Ensuring quality education for marginalized children through building a transformative Force

Baseline Survey Report

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NEG – FIRE

(New Education Group Foundation for Innovation and Research in Education)

Supported by – Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT)
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Abbreviation:

AIE:	Alternative Innovative Education.
AWC:	Anganwadi Center
AWW:	Anganwadi Worker
BC:	Backward Caste
ECA:	Education Community Animator
EGS:	Education Guarantee Scheme
ICDS:	Integrated Child Development Scheme
MS:	Mata Samiti
NEG FIRE:	New Education Group Foundation for Innovation and Research in Education
RTE:	Right to Education Act
SDTT:	Sir Dorabji Tata Trust
SMC:	School Management Committee
SC:	Scheduled Caste
ST:	Scheduled Tribe
UP:	Uttar Pradesh

Executive Summary

The Edu-leadership program is an initiative of NEG-FIRE supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT). This program aims at ensuring the entitlements of children as per Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and Right to Education (RTE) Act through the development and engagement of local leadership.

The purpose of the baseline survey is to identify the present situation in the project area with respect to the implementation of ICDS and RTE, to revise the project targets if necessary and to create baseline data-set that will assist in assessing the progress of the project over its term and beyond.

Baseline survey was conducted using survey tools, created and tested by NEG-FIRE. Volunteers and animators of the project conducted the baseline survey in 94 Primary Government Schools and 170 Anganwadi Centers in 103 villages (70 Gram Panchayats) from eight blocks of four districts in Uttar Pradesh. The survey was initiated in the month of October, 2013 and completed in December, 2013.

Key baseline survey findings for Anganwadi Center (AWC) and 3 to 6 years children are:

1. 98% children between the ages of 3-6 years were enrolled in AWC.
2. 5 villages do not have AWC.
3. 67% (117) AWC provided less than 50 % entitlements that are due to children under ICDS. 28% (49) AWC are functioning moderately where they ensured 51% to 75% of the entitlements due to children. 2% (4) AWC are functioning relatively well where they are ensuring more than 75% entitlements due to children are provided.
4. 97% of the Mata Samities are either very moderately functioning or are not formed.

Key baseline survey findings of Government Schools and 6 to 14 years children:

1. 86% children between the age group of 6 to 14 years were enrolled in various schools including private schools and Madrasas.
2. 42% (12123) of the children enrolled in Government Primary School.
3. 96% (11638) children studying in Government Primary School are from the marginalized community (ST,SC, BC & Minority).
4. 83% of the children enrolled in Government Primary School regularly attend school.
5. 48% (45) schools are ensuring less than 50% of provisions under RTE, 38% (36) school ensure 51% to 75% provisions of RTE and 14% (13) school ensure more than 75% provisions of RTE.
6. School Management Committees (SMC) is reconstituted in all 94 schools in the month of September 2013. Therefore only 2% of the SMC were found to be moderately functional.
7. 12% of the child forums are not formed and rest of the child forum perform less than 50% of their roles.

Key baseline survey findings of Edu-volunteers:

1. The project has 180 Edu-volunteers. 90% of the Edu-volunteers are performing less than 50% of the activities they were envisaged to be performing in the project. More than 80% of the Edu-volunteers are from the target community.

Significant findings of ICDS and strengthening project strategies:

1. The low and low-medium level of entitlements reaching AWC children was evident from the data. The low level functioning of Mata Samities has also emerged from the survey. NEG-FIRE project team and partners will continue to strengthen the Mata Samities who play crucial role in monitoring of AWC thereby ensuring the children received their due entitlements as per ICDS.
2. The Baseline study had brought out that 2% of the AWC was effectively functioning and it was proposed, two case-studies of such ICDS centres will be developed to learn about strategies that could be used with other centres.

Significant findings of government primary school education and strengthening project strategies:

1. 4498 out of school children needs to be motivated and enrolled back to school as early as possible. The project team will identify the reasons and develop appropriate strategies to address children who are out of the school system now.
2. SMC are instrumental in making school RTE compliant therefore the project will continue to strengthen SMC to make them functional. The need to engage community members - teachers and government officials to make the schools RTE compliant has been recognized.

