

# Rajiv Gandhi Foundation

*Annual Report 2012-13*

“ *Development is not about factories, dams and roads,  
Development is about people.  
The goal is material, cultural and spiritual fulfilment  
for the people. The human factor is of  
supreme value in development.* ”

*~ Rajiv Gandhi*





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## Foreword

When a new perspective is grounded in stable effort, a path is created for sustained transformation. For the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, 2012-13 was one such year. During the year we reached out to a large number of stakeholders through various programmes under the rubric of education. It was a year of matching wavelengths of ideas and expertise to create institutional synergies. In the process, new terrains of endeavour opened up for the Foundation.

These aspects of the RGF's work took shape against the backdrop of an organisation that had embarked on a new course the year before by repositioning its focus on education. Hence the initiatives of 2012-13 were energised by a new narrative of strengthening the Foundation's organisational approach, its processes and structure with a view to stabilising its core and expanding its reach.

The focus of 2012-13 was on programme development, on interfacing with institutions and on team development. For instance, the Foundation explored ways of extending the Transformative Learning programme to states across the country. These provided a stepping stone for getting into formal agreements with various state governments and NGO partners.

Secondly, the Foundation took the first steps to engage with key north-eastern states as part of its Teacher Empowerment programme, linking institutions and teachers to new educational practices and other resources that would enable them to expand their horizons. Thirdly, the RGF's continuing efforts in the Decentralisation of Education Governance programme showed the beginnings of an impact testifying to its immense potential. Moreover, these results demonstrated that the programme has indeed taken root in local contexts, in the two states of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

It was also a year when the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies (RGICS) strengthened the efforts that it began two years ago to work toward democratising the process of public policy formulation. Through an appreciable range of initiatives such as seminars, conferences, brainstorming sessions and briefing sessions for Parliamentarians, the RGICS sought to create an environment of informed understanding on various socio-political and economic issues prevailing in the country.

As the Foundation's year-long rhythm highlighted, a new agenda of engagement is not only about evolving a vision and setting a new course; it is equally about resolute action that centres the effort.



Smt. Sonia Gandhi  
Chirperson

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## Overview

For the Foundation, the theme of 2012-13 was stabilisation. It was a year of growing into a new way of seeing and doing that would imbue the RGF's programmes with a strong core.

One of the significant steps taken by the RGF was to hold several exploratory workshops and meetings in the states where, as per its analysis, the Transformative Learning programme could be launched - namely, Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Uttarakhand. Among those who attended the workshops were officials of the state Departments of Education, including the State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs); teachers and potential NGO partners. The detailed discussions that followed gave the Foundation an insight into the distinct nature of engagement processes in each of the respective states.

Similarly, efforts were made to reach out to the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura in the north-eastern region in pursuance of the Teacher Empowerment programme. The RGF initiated a pilot programme with a DIET in Assam as well as a project to support the Institute of Advanced Study in Education (IASE) in Mizoram's capital city of Aizawl, to establish a training management system based on creating a framework for assessing and developing teachers' abilities.

Through the Decentralisation of Education Governance (DEG) programme with its partner institutions in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, the Foundation reached out to a large base of stakeholders, namely PRI elected representatives and functionaries, parents, teachers, SHGs and youth groups, among others. The beginnings of a visible impact in the three vital areas of enrolment, infrastructure and teacher accessibility provided an impetus to the RGF team to prepare themselves for bigger challenges.

At another level of intervention, as part of its commitment to democratising the process of public policy, the RGICS organised a sustained range of interactions on significant social, political and economic issues. Supported by a vibrant team, the RGICS produced high quality briefs, reports, research papers and newsletters throughout the year.

This annual report highlights in greater detail the contours of the core areas of the Foundation's work. In particular it underlines the efforts undertaken to put key processes in place that would provide the desired stability and strength to the programmes.

# Decentralisation of Education Governance

- \_\_\_ Community Engagement
- \_\_\_ Engagement with the Department of Education
- \_\_\_ Communication Through Newsletters
- \_\_\_ Web-based Application
- \_\_\_ Mid-term Audit
- \_\_\_ Study on Panchayat School Interface



The DEG programme of RGF is rooted in the belief that institutionalisation of community ownership at different levels of education governance is the key to improving the quality of school education. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, has already created a clear policy mandate for the community to play an active role in education governance by providing legitimacy and recognition to the institution of the School Management Committee (SMC), which comprises parents and guardians, elected representatives of the local authority such as the Gram Panchayat (GP), and teachers. The DEG programme strives to leverage the SMC to build an environment that supports and strengthens the institutionalisation of community ownership on a sustainable basis. The programme is implemented by RGF's partner organisation, Prajayatna, in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

## Facilitating Community Engagement in Uttar Pradesh

In 2012-13, the focus of work in Uttar Pradesh was to reach out to the schools and PRI institutions of the selected GPs and to facilitate the community's engagement with the school in the districts of Lucknow, Ghazipur, Amethi, Sultanpur, Chitrakoot, Bareilly, Rae Bareilly, Bahraich, Barabanki, Aligarh and Kanpur Dehat.

### *Data collection*

The facilitation work starts with a school-wise collection of Local Education Governance Data (LEGD). This data is first disseminated at the block level with PRI functionaries. Following this, the data is shared at the level of the school in the Shikshan Gram Sabha (SGS) comprising all parents and guardians and then at the GP and the Nyaya Panchayat (which on an average constitutes four to six GPs and an average of 15-20 schools) so that the issue of school governance can be discussed and debated comprehensively.

During the year:

- The second phase of LEGD collection was accomplished, comprising the data of 13,990 schools;
- The SGS meetings in each selected school were followed by GP level meetings in which all the schools, represented by their respective SMCs, jointly discussed their issues with the Pradhan and other PRI representatives; and
- Nyaya Panchayat Resource Centre (NPRC) level meetings were organised to activate the Standing Committee on Education (SCE), a mandated body within a GP entrusted with the responsibilities of education administration. The participants included the NPRC coordinator, Pradhans of the GPs within that NPRC, teachers and Panchayat ward members, among others. The objective was to sensitise and activate the PRIs to take greater ownership of education. These meetings were the first of their kind in the state.

### *Shikshan Gram Sabha: The Core Process*

The most important intervention set in motion has been to enable the formation of the SMC which comprises the primary group of parents and guardians of students in each selected school. Through the SGS, Prajayatna facilitates a school based, village-level process aimed at initiating a dialogue with the community and enabling it to feel a sense of ownership about its village schools. In 2012-13, 3,049 SGS meetings were organised in all the 11 districts, reaching out to more than 94,968 stakeholders. That the community was realising its role in shaping education governance was made clear by several instances:

- Soon after a SGS raised the issue of lack of teachers at the Bargadaha primary and upper primary school in the Bargadaha GP (Nawabganj Block) in Bahraich, a requisition letter was submitted to the Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari (ABSA), following which the problem was addressed. A teacher was deputed to take the place of two volunteers at the lower primary school and to complement the efforts of the sole teacher at the upper primary school.
- At the Gaunda primary school in the Gaunda GP (Gaunda Block) in Aligarh, it was for the first time in many years that teachers and parents in schools came together to discuss their concerns jointly. For instance, parents attending the SGS stressed that teachers should pay greater attention to the quality of learning among children; and, on their part, the teachers expressed a need for parents to follow-up on the learning of children.
- During a meeting of the SGS in the Gorai primary school in the Gorai GP (Dostpur Block) in Sultanpur District, which has just two teachers and a volunteer for 200 students, participants raised the issue of increasing the number of teachers for effective learning. This led to a decision to submit a requisition to the Department of Education for additional teachers. Simultaneously a work plan was discussed in the SGS to approach the department to construct a school compound, toilets and a tank for drinking water, as well as provide an electricity connection for the school. Following this, the Pradhan spoke to the Lekhpal who was also present at the meeting to complete the formalities of the registration of the school. The 21st of every month was fixed for regular monthly school management committee meetings.



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During a SGS meeting in Lucknow's primary school Thavar-1 in the Thavar GP (Kakori Block), the head teacher and parents discerned their respective concerns. Pointing out that only 53 out of 112 enrolled students regularly attended school, he requested the parents to ensure that more students attended school, further asking SMC members to reinforce the message by talking to the parents. The school attendance increased by 10 in the following week. Equally, responding to the parents' concern about the lack of play material for children in the school, the head teacher took the initiative to buy few materials from the school development fund. The repair of the school toilet was also discussed at the SGS as also the levelling of school land. By consensus, SMC meetings have been taking place on the 6th of every month.

### *Shikshan Gram Sabha Follow-up Meetings*

Following the formation of the SGS, a follow-up process was put in place with SMC members to track the progress of earlier plans approved in the SGS, and also to reiterate the role and responsibilities of the SMCs. In 2012-13, Prajayatna organised 1065 such follow-up meetings, reaching out to 16,230 stakeholders. These follow-up meetings threw light on interesting developments, underscoring the fact that the process of ownership had begun:

— The Maseet primary school in the Seda Maseet GP (Bhojipura Block) in Bareilly working to the SGS plan showed an improvement in enrolment figures beyond expectations bringing in about 27 children. This was largely due to the efforts of two SMC members – Mr. Chandrabhan and Mrs. Saroja Devi.

— The Khem Nevada primary school in the Bheetargaon GP (Rasoolabad Block) in Kanpur Dehat, which had remained closed for nine months due to the absence of teachers and irregular volunteers, was re-opened in September 2012 following a meeting of the SGS. As the follow-up meeting further revealed, a teacher for the school was appointed after a letter was sent by the members of the SMC to the department.

— The enrolment in Ahrauli primary school in the Ahrauli GP (Amraudha Block) in Kanpur Dehat jumped by a figure of 16, largely due to the efforts of the SMC, especially its president Shabana Khatoon.

— A follow-up meeting at the Macha primary school in the Macha GP (Amraudha Block) in Kanpur Dehat highlighted the fact that the construction of a kitchen, which had been part of the SGS work plan, had been accomplished through the head teacher's consistent efforts. The head teacher, Mr. Ram Swaroop, said that books worth Rs. 3,000 were bought for the school as per the work plan.

### *Gram Panchayat Network Meeting*

Following the completion of the SGS in all schools of a GP, a Panchayat-level network process is organised. It includes the Pradhan, members of the Panchayat's Standing Committee on Education, anganwadi centres and SMCs of all the schools in that particular GP. The network meeting serves to establish the significance of the GP towards addressing issues of education. The meetings look at the status of the work plans made for



the schools and anganwadis as well as the role of the GP in ensuring its implementation.

In 2012-2013, as many as 214 GP network meetings were conducted, taking the total number of GP network meetings to 305, in the 11 working districts of Uttar Pradesh, securing the participation of 8568 members. The meetings were attended by representative members of the SMCs, the Gram Pradhan, Gram Sachiv, and teachers.

An illustration of some discussions that took place during several GP network meetings underline a commitment among all stakeholders to ensure that the process takes root:

- In the Sujaur GP (Amraudha block) in Kanpur Dehat, all the SMC representatives unanimously agreed to conduct SMC meetings every month. A petition seeking one more anganwadi centre in the Panchayat was submitted to the authorities. During a discussion on the need for parents and the SMC to track the learning progress of children, a proposal to provide files recording the progress and classroom activities of each child was mooted by a Panchayat member who agreed to get the resources either from the GP or from the parents. He took a month's time to complete this process. The Panchayat member also agreed to make arrangements for a retired teacher to provide two days of learning support every week for children and conduct a children's sangha or forum on Sundays.
- In the Govindpur GP (Fareedpur Block) in Bareilly, a discussion revealed that owing to the fact that the sole primary school in the Panchayat did not have gate, its grounds were used by the people in the village to dump garbage, tie up their cattle or simply to cart away soil. The Pradhan and Panchayat members then discussed this issue with the Lekhpal and the Block Development Officer (BDO). The Lekhpal has initiated steps against the encroachments.

### *Gram Panchayat Network Follow-up Meetings*

For the first time some follow-up meetings were initiated in the GPs which had held network meetings without fail. To assess the progress made, plans devised during the network meetings were reviewed. The Panchayat's SCE, representatives of the SMC, teachers, officers of the Department of Women and Child Development, Self-help groups (SHGs) and youth organisations, parents and other individuals interested in the issues of education participated in the meeting. Roles and responsibilities were reiterated and affixed for the operationalisation of the work plan.

During the year, four GP network follow-up meetings were organised, reaching out to 120 community representatives:

- A GP network follow-up meeting in the Benti GP (Sarojini Nagar Block) in Lucknow District, was conducted on February 18, 2013. The meeting focused on the important role that SMCs play in the review of the work plan made in the previous network meeting and creating an environment conducive to education governance. A mention was made of the fact that an assistant teacher had been appointed in the primary school after the previous meeting. Further, SMC meetings are held regularly in the GP. The



Gram Panchayat Network Meeting, Benti, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

members pointed out that there was a need for the Standing Committee on Education in the Panchayat to be more active on issues of education. A decision was taken to meet on the 1st of every month in the GP office. To address the shortage of furniture, the Panchayat agreed to collect funds for the same and also stated its intent to plant more trees in their premises and use the old ones to make furniture.

### *Nyaya Panchayat-level Workshops*

Nyaya Panchayat (NP) level workshops were organised to conduct joint meetings of GPs to discuss educational issues of schools in their respective GPs. This enabled the schools to have a broader perspective of issues and access multiple solutions for the same. These meetings were attended by representatives from all the GPs within that NP – the teachers, Pradhans, in particular the ward members of the GP and concerned officials of the Department of Education. These meetings were a first of its kind in Uttar Pradesh and generated great interest both among PRI members as well as the department.

The key outcomes of these meetings were:

- The identification of members of the Standing Committee for Education from among the ward members;
- An awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the Standing Committees towards education in their respective GPs;
- A greater sharing of information pertaining to schools in several of the GPs, with a discussion on the possible solutions to various issues;
- A commitment on dates by PRI members for holding GP network meetings in their respective GPs;
- A sharing of information by the GP Secretary on the possibilities of utilising GP resources to address school issues; and
- A coverage of GPs hitherto untouched by the GP network process.

The NP level meeting provided for several possibilities in encouraging the PRI structures to participate in education.

In 2012-13, 101 NP level meetings have been organised, reaching out to 632 GPs and 6,342 PRI representatives. The response to these meetings has been positive as exemplified by a Nyaya Panchayat meeting in Nonapur (Amraudha block) in Kanpur Dehat District, where Panchayat presidents expressed the need for GPs to play a crucial role in a decentralised administration, and were happy to see the participation of Panchayat ward members for the first time.



NPRC Level Meeting, Nonapur, Kanpur Dehat, Uttar Pradesh

### *Block-level Workshops*

Block-level workshops constitute the most important process in the initiation of work in any block. In the year 2012-2013, 14 block-level workshops were conducted, taking the total number to 140 workshops in the 11 working districts of Uttar Pradesh.

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During these workshops, block reports based on the LEGD collected earlier, were presented to Gram Pradhans, Gram Sachivs and representatives of the Department of Education with a view to jointly understand the education scenario of each of the blocks and the issues pertaining to schools in each block.

