CHAPTER 5

Education and Literacy

Programme Vision

Our mission is to support projects to –

- *Sustain literacy skills*
- *Foster quality in education*
- *Encourage education of girls, tribals and minorities*
- *Promote low cost good quality children's literature*

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2006 – 2007

VILLAGE & SLUM LIBRARIES

- 89 new libraries established in 7 states under the Village Library programme (17 with grants from Good Gifts, U.K), taking the total to 1411 libraries in 22 states. On going support to 246 libraries.
- 68 book grants and 90 newspaper grants with grants from Good Gifts, UK
- Development of modules for training librarians in educational activities with children; 9 trainings conducted for librarians

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Kashmir Initiative for Quality Education

- A meeting entitled ' Towards Child Centred Quality Education in J&K' organised in Jammu to discuss the findings of the studies undertaken in collaboration with MHRD and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, J&K.
- Series of workshops conducted on 'Discovering Srinagar' exploring culture and history, life style, built heritage, art and craft, flora and fauna of Srinagar
- Two days writers' workshop organised with the Department of Kashmiri, University of Kashmir to encourage young writers
- Instituted 20 Awards for Creative Writing in Kashmiri, Urdu, English between the age group of 16 to 35 years of age
- Children's Film Festival organized in Srinagar. 10 national and international award winning films screened.

Improved Learning Environment in Schools: Building as a Learning Aid (BaLA)

- Promotion of child friendly school building designs for government elementary schools with SSA in many states
- Orientation and training of engineers and teachers for participatory school design development on a pilot basis in 14 districts of Karnataka and 6 districts of Jammu & Kashmir

Books for Children

- 26 books in Hindi and five other languages printed for early readers.
- Development of a user-friendly database on children's literature with validated information on 710 books in Hindi.

Area focussed village libraries pilot programme

- Ten library resource centres created each with more than 1000 books, educational, sports and science material, and large number of periodicals.
- Activities with children and adolescents like story telling, creative writing workshops, environment awareness, craft, popular science, sports, recreation and adventure
- Non-formal education and life skills training for out of school children and adolescents
- Capacity Building training of village coordinators, supervisor and volunteers

Integrated development programme in Jamwa Ramgarh

- Twelve educational centres established in 12 villages across three panchayats
- Three Nodal Centres established in the three panchayats of Raiser, Thalli and Neemla
- Remedial classes for children studying in classes 2 –3 to help school going children with learning difficulties.
- Bridge classes started for children dropped out of school
- Regular training and capacity building for the teachers, field staff and volunteers

EDUCATION OF MUSLIM GIRLS

- Project EDGE, for education and vocational training of 388 adolescent Muslim girls, in Hyderabad old city
- Project Darakht-e-Ilm in slums of Jogeshwari in Mumbai, for education of Muslim girls and literacy for women. A community centre, library and legal aid cell also established .
- Project VISION for Muslim weaver community in Naki Ghat area of Varanasi for education, child rights and awareness issues such as health, immunization, birth registration etc.

Our Constitution fathers did not intend that we just set up hovels, put students there, give untrained teachers, give them bad textbooks, no playgrounds and say, we have complied with Article 45 and primary education is expanding... They meant that real education should be given to our children between the ages of 6 and 14.

Shri M.C. Chagla, Education Minister, 1961

Wall mural at Anegundi village library, Karnataka

Education and Literacy

VILLAGE AND SLUM LIBRARY PROJECT

The Foundation has nurtured a countrywide village library programme over the last thirteen years. It is one of our most widely recognized and popular programmes, which is focussed on improving the quality of education for children in marginalized communities and expanding the learning capacity of people.

The project has gained popularity internationally also and receives grants from Good Gifts, a U.K charity.

New libraries in 2006-2007

In 2006-2007, 89 new libraries were established by RGF, including 72 new village libraries in 7 states and 17 Good Gifts libraries in 4 states. Typically, each library is supported for 2 or 3 years.

- 25 in Orissa: 10 with Gram Vikas in Ganjam district; and 15 with SRUTI in Dhenkanal, Rayagada, Sundergarh and Jharsuguda districts
- 5 in Uttar Pradesh with Action India in Hapur district;
- 12 in Andhra Pradesh with Sahayog Community Coordination Network in Viskakhapatnam district
- 11 in West Bengal with Street Survivors-Stree Shakti in Murshidabad district
- 10 in Jharkhand with Manthan in Ranchi district
- 5 in Uttarakhand with Foundation for Development Research and Action in Dehradun district
- 4 in Assam with Indian Council for Child Welfare in Kamrup district
- 17 Good Gifts libraries in 4 states: 10 in Jodhpur district, Rajasthan with Foundation for Education & Development; 4 in Orissa with Gram Vikas; 2 in Koppal district, Karnataka with The Kishkinda Trust; and 1 in Bokaro district with Jan Chetna Manch Bokaro

NEW LIBRARIES

New library in Assam

New library in Murshidabad, West Bengal

A meeting with children at a village library in Jodhpur, Rajasthan

We also continued the support for 246 libraries established in the previous years. In all, since 1993, RGF has established a total of 1411 libraries in 22 states, which includes 1328 village and 83 slum libraries.

The libraries are expected to help children improve their reading ability, and nurture a learning environment in the area as a whole.

State wise distribution of RGF Village libraries

State	Total
Andhra Pradesh	135
Assam	43
Bihar	15
Chhattisgarh	70
Delhi	2
Gujarat	10
Himachal Pradesh	9
Haryana	20
Jammu & Kashmir	5
Jharkhand	31
Karnataka	33
Kerala	10
Madhya Pradesh	6
Maharashtra	10
Manipur	25
Orissa	120
Punjab	20
Rajasthan	254
Tamil Nadu	161
Uttar Pradesh	90
Uttaranchal	122
West Bengal	137
Total	**1328**

State wise distribution of RGF Slum libraries

State	Total
Andhra Pradesh	11
Assam	1
Delhi	27
Madhya Pradesh	3
Uttar Pradesh	10
West Bengal	30
Karnataka	1
Total	**83**

LIBRARIES AS MOTIVATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL CENTRES

Children enjoying recreational activities in Jodhpur, Rajasthan

A girl performing at a newly inaugurated village library in Murshidabad, West Bengal

Learning papier-mâché at a library in Anegundi village, Karnataka

IMPACTS

RAJASTHAN

Rajesh Singh is a simple village youth. Limited resources and lack of guidance prevented Rajesh from thinking beyond the occupations available in the village. Though ambitious, he was unable to buy books and compete in this era of fierce competitiveness.

The RGF library in Deeg, at SARD's field office, came as a blessing to him. The library contains a wide range of books to prepare for competitive exams. Rajesh was given the necessary guidance by the librarian. He became a regular member of the library and prepared sincerely for the Rajasthan Police Force exam. His hard work and dedication bore fruit and he passed the exam with a good ranking. Presently, he is receiving his police training. He owes his success in good measure to the RGF Library which gave him access to books to study.

KARNATAKA

The RGF library started in village T. Gollarahatti, Karnataka, comprises "gollas" (shepherds) and "bhovis" (stone cutters), who are generally considered as nomads. Ranganath, a farmer by occupation and a school committee member, resisted the setting up of a library in their village. He feared that English books and magazines would distract children from their studies.