Significant finding of Edu-Volunteers and strengthening project strategies:

The Edu-volunteers are mostly educated youth from the villages, who have volunteered their services to improve the level of education in the villages. These volunteers would play a key role in mobilizing and engaging the community to seek entitlements for children under ICDS and RTE. Therefore the primary focus of the project will continue to train, develop and support the volunteers to perform their role in the project.

Chapter: 1

Background & Methodology

1.1 NEG-FIRE and its Commitment to Education of Marginalized Children

The New Education Group- Foundation for Innovation and Research in Education (NEG-FIRE) endeavors to bring social transformation through Education. Further, NEG-FIRE looks at strengthening the existing government structures through the participation of community and strengthening local governance structures to ensure education for all especially the most marginalized communities. NEG-FIRE contributes to and is working towards fulfillment of the goals on education and development of children, as per Integrated Child Development Scheme and Right to Education Act.

1.2 Edu-Leadership project aim:

The Edu-Leadership program supported by Sir Dorabji Tata Trust (SDTT) is one of the initiatives of NEG-FIRE. This project will address the issue of quality education in the most marginalized blocks of UP by strengthening appropriate Governance structures like Mata Samities, SMC and Village Education Committee that promotes education. The program aims to develop cadre of Edu-volunteers who will continue to motivate children and parents to access education and their entitlements and also work with teachers and others to recognize the educational right of children. The community-based educational leadership (Edu-volunteers) promoted by the project is expected to sustain the educational interest generated during the project term.

1.3 Objectives of Baseline Study:

The purpose of the baseline survey is to identify the present situation in the project area with respect to the implementation of ICDS and RTE, to revise the project targets if necessary and to create baseline data-set that will assist in assessing the project progress over its term and beyond.

The baseline survey was conducted on the following key project indicators:

1. Enrolment and attendance of children in AWC & School.
2. Functioning of AWC in ensuring the entitlements of children as per ICDS.
3. Functioning of Mata Samities in monitoring and ensuring that children receive entitlements as per the provisions of ICDS.
4. RTE compliance of school
5. Functioning of SMC to ensure that children receive entitlements as per the provisions of RTE.
6. Child Forum and their participation in school.
7. Role played by edu volunteers to ensure the implementation of ICDS and RTE.

(All the tools developed for collecting data on each of the above parameters is attached as Annexure)

The baseline survey covered all project villages which include 94 Primary Government Schools and 170 Anganwadi Centers (AWC) from 103 villages of 70 Gram Panchayats from eight blocks of four districts in Uttar Pradesh. The baseline survey covered all

children going to AWC and government primary school between the ages of 3 to 14 years from the above mentioned project area.

The data was collected by project volunteers and Education Community Animator (ECA) under the supervision of Project Coordinator from Partner Organization and project staff from NEG-FIRE Lucknow. The survey was initiated in the month of October, 2013 and completed in December, 2013.

1.4 Baseline Survey Methodology:

Tools were designed by NEG-FIRE and it was tested and finalized in consultation with all the 8 NGO partners. All tools were common for all the 8 NGO partners and they were oriented on the tools to create a common understanding and how to administer the tools.

The data collection tools were administered through the following combination of methodology:

- Individual interview.
- Focus group discussion.
- Observation.

1.5 Details of the Tools

Two types of tools were developed Questionnaire and Tabular Formats; both the tools were developed in English and later translated in Hindi before testing on the field by the project team.

a. Six (6) questionnaires were developed to collect information on Anganwadi Center (AWC), Mata Samiti (MS), School Management Committee (SMC), Government Primary School (RTE related parameters), Edu-volunteer and Children's forum. Each tool contains questions with response options of either 'yes' or 'no'. For the ease of data analysis and inference these tools were converted into score and graded. The response 'Yes' is equal to '1' and 'No' is equal to '0'.
b. 3 tabular formats were developed to collect information on the number of children in school, number of children out of school and learning level of children. All the formats also collected important demographic information like caste, gender of children and school and AWC.

