TOGETHER FOR COMMUNITIES
Special Edition on Education (ACC Vidya Utkarsh)
ACC VidyaUtkarsh

ACC Vidya Utkarsh is a CSR project that aims to facilitate quality education to every child in the host community. ACC facilitates enhancement of quality education in the area through a hub and spoke model. There are 15 ACC established schools which have positioned themselves as center of excellence over the past decades. The center of excellence plays a role of hub to enhance quality of education in 239 government-run schools in the area.

This project has five major interventions:

a) Teachers Training – Learning from CBSE Teachers Training module, ASER Report and innovative methodologies like B.A.L.A., STEM etc. are proactively adopted.

b) e-Learning – multimedia instructional design principles have been adopted to facilitate effective learning. Educomp, IL&FS Education models are being used.

c) Library – to inculcate reading habit among the children and exposing them to the world of imagination. It’s been done with support of Pratham Books.

d) Strengthening school management Committee – to ensure positive participation of the community for better learning environment, adequate facilities, quality time by teachers and good governance, capacity building support is provided to the school management committee.

e) Scholarship – means cum merit scholarship for students residing in fourteen districts spread across twelve states, who are pursuing studies after secondary level education. It’s named as ACC VidyaSaarathi scholarship that available through an online portal developed in partnership with NSDL.

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<th>No of libraries</th>
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Mapped to

Acknowledgements

This CSR update is produced by ACC’s Corporate Communications Department with inputs from the CSR Department and plant based CSR coordinators. The editorial team thanks all those who contributed with content and images.
India’s first online Scholarship project. ACC piloted at Chandrapur District of Maharashtra on February 26, 2016.

Now ACC is replicating it across 15 Districts of 11 States of India.

Reaching to 1173 underprivileged Higher Secondary Students.

The community needs assessment exercise at Gagal Cement Works revealed that though the area is better off in many development indicators, the grade specific learning levels among the children in government run elementary schools is poor.

The teachers teaching in the secondary school and higher secondary schools in the area highlighted that with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Right to Education ACT, the school infrastructure facilities have been strengthened however poor learning levels of the students in elementary education is restricting the youth in the area to achieve their potential.

ACC Gagal thus collaborated with IL&FS education, an organization known for its expertise in this domain, for improving quality of education in the government primary schools in the area. A pilot intervention was taken up in four government run primary schools. That covered 547 students and 24 government teachers. Prior to the intervention, these teachers in these schools lacked in basic teaching techniques to impart quality education among students.

ACC, while initiating the interventions with IL&FS education, had set the following objectives for the initiative to improve students’ performance in Mathematics, Science and English:
- encourage innovative teaching and learning techniques
- integration of technology in classroom teaching
- capacity building of government teachers

To achieve the above objectives under this project, government primary school teachers were trained to use various innovative tools of teaching, such as Knowledge-Yan (K-Yan), which is an integrated community computer that functions as a computer, projector, and a television. It is designed to enable group-learning within a classroom setting and can be used on any wall, turning it into a projector screen. K-Yan has been very successful in imparting education through electronic learning material that helps students grasp basic concepts easily as the learning happens through Audio – Video medium.

IL&FS Education team also appointed nine supplementary Teachers and one Project Coordinator cum technology person for coordination, training and assistance. Within a year of intervention, the average percentage score of pre-test changed significantly. In 2015, the average percentage score for students in English was 29% and in 2016, it shot up to 51%. Similarly the average parentage score in Science in year 2015 was 35% which went up to 46% in 2016. As for Maths, the average percentage score for all the students in 2015 was 28 % which improved to 46 percent.

In addition to this training and assistance in teaching input, school infrastructure for the schools were also strengthened further. Moreover Activity Based Learning model was also introduced, to provide students with learning rich environment and Child centric education.

These all efforts have another positive impact on the community, it has been noted that there is a reverse migration of students from private schools to these government schools. There are about 15 students who have enrolled back into the government run primary schools where ACC Gagal’s intervention is undergoing.

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For more details, please contact hitendra.kapoor@acclimited.com
The gap between potential and performance of the students could be attributed to certain fundamental bottlenecks such as lack of infrastructure, non-availability of trained teachers, parents unable to afford private tuitions for their wards and low premium on education in the community. Poor education made youth of the area unemployable which resulted in mass unemployment that resulted in mass unemployment that led to poverty, turning the entire process into a vicious cycle. A solution was required to bridge the learning gap which was economical, scalable and effective.