Post-presentation discussions focussed on:

- \_\_\_\_\_ The possible ways of addressing the various issues that had been identified and creating a time frame for their resolution. The issues ranged from the construction of a school compound to that of an anganwadi after identifying the space for it, provision of mid-day meals, drinking water, play material, library, paying attention to the student-teacher ratio and the need for health check-ups; and
- \_\_\_\_\_ The need to tackle the lack of basic amenities such as drinking water and toilets, with most PRI officials seeking detailed information pertaining to these issues from the facilitating team.

### *Block-level Follow-up Workshop*

In the district of Chitrakoot, three follow-up workshops were held at the block level with PRI and Department of Education representatives to apprise them of the DEG activities, the impact of community meetings – SGS, SGS follow-ups and GP meetings – and to demonstrate the possibility of community involvement in bringing about a change in schools. A follow-up block workshop was also organised in Sultanpur. A total number of 200 members participated in these four workshops, which included the BDO and the Assistant BDO.

### *Anganwadi Meetings*

During the period mid-May to July 2012, an attempt was made to organise community meetings focusing on anganwadi issues in several villages. A total of 532 meetings were organised. These meetings reached out to 9872 anganwadi staff as well as members of the mothers' committee (required to be part of the anganwadi, the mothers' committee was activated by Prajayatna in select GPs to address anganwadi-related issues).

Apart from the anganwadi teacher and assistant teacher as well as members of the mothers' committee, these meetings also involved nominated members such as the elected representatives of the GP. A primary emphasis of these meetings was to ensure that the children were enrolled in school after completing pre-school. All SGS meetings, in particular all the GP meetings, include discussions on the anganwadis and the resolution of issues related to them.



## Facilitating Community Engagement in Rajasthan

In 2012-13, the work of DEG progressed rapidly in Rajasthan, with the initiative reaching out to most of the schools and GPs in the five working districts of Jaipur, Sikar, Karauli, Nagaur and Jalore. Prajayatna's efforts at facilitating processes so as to help communities develop a sense of ownership towards schools began to show encouraging results.

### *Shikshan Gram Sabha: The Core Process*

For the first time, members of the SMC began to understand the manner in which they were required to function with regard to the school, from making work plans for the management of the school to ways of ensuring the completion of processes identified in the SGS work plan, and the resources required to operationalise the plan, among others. Members of the community are beginning to support efforts towards the development of their schools and anganwadis.



A total of 1150 SGS were organised from April 2012 to March 2013, reaching out to nearly 22,577 stakeholders.

The participants at SGS meetings included members of the SMC, the parents' council (parents other than SMC members), youth groups, teachers and anganwadi staff. The discussions in the SGS meetings largely focused on:

- \_\_\_ The responsibilities of stakeholders towards providing an education that helps develop the potential of children;
- \_\_\_ Capacity building of stakeholders, providing them information about their roles and responsibilities, facilitating them in the development of school improvement plans;
- \_\_\_ Efforts to institutionalise the SMC through community support, ensuring its timely formation in accordance with the norms;
- \_\_\_ Creating an environment conducive for discussions on children's learning; and
- \_\_\_ Creating an awareness of different facets of education, such as student-teacher ratio, children's school enrolment in accordance with their age, and promotion of children to the next class, among others.

### **Towards Greater Engagement**

In Jalore, motivated by the SGS at the Kolar upper primary school in Safada GP (Sayla Block), members of the SMC put a system in place for children to borrow library books thus reactivating the library, made provisions for learning materials for the children, had the blackboard painted and the fans fixed.

Similarly, following a meeting of the SGS in Jaipur in the Bateri GP, five children who had dropped out of the Gadholi primary school were enrolled back in the school. Books in the library began to be lent out to children. The mid-day meals being provided to the children began to be supervised for quality on a regular basis and members of the SMC even had the school radio repaired for the children.

### *Shikshan Gram Sabha Follow-up Meetings*

In 2012-13, as many as 505 follow-up meetings were held, reaching out to 6,592 participants. The discussions focussed on:

- \_\_\_ A review of the previous plan and assessment of the extent of implementation;
- \_\_\_ Re-emphasising the role of the SMC;
- \_\_\_ A review of the income and expenditure of the school;
- \_\_\_ The learning of children; and
- \_\_\_ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 and enrolment, in some instances

### *Gram Panchayat Network Meeting*

After SGS meetings are held in all the schools located in a particular GP, a GP network meeting takes place. These meetings are attended by Presidents of all the SMCs, members of the anganwadi centres as also of the GP, the GP President and the Nodal Prabhari (the headmaster of the school located in the GP headquarters). A total of 195 GP network meetings were conducted between April 2012 and March 2013, reaching out to 6,695 participants.

The discussions focused on:

- \_\_\_ The operationalisation of work plans made in the SGS;
- \_\_\_ The formation and responsibilities of the SMCs and Standing Committees (Education);
- \_\_\_ Ensuring the support of the Department of Education as well as the Department of Women and Child Development to strengthen anganwadis and schools; and
- \_\_\_ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 and related information.

### A Network that Delivers

Inspired by the Panchayat network meeting held on 16 March 2012 at Ramseen GP (Jasavatpura Block) in Jalore, the members of the SMC at Bhil Goliya school decided to make a new school building instead of repairing the old one. To translate this vision into a reality, the Committee secured five bighas (a little more than an acre) of land with the GP's support. The new school building boasts a frontage for conducting programmes and a playground.

### *Gram Panchayat Network Follow-up Meetings*

In 2012-13, nine GP network follow-up meetings were organised, reaching out to 154 people. These follow-up meetings enabled them to review the work plan devised in the GP network meeting while simultaneously institutionalising the processes of local education governance at the GP level.

The participants in the GP follow-up meetings included members of the GP, the GP Secretary, SMC representatives, the nodal Prabhari, anganwadi teacher and women representatives such as SHG members, ASHA health workers, members of the mothers' committee and anganwadi assistants.

### Standing Committee Improves Quality

For the first time, a Standing Committee (Education) was formed following a meeting in the Talchida GP in Karauli District. As a result of this, the committee members started visiting the schools and engaging with children's learning on a regular basis. The quality of learning of schools in the GP is gradually improving.

The GP network follow-up discussions focused on:

- \_\_\_ The need for Standing Committees in the Panchayati Raj system and their formation;
- \_\_\_ The role of the Standing Committee (Education);
- \_\_\_ The aspect of coordination between the Standing Committees on Education and the SMC in addressing school issues;
- \_\_\_ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 as well as the nuances of budgeting at the GP level; and
- \_\_\_ The formulation of work plans of Standing Committees.

### *Meeting with Parents in the School Management Committee*

During the schools' summer vacation months of May and June, prior to the SGS meetings the DEG team initiated a process of meetings with parents who were on the SMCs. The topics that were discussed in these

meetings included a need for the formation of the SMC and its role and responsibilities. In the course of these meetings, parents on the SMC were encouraged to articulate their views and concerns. As many as 662 SMC parent meetings were organised in these two months, reaching out to 7,161 members.

### *Block-level Follow-up Workshop*

Following the completion of block workshops in all the 45 blocks in 2011, block-level follow-up workshops were conducted, focusing on the progress of the DEG team's work in the block. A total of six such follow-up workshops were organised, reaching out to 192 representatives.



Boraj, Dudu, Jaipur

### *Impact of Processes in Rajasthan*

The impact of the various processes in Rajasthan was broadly related to learning, infrastructure and enrolment.

The impact on learning was as following:

#### **In Sikar district:**

- o The BEO, Mr. Shankar Lal Sehrawat, addressed the issue of the SMCs by providing a teacher for the Chowkadi upper primary school (Khandela Block); and
- o Following a meeting of the SGS, learning material was provided in each and every classroom of the Mangaloona girls upper primary school (Lakshmangarh Block). Library books, too, were made available to children.

#### **In Jaipur district:**

- o An additional teacher was provided to the Shivapura primary school due to the efforts of the SMC members of the Khavaraniji GP (Jamva Ramgarh Block);
- o The SMC of the Samore lower primary school in the Daangarwadi GP (Jamva Ramgarh Block) was reconstituted and play material was arranged for the children; and
- o The Badh Booj primary school in the Booj GP (Jamva Ramgarh Block), and the Khijuriya upper primary school in the Jhadla GP (Phagi Block) were sanctioned two teachers each due to the efforts of their respective SMC members.

#### **In Jalore district:**

- o Inspired by the SGS meeting at the Kolar upper primary school in the Safada GP (Sayla Block), members of the SMC arranged for three computers at the school, cleaned up the school premises and planted trees as well; and



- o At the Nimbla primary school in the Nimbla GP (Ashore Block), children gained access to library books, while those who performed well were awarded small gifts by the SMC.

**In Karauli District**, a SGS meeting at the Baijatt primary school in the Baijatt GP (Hindon Block) on December 12, 2012, identified only one teacher for 80 students. This issue was discussed with the BEO and subsequently two new teachers were appointed to the school.

The impact on infrastructure was as follows:

**In Sikar district :**

- o A tank was constructed to store drinking water at the Jilai Johdi primary school in the Bhojasar Bada GP (Lakshmangarh Block); and
- o Land within the premises of the Bhanipura Nehro Ki Dhani upper primary school in the Chowmu Purohitan GP (Srimadhopur Block) was levelled with soil following a contribution of Rs. 15, 000 by the SMC and the community.

**In Jaipur district:**

- o Details of the status of all schools in the Amloda GP (Viratnagar Block) were collected during personal visits by the village accountant, including the registration of school premises and the measurement of school land that had been encroached upon;
- o Provisions for drinking water were made at the Swami Ki Dhani upper primary school in the Amloda GP (Viratnagar Block) after the matter was resolved in a discussion of the SMCs;
- o Following a GP network discussion on the danger posed to children by an uncovered well in the premises of the Swami Ki Dhani upper primary school in the Amloda GP (Viratnagar Block), the decision to provide it a protective covering was taken. This work has almost neared completion; and
- o The Gangasagar primary school in the Bilandarpur GP (Shahpur Block) was provided with an electricity connection.

**In Nagaur District (Jayal Block):**

- o Compound walls were constructed around the primary school in the Khatu Sadak and Indira Colony in the Kathoti GP; the Nainadi primary school in the Manglod Gram Panchayat; the schools in Dehlai Naadi Boseri and Manser Rasta in the Anwliyasar GP; and the upper primary schools in Munderse Jorda Rasta Boseri in the Anwliyasar GP as well as the upper primary school in the Manglod GP.
- o A kitchen was constructed in the Nainadi primary school in the Chhapra GP
- o Ramps were constructed at the upper primary schools in Jaton Meghwalon Ki Dhani and Manjra in the Jalniyasar GP, and at the lower primary school in Manser Rasta in the Anwliyasar GP;
- o Classrooms were constructed at the Nainadi primary school in the Manglod GP and the Doodoo upper primary school in the Akoda GP.

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**In Nagaur District (Kutchamaan Block):**

- o Kitchens were constructed in the Meghwalon Ki Dhani primary school in the Chawandiya GP;
- o Toilets were constructed at the Jhajhanon Ki Dhani and Jawanpur primary schools in the Shyamgarh GP; and
- o The grounds of the Narayanpura upper primary school in the Narayanpura GP were levelled for children to play.

**In Jalore District**, inspired by the SGS conducted at the Aaladi higher primary school, located in the Ropsi GP (Raniwada Block), the President of the SMC took up the responsibility of overseeing on a regular basis, the mid-day meals provided to the children, following which there was a major improvement in its quality.

The impact on enrolment was as follows:

**In Sikar**, eight children of the Bavaria community in the Bhadadar GP (Dhod Block) were enrolled in the Chelani Johdi primary school due to the consistent efforts of the members of the SMC.

**In Jaipur:**

- o Seven children were enrolled in the Gangasagar primary school in the Bilandarpur GP (Shahpur Block);
- o Five children were enrolled in the Kanpura primary school, located in the Radawas GP (Shahpur Block). Learning charts were put up in the school and children could access library books; and
- o 10 children were enrolled in the Suryawali upper primary school, located in the Singodkalan GP (Govindgarh Block), and library books were lent out to children.

**In Jalore:**

- o Motivated by the SGS in the Ghasedi upper primary school, located in the Kotkasta GP (Bhinmal Block), SMC members prepared a list of children who were not attending school and met with their parents. They also carried out door to door visits to ensure that the children joined anganwadis and schools; and following a SGS meeting, 16 children were enrolled in school; and
- o Two children were enrolled in the Dhodrathaal upper primary school, located in the Jhotwada GP (Jaswantpura Block).

The impact on the school committee was as follows:

**In Jaipur:**

- o The SMC of the Renwal upper primary school in the Renwal GP (Phagi Block) was re-constituted and play material provided for the children; and
- o The SMC of the Chaechawala upper primary school in the Amlodha GP (Viratnagar Block) was re-constituted.

## Engagement with the Departments of Education in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan

In Uttar Pradesh as well as Rajasthan, an effective working relation was established with the Departments of PRI, Education and Women and Child Development at the block level. In both the states, at regular intervals, the Prajayatna team members visited the BDO, BEO and the CDPO to share the key community-based citizens' reports prepared by them on a monthly basis, apprise them of the issues faced by schools/anganwadis and keep them informed about the community's involvement in resolving issues. Prajayatna is one of the NGOs identified by the Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan state governments to monitor the progress of the implementation of the RTE Act.

## Communication Through Newsletters

In both states, newsletters capturing the essence of field discussions and developments were published. These newsletters were disseminated in the Department of Education and the Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, as well as among other stakeholders.

## Activation of the Web-based Application

In 2012-13, as the web-based application providing access to LEGD school records was activated, about 20,217 LEGD school records in Uttar Pradesh and 13,356 LEGD school records in Rajasthan became available in the online database (the data so available was collected in the years 2010 and 2011). Through this application, it became possible to run a series of analyses on the data. While the data was accessible only to generate key reports, it was envisaged that these would eventually be made available to the Department of Education and the Department of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development as well as other stakeholders so as to enable school development measures and also impact decision making and policy.



| Number of teachers sanctioned and working             |   |       |      |                |         |             |                     |                  |                         |
|---|---|-------|------|----------------|---------|-------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Location Information                                  | District  | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Anganwadi Information                                 | Anganwadi   | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Basic school Information                              | Basic school  | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Student Information                                   | Student   | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Detached school Information                           | Detached school                                       | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Teacher Information                                   | Teacher   | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Number of teachers sanctioned and working             | Number of teachers sanctioned and working             | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Teacher Student ratio in schools                      | Teacher Student ratio in schools                      | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| List of teachers                                      | List of teachers                                      | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| List of head teachers                                 | List of head teachers                                 | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| List of teachers based on their residence from school | List of teachers based on their residence from school | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Schools with teachers on deputation                   | Schools with teachers on deputation                   | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Details of Deputation in schools                      | Details of Deputation in schools                      | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Teacher Training Information                          | Teacher Training Information                          | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| List of single teacher schools                        | List of single teacher schools                        | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |
| Teacher Involvement in                                | Teacher Involvement in                                | Block | NPIC | Gram Panchayat | Village | School Name | Teachers Sanctioned | Teachers Working | Year of Data Collection |

## Mid-term Audit

To assess the milestones achieved through field intervention, a mid-term audit was carried out by the RGF with the help of an external agency during the year. The objective of the audit was to assess work progress vis-a-vis expected outcomes and also to examine aspects of the DEG approach. For this exercise a randomised sampling of 10 schools from each district was done. The SMCs/parents of the selected schools (governance body members at the school level) and the GP president (governance body member at the GP level), were approached and interviewed as per a set questionnaire. In Rajasthan, 50 schools and 46 GPs and in U.P, 110 schools and 109 GPs were reached out to through the audit process.