1.6 Data Collection:

Primary data was collected through the survey tools from Parents of children, Teachers, AWW, Children, Community members and Edu-volunteers. A combination of data collection methods were used like physical observation of AWC and School, group discussion of parents of children, community members and interview with teachers and AWW.

For the purpose of understanding the context of the project area secondary data was collected from government offices, private schools, Madrasas, Education Guarantee Scheme, Alternative Innovative Education, Panchayats, AWW and Para Teacher.

1.7 Data Compilation:

The partner organisations compiled data collected through the tabular formats from all the villages together in an excel files. The excel compilation formats were provided by NEG FIRE. Similarly the information from the 6 questionnaires (AWC, MS, SMC, School,

Edu volunteer and Child forum) were graded and compiled in the excel file along with their grade[1].

1.8 Data Validation:

After data was complied, NEG FIRE validated the data. Processes adopted to validate data were:

a. NEG FIRE MIS Officer based in Lucknow identified data with extreme values and reconfirmed the data at the field level through personal visit or asked NEG-FIRE Project Officers to visit field to verify the data. Sample data verification of data was taken up for validation.
b. NEG-FIRE MIS Officer randomly compared a data set in soft copy with hard copy to verify if there were any data entry errors.
c. NEG-FIRE MIS officer randomly identified data sets and through telephone asked the Education Community Animator, Project Coordinator or NGO head and verified specific data.

1.9 Data Analysis and Report writing:

The primary data analysis was conducted by the Lucknow Team, they consulted and discussed with the partner organisations on each topic. The MIS Officer created the tables and the charts.

It was then reviewed by the M&E Manager, Programme Head and the Executive Director, relevant suggestion were exchanged with the Lucknow team

1.10 The steps followed for baseline survey were:

1. Tools translated to Hindi and tested.
2. Orientation of data collectors on the tools and how to administer tools.
3. Data collection on the field.
4. Data compilation at partner organisations.
5. Data validation
6. Project level compilation of data.
7. Data analysis and report writing, (During this process discussion and consultations were done with Partner Organisations)
8. Report reviewed by M&E Manager, Programme Head and Executive Director.

[1] The grades were based on the following calculations:

Grade I	=	0% to 25% questions with positive response.
Grade II	=	26% to 50% questions with positive response.
Grade III	=	51% to 75% questions with positive response.
Grade IV	=	76% to 100% questions with positive response.

Chapter: 2

Study Findings: Children going to school

This section discusses the findings on the enrollment of children to school and AWC.

2.1 Population of children

Children constitute nearly 14.42 % of the total population (Secondary data collected from local sources). This is slightly higher than the national average of 13.12 percent (Census 2011).

Below mentioned table provides age wise segregation of the number of children in the project area:

Sr. No.	Village Population (Secondary data)	Number
1	Total population including adults	298070
2	Number of children between 3 to 6 Year's	9675
3	Number of children between 6 to 14 Year's	33308

2.2 Status of enrollment:

Table below provide details of the enrollment by institution:

Sr.No.	Enrolment Status	Number
1	Number of children enrolled in AWC (Primary Data)	9499
2	Number of children enrolled in Government Primary School (6 to 14 years) (Primary Data)	12123
3	Number of children enrolled in Private School(6 to 14 years) (Secondary Data)	15976
4	Number of children enrolled in (Madrasa, EGS*, AIE**) (6 to 14 years) (Secondary Data)	711
Total		**38309**

Note: * EGS means children enrolled under Education Guarantee Scheme, **AIE means children enrolled under Alternative Innovative Education.

Total children between 6-14 years going to different types of educational institutions are 28810. This is approximately 86 % of the total 33308 children in the 6-14 age groups, it also means approximately 16% children i.e. 4498 children may be out of school. This figure is assumptive as the population data and data from Private schools/institutions were from secondary sources and the scope for verification was limited.