To bridge this gap ACC Kymore initiated Bridge Education Centers in the neighborhood villages, wherein educated youth or daughter-in-law of the village itself were engaged for teaching English, Science and Mathematics. These Teachers have been engaged through a proper selection process. An orientation of these young teachers was done to ensure appropriate delivery of the teaching modules to address the needs of the local students. Training Programmes are being organized for the Bridge Teachers – both in-house and external. Since the teachers belong to the villages itself they could reach for home visits and do counseling of the parents too.

The classes are conducted in the government school itself, pre or post school hours. The students are also provided with stationery material for their study. At the time of enrollment a Minimum level of Learning (MLL) test is conducted to understand the learning level of the child so that appropriate focus could be given to each child, a database of progress for each student is maintained to monitor progress of each one of them. Another test, Learn to Read (L2R) is conducted at regular intervals to understand the students’ growth, potential and knowledge of the subjects. These test results help the teachers

In continuation with the long tradition of shouldering social responsibility, ACC Boards CSR Committee had desired ACC to launch a national level scholarship for deserving candidates from rural hinterland where company has its operations.

The logistics of launching a scholarship across multi locations, maintaining transparency, adhering to tight time lines, process a huge amount of data to make the scholarship award decisions and providing ease of application to thousands of students was intimidating. The use of a web based technology to manage end to end scholarship application and award process has helped in the launch and successful running of the scholarship scheme.

NSDL e-Gov that manages some of India’s most robust and complex web solutions such as National Pension System, National Judiciary Reference System, Tax Information Network, Registrar & Authentication Service Agency for Aadhaar

The ACC team was in search for a technology backbone to power a web based scholarship application and management solution for Vidya Saarthi initiative. In NSDL e-Gov, ACC found such a partner. NSDL e-Gov currently manages some of India’s most robust and complex web solutions including National Pension System, Registrar & Authentication Service Agency for Aadhaar and many others.

The online platform gives advantage of electronic computing in analysing large data from student applications and tracking status of applications. Another big advantage of the NSDL web solution is custom defining of algorithm, and assignment of weightage for various variables to be assessed for award of the scholarship.

The education funding system in India is in a very dismal state when compared to the developed countries of the world, where on an average more than 75% of the students pursuing studies could avail funding from government or other sources, in India only 3% students could do so. Considering this Government of India has already brought all its scholarship around the country on one platform i.e. National Scholarship Portal. It has further brought all the Banks together on another portal from where all students who wants to access funds and information related to educational loans could avail it. NSDL had provided the technical support for all these initiatives. Hereafter, Government of India started considering building of one platform from where students could avail scholarships being offered by all corporate. Partnership with NSDL was indeed providential as ACC was also looking for technical support to build its portal to launch national level scholarship.

Since the initiative was to be launched across all operation district of ACC. It was decided to do a pilot first and then after imbuing the learnings roll it out across locations. A pilot launch was thus on on 26th February 2016 at Chandrapur in an event under the chairmanship of District Collector and in the presence of other local opinion leaders and principals of colleges in the district. The scholarship application window was kept open for 45 days and in this duration more than 500 applications were received. The power of digital computing helped in quick analysis of the received applications and total hundred scholarships were awarded. Of which more than 50% going to girls. All the education institutes in the district were registered on the Vidyasarthi portal which helped disbursal of the scholarship directly into the education institutes’ bank account where the student has taken admission.

National Roll Out

The success of the pilot, lead to the launch of ACC Vidya Saarthi Scholarship, nationally on 12th of January 2017 on ‘Yuva Divas’. All manufacturing plants of ACC organized their respective launch in presence of district officials, local community leaders, heads of education institutions in the districts and ACC Plant management. Students from surrounding villages also participated in good numbers. Window for application has been kept open for 6 months and final award of the scholarship will be announced on 8th September 2017 which coincides with the ‘International Literacy Day’. For this year’s scholarship round, a total of 1175 students are to be awarded with the scholarship across all 14 districts spread in 12 states where ACC manufacturing operations are located.

The ACC Vidyasarthi is well poised to link some of the brightest but under-financed youth from some of the most backward districts in the country. The online solution is also a template which other corporates might consider emulating and help make higher education accessible to those who have the potential but not the means.
Gender discrimination is prevalent across the globe and so it's true for India as well. Gender discrimination violates not only human rights but also fundamental rights. Although the constitution of India has granted men and women equal rights, gender disparity still remains. Gender discrimination in North India has been particularly alarming as it shows the gender bias here has lead to female feticide, general abuse and other highly discriminatory practices. Such discrimination is more evident in families where mothers are illiterate or marginally literate. Education gives a woman freedom of thought. It broadens her outlook and makes her aware of her duties, responsibilities and rights. With a deep realization that education is the only way to empower the girls and women in the society to help themselves and their family, ACC decided to undertake a region wide intervention. To take on this challenge company partnered with IMPACT, which is an NGO dedicatedly working towards providing educational opportunity to girls from socially and economically disadvantaged communities of India. The aim was to break the cycle of illiteracy that girls from such disadvantaged sections are mired in. This project was named "ACC KI LAADLI".