## Study on Panchayat-School Interface

A 'Panchayat-School Interface' study was initiated in four states by the DEG team of the Foundation in 2012-13 to build a thorough body of knowledge about state-specific Panchayat structures at different levels of governance and their involvement in school education. About 26 districts, 62 blocks, 62 GPs and 124 schools were covered by the study in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Although a tentative roadmap to navigate the course of the study was developed, it provided enough scope to explore different aspects of education governance. The findings of the study were based on interviews with various stakeholders, among them the Department of Education and Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, GP or ward members, members from NGOs, SHG groups and youth organisations, and community members. Apart from this, the study used references from primary/secondary data pertaining to education as well as state-specific Panchayat and RTE rules.

| S. No | State          | Total Districts | Name of Districts  |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|--|
| 1     | Madhya Pradesh | 6               | Balaghat, Bhopal, Dhar, Gwalior, Panna and Shahdol                                       |
| 2     | Orissa         | 6               | Bargarh, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Nayagarh, Rayagada and Sundargarh                          |
| 3     | Tamil Nadu     | 5               | Erode, Cuddalore, Pudukkottai, Thiruvannamalai and Virudhunagar                          |
| 4     | Uttar Pradesh  | 9               | Agra, Allahabad, Balia, Bijnor, Gorakhpur, Mainpuri, Muzafarnagar, Sitapur and Sonbhadra |

# Transformative Learning

- \_\_\_ Transform Schools Programme
- \_\_\_ Educational Ecosystem Project
- \_\_\_ INTERACT





The RGF's Transformative Learning programme approaches education in a holistic manner, perceiving it in terms of 'how children learn'. Hence the programme's aim is to facilitate the realisation of every child's innate capabilities. It implies a thorough re-examination of the entire learning experience -- from how classroom processes are designed to the content in terms of what is relevant to learn, and the way teachers engage with children.

The Foundation believes that fundamental change is possible only when there is a redefinition of the concept and process that we know of as learning. There is a need to comprehend:

- \_\_\_ The manner in which learning is perceived by society;
- \_\_\_ The mechanisms/structure and the overall environment that enables learning; and
- \_\_\_ What comprises the content and process of learning.

Through its various programmes, the Foundation seeks to explore and probe the various dimensions of learning. It believes that although schools are by tradition perceived as spaces of learning, there are far more intense settings, life experiences and possible opportunities that can provide momentum to the process of learning. For instance, learning happens in a library space as well as through life experiences of adversity and success; through collaboration, networking and leadership opportunities, among others. It is the firm belief of the Foundation that learning, which has the power to transform lives at an individual and collective level, needs to move out of a paradigm of 'course content' and methodologies to one that understands the processes and patterns of how children learn, the contexts which provide a basis for

learning to happen, recognising that any content should lend itself to various viewpoints and interpretations.

The three programmes under the Transformative Learning domain are:

— The Transform Schools programme, which seeks to redefine the assessment framework to truly reflect the learning abilities of children.

— The Educational Ecosystem Project, which seeks to:

- o Develop community level- interventions for quality learning;
- o Develop an institutional set-up for teacher development such as a teacher resource centre; and
- o Strengthen the government schooling system through decentralised education governance, signifying greater ownership of the community and PRI institutions.

— The INTERACT programme, which comprises:

- o Access to Opportunities
- o Young Scholars Leadership Initiative
- o Vidyagyan
- o Samangan

## Transform Schools Programme

The year 2012-2013 saw an intensification in the process of dialogue, planning and preparation that went into the launch of the Transform Schools programme in different states. The RGF team engaged with the officials of concerned state governments during their visits to Meghalaya, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, and Jammu and Kashmir. Many states displayed an interest in the programme with a view to improving the quality of primary education. In the consultations that followed, two or three clusters/blocks were identified in select blocks/districts, based on criteria such as low girl child enrolment, poor access to schools, location in border regions, and economic backwardness.

The processes that were initiated in the beginning of 2012 were finalised and formal agreements were entered into with the states of Uttarakhand, Bihar and Meghalaya to initiate the Transform Schools programme in select clusters/blocks. During preliminary meetings with the State Project Director of the SSA/SCERT Director and key representatives of the state Department of Education, the approach of the initiative was discussed and aspects related to implementation outlined. A broad plan was evolved and a review team was set up, comprising officials of the Department of Education/nodal officer representing the government and a coordinator on behalf of the RGF as the implementing organisation.

Further, exposure visits and workshops were organised for the Transform Schools team of the Foundation:

- 
- A visit to the Karnataka-based Kalikayatna learning programme – a joint collaboration of Prajayatna and SSA Karnataka -- yielded rich insights into the programme as well as the various processes underlying the approach.
  - The team visited several other organisations, each following a distinct approach to enhance learning among primary school children, prominent among them being the Bodh Shiksha Samiti, Jaipur, NEEV( Network of Enterprising Educational Ventures), and Jodo Gyan in Delhi.
  - Monthly workshops by Jodo Gyan were organised to strengthen the team's understanding of basic concepts of primary mathematics.
  - A workshop by the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) on the Whole Language Approach was organised, illustrating ways for teachers to enable a child to link the use of language to make sense of her world and the world around.

At the same time, the RGF team prepared relevant materials for various stakeholders involved in the initiative. These included a manual as well as brochures for teachers about various elements of learning approach and its implementation. Simultaneously efforts were made to translate this material in languages such as Telugu, Hindi and Punjabi so that they could be customised for the states where the Foundation was initiating the programme.

Since it was important for all key stakeholders to be oriented to the various aspects of the learning approach, workshops were conducted for state, district and cluster level functionaries as well as for head teachers of schools.

### *Andhra Pradesh: The First Steps*

Following a meeting with senior Department of Education officials, Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed in the three districts of Mahabubnagar, Chittoor, Visakhapatnam districts and clusters were identified. Thereafter, in orientation sessions for functionaries at the state and district level, the RGF team sketched out the objectives of the Foundation as well as the aspects of the Transform Schools programme.

This was followed by a discussion on the existing assessment practices in learning and whether there was a need to change it. The various aspects of the programme were explained in detail:

- o The integration of subjects through concept facilitation
- o Collaborative learning or learning in mixed age groups;
- o Regular teachers' collectives to strengthen their learning approach and skills; and
- o The idea of an ongoing, comprehensive assessment .

Orientation sessions for teachers, CRCs and head teachers were conducted in Mahabubnagar, Chittoor and



Visakhapatnam districts in February and March 2013. The teachers:

- Explained the teaching-learning process in their schools, including the extent of use of resource material, the curriculum as well as assessment practices;
- Provided details about the socio-economic background of their students and the concerns they invariably brought into the classroom, and the lack of constructive links between the students' world and the school;
- Outlined the outcomes for children after completion of five years of schooling; and
- Learnt about assessment practices - why, when, how and what to be assessed - along with their documentation.

During the year, the Foundation's Transform Schools team visited the selected schools on several occasions to interact with teachers and to collect data that would be relevant for the purpose of implementation.

Six cluster facilitators from the three selected districts visited Karnataka to see for themselves the various dimensions of the learning approach as practised under the Kalikayatna programme.

### When Children and Teachers Learn Alike

All of us are aware that the attendance rate and learning levels of children in the Paderu tribal belt is very low. But it is only after attending the teachers' collectives in Jolaput that I have realised something important: every teacher must make an effort to acquaint himself thoroughly with the learning levels of the children and then develop learning tasks for them, based on their abilities. We have implemented



this approach for children up to Class V. The results are evident for all to see; some time ago the Mandal Education Officer (MEO) - in Andhra Pradesh - visited my school and appreciated the children for their active participation in classroom activities. The MEO wanted to implement the same process across the mandal.

Earlier, I had assumed that these children did not have it in them to participate in discussions in a classroom full of students. As a result I had never tried to draw them in. But the Transform Schools programme has given me an opportunity to put this idea into practice and, to my surprise and delight, I have witnessed an unimaginable change come over the children as well as over me.

Mr. Jagannatham, Head Teacher, Jolaput school, Visakhapatnam District

### *Meghalaya: Moving Towards a Capability Based Approach*

In September 2012, the RGF team visited Meghalaya's capital Shillong to conduct a workshop on Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) for the State Department of Education/SSA. The workshop, which was conducted at the Directorate of School Education and Literacy, was attended by Block Resource Persons, Cluster Resource Co-ordinators from different districts of Meghalaya, and SSA functionaries. The objective was to build an understanding of CCE among the participants.

Subsequently, a three-day workshop was held in October 2012 in partnership with the SSA Meghalaya, for District Pedagogy Coordinators and Block Resource Persons of the state to strengthen their understanding of the principles and practices underlining CCE. The workshops also helped the participants to internalise strategies by which they could engage with mixed age group classrooms in the context of CCE. In an attempt to consolidate their learnings, a CCE module in the form of a ready reckoner, with a corresponding sample resource and activity book was developed. The manual and booklet comprised a range of activities that would help teachers to further enable the students to develop certain abilities.

#### **CCE: A New Dimension to Learning**

At the end of the three-day workshop, the participants had a lot to say about the workshop. They felt that the sessions:

- \_\_\_ Were unique and interesting, providing a real understanding of the concept of CCE;
- \_\_\_ Were more practical and hands on, unlike the more theoretical lectures that marked traditional orientation sessions to classroom practices;
- \_\_\_ Enabled them to learn by doing and thereby making them realise that there were so many abilities in children that they had overlooked completely;
- \_\_\_ Eased them so well into an understanding of the 'what' and 'how' of CCE that they no longer had any apprehensions about practising it in the classroom to assess children's abilities and provide them with opportunities;
- \_\_\_ Were enjoyable, with very many activities that could be shared with other teachers and children;
- \_\_\_ Gave them an opportunity to correct their earlier impression that CCE was merely a new system of examination;
- \_\_\_ Gave them the confidence that the atmosphere of the classroom could get transformed through CCE, by giving students plenty of opportunities to learn by themselves not just to pass exams but to develop their abilities;
- \_\_\_ Signalled to them that there was no need for the classroom to be teacher-centric, with fixed seating for children; and
- \_\_\_ Made them see that CCE would mean less of a burden on children.

The Foundation's engagement with the SSA-Meghalaya was further strengthened when both entered into a MoU in February 2013 to collaborate on the project titled 'Developing and strengthening a capability-based learning approach' in government primary schools in the Myllem Block of East Khasi Hills District and the Resubelpara Block of North Garo Hills District.

A preliminary orientation workshop was conducted in Shillong for key representatives from the Department of Education at the block and cluster level to share the approach of the initiative. It was interesting to note that:

- \_\_\_ Many of the CRCs from Resubelpara Block had travelled to the state capital for the first time;
- \_\_\_ The participants got an insight into how effective group/peer learning could happen in the classroom. Ms. Bahun Mary Pyngrope, the CRC of Madanrting cluster, Myllem Block, commented, "Earlier there was only one teacher in the classroom but going by this process there are many teachers!"

The RGF team also had several interactions with teachers from the Myllem and Resubelpara Block. The team:

- \_\_\_ Set out for initial school visits to understand the context in which the schools operated, the processes of teaching-learning and the aspects that needed attention;
- \_\_\_ Collected school data so essential for programme implementation; and
- \_\_\_ Recognised that there were teachers in the group with over 38 years of teaching experience and a wealth of information about the school system.

### *Bihar: Processes for Enhancing the Quality of Learning*

In October 2012, the RGF team had a meeting with the state Principal Secretary, Education, and the State Project Director of the SSA, to acquaint them with the approach of the Transform Schools programme. On January 4, 2013, the RGF firmed up a collaboration with the state SSA to implement 'processes for enhancing the quality of learning' in three clusters located across two districts. The clusters were Nawabganj and Jhamanbhiga in Jehanabad District and Simri in Madhubani District. It was decided that the Foundation would provide the necessary academic, technical and advisory support to ensure the initiative's smooth implementation.

### *Punjab: Initiating Work in Border Areas*

In February 2013, the RGF team had a meeting with senior functionaries of the SSA Punjab. The officials expressed their keenness to adopt best practices in order to achieve universalisation of quality elementary education for all children in the state. They felt it was all the more necessary to work in border districts which were affected by low enrolment and low learning levels. A decision was taken to initiate the quality intervention programme in the blocks of Patti and Valtoha in the border district of Tarn Taran. NGOs with a strong community presence in their areas, which showed an interest in the learning approach, were identified to partner with the Foundation in implementing the programme in their state.

### *Chhattisgarh: Strengthening the Ongoing Processes*

In January 2013, the RGF discussed the Transform Schools programme with the State Project Director of the SSA, and the Director, SCERT, over several meetings. Building on the work initiated by the State in CCE and based on discussions with key education officials of the state, the RGF initiated work in three clusters each in Mahasamund and Bastar districts in 2013.

### *Uttarakhand: Exploring Learning Across Regions*

In continuation of the MoU process initiated in March 2012 and following a meeting with the State Project Director of the SSA, in October 2012, the RGF collaborated with the state SSA to initiate the capability-based learning approach in one cluster each in five districts: Jivangarh (Dehradun District), Sounrakhhal (Rudraprayag District), Galai (Bageshwar District), Nathuvakhan (Nainital District), and Urgam (Chamoli District). The Foundation extended its support by providing academic and technical support to the teachers at the cluster level.

The RGF team:

- Began by conducting an orientation meeting with state, district, block and cluster level functionaries such as the State Project Director, the District Coordinator (Training), the Block Education Officer, the Block Resource Coordinator, and the Cluster Resource Coordinator, to apprise them of the Transform Schools approach; and
- Organised an orientation of head teachers of Sounrakhhal in March 2013 at Rudraprayag, where the overall structure of the programme and aspects of its approach, such as the assessment of children and how children learn, were discussed.

### **A Wonderoom of Ingenuity**

One of the most engaging ideas to emerge in 2012-13 was that of a Wonderoom - a space that would function as a centre of innovation and development in learning practices. The Foundation was motivated by the conviction that it was essential to create a kaleidoscopic range of experiences for children to make their learning more interesting, engaging and meaningful. Creating a space that would open up a world of books, audio-visuals, activities and discussions could lead to endless learning opportunities.



### *Internal Capacity Building*

The process of setting up the Wonderoom was challenging. During the year, the Wonderoom team developed an understanding of how children learn and what constitutes learning:

- This was done through a series of internal workshops and meetings which resulted in a substantial vision for the Wonderoom as well as strategies to bring the centre to life. The Wonderoom team developed different concepts that children in the age group of 6-11 could engage with;
- These internal workshops were complemented by intensive sessions conducted by Jodo Gyan to bring mathematics to life;
- A language development and orientation programme was conducted by a specialist in learning disabilities, Ms. Sonya Philip, from the organisation Learning Matters; and
- The team also developed activities and models that could be used in sessions with children in the Wonderoom.

### *Identifying Resource Persons and Material*

The next step was to:

- Identify resource persons who could meaningfully engage and facilitate the development of specific skills in children in the age group of 6-11;
- Identify a range of literature that could engage children of varying ages, and this was done by visiting institutions such as the British Council Library, the National Book Trust, the Childrens Book Trust, and the NCERT's reading cell, among others; and
- Get an idea of the various book publishers, visit book fairs, secure catalogues and books for a sampling so as to come up with an appropriate selection criteria.