2.3 Attendance of children in government primary school:

The focus of our intervention is Government Primary School, therefore the attendance data is collected from 12123 children going to Government Primary School.

Regular & Irregular Children in Government Primary School			
S.N.	Detail	Number	Percentage
1	Regular*	9907	82
2	Irregular	2216	18
Total		12123	100

Note: *here regular means children who attended school 17 days or more in the previous month.

The above mentioned figures are encouraging and are in contrast with popular belief that children are irregular.

2.4 Gender-wise breakup of children in government primary schools:

It was found that the number of boys enrolled in school was less than girls. This is shown in the table below:

Children Gender-wise		
Children	Number	Percentage
Boy	5685	47
Girl	6438	53
Total	12123	100

2.5 Caste-wise breakup of children going to government primary schools:

96% of children enrolled in government primary schools belonged to the marginalized (SC, ST, BC and Minority) community as shown in the table below:

S.N.	Category of Child	Number	Percentage
1	OBC	4783	39
2	SC	5031	41
3	ST	20	1
4	M (Muslim)	1860	15
5	GEN	429	4
Total		12123	100

It is confirmed from the above data that marginalized populations preferred and opted sending their children to the Government schools and not private schools for their children.

2.6 Age wise breakup of children going to government primary schools:

The above data is from primary school (Class 1 to 5); therefore children between the ages of 6 to 11 are expected to be in primary school.

2.7 Class-wise breakup of children going to government primary schools:

The class wise breakup of the total children who were found to be enrolled in government schools is shown below:

NEG FIRE would study why children dropout with growing age and class. An interesting observation is that children in Class 2 are more than Class 1, this may be due to children from alternative schools are directly admitted to Class 2.

2.8 Children enrolled in age appropriate class:

The survey also tried to find number of children who were studying in class appropriate to their ages. Children were considered age appropriate if a child of 6 years was in Class 1, 7 years in Class 2 and likewise 14 years in Class 9. The findings are as mentioned below:

Enrolment in Age Appropriate class in Government Primary School			
S.N.	Age Appropriate class	Number	**Percentage**
1	Number of children in age Appropriate class	11982	**99**
2	Not in age Appropriate class	141	**1**
Total		12123	**100**

Most of the children were found to be in age appropriate class; this is because after RTE teachers promote children without any evaluation. Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation has not started in any of the 94 schools in the project area. Children studying in age appropriate class do not mean they have age appropriate learning levels.

2.9 Enrollment of new children in school:

Newly Enrolled children from Class 1 to Class 5			
S.N.	**Class**	**Number**	**Percentage**
1	1	2157	50
2	2	628	14
3	3	586	14
4	4	474	11
5	5	462	11
Total		**4307**	**100**

50% newly enrolled children are in class 2 or above, it shows half these children were either outside the ambit of the schooling system or have shifted to government schools from alternative schooling systems such as Madrasa's. It is a positive sign and NEG-FIRE would study this phenomenon to identify push and pull factors that is bringing children to Government Primary Schools.

2.10 Drop-outs from government primary schools

This study identified dropouts from the 94 target schools and it was found that only 429 children out of 12123 children have dropped out of school. During the study 256 never enrolled children were also identified from the project villages, which means 685 children are out of school.

Among the children who are out of school, 262 (38%) children were found to be child labour.

Chapter: 3

Study Findings: ICDS, RTE and Community

This section discusses the level of implementation of ICDS and RTE. Also discusses the level of preparedness of the Edu-volunteers in engaging the community to seek entitlements.

3.1 Functioning of Anganwadi Centres (AWC):

The status of the 70 Anganwadi centres with regard to the implementation of the provisions of ICDS is given below:

Number of Grade	Number of AWC	Percentage
Grade IV	4	2
Grade III	49	28
Grade II	97	55
Grade I	20	12
No AWC	5 (Villages)	3 (Considered Grade I)
Grand Total	**170**	**100**

A total of 206 Anganwadi Workers are working in these centers and a total of 170 Mata Samities have been formed in the villages where there is AWC. Interestingly 2% of the AWC were effectively functioning and it was proposed, two case-studies of such ICDS centers be developed to learn about strategies that could be used with other centers. Priority interventions will be carried out to seek AWC in 5 villages where there is no AWC. NEG-FIRE and its partners would focus to improve the infrastructure and functionality through stronger community participation.