It was envisaged that to attain this purpose, girl children who have dropped out of school would be identified in villages and brought under education program to ensure that they get meaningful and stimulating education up to grade V and then are guided enter into mainstream education. Search for villages with high school dropouts began. Twenty five villages in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh were identified to reach out to such dropout girls. Through community mobilisation one classroom with multigrade teaching methodologies was created and journey began with a five year commitment. All girls were taught to a level of grade V and then helped to take up school by successfully getting admitted to class VI in nearby School. These girls could, not only regain their place but also gain mainstream quality education but also passed through gender studies. This helped to realise the potential of each girl child and all of them were made part of adolescent club formed in their villages.

Looking at it success, ACC cement supply chain partners came forward to support the cause. With joint support of ACC dealers, retailers and CFAs today ACC Ki Laadli is reaching out to about 1600 girls in 50 interior villages of five states of North India. This is ACC's first CSR project with its supply chain partners involved directly in all launching of various social development programmes such as awareness generation on sanitation, school enrollment, malnutrition, road safety etc. They have become harbingers of gender equality.

Currently there are 19 teachers engaged in 15 Bridge Education Centers with an enrollment of 689 students from poor backgrounds.

Today, Education Department of Madhya Pradesh acknowledges the contribution of the ACC Bridge Education Centers and say that pass percentage in school leaving examination have gone up where ever ACC Bridge Education Centers are operating. Principal of School at Amheta has gone on record highlighting that earlier passing percentage of school was only 15% which has gone up to 82%. Bridge Education programme has helped the community members understand the importance of education, decrease drop-out rates and increase community participation. The same trend is visible in other project villages as well. With availability of quality education, the girls are beginning to excel in examinations. The attendance at schools has also significantly improved. Students of these centers are also involved directly in all launching of various social development initiatives in the villages through spearheading various government programmes such as awareness generation on sanitation, school enrollment, malnutrition, road safety etc. They have become harbingers of ACC Kymore CSR in the villages.

From a student to a teacher:

Mr. Amar Giri Goswami joined the Bridge Education programme in 8th standard. He was a sincere and diligent student. Amar aimed to study engineering and hoped for a better life. Unfortunately, his father met with an accident, making the financial conditions unstable. Last year, Amar appeared for JEE examination and scored 60%. Since he couldn’t join any government college, he joined ITI-Vijayraghavgarh. To help his family cope with the financial crisis, he applied for teaching at the Bridge programme. He cleared his written test and personal interview and has been an encouraging teacher since then. Having faced multiple turbulences in his life, Amar understands the importance of education and has been motivating his fellow community members.

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This is the centenary year for ACC Lakheri and for their social responsibility initiatives. Among many such early initiatives it was on July 1, 1935, that Lakheri’s Upper Primary School registered its first student, Mr Suwa Lala, s/o Mr Malia. This Hindi medium school was established to impart qualitative education to the community children, and has delivered on this mandate since its establishment to this date. The school attracts students from all socio-economic strata’s of the community. The fee today is very nominal, i.e., ₹ 30 - ₹ 40 per month, making the school accessible to everyone. The school has all basic infrastructures, including, spacious classrooms, tables and chairs, clean water drinking and sanitation facilities. Also, teachers are well trained and are a part of the community. The school follows the state board syllabus and has classes from 1st to 8th Standard. Teachers here use different interactive and e-learning methods to enhance student’s interest and attention. One such popular method with the students is the ‘the hole in the wall’ kiosk. This kiosk acts as a window to the world of imagination for children and lets them learn and grow with fun. The school also has a well stacked library and a big playground. The school has also been recognized as one of the best schools in Bundi district in Rajasthan. The alumni of this school have established themselves in number of fields, including, medicine, defense services, engineering and administrative services.

The long list of alumni of this school also includes among others, the Honorable Cabinet Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Rajasthan i.e. Shri Babu Lal Verma, who also passed out from Lakheri’s Upper Primary School. He completed his schooling in 1968 and started his career in the banking sector.

In addition to this, ACC Lakheri also works with other government schools in the area by providing them with e-learning facilities, libraries, teacher training facilities, capacity building workshops for School Management Committee.