The youth club formed in the village supported the initiative and convinced Ranganath about its value. Ranganath reluctantly agreed to support it. The youth forum motivated more youth and men to take advantage of it. School children and their parents started to come to the library in increasing numbers.

Ranganath was happy to find many useful books in Kannada not seen by him all his life. He too got interested and became one of the library's regular visitors. The school teachers have also started borrowing books for their own reading and share information with their students. The library has become a hub for activities and social gatherings in the village.

TAKING BOOKS TO UNREACHED AREAS

One of the outstanding efforts made by the Library programme in 2006-2007 was in reaching areas and communities that are relatively neglected by the mainstream of development. The new libraries were mainly established in Muslim, dalit and tribal dominated areas, in a conscious attempt to bring in quality aspects to education, and to link with efforts to bring in children from these areas into the education system.

RGF supported libraries in areas with a prominent Muslim population

No.	District	State	Partner NGOs
1.	Baramulla	Jammu & Kashmir	Human Aid Society
2.	Jodhpur	Rajasthan	Foundation for Education & Development
3.	Bharatpur	Rajasthan	Society for All Round Development
4.	Juhapura, Ahmedabad	Gujarat	Ahmedabad Study Action Group
5.	Murshidabad	West Bengal	Street Survivors India
6.	Yakutpura, Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	Mahita
7.	Jogeshwari, Mumbai	Maharashtra	Majlis
8.	Naki Ghat, Varanasi	Uttar Pradesh	CRY
9.	Hapur	Uttar Pradesh	Action India

RGF supported libraries in prominent tribal and dalit areas

No.	District	State	Partner NGOs
1.	Ganjam, Dhenkanal, Rayagada, Sundergarh and Jharsuguda districts	Orissa	Gram Vikas; SRUTI
2.	Vishakhapatnam, Medak	Andhra Pradesh	Sahayog Community Coordination Network; Sanghamitra
3.	Ranchi, Dhanbad, Bokaro, Koderma, Latehar	Jharkhand	Manthan; Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti; Jan Chetna Manch
4.	Kamrup, Darrang, Nagaon	Assam	Indian Council for Child Welfare; Gyan Vigyan Samiti Assam
5.	Sirohi, Jhalawar	Rajasthan	Foundation for Education & Development; Hum Kisan
6.	Bellary, Koppal, Tumkur	Karnataka	SAMVADA; The Kishkinda Trust; Anekal READ
7.	Cuddalore, Virudhunagar	Tamil Nadu	VAPS; MNTN
8.	Wayanad	Kerala	Hilda Trust; District Literacy Mission

LIBRARY ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN

A Pathak Mela reaches more readers in Sirohi, Rajasthan

Learning in a joyful way at a slum library in Delhi

The libraries are expected to help children improve their reading ability, and nurture a learning environment in the area as a whole. The process of linking libraries with schools has been consolidated, particularly in the libraries in Rajasthan, Orissa, and Andhra Pradesh.

The proactive search for innovative, academically sound initiatives and NGOs across the country, as well as methodical training programmes have improved the quality and conceptual scope of the programmes.

Librarian training

To further support and nurture the libraries, RGF has also been organizing training programmes to build the capacities of librarians and education volunteers associated with the programme. The trainings have been directly organised on a regular basis in the last 3-4 years, with resource persons

TRAINING OF THE LIBRARIANS

Learning motivational activities for children at Murshidabad, West Bengal

Left: Librarian training in Jodhpur, Rajasthan
Above: Librarian training at Baramulla, Jammu and Kashmir

drawn from all over the country. The trainings are usually residential, with intensive sessions and participatory approach to motivate librarians and broaden their creative and academic horizons. The librarians are taught skills to attract children and the community to use the libraries.

The following librarian training programmes were organised in 2006-2007.

The librarians are taught skills to attract children and the community to use the libraries.

Partner NGOs	State	Location	Resource Person/ Institution	Month
Human Aid Society	Jammu & Kashmir	Baramulla	Feisal Alkazi	May 2006
Anekal READ	Karnataka	Tumkur	KATHALAYA	June 2006
Outreach	Karnataka	Bidar	KATHALAYA	June 2006
Human Aid Society	Jammu & Kashmir	Baramulla	Feisal Alkazi	Aug. 2006
Foundation for Education & Development	Rajasthan	Jaipur	DIGANTAR	Oct. 2006
Gram Vikas; SRUTI	Orissa	Ganjam Jharsuguda	Manas Ranjan Mahapatra	Jan. 2006
Street Survivors Stree Shakti	West Bengal	Murshidabad	Manas Ranjan Mahapatra Jodo Gyan	Feb. 2007
Foundation for Development Research & Action	Uttrakhand	Dehradun	NALANDA	March 2007

Interactive training with children at Gram Vikas, Mohuda, Orissa

Learning to tell a story

Convergence of programmes

Concerted efforts were made to utilize funds in such a way that comprehensive education projects are developed in selected blocks in educationally backward districts or areas with particularly neglected communities like tribals and minorities. For instance, the Ahmedabad Study Action Group and the Foundation for Education & Development could considerably improve the quality of their programmes having received library, newspaper and book grants from Good Gifts UK for working in one district. Efforts have been made to develop linkages with the National Book Trust and children's publishers in different states. The partners are also advised to explore the national book fairs when making their purchases to ensure a wide selection of new books.

Within RGF, the Education & Literacy unit initiated an area focussed approach, with programmes in selected districts each year and multiple NGO partners at state level for visible impact on marginalized districts. The integrated programme in Jamwa Ramgarh, where libraries have already been established, has highlighted the need for a holistic approach which needs to be taken further in a concerted manner across sectors, a trend being increasingly adopted by government and non-government funding agencies.

KASHMIR INITIATIVE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

Jammu & Kashmir has acquired a special focus in RGF's programmes in the last few years. The initiatives related to quality of education were further developed during the year, and academic depth added to them. Programmes with the government were initiated to promote improvements in schools, and innovative educational methodologies and child centered activities were expanded through programmes with

non-government organisations and institutions. Expertise from outside the state was brought in to supplement local resources.

Review of Quality of Education

A meeting entitled 'Towards Child Centered Quality Education in J&K' was organised in Jammu in April 2006 to share the observations of the studies undertaken in collaboration with MHRD and State Project Office of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, J&K. The meeting was attended by senior state and MHRD officials, representatives of state level academic institutions. Each institution agreed to prepare its own plan for developing a holistic programme to improve textbooks, teacher training and classroom transactions in the whole state.

The process of teacher training was initiated by RGF in 2005 with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan J&K. When the Ministry of Human Resource Development undertook a review of quality of education, including Observation of Classroom Transactions and Textbook Analysis, RGF was involved in planning the process, organizing meetings and field studies and preparing the final report in consultation with experts. The review of Classroom Transactions was led by Prof. Anita Rampal. The participatory process, from January to April 2006 involved 40 Resource Teachers from all over the state. The meeting in April was a culmination of the year long process. The actual implementation of the holistic quality enhancement education plan is still awaited from the state.

Nurturing Kashmiriyat – 'Discovering Srinagar' series of workshops

A series of 5 workshops titled 'Discovering Srinagar' were organised in 2006. The workshops used modern interactive processes with children on curriculum related themes for social science and environment education. The cutting edge concepts take forward the methodologies recommended by the National Curriculum Framework. Mr. Feisal Alkazi and Ms. Priti Jain of Creative Learning for Change, a Delhi based educational training and resource group, conceived the workshops. The objective of the workshops was to enable the children to relate their curriculum with their own lived environment, generate respect for their heritage and culture and equip them to comprehend the events shaping their lives from a historical perspective.