### *Planning Learning Processes*

The Wonderoom and the Transform Schools team had continuous discussions on contemporary practices in education and the approach of learning. Based on these discussions and further research on educational processes, the team prepared plans to create concept-based activities with children. Accordingly, appropriate teaching-learning material was procured and resource persons were identified.



### *The Wonderoom Comes Alive*

Housed in an attractive and child friendly physical space designed and constructed within the premises of the Foundation's office, the Wonderoom became functional in March 2013. Children from the vicinity were enrolled as members and soon the Wonderoom resounded with the chatter of curiosity and playfulness. At the same time, the team created an outreach plan for ensuring children's participation in the Wonderoom. It created posters and brochures to disseminate among schools and organisations in the vicinity working towards the development of children.



The year 2012-13 saw an innovation planned the previous year come to life:

- \_\_\_ The Wonderbox -- a storage unit that would contain books, learning materials, sports equipment - which had been conceived in 2011-12, gained a new purpose when it became part of the Transform Schools initiative. The Foundation decided that schools, which had the Transform Schools programme, would be supported by the Wonderbox.
- \_\_\_ During the year, 10 out of 25 such schools were identified and literature in Indian languages such as Telugu and Khasi were procured apart from books in Urdu, English and Hindi.
- \_\_\_ A stable, functional and attractive design for the Wonderbox was developed and the Foundation started searching for a suitable unit that could manufacture and distribute the Wonderbox to different locations in the country.

### **Educational Ecosystem Project**

The Educational Ecosystem Project comprises:

- \_\_\_ Children's Learning Spaces;
- \_\_\_ Children's Learning Centres; and
- \_\_\_ Education governance programme.

### *Children's Learning Spaces*

The Children's Learning Spaces (CLS), called Vistaar, were conceptualised to address the gaps in formal schooling and strengthen the children's learning abilities. Initiated in the districts of Rae Bareli and Amethi, they were designed as centres that would complement the formal learning of primary school children by providing a range of opportunities for experiential learning over a period of two hours. In naming the CLS as Vistaar, the Foundation hoped that the activity-based, experiential learning that these spaces enabled



Children at CLS Deenapur, Bhetuva Block engaged in their Learning Group Task

would provide then to expand their abilities. Language, mathematics and life skills are taught to children at the CLS by facilitators selected from the Village Organisations (VO) and trained under the programme.

### CLS status during 2012-13

In Rae Bareli region, out of 15 blocks, the CLS' have been initiated across 3 blocks while in Amethi region out of 16 blocks it has been initiated in 8 blocks. The programme has so far reached out to a total of 128 Gram Panchayats in Rae Bareli and Amethi district. The detailed status of CLS is given in table below:

| S. No. | Name of District | Name of Block | No. of Gram Panchayat | No. of CLS | No. of Children |
|--------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1      | Rae Bareli       | Harchandpur   | 12                    | 14         | 490             |
| 2      |                  | Sataon        | 6                     | 10         | 350             |
| 3      |                  | Rohiniyan     | 10                    | 11         | 385             |
| 4      | Amethi           | Bhetua        | 10                    | 10         | 350             |
| 5      |                  | Shahgarh      | 15                    | 15         | 525             |
| 6      |                  | Musafirkhana  | 13                    | 15         | 525             |
| 7      |                  | Jamo          | 9                     | 14         | 490             |
| 8      |                  | Gauriganj     | 16                    | 17         | 595             |
| 9      |                  | Tiloi         | 11                    | 15         | 525             |
| 10     |                  | Deeh          | 12                    | 12         | 420             |
| 11     |                  | Bahadurpur    | 14                    | 14         | 490             |
| Total  |                  | 11 Blocks     | 128                   | 147        | 5145            |

By November 2012, the groundwork of orienting the facilitators had been accomplished;

By February 2013, 38 new CLS' started functioning, reaching out to 36 GPs; and

By March 2013, the total number of CLS' in the two districts rose to 147 in 128 GPs, reaching out to 5145 children.



### The selection of facilitators

For the 38 CLS' set up in 2012-13:

The facilitators were identified with the active involvement of SHG/CLA (Cluster level Association) members of the village;

The RGF team then proceeded to interview the facilitators so identified in order to assess their capability levels and gauge their interest; and

After their selection, the facilitators participated in a three-day orientation programme to build an understanding of how children learn, how to facilitate learning and create a daily facilitation plan. The orientation programme enabled the cluster facilitators to run the Vistaar centres in their respective villages effectively.

### Facilitators' collectives

Every quarter, 30-35 facilitators from the districts of Rae Bareli and Amethi participate in collectives to:

Share their classroom experiences with children

Develop their skills further; and

Jointly seek solutions to their problems. These collectives, which last for a day-and-a-half, do a great deal to enthuse and equip the facilitators to do well.

In 2012-13, the Foundation decided to organise monthly collectives at the block level for a smaller group of eight to 14 facilitators. The idea was:

To provide time and space to those who might be hesitant to open up before a larger group;

To ensure that plans made in the monthly collectives were followed up and that the problems of facilitators were resolved more speedily. About 96 block level meetings for facilitators were held during the year.



Further, fortnightly block-level collectives were also organised for the Block Learning Coordinators to meet their respective learning team members.

### Developing a strong CLS team

In 2012-13, the RGF worked on creating a strong team that could provide regular on-site support and feedback to make the CLS function effectively. During the year:

— The team of project associates gradually equipped itself to establish CLS' in identified villages, evolving a set of procedures to create an interest in education among various stakeholders. Their effort showed, for the frequency of initiating CLS' had improved in 2012-13 as compared to the previous year;

— The Learning Coordinators team of RGF developed the skills to design a set module for the empowerment of facilitators. This was made possible through collectives, block-level facilitator meetings and on-site support. It helped the Project Associates to have a better understanding of the CLS classroom process, learning related aspects and the facilitator empowerment process, among others;

— The CLS facilitators gained a conceptual understanding of what was needed in a daily plan and how it was to be implemented in the classroom, which improved their bonding with the children. At the same time, their own knowledge levels rose through learning by doing in the CLS. Their grasp of the documentation process also improved. The facilitators were able to write detailed plans for the whole group, where all the children, irrespective of age, class and abilities, sit together; they were able to prepare work sheet designs according to different levels, record feedback on Individual Consolidation Record (where children engage with tasks at an individual level) and observe children in detail; and

— The facilitation team gradually built bridges of trust with the community, which began to realise that the CLS initiative had the potential to truly build their children's capacities. As a result community members showed a greater interest in participating in parents' meetings.



First Day of a CLS in Village Pure Keshar Singh Ka Baag in Deeh Block-1

## Community participation and ownership of CLS

Although the term 'community participation and ownership in education' may have different meanings in different contexts, with regard to the CLS initiative it connotes the extent to which the CLS' are initiated, financed and managed by the community - that is, by the CLAs formed by the Foundation's partner organisation, the Rajiv Gandhi Mahila Vikas Pariyojana (RGMVP). Through the year, 1,014 parents meeting and 1,005 CLA meetings were organised to put the CLS on a solid footing.

## Community Learning Centres

Community Learning Centres (CLCs) were designed as day centres with the objective of introducing the idea of a capability-based learning approach for children in the age group of 5-10 years, owned and managed by the community. In 2010, after nine cluster level associations (CLAs) were selected from a group of resource villages for the initiation of the CLCs, nine CLCs were set up in eight blocks (four in Rae Bareli and five in Amethi). About 16 facilitators reached out to 320 children. A 7 member Shiksha Samiti comprising of representatives from the SHGs, interested parents and community leaders was formed in each village to ensure the proper functioning of the CLCs.



Children during their individual practice time

| CLC Locations |                   |               |            |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------|------------|
| S.No.         | CLC Village       | Name of Block | District   |
| 1             | Kaziyana          | Jagatpur      | Rae Bareli |
| 2             | Talagopalpur      | Rahi          | Rae Bareli |
| 3             | Melthua           | Gaura         | Rae Bareli |
| 4             | Birnawa           | Deeh          | Amethi     |
| 5             | Khalispur         | Bahadurpur    | Amethi     |
| 6             | Gogmau            | Jamo          | Amethi     |
| 7             | Newada Kishungarh | Shahgarh      | Amethi     |
| 8             | Manderka          | Bhetua        | Amethi     |
| 9             | Kouhar            | Shahgarh      | Amethi     |

From the time the CLCs were initiated in 2010, several positive developments were observed:

- The community displayed an enhanced understanding of aspects such as the quality of learning in schools, having gained valuable experience in managing the CLCs;
- While the RGF/RGMVP took on the responsibility of building the capacity of facilitators and supporting those at the CLC level during their onsite visits, the community stepped in to ensure enrolment, fee collection and attendance; help out in monthly parent-teacher meetings, and collaborate on future plans for the CLCs with the RGF/RGMVP team members; and
- The CLCs' circle of influence further widened when teachers from government schools visited the CLCs close by to understand their learning approach and implement some of its processes in their classrooms.

These positive results triggered a new line of thinking in the RGF:

- Would it be possible to expand the scope of the CLCs to include all the government schools located in the cluster around the CLC through the Transform Schools programme? The positives of the CLC's learning approach would reach a far greater number of students and teachers.
- In 2012-13, the Foundation initiated a dialogue with facilitators, the Shiksha Samiti and CLA members to elicit their views. Gradually all the stakeholders agreed on the vital point that the process of reconfiguring the CLCs could be completed by the next academic year (2013-14) and, simultaneously, assume their new form as interventions in the government schools; and
- Efforts were redoubled to make the community recognise that with these inputs the government schools, too, would gradually start functioning like the CLCs. Parents did not have to look far to realise that the learning gained from the CLC experience was significant not only for the Transform Schools programme but also for the expansion of the CLS'.

### Experiencing the change

July 7, 2012, was an important letter day for village Malikpur Barna (Harchandpur Block) in Rae Bareilly District - it was the day a CLS was started in the village. Within six months its impact was there for everyone to see. Take 18-year-old Chandni, a cluster facilitator in the CLS, who was initially so stricken by shyness that she could never bring herself to ask questions relating to facilitation in the classroom. Six months later she was a changed person, confident enough to seek clarifications on how to respond to classroom challenges, among others. Not only that, her approach to learning underwent a transformation as well. "Now I don't learn by rote for my exams but try to understand the question and then try to answer it," she says. Her confidence was reflected in her vastly improved results in the board exams.

Chandni's mother Maya, who is a community volunteer in the RGMVP, is very happy to see this change in her daughter. "She has become very sensible and responsible now," she states proudly.

### A space true to its name

Sangeeta, a cluster facilitator of the CLS in Andawa village in the Andawa GP (Amawa Block), says without hesitation, "True to its name Vistaar, the CLS has expanded the horizons of my life (Vistaar means expanse in Hindi). She enumerates the changes that have come in her life: "I have forged a warm relationship with the children attending the CLS. The monthly and quarterly collectives have transformed my outlook. Even my parents, who had earlier wanted me to get married soon, have changed their views. Most of all, the honorarium of Rs 500 that I get, goes to support my education. Now you know what I mean when I say Vistaar has expanded my horizons!"

### The awakening

In village Pure Keshar Singh Ka Bagh (Deeh Block) of Rae Bareilly District, the CLS has become an epicentre of enthusiastic learning. Inspired by the cluster facilitator Deepa Gupta, the children have developed a newsletter titled 'Keshar Singh ka Bagh', tracing the history of the village and enumerating its natural resources. Not only that, the children's portfolios are well maintained, and Deepa



herself is trying to master English so that she can teach the children. Her parents are so happy at this turn of events that they declare they will never let the CLS close!



## INTERACT

### Access to Opportunities



This programme was initiated in 1992 to enable physically challenged individuals to improve their accessibility; in particular it was conceptualised to cater to the needs of individuals affected in their lower limbs. The Access to Opportunities (AtO) initiative, which started off by awarding one motorised vehicle in its first year, reached 450 in 2012. This programme has demonstrated the impact of the collective efforts of inspired individuals and committed corporate entities whose contribution has grown from year to year. Most importantly, through this programme, there has been a constant effort to refine the existing models of vehicles to suit the needs of the awardees.

Since 2011-12, in keeping with the Foundation's repositioned focus on education, the programme has laid stress on the selection of students. Its objective is to enable physically challenged youth to improve their accessibility to educational pursuits and to a life of better opportunities. Hence, in 2012-13, students comprised almost 65 per cent of the awardees.

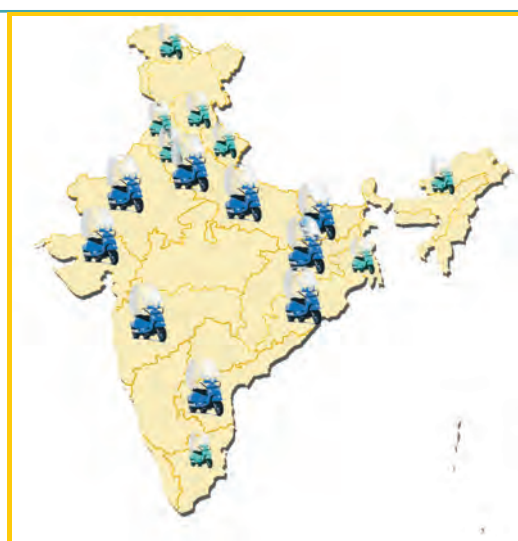
In 2012-13, in addition to increasing the number of awardees, the Foundation expanded the scope of the programme, in terms of partnering with organisations working in the area of disability at the state level.

This would enable the Foundation to reach out to a wider field of people with special needs. Moreover, partnering with organisations at the state level would enable a more comprehensive support programme for people with special needs, in terms of schemes and facilities, rights and ongoing follow-up. One of the major tasks of the year was a continuous effort to identify potential partner organisations in states to facilitate this programme.

As a result the Foundation:

- \_\_\_ Forged an association with organisations in 18 states and, in a first, approached the awarding of the vehicles programme at the state level;
- \_\_\_ Organised eight events in which 450 vehicles were awarded to individuals from 22 states;
- \_\_\_ Selected partner organisations on the basis of their outreach and network in the state, for that would lead to a wider dissemination of information about the programme and also enable authentic verification of individuals;
- \_\_\_ Conducted regional workshops for partner organisations region-wise to share programme details with them and also seek their inputs in programme;
- \_\_\_ Collected and compiled state-wise data for the purpose of conducting state-wise workshops on the rights of and opportunities for the physically challenged the following year; and
- \_\_\_ Made efforts to explore the possibility of securing scholarships, placements as well as hand-holding for livelihood interventions, and created a databank of resource persons for that purpose.

| Awarding of Vehicles - 2012-13 |                     |                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| S.No.                          | Programme Locations | No. of vehicles |
| 1                              | Delhi*              | 180             |
| 2                              | Gujarat             | 55              |
| 3                              | Maharashtra         | 23              |
| 4                              | Rajasthan           | 30              |
| 5                              | Uttar Pradesh       | 58              |
| 6                              | Chhattisgarh        | 20              |
| 7                              | Orissa              | 20              |
| 8                              | Patna               | 30              |
| 9                              | Hyderabad           | 34              |
| <b>Total</b>                   |                     | <b>450</b>      |



\*States: Assam 1, Delhi 70, Haryana 56, Himachal 1, J&K 5, Punjab 5, Tamil Nadu 12, Uttar Pradesh 26, Uttarakhand 1, West Bengal 3



### *Highlights of a study on the impact of the AtO programme*

In 2012-13, the Foundation carried out an impact study among AtO awardees to see how much of a difference the motorised vehicles had made in their lives with regard to independent mobility, participation, and access to opportunities. The study also attempted to assess the benefits of the award in the lives of students as compared to adults with settled livelihoods. The study was based on a sample of 116 respondents from a pool of 750 individuals from different states who had been awarded vehicles from 2006 to 2010. Women comprised 47 per cent of the respondents.