### General Awareness Assessed for Class IV student

The general awareness of students is area of serious concern. The question in which the students scored the lowest asked the student to write down the ‘state she lives in’. Only 32% of the students could answer this question correctly. The next question which stumped the students was ‘when Independence Day is celebrated’, to which only 34% could respond correctly. Surprisingly the question on ‘name of the country you live in’ could only got 60% of students answering correctly. The question which got the most correct answers was on ‘identification of body parts’ from the figure given in the question paper to which 87% had the correct answer.

Thus it got evident from the assessment that substantial work needs to be done to improve the learning levels of the students in the area. ACC Damodhar thus developed a new educational program for the students of the area that targets to enhance learning levels of the students by engaging quality teaching tools and methods.

This would involve bringing in para teachers to the classroom. Improved teaching techniques to be introduced, like the bridge education programme, activity based learning, induct technology aided learning, computer classes and wall library. Moreover, community leaders and other stakeholders will also be encouraged to participate in providing a higher quality of education for their children.

The outcome of the proposed programme is to improve the language early reading skills of students. The target indicators set are 40% of the students of the two targeted primary schools, should receive quality education by the first year, 60% students should receive by the second year and 80% by the third year. Moreover, the programme also aims to regularize the attendance of students and also, regularly assess them and their reading skills. The monitoring and evaluation process will be determined via quarterly and annual reports. Focus group discussions, questionnaires, base line reports and monthly reports too, will help in evaluating the programme.
To commence with an intervention for enhancing quality of elementary education in the neighborhood schools, ACC Damodhar undertook a baseline assessment at the eight neighboring schools of Damodhar. The assessment tried to understand the learning outcome levels at these schools. Standard IV was taken as a control set and two tests were conducted on Basic Language and Numeracy Skills test, using ASER tool and Writing and Comprehension Skills.

Following is the picture that emerged out of this assessment.

**Level of Reading and writing in Bengali for Class IV students**

At the aggregate level of the total of 187 students assessed 66% were able to complete the Bangla reading test successfully. Whereas 5% could read up to a paragraph, 8% could read up to words only and 17% could read only alphabets. 5% students were beginners, i.e. they cannot even identify alphabets. While 66% were beginners, i.e they cannot read only alphabets. 5% students read up to words only and 17% could complete the Bengali reading test, even identify alphabets. While 66% were beginners, i.e they cannot read only alphabets. 5% students read up to words only and 17% could complete the test i.e. read a story fluently, 14% could read up to paragraph, 18% could read words only, 35% could read only alphabets, 10% students were beginners, i.e. they can not even identify alphabets. For English writing skills it was found that majority of the students are stuck at Grade I writing levels in English, Only 13% could answer Class IV level questions, whereas 3% students were beginners, i.e. they could not attempt a single question successfully.

**Level of Reading in English for Class IV students**

At the aggregate level only 23% of the students sampled could achieve the desired reading level standards. This compares very poorly with 60% levels achieved for Bangla reading. 23% could complete the test i.e. read a story fluently, 14% could read up to a paragraph, 18% could read words only, 35% could read only alphabets, 10% students were beginners, i.e. they can not even identify alphabets. For English writing skills it was found that majority of the students are stuck at Grade I writing levels in English, Only 13% could answer Class IV level questions, whereas 3% students were beginners, i.e. they could not attempt a single question successfully.

**Level of Basic Number skills for Class IV students**

At an aggregate level 54% of the students sampled displayed proficiency with basic number skills. (completed the test successfully), 32% could do up to subtraction but not division, 6% could recognize up to numbers 10-99 but could not do subtraction, 6% could recognize up to numbers 0-9 and nothing more and 3% students could not recognize even single digit numbers.

For level of arithmetic ability, at an aggregate level only 23% of the students could complete the grade specific test successfully. This reflects that students lack in higher order skills of understanding, core mathematical concepts and processes and their use in everyday life.
under the BaLa tool and soon walls had illustrations which displayed important dates from the history book, map of India and its states, geometric shapes, alphabets, days of the week and much more. Also, on the walls were found names and images of role models like Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Bachendri Pal, Mother Teresa, Kalpana Chawla, Rakesh Sharama and many others who have done India proud. Having the chapters from the text book, illustrated on the walls and seeing the same everyday at school helped in learning and assimilation. This tool has effectively strengthened the student’s language, communication, numeracy skills and has also reinforced their observation skills by involving multiple senses in the learning process. ACC CSR team did an assessment as to whether BaLa has any impact on learning outcome. A sample of students from the project schools were administered a question paper with a set of questions related to BaLa illustrations and a set from the text book which did not have any corresponding BaLa illustration. 50% of the questions relating to BaLa illustration were correctly answered by the students while only 10% of the non-BaLa questions elicited correct answers. This clearly indicates the efficacy of the BaLa methodology in teaching and learning. BaLa incorporates the idea of education is everywhere; you only have to see carefully.