The workshops were coordinated and organised by Help Foundation, a local Srinagar based organisation. Children (50) and teachers (10) from 5 schools and institutions participated. The children belonged to an interesting range of schools, children whose parents are fishermen in a school started by the Help Foundation; children from the Lal Ded School at Ganpati Mandi, a minority school with Hindu and Sikh kids as well; a school on the banks of the Jhelum; Ameena Kadal government school which includes several children from distant

Observing Kanihama weaving

The five themes around which the 'Discovering Srinagar' workshops were organised were:

The Built Heritage of Srinagar: Then and Now
Exploring the world of traditional wooden architecture from nineteenth century photographs and site visits to buildings, gardens and bridges. Art and creative writing, model making activities, interviews and questionnaires were designed to explore the theme: People shape buildings and then buildings shape people.

A Historical Time Line of Srinagar
Unlikethe popular perception that history is a dull, dry subject about dead people, our activities of researching your own identity and roots, devising worksheets to use and activities to carry out in the Srinagar museum, exploring legends.... brought alive Srinagar's history.

Culture and Lifestyle
From festivals to food, from costumes to the chinar, from walnut to the wazwan, from the santoor to the shikara; the unique Kashmiri identity was explored through children taking photographs, involving themselves in drama and role plays, finding out about utensils, costumes, instruments and music of the past.

Arts and Crafts
The world renowned craftsmanship of Kashmir was explored through a series of hands on activities and meeting the highly skilled artisans

Natural Environment: Flora and Fauna
From looking through the exquisite miniature albums of Mansur in the court of Jahangir, to actual bird watching activities, working on the Jhelum riverfront, creating herbariums, making 'natural' dyes and colours to designing an art mural and celebrating the spirit of the chinar.

'DISCOVERING SRINAGAR'

School children drawing the Martand Temple, Anantnag district

An art lesson

Seeing life on Jhelum River

Visiting a British period Christian Cemetery

Girls working on their assignment

Boys working on their assignment

Preparing a map of Srinagar

Sketching an ancient building in Srinagar

AN EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

Field visits to heritage sites nurtured th students interest in observation, analysis, research and fostered their participation in brainstorming and discussion. Creative workshop activities challenged their imagination and resulted in stimulating presentations. The keen interest shown and questions raised demonstrated the success of the project.

Through this programme the students understood the urgent need for conservation as they began to be aware that the disappearance of a culture is ultimately like the disappearance of a species, something beautiful, meaningful, utilitarian that will be lost forever, never to return.

Each participant

- Got a feel of the oral history of Srinagar by interviewing their grandparents
- Collected anecdotes on heritage buildings
- Visited old houses, monuments, bridges & toured the city
- Described the street on which they live
- Created an illustrated map of the local environment including important landmarks
- Carried out research on crafts
- Collected local legends
- Created short plays around Srinagar's history
- Made newspapers on their research
- Wrote poetry, prose and songs
- Sketched monuments on site
- Visited the banks of the River Jhelum

areas; and children from single parent families in the Shehjhar orphanage. All the children were from middle school. The workshops were conducted in English and Hindustani. All the participants seemed to understand English perfectly even though they couldn't speak it fluently.

The workshops helped the children to relate their curriculum to their own lived environment, generate respect for their heritage and culture and equip them to comprehend the events shaping their lives.

The children also made several field study tours during the workshops, including visits to historic buildings in Srinagar, an obscure Christian cemetery on the banks of the Jhelum, an ancient temple in Martand and a traditional weaving centre in Budgam. They worked in groups and composed songs in Kashmiri, composed a wall newspaper, enacted a small play on the 17th century engineer who designed the canal system of the Valley, and prepared an exhibition on the art and heritage of Kashmir.

The teachers were also active participants in the workshops, and it is hoped that the Manual based on the workshops would take forward the process, enabling all the children learn exciting aspects of their culture and heritage with a modern, contemporary perspective.

The workshops series culminated in a grand function on Children's Day, 14 November 2006, when the children put up an exhibition of their work and a cultural programme, and shared their joy with 800 other children. A Manual for Teachers relevant for the entire Valley, titled 'Discovering Kashmir', is under preparation.

Village Libraries

Libraries for children and youth were started in Baramulla district in collaboration with Human Aid Society for establishment of 3 libraries. The libraries became operational in April 2006. A workshop for librarians, education volunteers and school teachers was conducted in May 2006 in Baramulla involving RGF librarians, teachers and children. The focus of the workshop was to empower the participants with tools and methodology to be able to create an interactive library with a special emphasis on children and youth. A second workshop was held in August 2006 to consolidate the management processes and activities to be conducted with children. The workshops were conducted by Mr. Feisal Alkazi, Creative Learning for Change.

The village libraries are on a new pattern particularly developed for Kashmir, in which the budget has been increased to Rs. 1,50,000 per library for three years. This is due to the requirement of better storage, display and seating facilities due to weather conditions. The number of books is also increased. The Baramulla libraries are being used extensively by youth, and have created considerable goodwill among students and educational institutions in the area.

Community Library in Srinagar

The Community Library in Srinagar was started in March 2005, in partnership with Help Foundation, Srinagar. Within two years of its establishment, the library has become a cultural hub for children in the locality. It has a large collection of books on various themes in English, Urdu and Kashmiri, with a special section for children. The majority of children visiting the library have never seen books with colour illustrations. A number of reference books, and books on the history and culture of Kashmir are also available.

A series of creative programmes and workshops for children and teachers are being organized in the library every month on reading, art, theatre, writing, music, and craft. A computer centre in the library gives local children access

COMMUNITY LIBRARY IN SRINAGAR

Girls immersed in reading newspapers and magazines

Children learning computer applications

Readers in the library

to learning computers and exploring the internet. The series of workshops Discovering Srinagar, the Awards for Creative Writing and the Children's Film Festival reported in detail below, were planned and organised by the team at the Community Library.

A notable feature of the library is that a number of children from orphanages and institutions for children with disabilities have been given special attention, and transport and creative opportunities are made for their involvement. The Community Library has truly fulfilled its role, and the Help Foundation team deserves to be commended on their sensitivity, organizational skills and hard work. Led by Ms. Nighat Shafi, Chairperson, Imtiaz Rather and Hakim Javed and other staff members have worked hard to establish the library as a model for the whole country.

Creative writing workshop for young writers

A two-day workshop for young writers was organised in July 2006 with the Department of Kashmiri, University of Kashmir to develop new and modern stories for children. About 25 authors participated in the workshop, during which they discussed different issues, techniques and themes with three senior writers. The Vice Chancellor of Kashmir University, Prof. Abdul Wahid inaugurated the event. Eminent writers like Ms. Neerja Mattoo, Mr. Naji Munnawar and Mr. Feisal Alkazi facilitated the workshop. The workshop was followed by an editorial meeting with the young writers in September 2006, during which the manuscripts were revised and finalized. The programme is coordinated by Prof. Shafi Shauq, Head of Department of Kashmiri. Twenty four short stories have been developed during the workshop.