As for the extent to which awardees were able to integrate with their families and play a participative role, the study found that:

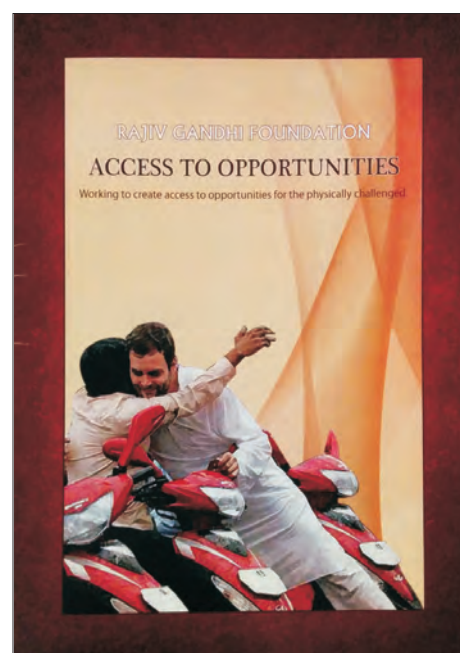
- \_\_\_ 54 per cent of the respondents who had completed their education or were pursuing it, were able to do so more effectively from the time they received the motorised vehicle;
- \_\_\_ About 25 per cent of the respondents started participating in community affairs;
- \_\_\_ 29 per cent of the respondents experienced an improvement in their relationships within their community;
- \_\_\_ 59 per cent of the respondents started attending community events, get-togethers and ceremonies independently; and
- \_\_\_ In seven cases, the awardees were found to be supporting other physically challenged relatives in the family.

With regard to vehicle maintenance, the study found that:

- \_\_\_ About 28 per cent of the respondents had kept their vehicles in excellent condition;
- \_\_\_ 60 per cent had maintained their vehicles in a reasonably good condition; and
- \_\_\_ 12 per cent had not paid attention to the maintenance of their vehicles at all.

Regarding the respondents' views about the change brought about in their lives by the vehicle, the study found that:

- \_\_\_ Around 20 per cent of the respondents clearly felt that the vehicle saved them a lot of time which they were able to invest in studies;
- \_\_\_ Around 12 per cent of the respondents felt that they could not have completed their education if they had not been awarded the vehicle;



- \_\_\_ Around 10 per cent of the respondents felt that the vehicle made it possible for them to secure part-time employment which, in turn, enabled them to complete their education; and
- \_\_\_ 13 per cent of the respondents felt that the vehicle and attendant accessibility created an opportunity for them to enrol in a vocational course along with their regular education.

Trying to track the extent to which the vehicle had had an impact on the respondents' financial situation, the study found that:

- \_\_\_ The standard of living of 102 respondents (88 per cent of the sample) improved a great deal after receiving the vehicle;
- \_\_\_ 51 respondents (47 per cent of the sample) benefitted through a reduction of expenses on local transport;
- \_\_\_ 49 respondents (45 per cent of the sample) were able to fulfil their basic family needs of health and education;
- \_\_\_ 45 respondents (42 per cent of the sample) succeeded in expanding the scope of opportunities;
- \_\_\_ 17 respondents (16 per cent of the sample) were able to avail opportunities for a job placement which would not have been possible without a vehicle; and
- \_\_\_ 61 per cent of the respondents were able to avail public service benefits such as rail or bus concession cards, disability pensions from the social welfare departments of various state governments; free medical or hospital facilities where available; free or subsidised distribution of aids such as crutches and tricycles, among others.

With regard to the areas that the Foundation needed to strengthen, the study indicated that:

- \_\_\_ There was a need for a wider dissemination of information about the application process, which itself needed to be simplified;
- \_\_\_ There was a need to decentralise the application process and awarding of vehicles;
- \_\_\_ There was scope to add supportive programmes to the AtO for a more holistic approach benefiting student awardees; and
- \_\_\_ There was a need for greater research and development on the vehicles to come up with more user-friendly vehicles.



## Young Scholars Leadership Initiative

One of the key initiatives of the Foundation, the Young Scholars Leadership Initiative (YSLI) programme has been supporting children affected by conflict across the country since 1993. Since then the programme has reached out to approximately 1700 children. In 2012-13, the programme supported 740 scholars, spanning the states of Nagaland, Manipur, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir, as well as the union territories of Puducherry and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

| YSLI Scholars State-Wise in 2012-13           |                           |                 |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Existing-Partner                              | State                     | No. of scholars |
| Indian Council for Child Welfare, Guwahati    | Assam                     | 28              |
| Ratnanidhi Charitable Trust, Mumbai           | Maharashtra               | 20              |
| Khwai Social Development Organisation, Imphal | Manipur                   | 188             |
| Aman Trust                                    | Jammu and Kashmir         | 220             |
| Bastar Sewak Mandal                           | Chhattisgarh              | 25              |
| Self-Employed Women's Association - (SEWA)    | Gujarat                   | 36              |
| IRDC- Baby Sarah's Home                       | Puducherry                | 23              |
| Direct Intervention                           | State                     | No. of scholars |
| Direct intervention                           | Andhra Pradesh            | 101             |
| Direct intervention                           | Tripura                   | 8               |
| Direct intervention                           | Nagaland                  | 26              |
| Direct intervention                           | Andaman & Nicobar Islands | 59              |
| Direct intervention                           | Punjab                    | 6               |
| <b>Total no. of scholars</b>                  |                           | <b>740</b>      |

Strengthened by the RGF's depth of experience with INTERACT programmes, the YSLI sought to build and expand the scope of the scholarship programme in 2012-13, recognising that these young scholars with their unique experiences of courage and resilience in adversity would be in a position to make a difference in society. Currently the programme is operational in 10 states and two union territories.

During the year:

- The RGF focused on setting leadership processes in place for young scholars in the states of Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh through leadership development training programmes in the respective states;
- The preparatory process included an attempt by trained programme associates to understand young people in their particular living contexts and school situations in order to get a sense of their nature

and interests, as it would be the associates who would facilitate the programme ahead;

— Around 35 children in Jammu and Kashmir were identified for a pilot process, and there were comprehensive interactions with them in their homes and schools for two months, which were documented for inclusion in the course material for training;

— An extensive database comprising information about each of the 740 young scholars was prepared on the basis of the individual files of each scholar, to be augmented with every successive interaction;

— Processes were initiated to identify state partners who could contribute in the areas of outreach, education, internship, placements, professional orientation and psycho-social counselling; and

— The task of identifying resource persons and agencies for workshops was also initiated.

### Emerging from the shadows of fear

Shabir Ahmad Karam's earliest memories of life in Srinagar bear the stamp of trauma, such as the time he was shocked into silence as an eight-year-old following the death of his father in a grenade blast, in 1995. Shabir's playful childhood ended that day; as the fog of financial insecurity settled over the family, he dropped out of school and started working as a sales boy for a monthly salary of Rs 300. Gradually, he slid into a state of despair; as the only male member of the family he could not leave the job.

In 1999, an NGO called Secure Future, supported by Save the Children (U.K), came across Shabir's family while working on a project on people affected by conflict and made every member go through counselling. Thereafter the NGO admitted Shabir into a mainstream private school, the Modern Islamia High School, supporting him financially and in kind. Just when Shabir had started regaining his confidence as a Class VIII student, Save the Children had moved its work from Kashmir. However fate works in mysterious ways, for Shabir's mother was informed about the RGF's YSLI programme at a doctor's clinic by a patient sitting next to her. The day Shabir received his first cheque from the RGF was perhaps the first time since his father's death when the family felt a sense of ease. Says Shabir, "Representatives from the RGF guided me from time to time and took care of my studies till I passed my Class XII. Once again the Foundation opted to support me in my second phase of studies. Today, having completed my graduation as well as a one year course on computers, I am all set to apply for an MA in social work. I chose this subject because I want to help other children who are getting traumatised by the scenario of conflict in Kashmir. My desire is to join an NGO and help as many children as I can." Shabir is an exemplar for his generation.

### Vidyagyan Scholarship Programme

The five-year-long Vidyagyan project was initiated by the RGF with the support of the Shri Sivasubramaniya Nadar Educational and Charitable Trust (SSN Trust), for girls from marginalised and minority communities in December 2007, to help them complete their schooling. The project was initiated in three districts of Uttar Pradesh, namely Barabanki, Rae Bareilly and Varanasi. These districts were selected on the basis of the extreme level of vulnerability of the marginalised and minority communities and the correspondingly low

level of girls' education in these groups. Implemented through 10 partner organisations, until now the programme has reached out to 2973 girls with a scholarship and the additional support of coaching classes and computer education. In its last phase, in 2012-13, the programme catered to 946 girls in Class X; the rest have completed high school.

| No. of Girls supported through Vidyagyan in three districts through ten partners |                                 |   |  |
|--|---------------------------------|---|--|
| S. No.   | Partners                        | No. of Girls selected for the scholarship | No. of girls in the programme at present |
| District Barabanki   |                                 |   |  |
| 1  | Beti Foundation                 | 238                                       | 61                                       |
| 2  | Gyan Vigyan Samiti              | 301                                       | 105                                      |
| 3  | Pashu Swachedan Sahkari Samiti  | 284                                       | 80                                       |
|  | <b>A)</b>                       | <b>823</b>                                | <b>246</b>                               |
| District Varanasi  |                                 |   |  |
| 1  | Children's Emancipation Society | 237                                       | 94                                       |
| 2  | Human Welfare Association       | 293                                       | 80                                       |
| 3  | Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra        | 223                                       | 103                                      |
| 4  | Vision                          | 364                                       | 97                                       |
|  | <b>B)</b>                       | <b>1117</b>                               | <b>374</b>                               |
| District Rae Bareli  |                                 |   |  |
| 1  | SEWA                            | 294                                       | 102                                      |
| 2  | Lokmitra                        | 317                                       | 113                                      |
| 3  | Sabla                           | 422                                       | 111                                      |
|  | <b>C)</b>                       | <b>1033</b>                               | <b>326</b>                               |
|  | <b>Total A+B+C</b>              | <b>2973</b>                               | <b>946</b>                               |

### *Building on the work done so far*

The basic aim of the Foundation in initiating the Vidyagyan programme was to enable a shift in society's attitude towards girls' education. Since the programme was poised to conclude in May 2013, the RGF conducted an impact study to find out how effective the programme has been and its further scope.



Beti, Foundation, Mittai, Barabanki



The objective of the impact study was to:

- Get an idea of the extent of change in the overall perception of parents and the community as regards the issue of girls' education – a look at the facilitating as well as inhibiting factors;
- Highlight the various challenges faced by the young scholars and the ways in which the programme helped them overcome the hurdles;
- Highlight the changes that had come over the scholars in terms of a sense of confidence about themselves and their levels of knowledge;
- Consolidate the lessons learnt in the course of the programme, including insights into the role of partner organisations; and
- Understand the processes that were necessary to ensure the sustainability of the intervention.



BGVS, Masauli, Barabanki

The findings indicated that:

- There was a need to support willing scholars beyond Class X, for further education – at least up to Class XII; and
- There was a need to further empower these youngsters to develop a road map for their self-reliance. Most of the scholars strongly agree that it was the support provided by Vidyagyan which had motivated them to aspire for a life beyond the narrow confines of their homes.

### *The way forward*

Based on the findings of impact study and recommendations of the partners:

- The RGF decided to extend the programme for a select group of scholars, based on the partners' groundwork in compiling the names of girls studying in Class X who desired to study further;
- The RGF team interacted with each of the scholars and visited their families to get an in-depth understanding of the family situation and also to ascertain that they supported their daughters in their quest for further education; and
- It was decided to support 500 girls who required support in skill-based training, along with their Class XII studies, for a period of two more years. This select group would get an opportunity to participate in leadership development training which, in turn, would enable them to access information and opportunities as well as assume greater responsibilities.

### *Rewriting the script of her life*

Hailing from a 11-member family with an annual income of Rs 36,000, the very idea of pursuing excellence in education would have been unthinkable for Chunni Bano some years ago. In 2013, the same Chunni Bano came to be known as the topper from Varanasi who had scored 82 per cent marks in her Class X exams and had decided to pursue further studies. A scholarship from the RGF had made all the difference in her life, adding the much needed encouragement to her hard work, making it possible for her family to experience some happiness at last. So much so that her parents vowed that they would provide all possible support to their daughter in her future education. They have recognised the burning desire in their daughter's heart, which has the power to lift her family from a life of deprivation.



### *Priyanka Chaudhary*



For as long as she can remember, Priyanka Chaudhary has seen her parents labour hard for a living and still find it difficult to make ends meet. For this girl, who lives in a backward area of Varanasi District, poverty has been a constant, and dreams of studying all the way up to Class XII were just that - dreams. However, with the RGF stepping in to support her with a scholarship, life took on an encouraging hue. Priyanka's desire to excel brought her 80 per cent marks in her Class X exam in 2013. Her parents admit that they would not have been able to make her study on their own since their six-member family barely managed to get by. Today, their heart swells with pride when they see their daughter attend school as a Class XI scholar pursuing Humanities, with just one more year to go for finishing school.

### *Fledgling flight*

There was a time when the idea of regularly attending school seemed like an insurmountable task, and all subjects seemed daunting to Zehra. The mind of this girl, who lives in Rae Bareilly, was much too preoccupied by her family's vulnerable situation: her father did not keep too well, and her mother who was the sole bread earner for the six-member family, could barely make ends meet. In such a situation, pursuing the unencumbered life of a student seemed like a fantasy. Zehra could not complete her assignments on time and often skipped school; there was no money to buy notebooks or pens. But once she was selected for a scholarship by the RGF, Zehra turned her life around. In Class X now, her grades in school have also improved. Moreover, her mother tries her best to attend the parent meetings regularly, for she wants her daughter to

finish school and then do further studies or acquire some vocational skill. Zehra is much more confident about herself, which makes her reach out to others. For instance, she tries to help the younger children in her community by teaching them in her free time.

## Samangan

In 2012-13, the Foundation took an important decision to revisit the countrywide library programme it had initiated in 1993. The initial purpose of the libraries, which had grown to a total of 1444 libraries across 22 states, with 1344 in rural areas, had been to make available material for a newly literate audience. But now the needs of the community were changing and the RGF felt that it was time to evolve flexible new library models to address new realities, as well as improve the quality of the existing libraries.



Meeting to discuss about Samangan in Manupally GP, Boudh district, Orissa

## *An audit of the library programme*

To get a sense of changing realities the Foundation conducted a review of the library programme in the months of June and July 2012. The objective of the study was to:

- \_\_\_ Assess the impact of the libraries set up by the Foundation in the communities;
- \_\_\_ Review key aspects of the programme to gather feedback on their relevance and applicability;
- \_\_\_ Assess the impact of the collaboration between the RGF and partners on each other; and
- \_\_\_ Develop a strategy for the way forward.

