. Fr. Raymond Ambroise
2. Mr. Martin Macwan
3. Ms. Mridula Bajaj
4. Mr. Lourdes Baptista
5. Prof. Ramachandran
6. Ms. Kameshwari Jandhyala
7. Ms. Marita Ishwaran.

Financial Report

New Education Group - Foundation For Innovation and Research in Education

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2011

Particulars	Schedule No.	As at 31/03/2011 (Rs.)	As at 31/03/2010 (Rs.)
SOURCES OF FUNDS			
Reserves & Funds	1	1,572,032.72	1,497,965.67
Program Balances	2	6,045,885.34	5,510,416.91
Total		7,617,918.06	7,008,382.58
APPLICATION OF FUNDS			
Fixed Assets			
Gross Block	3	3,572,468.00	2,935,131.00
Less: Depreciation		2,000,435.28	1,437,165.33
Net Block		1,572,032.72	1,497,965.67
Investments (FD)		4,000,000.00	3,500,000.00
Current Assets & Advances			
Cash & Bank Balances	4	3,242,066.30	1,958,535.20
Advances	5	175,515.04	585,109.71
		3,417,581.34	2,543,644.91
Less: Current Liabilities & Provisions	6	1,371,696.00	533,228.00
Net Current Assets		2,045,885.34	2,010,416.91
Total		7,617,918.06	7,008,382.58
Significant Accounting Policies & Notes to Accounts			
	9		

Note: Previous Year's figures have been reclassified wherever necessary.

For & on Behalf of Management

As per our report of even date annexed

For Vishal R Gupta & Co.
Chartered Accountants

M. Ishwaran
Executive Director

Fr. Thomas V. Kunnunkal
Treasurer

Vishal Gupta
(Proprietor)
M. No. - 502686

Place: New Delhi
Date: 21-07-2011

New Education Group - Foundation For Innovation and Research in Education

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st March 2011

Particulars	Schedule No.	For the Year Ended 31/03/2011 (Rs.)	For the Year Ended 31/03/2010 (Rs.)
INCOME			
Programme Fund Allocated		57,397,765.67	43,772,968.60
Total		57,397,765.67	43,772,968.60
EXPENDITURE			
Continuation of the National Education Programme in India	7	45,031,640.28	36,987,068.72
SDTT Project Expenses	8	10,802,855.45	6,351,462.55
Depreciation	3	563,269.94	434,437.33
Total			
Excess of Income over Expenditure		-	-
Total		57,397,765.67	43,772,968.60
Significant Accounting Policies & Notes to Accounts			
	9		

Note: Previous Year's figures have been reclassified wherever necessary.

For & on Behalf of Management

As per our report of even date annexed

For Vishal R Gupta & Co.
Chartered Accountants

M. Ishwaran
Executive Director

Fr. Thomas V. Kunnunkal
Treasurer

Place: New Delhi
Date: 21-07-2011

Vishal Gupta
(Proprietor)
M. No. - 502686

Vishal R. Gupta & Co.
Chartered Accountants

AUDIT REPORT

We have audited the attached Balance Sheet of New Education Group – Foundation for Innovation and Research in Education (NEG – FIRE) as at 31st March 2011 and also the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended on that date, annexed thereto. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Management of the Society. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

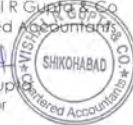
We have conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in India. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

We report that :

- a. We have obtained all the information and explanations, which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of our audit.
- b. In our opinion proper books of account as required by law have been kept by the organization so far as appears from our examination of the books.
- c. The Balance Sheet and the Income and Expenditure account dealt with by this report are in agreement with the books of account.
- d. In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given to us, the said accounts, read together with notes thereon give a true and fair view in conformity with the accounting principles generally accepted in India :
 - a) in the case of the Balance Sheet, of the state of affairs of the Society as at 31st March 2011.
 - b) in the case of the Income and Expenditure account, of the surplus for the year ended on that date.

For Vishal R Gupta & Co
Chartered Accountants

Vishal Gupta
Proprietor



Place: New Delhi

Date : 21-07-2011

C/o Dr. R.P. GUPTA, KATRA BAZAR, SHIKOHABAD, DISTT. – FIROZABAD PHONE- 05676-234422
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