Awards for Creative Writing

The Foundation instituted awards for Creative Writing in Kashmiri, Urdu and English with an aim to encourage young talent and create awareness about the importance of books in the mother tongue and thereby enhance learning

A creative writing prize winner

Receiving a certificate for creative writing

in children. After consultation with educationists and senior writers, it was decided that the awards should be extended to Urdu and English also. Therefore, the number of awards was kept large– 10 Awards for age group 16-25 years and 10 Awards for the 26-35 years age group in all the 3 languages.

The Foundation instituted awards for Creative Writing in Kashmiri, Urdu and English to encourage young talent and create awareness about the importance of books in the mother tongue to enhance learning by children.

The awards were announced through advertisement in local English and Urdu newspapers in Kashmir in August and September 2006. Help Foundation, RGF's local partner was given the responsibility for administrative work and overall local coordination. A jury comprising Prof. Shafi Shauq, Prof. Naseem Shafai, Prof. Neerja Mattoo and Ms. Nighat Shafi was instituted in October 2006. More than 200 entries were received from all over the Kashmir Valley in all the 3 languages. The jury deliberated over the manuscripts, and expressed its concern about the low number of entries in Kashmiri. This highlights the issue raised by educationists – that Kashmiri is not a medium of instruction and is hardly taught as a language in schools in the valley, while the University Department of Kashmiri is flourishing with talented youth.

The Awards for Creative Writing in 2006 were as follows -

Language	Age 16-25 years	Age 26-35 years
Kashmiri	1	6
Urdu	5	1
English	7	0
Total	13	7

The results were announced in the local newspapers, and an award giving function was organised on 14 November 2006 in Tagore Hall, Srinagar. The Foundation plans to continue the process in 2007 also.

CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

The prevailing conditions have had an adverse effect on the children in the Kashmir Valley. Having their lives and minds filled with images of violence has a deep psychological impact resulting in stress, which leads to depression and other mental illnesses. Remedies, alternatives, creative channels of expression or means of entertainment are very limited. Children from more privileged backgrounds do have access to some extent, both at school and at home, but for those not so fortunate, the avenues are limited. In a city with hardly any library or cinema hall, television, with its own limitations, remains their window to the world.

In fact, during the survey on children's literature and organisation of different workshops with children, we realized this huge gap in children's lives, their lack of exposure to people of other cultures and their intense desire to connect with the rest of the world.

The Children's Film Festival, the first of its kind in Kashmir, was developed after discussions with Mr. M.K. Raina and Ms. Nifgat Shafi, Chairperson, Help Foundation. It was planned as a four-day event. The focus was to provide underprivileged children like orphans, children studying in government schools and other institutions an opportunity to see a number of films from the country and abroad.

CULMINATION FUNCTION FOR 'DISCOVERING SRINAGAR' AND CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

Exhibition on Srinagar's cultural heritage

Girls performing a traditional dance

A group of students presenting a song

Books displayed at the festival

A stage show by students on 'Suyya the 18th Century Engineer'

A young participant receiving a gift and certificate in the 'Discovering Srinagar' workshop

The culmination function in Srinagar

Group photograph of participants in 'Discovering Srinagar' workshop

The Festival was held at Tagore Hall, Srinagar from 12-15 November 2006. It was organised by Help Foundation, and the films were sourced by Mr. M.K. Raina, who also conducted the screening sessions. 10 national and international award winning films were screened, like Mujhse Dosti Karoge, Choo Lenge Aasman, Adventures of Goopy and Bagha, Bas Yari Rakh, and Ankur Maina Kabutar, Iranian films Children of Heaven and Colour of Paradise, international films like Finding Nemo, Beautiful People, and ET.

More than a hundred schools from Srinagar, Kupwara, Handwara, Pattan and Budgam, government, private as well as NGO institutions participated in the festival. The Foundation also provided transport to the children of orphanages and other school who could not afford to hire buses. About 4500 children from schools and orphanages saw the films with great enthusiasm. Several bus loads had to be turned away since the hall had a seating capacity of 700 at a time.

The festival was combined with two other events – the Culmination Function of the Discovering Srinagar workshops and the Awards for Creative Writing Ceremony. The functions were presided over by RGF's Secretary-General, the Chairman State Board of Education Prof. N.A. Ganie was the Chief Guest, and Mr. M.S. Pandit, Chairman, State Public Service Commission was a special invitee.

The Children's Film Festival, the first of its kind in Kashmir, provided Kashmiri children their first opportunity to see outstanding films from the country and abroad.

School Infrastructure

SSA J&K agreed to the development of 6 model schools in 6 districts on the BaLA pattern. RGF entered into a tripartite MoU with SSA J&K and Vinyas in 2005-2006. However, the progress on the project has been characterized by delays and absence of information and feedback from the state. The first training programme of August 2005 could be followed by only one more workshop with the state engineers in September 2006. Vinyas has developed the required resource material and training module for the implementation of the programme in the state.

IMPROVED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN SCHOOLS

Improved Learning Environment in Schools (ILES), which is centered on using the Building as a Learning Aid (BaLA), involves the development of a child sensitive, integrated physical learning environment in existing and new rural and urban schools across the country. The concept was developed by Mr. Kabir Vajpeyi and his team at Vinyas, a Delhi-based architectural organisation under a UNICEF project. The programme is being implemented in collaboration with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in different states.

The Foundation initiated a presentation on BaLA to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), which was very positively received. MHRD then took the lead in disseminating its concepts across the country, starting with a meeting of State Education Secretaries. Since 2005-2006, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programmes of 12 states in 2006, including Karnataka, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh,

IMPACT OF BALA ON SSA AND ELEMENTARY EDUCATION SCENARIO

IMPACT OF BALA IN SSA STATES

- MoUs were signed by SSA Karnataka and SSA J&K with RGF – Vinyãs: Vinyãs has conducted orientations and trainings to build capacities of the professional staff and to make schools with BaLA elements integrated within the school system. These are presently being implemented.
- BaLA component was planned by SSA Karnataka and SSA J&K in the Annual Work Plans (AWPs) of years 2005-2006 and sanctioned by the Project Approval Board (PAB) of SSA at the national level. The following year (2006-2007) other states followed suit: BaLA was integrated into their respective AWPs by SSA Gujarat, SSA Himachal Pradesh, SSA Madhya Pradesh. Except SSA Gujarat, where it was partly sanctioned, in other states it was sanctioned in total by the PAB.
- In Delhi, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and Govt. of NCT of Delhi have signed an MoU with UNICEF and Vinyãs to introduce BaLA in schools and also make two mobile resource centres (retrofitted DTC buses) with BaLA elements. The work is under way in 10 NDMC schools.
- Inspired or motivated by the dissemination events, workshops and publication on BaLA, there are several examples of child-friendly and BaLA interventions in SSA States across the country:
  - SSA Karnataka (examples seen in districts Davangere, Tumkur, etc.)
  - SSA Gujarat (examples seen in district Kutchh)
  - SSA Madhya Pradesh (examples reported in the press in districts Betul, Khargone, etc.)
  - SSA Himachal Pradesh (good examples reported from district Kulu. Others from Una, Sirmour, Chamba, etc.)
  - SSA Orissa (examples reported from Nayagarh district)
- An Operations and Maintenance manual designed by Vinyãs and Taru Leading Edge for Village Education Committees (VECs) in Orissa also has BaLA components that can be integrated while upgrading or repairing their present schools. This is being published in Oriya for dissemination across the entire state.
- SSA Gujarat is moving ahead with 100 models schools that are primarily based on the concept of BaLA. Another 150 schools will also be developed and the entire project exercise completed by April 2007.
- Delhi Government represented by its Secretary Education has called for all government schools under its ambit to follow essential BaLA elements in all schools and is planning to make it mandatory for all agencies in school construction, renovation and maintenance. It has asked for comprehensive inputs to be given to cover all schools under Department of Education, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, NDMC and Delhi Cantonment Board schools (about 2000 schools).

