

Review Report of Read India Campaign in Orissa (Jul – Oct 2007)

Introduction:

Pratham started its 'Learning to Read' and library activities in the slum areas of Cuttack in 2003 and later the direct program was expanded to Jaypore town in Koraput with support of BILT. Later the program was expanded when Pratham Orissa in collaboration with Orissa Primary Education Program Authority (OPEPA) conducted a pilot of 'Learning to Read' in 4 blocks of 4 districts namely- Kantamal of Boudh, Tikabali of Kandhamal, Basta of Balasore and Thakurmunda of Mayurbhanj during the period Nov 06 – April 07. The pilot received positive response and now the campaign has moved to 24 out of 30 districts of Orissa. We are covering 181 blocks (roughly half of the state) in these 24 districts. The blocks have been chosen in consultation with OPEPA on the basis of backwardness in terms of various parameters such as out of school children percentage, results etc. as compared to state average. The campaign was launched on 28th of July with a 2 day state level consultation with various partner organizations. The campaign is 3 months old and community based as the OPEPA partnership to implement it through the school system is yet to be finalized, but likely to take place very soon.

No. of Districts: The campaign will now cover 24 out of 30 districts of Orissa

Target Children: The target group is the children in the age group of 6-14 years.

Learning Goals:

The target children should be able to read 6 letter words and simple sentences, passage, short stories without conjoined letters.

Achievements and Shortfalls

- Mobilisation
 - Reach – We have reached about 13500 out of approximately 25000 villages. We have realized that there has to be a change in tactics to speed up our reach by collaborating with existing network of NGOs, SHGs, Government programs such as OTELP, Watershed mission etc. We realistically expect to reach any where between 15000-20000 by middle of November.
 - Partnership – Formal partnership (MOU) with OPEPA is yet to be signed. But we have got in principle letters of support from State Project Director addressed to all DPCs, we have letters of support from Revenue Divisional

Commissioner (RDC)s of two out of 3 zones where most of our districts are located in support of our campaign addressed to collectors. Number of districts are giving us good support with out formal MOU. We have partnership with out formal MOU with about 30 NGOs. We have received small local financial support from one group of educational institutions (CSREM) and a US based NGO – IAFF. Partnership proposal with UNICEF is being negotiated for joint campaign in Koraput and Raygada districts.

- Personnel- Number of volunteers mobilised was about 14500 at roughly one per village.
- Training: Almost 6400 volunteers have been trained by the end of October. No. Of teachers, SHG members, Anganwadi workers trained have been much smaller in comparision.
- TLM: Pratham – Pratham has printed and distributed about 92000 sets of materials to the trained volunteers at the rate of set of 20 booklets per volunteers so that the trained volunteers can start the classes. About 4600 volunteers had received the material by end of October.
- Teaching-Learning Activities – About 78000 children are involved in the classes by the end of October.

Other Highlights of Achievements:

1. 180 blocks in 24 districts have been identified and block coordinators, district coordinators and zonal coordinators selected, trained and deployed.
2. Almost 14000 volunteers have been identified in as many villages and training is going on.
3. About 50% of the volunteers have been trained and started classes.
4. 12 page TLM has been designed and printed and being distributed in phases as more and more volunteers are trained and getting ready to start classes.
5. Letters of supports have been received from SPD and two RDCs.
6. MOU under negotiation with Orissa’s largest Newspaper group.
7. Pratham has conducted a 'Story Writing and Story Reading' festival in 1500 panchayats in collaboration with SAMBAD – the largest circulating Oriya daily.
8. In collaboration with UNICEF Pratham organised a 'Reading can be Fun' stall on Children's Day for the state level function.
9. In collaboration with Institute of Mathematics and Application (IMA), Bhubaneswar and

its director Prof. Swadhin Pattnaik (most well known mathematician of Orissa), Pratham volunteers helped conduct the Rural Mathematics Talent Search Examination (RMTS) on November 18th. As a result of our help, almost 10000 additional class VI students could take the test in almost 100 centres in remote rural areas. This partnership is likely to help us in the future with our work in 'R2L' in mathematics.

All in all it has been an exhilarating experience, as we go about taking the campaign forward and reaching out to children far and wide in remote corners of the state. We hope to work closely with OPEPA at the state level and education department officials at all levels and finally primary school teachers to ensure that all of our children are able to read, write and do arithmetic.