Mo. Wasim Khan, Principal, Junior High School, Annibajal, shares: “Before BaLa was adopted, students only had books to learn from. But ACC and Dehat team, both collected information from all over and re-did the walls. These walls are not restrictive to the student’s course, but also share general knowledge. There are few topics that are taught from books, but these BaLa walls make it easier and interactive.”

The tool has also helped in increasing the enrollment number in schools and reducing the dropout rates. School timings have become interesting for both student and teacher. Today a total of 1075 students have access to this programme.

In addition to this, a student run and managed library was also been set up. The library stores books according to the students needs. The students were also trained to manage the library. They have well documented rules and regulations.

During the annual social audit at ACC Tikaria, these students successfully explained the system to the auditors. They have well maintained registers that help them recording visitor details.

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Madukkarai has an average literacy rate of 72% with male literacy rate of 79% and female literacy rate is 64%. There are 10 government schools located in the host community of ACC Madukkarai where 2848 students from the neighbourhood are receiving education. The school teachers and Headmasters of these schools are member of the ACC Community Advisory Panel and they take active part in not only the educational development aspects but also the generic development aspects for the neighborhood community.

ACC Madukkarai supports the nearby schools in development of quality education, assessment of students through ASER test, upgradation of infrastructure, training students for cultural activities and performing arts, career guidance program, NSS programs, personality development programs and sports activities. ACC Madukkarai has also played a significant role in strengthening of Parent Teacher association and working with this association for identification of education needs in the area.

There are 15 government schools with ~3000 students in neighborhood of ACC Kudithini. These schools were having issues of infrastructure as well as quality of education; the school management committee was there in the namesake and hardly participating in the developmental activities of school.

ACC CSR team wanted to do something to help the situation but whenever consulted the School development Management Committee and teachers would ask only for infrastructure and nothing else. This is when the CSR team came across Shikshana Foundation’s successful experiment in schools at Hubli. To replicate the model, CSR team organized an exposure visit of the SDMC members, teachers of the local schools, volunteers from local implementation NGO partner and other opinion leaders.

This created enthusiasm amongst the teachers and SDMC members for replication of the same in schools of Kudithini, however there were some administrative approvals required for going ahead with the implementation, which was facilitated by the DDPI (Deputy Director of Public Instructions) and Block Education officer (BEO), who wrote a letter in this regard to the concerned schools.

The model looks at holistic development of the children and teaching with fun for complete involvement of the children. It was decided to initiate the project as a pilot in 5 schools and then replicate to other schools. Five Vidya Volunteers were identified who had the qualification and aptitude to implement the model. The Shikshana foundation agreed to provide technical support by sending one of their experts bi-weekly and supply the educational material. The Shikshana representative helped carrying out the baseline survey and chalk out the implementation plan. Thereafter during his regular visits, review meetings were held with teachers, Vidya Volunteers and SDMC member to ensure project being on course. The baseline survey revealed that students were lagging in languages be it Kannada or English, science as well as numeric skills corresponding to their grades and age.

Matching and batching of the students was done according to their grades in baseline examination, which helped in creating an interest in the entire class. Poor students were provided more attention and extra hour long classes were held by teachers and vidya volunteers, pre-post school timings.

The model not only enhanced teaching quality in the classes but also involved the students in extracurricular activities such as sports, cultural activities, plantation, neighborhood cleanliness, communication skills through oratory and handwriting competition, exhibitions, organizing skits & plays. Inculcated leadership skills by giving them various responsibilities and appointing them as minister, wearing badges as prime minister, sanitation minister etc. It was also ensured that SDMC is involved in various interventions that enhanced their interest in the school management.

In monthly monitoring meetings, SCMC members were invited and progress was shared, this has made the SDMC members to start getting involved fully in the schools developmental activities.

The effort has shown remarkable results in the end line survey conducted last month. It showed that model has helped in increasing the pass percentage in all grades, notably of the 10th board examinations. Also, there has been an
Schools are called temples of learning; however, schools in large parts of rural India are in a miserable state. Though having excellent infrastructure is not a prelude to improving learning outcomes, however it is certainly a fundamental requirement for good quality education.

Prior to ACC Sindri’s interventions, the schools in neighborhood villages such as Chhatatand gram panchayat, failed to meet any RTE mandated infrastructure requirements. The schools lacked clean drinking water facility, different toilets for girls and boys, electricity, and compound walls.