IMPACT OF BALA AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

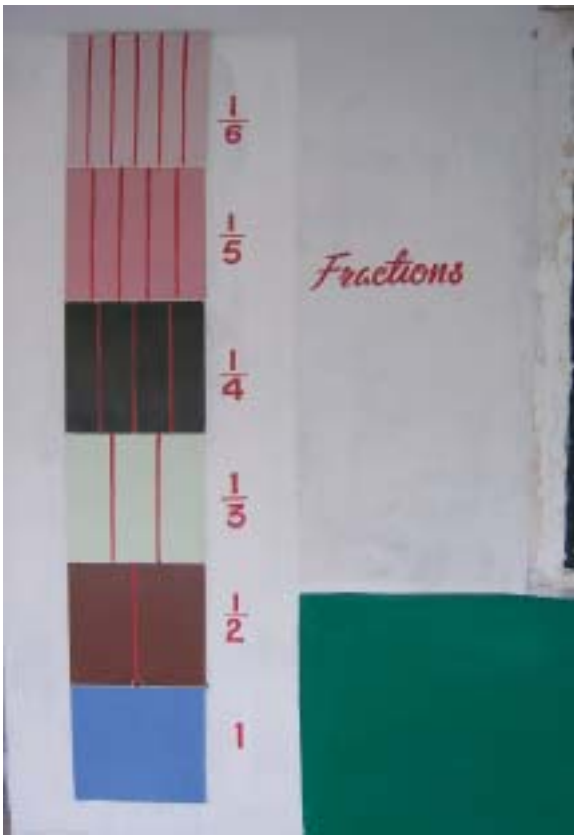
- The National Curriculum Framework by NCERT has the opening section of the School's physical environment describing the concept of using built components as learning aid.
- Department of Elementary Education & Literacy (DoEEL), MHRD through its national submission on elementary school infrastructure gap has included a BaLA thrust in its directive to all the states where school infrastructure gaps are being taken up in a big way. The estimated infrastructure gap was about 10 lakh classrooms across the country at the beginning of the financial year 2006-07.
- The group within DoEEL, MHRD working on the issues to be included in the 11th Five Year Plan is seriously thinking about including BaLA and child-friendly school environment components to be made essential components in developing school infrastructure.
- UNICEF India has included BaLA in its national level work plan to develop manuals on BaLA for SSA states and also hold national level experience sharing workshops between states.

Using outer space to draw a map of India in the school compound

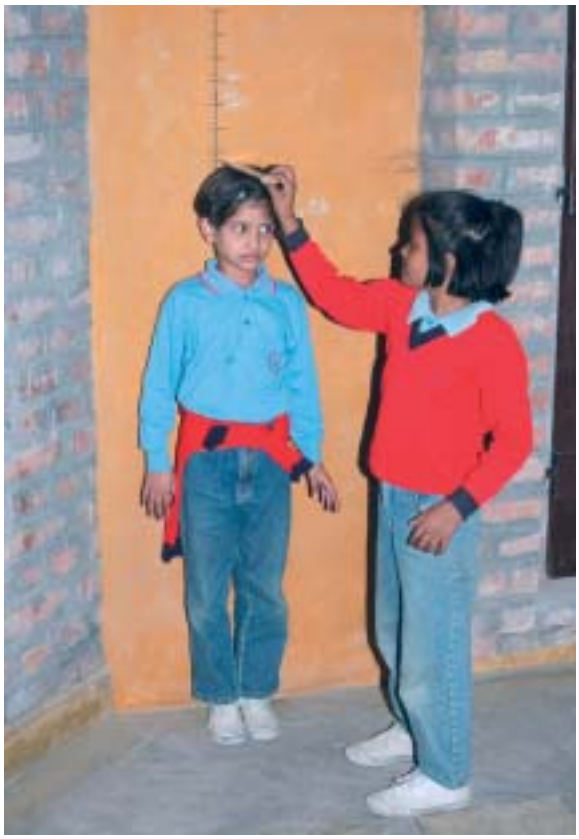
With reference to the RGF-Vinyas-SSA partnerships in Karnataka and Jammu & Kashmir, two rounds of training have been held in Karnataka, and a core group comprising engineers, teachers, faculty of State Council of Educational Research and Training and pedagogy coordinators of 10 pilot districts has been set up. In J&K, a 5-day orientation workshop was held in February 2006 at Jammu for the state engineers and pedagogy coordinators from the 6 pilot districts.

The processes and designs related to BaLA have been disseminated all over the country, and it is heartening to note that the idea of providing a good physical learning environment for poor children in government schools has been widely accepted.

IMPROVED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN SCHOOLS - BALA, KARNATAKA



Using a wall to understand fractions



A child measuring height on a scale on the wall

Signs and shapes on school building

Patterns in a school verandah

IMPROVED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN SCHOOLS - BALA, KARNATAKA

Children utilizing the school wall for drawing

Geometric shapes on window and wall

Games on the school wall

English alphabets on the window grill

Chessboard inbuilt into the floor

Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Chattisgarh and Rajasthan, have included additional amounts per classroom ranging from Rs. 8000 to Rs. 15,000 for BaLA elements in the Annual Work Plans. It is expected that almost all the states will have pilot BaLA components in their budgets for 2007-2008. MHRD is also proposing to include it in the proposals for the 11th Five Year Plan.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Development of Books

The development of books for children in collaboration with Pratham entered its third year. The initiative was started to develop and print quality books for children between 6 to 14 years of age with colour illustrations that they would enjoy. So far 41 books have been finalized, of which 26 have been printed in varied languages (Hindi, English, Urdu, Marathi, Kannada and Gujarati). Another 15 titles are in the process of being finalized and printed. The books would also be printed in Punjabi, Bengali and Telugu to reach out to a wider audience. The books have been well received by children and educationists though the progress has been slower than anticipated.

Database on Children's Literature

RGF and Pratham jointly created a validated database to selectively list available books in Hindi for children which have been used successfully by educational organisations. A total of 710 books have been identified for launching the website. The process of data entry has been completed and the design has been finalized. The database has been developed for providing validated information and analysis of quality children's literature in Hindi through a website.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROJECTS

Area Focussed Village Libraries Pilot Programme, Jodhpur, Rajasthan

As part of the efforts to bring in enhanced cooperation with the government school system, policy level changes have been introduced in a phased manner in the library

Tribal women reading a book at a library in Jodhpur district, Rajasthan

School children selecting books at a library *(above)*; and learning photography *(below)*

programme. Integrating libraries with schools, and bringing out-of school children back into the educational mainstream with library resource centres, has been started on a pilot basis. The programme involves systematic micro level planning and specific educational outcomes.