For the purpose of data collection:

- \_\_\_ 75 partner organisations were contacted, out of which nine cited closure as reasons for non-participation in the study;
- \_\_\_ Around 121 libraries from 66 organisations were visited ;
- \_\_\_ The basic data was collected from about 200 libraries through correspondence, which included both functional and non-functional libraries; and
- \_\_\_ Group discussions and individual interviews were conducted with around 918 individuals.

The review revealed that:

- \_\_\_ 69 per cent of the organisation representatives, 67 per cent of the librarians and 33 per cent of the community groups felt that children were the main beneficiaries;
- \_\_\_ 61 per cent of the libraries were located centrally in the villages and were accessible to all community members;
- \_\_\_ 31 per cent of the organisation representatives and 48 per cent of the community groups said the members paid a fee of less than Rs. 5; a majority of members were literate males, relatives of the librarian or village elders;
- \_\_\_ The number of daily users stayed between 10 and 20;
- \_\_\_ Librarians required training, especially with regard to management of the library;
- \_\_\_ That the community requires more books than the usual stock ranging from 300 to 500, as well as access to newspapers and better facilities;
- \_\_\_ Representatives of 61 per cent of the organisations said that the library committees played an active role, a claim that was supported by only 33 per cent of the librarians who stated that the library committee members visited the library merely once a month; and
- \_\_\_ The role of the library committee needs to be more sharply delineated – for the librarians, community and organisation.

Questions about the functions of the library committee elicited the response that they were responsible for:

- \_\_\_ Maintaining and managing the library;
- \_\_\_ Taking care of books;
- \_\_\_ Buying new books;
- \_\_\_ Organising meetings;
- \_\_\_ Helping organise events;
- \_\_\_ Giving suggestions on how to improve the library;
- \_\_\_ Giving donations for maintenance; and
- \_\_\_ Attending meetings organised for improving the library.

As to the way forward, the review indicated that there was a need to:

- \_\_\_ Strengthen the process of selection of partners for setting up libraries;
- \_\_\_ Integrate the programme gradually with the high school aspects of the Transform Schools programme;
- \_\_\_ Train partner representatives for a better understanding of learning and library initiatives;
- \_\_\_ Increase the number and variety of books in each library;
- \_\_\_ Orient the library committee members on how to contribute to the library;

- 
- \_\_\_ Develop libraries as resource centres - a lending library that is also a reading room and a space for interaction; and
  - \_\_\_ Provide training support to librarians in a manner that the libraries were able to sustain community participation during the grant period and in the post-grant period.

Following this intensive phase of stock-taking, the RGF developed the idea of Samangans or equal opportunity centres where the youth could come together in a common, and equal space to understand issues of mutual interest or concern, forge friendships, and foster a proactive community environment. The idea was that the Samangans would serve as lively learning and cultural spaces for young people in rural and low-income areas across 10 states. If set up in local community spaces such as samudaya bhavans (community halls) or gram panchayats, the Samangans had the potential to generate dialogue and interactive programmes. The RGF hoped that these resource centres would gradually be integrated into a high school or the PRI system to function with the support of the GPs.

Intensive visits were organised in eight states for an assessment of the needs of rural youth, and to identify potential partners and GPs who would get involved in the planning of Samangan centres. Organisations with considerable experience in community development and youth empowerment were identified in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal.



# Teacher Empowerment Programme

- \_\_\_ Action Research on the District Institute of Education and Training
- \_\_\_ A Training Management System for Secondary School Teachers of Mizoram
- \_\_\_ Engagement with MHRD
- \_\_\_ Initiatives in Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland



Jorhat, Titabhor DIET

The RGF has identified Teacher Empowerment as one of its core areas of work for improving the quality of education being offered in India. It is now widely recognised that the ethos of a learning space or a classroom is defined and set by the worldview of the teacher:

- \_\_\_ Her perspective on how children learn;
- \_\_\_ Her understanding of the varied socio-cultural contexts that the children come from;
- \_\_\_ The degree of respect for diversity and individual differences in her classroom; and
- \_\_\_ Most importantly, the way she perceives her own self.

This further determines the approach that a teacher takes to communicate course content to a group of learners. In this context, what assumes significance is the manner in which teachers are encouraged and supported to build on their learning in order to negotiate varied classroom settings. Hence teacher empowerment is a key process that prepares a teacher to appropriately locate, reflect, redefine and challenge her own worldview in the context of learners as well as the content.

The RGF's Teacher Empowerment Programme has been conceptualised with a view to supporting the various institutions connected to the teacher empowerment system in order to focus on quality in their programmes and processes. The basic idea is to help the existing teacher education system function more effectively through direct and indirect interventions.

In 2012-13, the Foundation initiated this programme for states in the north-eastern region by establishing a base in Assam's capital, Guwahati.

## Action Research on the District Institute of Education and Training

One of the first steps taken by the Foundation was to initiate research on the manner in which the country-wide stipulation of elementary school teachers requiring a Diploma in Elementary Education (D. El. Ed) was being implemented by the District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) in Titabor, in Jorhat district of Assam.

The D.El.Ed is conducted through the government run DIETs in Assam, where only 18 of the state's 27 districts have a DIET. The process for establishing DIETs in other districts has also been initiated.

The Foundation identified other issues that needed to be addressed. For instance, in 2010-11, Assam's State Council for Education Research and Training (SCERT) revised the curriculum of the two year long D.El.Ed programme, largely basing it on the National Council for Teacher Education's (NCTE) model curriculum and structuring it into four semesters of six months each.

In general the curriculum is expected to prepare teachers who can follow the principles and practices indicated in the National Curriculum Framework, 2005, to facilitate students in designing their learning based on their experiences. This is a significant departure from the conventional system where the teacher was expected to be a repository of knowledge who transmitted the same to students.

It was observed that since all the faculty members of DIETs were not fully conversant with the changes brought about by this revision, in terms of content, pedagogy and assessment, it was important to introduce them to the various dimensions of the same. Another factor that added to the under-preparedness of the faculty was the fact that the D. El.ED teacher education programme had been suspended in Assam for the last 10 years due to legal issues. Hence the RGF decided to initiate an action research to identify appropriate practices and processes for conducting the revised programme.

The Titabor DIET, one of the oldest teacher education institutions in the state, has grown to be one of the more progressive DIETs in Assam. This has been largely due to the efforts of the DIET faculty and the Principal, Mr. Uttam Kumar Bordoloi, who had initiated in 2008 a school improvement programme in around 100 primary schools in the district. In the Titabor DIET, the Foundation found a reflective partner willing to explore various innovations in conducting the D. El. Ed programme.

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To begin with, the RGF team considered it important to understand the trainee teachers at the time of entry to the D. El Ed Programme. This was done through a mix of quantitative data as well as by observing the students in different settings. Once this process was completed, the faculty worked on developing course outlines for the topics allotted to them. This was particularly important as many concepts had been introduced in the curriculum for the first time.

Subsequently, the faculty was encouraged to explore diverse pedagogical approaches in the classes. All of this was done through a series of intensive workshops and deliberations with the teacher educators, over several visits to the DIET.

Though it was too early to discern any visible impact on the trainee teachers, it can be said that the understanding of teachers regarding the curriculum as a whole, and of their respective responsibilities, was enhanced. Consequently, the preparation of teacher educators has also become rigorous. These early signs have encouraged the Foundation to continue the process of experimentation further.

## A Training Management System for Secondary School Teachers of Mizoram

The Institute of Advanced Study in Education (IASE), Aizawl, is mandated to conduct in-service training of all secondary school teachers in the state of Mizoram. The IASE sought the support of the Foundation to evolve an ability-based management system for teacher training. This system would enable the IASE and the Department of Education, Mizoram, to identify the training needs of secondary school teachers more effectively.

A training needs assessment system was designed by the RGF team, based on a 'teacher abilities framework'. This system is expected to assess the teachers against aspects of what the teachers are expected to do, encapsulated in the teacher abilities framework. This is a two-step process where the teacher carries out a self-assessment exercise, which is further refined by the school principal. Based on the training needs identified by the teachers at the school level, the exercise would be consolidated at the block and district levels to optimise resources and design training programmes that truly reflect teachers' requirements.

A pilot was launched in Kolasib District and a workshop conducted in collaboration with the District Education Officer to orient both principals and teachers to the process. The response of the principals and teachers was diverse. While some felt that the system was useful and would be helpful to them, others were apprehensive about being slotted as deficient in certain abilities. A clearer picture would emerge only after an analysis of the findings of the pilot.



Jorhat, Titabhor DIET

RGF's work in the state included giving inputs to the Mizoram Board of School Education with regard to a revision of the curriculum of the elementary teacher education programme in the state.

## Engagement with MHRD

A workshop on the status of teacher education in the north-eastern states was organised in Guwahati by the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). Those invited to be a part of the workshop included representatives from the Department of Education, the SSA and the SCERTs from all eight north-eastern states, to inform them about various policy developments regarding teacher education and to discuss the way forward.

The Foundation facilitated the discussions around the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) and Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE); and

The RGF was invited to be part of a Joint Review Mission on the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Teacher Education for the state of Assam, constituted by the MHRD. The mandate of the Joint Review Mission was to review the extent to which revisions in the scheme - a substantial expansion of its scope as well allocation - had been implemented, and to support the states in aspects that could be addressed through the scheme in future, such as research and training, among others.

The joint review submitted its report to the MHRD as well as the state during the year.



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## Initiatives in Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland

In 2012-13, the RGF was involved in a series of other initiatives for the north-eastern region. These included:

- Providing support to the SSA Meghalaya in developing a training module for head teachers through consultations and workshops;
- Providing inputs to the SCERT, Manipur, for developing a five-year perspective plan for the revised Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Teacher Education as well as facilitating a planning meeting of the principals of all the DIETs in Manipur to help them develop appropriate perspective plans under the scheme;
- An exploratory visit to the SCERT, Nagaland to understand the framework of the programmes being conducted.

# Natural Resources Management

- \_\_\_ Improving Livelihoods and Increasing Resilience  
of Vulnerable Communities
- \_\_\_ School Education Programme
- \_\_\_ Interventions to Improve Mother and Child Health



Gram Gaurav Sansthan, Rajasthan

In 2012-13, the Foundation supported its partner organisation, Gram Gaurav Sansthan, in the implementation of a project – Improving Livelihoods and Increasing Resilience of Vulnerable Communities – in 74 villages located in the Dang region spread across Rajasthan's Karauli and Dholpur districts. The project's objective was to intensify the activities initiated in the region by the RGF in previous years. The major focus of the project was on helping the local community:

- \_\_\_ Augment their water resources;
- \_\_\_ Scale up soil conservation activity;
- \_\_\_ Implement an appropriate intervention to enhance agricultural production in the project villages; and
- \_\_\_ Improve the educational and health standard in the targeted villages.

### Enhancing Productivity in a Difficult Terrain

The Dang region, which is close to the Rajasthan-Madhya Pradesh border, runs north-south, with the Chambal River stretching from Dholpur in the north to Sawai Madhopur District in the South. The Dang is a highly undulating plateau region which drains into the Chambal through steep gorges. The villages, mostly located on the flat top of the plateau, deep inside the forest, are largely scattered. As a result the villages are deprived of fundamental services like health, education, roads, electricity and drinking water, among others.

The overall goal of the project was to improve the productivity of the community's natural resources, develop the capacities of the partner community to enhance its agricultural production and establish a robust network of specialised organisations to improve school education and health standards in the project villages. To achieve this overall goal, the project aimed to:

- \_\_\_ Improve the food security of 960 families identified across the 74 villages;
- \_\_\_ Augment land and water resources in the 74 targeted villages;
- \_\_\_ Enhance agricultural productivity in 50 villages;
- \_\_\_ Help regenerate the base flow of rivers Barkheda and Kalisil and the local biodiversity around them;
- \_\_\_ Develop the institutional base of the partner community; and
- \_\_\_ Improve educational and health services in the targeted villages.

### *Intervention Focus*

The major focus was on:

- \_\_\_ Supporting the construction of water and soil harvesting structures such as the pokhar and the pagara;
- \_\_\_ Organising trainings for the community, focusing on a systematic rice intensification (SRI), a systematic wheat intensification (SWI) techniques, as well as community-based seed management. Farmers were encouraged to adopt these technique- for instance, the SRI initiative is a low water and labour intensive, organic method that uses younger seedlings singly spaced and typically hand weeded; and
- \_\_\_ Interventions to improve the health and education standard of the targeted villages.

The participation of the community was fundamental at every step of the project facilitating a sense of ownership - be it the sensitive task of selecting beneficiary families, appropriate project sites or the community's contribution to the cost of the project.

### *Construction of water harvesting structures*

With regard to the construction of water harvesting structures (WHS) and wasteland development:

- \_\_\_ 31 WHS were planned for 2012-13 out of which 28 were constructed; work on three sites was deferred because of a lack of consensus in the community, among others. While the WHS structures benefitted a group of families, for the



purpose of wasteland development families were selected on an individual level;

Care was taken to ensure that the selection process of beneficiaries was more inclusive and pro-poor, reaching out to the most vulnerable families; and

The community's contribution reached almost 41 per cent of the total investment in project, with Gram Gaurav contributing 59 per cent. For the community work, entire villages contributed money, whereas for work benefitting groups or individual families contributions came in the form of labour and material.

Below are the tables showing the details of the constructed structures:

|                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| No. of WHS Constructed  | 28                            |
| No. of Villages Covered | 19                            |
| No. of Gram Panchayat   | 11                            |
| No. of Panchayat Samiti | 3 (Sapotra, Karauli & Baseri) |
| No. of Districts        | 2 (Karauli & Dholpur)         |
| No. of Families Covered | 194                           |

#### Ownership & use

| Ownership | No. | Use Pattern           | No. |
|-----------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| Community | 1   | Irrigation            | 5   |
| Group     | 19  | Irrigation & DW       | 11  |
| Private   | 8   | Wasteland Development | 12  |

#### Type of Structure

| Type of Structure | No.       |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Anicut            | 1         |
| Paqara            | 12        |
| Pokhar            | 15        |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>28</b> |

#### Cost details

| Expenses               | Amount         | % of Total Cost | Family Share (Rs.) |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| RGF Contribution       | 2789310        | 59              | 14378              |
| Community Contribution | 1967407        | 41              | 10141              |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>4756717</b> | <b>100</b>      | <b>24519</b>       |

#### Families covered

| Type of the Family                           | No. of Families |
|--|-----------------|
| Widow/Women headed                           | 1               |
| Disabled                                     | 2               |
| Poor (BPL & Marginal non-arable land holder) | 25              |



Impact on agricultural production

During the year:

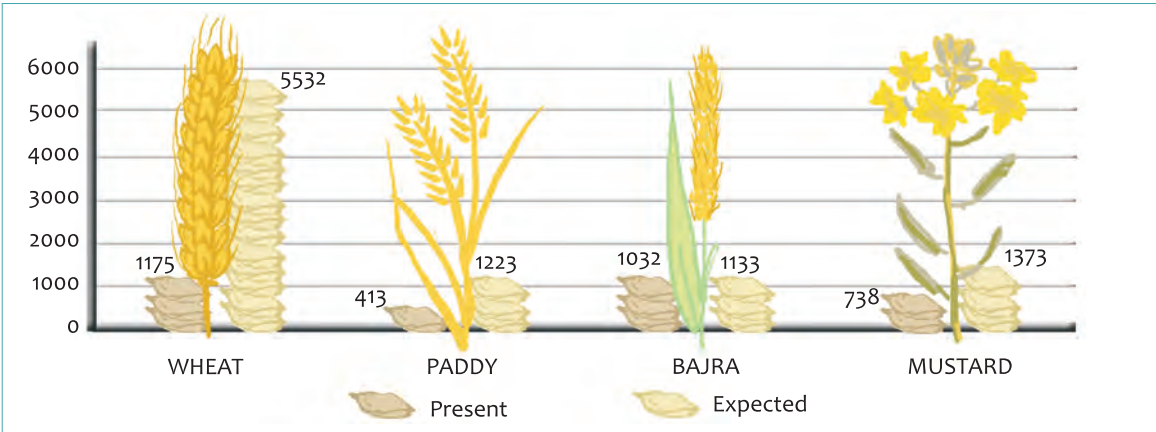
— Nine out of the 28 WHS received their first rain, leading to a considerable harvest. Among all the anticipated benefits of the project, water harvesting is the most significant for the stakeholders, the farming community in particular. For instance, paddy production, which used to be around 1.5 -2 quintal/bigha earlier, was now expected to increase by 6-7 quintal/bigha. Similarly, wheat was cultivated for the first time after the construction of WHS, with a highly satisfactory result. A further increase was anticipated in paddy and wheat production after the next monsoon.



