Gram Vikas Trust - Sikshana Project

February - 2016

Project: Replication of Sikshana in a second node in the State of Gujarat

Sikshana is a unique effort started by the Gram Vikas Trust that aims at improving learning levels in the government primary schools through better access and delivery of education. The program has grown in second years to cover 30 schools and 4747 kids, becoming one of the top such interventions in the State of Gujarat. Sikshana aims to build a participatory and gender-sensitive teaching/learning approach to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Mission & Objectives
To evolve a sustainable and replicable model for an effective and decentralized public education system based on good management practices

Location
Bharuch (Vagra Block)

Sikshana aims to improve the quality of education in Government primary schools at a typical cost of Rs. 60,100/- per annum per school. The improvement is measured in quantified scales in each school under standard test conditions. The program is essentially focused on decentralization and empowerment of the adopted schools. Gram Vikas Trust acts primarily as a facilitator and not as provider of solutions.

Rationale of the project:

Decentralization and empowerment of the schools can lead to a healthy public education system. At present, the expense incurred by the government in educating a child in this system works out to anywhere between Rs 7000 to Rs 10,000 per annum. For a typical school of 150 kids, this amounts to Rs 10 lakhs or more. A program which seeks to get optimum learning levels at a cost of Rs 60,100 inclusive of the direct and monitoring costs- is an eminently desirable one, if the targets are realized.

The failure of the public education system in India is well documented in various studies and also the academic statistics maintained by the state education department finds the government schools lacking the minimum standards prescribed by the state itself.

The GVT Sikshana project approach has been significantly successful in one clusters of schools already adopted by GVT - Sikshana in and around Jhagadia block of Bharuch district. The current proposal seeks to extend its scope to a second cluster in Vagra block of Bharuch district in order to establish its validity statistically over a larger number of schools and in all environments.

Objective

To improve the academic standards in the government higher primary schools specifically in the areas of ability to read and write, basic computation and expression as per the minimum learning levels defined by the department of education.

Target Group

The program targets children studying in Government primary schools of the age group 5 to 13. These kids belong to the most deprived sections of the society as parents who have the means to raise as little as Rs 50 per month normally choose to place their children in private schools.

Project Location

The location will be Vagra block of Bharuch district of Gujarat 30 higher primary schools in that school district will be selected for the project and an MOU with the Department of Education has already been signed to implement the GVT-Sikshana Project at these schools.

Deliverables

- Fluency in reading and writing non –text book Kannada of the appropriate level in 3rd and 7th Standard (year 1 estimated impact on 700 children)

- Basic Computational skills with two digits in III Standard (year 1 estimated impact on 300 children)

- Lingual skills in English at IV Standard: Vocabulary of 500 words and ability to construct simple sentences (year 1 estimated impact on 300 children)

- Attain 65% in APF model testing as adopted by Dept of Education or 10% increase every year , as applicable

- 90% plus students to get Grades B or above in all subjects in VII Standard Final Examinations (year 1 estimated impact on 500 children)

- *Time schedule*: Bench marks to be attained in two years and maintained in the Third.

An estimated 4747 children will be the target student population during the duration of the project.

Duration

3 – 5 years

Sustainability Plan

Sikshana is essentially a program aimed at evolving a sustainable and replicable model for the public education system at the primary level. It has been in existence for about one and half years, with the coverage increasing from three in the first year of its operation to 15 in the second. Sikshana has been able to show significant and measurable improvement in the learning levels at a typical cost of not more than Rs 55100 per annum in a typical school of 150 kids.

The schools which have gone through this program for one and half years are showing encouraging results, indicating that it is feasible to have a permanent and lasting impact over a 5 to 7 year period.

Sikshana feels that sustainability in the field can be ensured through the following options:

- The enhancements achieved may be irreversible and the school may not need continued support on the same scale. The presence of some schools of excellence within the public school system proves this point.
- The school may need substantially less external resources to maintain the momentum, which may be within the reach of the local community. It has been seen that some of the communities in the school zone have shown the capability to raise such amounts, over and above the amount which Sikshana project have deployed.

Bi-annual progress reports will be generated on the entire cluster of schools. APF model testing will be resorted to in all schools in at least two levels twice—once at the start of the year and the other at the end. These will be carried out by competent and independent agencies. Results will be announced as received from them. Un-audited financial results will be furnished during the middle of the year and the audited statements provided by end June of each year.

- And thirdly the department and the government are closely watching the impact of the intervention and if shown as a successful model then there is a good possibility that they may cover the incremental expense to implement the Sikshana practices.

Proposed Budget

Even though Sikshana calculates the program cost on a per child basis typically the activities and expenses are at the school level and as such it will be helpful to calculate the budget at a school level and based on the 5years of work with nearly 30 schools, a typical budget per school is as shown below which assumes that 150 - 200 children are there in a school. The school budget will change based on the actual school strength.