The programme is being implemented with Foundation for Education & Development (FED) in Bap. Bap is located in Jodhpur district of Rajasthan, at the junction of Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Bikaner districts in western Rajasthan, in the heart of the Thar desert. Practically all the educational parameters for Bap block are adverse. The overall literacy rate is 46%, with only 26% literacy among females. The male female ratio is around 55:45. Though there are 6 schools here, the number of Muslim girls in schools is very low as compared to boys from Muslim community and also to other communities. It is observed that boys are generally sent for higher studies and girls are forced to work at home.

FED is a public charitable trust led by the eminent educationist and retired senior civil servant Mr. Anil Bordia. FED started its field programme, Doosra Dashak (The Second Decade) in June 2001, focusing on the education and development of persons in the 11-20 age group. FED began its activities in Jodhpur district in 2001 by mobilizing the community in persuading parents to allow adolescent girls to participate in residential educational camps, where girls were trained on gender sensitive issues and empowerment. It has facilitated the formation of Adolescents Forums, several of which have taken up issues like village sanitation, running of libraries and other socially relevant activities in their villages.

The project was started in October 2006 and will run for 3 years in the first instance. The project has 10 village libraries supported by the grant from Good Gifts UK, and matching funding from RGF. It also involves development and capacity building of a cadre of local youth in education and related community programmes. Baseline information has been compiled in all the 10 villages on the status of education, reading ability, school infrastructure etc. There will be regular qualitative and quantitative monitoring in collaboration with the local stakeholders

Integrating libraries with schools, and bringing out-of school children back into the educational mainstream with library resource centres, has been started on a pilot basis.

Each library would serve one gram panchayat, and would have about 1000 books, educational and sports material, a large number of periodicals, and basic furniture. A full-time library coordinator is responsible for organizing all the required programmes with the cooperation of the community. The librarians were selected in October 2006, and underwent an intensive 12-day residential training and the programme became operational in November 2006.

Integrated Development Project in Jamwa Ramgarh, Rajasthan

The Integrated Development Project in Jamwa Ramgarh takes forward the achievements of the Natural Resource Management programme being implemented there. Village libraries were started in the area in 2004. The specific objectives of the programmes planned under the Integrated Development Project are:

- Meet the basic learning needs of children, both in and out of school
- Develop activities related to improving the quality of education available in the local elementary schools
- Provide opportunities for continuing and remedial education
- Improve the educational infrastructure available in the area
- Capacity building of school teachers and training of non-formal teachers
- Increase awareness and participation of the community in the education of children

The project period is envisaged as 3 years to meet the above objectives and is being implemented in collaboration with Society for All Round Development (SARD). Activities began in 15 villages in November 2006. The project is expected to expand in other villages in the area.

Children studying at the remedial centre

The main components are:

- Survey to assess the learning level of students in selected villages
- Meeting with key community stakeholders for mutual understanding, and formation/ strengthening of Parent Teacher Committees
- Establishment of 3 Nodal centres, one in each of the 3 panchayats
- Establishment of 12 Bridge/Remedial centres in selected schools and villages in each of the 3 panchayats
- Capacity building for teachers
- Establishment of Bal Mandals
- Creative and sports activities with children

Nodal Centres have already been established in Raiser, Thalli, and Neemla. The Nodal Centres are attractively developed as resource centres for teachers, children and the community. They are located in the centre of the village and are equipped with educational material, books toys, charts, maps and games to supplement the school curriculum. A Cluster Coordinator manages the Nodal Centre, liaises with the local government schools, conducts teachers training and oversees remedial and bridge classes for children.

Twelve educational centres have also been established in 12 villages across the three panchayats. Remedial classes for children studying in classes 2 –3 are held by teachers to help school-going children with learning difficulties. A written and oral test was conducted by the SARD team in cooperation with the government schools for all children studying in classes 2 and 3 in all the 12 villages. A group of 25-30 children per village with the most serious learning problems, like inability to recognize alphabets, was identified. The children are now regularly attending classes for two hours per day at the remedial centres in 6 villages.

For children who have dropped out of school due to various reasons, bridge classes for 2 hours each day have been started in another 6 villages. This group of 25-30 children per village would be encouraged to enroll in school again at the beginning of the new academic session in cooperation with the government schools.

The teachers at the Remedial and Bridge centres are mostly local educated youth, selected with the cooperation of the local community. The teachers underwent a 5 day residential training, which included basic issues of pedagogy, initial orientation about Teaching Learning Material (TLM), class room process and record keeping.

Supplementary educational material like workbooks and readers developed by SARD, and based on Rajasthan government school curriculum are being used in the educational centres. The initial interventions have been received positively by the community.

EDUCATION OF MUSLIM GIRLS

Project EDGE, Hyderabad

Project EDGE (Educating Girls for Empowerment) supports 4 Education cum Motivational Centres in the slums of Hyderabad for children, adolescent girls and young women in the age group of 6-18 years. Most of them have never been to school or have dropped out due to social and economic reasons. The Motivational Centres provide basic education and subsequent integration into formal schools. The project provides a package of informal, need-based education, together with training in vocational skills for girl children from the Muslim community.

In the year 2006-2007, 388 girls were enrolled in the four centres, 184 girls

A Slum Library at Yakutpura, Hyderabad

A girl learning tailoring at the Centre

entered formal schools, 32 girls set up their own enterprise, and 63 girls have been linked to Jana Shikshana Sansthan for advanced vocational training courses. A library was started through the Good Gifts grant in the Bhavani Nagar Motivational Centre. Children, girls and young women come for non-formal education and vocational training. People living in the locality also use the library. The newspapers and periodicals subscribed by the library are a big attraction.

Project Darakht-e-Ilm, Mumbai

Project Darakht-e-Ilm, started in 2005 in collaboration with the NGO Majlis, reaches out to deprived families in the Jogeshwari slum in Mumbai. The Project offers educational support and coaching to girls who are studying. Ten young teachers from the locality conduct classes in different mohallas of Jogeshwari, a predominantly Muslim locality, for around 200 students from the poorest households in the area. This has prevented them from dropping out of school.

For the girls and older women who have never been to school, there are literacy classes. Two teachers conduct literacy classes for women. A micro-planning exercise was done to identify the women and a systematic door-to-door awareness programme was conducted to encourage them to attend the classes.

A Community Centre has been established in the project area. A legal cell running at the centre provides legal aid and advocacy to women facing marital and other problems. Workshops related to health and nutrition are also organised at the Centre. A library, funded by RGF from the Good Gifts grant, has also been functioning at the Centre since May 2006. Vocational classes for sewing and embroidery, English speaking and computer training are also held. The Centre has become a hub of activities for citizens in the area, and public events are held on a regular basis. The young teachers are also being supported by the project to complete their own higher education and acquire professional skills.

Maimoona Begum Maimoona lives in Khan Nagar with her family of 8 sisters and 3 brothers and works as a Motivator at RGF's Motivational Centre. Maimoona joined the Centre at the age of 16 years.

"I was very shy and reserved when I joined the Centre," she says. "I came to learn hand embroidery and mehndi designing. The motivators at the centre helped me to acquire these skills within a year. I regularly attended meetings on issues like gender equity, health and reproductive rights which helped me to become bold and confident. Due to my commitment and zeal to work in my area following completion of my training, I got an opportunity to teach junior batches in the RGF Centre itself which enhanced my confidence further. I want to develop my skills further to take up more challenging tasks. My parents are proud of me and respect my concerns and commitment."