Below is the chart showing details of the anticipated enhancement in agriculture production:

| Agriculture Production | Paddy | Wheat | Mustard | Bajra |
|------------------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|
| Production Before (qt) | 413   | 1175  | 738     | 1032  |
| Production After (qt)  | 1,223 | 5,532 | 1,373   | 1,133 |
| Inc / (Dec)            | 810   | 4357  | 635     | 101   |
| % Inc / (Dec)          | 196   | 371   | 86      | 10    |

(Production in quintals)



### *Impact on land resources*

The project was also expected to have a significant impact on land resources. Among the most eagerly anticipated benefits was:

- The transformation of wasteland into arable land that could be used for double cropping. It was anticipated that 90 per cent of the land coming under the intervention area would be converted with an assured facility of irrigation.

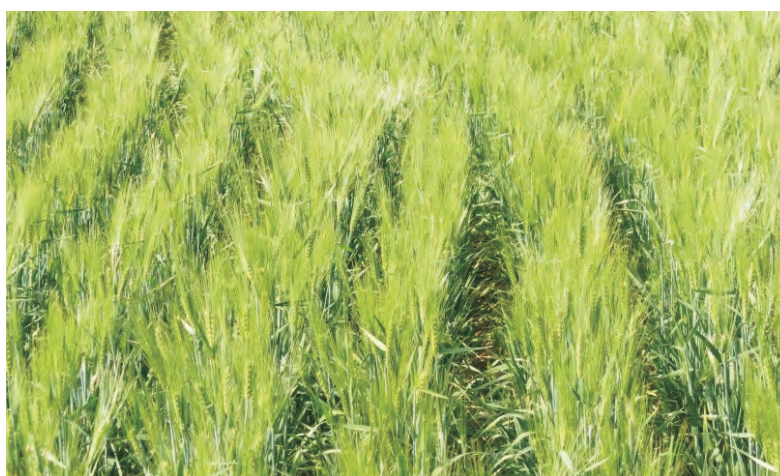
Table showing impact on land resources:

| Land Type (in bigha) | Before        | After   |
|----------------------|---------------|---|
| Irrigated            | 177.5         | Out of total 1010.5 bigha of land 902.5 bigha is now irrigated and out of 325 bigha of waste land 316.5 bigha has been converted into arable land |
| Unirrigated          | 508           |   |
| Waste                | 325           |   |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>1010.5</b> |   |

### *Training farmers on systematic rice and wheat intensification*

In order to make the most of the increase in water availability, and to improve crop productivity, systematic SRI and SWI techniques were introduced in the project villages:

- A two-day training for farmers on SRI was organised at the Gram Gaurav office in Kaila Devi in Karauli District, on June 14-15, 2012. The training was attended by 98 farmers from 30 villages. The resource person for this was invited from the Dehradun-based Green Ways Services:



- o The first day of the training focused on the conceptual framework of SRI and SWI, followed by interactive sessions. The doubts of farmers regarding the quantity of seed required, the sowing method and weed and water management were clarified by the subject expert; and
- o The second day focused more on the practical aspects of the methodology, with a demonstration of seed selection, treatment, sowing method, weeder operation, and ways of making organic pesticide and manure.

following the training, interested farmers were identified along with sources of procurement of the best available seed. About 227 kg of seed was procured from Sawai Madhopur, from farmers who had cultivated the Sugandha 1121 rice variety. The seed was distributed to 88 farmers and planted in 113 bigha of irrigated land. Apart from this one weeder and one marker was provided to each village. During the time of sowing the project staff provided onsite technical support; and

For the wheat crop also, the project team provided onsite technical support to the farmers in selecting the best seed, treating it before sowing and as well as in the method of sowing. About 25 farmers from eight villages were covered by the SWI initiative, and 26 bigha of land was cultivated under the SWI technique.

Below is the table showing the coverage of SRI and SWI in the project area:

| Name of the Crop | No. of Farmers | No. of villages | Land in (Bigha) | Seed Distribution (Kg) | Seed Treatment (Kg) |
|------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| SRI (Paddy)      | 88             | 18              | 113             | 227                    | 227                 |
| SWI (Wheat)      | 25             | 8               | 26              | --                     | 896                 |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>113</b>     | <b>26</b>       | <b>139</b>      | <b>227</b>             | <b>1123</b>         |

### *Community-based seed management*

The project proposed to establish a community-based seed management system in the project area, covering 50 targeted villages. The aim of the intervention was to develop the resources and capacities of the partner community, so that the community could ensure a sustained supply of local seeds in their respective villages. Several steps were taken towards this:

To help the community understand the operational management of seed banks a two-day exposure tour of project and community members to Navdanya, Dehradun, was organised in December 2012. The visit to Navdanya, known for its work on seed conservation, proved to be an illuminating experience for the 14-member group; and

Soon after the exposure visit, a brief consultation was held with the community members following which a decision was made to create three seed banks in three different locations. These seed banks would form a corpus for a continuous supply of seeds in the adjoining villages. The seed banks were expected to play a significant role in conserving indigenous varieties of local seeds that are on the verge of extinction;

During the year, work on two seed banks





was completed in the villages of Shayampur Pator and Ghasingpura. In Shayampur Pator, the seed bank was set up on community land with the GP's permission. In Ghasingpura, owing to the non-availability of suitable community land, the bank was created on land donated by a person in the village. It was anticipated that the two seed banks would start functioning by the next monsoon. Work on the third seed bank in village Khajura was in progress.

The progress of the work on seed banks was as follows:

| Name of the village | Name of the cluster | Land                     | Progress                | Anticipated operational date |
|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Shayampur Pator     | Shayampur           | Community                | Physical work completed | June 2013                    |
| Ghasingpura         | Kaila Devi          | Donated by Private owner | Physical work completed | June 2013                    |
| Khajura             | Khajura             | Community                | Under progress          | September 2013               |

## School Education Programme

In the course of its work in the Dang region the Foundation had realised that educational facilities were virtually non-existent in many a project village owing to the difficult terrain in which they were located. The schools were far away at a distance of 4-5 kilometres and children usually dropped out because of this reason. The government schools, too, were not in a good condition faced as they were with teacher absenteeism.



In 2012-13, several significant steps were taken:

- Taking heed of the community's long-standing demand for access to better education, Gram Gaurav started operating a community school each in six villages. A total of 184 children were enrolled in the schools, which followed a learning approach based on mixed age groups. These schools are running on multi grade and multi-level (MGML) learning methodology; and
- A one-day teachers' refresher training was organised in August 2012, followed by an interactive session through which the various issues of teachers were discussed. Among other things, ways to improve the community's participation were debated. It was decided that the teachers would hold a meeting in the village every fortnight to share the progress of the children with their parents.

Following are the details of the school :

| S. No.       | Name of the Village | No. of Enrolled Children |           |            |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
|              |                     | Boys                     | Girls     | Total      |
| 1            | Ghasinghpura        | 18                       | 17        | 35         |
| 2            | Rasilpura           | 12                       | 16        | 28         |
| 3            | Dhodhaki            | 20                       | 15        | 35         |
| 4            | Richraki            | 18                       | 6         | 24         |
| 5            | Patikapura          | 27                       | 6         | 33         |
| 6            | Gopalpura           | 18                       | 11        | 29         |
| <b>Total</b> |                     | <b>113</b>               | <b>71</b> | <b>184</b> |

## Interventions to promote the health of mother and child

In 2011-12, Gram Gaurav started a helpline to provide an ambulance service for pregnant women who needed emergency medical care in order to facilitate institutional deliveries. For a long time, women had suffered the after effects of living in a difficult terrain: due to the lack of any accessible health facility close by, pregnant woman had to be carried long distances on cots by their men folk. Many of them died due to lack of timely treatment and proper care.

In 2012-13:

- There were 41 instances of providing ambulance services and a total of 252 safe deliveries were facilitated in government hospitals. The covered families benefited by the provisions of the government's Janani Suraksha Scheme.

## A resource centre for the community

During the year:

- A decision was taken to construct a resource centre in Karauli District, which could be used for the purpose of conducting trainings and other capacity building events. Apart from trainings, this centre would also provide office space for Gram Gaurav;
- The centre has been functional from May 2013.





# Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies

- \_\_\_ Augmenting the Capacity of Political Leaders
- \_\_\_ Strengthening the Capacity of Social Movements to Impact Policy
- \_\_\_ Enhancing Public Awareness Towards Public Policy Challenges
- \_\_\_ Towards Strengthening the Institutional Framework and Systems
- \_\_\_ Towards Public Policy Innovations
- \_\_\_ Providing Policy Research Assistance to MPs
- \_\_\_ Starting a Weekly Newsletter

Over the years, the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies (RGICS) has evolved into a unique space, having made significant contributions in the domain of public policy. In the present-day context, the RGICS has chosen to address what in its view is the biggest challenge facing the nation today - namely, the way in which a policy is formulated. This in turn raises a number of complex issues such as the following:

- \_\_\_ Who has a voice by right in the policy making process;
- \_\_\_ How is the voice of the people to be channelled; and
- \_\_\_ How a sound policy outcome can be ascertained.

Hence the RGICS's main focus in 2012-13 was to strengthen the efforts it began two years ago to work toward democratising the process of public policy. It aims to do so by:

- \_\_\_ Strengthening the capacity of political leaders;
- \_\_\_ Strengthening the policy capacity of social movements;
- \_\_\_ Increasing the sensitivity of public officials towards democratisation of public policy;
- \_\_\_ Widening public awareness of public policy; and
- \_\_\_ Strengthening institutional frameworks and systems of public policy decision-making through public policy innovations.

The quality of any public policy rests on the following six safeguards:

- \_\_\_ The extent to which it is receptive to the voice of the people;
- \_\_\_ Technical soundness;
- \_\_\_ A consistent espousal of non-negotiable values and rights;
- \_\_\_ Clear and measurable goals and policy objectives;
- \_\_\_ A transparent and accountable decision making process; and
- \_\_\_ A sound implementation framework.

In 2012-13, the RGICS organised several seminars, workshops, conferences and brainstorming sessions on significant social, political and economic issues facing the nation. Aided by its vibrant academic environment and a team of motivated individuals with considerable expertise in domains like economics, sociology, political science and law, the RGICS produced high quality briefs, reports, research papers and newsletters, among others, throughout the year.

## Augmenting the Capacity of Political Leaders

- \_\_\_ Several briefings for Members of Parliament (MPs) were prepared by the RGICS on challenging issues such as Demand for Grants, Finance Bills, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) report on coal allocation, the problem of black money, SC/ST reservation in the



Promotions Bill, the Lokpal Bill, issues of social justice, the economic situation in India, and the Union Budget 2012-2013 (refer to Annex 1 for a detailed list of briefings prepared during the year);

— A series of monthly seminars were organised for members of youth organisations on significant socio-economic issues such as the emerging Indian economy, the National

Food Security Bill, the political economy of India, reservations in promotion for SC/ST candidates, and issues of violence against women; and

— The RGICS assisted a group of youth organisations through a series of more than 10 meetings on developing a national students' movement on quality and equality of education. Meetings were organised as a mandate to enhance knowledge of various student and youth representations on various such issues.



## Strengthening the Capacity of Social Movements to Impact Policy

— The RGICS organised national seminars in Delhi and Bangalore on the theme of 'Strengthening the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act' for NGO representatives from across the country;

— A series of meetings were organised with the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights on strengthening the law against manual scavenging;

— The RGICS assisted the Delhi-based Lawyers' Collective on evaluating the effectiveness of the Protection of Woman Against Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) and the Justice Verma Committee on Violence Against Women; and

— A consultative workshop on the theme of 'Women's access to justice' was organised with a view to addressing issues related to women's legal rights and access to justice. This was organised in collaboration with Prof. Roop Rekha Verma, former Vice-Chancellor, Head of the Philosophy Department, Lucknow University, and founder secretary of Saajhi Duniya, a social organisation which deals with gender-based issues. It was also attended by many NGOs, CSOs and academicians.

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## Enhancing Public Awareness and Sensitivity of Public Officials Towards Public Policy Challenges

- The organisation emerged as a platform to disseminate knowledge on public policy issues and initiated interactive sessions with students from the New York University as well as the University of Delhi.
- The Institute also played a significant role in providing conceptual and information inputs to government officials on important areas including education reform, the Lokpal Legislation, reform of the Corruption Act, to name a few.

## Towards Strengthening the Institutional Framework and Systems for Public Policy Decision making

- Several public consultations on electoral reforms were organised by the RGICS. These consultations engaged a large number of civil society representatives and experts;
- Several workshops were organised on important issues like genetically modified food, protection of the tiger and forest conservation;
- The RGICS organised a consultation meeting to discuss the issue of state policy vis-à-vis folk art traditions, in view of their increasing marginalisation in the contemporary Indian scenario of art and culture. Among others, the meeting was attended by Prof. Jyotindra Jain, Director, Crafts Museum, New Delhi; Dr Molly Kaushal, Head, Janapada Sampada, the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi; Prof. Roma Chatterji, visiting ICCR chair; Prof. Parul Mukherji, former Dean, School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University.
- A two-day conference was organised to build on the brainstorming sessions on the theme of 'Balanced regional development in India' that took place in 2011, attended by the authors of papers as well as by political leaders;
- As an extension of the 2011 brainstorming session on internal migration in contemporary India, a research project, 'Internal migration in India', was initiated. A two day conference on the research project was organised during which subject experts presented papers;
- A brainstorming session followed by a midterm review meeting in 2012 took place on the theme of 'Regionalism: Issues and Concerns'. The findings of the project were shared by the researchers at a conference in 2013, where issues of Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Northeast India and Jammu Kashmir were discussed;
- The RGICS organised brainstorming sessions on the themes of 'Caste in contemporary India: ideas, institutions, practices and policies', 'Rights-Based Approach', and 'Left-wing extremism'. Projects based on these topics were initiated;
- the session on the project, 'Caste in contemporary India: ideas, institutions, practices and policies' identified the focal areas of the research project. While there was a consensus among academicians on the existence of caste, and that caste matters, there was a view that the ways in which caste operates



today bears revisiting. It was decided to examine the principles underlying policies and the state's response to the caste structure and politics constructed around it;

Meeting on a Rights-based approach: The meeting on a Rights-Based Approach (RBA) concluded that there should not be an attempt to homogenise the struggles of people, and that a new RBA was required, which would throw some light on the issues as well. It was decided to invite papers with a view to revisiting the concept of RBA. This would include defining the scope of the approach – individual versus collective, ideological, civil and political rights; the history of the RBA – the context of its emergence, and its impact on state policy, state and citizen, as well as an advancing market economy; and the positives and issues of the RBA;

Consultative workshop on 'Women's access to justice': Access to justice is to be understood as more than just financial ability or the ability to access the justice system. It implicitly consists of two components: that the legal-judicial system should be equally accessible to all irrespective of gender and caste, among others; moreover that these systems are seen as socially just. With regard to the attitude towards women in terms of violence, neglect and exploitation, one way of bringing about an improvement in the status of women is to bring about legal remedies, both in terms of laws and access to justice. One of the most important international human rights law document for the recognition of women's rights is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The aim of the workshop was to examine all these aspects and suggest ways forward.