3.2 Mata Samities (MS):

The status of 170 Mata Samities is given below:

Number of Grade	Number of Mata Samiti	Percentage
Grade IV	1	1
Grade III	5	3
Grade II	50	29
Grade I	105	60
Not formed	9	4
No AWC	5	3
Grand Total	**170**	**100.00**

Lot of training, exposure and handholding will be required to make the Mata Samities empowered to monitor the functioning of AWC and seek entitlements for children. Edu-volunteers will play a crucial role in handholding and providing the support. The exceptional cases of one fully functional Mata Samiti will be studied to create case study to identify the factors of success and replicate with other Mata Samities.

3.3 RTE Compliance of Government Primary School:

The status of the RTE compliance of the 94 schools in the project area is given below:

Number of Grade	Number of school	Percentage
Grade 4	13	14
Grade 3	36	38
Grade 2	31	33
Grade 1	14	15
Grand Total	**94**	**100**

The schools with such low RTE compliance are unlikely to be effective in retaining and educating children. This is probably the reason why children drop out of school. The provisions of the RTE are non-negotiable and all school should implement all the provisions. NEG-FIRE along with its partners will work with the community, teachers and government officials to make all the schools RTE compliant.

3.4 School Management Committee (SMC)

The functioning of School Management Committees is given below:

Number of Grade	Number of SMC	Percentage
Grade IV	0	0
Grade III	5	5
Grade II	51	54
Grade I	39	41
Grand Total	**95**	**100**

As per mandate in RTE to reconstitute SMC every two years, SMC in UP have been reconstituted first time in the month of October 2013. SMC are instrumental in making school RTE compliant therefore the project will continue to work with SMC members to make the SMC functional and strong.

3.5 Child Forum

Number of Grade	Number of Child Forum	Percentage
Grade IV	0	0
Grade III	0	0
Grade II	27	28
Grade I	57	60
Not formed	11	12
Grand Total	**95**	**100**

NEG FIRE will continue to work with children through treasure houses and Mel-Jol classes to engage, motivate and create an agency among children. This will prepare children to participate in the functioning of the schools through forums like Child Forum.

3.6 Role played by Edu-volunteers:

Number of Grade	Number of Edu-volunteers	Percentage
Grade IV	2	1
Grade III	17	10
Grade II	103	57
Grade I	58	32
Grand Total	**180**	**100**

The Edu-volunteers are mostly educated youth from the villages, who have volunteered their services to improve the level of education in the villages. More than 80% of the current Edu-volunteers in the project are from the target community. These volunteers would play a key role in mobilizing and engaging the community to seek entitlements for children under ICDS and RTE. Therefore the primary focus of the project will continue to train, develop and support the volunteers to perform their role in the project. A significant number of the Edu-volunteers are females.

Chapter: 4

Focus areas for the programme:

The baseline survey brought to the forefront various focus areas. They are discussed below:

1. **AWC:** Non-functional AWC will have an impact on the early childhood care and development of young children. This might hamper the development of many children. Therefore one of the major focus areas of the project would be to make the AWC functional.
2. **RTE compliance of school:** RTE Act was passes to ensure education for all children, as education can impact the quality of life a child will have in future. Moreover RTE Act is designed to deliver quality education to children. Given the low level of compliance of RTE in the government schools it is a focus area.
3. **Activate Mata Samities and School Management Committees:** Mata Samities and SMC are key bodies to monitor the functioning of AWC and school. Therefore it is crucial that Mata Samities and SMC are fully active and functional.
4. **Capacity building for Edu-volunteers:** Edu volunteer are the transformative force to make the AWC and School functional. Therefore the project will continue to train, develop and support the volunteers to perform their role in the project.

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