For enhancing quality of education in the plant operation’s neighborhood, ACC Sindri CSR team conducted multiple meetings with teachers, SMC members, parents, and together worked out a plan for bettering the infrastructure conditions of the schools. The local village school’s boundary walls were constructed and the school were given a parameter. This brought in a sense of security and ownership among students.

Clean drinking water facility, renovation of existing toilets, electrification of school and arrangement of benches and desks too have been made. The school premises are clean now and this has instilled an idea of cleanliness among children.

DISE report scores a school on its infrastructural facilities. Majority of the intervened schools now have an average score of 7 out of 10. Interestingly with these infrastructural gap fulfillments, students are more motivated to study and evolve. Children have started discussing with their parents about building a toilet inside their homes and doing away with open defecation in the villages.
Twenty five of them have qualified for Chhattisgarh, PMT-Chhattisgarh, etc. exams such as NTSE, JEE Mains, PET. This center trains 80 percent of the students. Of the total students trained so far, 60% of the candidates have been girls. The Utkarsh Coaching center has screened test and conducted an initial coaching by taking sincere candidates only. This initiative ensured that the students from the marginalized sections of the society participate. To ensure that sincere candidates only participate and qualify for the coaching, the Center took steps to reach out to larger number of students in the area.

Jamul Utkarsh Centre is part of a larger initiative of ACC named ACC Vidya Utkarsh. Under this initiative, ACC Jamul is working to reach out to students and schools in the local neighborhood. It is nine schools in the vicinity. An exposure visit of the teachers from the schools in the neighborhood and the school development management committee members were taken to Hubli to see the successful experiment of Shikshana Foundation.

A baseline assessment was carried out in July 2016 and it was found that students are finding it difficult to read paragraphs even in their mother tongue. Performance of students was poor in both language as well as numeracy skills. Students of 4th to 7th grade in the four pilot schools were matched and batched as per their performance in the baseline assessment. Shikshana Foundation provided suitable education material for the students.

Further, two young girls from the local area, who have Diploma in Education (D.Ed.) i.e. they were qualified to impart education, were engaged by ACC CSR through its implementation partner FORD that had replicated the same model at Kuduthini. These two qualified young girls were further trained on ‘Shikshana Model’. They started visiting these four pilot schools on alternate day basis. Local kids call these two young teachers as ‘ACC Teachers’. These batches of slow learners are given special attention at the school by these ACC Teachers.

Recognizing that the local communities have the immediate interest and greatest motivation for improving education quality in their neighborhood schools, ACC Thondebhavi intensively involved the SMC in the implementation of the Shikshana model. To achieve this purpose, the capacity building of the SMC members to execute plans for the development of the school and the students was also done.

Success story

Yarun Sahu’s is one of such students who got trained in Utkarsh Coaching Centre. He belongs to an economically weak family, his father is a labourer and his mother is a housewife, he is the eldest of many siblings. The family has no other source of income and completely on Sahu’s father for finances. Yarun was a regular student at Utkarsh coaching centre, he studied hard at this centre, have done well in their school studies and 11 of them have topped their school annual examination. In recent years the coaching center is also orienting students on communication skills and personality development. Moreover ACC’s own employees particularly the female employees have taken up responsibility of mentoring these students. Female employees take motivation sessions with the young girl students and share with them how they have worked against difficulties and have become engineers and professionals serving ACC.

Learning from the success of Shikshana Model at ACC Kuduthini, which is another plant of ACC in State of Karnataka, ACC Thondebhavi decided to adopt the model to address the challenge of reaching quality education to nine higher primary schools in the vicinity.

An exposure visit of the teachers from the schools in host community area and the School development management committee members were taken to Hubli to see the successful experiment of Shikshana foundation.

On returning there was general agreement to start a pilot implementation in four of the nine schools in the local neighbourhood. Required permission was granted by the Block Education officer. Teachers of these schools were also oriented on the new model of children centered school.

A baseline assessment was carried out in July 2016 and it was found that students are finding it difficult to read paragraphs even in their mother tongue. Performance of students was poor in both language as well as numeracy skills. Students of 4th to 7th grade in the four pilot schools were matched and batched as per their performance in the baseline assessment. Shikshana Foundation provided suitable education material for the students.

Further, two young girls from the local area, who have Diploma in Education (D.Ed.) i.e. they were qualified to impart education, were engaged by ACC CSR through its implementation partner FORD that had replicated the same model at Kuduthini. These two qualified young girls were further trained on ‘Shikshana Model’. They started visiting these four pilot schools on alternate day basis. Local kids call these two young teachers as ‘ACC Teachers’. These batches of slow learners are given special attention at the school by these ACC Teachers.