Based on an Advisory Group meeting on 'Response to insurgency', a research project followed by a conference on 'Response to insurgency in Northeast India' was organised; and

A two-day brainstorming and workshop event was organised on the theme of 'Mapping the adverse consequences of sex selection and gender imbalance: findings and policy implication'.



## Towards Public Policy Innovations

Two talks under the Cutting Edge Series Programme of the RGICS were organised on the themes of 'Aerial robot swarms – technology that will shape the future' and

'Right top: Cutting Edge talk, 'Aerial robot swarms: technology that will shape the future' with Prof. Vijay Kumar

Right bottom: 'State, culture and human imagination' with Prof. Ashis Nandy and Prof. Hamid Dabashi.



'The future of the internet – 1.2 billion empowered Indians'. These events were attended in large numbers by students, social organisations and interested MPs; and

— A public conversation on 'State, culture and human imagination' was held between Prof. Ashis Nandy, well-known Indian political psychologist, and former Director, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi, and Prof. Hamid Dabashi, Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, New York. This event elicited a very positive response from academia (refer to the events calendar for details in Annex 1)

## Providing Policy Research Assistance to MPs

The RGICS started the Rajiv Gandhi Research Assistants to Legislators (RG-RAL) programme in 2012. A team of eight young people were selected and trained to provide policy research assistance to MPs. This initiative helped the MPs access research assistance on various issues arising in legislative work such as:

— Preparing questions and other interventions in Parliament on policy matters, including committee work, through close interaction with various MPs;

— Analysing draft Bills presented to Parliament;

— Preparing background papers and briefings for MPs on key policy issues;

— Conducting briefings, seminars and consultative meetings with concerned stakeholders on contemporary issues; and

— Attempting to strengthen the political voice of neglected regions like Northeast India and marginalised communities by providing assistance in the form of research materials and attempting to bridge the knowledge gap.

## Starting a Weekly Newsletter

The RGICS started a weekly newsletter, 'Policy Watch' during the year. The newsletter was a compilation of articles from newspapers, journals, magazines, national and internal websites, covering domains like governance, science and technology, legal, social and economic affairs. As of March 2013, the RGICS had produced 23 issues of 'Policy Watch'.



## Annex 1: RGICS Events: April 2012-March 13

April 7, 2012

Brainstorming on 'Regionalism: Issues and Concerns': Principal Researcher, Prof. Bhupinder Zutshi, and six others participated in the brainstorming session to outline the scope and methodology of the project. It was decided to base the project on fieldwork reports so as to bring out regional perspectives more clearly. The regions earmarked for study included Jammu & Kashmir, Northeast India, Uttar Pradesh, and the Telangana issue.

April 30, 2012

Briefing for MPs on Demand for Grants (Urban Development)

May 1, 2012

Briefing for MPs on Demand for Grants (Home Affairs)

May 2, 2012

Briefing for MPs on Demand for Grants (Commerce)

May 4, 2012

Briefing for MPs on the Finance Bill

May 10, 2012

National Consultative Meeting on Amendment to SC/ST Atrocities Act

June 23, 2012

A brainstorming session was held for academicians to identify the key areas of the research project, 'Left-wing extremism'. It was decided to focus on the two important issues: justice and reconciliation, and enhancing tribal self governance.

June 20, 2012

Meetings on land reforms policy with Ekta Parishad.

Briefings organised for MPs on the Consultative Group of Ministry of Rural Development on the Land Acquisition Act.

July 16 to July 26, 2012

A 10-day training programme for Rajiv Gandhi - Research Assistants to Legislators (RG-RALs).

Twelve RG-RALs were selected after an exhaustive selection process. They were given an orientation in Parliamentary procedures and trained to handle research and writing methodology, write policy briefs/ summaries, analyse Bills, among others.

July 19, 2012

Students from the University of Birmingham had a meeting with RGF members and RG-RALS. About 12 students from the universities of Delhi and Birmingham visited the RGICS. They were briefed about ongoing projects on education. This was followed by a one hour meeting with the RGICS Fellows on their various research projects. The students had a very lively discussion with the RALS on various issues.

July 30, 2012

Strengthening the traditions of folk art: A consultation meeting was held to chalk out the main issues affecting folk art and folk artists. It was attended by academicians and practitioners of folk art. The discussion focused on the relationship of the state vis-à-vis culture.

August 7, 2012

State, Culture and Human Imagination: A public conversation between Prof. Ashis Nandy and Prof. Hamid Dabashi. This well-attended dialogue was also telecast online.

August 21, 2012

Briefing on the economic situation in India for MPs: MPs were briefed by the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission on the prevailing economic situation in India.

August 27, 2012

Briefing for MPs on CAG's performance audit of coal block allocation and augmentation of coal production 19.

August 27, 2012

Briefing on reservation in promotion

August 28, 2012

Seminar on social justice for youth organisations

September 3-5, 2012

Field visit to Mandsaur district, Madhya Pradesh, to interact with representatives of several SC community groups on the proposed amendments to the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act.

September 4, 2012

Briefing on social justice issues for MPs

September 12, 2012

Economic opportunities for marginalised communities in India: The first phase of a field trip was completed by a group of experts from the College of Social Work in Mumbai. The report would be finalised on the basis of this field survey.

September 18, 2012

Workshop on an Institutional Framework for Democratic Decision Making on Forests: Addressing the Democratic Deficit

September 30, 2012

Seminar on the economic Situation in India for youth organisations.

October 24, 2012

Seminar on the Politics of Economy of India for youth organisations.

October 29, 2012

Monthly seminar for youth organisations on the Politics of Economy of India

November 9-10, 2012

A workshop on 'Mapping the adverse consequences of sex selection and gender imbalance: Findings and policy implication' was organised at the RGICS and attended by various representatives including the researchers of RGICS.

November 12, 2012

Workshop on decision making on GM Food

November 24, 2012

Monthly seminar for youth organisations on the Economic situation in India.

December 2012 -Feb 2013

Series of meetings with youth organisations on developing a national students' movement on quality and equality of education.

April 2012- Feb 2013

A series of meetings on strengthening the law against manual scavenging

December 3, 2012

A briefing on FDI in retail was organised for political representatives.

December 17, 2012

Cutting Edge talk, 'Aerial robot Swarms: Technology that Will Shape the Future' by Prof. Vijay Kumar

December 25, 2012

Briefing for representatives of demonstrators on punishment for rape

January 7, 2013

A mid-term review meeting of the project, 'Regionalism: Issues and Concerns', was held at the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, the Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi. Experts reported their findings from the field visit and discussed scope of improvement.

January 22, 2013

One day seminar on 'Countering Violence against Women' was held.

January 29, 2013

Cutting edge talk event on the 'Future of the internet: 1.2.billion empowered Indians' by Vinton G. Cerf, Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist, Google

February 8-9, 2013

Conference on 'Balanced regional development: challenges and the way forward'. All the research papers were presented and discussed.

February 22-23, 2013

Conference on the research project "Internal migration in contemporary studies". Several research papers were presented.

February 26, 2013

Monthly Seminar on 'Countering Violence against women' was held.

March 1, 2013

Workshop on 'Response to insurgency in Northeast India' was organised by the RGICS and attended by authors of the project, academicians and political representatives.

March 6, 2013

Economic opportunities for marginalised communities in India: A follow-up meeting with a group of people from the Koli community was held. It was decided to conceptualise the next workshop on the issue of the rights of the fishing community in India.

March 8, 2013

Briefing on the 2012-13 Union Budget for MPs by the Finance Minister

March 20, 2013

A consultation meeting on electoral reforms was organised by the RGICS and attended by political representatives.



## Partners and Donors

Programme specific donations have been mentioned below. We would also like to acknowledge and thank individuals and organisations who have contributed to the Foundation through General Donations.

### List of partners - 2012-13

#### Decentralisation Education Governance

Prajayatna

#### INTERACT- Young Scholars Leadership Initiative

Aman Trust

#### Vidyagyan

Beti Foundation  
Children Emancipation Society  
Gyan Vigyan Samiti  
Human Welfare Association  
Lokmitra  
PSAUSSL  
SSN Trust  
Sabla  
SEWA  
Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra  
THE BRIDGE  
VISION

#### Village Library

AID India  
Gramin Vikas Sansthan  
Majlis-un-Nisa  
Shashwat Sahbhagi Sansthan  
Ibtada  
Vikramshila Education Resource Society

#### NRM

Gram Gaurav Sansthan

#### Educational Ecosystem Project

RGCT

#### Access to Opportunities

Aditya Vikram Birla Memorial Trust  
Ambuja Cements Ltd.  
Apeejay Trust  
Bharat Forge Ltd.  
DCM Shriram Consolidated Ltd.  
GAIL (India) Ltd.  
GVK Airport Foundation  
Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd.  
Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.  
Patton International Ltd.  
Pirojsha Godrej Foundation  
RP Infosystems Pvt. Ltd.  
State Bank of India  
Steel Authority of India Ltd.  
Tata Steel Ltd.  
THE BRIDGE  
UCO Bank

# Financials

## RAJIV GANDHI FOUNDATION BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31, 2013

| Particulars                                   | Schedule | As at<br>March 31, 2013<br>₹ | As at<br>March 31, 2012<br>₹ |
|---|----------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>SOURCES OF FUNDS</b>                       |          |                              |                              |
| Corpus fund                                   | 1        | 962,845,151                  | 862,038,307                  |
| Restricted fund<br>(Unutilised grant balance) |          | 8,456,799                    | 33,978,152                   |
| Income and expenditure Account                | 2        | 101,676,048                  | 156,645,898                  |
|   |          | <b>1,072,977,998</b>         | <b>1,052,662,357</b>         |
| <b>APPLICATION OF FUNDS</b>                   |          |                              |                              |
| Fixed assets                                  |          |                              |                              |
| Gross block                                   | 3        | 19,289,798                   | 25,535,856                   |
| Less: Depreciation and amortisation           |          | 14,636,603                   | 21,157,421                   |
| Net block                                     |          | <b>4,653,195</b>             | <b>4,378,435</b>             |
| Investments (at cost)                         | 4        | 1,011,074,582                | 1,005,329,260                |
| Current Assets, Loans and Advances            | 5        | 68,690,789                   | 52,782,668                   |
| Less: Current liabilities and Provisions      | 6        |                              |                              |
| Current liabilities                           |          | 8,525,427                    | 7,399,830                    |
| Provisions                                    |          | 2,915,141                    | 2,428,176                    |
|   |          | <b>11,440,568</b>            | <b>9,828,006</b>             |
| Net current assets                            |          | 57,250,221                   | 42,954,662                   |
|   |          | <b>1,072,977,998</b>         | <b>1,052,662,357</b>         |

Summary of significant accounting policies and notes to accounts 11  
The schedules referred to above form an integral part of the Balance Sheet

As per our report of even date attached  
For Haribhakti & Co.  
Chartered Accountants  
Firm Registration No.: 103523W

Raj Kumar Agarwal  
Partner  
Membership No. 74715

For and on behalf of  
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra  
Executive Trustee

Suman Dubey  
Trustee

Sonia Gandhi  
Chairperson

Place : New Delhi  
Date : September 26, 2013

Sandeep Anand  
Director-Finance

**RAJIV GANDHI FOUNDATION**  
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2013

| Particulars                     | Schedule | For the year ended<br>March 31, 2013<br>₹ | For the year ended<br>March 31, 2012<br>₹ |
|---------------------------------|----------|---|---|
| <b><u>INCOME</u></b>            |          |   |   |
| Income from investments         | 7        | 83,978,327                                | 72,427,458                                |
| Grants and donations            |          | 106,217,289                               | 68,852,786                                |
| Other income                    |          | 2,566,398                                 | 1,112,123                                 |
|                                 |          | <b>192,762,014</b>                        | <b>142,392,367</b>                        |
| <b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>       |          |   |   |
| Program implementation expenses | 8        | 125,847,057                               | 122,525,372                               |
| Administrative expenses         | 9        | 19,411,080                                | 16,130,888                                |
| Non cash expenditure            | 10       | 2,473,727                                 | 1,790,004                                 |
|                                 |          | <b>147,731,864</b>                        | <b>140,446,264</b>                        |
| <b>Surplus for the year</b>     |          | <b>45,030,150</b>                         | <b>1,946,103</b>                          |

Summary of significant accounting policies and notes to accounts 11  
The schedules referred to above form an integral part of Income and Expenditure Account

As per our report of even date attached  
For Haribhakti & Co.  
Chartered Accountants  
Firm Registration No.: 103523W

Raj Kumar Agarwal  
Partner  
Membership No. 74715

For and on behalf of  
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra  
Executive Trustee

Suman Dubey  
Trustee

Sonia Gandhi  
Chairperson

Place : New Delhi  
Date : September 26, 2013

Sandeep Anand  
Director-Finance











**T**he Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF) was established in 1991, to realize the vision of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. He dreamed of a modern India, secular, independent and progressive; a country that enshrines the democratic principle of equality, and blends progress with rich cultural traditions. This vision is the Foundation's mandate: to help create a peaceful modern nation with a just society, in which every Indian has the opportunity to fulfil his or her potential.

Since its inception, the RGF has worked on many wide-ranging issues, from literacy, health, disability, and empowerment of the underprivileged, to creating livelihoods, to natural resource management. With over two decades of rich experience in nation-wide grassroots developmental work, the Foundation now concentrates on an area we have come to understand as crucial: facilitating the transformation of India's education system. We see the engagement between the education system and its larger ecology as a catalyst of social transformation. We believe that to effect fundamental social changes, the discourse around education must shift from reformation to transformation.

The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation places the self-development of a child at the heart of education. Our vision is to transform India's education system, so that a child who enters it, comes out of it an empowered citizen with an analytical and creative mind, who upholds constitutional and humanitarian values of equality, secularism, tolerance, integrity and dignity, and who has access to equal opportunity.

**Rajiv Gandhi Foundation**  
Jawahar Bhavan,  
Dr. Rajendra Prasad Road,  
New Delhi 100001

Tel: 011-237 55117, 233 12456

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Website: [www.rgfindia.com](http://www.rgfindia.com)