Project Vision, Varanasi

Project Vision, in collaboration with CRY (Child Relief and You), is aimed at ensuring holistic child rights to the children of the most disadvantaged Muslim weaver community in the Nakhi Ghat area of Varanasi City. It was started in July 2006. The project is working among Muslim women and children, and all the project workers are women belonging to the minority community.

The Muslim weavers of Varanasi have been undergoing immense hardships due to the loss of traditional markets. They live in slums that even today hardly have any school or primary health facility. Most families survive on one

Children's day celebration by students at Majlis, Jogeshwari, Mumbai

Cultural activities in Project Vision, Varanasi

Towards a new goal: Fatima Sheikh

School education is a taboo in Fatima Sheikh's family. Even boys do not complete their school education. After 8th or 9th class, they are sent to garages or somewhere else for apprenticeship. Girls are not allowed to continue their school education after 7th or 8th class. They are kept busy in household work or on odd jobs where they earn a meagre amount. Fatima's family migrated to Mumbai from a small village in eastern U.P. Fatima's mother sent her to the local Municipal School and then to Secondary Girls School. She came in contact with RGF's coaching classes for the girls and the co-ordinator noticed her dedication and enthusiasm for education. But her mother wanted her to discontinue her studies after class 9 like others in the family. Her father's income was not enough to support her education. However, Fatima was encouraged to continue her studies and everything was taken care of in the coaching classes. Students are given all study materials including books and stationery. Competent teachers are also available to guide the children. Thus Fatima, in spite of all odds, passed her SSC exams. Her parents were very happy. Encouraged by the co-ordinator Fatima joined a local girl's college where she faced the language problem as all the subjects were in English. However, the Centre helped her with English and she gave her exams and passed successfully.Her journey continues. Meanwhile, she also learnt tailoring in the Community Centre. She does stitching at home and supports her family. The Centre helped her to learn and earn. Now Fatima wants to become a teacher. Let us hope for the best.

meal a day. The main activities undertaken by the project are:

- Awareness generation about health issues and infant mortality, immunisation and birth registration.
- Provision of basic health facilities for women and children
- Setting up of 2 non-formal education centres and 2 balwadis for the education of non-school going children.
- Training the teachers and community workers to be able to deliver quality education
- Protection of children, especially the girl child, and prevention of child marriages by working with the community
- Formation of children's groups to ensure their participation in issues which directly affect them
- Linking the community with government schemes and facilities, and lobbying for the establishment of basic health and education centres in the area

About 400 women and children are associated with Project Vision in the most deprived areas of Varanasi city.

NEW PROGRAMMES

The following projects have been approved by our Board of Trustees for which agreements have been signed in the month of March 2007:

Training Teachers in the art of Story-Telling

Kathalaya, a Bangalore-based educational resource centre, conducts training workshops for teachers which integrate storytelling into the school curriculum and find a modern application for this ancient art.

The project initiated in Karnataka aims to introduce storytelling as an effective tool thereby empowering teachers, librarians and educators to make their subjects and learning more interesting for children. It would improve effective communication skills of teachers and librarians and train them on designing and implementing lesson plans

A total of 10 workshops would be conducted by Kathalaya for RGF in Karnataka in Koppal, Bidar, Tumkur, Bangalore rural, Karkala and Mysore districts.

School sanitation and hygiene programme

The programme is planned to be implemented in collaboration with RGF's existing partner Anekal Rehabilitation Education and Development (READ) Centre, covering primary and upper primary schools in 13 villages of Hulliyar block, Tumkur district in Karnataka.

A field-based programme will be initiated to create awareness in children and the community related to sanitation and hygiene and their relationship with good health, with a convergence of resources and experiences. The focus of the project would be on development of a manual for wider dissemination based on good quality and relevant resource material and its utilization in a pilot way in Tumkur district of Karnataka. The programme would be implemented in a participatory interactive methodology involving government school teachers and children.

Educational Software

The Foundation and the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) are collaborating on a comprehensive programme to make computer-based learning accessible to people in Indian languages, and thus empower them to broaden their horizons. Making it possible to use Indian languages on the computer is important for the preservation of marginalized languages and cultures that are in danger of being left out of the development paradigm which is increasingly dominated by information technology.

RGF and CSDS would jointly work on the following programmes to achieve some of these objectives :

- Directory of information on available educational software
- Fellowships for Localization of Software Content In Regional Languages
- Dissemination workshops on Localization of software.

EDUCATION & LITERACY UNIT

HIGHLIGHTS 1992 – 2007

VILLAGE AND SLUM LIBRARIES PROJECT

1992-present

Village Libraries Programme

- 1411 libraries in 22 states, which includes 1328 village and 83 slum libraries
- librarian training, furniture, books, stationery provided
- 4 mobile libraries in rural areas of West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra
- libraries focussed on child centred activities
- Trainings on book related activities conducted for the librarians and committee members
- Book grants and Newspaper grants given to strengthen the existing libraries

2000

Book Banks

- Provide new reading material, strengthen the existing village libraries
- 2 in Uttarakhand, 1 in Andhra Pradesh and 1 in Rajasthan

Cyber centres

- Pilot project to bring computer facilities to rural areas in 4 existing village libraries in Uttar Pradesh

2002

- Collaboration with Swa Shakti, a World Bank and IFAD funded project coordinated by NIPCCD, which linked libraries with women's self-help groups
- Provide technical expertise to establish 75 libraries in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh
- Initial training and follow up training programmes were conducted in 6 districts by RGF in association with PRIA
- Final report submitted to NIPCCD

LITERACY PROJECTS

1992

National Workshop on Total Literacy Campaign

- bring together NGO managers of the Total Literacy Campaign from all over the country
- discuss, prioritise literacy issues, prepare Action Plan

National Workshop on Post-Literacy Material

- held at the Indian Institute of Education, Pune
- worked out plans to develop reading material for neo-literates
- develop programmes linking post-literacy with health and income generation, with a special focus on women
- launch experimental programmes for stimulating and accelerating Universalisation of Primary Education

Rajiv Gandhi Pustak Mala Series

- specially commission 26 titles for neo-literates
- books published in Hindi, Urdu, Bangla, Telugu, Gujarati, Marathi, Assamese, Kannada, Malayalam and Punjabi
- more than 30,000 copies distributed free through government agencies and NGOs

ADVOCACY PROJECTS

1994

Initiative to support Universalisation of Elementary Education, organised jointly with UNICEF and Jawahar Bhawan Trust

- an Affirmation, 'The Educated Child: Towards Fulfilling a Promise' signed by eminent personalities
- resulted in several RGF initiatives like Rajiv Gandhi Initiative for Elementary Education, Project EDGE, Project ASSET

1995

Rajiv Gandhi Initiative for Elementary Education (RGIEE) launched

- an independent state-level agency to promote Universalisation of Elementary Education in Madhya Pradesh in partnership with the Madhya Pradesh government
- the initiatives undertaken by RGIEE
- base line surveys
- alternative schools
- training programmes for school principals
- increase enrolment and retention of children in schools

GIRL CHILD EDUCATION

1995-2004

Project ASSET

- provide education to girls in remote tribal areas of Udaipur district, Rajasthan
- 8 education centres were managed by Apna Sansthan and Prayatna Samiti
- benefit 1500 tribal girls
- 120 girls join formal schools

