

Report Statistics**Educational
mapping of 100
villages****Census of 2
villages****184 schools
studied****kusuma
trust**

Greater access to education needed at higher levels

Pilot research sheds light on education provision at district level

A recent pilot study entitled **'Understanding Access to Education'** in the Sursa Block of Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh has revealed that education provision decreases at higher levels of schooling, and corresponds to a decrease in school enrolment.

The research conducted by the Annual State of Education Research (ASER) Centre at Pratham and funded by the Kusuma Trust UK included mapping of education provision in 100 villages and an education census of two villages. The research focused on assessing the levels of education of children and youth in the age group of 5 - 20 years. All primary and post-primary, government and private institutions, tuition and vocational training centres were mapped and listed, and all households were surveyed in the two villages. Results showed that only 17 secondary schools were available for the 100 villages mapped as compared to 167 primary and upper primary schools. Furthermore the report states that education provision is increasingly reliant on the private sector at higher levels of schooling.

The report concluded that access to education is constrained by socioeconomic status and gender expectations. Children from economically weaker sections and particularly girls, are less likely to continue to the highest levels of schooling and are more likely to cite issues of access and safety as reasons for dropping out of school at an early stage. The report recommends that efforts should be initiated to increase public provision of education at post-primary level and to further align curricula with students' abilities. The report also recommends a vocational programme for youth who are out-of-school.

Discussions are underway between the Kusuma Trust UK and Pratham to explore how this research could be carried out at district level across Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh and in Sambalpur, Odisha.



ASER staff carrying out a village census in Hardoi. Photo: Pratham.

Communities encourage young people into education

The BETI Foundation's **Education Advancement through Livelihood Training** project provides education and vocational training opportunities for young adolescents that have dropped out of mainstream education. In Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh, five Community Support Groups (CSG) have been established to encourage young people to attend school. The CSGs have been trained to identify out-of-school children in their communities and employ strategies to reintegrate young people into mainstream education. Members were also briefed on the value of skills-based learning for young people. Community awareness drives have been held to encourage the enrolment of out-of-school children in education and vocational training centres.

Student-led School Cabinets play their part

In Sambalpur, Odisha, the **RMSA Roll Out for Quality Secondary Education** project, implemented by the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD) conducted eight meetings with community members. The meetings raised awareness about young people not enrolled in school and the high drop-out rates in secondary school. Following the meetings, community members prepared lists of out-of-school children, which will be used to track them in order to encourage their enrollment in school for the next academic year. School Cabinets, which aim to provide a student voice in decision-making within schools, have also been formed. The school cabinets will also contribute to community awareness campaigns to reduce the number of students who drop out of school.

Teachers equipped with new skills

The Open University project, **Teacher Professional Development in Secondary Science and English**, aims to support students from Hardoi district to improve their grades and to enable participation in higher education. Following the Teacher Professional Development workshops that took place in October 2012 in the district, teachers are now beginning to implement their newly developed skills in the classroom. Teachers are adapting materials from the training and adopting new approaches to teaching. They are also planning classroom activities to share good practice.



OU training: A new approach to teaching. Photo: Sam Strickland

Scholars prepare for the job market

In September and October, five 'motivation camps' were organised by Pragathi Seva Samithi for **Kusuma Young Achievers Fellows** to help them perform better in their studies. 107 fellows participated in the camps and learnt more about the selection process and entrance examinations including the Indian Administrative Services and Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering. The camps have enabled the fellows to be better prepared for the examinations and employment.

Science brought to life in schools

Students in Sambalpur are improving their understanding and practical knowledge of Science by working with new science kits. **The Conducive Learning Environment and Facilities for Secondary Science Students** project is implemented by Agraneer Jana Kalyan Anusthan (AJKA) in partnership with 25 schools in the district. Students are now reaping the benefits of the project by carrying out practical science experiments using the science kits. Experiments conducted in the classroom include studying cells using a mini-microscope, understanding refraction and reflection with the use of mirrors and water, as well as conducting experiments to purify water by distillation.



Pehchaan students at Sarvadoya Ashram. Photo: Sam Strickland

Pehchaan students achieve good grades

The **Pehchaan** accelerated education residential programme provides opportunities for girls from disadvantaged backgrounds who have dropped out of school to continue their schooling. Students were recently evaluated and results have been positive. In Class 9, 48 students were evaluated and more than 85% of them received grades of 60% or higher. In Class 10, 40 students were evaluated and 90% of them received grades of 60% or higher. The results demonstrate how investment in such an accelerated programme which uses interactive teaching methods can have such a big impact on education outcomes for girls. In October, all students in Class 8 were taken on a study visit to Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh to experience places of educational importance including the historical monument Imambada, the Planetarium and the Zoo. The objective of the trip was to familiarise the students with the historical and cultural heritage of the city and to give them an opportunity to understand astronomical concepts and facts.