Sr.	Description of Expenses per School	Unit Cost in Rs. Per School		% distri.
A	**Mandatory**		22100	
1	Writing Sheets	3000		5.40%
2	Library	3000		5.40%
3	Competitions	1000		1.80%
4	Scholarships	3600		6.50%
5	Spot Prizes	2000		3.60%
6	Teacher Training	5000		9.10%
7	Exams / Assessments	3000		5.40%
8	Ram Shop (Stationary item)	1500		2.70%
B	**Optional**		18500	
1	Educational Tours	3500		6.40%
2	Para Teachers	9000		16.30%
3	Sports / Music	3000		5.40%
4	Teaching Aid	3000		5.40%
	School Defined Initiative	5000		
	School Fund		**45600**	73.70%
1	Mentoring & Monitoring		12000	21.80%
2	Admin		2500	4.50%
	Total		**60100**	
	Grand Total for 30 Schools Rs.		**1803000**	

Financial outlay for the project

No. of Primary Schools	No. of Students*	Cost Per child/year	Total Cost of the project for 1 year
30	4747	379.80	Rs. 18,03,000

Work Plan

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<tr><td colspan="3">Goal:
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Measurable Outcome(s):
- Fluency in reading and writing non –text book Kannada of the appropriate level in 3rd and 7th Standard
- Basic Computational skills with two digits in III Standard
- Lingual skills in English at IV Standard: Vocabulary of 500 words and ability to construct simple sentences
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- 90% plus students to get Grades B or above in all subjects in VII Standard Final Examinations

The same activities are planned for the 2nd and 3rd year with minor modifications in the program as necessary epending on the feedback from the 1st year implementation of the program.

Major Objectives	Key Tasks	Lead Person	Timeframe (Start and End Date by Month)			
			Apr-Jun	**Jul-Sep**	**Oct-Dec**	**Jan-Mar**
1 TQM (Total Quality Management) Concepts to be introduced in all the schools	a) TQM training program for all teachers (current estimate is 600 teachers from 105 schools)	Sikshana TQM Training Staff	Conduct a TQM workshop and have schools draft their goals	Monitor milestones	Monitor milestones	Feedback TQM session at end of the academic year
	b) Goals and Vision statement to be displayed in each school	School Staff	Create the display board with vision/goals	Check progress against set milestones	Check progress against set milestones	Report goals achieved at end of the year
2. Fluency in reading non-text Kannada and English at the appropriate level (current estimate is that 4000 children will be impacted every year in 3rd and 7th class from the 105 schools)	Subscribe Kannada and English newspaper to the school and use them in the school assembly daily by having children read the news headlines	School Staff	Start the program at the beginning of the school year	Continue the program	Continue the program	Continue the program
	Take children to large book stores and let them create their own library	School Staff and Sikshana Mentor	Have select children from class 5,6 and 7 to create their own library. Those students become library monitors	Library monitors ensures all children read at least one book per week. Class 7 students summarize in one page each book they read	Library monitors ensures all children read at least one book per week. Class 7 students summarize in one page each book they read	Library monitors ensures all children read at least one book per week. Class 7 students summarize in one page each book they read
	Verify the compliance to the program by the school staff	Sikshana Mentor	Create a baseline for class 3 and 7 for each of the school	Monitor progress	Monitor progress	Report end of year progress

3) Improve the overall learning levels in the school. Measurement parameters: 1. 65% or above in the APF model testing by independent agency 2. 90% of the children in class 7 will score B or above in the final exam	a)Implementation of the following motivational programs of Sikshana : 1. Sheet bank initiative 2. Spot prizes 3. Delhi trip for quiz winners 4. Annual prizes 5. Educational tour 6. Teaching Aids 7. Computer initiative 8. Para teachers 9. Other initiatives as determined by the school staff with an eye towards increasing the learning levels in that school.	School Staff	Sheet bank initiative Spot Prizes Teaching Aids Computer initiative Para teachers Other teacher initiatives	Sheet bank initiative Spot Prizes Teaching Aids Computer initiative Para teachers Delhi trip quiz and tour Other teacher initiatives	Sheet bank initiative Spot Prizes Teaching Aids Computer initiative Para teachers Educational tour Other teacher initiatives	Sheet bank initiative Spot Prizes Teaching Aids Computer initiative Para teachers Annual prizes Other teacher initiatives
	b)Compliance of the program	Sikshana Mentor	Monitor and suggest changes	Monitor and suggest changes	Monitor and suggest changes	Monitor and suggest changes
	c) Assessments	Independent testing agency	First Assessment			Second Assessment and report
	d)Department Exams	School Staff		First Semester Exams		Final Exam and report

4. PROJECT MONITORING & EVALUATION

- Monitoring and evaluation, both **programmatic and financial** will be conducted **on a quarterly basis** to ensure that intervention is on track to meet desired impact. Cheques for the project will be released in two instalments. Each disbursement will be audited and then the next instalment will be released.

- **A six monthly programme report** on the project will be provided to donor.

- **A final financial utilization certificate** that lists out all the budget heads under the specific programme and its utilization will be provided to donor on completion of the term.

- **A final programme report** on the project will be provided to donor. The report will detail activities conducted in the project duration, their impact and recommendations for future support.

Results from 2012-13 & 2013-14 academic year of govt schools under Sikshana Project

Performance of Sikshana Primary Schools

As per ASER (www.asercenter.org), a child in class 7 should know how to perform a 2 digit division and also able to read fluently level 2 Gujarati. Data from 43 schools in two block of Bharuch district is shown below. The end of year results are way above the state and national averages and the schools are well on their way to getting a 100% which would mean that no child will enter high school without the basic language and math skills.

Sikshana Language and Arithmetic Assessment (based on ASER)				
Block	**No. of Schools**	**No. of 7th Students**	**Gujarati (Level 2) Start -> End**	**Math (2 Digit Division) Start -> End**
Jhagadia	15	340	**69 % -> 92%**	**61 % -> 88%**
State Rural Avg. 2010			65%	42%
National Rural Avg. 2010			76%	57%

Highlights:

The 31 schools in Jhagadia block which was run as a pilot showed the biggest improvement within Last 3 years