Recognizing that the local communities have the immediate interest and greatest motivation for improving education quality in their neighborhood schools, ACC Thondebhavi intensively involved the SMC in the implementation of the Shikshana model. To achieve this purpose, capacity building of the SMC members to execute plans for the development of the school and the students was also done.

Success story

Jamul Utkarsh Centre is part of a larger initiative of ACC named ACC Vidya Utkarsh. Under this initiative, ACC Jamul is reaching out to larger number of student population in the area.

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DAV Public School ACC Wadi is located in Gulbarga district of Karnataka, that is one of the most backward districts of the State. Despite the shortcomings prevalent in the region, the school could establish itself as one of the best equipped centres of excellence. The school was established in 1986 and since then has actively contributed to the development of education in the region. It welcomes students from all sections of the society.

The school believes in holistic development of children and thus beyond academics it encourages them to participate in sports and extra circular activities on an equal footing. The school has classes for students of all standards i.e. from kindergarten to standard XII, where more than 1200 students of the area are receiving quality education.

The school buildings and classroom are well designed, having adequate space, ventilation, lighting, sanitation, temperature and noise levels, including other auxiliary facilities with learning rich displays and comfortable ambience that positively affects learning atmosphere for the students. The classrooms are well equipped with e-learning tools that help teachers to make use of modern techniques of teaching. Students can also easily use the tools for self-learning when teacher is not there. The school also has a fully stocked library for students to read and expand their horizons. In addition to this, the school has fully equipped labs for Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Computers. Students from ACC DAV Wadi have always set new records by securing high percentages and topping various subjects in Boards Exams.

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Jamul Cement Works is located in an area that has developed over period of time into a semi urban area. Today the town has a population of 25000 with a 77% literacy rate. The area has good number of public as well as private schools for both primary and secondary education, where students from the area are enrolled and regularly receiving education. Though the literacy percentage is above national average, the quality of education to school children particularly in higher grades emerged to be a concern area for the parents. When the Jamul CSR team carried out a community needs assessment survey, they found that after completing their school, the students from the neighbourhood communities mainly enroll themselves in nearby technical colleges and worked at small levels. It was realized that with some coaching input the same students could be groomed well, get much better jobs and do well in life.

An interactive session with the youth in the area was held on occasion of Children’s day in year 2012, where it was found that many of the children were unaware about career opportunities and preparations required for medical, engineering, management and government service entrance examinations. In this perspective, to help students of the neighbourhood communities to achieve their potential by better learning during their secondary and higher secondary education and prepare well for various entrance examinations, the CSR team initiated a coaching center the area named Utkarsh Coaching Center. This Center not only helps students to prepare for the crucial examinations, but also guide and direct them for their regular learning in secondary and higher secondary classes in school.

ACC CSR team engaged Jan Sevak Samiti, an organization dedicatedly working...
Chaibasa has a majority of tribal population. Many of them were completely unaware of the concept of education. Moreover, belonging to the tribal sect, they are deprived and underprivileged. In 2008, ACC Chaibasa decided to revolutionize education for tribal in Jhinkpani area of Jharkhand. ACC DAV school of Chaibasa has 25 seats reservation in the primary section for tribal students. These students receive free CBSE education till standard 12th. These students are challenging the societal norms and are moving towards a paradigm shift in the world education.

Moreover, 205 marginalized tribal kids are enrolled in ACC DAV CBSE School, which is more than what is prescribed in the RTE norm. Our shining star, Badal Honagha, is a student, who comes from a tribal household. This year, he topped his 10th standard board examination. He proved that if given a fair and equal chance, the marginalized sector can also do wonders.

Despite the Right to Education Act, the quality of education in government schools is very poor. The student-teacher ratio is very poor, there is no sanitation and 80% of the students in class 8th, couldn’t solve basic mathematical problems. ACC is supporting four schools in the vicinity by providing them with specialised teachers for Mathematics, Science and English. Career awareness sessions were also conducted in these schools to let students know about the limitless possibilities that lie ahead.

Moreover, the school equally focuses on sports and extracurricular activities. Since physical fitness is equally important for students, the school have provided them with a big playground, dedicated sports teachers and well equipped sports room. This helps students to build their fitness, learn to play in a team, plan & execute strategies to win and learn from defeats that helps develop sportsmanship spirit. Students from this school regularly participate in inter-school competitions and secure positions at Zonal, Regional and National level competitions. One of the remarkable achievements in recent past is the school volleyball team competing and winning its way up to the national level games.