1996-present

Project EDGE

- 4 education-cum-motivation centres in Yakutpura slum of Hyderabad in partnership with NGO Mahita
- around 4400 children mostly from the minority community benefit
- more than 2600 children enter formal schools
- 452 set up their own enterprises and become self-reliant

1998-2000

Alternative Education Centres in Sultanpur district, Uttar Pradesh

- 12 centres provide primary education to 400 children

1999-2003

Project IMAGE

- collaboration with NGO Navsrishti in Nangloi, Delhi
- 101 school-dropout adolescent girls attend non-formal classes
- enable 63 girls to pass Class 10 Open School examination
- nearly 20 girls able to be economically independent from skills learnt

2005-present

Project Darakht-e-Ilm

- 10 coaching centres set up in Jogeshwari slum of Mumbai in partnership with Majlis, a legal and cultural resource centre
- 200 school girls benefit from the coaching centres
- Two literacy centres for women
- Community centre, legal desk and a library also established

2006-present

Project VISION

- Setting up of 2 non-formal education centres and two balwadis for non-school going children for muslim weaver community in Naki Ghat area, Varanasi
- Awareness drives carried out on various issues such as health, immunization, birth registration etc.
- Formation of Children's groups
- Regular trainings and capacity building for teachers and community workers

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

2004 onwards

Initiative in Jammu & Kashmir

- Collaboration with eminent academicians, reputed local NGOs and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to conduct teachers training
- A Community Library started in Srinagar
- Teachers training for 120 teachers from Jammu and Srinagar divisions in collaboration with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
- Facilitation of Review of Quality of Education in the state
- Survey of Literature for children
- Development of children's literature in Dogri and Kashmiri
- 3 village libraries initiated in Baramulla
- Series of workshops conducted on 'Discovering Srinagar' exploring culture, life style, built heritage, historical time line, art and craft, flora and fauna of Srinagar
- Writers' workshop organised with the department of Kashmiri, University of Kashmir to encourage young writers
- Instituted 20 Awards for Creative Writing in Kashmiri, Urdu, English between the age group of 16 to 35 years of age
- Children's Film Festival organized in Srinagar. Ten national and international award winning films screened.
- A Culmination function organized on Children's Day for Discovering Srinagar workshops and for Award giving ceremony.

2004 onwards

Books for Children

- Collaboration with Pratham to develop and print 50 books in Hindi for the age group 6 to 14 years.
- 26 books already printed in Hindi and five other languages
- Development of a user friendly database on children's literature with validated information on 710 books in Hindi.

2004 onwards

Improved Learning Environment In Schools: Building as a Learning Aid

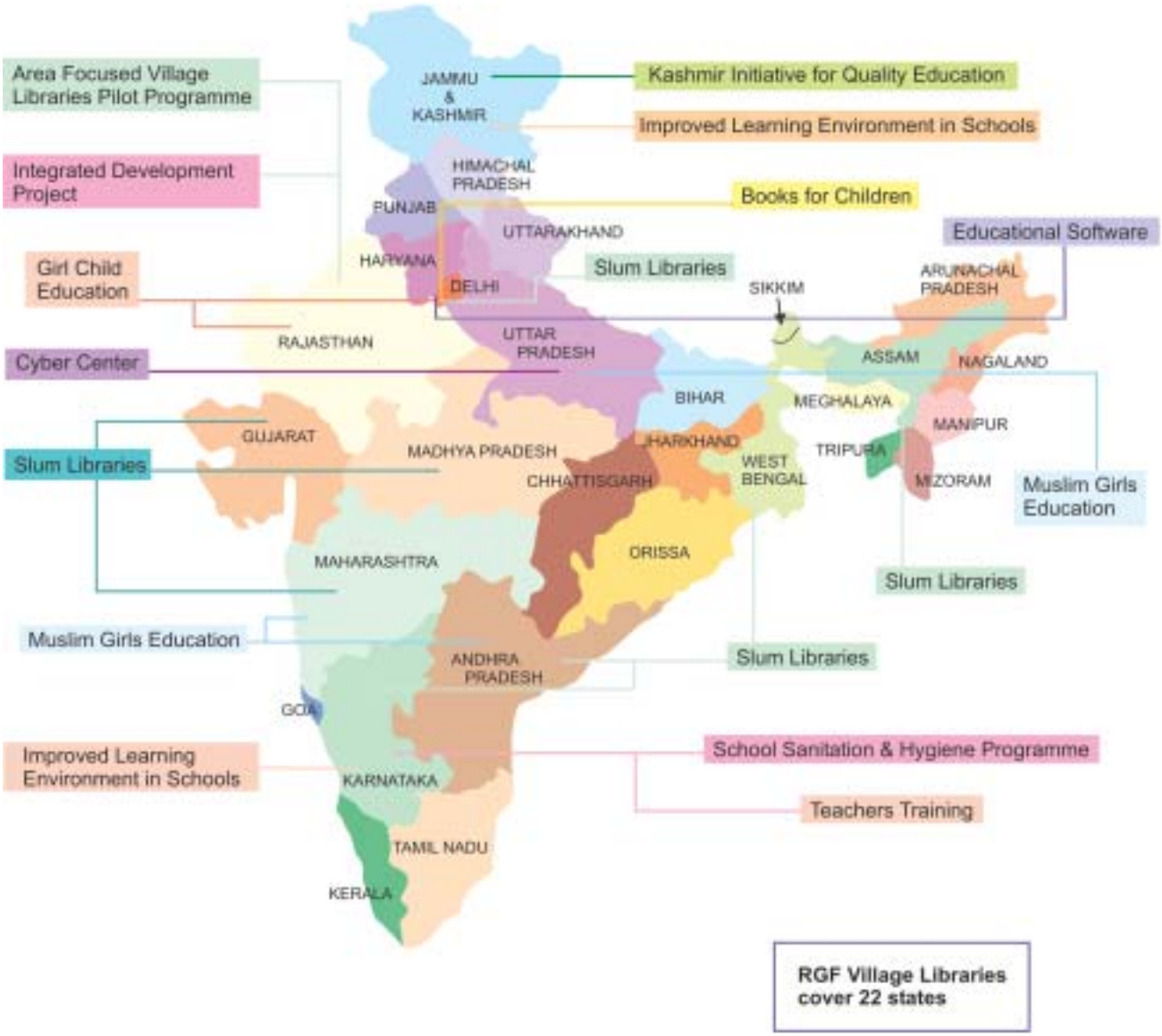
- Child friendly schools design developed by Vinyas to transform the learning space to improve retention of marginalized children
- Advocacy with state governments to implement the programme in government schools
- MoUs with SSA, Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir for the programme

2006 onwards

Area Focussed Village Libraries Pilot Programme

- Ten library resource centres created with more than 1000 books, educational, sports and science material, and large number of periodicals.
- Activities with children and adolescents like story telling, creative writing workshops, environment awareness, craft, popular science, sports, recreation and adventure
- Non-formal education and life skills training for out of school children and adolescents
- Capacity Building training of village coordinators, supervisor and volunteers

Integrated Development Programme in Jamwa Ramgarh

- 12 educational centres established in 12 villages across the three panchayats
- 3 Nodal Centres established in the three panchayats namely Raiser, Thalli and Neemla
- Remedial classes for children
- Regular training and capacity building for the teachers, field staff and volunteers

RGF's EDUCATION AND LITERACY PROGRAMMES IN INDIA