Summing it all, DAV Public School ACC Wadi has won ’Pride of DAV’ for the third consecutive year. ’Pride of DAV’ is recognition for a DAV school among all DAVs in the country, where Board Examination Result average for the Standard XIIth students in subjects of Science and Math is more than 75%. This is by all means a very remarkable feat for any school.

EDUCATING THE UNDERPREVILEDGED

Chaibasa

Some of the notable achievements of the students in academics in recent past are as below.

Ammara at Seoul:
Ms Ammara Farzeen of ACC DAV Wadi, was one of the four students selected from India to participate in the International Science & Engineering Camp in Seoul, South Korea. She was also awarded with a special prize for her keen understanding of science and technology.

Budding Orator:
Ms. Shamita Jain of Class Xth, brought laurels for the school and the district by securing the second position at the State level Seminar held at Bangalore, on the topic, ’Innovations in Agriculture for Sustainable Future: Prospects and Challenges’.

District Level Topper
Ms Venkala a student from Class XIIth of ACC DAV Wadi, scored 95% marks and stood first among all the CBSE schools in the District.

For the 3rd consecutive year, ACC DAV, Wadi competed and won its way to participate at the ’State level Science Seminar’. Ms. Sanjana of Class X of DAV Public School, ACC Wadi bagged the Second prize at the State level Science Seminar. After securing first place at Chittapur taluka level and Kalaburagi district level competitions, Ms. Sanjana represented District Kalaburagi at the Karnataka state level where she stood second among the 34 competitors representing all the 34 Educational District in the state. The Science Seminar was jointly organised by the Department of Education Research and Training (DSERT), Visvesaraya Industrial & Technological Museum (VIITM), Bangaluru and Head at the District Institute of Education & Training (DIET), Tumkur.

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Baal Sakhi, a child’s friend, is a very innovative quality education model. Prior to the intervention, a base line examination was conducted which revealed that 4th standard students were unable to write, read and comprehend as per their grade and age. Their basic concepts of mathematics and languages were extremely poor. The results were poor because majority of the teachers belonged to places far away from school, busy with official government work, few of them were on leave and the remaining, couldn’t manage large number of students in classes. Baal Sakhi is a village level volunteer, selected by gram sabha members and School Management Committee members. These volunteers are then given training and workshops for helping the students with extra coaching. They are also provided with materials that would be required while teaching students. These volunteers do not stick to the traditional style of teaching; rather use songs, stories, study tours and games to strengthen the students’ interest in class. Regular tests are conducted to monitor the students’ progress. In six months, the students could read easy sentences and frame and write basic sentences. Students have also inculcated the habit of reading. Baal Sakhi’s have also taught students to save their money in banks, by opening their saving accounts. Currently, there are 12 volunteers in the area, serving 7254 students in 12 villages. Since the time, these volunteers have intervened; children have started participating in cultural programs, have started showing interests in academics and have also started to enjoy school. Moreover, the SMC and gram sabha members have decided to engage Baal Sakhi in schools to replace on-leave government school teachers, so that education for children doesn’t stop.

Since the start of the programme, Vidhya Utkaarsh has reached out to 7254 students, out of which 3727 have been girls. Moreover, 41 boys and 63 girls have secured scholarships for their further studies. 11 girls and 12 boys have also been selected in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, which is a residence alternative school run by Government of India. To fulfill the increase in demand, a new block and eight classrooms have been added to the school’s infrastructure. ACC Bargarh regularly contributes to the school management fund to ensure better environment for learning and growth.

ACC Cement Nagar English medium School in Bargarh is run by ACC in association with Vikash Group of Institutions. Vikash is an educational group, renowned in the region for managing multiple schools and colleges. The school has been active for the past eight years and today has strength of 630 students, from Lower Kindergarten to 10th standard. Ninety percent of the students are from the neighboring village communities. Moreover, the school fee is kept nominal, making an English medium school accessible to all.

To fulfill the increase in demand, a new block and eight classrooms have been added to the school’s infrastructure. ACC has trained various graduate students and has facilitated them to contribute as supplementary teachers in the neighbourhood government schools of Bargarh. These supplementary teachers are trained to teach in the play-way method, thereby creating a positive environment for children to learn. Nearly 500 students have benefitted from this initiative.

Helping students with supplementary teachers:
Chinmaya Nanda, a student of Canalpada Primary School of village Khaliapali, studies in class three and is eight years old. He remembers not liking the school in his initial days. He found it boring and extremely difficult to learn. But since his ‘project sir’ has joined, he finds his classes very interesting and energizing. He enjoys extracurricular classes that are conducted, like, drawing, paper craft, poem writing, singing and so on. He now can easily add, subtract, multiply and divide. He also enjoys reading and writing sentences, letter and stories.